

THE GOSPEL

# MESSENGER

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## TRUSTING

THROUGH TROUBLE

feature article pg 6

*Rev. Terron Gentry*

*North Georgia District Superintendent*

**A VERY PRESENT HELP**

*BISHOP SCOTTY POOLE*

**BE STRONG AND  
COURAGEOUS**

*LEVI CANTRELL*

**IN GOD WE TRUST**

*DR. MATTHEW TURNER*

A man in a white robe, seen from behind, walks along a sandy beach towards the ocean. The sky is a warm, golden color from the setting or rising sun, and the waves are visible in the distance.

# A VERY PRESENT *Help*

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1*

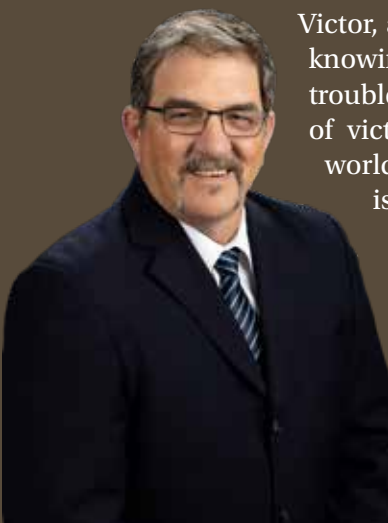
In the Book of John, Jesus gives His final discourse to His disciples just before He faces the cross. In John 14:1, He begins this conversation by saying, “let not your heart be troubled,” and in John 16:33, He ends the conversation just before He prays with “In the world, ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” These words of Jesus show that we can expect we will face troubling times. But He does not leave us without hope during those times. When we put our faith and trust in Him, He assures us we will overcome the troubling times

because He has overcome them. He is our Victor, and He gives us the victory. Even knowing these facts, we still try to avoid trouble at all costs. With the assurance of victory, Jesus lets us know in this world, we will face trouble. Trouble is not only experienced by Christians but is experienced by everyone. As Christians, we have help in troubling times. Every day, I watch people face trying times without Christ and see the hopelessness they are facing having nothing to base their hope in other than luck. You know the saying, “Maybe it will get better.” But for the believer, it should be and is different. I think back on my own life.

Having faced several trying and troubling times in my life, some were my own doing, and I remember how helpless I felt within myself. I could not “fix” anything and could see no resolution for what I was facing but God.

Whether it was when I was in the back of an ambulance with my three-year-old, rushing from Gainesville to Atlanta, with a penny stuck in her esophagus, hoping she would be alright. Or standing in my living room as a pastor determined that ministry was no longer for me. I was not good enough to serve Him or hearing that my friend dealing with COVID, whom we had prayed so much for, would not make out of the hospital, and then months later, receiving the same news about my brother-in-law, I felt helpless, and I was but God wasn’t! You see, through all these things, He has been my overcomer. I look back at these things now, realizing I am still here. I am still going. I still have victory because Jesus is the Victor! Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). God is with us through everything we face, and He is the one watching over us. We may not always get the exact results we desire, but God forever cares and gives us what we need. Comfort when comfort is needed, strength when strength is needed, and deliverance when deliverance is needed.

I have asked why a few times. Why must we face trouble



**Bishop Scotty Poole**  
Bishop Poole serves the CHC as  
the General Superintendent.

# PASSING THE BATON

We are blessed in the CHC to have Godly pastors who have faithfully served the Lord, and we would like to recognize three of those pastors. This past December and January, we had two 30 years + pastors and one 40 years+ pastors transition from Senior Pastor to another role within their church. There is no retirement for these men, only God's reassignment as they will still be active in ministry.

On the last Sunday in December, at Dillion Congregational Holiness Church, Rev. John Bryant preached his last Sunday as Senior Pastor after 47 years of service to the Dillion Congregation. Also, at Union Grove Congregational Holiness Church, Rev. Paul Flynn preached his last sermon as Senior Pastor after 33 years serving the Union Grove Congregation. Then on the last Sunday in January,

at Woodstock Park Congregational Holiness Church, Rev. George Dugger preached his last sermon as Senior Pastor after 33 years serving the Woodstock Park congregation.

