



## **GULF COAST JURISDICTION** *January 2017*

### **GCYYA Conference: God has a reward for those who endure to the end**

OLDSMAR, FLA. – God has a reward for those who endure to the end was the message during the annual Gulf Coast Jurisdiction Youth and Young Adult Conference held Jan. 14 to 15.

Dr. Eric Russell, Director of the International Youth and Young Adult Department (IYYAD) for The Church of the Living God International, Inc. (CLGI), opened the conference with a seminar.

“Everything is vanity, so we should do all we can do in our season as youth and we won’t have any regrets, because it will be over. Things on the earth are seasonal and don’t last forever.” He told the youth when they are called on in church service to do something, they should do their best, because the Lord is watching to see who He can use a far off.

Dr. Russell also told parents that if the Lord has a calling on their children’s lives, they should encourage them to go to college, so they can get a good-paying job, to have money to live a comfortable life and for the work of the ministry.

The edification and exhortation to the youth and young adults continued in the Saturday night service as various youth and young adult speakers gave powerful words of encouragement. Dr. Christiana Russell, Assistant Director of the International Youth and Young Adult Department for CLGI finished the service with her testimony and wise council.

In encouraging the youth and young adults, she said, “What the Lord has called you to do is not based on anyone else. You have to allow the Spirit to come in and not play church. God blesses me, because of my faithfulness when I was young and I gave my all to God.” At the end of her exhortation, she prayed for the youth and young adults that they would be faithful, live holy for the Lord and be separate from the world.

The “Bishop’s Blessing” came on Sunday morning during Christian Education from the Gulf Coast Jurisdictional Bishop Charles D. Smith, who is also the pastor of Promise in Fort Walton Beach, Fla. He admonished the saints not to go into the world and come back to church, but to stay and endure to the end, so the Lord can bless and anoint them. “Think how anointed you would be if you don’t leave, but continue in the Lord and grow stronger,” he said.

The world is continually pulling on the youth and young adults trying to entice them to sin. “What makes sin so exceedingly sinful is that it has become fashionable. Until you say, ‘I



should have not done that,' you do not have the mind of God. To have the mind of God, you have to set your affections on things above," said Bishop Smith.

At the Sunday morning service, GC Jurisdictional Youth and Young Adult Director Minister John Williams (Christ the Redeemer in Gulfport, Miss.) said, "Jesus gave us life because he is life." He added that, "We cannot make it to heaven any other way, it has to be by Jesus. Jesus has all power and if you believe that, you can get whatever you need today."

During the conference, people were healed and many youth and young adults were filled with the Holy Ghost, which demonstrated that God's Power was present in the services to confirm His Word by miracles, signs and wonders.

Bishop Smith culminated the youth and young adult conference by saying, "It is not hell's avoidance we preach, but heaven's reward. We need our youth saved. We don't need them to be church sinners!"

**In the Photo on the front page:** Bishop Charles D. Smith and Minister John Williams praying for the youth and young adults.

### More GCYYA Conference photos: By Elder Debbie Calix



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**In the photos:** Gulf Coast Jurisdiction saints and other CLGI saints, to include Dr. Eric Russell and Dr. Christiana Russell, CLGI International Youth and Young Adult Director and Assistant Director at the GCJ Youth and Young Adult Conference.

## More January stories

### Category: Events

*Churches bring in the New Year, celebrate birthdays, have elect ladies and brothers events, as well as missionary service and attend the GCJ Youth and Young Adult Conference.*

- **From Lily of the Valley:** On Jan. 1st Lily of the Valley saints brought in the New Year on one accord and set the tone for the rest of the year!

*Minister Desiree Sewell:* “This is a new year to go higher in God!”

**In the photo:** Members of the Lily of the Valley Elect Ladies Department.





- **From Lily of the Valley:** On Jan. 20th Lily of the Valley saints held their monthly Missions service and we were blessed to have our recently formed Missions Chorale “show out” for Jesus.

*Minister Xiomara Rivera:* "It was wonderful to see our young missionaries singing their hearts out for the Lord!"

**In the photo:** Members Lily of the Valley’s Missions Chorale.

- **From Lily of the Valley:** On the last Friday of each month the Lily of the Valley saints like to take time to celebrate the birthdays of the month. January’s birthday saints were celebrated on Jan. 27th.

*Junior Deacon De'onte Burrows:* "I like that I can celebrate with my church family the joy of making it another year in the Lord."



