

LET'S

RAP

New Testament Church of God



IS A COMMUNICATION TOOL OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BISHOP

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ISSUE 2



Bishop & Mrs E.A. Brown

THE POWER OF WORDS

*"...The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life."
John 6:53.*

We often underestimate the power of words. Words are the most creative force in the world and when misused, they can be most destructive. Many people today still carry the psychological scars of negative words spoken in their childhood: "You are stupid" "You are useless" "You will never come to anything good".

These are words that you might have had spoken to you or you might have spoken to someone else. They hurt. The rhyme "sticks & stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me" is not one I will be teaching Jude-Elliott, my grandson.

Negative words hurt. Don't be surprised if some people find it hard to love and accept you. The truth is they cannot love or accept you if they don't love and accept themselves, and the fault might not be entirely theirs. They might have been the recipients of negative words deposited in them from their early years.

Words are the most powerful, the most creative and the most

effective force in the universe. Pop stars and poets, preachers and philosophers, scientists and engineers, oh yes, dictators and demons all know the power of words, to move and even to control us. The Bible says, "Death and Life are in the power of the tongue; and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof" [Proverbs 18:21]. And in Matthew 12:37 we read, "For by thy words thou shall be justified and by thy words, thou shall be condemned". Words are like seeds – they produce after their kind. Be careful of the words you use and don't try to pass off your sarcastic comments as a joke. The word sarcasm comes from the Greek word 'Sarkasmos' which means, "to tear the flesh like dogs" to speak bitterly.

Proverbs 26:22 states the words of a whisperer or slanderer are like dainty morsels or words of sport to some, but to others are like deadly wounds and they go down into the innermost parts of the body (or the victims nature).

Jesus said, "... the words I speak... are spirit and life". It means His words are creative, life giving, transforming. They are spiritual and they are eternal. God places great importance on His word.

- He creates by the Word
- He gives life by the Word
- He blesses by the Word
- He sanctifies by the Word
- He heals by the Word, etc.

In our preaching and teaching, and in our private discourse, let us renounce negative words and commit ourselves to the power of positive words.

We are delighted at the response we received to the first issue of RAP. Your letters, cards and phone calls were greatly appreciated. Here are a two of the responses received:

"I would like to say thank you for "RAP". I have read it and I think it is excellent, I am looking forward to the next issue. After reading it, I felt connected..."

"RAP – very informative with excellent communication..."

Keep sending your comments. We have added an extra page to this issue and have made every effort to keep the information brief, yet informative & interesting.

PASTORAL APPOINTMENTS

We announce the following appointments:

Rev. Donovan Allen

Assistant Pastor & Administrator of the Lee Church will assume the Pastorate of the Northampton Church with effect from 1st June 2003. He succeeds the Rev. Prince Chambers who emigrated with his wife and 2 daughters to South Africa, where he will pursue his Ministry in Evangelism.

Rev. Allen & Pauline, his wife, are experienced committed Leaders and we are convinced they will be a blessing to the Church in Northampton. Please pray for them and their children, Tanya & Tiffany.

Rev. Wilfred Willins

With effect from 8th June 2003, Rev. Willins will take up the Pastorate at Farnborough. Rev. & Sis. Willins bring considerable experience to this Pastorate and it is certain that under their Leadership and the support of District Pastor, Donald Bolt, the work in Farnborough will experience growth.

Rev. Paul Thomas

Formerly Pastor of the Ealing Branch in West London, Rev. Thomas was inducted as Pastor of the Huddersfield Church on the 27th April 2003. He succeeds the Rev. C. Fisher who returned to the West Indies.

Paul heads up the Mentoring Programme being sponsored by the Men's Ministry, and is a qualified Social Worker. His wife Alva pursues her career in Counselling in the Prison Service and their considerable giftings will certainly enhance the Church's work in Huddersfield. They have a son named Hezekiah, who is nearly 3 years old. Please pray for them.