Their pastoral ministry will be missed with a combined pastoral experience of over 110 years. However, each of these pastors worked to bring on and develop the men who would take on the mantle of Senior Pastor for their churches. We are grateful for their service and faithfulness to the Lord and the CHC and know they will continue to share their wisdom, love, and care with the people of the CHC. We want to say thank you and welcome to the pastorate to James Bryant, Senior Pastor Dillion CHC, Bobby Ivester, Senior Pastor Union Grove CHC, and Keith Taylor, Senior Pastor Woodstock Park CHC. Our prayers are with you all.



*Pastors Paul Flynn & Bobby Ivester*



*Pastor George Dugger & Keith Taylor*



*Pastors John and James Bryant*



if God can see us through the trouble? It would be nice to avoid trouble altogether. But one of the ways God ministers to His people is through His people. Again, Paul wrote, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Corinthians 1:3-4) If, as Jesus says, the world will have trouble. Then the Lord used the trouble you faced and overcame as a ministry tool to help someone during their time of trouble.

I am thankful for a Savior that loves me and understands every trying and troubling thing I will ever face just so I can depend on him, be comforted by Him, and rely on Him for all my needs. Redenna sings a song that has this line, "sometimes the little girl in me wants to climb up on my Daddy's knee," talking about when we are scared or hurting, we can go to the Father for comfort. That is precisely what we need to do when trouble comes because I already know He takes care of us.

“

I STILL HAVE VICTORY  
**BECAUSE JESUS IS  
THE VICTOR!**

Bishop Scotty Poole





## IT'S *Okay* TO BE PROPPED UP ON YOUR LEANING SIDE

I recently read a story about a farmer who concluded a prayer by saying, “Lord, prop us up on our leaning side.” When someone who heard the prayer asked the farmer what this meant, he explained that he had an old barn leaning to one side. To keep the structure from falling, he cut large beams and placed them on the “leaning side” of the barn. Simply put, the farmer had asked the Lord to prop them up on their leaning side where they were the most vulnerable to fall. Unfortunately, so many troubling things in life can cause us to become vulnerable and lean. And when we do lean, it’s often on our own understanding, or lack of it, that we lean.

*Proverbs 3:5 tells us to:*

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
And lean not on your own understanding;*

We all face troubling times in our lives which make no sense to us. We may speculate on why the situation occurred, but it’s just that, speculation. Most of the time, we really don’t understand.

For example, it’s hard to understand when people doing great things for the Lord pass away. Friends, family, pastors, leaders, and good people in our church. All of them, it seems, left this world far too soon, and it’s impossible to make any sense of it. It’s in those times of frustration and grief that I have asked God, “What are you doing?” In hindsight, however, I realize my questioning came entirely from what I was leaning on at that moment, which was my understanding, or lack of it.

Commenting on Proverbs 3:5, the 17th Century theologian John Owen (1616-1683) said: “The great folly of man in tri-



**Rev. Jonathan Fitzpatrick**

*Rev. Jonathan Fitzpatrick serves the  
CHC as World Missions Executive  
Director.*

als is leaning to or on his own understanding and counsels.” Although it appears to be good, Owen said that ultimately, our own counsel results in stiffing our faith and letting us down. Proverbs gives us an alternative, though, and that alternative is to trust in the Lord. But what exactly does this look like?

According to Warren Wiersbe, the word translated “trust” in Proverbs 3:5 means “to lie helpless, facedown” like a “servant waiting for the master’s command in readiness to obey.”

I can certainly relate to feeling like I am helpless and face down. Perhaps that is how you feel in the middle of your troubles. Feelings of helplessness and uncertainty are often natural in those situations.

And according to Solomon, it’s precisely in these times that we are to trust (lie face down before and ready to obey) the Lord with all our heart and not lean on our own understanding. The indication is that it’s much better to fall down before God and be entirely dependent on Him than to rely on ourselves!

That’s how it is supposed to be. Adam Clarke (1762-1832) said: “It is on GOD, not on thyself, that thou art commanded to depend.” Clarke went on to say that whoever leans on his own understanding is a fool and that self-sufficiency and self-dependence have been the ruin of mankind and are the “grand sin of the human race.”

