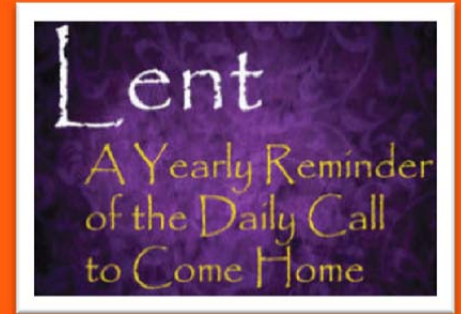




Bishop **Bishop Greg Hargrave, President**

# The Western NC District Quarterly



## THE WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT, GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Greetings to the entire Western NC District! It is with the sheer joy of the Lord that I greet you for the first time via the District digital newsletter! I am ever aware of the fact that without the support of our administration along with our District Elders, Pastors, Ministers, Officers and members, I would not be able to fulfill the myriad of duties as it relates to being the President of a District. I am humble at the thought of being afforded the opportunity to impact the lives of the people around me. Together, we can really make a difference in our community and this nation. This is especially true on the heels of a newly elected President of these United States. We are reminded that God remains sovereign and the church has been summoned during this critical time in our nation's history.

I would like to highlight our first annual Mid-Year conference, which will be held on Friday and Saturday February 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at Jerusalem United Holy Church in Reidsville NC. Special thanks to our host pastor and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President of the Western NC District Elder Mary Jackson and the Jerusalem church family. The purpose of this first annual event is to first allow for impartation thru a dynamic worship experience on the opening night and intentional planning on Saturday from 9am-3pm. I am excited because you are excited and I believe the Lord will meet us and honor our efforts. Finally, let us continue to pray one for another as we embark upon this new and exciting endeavor! Remember God is due all of the glory, we must remain humble servants and watch God exalt us in due time. I remain your humble servant and I

MARCH 2017

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solicit your most earnest prayers as we work together to make the Western NC District the best it can be.

Blessings!

Bishop Greg K. Hargrave,  
President, WNCDC



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## There is a war going on in my Spirit!

By Rev. Gloria Aghogah, D.Min

For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. The Apostle Paul

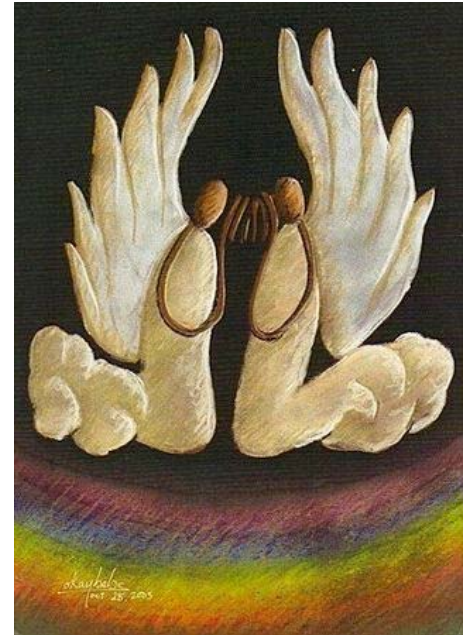
There is much we can learn from the life of the Apostle Paul in Romans and Galatians. This Apostle was given the opportunity to do extraordinary things for the kingdom of God. The narrative of Paul is a story of redemption in Jesus Christ and a testimony that no one is beyond the saving grace of the Lord. However, The Apostle Paul knew the challenges that would confront our spirituality. I would like to say two things about our spirituality. The first is, our spirituality is something that we have to work at. The second one is that it will

become naturally as we are changed from the inside out with the help of the Holy Spirit producing fruit inside of us.