Rev. Owen Francis

Rev. Francis currently Pastors the Chuckery Road branch in Walsall. On the 11th May 2003, he will assume the Pastorate at Huntingdon. For the past 6 years, he has been travelling over 130 miles one way from Cambridge where he lives to work in Walsall; and this despite physical challenges. It is a testimony to his commitment. Huntingdon is less than 20 miles from his home and he is excited about his new assignment.

Rev. Michael Stephenson

Rev. Stephenson is the former Pastor of the branch at Walthamstow and is currently assisting the Ministry at Handsworth. He has been appointed Pastor Designate for the Church in Castle Vale and will commence during the month of June.

Michael is a gifted Preacher/Teacher and his wife Millicent is, among other things, a gifted musician. Their combine giftings will undoubtedly contribute to the expansion of the work in Castle Vale.

Rev. Eglon Fyffe

Rev. Eglon Fyffe has been appointed Pastor for the Peterborough Church to take effect on the 1st June 2003. Rev. Fyffe is an Ordained Minister who holds a BA (Hons)

degree in Theology as well as a Certificate in Education gained at the Greenwich University & Birmingham College respectively. He is married to Dorrell and they have three children Dwayne (13), Danielle (11) and Jamie (9). Please support them with your prayers.

PASTORS/LEADERS MOVING ON

Rev. Carver Anderson

This will be Rev. Carver Anderson's last year as National Youth & Christian Education Director.

He has served the Department faithfully since June 1997 and as he moves on to pursue his Ministry & Career, we want to wish him, his wife Pauline and their children Danielle, Benjamin, Ebony every blessing.

Pastor Loristine Cox

Pastor Cox is the former Leader of the Huntingdon Church and without assignment at the present time. We wish to thank her for four years of sacrificial service and for her faithful commitment to the work.

Rev. Prince Chambers

After faithfully pasturing the Churches in Hitchin and Northampton, Rev. Chambers has answered the call to Evangelise in the Republic of South Africa.

Please continue to pray for him and his family.

Rev. F. Hosang

Pastor of the Vauxhall Church since 1979, Rev. Hosang announces his retirement from Pastoral Ministries after more than 35 years of active service. His previous Pastorates include Slough and prior to that he worked tirelessly with the late Rev. I. N. Carter in the early days of the Tottenham Branch, now Wood Green. His wife, Doreen, has been a tower of strength in his Ministry and together they have contributed greatly to the work of our Church. We salute them and wish them a healthy and happy retirement.

Rev. L. E. Reid

Rev. Reid has been pastoring the Church in Farnborough since 1998. Prior to this, he worked under the Leadership of Revd. Burrell in the Aldershot Church. Rev. & Sis. Reid are dear servants of God and have been pioneering this work almost since its inception. Sadly, due to ill health on the part of Rev. Reid, he now has to retire. We are thankful to them both for their labour in the vineyard and commit ourselves to pray for a speedy recovery and wish them every happiness in their retirement.

SALUTING OUR RETIRED HEROES

In the last two months, we have been in telephone and mail contact with our retired Ministers and we gladly report that they and their spouses are waxing. Strong in the faith, in spite of illnesses on the part of some of them. The truth is, although they have retired from Pastoral duties, they are still active in Ministry, Counselling, Preaching, Mentoring, and Lecturing and in the

case of Rev. & Sis. Hastings – Church planting. They are now renting a Community Hall in Swindon and soon, we believe a strong church will emerge. The pioneering spirit is still active in the New Testament Church of God.

Job 14:7-9 " For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant."

Along with them, we salute the following Ministers and their spouses: Rev. W. Brown, A. T. Foster, T. A. Grant, F. Hylton, F. Letford, H. Lynch, M. Parke, L. Stewart, F. Williams, P.R.J. Williams and others.

Let us continue to pray for them, as I am sure they are doing for us.

Historic Visit to Dr. & Mrs. O. A. Lyseight



Back Row (l-r) NEC Members: Revds R. H. Parkinson, I. Lewinson, H. Gayle, B. Burrell & W. Willis
Front Row (l-r) Dr. & Mrs. O. Lyseight, Bishop E. A. Brown & Mrs. M. Brown.

