

*The Church of God Great Lakes Mountaineer Region*



**Issue No. 1**

**December, 2018**

*Great Lakes  
Mountaineer  
Regional*



*News*

Official Publication of  
**The Church of God**  
In  
Michigan—Ohio—West Virginia

**James T. Smith**

**Regional Overseer**

*[www.tcog-glmr.org](http://www.tcog-glmr.org)*

# Editorial

It is my distinct pleasure to present to you this first edition of the regional paper for our newly formed region. I trust it will be inspirational and prove to be a blessing to each one. I plan to sprinkle it throughout with a variety of items that will bless and interest you.

Thanks to each coordinator and reporter who have submitted items for this issue of the paper. We would like to receive something from you for each issue as far as is possible. If in some months you have nothing to submit I would appreciate a notification so I can go ahead with the formatting of the paper. We project the ideal length of your articles be no more than 500 words with a preference being in the 200 to 300 range. For example, this editorial is around 400 words. If you need more space at certain times we will try to accommodate you as space allows keeping in mind that we need to stay within a certain number of pages.

Your local church news will help acquaint our regional membership with each other. Please share something with us that is going on at your local church so we can share it with the region.

I am planning a monthly *Birthday Calendar* with names and birthdays of all who attends your local church, whether members or friends. Pastors, **please** send me a list of these as soon as possible. We would like to have these by mid-December so we can include it in the January issue. Thanks.

We would like to start with a monthly paper and play it by ear to see if this is sustainable. If it does not prove to be viable we will go to a bimonthly paper. You may submit pictures if you desire. We will use them as we have space to do so. Please try to have your submissions in to me no later than the middle of the month prior to the monthly release date which will be at the beginning of each month.

Thank you and may God bless you.

Walter Lofton, Editor

**Note:** My new **Email** is: [wglof@tcog-glmr.org](mailto:wglof@tcog-glmr.org). My telephone number is: **304 837 5046**. The answering machine picks up, please leave me a message and I will get back with you . My mailing address is:

69 Trimble Lane  
Seth, WV 25181



## From the desk of the Regional Overseer *James T. Smith*



### **You Want to Pass It On**

I am happy to see how well our new region is doing. Everyone is so busy about their Lord's business. He is able, ready, indeed anxious, to bless our labors for Him. We have so much to be thankful about. This time of year gives us two distinct opportunities to declare our praises and thanks for all He has done, is now doing, and will yet do for us. He finds so many ways to shower His blessings on each of us. Some of His blessings are obvious, and some are not so obvious (at least at first). Even the trials and tests we face are His blessings in disguise! A dear song, *Through It All* reminds us: "If I never had a problem, I wouldn't know that God could solve them; I wouldn't know what faith in His Word could do."

During this holiday season (Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years), let us make sure that we are more than just thankful, both for what He has done, and for what He will yet do for us. Let's not just say it, but let us also show it. Ask the Lord what you can do that would show Him just how much His many blessings mean to you. We who have so freely received from above now can show our appreciation through how we give to others. Sure, we can give presents or gifts of things, but we can also give other gifts—of our time, of our care and concern, etc. I think of another dear song:

#### **You Want to Pass It On.**

*It only takes a spark  
To get a fire going  
And soon all those around  
Can warm up in its glowing  
That's how it is with God's love  
Once you've experienced it  
You spread His love to ev'ryone  
You want to pass it on.*

Let's show the Lord just how much we do appreciate the many blessings He is ever sending our way! Let's pass it on!

May the good Lord richly bless you as you give to others.

James Smith

[overseer@tcog-glmr.org](mailto:overseer@tcog-glmr.org)

304-657-4258

Below are scenes of pews being unloaded and put into storage which was donated to our region by the Uniontown, PA Church. These consists of 9 nine foot pews and 2 seven foot pews. Thanks, Uniontown and may God bless you for your gift to our region.