Also I want to bring to your attention that the Apostle Paul did not say fruits of the Spirit but used the singular word fruit. All of these things are part of the singular fruit of the Spirit in our lives. So we have a choice. We can either work at following our fleshly nature by operating in our own strength or we can allow the Holy Spirit to guide us and produce fruit in our lives that we did not have to work at but instead have become a part of who we are. The Apostle Paul concludes this chapter by encouraging us that since we already live in the Spirit, that we should choose to walk in the Spirit rather than operating in the flesh with provoking one another to anger, envying and gossiping about one another or simply being arrogant. So when it comes down to it, what is the decision you are going to make? Both decisions have consequences however, only one of these decisions will impact your spirituality to be Christ like. Choose today, a relationship with the Holy Spirit that leads you to His fruit. I want to encourage you in one of the fruit of the spirit today.

It is easy to love those that return love to you but the challenges are to love those that have afflicted you in some manner. During my tenure as Supervisor of the Chaplaincy Department at The North Carolina Correction for Women, I taught the inmates that never knew love to love one

another in spite of the how unlovable their crimes were – soon we learned there is some good in the worst of us and some bad in the best of us. We read inspiring examples of people who have embraced and love in spite of the circumstances and determine to be the most effective Christian to improve their church and community with love. Love is a powerful motivator for being good!





## Powerful Quotes from the Church on Fasting

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Fasting cleanses the soul, raises the mind, subjects one's flesh to the spirit, renders the heart contrite and humble, scatters the clouds of concupiscence, quenches the fire of lust, and kindles the true light of chastity. Enter again into yourself.

**St Augustine of Hippo, Africa**

Bless those who curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast for those who persecute you.

**Didache**

When a man begins to fast, he straightway yearns in his mind to enter into converse with God.

**St Isaac the Syrian**

The scripture is full of places that prove fasting to be not the invention of man but the institution of God, and to have many more profits than one. And that the fasting of one man may do good unto another, our Saviour showeth himself where he saith that some kind of devils cannot be cast out of one man by another "without prayer and fasting." And therefore I marvel that they take this way against fasting and other bodily penance.

**St Thomas More**

Fasting is most intimately connected with prayer. For the mind of one who is filled with food and drink is so borne down as not to be able to raise itself to the contemplation of God, or even to understand what prayer means."

**Catechism of the Council of Trent**

"Dr. King came to the cell door and said, 'I'm sorry, I can't eat your greens,'" Fager said. "Dr. King explained he and Abernathy had gone to India after the Montgomery bus boycott, and they learned Gandhi was in jail a lot, and he always tried to make the time in jail count, by making constructive use of the time. He also had religious services every day because the British tried to divide Muslims and Hindus. When they learned all of this, Dr.

King and Abernathy figured they'd end up in jail too and they ought to make the time count as much as possible. So they decided to turn that time into a religious retreat. The first two days they're in jail, they fast. "So King declined any food because he was fasting. "I spoke up and said, 'I haven't heard of this and wasn't planning on fasting. If nobody else will eat your greens, I will.' Dr. King just nodded. I was so hungry I was embarrassed. It turns out the greens were a facade; there were a couple of big pieces of country ham underneath. The greens were good too."

**Martin Luther King Incarcerated in Selma, Alabama by**

**Charles Fager**

We need to be emptied before God can fill us

**Mother Teresa of Calcutta**



## Calling all WNCN Young People!

Minister Rhonda Kelley, WNCN Youth President

### General Youth Convention

August 7th-11th

We have some rooms blocked for extra days if needed

August 5th-12th

**Convention Packages : Early Bird Registration: Package 1 \$120.00 until May 7, 2017  
(includes everything)**

**Package 1: After May 7th is \$130.00 (under 12 \$110.00) includes: Registration, Journal, Bag, T-shirt, Banquet ticket, Friday night Concert.**

**Package 2: \$110.00  
(under 12 \$90.00): includes: Registration, Journal, Bag, T-shirt, Friday night Concert**

**Package 3: \$100.00  
(under 12 \$80.00): includes:  
Registration, Journal**

**Convention will be held at:  
The Lexington Hotel & Conference Center  
1515 Prudential Drive,  
Jacksonville FL**

**Room rate \$112.00 tax included  
877-LEX-7070/ 904-396-5100**



## WNCY Youth Fellowship Opportunity



### Joyfest 2017 at Carowinds

**When:** Saturday, May 27  
**Where:** Carowinds in Charlotte, North Carolina  
**Amount:** Group rate before Mar 31 = \$32 + taxes/fees (about \$4 per ticket)

Group rate between Mar 31 and Apr 28 = \$34 + taxes/fees (about \$4 per ticket) In order to have the group rate we need at least 15 people. Without the group rate prices go up about \$10. Tickets should be ordered early in order to get the best seats so the target date for ordering would be **February 28, 2017**. Rate includes admission to the park as well as the concert.