On the 2nd April 2003, members of the National Executive Council, along with Mrs. Brown and myself visited the Lyseights. It is exactly 25 years since he vacated the office of National Overseer and this was the first meeting of its kind. We shared about many things, not least the early days of the Church, the difficulties and the triumphs, the pain and the joy. It was not a visit about nostalgia; in fact it was quite cathartic. For me, and I believe for all of us who attended, there was the feeling of impartation as this great man of God prayed for us and in his indomitable style, commissioned us to go forth and proclaim the glorious gospel of the Kingdom.

We can confirm that at 83, Dr. Lyseight is doing remarkably well, in spite of the fact that he is physically challenged. His mind is as sharp as ever and he is still as meticulous as before in his writing. Sis. Lyseight is strong, has rich anointing upon her life and is still a danger to Satan's kingdom. They express their thanks for the offering collected during the Ministers' Seminar.

The Thompsons

We make special mention of the Revd & Mrs. S. U. Thompson. In a recent visit with them, both Mrs. Brown and I found them vibrant in spirit and positive about their faith in God. In the autumn years of their lives, they have yet so much to offer the

body of Christ and it was a great honour and privilege to sit with them and to have them pray for us. Their wealth of knowledge about God and the Church must be captured for future generations. We left knowing we were in the **Presence**, for the fire burned and our spirits were lifted. We salute them.

Rev. Manley Bartley

It is with regret that we announce the passing of the late Rev. Manley Bartley, the former Pastor of the Church in Tipton, West Midlands and Ochio Rios in Jamaica. Rev. Bartley succumbed after a long period of illness during which he received the loving care of his dear wife, Phyllis and their children. Do remember Sis. Bartley and her family.

Widows/Widowers

We continue to remember and pray for the widows of those Ministers who have passed on to glory. They include:

<i>Sis. R. Bailey</i>	<i>Sis. Gordon</i>	<i>Sis. Walder</i>
<i>Sis. P. Bartley</i>	<i>Sis. Mason</i>	<i>Sis. Walters</i>
<i>Sis. E. Carter</i>	<i>Sis. Mitchell</i>	<i>Sis. Wisdom</i>

VISITS TO CHURCHES

Bradford

A small congregation with good facilities and a committed Leader in the person of Rev. Tony Parry. He and his wife are committed to working in the community but need help – more workers. Continue to pray for them.

West Croydon

I visited the West Croydon Church and was greatly impressed as I walked through the children's church which was in progress and observed the order, the commitment of the staff and obvious interest the children had in the lesson. Divine worship was great and the after-church fellowship was friendly. We thank God for Rev. Lawrence's recovery and continue to pray for him and Sis. Lawrence and indeed the whole congregation.

Handsworth

It was the Appreciation Service for Bishop Derek Webley and Rev. Hermilyn James on the 9th March 2003. A most enjoyable occasion when the Leaders and Ministers expressed their love in songs, poems, flowers, gifts etc. It was our privilege to share the word, and to enjoy a most wonderful buffet meal with all the Leadership Team of the Handsworth Church. We left with the sure knowledge that here is a team of people who are committed to move this congregation to a new dimension of relevant Ministry.

Elephant & Castle

Our visit to this church was really inspiring. Here also we were greatly impressed. The children's work and rich worship experience. Rev. Mrs. Hall is indeed a tenacious, visionary Leader with an evangelic group of people in her Leadership team and as we direct with them, we could sense the stirring of yet another visionary project. Watch this space and keep them in your prayers.

Leicester

This was the venue for the first of our interactions with Pastors and key workers as we seek their comments/suggestions for our 'BIG MOVE' programme. Over 30 Leaders attended, all of whom made valuable contributions to this process. There was general consensus that this is a difficult but necessary task which must be pursued if our church is to achieve a new dimension in Ministry. We thank Dr. & Mrs. Hasting for this meeting. Especially Rev. Gooden who actually left his sick bed for the first time in three weeks to be in Church. Thankfully, he is now recovered.

