

The District 23 Messenger



Issue 1

"Embracing the Challenge of the Cross!"

Spring 2011

A message from the Bishop

The grace and peace of the Lord Jesus Christ rest with you.



Bishop Samuel R. Moore
Diocesan

There has been an exciting series of events in the District during the recent past months. And it's my impression that we have emerged from each of them with renewed energy.

On the first weekend in March, 31 licensed clergy from throughout District 23 converged in Bristol, Virginia for the inaugural Samuel J. Grimes Academy. Dr. Brenda Brand from Blacksburg, Virginia was the featured guest. Brand, a tenured professor at Virginia Tech, presented inspirational and practical tools for identifying and developing church culture. Comments from the attending delegation suggested that most everyone emerged from the academy inspired to meet the challenges of ministry in their specific communities.

Then in March, more than 100 delegates from Parkersburg to Keystone; from Knoxville to Wytheville invaded Huntington, West Virginia for the 2011 Spring District 23 Youth Convention. Those in attendance experienced a weekend of exuberant worship, praise, and presentation of The Word.

WVETNC
Summer
Convention

July 13 – 16
Kingsport (TN)

A YOUTH EXPLOSION TAKES PLACE IN HUNTINGTON

Young People from throughout District 23 converged on Huntington for two days in early March, *'Embracing the Challenge of the Cross'* and igniting an explosion of rejoicing and praise.

In the first district-wide gathering of 2011, the district's Spring Youth Convention engaged a spirit of fellowship that should carry through to Knoxville and far beyond.



**Full Gospel Assembly
Huntington (WV)**

Minister B.J. Roberts of St. Albans (WV) kicked off the Youth Convention with a stirring Friday evening sermon, "Covered by the Cross." He and wife Tosha, who are gospel recording artists, ministered music also.



Saturday featured Evangelist Tammi Turner ministering for the Morning Glory service, and Elder Zack Humphrey making a powerful visual presentation called "No Further," before the closing service.

Quick Praise, from the host church, opened the the afternoon service and Levi & the Gang ministered music. And just when you thought things had calmed, the West Virginia & East Tennessee District Youth Choir and Minister of Music Robbie Hale reignited the praise.



North Carolina State Youth President Elder Robert Merriwether brought the message for the closing service.



From the Chairman's Seat

As we gather for the first meeting of 2011 for the council's general body, there is excitement in the air!



District Elder Thomas Moore
District 23 Chairman

Bishop Moore and I have worked together to help prepare our auxiliaries, leaders, and the general body to "embrace the challenge of the Cross" in ways that will move our district forward efficiently and effectively.

It's a new day for District 23 and we will walk into its promise with new enthusiasm and vigor.

We trust that we'll all leave Knoxville encouraged and rededicated to win even more souls for Christ.

FIRST ANNUAL SAMUEL J. GRIMES ACADEMY MET IN BRISTOL

More than 40 pastors, and P.A.W. licensed ministers & evangelists from around District 23 came together for the first annual Samuel J. Grimes Academy at the Holiday Inn Bristol Conference Center in March.

The Ecclesiastical Development, headed by District Elder Timothy Schofield, coordinated two days of outstanding instruction and dialogue that left our leaders both energized and inspired.

Dr. Brenda Brand, a spirit-filled professor at Virginia Tech, facilitated a two-part seminar on "Establishing a Church Culture." Brand is a member of Greater Mt. Zion Pentecostal Church in Bluefield.



Bishop Samuel Moore of Huntington (WV) and District Elder Timothy Schofield also led session discussions for leadership, during the Grimes Academy. An open dialogue ministerial forum was part of the final day of the academy.

Bishop Samuel J. Grimes was the founder of the West Virginia & East Tennessee Council. He was simultaneously the Presiding Bishop of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World from 1932 – 1967, the longest serving Presider in the P.A.W.'s history.

DISTRICT 23 COUNCIL CHOIR LEGACY CONTINUES

... with a new generation

When Bishop Samuel R. Moore charged district Minister of Music Robbie Hale with the task of reviving the West Virginia & East Tennessee Council Choir, he handed him the keys to a musical Cadillac.

Begun by Ann Abbingtion several decades ago, then passed on to the current Bishop for a time, the council choir produced great singers and musicians. Among them was Dr. James "Jimmie" Abbingtion, recognized around the world as one of today's most exceptional musician, clinician, choir director, and music professors.

At times, the choir numbered more than 50 voices and rang out a range of hymns, anthems, and rib-rocking gospel favorites.

The choir's legacy is long and storied. Its late-night rehearsals helped forge lasting friendships, and broke down barriers of competition between our churches. It defined special moments in the lives of persons throughout the nation. And that legacy stays with many of them, decades after their active years as a part of District 23.