Clarke’s words still ring true today. Unfortunately, and sadly, many believers are guilty of trying to live independently of God during difficult times. Of course, we trust the Lord where our eternity is concerned, but we find it easier to trust in ourselves or others before trusting God in the hard times. But I want to encourage you to trust and seek God rather than leaning on what you think you understand. Independence and self-sufficiency ultimately lead to disappointments, frustrations, and failures. But when we fall down before God as a sign of our dependence on Him and seek Him in all our battles, especially the battles we can’t win on our own, they become His battles!

A great example of this is Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20. Trouble arose in the form of large enemy forces coming against him. Forces too large for him to defeat on his own. But he “set himself to seek the Lord” (v 3); he admitted his dependence on God by when he said, “we have no might against this enemy, but our eyes are upon You” (v. 12). This led to God speaking through a prophet telling Jehoshaphat not to fear the enemy forces because the battle was not Jehoshaphat’s anymore; it was God’s.

So, when the storms of life are raging, remember that it’s better to trust in the Lord by admitting that we are entirely dependent on Him than to lean on what we understand. It’s okay to be propped up on your leaning side!

“But when **we fall down before God** as a sign of our dependence on Him and seek Him in all our battles, especially the battles we can’t win on our own, **they become His battles!**”

*Rev. Jonathan Fitzpatrick*





# TRUSTING THROUGH TROUBLE



## ***Rev. Terron Gentry***

*Rev. Terron Gentry serves as North Georgia District Superintendent and wife, Debra Gentry, serves as International Lady Ministers Director.*

**I**n a time where opinions seem to outnumber answers, fear is trying to overcome faith, and in a time when the Word of God is considered irrelevant by many. That is the time to hold fast to the precious content from its teachings. It is our compass pointing us to needed answers. The relevancy of the Word of God must take center stage for our balance in everyday living.

The instructions from the Word of God in John 16:33 reveal to us that, in this world, we have trouble, but in that same verse, he declares peace to us because he has "overcome the world." What words of comfort this brings to us as believers knowing that Christ has assured us everything will be ok. Immediately it gives us comfort and releases us from the fear pressing against us.

The Word will change our perspectives from fear to faith, from despair to hope, from heaviness to praise. When the Creator of the universe spoke these words into our lives, they were not meaningless or empty but a declaration over us.

The words of Christ have creative power that cannot be rivaled. In creation, God spoke the worlds into existence, and the universe is still expanding at the speed of light to this day. So, should not we believe that when he spoke peace over us, we should trust him and realize that this peace is still available today?

## COMFORT

The comforting words of Christ in John 16:33 should take root in our souls, allowing the weight of this world to dissolve into this promise. We live in a day where voices all around us are saying to panic. The voice of reason must take center stage in these moments, the voice of the Shepard. He is more relevant now than at any other time in history.

Pressure can bring out the best and worst in us. It reveals character and integrity. The moments that tempt us to cave into the panic around us

*We will face trouble in this world, but we will not face it alone! The overcomer, the Good Shepherd, is with us!*

should remind us of what the Word of God is speaking over us. Walk in faith with the assurance of his promises. Its foundational truths will guide us. These truths give us comfort. The clarity and purpose we find from it give us the confidence to press forward. The leadership we discover from it guides us through any circumstance. It is a lamp to our feet and a light to our paths. (Ps. 119:105)

## REALITY

The world is in a storm that is unprecedented in many ways. We know, of course, that the world is not perfect, but the season we are in has new challenges never faced by our generation. From these new challenges come further questions not before asked. To find these answers, we must rely on the Creator to reveal them to us from His Word.

The world is searching for answers,

and it is daily becoming darker. That's when the light of the church is seen more visibly. The well-planned strategies from the enemy are seen when the light of the Word is visible to us. Christ is counting on us to walk as His disciples in this world, having the answers to today's questions, which will bring people to the knowledge of Christ and His salvation.

## FAITH WILL STAND TRIAL

The power of life and death is found in the tongue (Pr. 18:21). God has given us the ability to speak those things as though they were. The words we speak are the paving stones of faith. It is what we walk on to perform the will of God. Speak words of life, not death. Speak words of God's provisions, not words of lack.