Wolverhampton

Over 25 key workers, along with Bishop Willis, spent a weekend in training around the theme: Positioning your Church for Purposeful Ministry. On Saturday, we were joined by two other pastors from the Wolverhampton District.

This interactive training session invites participants to look critically at their Church and its operations, and to seek new paradigms for effective/relevant Ministry. A number of scenarios/case studies were considered all designed to bring out the very best in participation and problem solving. NTCG,

Wolverhampton – now known as Harvest Temple – is set for great things. Their social responsibility programme is probably the most successful in our denomination and their vision for development is huge; they will certainly need a paradigm shift, for this vision to become a reality. They have the people whose hearts are in the right place. To my friends in Wolverhampton, I say: write down the vision and make it plain on tablets so, that on my herald may run with it. For the vision awaits an appointed time" Hab 2: 2,3.

Thanks to Mrs. Millicent Brown who co-taught with me on Friday evening.

Lee Church



In April 2002, Paul Henry Architects & Projects Managers Ltd and Mantle Projects Ltd were commissioned to deliver the vision of the balcony project at the Lee Church. This required the Church vacating the building for 6 months and they were blessed with the use of a temporary home at the South Lee Christian Centre to house their congregation of over 400 people.

The balcony now has external fire escape stairs; the Narthex and entrance vestibule/Nave have been re-decorated; the altar & baptismal pool area have been re-designed and a new multi media system has been installed. Overall, the church structure is a beauty to behold, and the seating capacity now stands at over 600.

We congratulate Bishop Simpson, his leadership team and members for the tremendous work they have done in re-

modelling their building, making it into a state-of-the-art sanctuary with facilities for the fulfilment of Ministry in South East London.

Overstone

It is exactly 2 years since the tragic fire which destroyed approximately two thirds of the Overstone building. We are now beginning phase 1 of our discussions with the relevant authorities. The Conservation & Planning Officers of the Daventry District Council, our Architects, along with the National Secretary and myself had our first meeting in March.

The building engineer has been commissioned to carry out further inspection with particular attention being paid to the tower and its foundation. The decision we make with regards to the building will depend largely on their report. We will keep you informed. Your prayers & support are much needed.

Meeting with Field Director

I had my first formal meeting with our Field Director, Dr. Grant McClung. This was most opportune as it gave me an opportunity to personally share with him my vision for leading the Church, and the challenges we face and what it takes to ensure our denomination pursues relevant-credible Ministry here in the United Kingdom and Europe. This was a fruitful meeting. He has the interest of our work at heart and we look forward to cordial supportive working relationship in the future.

NATIONAL MEN'S CONVENTION

The National Men's Convention was held in Oldbury where Rev. Lincoln Davis is the Pastor. Both Mrs. Brown and I were warmly received and I was privileged to share the word on Sunday. Rev. David Stewart and his team are to be commended for their work.

We are agreed that fresh new impetus needs to be injected into the Men's Ministry to motivate and impact our men. The truth is that the need is greater than the Men's Ministry alone can deliver. It calls upon Leaders and Pastors to begin to address the needs for more men and to train them to be the men God want them to be

NATIONAL WOMEN'S RETREAT 2003

Millicent Brown, National Women's Ministries President

As a start to our programmes, the Women's Ministries held a Retreat at the Le Meriden Hotel, Warwickshire. The Retreat ran from Friday 28 February to Sunday 2 March 2003 under the theme "You Matter".

We were delighted to welcome Pastor Penny Francis, from Ruach Ministries dealing with "Your Family Matters". This section looked at how families relate to each other – from the husband and wife to the extended family, and how we affirm family members.

Rev Phyllis Thompson, a member of the pastoral team at the Mile End Church presented "Your Faith and Future Matters". Here we looked at the essential elements in our Faith, how we maintain our Faith, and how our Faith is linked, not only to the present, but also to our future.