Susie Turner - Columbus (OH)

Formerly of Mt. Zion Tabernacle (Kingsport, TN) -----

"As a teenager, attending the WV & East TN Council was always an exciting time. Not only because I got to see friends, but the anticipation of Friday night's Young People's service and the Council Choir singing. In all the years that I attended the councils, there was never a time where the choir did not sing with the anointing of the Holy Ghost.

At the time, I did not understand what the anointing was, but I knew that there was something different about Sis. Ann Abbingtion. Under Sis. Ann's leadership, the music ministry of District 23 was awesome; we had some of the best musicians and singers in the history of the WV and East Tennessee Council."

Babby Dunn-Barner - Charlotte (NC)

----- Formerly of Grace Temple (Johnson City, TN)

"I would cry like a baby if I didn't get to go to the council. Staying up late for choir rehearsals (being how I was only 13 or so) was a big treat. There was laughter all around when we sang out of tune or forgot the words ('cause learning a song in 60 mins or less was a little hard on the brain). I loved me some Sis Ann Abbingtion and Jimmy (even though at one time I needed some extra rehearsal time). To them, evabody was special and time was of no essence.

Last but not least, the blessings that warmed the church, due to our performance! I miss those days. Looking back, I had no clue how blessed I was to have been part of the choir."

Council Choir Legacy Continues (continued)**Dominic Martin – Detroit (MI)**

Formerly of Apostolic Temple (Gary, WV) -----

“I remember being in the choir of the WV and East Tennessee Council as a young boy. It was a fun and exciting time. Both Sister Ann and Jimmy directed us on how the program was going to be for Saturday night. We had great, intense practices and Jimmy made sure our program was fine tuned. I felt good knowing we performed well and the Saints were always proud of our performance. I will always cherish my memories and times in the council choir for the rest of my life.”

Charlotte Wright-Johnson – Columbus (OH)

----- Formerly of Christ Temple (Williamson, WV)

“My fondest memories are the Friday night services and the late night choir rehearsals! I was taught to respect the sacredness of the ministry through songs and not to just sing meaninglessly. For me singing became another way of sharing the Good News!



Ann Abbingtion-Barlow
Council Choir Founder

I had the distinct honor and pleasure of training under Sister Ann Abbingtion-Barlow and Bishop Samuel Moore; both with extensive knowledge, patience and great ability to communicate as committed and inspiring choir directors. “

Tenna Harris-Dillard – Bluefield (WV)

Formerly of Mt. Zion Pentecostal (Bluefield, WV) -----

“I remember great times with Sis. Ann. She encouraged everyone to sing and I don't ever remember her telling anyone that they could not sing. Those were the best days of my life.”

Terry Redd – Elizabethton (TN)

----- Formerly of Grace Temple (Johnson City, TN)

“We were in Leslie, WV. The choir was rehearsing a song, "The King is Coming." Stacey Reeves, Randy Turner, and I were all standing together singing. That is, until Sister Abbingtion had to separate us because Randy and I were laughing hysterically and causing MUCH disturbance at the way Stacey was singing, when Sis. Abbingtion was trying to help others sing their parts.

After choir practice, Sis. Ann talked to us rather sternly about the trouble we were causing during practice. She said that one of us could have also fallen off the back of the risers and been hurt . . . which was true. She then began to smile at us (as she often did) and then said "ya'll are a mess".

She left a mark on my life about how to treat people with kindness while having them realize she meant business.”

WHAT DOES THE CROSS MEANS TO US?

By Bishop Samuel J. Grimes

(from February 1951 issue of The Christian Outlook)



Bishop Samuel J. Grimes

This subject does me great honor on this auspicious occasion. I confess willingly my inability to adequately define this momentous question, which angels desire to understand, and which involves the mystery of the Crucified One.

Pleading your indulgence as we stand with unshod feet on this holy ground; I should like to unshackle the “Us” from denominational dogma by understanding the subject to be, “What does The Cross Mean to the Church – The Ecclesia,” God’s Called out, and by considering the subject God-ward and Man-ward.

What does the cross mean to God-Elohim, the Creator, the strong faithful One?

God was alone in creation He looked forth from his dwelling place of light upon the wild waste and there beheld the sphere on which man was to live and fail, and on which His wondrous plans and counsels were to be unfolded and brought out; where He the Creator of all things seen and unseen, as a metaphysical Son was to live, labor, testify, bleed and die, in order to display in view of wondering worlds the glorious mystery of redeeming love, by the Cross of Calvary – God’s remedy for man’s ruin.