Reality is visible, but the Word of God is factual. Storms will come; you can be assured of that, but don't fear the storm because Christ is with you.

Storms have two purposes:

1. They will perfect you
2. They will correct you

The storm the disciples found themselves in (Lk.8) was a "perfected" storm. They were simply obeying what Christ said to do, "get in the boat and go to the other side." The burden of proof was on Christ. The disciples just had to carry out the command. However, a storm between them and the other side, and Christ was aware of it. This was an opportunity to perfect the disciple's faith. Christ knew that they would need to call on this level of faith in the future. It immediately caused faith to triumph over fear.

Think for a second. The boat is filling with water, and the waves are overtaking it, lighting, wind, and thunder all around. The panic has set in. Peter, the experienced fisherman in the group, seemingly has a breakdown! Christ appears in that moment of complete vulnerability and says, "where is your faith!"

What a time to preach, right? Christ knew in this moment of complete vulnerability when they were most fragile; they must learn to allow faith to be strong in them.

## RELATIONSHIP

In life, Christ must be our Shepard, especially in a crisis. He cannot be a passing communication, emotion, or frustration. We must build a trust system with Him that will not be shaken. His transcending power has no limits. His love will stop at nothing to get to you. He is passionate about you, and He will not fail you! He created you. He knows you inside and out. He has got you!

## SHEPHERD

Take comfort this day, knowing the Lord is your Shepard. The ownership of His love for you rests on Him. He will not allow you to fail if you walk in faith with his Word. He is committed to you through His Word.

The benefits of our Shepherd are as follows: He is...

1. Our covering
2. Our provider
3. Our comfort
4. Our promise keeper
5. Our strength
6. Our completer

We will face trouble in this world, but we will not face it alone! The overcomer, the Good Shepherd, is with us!

***No matter the circumstance, rest assured that Christ is with us. He will bring peace to the storm!***

# IN GOD WE TRUST

Take out a piece of money from your wallet. In today's cashless society, you may not have an actual paper dollar on you now. But, even if you do not have a piece of money to look to at this moment, I know the phrase will come to your mind when I ask the question. What is the theme that appears on every piece of paper money or coin in the United States? It emerges in our courtrooms, municipality buildings, and church houses. Do you have it in your mind yet? IN GOD, WE TRUST.



## **Dr. Matthew Turner**

*The Turner Family: Matthew Anna Kate, Elia, and Edyth. Matthew serves as the Mission USA Administrator for the CHC.*

Although I have been serving the Lord for some time now, trusting is still challenging at times. It is not because He has ever failed me; it is just simply because in the natural, it is hard to trust for provision when you do not see a door for provision to come. It is much easier to walk according to what we see than what we do not. However, God calls us to walk by faith and not by sight. Though there are many days when we do not understand how we can survive or see a resolution to the problem we are facing, we can still trust in the One who can make a way where there is no way. We can trust IN GOD, even when we don't see His hand working. We can trust IN GOD because His character has been long established. I may not see Him working in the natural, but that does not mean He is not working. His character, how He operates, and who He is, proves that we

can trust IN GOD.

Trusting IN GOD plays out in dramatic fashion in 2 Chronicles 20. Multiple nations joined forces and created one of the largest armies the world had ever seen at that time, intending to destroy Judea and the people of God. When King Jehoshaphat learned what was happening, he did the only thing he knew to do; he sought the Lord. Scripture says that the people of Judea joined together and prayed together with the King leading. Jehoshaphat prayed, "O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You" (Vs. 12). I love the honesty in the King's voice. "we don't know what to do" is what he said. Have you ever felt like Jehoshaphat? After his confession of not knowing what to do, he told the Lord, "our eyes are one you". This was Jehoshaphat's declaration that he trusted IN GOD while he was scared and had no clue what to do. He trusted in God's character that He has not changed and how God had moved in the past, He could do once again. Jehoshaphat and the people of Judea waited in silence, expecting God to respond. The Lord speaks through the prophet Jahaziel and says, "You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!" Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you" (Vs. 14-17).