**Gospel Groups to perform - Kirk Franklin, Tamela Mann, David Mann, David Mann Jr. , La'tia Mann, Travis Greene and Tasha Cobbs (with this line up, come ready to worship!)**

If there are churches that have enough to get their own group rates and you want to go on your own, that's fine – please just let us know so that we will know who is there. If there are churches that have smaller groups that want to partner with other churches, let us know because we can get the tickets together so that everyone will realize the savings.

**Post on the WNCY Youth Ministry FB page or send an email to [whiterockyouth@frontier.com](mailto:whiterockyouth@frontier.com).**

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Partnering with you in the spiritual development of your young people,

Minister Rhonda Kelley  
 Minister Donielle Graves  
 Minister Ian Courts

WNCY YPHA Ministry President  
 WNCY YPHA Ministry Vice President  
 WNCY BCS/YPHA Ministries Secretary



## Death, the Prosperity Gospel and Me

By KATE BOWLER, Professor at Duke Divinity School

Durham, N.C. — ON a Thursday morning a few months ago, I got a call from my doctor’s assistant telling me that I have Stage 4 cancer. The stomach cramps I was suffering from were not caused by a faulty gallbladder, but by a massive tumor. I am 35. I did the things you might expect of someone whose world has suddenly become very small. I sank to my knees and cried. I called my husband at our home nearby. I waited until he arrived so we could wrap our arms around each other and say the things that must be said. *I have loved you forever. I am so grateful for our life together. Please take care of our son.* Then he walked me from my office to the hospital to start what was left of my new life.

But one of my first thoughts was also *Oh, God, this is ironic.* I recently wrote a book called “Blessed.” I am a historian of the American prosperity gospel. Put simply, the prosperity gospel is the belief that God grants health and wealth to those with the right kind of faith. I spent 10 years interviewing televangelists with spiritual formulas for how to earn God’s miracle money. I held hands with people in wheelchairs being prayed for by celebrities known for their miracle touch. I sat in people’s living rooms and heard about how they never would have dreamed of owning this home without the encouragement they heard on Sundays.

I went on pilgrimage with the faith healer Benny Hinn and 900 tourists to retrace Jesus’ steps in the Holy Land and see what people would risk for the chance at their own miracle. I ruined family vacations by insisting on being dropped off at the showiest megachurch in town. If there was a river running through the sanctuary, an eagle flying freely in the auditorium or an enormous, spinning statue of a golden globe, I was there.

Growing up in the 1980s on the prairies of Manitoba, Canada, an area largely settled by Mennonites, I had been taught in my Anabaptist Bible camp that there were few things closer to God’s heart than pacifism, simplicity and the ability to compliment your neighbor’s John Deere Turbo Combine without envy. Though Mennonites are best known by their bonnets and horse-drawn buggies, they are, for the most part, plainclothes capitalists like the rest of us. I adore them. I married one.

But when a number of Mennonites in my hometown began to give money to a pastor who drove a motorcycle onstage — a motorcycle they gave him for a new church holiday called “Pastor’s Appreciation Day” — I was genuinely baffled. Everyone I interviewed was so sincere about wanting to gain wealth to bless others, too. But how could Mennonites, of all people — a tradition once suspicious of the shine of chrome bumpers and the luxury of lace curtains — now attend a congregation with a love for unfettered accumulation?

