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Twenty First Street Updates Their Sanctuary



Rev. Mykenley Augustin, Senior Pastor, and members of the Twenty-First Street Church of God, Richmond, Virginia, would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to Rev. Dr. Donn

Sunshine for using one of his many gifts, in making this beautiful cross for our sanctuary. He willingly assisted us in this endeavor and even delivered the finished product to our church, with the assistance of Rev. Bob Neace. Words cannot express how the cross has added to the beauty of our sanctuary and we will enjoy walking through the double doors, looking at this magnificent piece of artwork for many years to come. May God continue to bless you both, our brothers in Christ, Rev. Sunshine and Rev. Neace.





**Dr. Bob Neace COGVA
State Minister**

Neace's Pieces The early church faced persecution. Jesus warned His disciples numerous times of the hatred the world would have toward those who dared follow Him in all His teachings. It was true then and remains true today. Shortly after the Ascension, the fulfilling of the promise of the Holy Spirit, and early miracles, Peter and John are taken into custody. They are questioned concerning this doctrine of Jesus because they credited Christ with their ability to perform a miracle in the life of a man the community knew to be lame from birth.

As a result of this miracle and the response of Peter and John, those who lived in self-appointed authority threatened them to never preach in this name ever again. This did not deter them as they are found praying for boldness to continue preaching the Gospel.

Shortly after that, the apostles are found to be preaching, arrested, placed in jail, and then set free by an angel in the night. When the governing authorities sent for them to be presented for prosecution, it was found they were not in prison but preaching publicly again in the temple.

Having been arrested again, they are brought before the High Priest and questioned (indicted) because they continue to do as the Holy Spirit would guide them, rather than listen to the direction of man. This is the first time we hear of the apostles being beaten for their faith. “... when they had called for the apostles and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. (Acts 5: 40 – 42 NKJV)

Even in the midst of severe threats and beatings, the apostles stay true to their calling to preach Christ, even counting it a blessing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame on behalf of the Lord, finding themselves even more bold and brazen than before.

(Continued on page 6)

Healing Continues to Be a Part of God's Agenda!



Rev. Bernice Warner

New Years Day 2024 started out like most any other year, but I had no idea what that month or the coming year would hold for this 80+ year-old woman!

On January 31, I was diagnosed with COVID, then a week later I would receive a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer! That would initiate a series of Divine miracles that would save my life!

Miracle #1...The cancer was found early! The doctor said that pancreatic cancer is not usually found till the later stages when nothing can be done!

Miracle #2...The reason it was found early was because the mass had blocked off both a pancreatic and a liver duct, leading to symptoms that could not be ignored. Later, it was found to have pressed against my small intestine, partially obstructing it, as well! Stents had to be placed immediately to bypass these obstructions. In trying to place the stents via endoscopy, the medical staff punctured my small intestine. Normally, this would entail major surgery, but my skillful and knowledgeable surgeon was able to clamp it off through the scope (not many surgeons would know how to do this!). However, he could not place the stents at this time.

Miracle #3...Later, after my intestine had healed, he was able to put in the much-needed stents. Further testing detected another spot on my liver, but it would be operable! In surgery, that spot was never found!

Miracle #4...I was also told that a major blood vessel was running right through the surgical site, so a vascular surgeon and his team would be scrubbed in and ready to perform that part of the surgery. Again, it was not there!

Miracle #5...Following surgery and time in the hospital, I was sent to rehab, then to home, with a stomach/jejunum tube to aid in nutrition. The tube feeding was to run by pump overnight. In rehab, we had a major power outage. Due to the high number of patients who needed access to the generated power outlets, I decided to try to compensate for the feedings by simply snacking every **(Continued on page 6)**

“God’s Agenda is Unity!” John 13:34-35

As Christians, we must be able to produce people whose lives have been changed and let them stand alongside the proclamation of the Word. So many people in our society feel victimized, powerless, and vulnerable. So many have been devastated by divorce, the loss of their jobs, the loss of their health, the loss of their families, and some by criminal violence. How do you suppose we reach such a state of affairs? It has occurred because the people of God have failed to allow God’s power to work through them to bless the world. We assume that the church is limited to using only the same resources that are available to the other institutions of our society, and that kind of thinking has blinded us to the wonder-working power of God.