The very next day, Jehoshaphat and the people of Judea went out armed not with swords and shields but with praise and faith. The Bible records, "Now when they began to sing and to praise the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir who had come against Judah and they were defeated" (Vs. 22). PRAISE THE LORD! God proved yet again that His character is to work for His

IN GOD

WE TRUST



people, to bless them,  
keep them, and fight for  
them.

Lousia M.R. Stead married her husband in 1875, and shortly after, God blessed them both with a daughter, Lily. The Stead family took a vacation to Long Island Sound, New York. While the Stead family was there on the beach, they heard the cries of a boy out in the sea who the undertow had taken out from the shore. Mr. Stead rushed into the water to save him; however, the strength of the water proved to be too strong, and both the boy and Mr. Stead died. After going through this horrific experience, Mrs. Stead leaned on the Lord and later wrote from her experience:  
‘Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,  
and to take him at his word;

just to rest upon his promise,  
and to know, “Thus saith the Lord.”  
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him!  
How I’ve proved him o’er and o’er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
O for grace to trust him more!

Beloved, God has not changed. You  
can still trust IN GOD!

‘Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,  
and to take him at his word;  
just to rest upon his promise,  
and to know, “Thus saith the Lord.”  
Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him!  
How I’ve proved him o’er and o’er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!  
O for grace to trust him more!

SAVE THE DATE



# FIRST FRUITS OFFERING

APRIL 2022

CONTINUING  
*education*  
intensive



**Pastor Gary Richardson**

Place of Grace CHC  
Rockingham, NC

May 24, 2022

7 PM EST – Via Zoom



### **Rev. Brian Willingham**

*Brian Willingham serves as the Men's Ministries Executive Director for the Congregational Holiness Church.*

The warning in Revelation 21:8 is chilling. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." As Holiness believers, we are often insanely zealous for righteousness. We are quick to speak out against immorality, murder, and anything else that threatens our society. While it is imperative to stand up against "big" sins, I wonder how often we examine our own hearts before preaching to those around us. Is it not fascinating? Is it not immediately provocative that the two maladies that headline Revelation 21:8 are the sins of fearfulness and unbelief? Think about that! Fearfulness and unbelief! I doubt we truly understand the gravity of allowing fear and doubt into our lives. The Book of Hebrews reminds us that "without faith it is impossible to please God!" If we are to learn from the forty years the Jews spent wandering in the wilderness, it is that unbelief is offensive to the heart of God. Even Jesus upbraided His closest followers for their unbelief and hardness of heart. While the world around us goes crazy, we must never allow our trust in God to be shaken! We have been given a measure of faith by God Himself. We must invest our faith in His promises in the same way that the man with five talents invested His master's wealth. Let us never become the person who forsakes our trust in God because we think of Him as a harsh master. We must trust Him! His promises will not fail. His Word is sure! He will never leave us or forsake us- even when the world around us is filled with fright.

This month, as always, I am thankful for every man who serves our great denomination. In the months that have followed General Conference, I have been amazed at your eagerness to get involved. The future is bright! Will you join the journey?



## Local News

*Christian Hope CHC Men's Ministries*

presents  
**Heroes of Faith**  
episode 2

April 8th, 2022  
Dinner @ 5:30 PM  
Worship @ 7:00 PM

Location:  
1600 Elberta Rd.  
Warner Robins, GA 31093

Dinner menu includes:  
pork loin, taters & gravy,  
veggies, & dessert.

For information or to RSVP:  
Phone - 352-235-1287  
Email - glennicorbett@yahoo.com

Guest Speaker  
**Reverend Justin Griffis**

## District Highways



North Georgia Director-  
Kenny Simpson



This January, our North Georgia District Men's Ministry gathered for "Man Camp." A weekend retreat featuring the ministry of Nikita Kolov



# WHERE YOU ARE, THERE HE IS

Life can be lonely when you lose what you once had. The loved one passes away. The son leaves for college. The daughter becomes a bride. Neighbors move. Sweethearts break up—spouses divorce. Friends become distant. Businesses close their doors. Ministries end.

Life can also be lonely when you miss what you never had. No children for the elderly couple. No companion in marriage for the middle-aged. No best friend for the shy child.

Life can be lonely with its troubles and trials, yet we are never alone in the loneliness of life.