## Calendar of Events For 2019

### **Southern District Convention**

Local Church; Page, WV  
April 6, 2019

### **Northern District Convention**

Local Church; Niles, MI  
April 20, 2019

### **HQ Regional Ladies Retreat**

Lake Barkley; Cadiz, KY  
May 3-5, 2019

### **Bible Training Institute**

General HQ; Cleveland, TN  
May 27 - June 9 , 2019

### **Heritage Day**

Zion Hill Church; Cleveland, TN  
June 10, 2019

### **Annual Regional Convention**

Local Church; Castalia, OH  
June 21-23, 2019

### **International Youth Camp**

Meadow View Marriott Conference Resort  
Kingsport, TN—Aug. 2-4, 2019

### **Worldwide General Assembly**

Meadow View Marriott Conference Resort  
Kingsport, TN—Aug. 6-11, 2019

## Popularity Test

Someone rises to remark that the attendance at the morning service tests the popularity of the church.

The attendance at the evening service tests the popularity of the minister.

And the attendance at prayer meeting tests the popularity of the Lord.

**Nothing lies outside the reach of prayer except that which is out of the will of God.**



# A Minute *from the* Minutes

Inspirational Nuggets From Past Assembly Minutes

*(Excerpts from message by Jack C. Decker to the 60<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 1965)*

We know the Church as the Body of Christ. We can find a multitude of Scriptures that would declare that this is the Church, but what is it really like to the people on the outside of the Church? To those five hundred million Catholics, who are we? To us we are just as glorious as can be, clear as the sun, terrible as the army, but to them, who are we? (He read Proverbs 29:18 and Hosea 4:6 and continued) We are wasting time for the lack of knowledge. We are allowing millions of people to be destroyed without having knowledge of us. Who is accountable? Who will have them on their hands at judgment?

I can't get away from this command to go and teach all nations. These are things that are our job to do. My people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge. April 3, 1920, our former General Overseer put a piece in a periodical at that time, "I wonder if the moving picture machine will not be wrenched from the devil some time and be put into use to help us spread the gospel. What would be more impressive than the incident of the crucifixion and the resurrection thrown on the screen with an appropriate message on the subject?" That was his vision forty-five years ago. *(98 years ago now in 2018)*

The magnitude of our work as a church is too great for our small membership to accomplish. Every hour we are going further behind. Did you know that in the fifteen minutes that I have been here twelve hundred souls have gone into eternity? Not only that, but there is another side to this. In that same time over one thousand souls have been added to live here on this earth and die as most of their ancestors without hearing our message. *(What would these statistics be now in 2018?)* We only have one hope—the power of God and mass communication. There isn't one individual minister who is here today that can reach all these people, even by preaching every night and two or three times a day. God is giving man more and more knowledge. His interest is in the Church and not in the world. God must be allowing all these inventions to be invented for us. I don't believe He is allowing this to happen to see if one nation can outdo another or so communism can outdo us or so Catholicism can outdo us. These inventions are made for us. People are dying waiting for us.

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**Editor's Note:** There is much more that we can do than what was done 98 years ago. Social media can be used as a tool to advance the gospel along with our verbal witness and the printed page. Are we doing our part today? We can still give someone a tract, call someone, invite someone to church, etc. God is counting on us. He has instructed this message into our hands. What an awesome responsibility resting upon us.



# Great Lakes Mountaineer Regional Church News



## Castalia, Ohio

Sister Jessa Stephens had a wonderful Missionary Service on Oct. 11. She picked 4 different countries where we do not have a church at yet which are Italy, Japan, Australia, and Greece. She had some of the ladies make a dish that represents each of those countries. Needless to say we got to reap the benefit of four wonderful dishes after the missionary service that evening. We know that the Lord is moving and will reach all the world with His message and these countries will one day be a part of the Church. Each month she and Sister Becky pick a country to pray for and I believe God hears our prayers.

We want to welcome Brother and Sister Smith to our new region and want them to know that we love them and are praying for them. We hosted the Minister's Convention at our church on Oct. 20th followed by a light lunch. The men handled the business of the church and got the details of the new region worked out. Praise the Lord!!!!