Rev. Dr. Simeon R. Green III

The church’s great shame for the last half of this (twentieth) century is that we have forsaken the poor and the beggar. We have treated the poor as villains rather than victims, the opposite of what Jesus did. We have taken the socially elitist point of view, which says, “You’re poor because you’re basically lazy. It’s your own fault. We’re going to teach you how to pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.” We have misinterpreted Jesus’ words about having the poor with us always. Jesus was not giving us an excuse for not helping the poor. Rather, He was saying that, since they will not be going away, we have many opportunities to serve them. It is not our responsibility to condemn and in so doing add to their pain.

God’s purpose in this world goes beyond the saving of the souls of men and women or the helping and healing of the sick, beyond the liberation of the poor – God’s agenda is unity, the bringing of all things together in Jesus Christ. That is unity. It is wholeness, and it is oneness. It has nothing to do with whose belief about the end-times is right or whose church traditions are right. Unity is at the center of the heart of God, and yet, while unity is God’s agenda, I don’t think there is any area in which we have given more room to the world, the devil, and all kinds of contrary forces than in this area of Christian unity. We have tried to organize it, to legalize it, to strategize it, and none of that has worked. We have **(Continued on page 7)**

Pittman Road Church of God Welcomes Rodney Person, Sr as Pastor

CORRECTED ARTICLE

On June 23rd, 2024, Bro. Rodney Person, Sr. was chosen to become the Pastor of Pittman Road Church of God. He was born in Boykins, VA (Southampton County) to the late Rev. Roger Person, Jr., and the late Eunice M. Person. Bro. Rodney grew up with two brothers, the late Roger Person III and twin brother Ronney Person and two sisters, Dr. Ella P. Woodley, and Vickie P. Eley.

Coming from a legacy of preachers, Bro. Rodney is walking in his destiny. A creative, talented man of God, his message is to share the rhema word of God, teaching all mankind. With a passion for souls, Bro. Rodney began his training in ministry at the age of fifteen under the guidance of the late Pastor John D. Davis, his dad, the late Rev. Roger Person Jr. and the late Pastor George Murrell.

Bro. Rodney has worked in every ministry at the Church of God under the leadership of the late Pastor John D. Davis and the late Pastor George Murrell.

Bro. Rodney's favorite scripture is Proverbs 3:5&6. He teaches to rely on God, call on God and believe that God will bring you through any situation. His main focus in his ministry is instructing souls of all mankind to give their life to Jesus Christ and allow the Holy Spirit to transform their lives daily. Boykins. Bro. Rodney is married to the love of his life, Sister Loisteen Person and they have three children, Rodney Jr., Kristen, and Brandon and two grandchildren, Ryleigh and Rodney III.

Bro. Rodney loves the Lord with all his heart, mind, and soul and as he always says - “Stay prayed up, keep looking up, for one day, we’re going up to meet the Lord in the air.”

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18



Rev. Rodney Person

COGVA Bible College Announces Fall Schedule

The Bible College will resume classes for semester 1 on the 2nd Saturdays beginning in October and ending in January from 9-11 am. The Bible College is open to all. Pastors, lay leaders and lay people. The better equipped you and your people are the better we will serve. Serving Christ is a lifelong learning process you and each student is strongly encouraged to participate in.



Rev. Dr. James B. Milner

Class 1 will be instructed by the Reverend Dr. Jim Milner, focusing on the life and theological contributions of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer was a German pastor in WWII who was martyred for his faithful resistance to Hitler. His life and writings are still shaping the Church today with a Christ centered theology and practice.

Class 2 will be instructed by the Reverend Dr. Donn Sunshine, focusing on reading the Bible through different lenses (Biblical Hermeneutics). This class will coordinate with Class 1 by taking an aspect of Bonhoeffer's theology and applying that "lens" to understanding the Bible.

As an example, Jim may teach about how Bonhoeffer ran an underground seminary to train pastors of the Confessing Church (resistance to the national Nazi church) and how they formed family and practiced unity in Christ. From that we may look at scriptures from a Christ centered relational lens. For example, we might consider the relational aspect of being born again as being born into Christian family. Or the relational family aspect of the prodigal son or Jesus eating with Zacheus.



Rev. Dr. Donn Sunshine

If you wish to receive credits toward a degree from the COGVA Bible College, please use the link below to pay the \$30 per class fee. Three credit hours are issued per completed class. You may also mail checks to the state office. Certificates for classes with and without credit will be mailed to you. Certificates from last semester are coming soon.