Ms. Paulette Simpson, Chief UK Representative Officer, Jamaica

National Building Society spoke on "Your Finance Matters". This session gave us practical advice/information on how our money can work for us, making sensible investments, and preparing ourselves financially for retirement.

I believe this weekend assisted us in the transformation God is doing among His people. We matter to Him and everything we have or own matters to Him greatly. Our Faith, our family, our finances and our future are all linked and if we become unbalanced in any of these areas, it will affect the way we respond to our God.

NATIONAL YOUTH & CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CONVENTION 2003

The National Youth & Christian Education Convention 2003 is set to be one of Impartation, information, challenge and confirmation. The Theme IN THE BEGINNING - THE WORD highlights the need for young people to have the word of God central in their lifestyles and expressions.

As the Convention imparts God's words, we have Bishop John Francis from Ruach Ministries as our Guest Speaker. Rev Carver Anderson will also speak with this being his last Convention in his capacity as National Youth & CE Director. Other speakers include Rev Leonard McDonald, Mr Wayne Brown, Rev Antony Aris, Miss Louise Anderson and Mr Steve Campbell.

They will consider such topics as: The Word Behind The Music, God's Word & Me, God's Word = R E S P E C T and Only The Word Gives Authority.

CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING CONFERENCE 2003

Theme: Child Protection High on the Church's Agenda

The responsibility of the New Testament Church of God to protect its children, was highlighted in the Child Protection Training Conference on 22nd February, where 300 delegates from across the country attended.

The Conference was delivered by Mr David Pearson and Pauline Pearson from the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service and considered such issues as: -

- Understanding Child Protection in the church
- Developing a Child Protection Policy
- Responding to Child Abuse
- Leaders taking responsibility for implementing policies
- Churches working in Partnership with Child Protection Agencies and Organisations.
- Churches developing the strategic plan for the future regarding Child Protection

NATIONAL MINISTERS' SEMINAR

Over 170 Ministers attended this year's seminar in Coventry which we all agreed was one of our better Seminars. Stewards of the Mysteries was the over arching theme and the presenters: Rev. Dr. Claude Khan, Rev. T. E. Caine and Rev. L. McLeod did a fantastic job in the areas of Leadership, Finance and Legal Requirement & Financial Management. The keynote speaker was Bishop Eric Brown.

The hotel accommodation, food and service were all excellent. We are thankful to Rev. T. E. Caine the co-ordinator and his team Rev. L. McDonald & Rev. R. B. Brown for their hard work in ensuring the success of the Seminar.

Once again Pastors & Credentialed Ministers are reminded that attendance at the National Ministers Seminars and the National Conferences is vital and Ministers who consistently absent themselves from these two events are denying their congregation, the representation they deserve and they are personally accountable to the Leadership of the Church. Attendance at the meetings, along with the monthly reports, will form part of the annual Ministerial Appraisal.

FINANCE

Training

Saturday, April 26th was a Training Day for Secretaries and Treasurers at the Leicester Church. This was facilitated by our National Secretary/Treasurer, Rev. Louis McLeod.

The Day was considered an overall success with over 130 attendees and training being offered in the areas of Reporting, Bookkeeping, Gift Aid Claims, Record Keeping & Taxation.

Audit

The Annual Audit rounds have commenced. The Questionnaires sent to Treasurers & Secretaries requesting information re Branch Accounts are needed immediately. All these documents must be on site for the Auditors.

The increasing scrutiny by the Charities Commission into the workings of Charities such as ourselves makes it important that we get things right and leave nothing to chance in terms of our financial/administrative procedures.

Thanks to those churches who have already submitted their responses.

MINISTERIAL EXAMINATIONS

There were 35 candidates who sat the examinations this year, covering the three ranks of Ministry. The examinations are proving more demanding and candidates are now required to enrol on the Ministerial Internship Programme (MIP), the Ministerial Affirmative Programme (MAP) or the Certificate in Ministry (CIMS) Programme. Rev. Brian Robinson, our Director of Education will be promoting these programmes in due course. In future, we will be more stringent in the selection and vetting of candidates for Ministry.