We are also having a candle sale to help raise money for our local church thanks to Sister Jessa and Sister Becky. We are so blessed here in Castalia and we are one big happy family. **Birthday:** Chelsea Legg—October 1.



## Columbus, Ohio

Columbus is alive and well! God has been in our services in such a blessed way. We thank God for the new souls attending our services and the blessed messages from our Pastor. Thank you Columbus for the wonderful birthday party you had for our Pastor. **Prayer Request:** Lost souls, Bill Barnard with cancer, the Barnard family, one another, the Columbus congregation families.

**Birthdays:** Don Hutton Sr., Luisa Hernandez.



## Seth, WV

God is blessing at Seth with His presence in our weekly services. Our Sunday School Superintendent makes the Sunday School interesting with a different visual and Scriptural rendition each week to help encourage us to get into the Word.

We are blessed with an excellent Fund Raiser Coordinator. Sister Paula Sanner is always coming up with bake sales, hotdog, and craft sales to help us raise mission money and funds for our local church needs. Contacts made at these sales have resulted in people visiting our church services. We do not have a building payment so we can freely focus on helping out with projects on the regional and general levels.

We were blessed to have a visit by our Regional Overseer and wife on the 11th of November. We enjoyed a good visit Saturday evening with a good message following on Sunday Morning along with a good lunch prepared by the ladies of the Church. We are looking forward to what God will do for us at Seth in the coming year.



## Fairmont, WV

The Fairmont church has found a place to have their meetings which is in a conference room at the Fairmont YWCA, located off I-79, Exit 133.

Praise the Lord for this blessing! Please help us pray that we can find a permanent place soon.



## Page, WV

The church at Page, WV has recently put on a new metal roof which was badly needed. Our next project is to replace our floor joists which have termite damage.

We were blessed with a visit by our Regional Overseer on November, 11. We have gained some new members this year for which we are thankful. Pray for us at Page.

## Regional Convention Report

Our regional Ministers Convention convened October 19-20 at the Castalia, Ohio church. Friday evening consisted of boosts by regional coordinators and workers. The business session was conducted Saturday morning. Items discussed were the name of our newly formed region (Great Lakes Mountaineer Region), tax ID#, Finance and Appropriations Committee membership, and setting up the business guidelines for the Region.

The Present Financial System from the Assembly Minutes, budget guidelines for Regional Overseer expenses, regional expenses, ministerial expenses and allotments and accountable reimbursement plan, regional paper, and reporting frequency were discussed.

Other items discussed included funds received from the former VA/WV region and projected funds expected from the former Heartland region along with funds to be received from the sale of jointly owned property which included the state of Ohio, insurance and accountability. These business concerns were passed in regular business order.

The love and sweet spirit of all present was very apparent and all left with excited expectations for the coming year.

*Reported by Walter Lofton, Regional Reporter*



### **WMB Boost**

#### **CHRIST THE SAVIOUR**

*"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)*

Christ the Saviour (Deliverer) was born to deliver from sin, sickness, unclean spirits, and devils. Christ had a burden for souls.

*Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. (Matt. 14:14).*

*So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him. (Matt. 20:34).*

*And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean (Mark 1:41).*

Christ looked on the harvest (condition of the people) with compassion. Let us move with compassion and bring the good news to a lost and dying world that a Saviour, a Deliverer, has come so they could be free from every bondage!

Have a wonderful blessed Merry Christmas!