The guilty, convicted sinner, no doubt finds in the Cross of Calvary, a divine answer to his deepest, and most earnest cravings of heart and conscience. The true believer finds in the Cross of Christ that which captivates every affection of his heart, and transfixes his whole moral being. The angels find in the Cross a theme of endless admiration. All this is true; but there is that, in the Cross, which passes far beyond the loftiest conceptions of saints or angels; namely, the deep-toned devotion of the Heart of the Son presented to, and appreciated by, the Heart of the Father. This is the elevated aspect of the Cross.

In this aspect we see Christ, on the Cross doing the will of God – making atonement according to the measure of His perfect surrender of Himself as the perfect Man to God. A perfect Man on earth accomplishing the will of God even in death, was an object of amazing interest even to the mind of heaven.

We are apt to look on the cross merely as the place where the great question of sin was gone into and settled, between eternal justice and the spotless victim – as a place where our guilt was atoned for, and where Satan was gloriously vanquished. Eternal and universal praise to redeeming love! The cross was all this and more.

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It was first the place where Christ's love to the Father was told out in language which only the Father could hear and understand. Therefore, doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. "Lo I come to do thy will, O God," was his expression of ineffable delight. No one had ever done this before. Some had, through grace, done "that which was right in the sight of the Lord;" but no one had ever perfectly, from first to last, without hesitation and without divergence, done the will of God, but the Lord did. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). There were communications between the cross of Calvary and the throne of God, which lay far beyond the highest range of human intelligence.

The Cross – Manward

The cross means that God as a man died for all our sins – past, present, and future, according to the Scriptures, and by His death both God and man are enriched.

When we think of all the wrongs, and all the trespasses we have committed against The Lord, and how God has been wronged of His rights in this wicked world, with what interest can we contemplate the work of the cross as that wherein God has not merely received back that which had been lost, but whereby He is an actual gainer. God gained more by redemption than ever He lost by the Fall. Through the Fall he lost one son— Adam; by redemption He shall receive many sons to glory. The wrong done against him has not only been atoned for, but an eternal advantage has been gained by the work of the cross. We lost paradise and gained heaven; lost innocence and gained Holiness. The feeblest member of the church of Christ can say as he gazes upon the cross, "It matters not how I have been wronged, by the first Adam, nor how I have been trespassed against here, how I may have been deceived, what ills have been done to me, I am a gainer by the cross. I have not merely received back all that was lost, but much more besides."

The cross means that Jesus died for us. "The just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." This is the doctrine of the cross. Our sins brought Christ to the cross; but he brings us to God. He bore our sins far away from the sanctuary of God, in order that He might bring us nigh, even into the holiest of all.

He took our position with all of its consequences, in order that we might get his position with all of its benefits. He was treated as sin, upon the cross, that we might be treated as righteousness, in the presence of infinite Holiness. He was

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cast out as a creature from God's presence, because He had sin by imputation on Him, that we might be received into God's house, and into His bosom, through gaining perfect righteousness by imputation. He had to endure the hours of darkness that we might bathe eternally in the light of God's countenance. All that was due us as ruined sinners, was laid on Him, in order that all that was due Him, as the accomplisher of redemption, might be ours. As he hung upon the cross there was everything against Him, in order that there might be nothing against us. He was identified with us, in the reality of death and judgment, in order that we might be identified with Him, in the reality of life and righteousness. He, on the cross, was treated according to our deserts, that we might be treated according to His.

The cross means that Christ has made peace for us, brought us into fellowship with God and made it possible that we can feast with God on the One who has a loving heart and powerful shoulder for such unworthy creatures as we are. The Father will have the Prodigal feeding upon the fatted calf in fellowship with Himself. God's joy in the salvation of sinners, and His joy in the communion of saints may well elicit the admiration of men and angels throughout eternity.

The cross means that the church has been redeemed (*exagorazo*) – brought out of the slave market– not to be sold again, that we are loosed (*lutroo*) from the curse of sin.

The cross means that our sins have been forgiven, remitted, sent away, and that God has been gracious to us.

Let us glory in the cross and with the Apostle be determined to know nothing among men save Christ and Him crucified. Let us know him who resigned the throne and crown of heaven, exchanged the radiant robe of the universal King for the garment of a servant that he might redeem the lost. He who became the Daysman betwixt God and man, is able to lay His hand on both the way of God to man and the way of man to God; the true Jacob's ladder between Heaven and earth. God above the ladder to come down, man beneath it to go up. The God-man is Himself our pledge, that as God in Christ became a partaker of human nature, so man in Christ becomes a partaker of divine nature. He was born of a woman and made like unto us, that we might be born of god and be mad like unto Him! The God-man in not only a mystery but a miracle, a prophecy and a promise. He tells us what man shall be, when by faith in the cross of Jesus he is evermore made like unto the Son of God.