Dr. Curtis Grey

On the 9th April we were honoured by the visit of Dr. Curtis Grey, Superintendent of our Church work in West Africa. Rev. Grey is one of the pioneers of the works here in England.

His visit this time was to promote the Pan African Theological College which he founded in Ghana. Its aim is to provide training to degree level for a wide range of Ministerial students. The College is linked into Lee University who accredit their degree programme.

The College is currently housed in rented accommodation but they have purchased 23 acres of land which will eventually house purpose-built facilities. They are currently in desperate need of assistance – finance, people, books etc. Please send all donations for my personal attention, designating them ‘Church of God – West Africa’. IT Personnel who would like to donate time for training students in Ghana can contact Mrs. Millicent Brown, National Women’s President, who is co-ordinating this aspect of our support.

NATIONAL CONVENTION 2003 & 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

This year we celebrate our 50th Anniversary during the National Convention at the Brighton Conference Centre, July 24 – 27, 2003.

The main speakers will be Bishop Eric Brown, Bishop Noel Jones (Noel Jones Ministries – USA), Dr. Lovell Cary, Dr. S. E. Arnold and Bishop John Francis (Ruach Ministries).

We will also receive the dynamic music ministry of Jamaican Gospel Reggae Artist – Stitchie who will be with us over the Convention.

The Planning Committee are working on a number of special features to mark the 50th Anniversary, including a Commemorative Magazine and special exhibits. We are appealing for your full co-operation with any information/assistance that may be asked of you.

Let us make this a memorable and blessed occasion that will position the New Testament Church of God for greater impact in the United Kingdom.

“PASTORS & KEY LEADERS CONFERENCE”

Pastoring and credentialed Ministers must file ministers’ Reports at the end of each month.

This is a gentle reminder to delinquent Ministers of your responsibility and the necessity to act now and bring your records up-to-date.

Building confident, committed Leaders is one of the key objectives in our ‘BIG MOVE’ Programme. Part of the strategy of achieving this goal is for Pastors and Key Leaders to come together for learning, empowerment and spiritual renewal & fellowship.

Our first Pastors & Leaders Conference (PLC) is planned for Friday 9th to Sunday 11th January 2004 and will be held at the De Montford Hall in Leicester. This Conference is not for members but for Pastors, Ministers, Youth Leaders, Auxiliary Heads, Secretaries/Treasurers and Representatives from the Church & Pastor’s Council.

Details about cost and hotel accommodation are still being worked out and will be dispatched in the near future.

To do church work in an increasingly secular and technical age, calls for Leaders who are equipped to the highest standard. The Church has a responsibility to edify, i.e. “...*build itself up in love, as each part does its work*”
Eph 4:14-16.

Pastors, please note this date in your diaries and begin from now to identify your key workers who need this training in order to help you fulfil your vision for your congregation.

BIG MOVE ROAD SHOW

On Monday, May 12th we began our Road Show which aims to engage Pastors & key Heads in the development of our BIG MOVE programme. Our venues are Willesden, Brixton, Highgate, Bristol, Reading and Leeds. We recently sent direct invitations to all Ministers aged 50 & under to join me at the Northampton Marriott Hotel for a Young Ministers Consultation on Saturday 14th June 2003. Please contact my P.A., Leony Titus at the National Office for further details. Please be sure to attend.

“And finally...”

Our first seven months in office have been quite eventful and rewarding. We have covered over 17,000 miles in that time, which is a bit wearing on our bodies, but we have been heartened by the support we have received from the National Executive Council, the fine Administrative Staff here at the National Office and the Ministry & members.

We are committed to do God’s will and we are confident about the future of our Church. She will prosper, she will succeed and together we will raise up a generation of Leaders and members who, with God’s help, will make this Church great.

THE

Building Committed, Confident Leaders

Informing and Impacting our Youth

Growing Healthy Churches

Mobilising the Church for Ministry & Missions

Offering Hope to our Communities

Valuing our Women and our Men

Evangelising our Community and our World

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