*Regional WMB Coordinator, Sue Hutton*



## **Let Us Not Lower Our Standard**

*Today other churches have left God  
They no longer live by His Word.  
They have lowered their way of living.  
They have turned God from their door.*

*Let us not lower our standard  
Of the beautiful great Church of God.  
God gave us the Bible to live by.  
So let us stand up against all odds.*

*These churches have lowered their standard  
Though they all started out well.  
They have changed their way of living  
And caused many souls to go to hell.*

*There is only one true church  
Called by the name of her God.  
She never will lower her standard  
She will show all men the plan of God.*

*Let us not lower our standard  
Of the beautiful great Church of God.  
God gave us the Bible to live by.  
So let us stand up against all odds.*

*Written by Walter Lofton 1964*

## **Quenching The Spirit**

Be careful that you do not hold back when the Spirit prompts you to move in some way and thus grieve the Holy Ghost and put a clog in the wheel and hinder the progress of the glorious work of God. By refusing to yield to the promptings of the Holy Spirit might check His work to the extent that souls may be eternally lost—and then who will be responsible? God seems to prompt me to keep sending forth these notes of encouragement to sharp and quick obedience to the Holy Ghost. I feel it more and more as we see the day approaching.

*A. J. Tomlinson*



## Honoring Our Ministry



**Ronald and Donielle Legg  
Pastor at Castalia, Ohio**

I grew up in the Castalia, Ohio area. I was not raised in the Church. I was raised Baptist. I was raised to know the need of salvation, and I remember when I was 13 years old, I had three cousins killed in a car wreck and an aunt die within 3 day of each other. We were on our way to my aunt's funeral when I was talking to my parents, telling them I had been asking the Lord to forgive me, and I did not feel that he had yet. It was there in the backseat of a car that I gave my heart to the Lord. While I wish I could say I have never backslid and have continuously served the Lord from that moment, I cannot say that.

I started to become acquainted with the Church when I started dating my wife, Donielle, back in the Church of God of Prophecy days. I remember when I first started visiting, the Holy Ghost fell in one service, and they were speaking in tongues and shouting. I went home and told my parents, "I think those people have lost their minds." While I said that out of ignorance and not knowing the truth, I continued to visit on and off and never really applied myself to learn the full truth. Even after Donielle and I were married, I would visit from time to time but never gave one thought about maybe they taught the real truth. Donielle and I were married on April 24, 1993. For those of you that know your history, it was the day before the Holy Ghost gave the third message at the South Cleveland church. I remember a man by the name of Brother Cooper. He was always so kind to me when I would visit and would talk to me just as if I was a member there. He became very sick with cancer, and Donielle's mother and grandmother were going to visit him in the hospital. I told Donielle that I wanted to go also. I remember him telling the ladies in the hospital room, "keep your eyes on that 'concerned group.' They are the ones keeping the truth." I did not even know what that meant, but it stuck with me.

In 1995, Donielle's father had gotten me a job where he worked. I watched his life and the respect that those he worked with had for him. One Sunday morning, Donielle and I went to visit the church in Fremont, Ohio. The pastor announced that Donielle's father was going to speak that night, which peaked my interest. I told Donielle that I wanted to go back that night to hear what he had to say. Well, I was shocked. While I thought I had him fooled that I was saved, he called me out and said that he wanted to see the Lord save me. The Lord used this to show me I

wasn't fooling anyone. I gave my heart back to the Lord that night, and I can say that I have not looked back from that night. The Lord saved, sanctified me and filled me with the Holy Ghost within a few months of each other, and I joined the Church after much prayer and fasting. A few months later, the Lord called me to preach in a Sunday morning service. I continued to work in the factory with Brother Bolyard, growing in the Lord and learning all I could about the Church.

The Lord blessed a group of us from the local church to go to BTI in 1998. In December of 1999, I was on the job working, and the Lord spoke to me and said, "I have called you to do my work, not to sit in this factory." The next few weeks were rough. I couldn't pray. Every time I went to pray, the Lord would say to me, "submit to my government." I finally called Brother Bill J. White, my Regional Overseer, and told him I would go wherever he needed me. In June of 2000 he asked me to take a church in Portage, Indiana. In 2002, Brother Ard, appointed me to Mansfield, Ohio. I Pastored there for 3 years. In 2005, I was appointed to Castalia, Ohio where I am currently serving as Pastor. In 2016, I was ordained as a Bishop at the General Assembly.