**In the photo:** Co-Pastors Deborah and Tony Sewell and the Lily of the Valley saints celebrating birthdays in January.

- **From Lily of the Valley:** Deacons help to keep the church together. This is why the Lily of the Valley Pastors like to take the time to encourage them to continue in the Lord with fun activities. The first deacons’ outing took place in Tampa, Fla. on Jan. 28th at the Grand Pix go carting place.



*Deacon Cameron Franklin:* "Good food and good fellowship helps a brother go a long way!"

**In the photo:** Lily of the Valley’s deacons.

- **From Lily of the Valley:** The Lily of the Valley's elect ladies conducted a workshop on Jan. 28th titled, "There's Only One ME." Minister Yamilette Rivera facilitated this interactive workshop, which focused on handmaidens ages 18 and under, with the objective of building their self-esteem. Minister Yamilette encouraged the young ladies to embrace their uniqueness, reminding them that they are, "...Fearfully and wonderfully made," according to Psalms 139:14.

*Minister Xiomara Rivera:* "We encourage you, too, to embrace and celebrate your uniqueness. Uniqueness is the quality of being particularly remarkable, special...or unusual."



**In the photo:** Minister Yamilette Rivera and Lily of the Valley young hand maidens.

- **From Christ the Redeemer:** Christ the Redeemer started off this wonderful New Year by celebrating Elder Treani Thompson's 51st birthday! The church family honored her with a



wonderful gift to pamper herself. She received a special gift card and a beautiful plaque quoting a scripture. Additionally, her son, Jonathan, Brother Orion Brinkley, and Sister Taylor Williams serenaded her with the Happy Birthday song.

*Minister Tanoa Williams:* "Elder Treani is a dynamic first lady and assistant pastor. Her God-fearing character and example are to be envied. We love our first lady!"



**In the photos:** Pastor Carlos Thompson, Minister Cherly James, Elder Treani Thompson, Brother Isaiah Brinkley, Brother Orion Brinkley and Sister Talia Williams.



- **From New Covenant:** Currently Minister Andrea Spriggs and Exhorter Maurissa Spriggs are preparing to run their first half marathon (13.1 miles) on Feb. 26th during the Disney Princess Half Marathon. In preparation for this goal, Exhorter Spriggs completed the Atlanta Hot Chocolate 15K (9.3) on Jan. 22nd.

**In the photo:** Exhorter Maurissa Spriggs and a co-worker in Atlanta, Ga. at the Hot Chocolate 15K run.

- **From Spirit of Christ:** The youth and young adults of Spirit of Christ were excited to attend, as well as prepared to be used by God at the Gulf Coast Jurisdiction Youth and Young Adult Conference in Oldsmar, Fla. Brother Jaylen Reid and Sister Venus Woods were presented the Youth of Excellence award for accomplishments in their 2016 school year.

*Elder Debbie Calix:* “We are so very proud of our Youth and Young Adults!”

**In the Photos:** Spirit of Christ Youth Director Minister Stephen Calix with our Youth of Excellence recipients. Sister Tonya Bloxson, Sister Venus Woods and Minister Stephen Calix rendering solos. Brother Jaylen Reid along with Sister Venus Woods singing in the youth choir.





- **From Spirit of Christ:** The Busch Gardens outing during the Gulf Coast Youth and Young Adult Conference was a great time for all Spirit of Christ youth and young adults, as well as the not so young adults. The activity after the conference is always a highlight for the kids.

*Elder Debbie Calix:* “The weather was beautiful and the fun and fellowship was even better!”

**In the Photos:** Members of the SOC Youth and Young Adult Department as well as alumni.

- **From Spirit of Christ:** Spirit of Christ celebrated four birthdays during the month of January with cake, ice cream and lots of smiles.

*Elder Debbie Calix:* “A good time was had by all!”

**In the Photo:** Spirit of Christ’s members with January birthdays include Elder Gladys Calix, Missionary Felicity Woods, Sister Venus Woods (8), and Sister Maxine Woods.



## Category: Blessing

*Saints celebrate the results of fasting and praying for the month of January.*

- **From New Covenant:** During the month of January, the members of New Covenant joined CLGI in the bi-annual consecration. As a result of our obedience, the Lord answered our prayers and below are the blessing.

Exhorter Crystal Russell’s Brewbaker Junior High School Debate team received a \$1,000 donation. With this money, the team was able to rent a bus to travel to their competition.

Pastor Augustus Russell and Assistant Pastor Bonita Russell received a blessing concerning some construction work they needed done to their property. What other companies quoted, the Lord touched a man’s heart from another company and the quote was much less.

Elder Ruth Latham's daughter had a specific prayer request during her fast. The Lord moved exactly according to her prayer. She was able to move into the same type and size of apartment she lived in, but got a free garage and over \$200 less a month for rent.