Class Registration <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/10455506>

The zoom link below will be the same for all classes.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81836882767>

(Healing Continues continued) time I woke up during the night. Then, after returning home, I again had trouble getting my nightly feedings because I was sent tubing that did not fit my pump! I compensated by repeating what I had done in rehab! Praise the Lord, I tolerated it well and the tube was eventually discontinued!

As of today, over a year following surgery, and with no follow-up chemo, I am still in remission! Praise the Lord! (He must not be finished with me yet!)

(God's Agenda continued) become, most of us, disillusioned with the divisions, sectarianism, and denominationalism. But still, we have not been able to accomplish any kind of basic unity.

Uniformity of doctrine or coming together under one form of church government cannot produce unity. The unity of the church emerges through the organic unity of the people constituted spiritually as the body of Christ. This unity springs forth from Christ's name, person, will, ministry, work, and function in the world. Jesus said that our most important tool for evangelism would be our love for each other, John 13:34-35 says, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples if you have love for one another.”

(Neace's Pieces continued) Since the enemy had not been able to silence the apostles, he goes after the church body. Chapter 6 of Acts tells the story of division within the church over the distribution of food among the Jewish and Gentile widows.

As the apostles are summoned to settle the dispute, the wisdom of the group had those in leadership identify seven men, “of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” to appoint over this ministry. Enter Steven, along with six other men.

As Steven ministered in the waiting of tables, his reputation as one who could pray, with wonders and signs following grew. For whatever reason, this caught the attention, again, of the ones who thought they had a better understanding of God's will than anyone else. Stephen is seized and put on trial for his faith. Accusers come who either quote him in part (selective editing), or flat out lie, stirring the passions of the people. An atmosphere and tactic that is not unfamiliar with us today...

All the while, during the accusations, Stephen’s demeanor was such that, even in the midst of such blatant hypocrisy and lies, those who heard the accusations against him are said to have seen him as if he had the face of an angel. Perhaps this was the first time Saul of Tarsus, later to be identified as the Apostle, had seen what he would one day define as a “peace that passes all understanding.”

When offered the opportunity to defend himself, Stephen preaches a sermon or gives a history lesson. But either way you frame it, he brings truth to the forefront, truth that is inconvenient, hard to absorb, and difficult to deny. He does not defend himself. He points his accusers and those in the crowd to Christ, using his opportunity to speak, not as a means self-justification, but a revealing of truth concerning Christ, using historical accuracy to introduce Jesus to those in hearing distance.

What he said struck a chord in the crowd. Those accusing him could not bear the weight of truth he was proclaiming. They were more offended by the truth than willing to acknowledge that truth had been spoken. Rather than finding peace through the Christ Stephen introduced to them, they decided to kill the messenger, perhaps with the hopes of squelching his testimony into oblivion and frightening the rest of the church into silence and submission. But something else happened. The Holy Spirit had someone in the early church record this moment, and as the final minutes of Stephen’s life play out, he is given a glance of what awaited him. He saw the Jesus, “STANDING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER.” Seen as a gesture of welcoming someone into our home, we stand and go to the door to welcome them in. Christ did this for Stephen, and the violent crowd hears him say two things. One – the declaration of what he was seeing. The other – a plea that God would not hold this sin against those who were taking his life.

Stephen is named as the first martyr in the church. Not a pastor, not a preacher, not an evangelist, prophet, or apostle, but simply a man who waited tables in service for his Savior. Under the unction of the Holy Spirit, Stephen says things that most other Christians might not have said. He made those who hated Christ and His church uncomfortable, and yes, again, offended, but all that he said in the recorded sermon can be backed up by looking at the text of Old Testament scripture. In other words, boldly speaking truth cost him his life, but he continued steadfast.

I, along with many other pastors, and others who speak publicly would shudder to think what accusations can be brought against me if someone were to take the time clip portions of my sermons to advocate something they deemed as hate speech in order to further their own agendas. Recent events show that it happens often and it is a dangerous precedent.

But I want to encourage each of us who proclaim Jesus to be our Savior to take to heart the words Peter shared in his first epistle: “But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.”