## **VLB Boost**

Please know I am praying for all the youth in our region, that you will grow IN CHRIST and get all the many blessings He has for you! Those that I have met already, I have been praying for you individually. There are many challenges we face in this world, but be encouraged, Christ said in John 16:33 *"These things I have spoken unto you, that IN ME ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I HAVE overcome the world."* Our General Theme is **"ENEMIES On The RUN."** BE ENCOURAGED! Whatever we face in this world, IN CHRIST there is ALWAYS VICTORY! For He can not fail! AMEN! PRAISE THE LORD!

*Jessa Stephens, Regional VLB Coordinator*



## **ABM Boost**

**Christmas Love Offerings**

Our General ABM Coordinator is encouraging each Church to send in a Christmas Love Offering to our Regional Overseer and to the General Overseer. She needs the General Overseer's offering to be sent to General Headquarters by December, 15th. You may send the Regional Overseers offering to the regional treasurer so she can forward it to him in plenty of time for Christmas. Thanks in advance for your giving. May God bless you.

*Regional ABM Coordinator, Junita Atha*



## CPMA Boost

### HERITAGE

In our Country a new fad has been catching on in recent years—Rediscovering our Ancestral Roots! Such web-sites as Ancestry.com, Genealogy.com, and 23andme.com have drawn millions of people to carefully look at their heritage to understand better who they are today.

Heritage is often thought of as only our past. While it does begin there, it continues in our present time, and will into the future. This new fad has caught on because people are finding purpose in "connecting" with their heritage. It has been a source of inspiration and understanding to who they can be and who they are just by reflecting back to where they came from.

As a member of the Church we can "discover," or if need be "rediscover" who we are as members of The Church of God by doing some study in God's Word! We can look at Noah the "Preacher," Abraham who looked for a City, Jacob who found the House of God in a vision, David who saw how great God's House must be built, Habakkuk who had to "write the vision," Paul who could speak concerning Christ and the Church, and John who saw the Bride from his present time to the end of Christ's Millennial Reign.

Our Heritage shows us plainly a source of inspiration and encouragement that we can connect to. We can see and understand why we are called out, saved, sanctified, baptized with the Holy Ghost, and have joined The Church of God! Further, we will not be ashamed to share with others the joy unspeakable of these blessings so they can also "*esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt*"! What a Heritage that we can be excited about in The Church of God!!!

I would like to also say that in the month of February we will make a Drive to be 100% in CPMA Memberships! If you haven't already joined the CPMA please try to budget so you can by February!

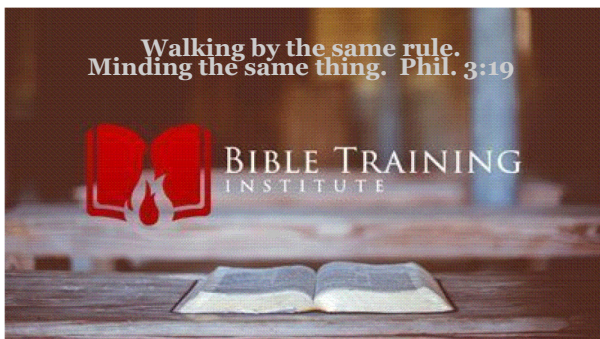
*Thanks, Levi G. Stephens, CPMA Coordinator*



### **Extra! Extra! Read All About It!**

**There will be no charge for our regional paper.**

If you would like to donate for this cause you may do so by giving it to your local treasurer to send along with their report. Or you can watch our Regional website for information on how to donate online.



## BTI Boost

Thank God for our new theme: **Walking by the same rule, Minding the same thing. Philippians 3:16.** We received new information from Brother Horton about BTI in Cleveland . Dates are May 26-June 8, 2019. Tuition and textbooks will be

\$75.00 and a discount of \$15.00 if application is received by May 10, 2019. There's plenty of time to prepare if you begin to plan now. Not long after the reorganization of the Church, our local church began having BTI services once a month and that inspired 6 of our members to attend BTI in Cleveland. My two years was a wonderful time of learning and fellowship with brothers and sisters we never knew before. We have continued to teach all of the correspondence courses down through the years, and I want to encourage every local church to try to do the same. The offerings received in these services are used to teach BTI in other countries. So pray for BTI on all levels in the Church, and for all the leadership of the Church, that we all can receive the knowledge and training needed to finish the work of the Church.