On Jan. 22nd, the New Covenant saints welcomed a new member to our family. Sister Brittany Heard was first witnessed to by Pastor Russell and First Lady Russell during one of their date nights. Through their continuous encounters, the Lord drew her to the church.

*Exhorter Maurissa Spriggs:* "We are so happy about the many blessings to the saints and to have Sister Brittany join the New Covenant family!"

### **Category: Testimony**

- **From Spirit of Christ:** This month was a time of consecration for The Church of the Living God International, of which, members of Spirit of Christ welcome and gladly participate, with fasting and prayer. Pastor's Tom Calix and Shanna McAuley encouraged the saints, to include new and mature believers, each week to be faithful to the fast and do the best that they could, while asking the Lord in prayer to help them. During the consecration, the Lord moved by miracles, signs and wonders for the saints and the church.

On the first day of the consecration, our newest member, Sister Tonya Bloxson, while reaching over her head for an iron skillet, dropped it on her foot. After going to the hospital, the doctor confirmed through x-rays that she fractured the metatarsal bone in her right foot. She was told she would have to wear a boot and that it would take four to six weeks to heal. During service Tuesday evening, Sister Bloxson was in pain and unable to wear a normal shoe. Pastor Calix was led of the Lord to tell her that God was going to heal her foot as a confirmation of the consecration and the Word of God, and thus prayed for her as such. Wednesday morning Sister Bloxson arose and having no pain in her foot, ran two miles and then came to church wearing high-heeled shoes.

*Elder Debbie Calix:* "She was overwhelmed with joy as she experienced the Power of God, how He confirmed His Word during the fast and was so good to her."

### **Category: Upcoming Events**

- **From the Editorial Staff:** Saints please be mindful of the below upcoming events for the Gulf Coast Jurisdiction and CLGI events. Please note that the ***G CJ Christian Education Recreational Fellowship has permanently changed for the foreseeable future to Aug. 26-27.*** Bishop Smith says he's open to "positive reasonable review and feedback," but the change was made to not be back to back with the CLGI Missions Conference and conflict with other jurisdictional meetings. He realizes that as the organization grows, we will eventually have date conflicts with other meetings and conferences.

#### *The 2017 Gulf Coast Jurisdiction Calendar*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
Mar 11-12	GC Missions Conference	Gulfport, MS
Apr 21-23	GC Elect Ladies/Brotherhood Conf.	FWB, FL

Apr 27-30	Pastors and Leadership Conf.	Atlanta, GA
6-7 May	Elder Sewell/Sewell Pastoral Ann.	Thonotosassa, FL
20-21 May	Emmanuel Dedication/Elder Jenkins Ann.	Panama City, FL
Jun 5	CLGI Consecration Begins	
Jun 10-11	Elder Harrison Pastoral Anniversary	Jacksonville, FL
Jun 28	CLGI Consecration Ends	
Jun 30- 9 Jul	IYYAC/Brotherhood/General Assembly	Mobile, AL
Jul 29-30	Elder Russell Pastoral Anniversary	Montgomery, AL
<b>Aug 26-27</b>	<b>GC CE Recreational Fellowship</b>	<b>Thonotosassa, FL</b>
Sep 1-3	Elder Paula Smith's Ret/B-Day Celeb.	FWB, FL
Sep 8-10	Elder Chisolm and Chisolm Pastoral Ann.	Melbourne, FL
Sep 21-24	International Missions Conference	Columbus, OH
Oct 13-15	Elder Calix/Elder McAuley Pastoral Ann.	FWB, FL
Nov 4-5	Elder Grandberry Pastoral Ann.	Gainesville, FL
Nov 17-19	Gulf Coast Jurisdictional Meeting	FWB, FL
Dec 2-3	Elder Thompson Pastoral Anniversary	Gulfport, MS

**2017 Gulf Coast**  
**M I S S I O N S**  
**March 11-12**  
**“Reaping the Harvest”**  
 Matthew 9:37 and Luke 14:23

**Saturday, March 11**  
 Breakfast/Business Meeting - 9:00 AM  
 Morning Seminars/BINK - 11:00 AM  
 (Choir rehearsal to follow)  
  
 Prayer - 7:00 PM  
 Service - 7:30 PM  
 Colors: Shades of Orange, Red, Brown

**Sunday, March 12**  
 Morning Service - 10:00 AM  
 Colors: Red & Gold

**Christ the Redeemer CLGI**  
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For more information visit the CLGI Website at:  
[http://clgi.org/gulf\\_missions.php](http://clgi.org/gulf_missions.php)