The riddle of a Mennonite megachurch became my intellectual obsession. No one had written a sustained account of how the prosperity gospel grew from small tent revivals across the country in the 1950s into one of the most popular forms of American Christianity, and I was determined to do it. I learned that the prosperity gospel sprang,

in part, from the American metaphysical tradition of New Thought, a late-19th-century ripening of ideas about the power of the mind: Positive thoughts yielded positive circumstances, and negative thoughts negative circumstances.

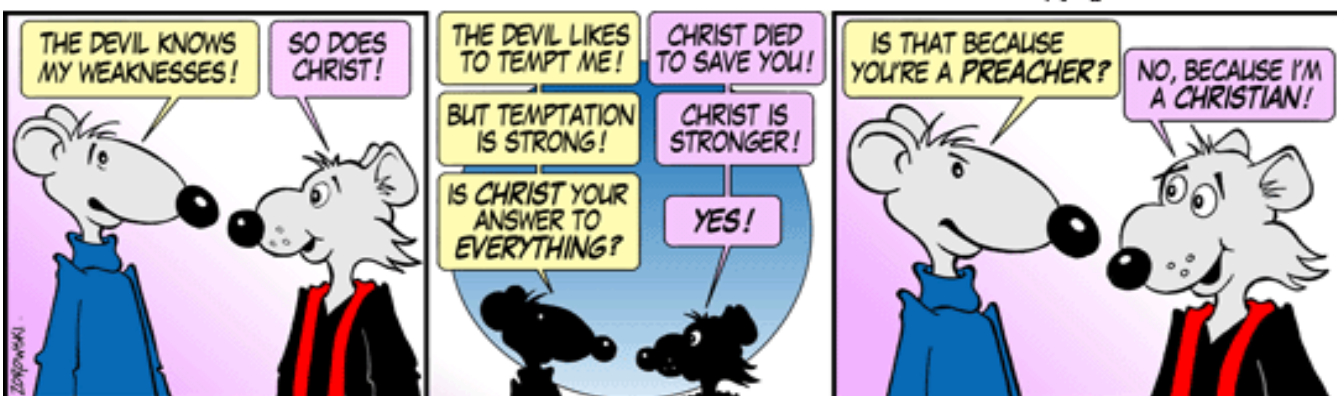
Variations of this belief became foundational to the development of self-help psychology. Today, it is the standard “Aha!” moment of Oprah’s Life Class, the reason your uncle has a copy of “How to Win Friends and Influence People” and the takeaway for the more than 19 million who bought “The Secret.” (Save your money: the secret is to think positively.) These ideas about mind power became a popular answer to a difficult question: Why are some people healed and some not?

The modern prosperity gospel can be directly traced to the turn-of-the-century theology of a pastor named E. W. Kenyon, whose evangelical spin on New Thought taught Christians to believe that their minds were powerful incubators of good or ill. Christians, Kenyon advised, must avoid words and ideas that create sickness and poverty; instead, they should repeat: “God is in me. God’s ability is mine. God’s strength is mine. God’s health is mine. His success is mine. I am a winner. I am a conqueror.” Or, as prosperity believers summarized it for me, “I am blessed.”

One of the prosperity gospel’s greatest triumphs is its popularization of the term “blessed.” Though it predated the prosperity gospel, particularly in the black church where “blessed” signified affirmation of God’s goodness, it was prosperity preachers who blanketed the airwaves with it. “Blessed” is the shorthand for the prosperity message. We see it everywhere, from a TV show called “The Blessed Life” to the self-justification of Joel Osteen, the pastor of America’s largest church, who told Oprah in his Texas mansion that “Jesus died that we might live an abundant life.” **This book is a must read - “Blessed” by Kate Bowler, Professor at Duke Divinity School**

## Church Mice

Copyright Karl A. Zorowski





**Come and Worship with**

**Bishop Clifton Buckrham**

**This service is part of the 2017 Sankofa Black Alumni Preaching Series sponsored by the Office of Black Church Studies...**