*Regional BTI Coordinator, Don Bolyard*



## Sunday School Boost

### EMBRACE THE VISION

This year's theme is a wonderful thought! To embrace means to accept or support something willingly or enthusiastically. A vision is a revelation. We should accept and support the revelation our

Lord has given to us through His Word willingly and enthusiastically! His revelation is a divine revelation. This is a revelation of who Jesus is and what His Word means in every aspect of our lives.

Sunday School is the perfect avenue to teach the Word of God to all people of all ages. Then the Lord will plant His seed in their hearts. God will reveal His Word to those who seek to understand. The Bible tells us in Proverbs 4:7, 8 *"and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honor, when thou dost embrace her."*

We must embrace the vision! *"Where there is no vision the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he"* (Prov. 29:18). We don't want to perish, we want to be happy. We ALL will be happy, when we embrace the vision!

For Christ and His Church,

*Jenny Lonz, Regional Sunday School Coordinator*

# An Inspirational Mini Sermon

From the book, **MUSE WITH ME** by R. O. Covey

## IF YOU WERE LOOKING FOR the CHURCH

If you were one of God's "other sheep" today, looking for God's Church, what would be the criteria? Just what would you be looking for in that Church? If you were really looking for the Church of the New Testament, and not just "a change of camps" you would not be taking your search lightly.

You probably would have searched the Scriptures for the Bible pattern, to the best of your understanding. Then you would turn your thoughts to people—a people who would identify with the Scriptural pattern. If you were serious about what you were doing, you would not be easy to satisfy. You would make no "snap decisions."

Well, you may already be a member of the Church of God; and since you are "inside looking out," don't forget how it would be if you were "outside looking in." You are one of those under scrutiny.

We make much of the statement that people need a "spiritual vision"—a divine revelation." True! But let us never forget that before the "other sheep" have that *vision* or *revelation*, they have only flesh-and-blood members to look upon, with the vision of the "natural eyeball."

*It is up to you and me as to what they see!*

**Editor's Note:** Each month we will share an inspirational quote from R. O. Covey's writings. Brother Covey was a great inspiration and blessing to me over the years and I trust you will enjoy these short sermons as we share them with you.



## High-Principled Teens Needed!

A high school senior needed money for going on to college and a certain movie house owner offered him a job as assistant to the manager. When the lad refused, the owner raised the salary offer twice. When the boy still refused the man asked why, and was told, "You run too many off-color pictures, and I don't want to be connected with them in any way." Imagine what would happen if hundreds of high-principled teenagers took such a stand for decency. Magazines, theatres, radio and TV programs, geared to their entertainment, would soon take notice!

*WWM August 8, 1966*

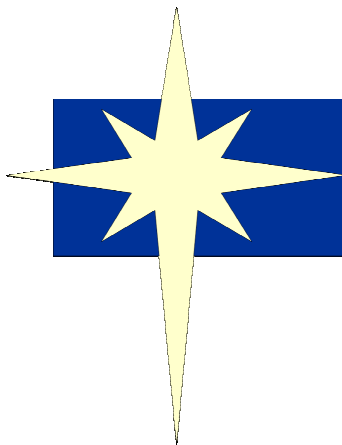
# Photos From The Past



## **Stephen E. Smith Family**

Stephen-Vicki-Rebekah-Jonathan

**1978**



**I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. (Phil. 1:3)**

*Merry  
Christmas*



*Happy New Year to all!*



## **Regional Youth Activity**

**Sledding at Oglebay Resort in  
Wheeling, WV**

**January 19**

**Encouragement, Fun, And  
Fellowship!**

**More information to follow!**