Jesus both "Lord and Christ" is the Head of the Gospel. To omit His Lordship in

(continued on last inside page)

Council Choir Legacy Continues (from page 5)**Raphael Myers – San Diego (CA)**

Formerly of Mt. Zion Pentecostal (Bluefield, WV) -----

(I remember) the joy and laughter I shared with like minded and like spirited people. . . cutting up every chance that I got and promptly being given that "Church Mother look" by many of the old Matriarchs.

I remember being in total awe at the number of voices gathered in one place to sing the praises of God; of the sheer size of the stage; and of the precise professionalism of the choir masters.

Stacey Reeves – Greenville (NC)

----- Formerly of Apostolic Temple (Gary, WV)

When Sister Ann Abbington introduced the song "The King is Coming," we embraced it, but the tenors had a bit of a struggle with our part at first. However, we had one tenor who stepped up and led the tenors, Terry "the tenor" Redd. This song became a council favorite. And even after we had learned many other songs, Terry (to some of us) until this day is known as "Oooh! The King."

Bishop Fred Simms – Beckley (WV)

Former member, New Jerusalem Temple (Lester, WV) -----

It was always a time for us of great anticipation. . . a representation of all District churches coming together to form a mass choir, with talented musicians and a maestro director by the name of Sam Moore preparing to produce one harmonious sound.

For the small churches such as New Jerusalem, it was an exciting time to join in with what we called "explosive choirs," with Bluefield, Williamson and Johnson City leading the way. Man, do I miss those days. Our conversation leading up to going to council and arriving at council centered around one prevailing thought-- "Are you going to sing with the council choir?"

Robbie Hale – Johnson City (TN)

----- New Minister of Music, District 23

"It is an AWESOME honor to have been appointed to carry on such a great legacy of rich, wonderful music. My father and mother were very active in the District Choir under Lady Ann Abbington and by the time I came along, I was privileged to sit under the direction of Elder (now Bishop) Samuel Moore.

By sitting under his and the late Paulette Byars' direction, I watched and learned skills to be able to instruct and sharpen the musical abilities of those wanting to work in the music of the church. I am excited to take the council music department to the next level of excellence and to groom and ready the next generation of Levites to take their places as TRUE PRAISE & WORSHIP LEADERS."



MINISTERS WIVES ARE ENCOURAGING 100% PARTICIPATION

President Deborah Moore has announced a push to encourage full participation from all wives of licensed District 23 ministers in the Ministers Wives Alliance.

In her appeal she states, "We can help each other to grow and encourage one another."

MEN'S MINISTRY CALLS BROTHERS TO ARM

Men's Ministry President Paul Lee took advantage of the occasion of P.A.W. international Men's Ministry President Roskco Motes' visit to Knoxville to unveil a major initiative to arm the brothers of District 23 for service.

A program titled "A Call to Arm," is a district-wide fundraising effort that, if successful, would provide a significant "war chest" for the men of the district to pursue their goals. Additionally, the "Call to Arm" sets a goal to expand the ranks of men in local churches throughout District 23 and activate the auxiliary's support of the ministry.

THE DISTRICT 23 USHER BOARD IS SEEKING DEDICATED PARTICIPANTS

Usher Board President Charles Locke II has placed a call out to District 23 members for dedicated "willing workers" to join the ministry of ushering.

Interested persons must first take the following steps:

- Be an active member of the usher board at your local assembly
- Be in good standing as a member of your local usher board
- Consult with and be approved for service by your local usher board president and your local pastor, to serve with the district ushers.

Locke notes that "In order for one to be an effective usher, a person must be friendly and have a servant's heart. The ministry of ushering is a very important element in the church and just like the more popular ministries, such as music & sacred arts, missions, and the preached Word, it has the ability to win souls for Christ . . . which is the ultimate goal."

Please contact Bro. Locke at either 423-943-3052 or via email at cklocke@nuclearfuelservices.com.

(What Does The Cross Mean to Us? - Conclusion)

our preaching, is to preach a gospel without a head. His Cross is the heart of the Gospel, to omit the cross, is to preach a gospel without a heart, a bloodless, anemic gospel, that cannot cleanse. His Resurrection is the power of the Gospel. To omit the resurrection is to preach a gospel without power— no hope beyond the grave.

When the true Gospel— God's remedy for man's ruin is preached, it reveals Christ, as the only Saviour and consumes all before it like fire among stubble.

How God could come among us and espouse our nature is so far a great mystery that we do not know fully how it could be, but blessed be God though we do not know how it was done, we know that it was done and that is enough for us.

The District 23 Messenger

The Official Newsletter of the West Virginia & East Tennessee Council

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Information was requested for this newsletter, but was not submitted by the following areas of the council operation:

- Women's Ministry
- Christian Education

Our Heritage

How many of these West Virginia & East Tennessee Council members can you identify?