**Duke Divinity School ... 11:25 AM -Tuesday,  
February 7, 2017**



# 2015 was 'worst year' for Christian persecution, says Open Doors

BY CATHY LYNN GROSSMAN | JANUARY 13, 2016



*South Korea-born Canadian pastor Hyeon Soo Lim stands during his trial at a North Korean court in this undated photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency in Pyongyang December 16, 2015. (Photo courtesy of Reuters)*

South Korea-born Canadian pastor Hyeon Soo Lim stands during his trial at a North Korean court in this undated photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency in Pyongyang on Dec. 16, 2015. (Photo courtesy of Reuters)

**WASHINGTON (RNS)** With North Korea leading the way and Islamic extremism rapidly expanding, 2015 was the “worst year in modern history for Christian persecution,” according to a group tracking this issue.

Iraq is in second place on **Open Doors**'2016 World Watch List, a ranking of the top 50 most dangerous places in the world to be a Christian.

It's the first of 35 countries on the list where Islamic extremism "has risen to a level akin to ethnic cleansing," said the report, released Wednesday (Jan. 13).

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*The 2016 World Watch List. Graphic courtesy of Open Doors*

The nonprofit organization Open Doors has focused on concern for persecuted Christians since 1955. On its map, the top 10 are highlighted in blood red to indicate "extreme" persecution:

- **North Korea, topping the list for the 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive year**
- **Iraq**
- **Eritrea, leading several sub-Saharan African nations on the list**
- **Afghanistan**
- **Syria**
- **Pakistan**
- **Somalia**
- **Sudan**
- **Iran**
- **Libya, which appeared on the list for the first time**

Saudi Arabia, which recently executed a Shiite cleric and where bloggers have been sentenced to lashings for suggesting changes in the practice of Islam, came in at No. 14.



*Open Doors President David Curry speaks at a news conference on Jan. 13, 2016, in Washington about his organization's annual World Watch List. Religion News Service photo by Adelle M. Banks*

**More than 7,100 Christians were killed for faith-related reasons, and 2,400 churches were destroyed or damaged, said Open Doors President David Curry.**



Curry gave a world tour of murder, exile, terror, detention and destruction at a press conference introducing the new report. The militant groups Boko Haram and al-Shabab, he added, are the “sinister” power behind persecution in four African countries.

“The level of exclusion, discrimination and violence against Christians is unprecedented, spreading and intensifying,” said Curry. It’s vital to track such persecution, not only on behalf of its victims, but to recognize growing threats to global peace and security, Curry said. “The persecution of Christians is a lead indicator of when countries are beginning to tip into chaos.”

David Saperstein, ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom, added to Curry’s list of atrocities and crimes against humanity. “In far too many countries far too many people face daunting, alarming restrictions “ on living and practicing their religion and yet, Saperstein said, most “refuse to surrender their faith or their God.”

“Every one of the numbers in this report is a human being,” the ambassador said, as he stood at the podium directly in front of Gladys Juma, whose husband was murdered in Kenya.



*Gladys Juma, whose husband was murdered in Kenya, speaks at a news conference on Jan. 13, 2016, in Washington about Open Doors’ annual World Watch List. Religion News Service photo by Adelle M. Banks*

Juma detailed a heartbreaking night of searching for her husband, Benjamin, who had gone with a pastor to “share the word of Christ” in a nearby Muslim area.

Hours after the two men went missing, Gladys Juma went to a hospital nearby, where she was shown a gunnysack of hacked and burned body parts and a seared skull sitting

in a burned tire rim. No one could say who they were. A few hours later, she learned that those unidentifiable victims were, in fact, her husband and the pastor.

“It hit us very hard,” Juma said. “In Mombasa, we had had religious tolerance for many years and suddenly the tables had turned with no warning. We are still healing.”

That healing, for herself and her four children, relies on forgiveness, on trust in God and in her belief, she said, that America will act “to make sure people respect other people’s faith.” *(Cathy Lynn Grossman is a senior national correspondent for RNS)*

# What's Happening

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Faith Gospel Tabernacle UHCA sponsors Toys For Tots Christmas 2016!  
Elder G. Aghogah and Pastor L. Gilbert on the move !