Jesus promises, I will never leave you nor forsake you, (Hebrews 13:5)! When it feels like our world is ending, Jesus assures us, I am with you always, even until the end of the world, (Matthew 28:20). It is an emphatic statement only He would make and an unconditional promise only He could keep. No matter what. No matter where. No matter who. No matter when. Jesus will never leave you. He will never forsake you. If you lose your wealth, your health,

and your family all in a day, will Jesus still be there? Ask Job. If you walk across the street or travel around the world, will Jesus still be there? Ask Paul. If you're wrinkled and gray-headed, will Jesus still be there? Ask Abraham and Sarah. If you stumble in sin, will Jesus still be there? Ask David. If you become discouraged and depressed, will Jesus still be there? Ask Elijah. If you face persecution and prison, will Jesus still be there? Ask Joseph.

Jesus will never isolate you. Ask the Samaritan woman. Jesus will never ignore you. Ask the little children. Jesus will not insult you. Ask the leprous man. Jesus will never embarrass you. Ask the adulterous woman. Jesus will never abandon you. Ask the disciples. Jesus will never deny you. Ask Peter. Jesus will never forget you. Ask the thief on the cross. You will never be left behind or forsaken by Jesus.

Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you, the Lord said to Joshua (Joshua 1:5). Just as He was with the heroes of the faith, He will be there with you. Fear not, for I am with you;



**Rev. Micah Messer**

*The Messer family: Caleb, Micah, Laura, and John Mark. Rev. Micah serves the CHC as the National Royal Rangers Commander.*

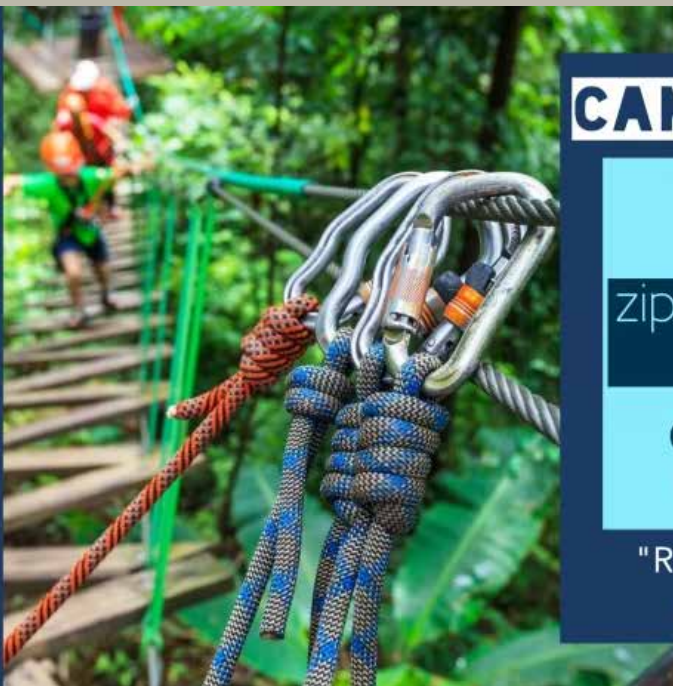
be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand, (Isaiah 41:10).

Isaiah 43:2 says When you pass through the waters, the Lord will be with you. When you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

Jesus will be with you through the floods and flames of life. Jesus is your helper in the hardest moments, your strength in the weakest moments, and your joy in the lowest moments. He is your deliverer in temptation and your peace in frustration. Jesus is your comfort in sorrow and your friend in loneliness. He always listens. His shoulders are strong enough for your tears; His hands are gentle enough for your fears. You and Jesus are inseparable (Romans 8:31-39). He will never leave you nor forsake you.

**Where you are, there He is (Psalm 139).**

Royal Rangers 60th Anniversary



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"Rise Up For Battle"  
Jeremiah 49:14

# A WOMAN NAMED *Ruth*

Looking to the Word of God, I am reminded of a woman named Ruth and how she followed her mother-in-law to a place she had never been before. She left everything that was familiar to her: her family, her friends, and her home, to follow this woman that she had gained much respect for - Naomi. Her trust in Naomi's God brought her to the love of her life, and she also became the (several generations descended) great grandmother of Jesus.