COGVA Budget

Churches Giving by Aug. 2025 - Sept. 31, 2025				
Churches	August	September	October	To Date
Abingdon	\$319.80	\$417.55	\$305.30	\$1,042.65
Atkins	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Big Stone Gap	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Birdsnest	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Blacksburg First	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Blacksburg Slussers	\$83.33	\$83.33		\$166.66
Bluefield	\$230.00	\$0.00		\$230.00
Boones Mill	\$75.00	\$0.00		\$75.00
Boykins	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Bristol	\$306.16	\$279.00		\$585.16
Chesapeake	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Chilhowie	\$304.51	\$355.17	\$488.87	\$1,148.55
Christiansburg	\$761.30	\$366.37	\$478.41	\$1,606.08
Dublin	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Emporia	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Forest/Cardinal	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Fredericksburg	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Glade Spring	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Goodview	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Hampton Joynes Road	\$100.00	\$200.00		\$300.00
Lynchburg Greenview	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00

Lynchburg Mtn View	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Marion	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Martinsville	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Newport News First 20th Street	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Norfolk Bellamy Ave	\$266.00	\$266.00		\$532.00
North Tazewell	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Norton	\$283.10	\$280.56		\$563.66
Pearisburg	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$250.00
Reedville	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Richmond First	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Richmond 21st	\$200.00	\$200.00		\$400.00
Roanoke First	\$0.00	\$509.57		\$509.57
Roanoke Staunton Ave	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Rural Retreat	\$214.29	\$205.14	\$191.12	\$610.55
Salem	\$25.00	\$0.00		\$25.00
Saltville Broadford	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Saltville Chatham Hill	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Saltville Allison Gap	\$180.00	\$134.00		\$314.00
Saltville MntView	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Spotsylvania	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Staunton	\$312.11	\$303.75		\$615.86
Suffolk	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Wise	\$3,500.00	\$0.00		\$3,500.00
Wytheville	\$80.00	\$80.00	\$80.00	\$240.00
Individual Giving	\$0.00	\$ 200.00		\$200.00
Credit Card Cashback	\$125.69	\$0.00		\$125.69
CD Interest	\$1,443.96	\$0.00		\$1,443.96
Investment Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Total	\$8,810.25	\$3,880.44	\$1,793.70	\$14,484.39

Expenditures August 1, 2025 - July 31, 2026		
		Aug-Sep
Categories	Budget	1st Qtr.
		Expenses
1000 State Office		
1100 Business Office	\$ 4,900.00	\$ 348.43
1200 Insurance	\$ 18,400.00	\$ 4,378.25
1300 Office Manager	\$ 17,942.80	\$ 2,990.48
1400 Income Taxes	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 317.68
Subtotal	\$ 44,842.80	\$ 8,034.84

“...I will keep watch to see what he will say to me... Then the Lord answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets...” Habakuk 2: 1b-2a.

1500 Chair	\$ 400.00	\$ -
2000 State Minister		
Salary	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Reimbursement Fund	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 84.82
Subtotal	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 3,084.82
3000 Executive Board/Standing Ministries		
3100 Executive Board	\$ 50.00	
3200 Ministry of Church Service/Credentials	\$ 1,350.00	\$ 501.90
3300 Ministry of Christian Education	\$ 2,000.00	
3600 Ministry of Program	\$ 50.00	
3800 Ministerial Fellowship	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 500.00
3900 Church Property Team	\$ 500.00	
Subtotal	\$ 5,950.00	\$ 1,001.90
5000 Property and Maintenance		
5110 Camp Bedford		
5110 Caretaker	\$ 5,250.00	\$ 875.00
5120 Campground Expenses (Maintenance)	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 702.83
Capital Improvements	\$ 1,000.00	
Camp Bedford Mkt/Advertising	\$ 250.00	
5140 Utilities	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 472.83
Subtotal	\$ 13,200.00	\$ 2050.66
5200 Camp Christi		
5210 Caretaker	\$ 26,565.12	\$ 4,427.52
5220 Health Insurance	\$ 5,000.00	
5250 Utilities	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 4,868.08
5260 Maintenance	\$ 1,500.00	
5270 Capital Improvements	\$ 24,000.00	
5280 Vehicle Maintenance	\$ 250.00	
5300 Legal Fees	\$ 600.00	
5400 Ministry Expenses	\$ 200.00	
Christmas Bonus	\$ 1,500.00	
Subtotal	\$ 73,115.12	\$ 9,295.60
Total Expenses	\$ 159,507.92	\$ 23,467.82
Total Income		\$ 12,690.69
Kingdom B. Transfer for State Minister Salary		\$ 3,000.00
CD Interest		\$ -
Transfer from Kingdom Bldrs		\$ 9,500.00
Investment Fund		\$ -
Difference		\$ 1,722.87