When we recall Jesus and His joyful birth, we're reminded, as well, of His death and how all that loved Him must have grieved sorely after His death. Then came the Resurrection and how amazed they all were when He returned in His glorified body! Jesus' Resurrection lets us know that as we trust Him in all our circumstances: the death of a loved one, trials that we

all face at some point, sickness, family problems, and so forth, we have to believe that not only will He take care of our present circumstances, but that we will meet Him one day and all those that have gone before us!

Losing my husband on October 26, 2020, has been the most difficult time of my life, but God has been faithful to me. Yes, there are many times I still miss him but just knowing I will see him again is my peace.



## **Rev. Wanda Murray**

Rev. Wanda Murray serves the CHC as the International Executive Director of Women's Ministry.



CHC GENERAL WOMEN'S MINISTRIES PRESENTS THE

## **WOMEN'S RENEWAL CONFERENCE**

with keynote speaker

*Samantha McCutcheon*

April 28-30, 2022





# HOW DO WE *Trust God* DURING TROUBLING TIMES?



## **Kim Causey**

*The Causey family: Seth, Shelby, Kim, and William. Kim serves the CHC as the National Girls Ministry Director.*

A few days before my husband passed, God led me to the scripture Psalm 121:1-2 during my morning Bible reading; little did I know days later, I would cling to those verses. I had to lift my eyes to the Lord and depend on His strength for the help I needed.

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, David said "yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." To me, the keyword in that verse is through. He didn't say yea, though, I'm stuck in this valley, yea though I'm going to die here in this valley. He said yea, though I walk through the valley. I don't know what valley you are walking through, but I want you to know you will walk through it. You won't stay in it, and most importantly, I want you to know God is faithful in all circumstances. I can attest that even when you walk through the valley of losing someone you love, if you walk with Jesus, you will walk through it victoriously.

There were many times when I asked

God the question, why? Why did this happen to us? We were serving in the church, raising our children to know and love the Lord, we were doing everything right we knew to do, yet this happened. I never got an answer to my question, but instead, I received peace that passed all understanding, strength when I didn't know if I could go on, and I trusted the Lord's sovereignty more than I ever had in my life. I saw the faith that my husband and I had taught our children rise up in them to a whole new level. I learned that at my husband's funeral, a man that had never stepped foot in a church came that day, and he heard the gospel preached, and I know he felt the Holy Spirit because He was so very real that day. Later, I learned that a man had started coming to church again because when Chris died, he realized that he and his family needed to be in church. You know what, they haven't missed a service since they started back. I don't have the space to tell all the wonderful things God has done over the past five years through

and during the tragedy of losing Chris.

I will end with my favorite story in the Bible, the story of the three Hebrew boys. They were thrown into the fire simply because they would not bow to an idol, but one of the keys to their deliverance was the faith they spoke before they were even in the fire. I love the part when the king looked in the fire and said, "I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the son of God." I like to think maybe that while Jesus was walking around with them, he was holding their hands and encouraging them that even though they were surrounded by fire and their circumstances didn't look too great, they were going to make it. You may be in the midst of a fiery trial but remember Jesus is walking with you, and you will come out just like the Hebrew boys did, not even smelling like smoke. Keep reading His word, claiming his promises, speaking life over your situation, and watch what God will do!

# WHEN I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE WAY, *I can still trust the Waymaker*

**"Mommy, I've swallowed a quarter,"** I heard Hannah, who was three at the time, say quietly. Startled from where I was cooking supper, I called our on-call pediatrician, who advised us to go to the local ER for an x-ray. We left for the hospital.

After a series of x-rays, suddenly, the atmosphere changed – two nurses came in very fast and began to put an IV in Hannah's hand and were explaining to us that the money she swallowed was lodged like a pendant very close to her windpipe, and she needed to go by ambulance to a children's hospital in downtown Atlanta. Within a few minutes, Scotty and Hannah are loaded into the ambulance, and I am following behind it.

As we drove, we prayed for the coin to move. I prayed with faith, believing that it would move. Our family and church family were praying as well. We arrived at the children's hospital, and Hannah had another x-ray. The coin had not budged. It was close to midnight by then, so the doctors decided to keep her in the hospital and if it had not moved by morning, they would do a procedure and go in and retrieve the coin.

Scotty and I have been praying, our family and friends are praying, and I just KNOW that coin has made its way on down. The coin did NOT move. It was still in the same place. At this point, the nurses took Hannah down for the

procedure to retrieve the coin.....

About two hours later, Hannah was brought back to her room, sleeping peacefully, and the nurse handed Scotty the coin (it was a penny). Several hours later, we were discharged, only to walk out and find not one but two flat tires on our car in downtown Atlanta. Somehow, we got our tires fixed and made it wearily home.

Later, I was troubled. I could not understand why that penny did not move. We were following God, and we were praying with authority, we believed it could move.... Why did it not move?

Two weeks later, I was watching a news program about hospital emergency rooms that did not have pediatric tools. A small child swallowed a pumpkin seed, and like Hannah's penny, the seed was hung in the child's throat. Also, like Hannah, they were sent by ambulance to a children's hospital. Unlike Hannah, when the ambulance doors opened, the child on the television program had died. The child died because the seed had moved!

I realized at that moment that if Hannah's penny had moved, it could have very well suffocated her. I was praying for the safety of my child, and my child was kept safe. I am so thankful that I learned that when I don't understand the way, I can still trust the waymaker.

**"Trust in the Lord, with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."**

*Proverbs 3:5-6*



**Sis. Redenna Poole**

*Sis. Redenna Poole is the wife of Bishop Scotty Poole. Sis. Poole serves the CHC as the Ministers' Spouse Ministry Director.*





Hello, my name is Levi Cantrell. I was elected as the 2021 Junior World Mission Director when I attended the Youth Leadership Summit in September. It was a very exciting journey. Being able to learn new teachings about their congregation, our denomination, and our beliefs was a great learning experience. Brothers in Christ, Matthew Turner, Rev. Jonathan Fitzpatrick, Bishop Scotty Poole, and Rev. Brian Willingham, shared so much with my friends and me. I am truly thankful for this experience. It gave me a whole new perspective on what the Congregational Holiness Church is all about.

To be quite honest, my friends and I did not know what to expect when we traveled down to Griffin, Georgia—spending a couple of nights in South Georgia to learn more about God's word. Considering the fact that we had never done something like this before, we were all a bit nervous. I went in my normal street clothes, long hair, bandana and all. My mom even told me that maybe I needed to dress up a little. I told her that I wanted to go and be myself, which I am glad that I did. I think that this made me connect with the other young people that were there.

When we met Brother Matthew, he made us feel right at home. He showed us around, and soon after, we realized we had been worried for nothing. Everything was under control, and in God's hands the whole time. I feel that everyone can relate to that, to uncertainty. When you don't know what to expect or what's to come, you grow anxious. You wonder what is going to happen? But when you put your faith in God, He helps remove those feelings and reminds us that everything will work out for the best, and He is in control and always will be.

Joshua 1:9 states "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord our God will be with you wherever you go."

**Life is full of challenges, sorrows, and tough decisions. But even amidst the hardship, the Lord councils us to be strong and courageous.**

This year I am a senior and will be graduating in May. It is coming up sooner than I thought, even though it's four months away. I am also a wrestler, and this will be my final time wrestling on the mat with my teammates. Something that goes through my mind every day is what if everything gets shut down because that happened two years ago in 2020. When we had just begun our season, we were quickly shut down due to covid-19. I was extremely disappointed because it felt like I had lost a whole season of wrestling. After all, I did. We are at the very end of our season this year, and I'm so grateful to have come this far. However, I feel like that fear will always be in the back of my head "what if?".

What if we get shut down again? What if this time I actually get the sickness, and it takes me out of the game completely? I know I shouldn't worry, but I still do. Then I remember who is in control and who has everything in the palm of his hands. I believe that God does everything for a reason and that we should trust in Him no matter what and no matter how difficult it may seem. When my season ended two years ago because of Covid-19, I could have been angry, but instead, I trusted God and remembered that he is doing this for many different reasons that we may never know. As humans, we might always worry, and that's okay, but we need to remember that God is in control no matter how crazy the situation may seem.



**Levi Cantrell**

*Levi serves at the Jr. World Missions Executive Director.*

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