

## Should the Church Change the Dress?

Continued from page 1

Editor

Send us your feedback at Survey Monkey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XP7SGFF>

Alternately, you can send us an email at [cogsabbath.org](mailto:cogsabbath.org) and let us know what you think. Some responses will be shared in our next edition. Thank you for contributing!



**Congratulations** on the wedding of Oriel and Lincoln Cameron: February 14, 2021. May God bless you as you embark on this wonderful journey.

### HAVE A SUBMISSION?

Send announcements, articles, and testimonies to the PR in your church. We welcome your participation and feedback.

NEXT EDITION: April 2022

**Answer to Riddles:**  
Ch-ur-ch (pg. 2), Maher-shalal-hash-baz Is. 8:1 (pg.

## Newsletter Survey

- 1a. How many editions of the newsletter have you read? One, a couple, all of them?
- 1b. If you have not read any, why not?
2. What is your favourite part of the newsletter?
3. What would you like to see in the newsletter?
4. Additional comments?

**\*\*\*Email your responses to [editing@cogsabbath.org](mailto:editing@cogsabbath.org) and enter to win a Tim Horton's gift card.**



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Thanks to Shirley Ostrander  
HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%? 01-15-2004

### Article Submissions:

Due to space constraints, we request your article be kept **under 250 words** in length, with no more than 350 maximum.



Newsletter of The Church of God Sabbath-Keeping

Volume 8, Issue 2: Jan 2022

# The Vision

"Where there is no vision, the people perish ..." Proverbs 29:18a

HAPPY NEW YEAR

## Study: Church Outreach Expands to Meet Pandemic Needs

...continued on page 2

By: Adelle M. Banks - Religion News Service  
Christianity Today, December 24, 2021

According to a new survey, more than half of Christian congregations proclaim they have started new ministries or expanded existing ones during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On average, in fact, these Christian houses of worship began or broadened more than three of their outreach activities in response to the pandemic.

### Church Outreach Growth By Sector

Percentage of congregations who added or expanded ministry efforts during the pandemic

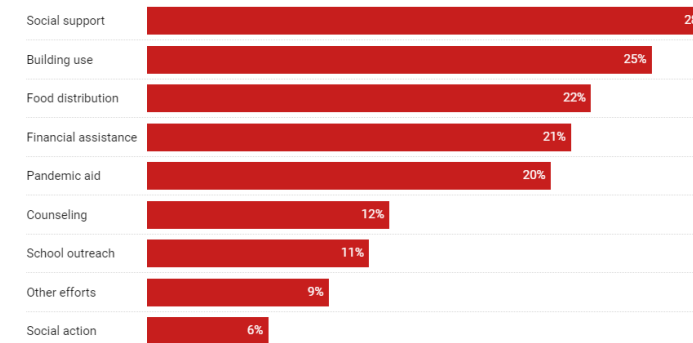


Chart: Christianity Today • Source: Hartford Institute • Created with Datawrapper

Even as sanctuaries were closed to in-person visits and other meetings moved online, about a quarter of congregations expanded the use of their buildings for other activities, such as helping homeless people, offering child care, and tutoring.

About a fifth of congregations were involved in ministries specifically tied to the pandemic, such as hosting vaccine clinics, making masks or holding celebrations for front-line workers.

Twelve percent started or increased mental health ministries, and 6 percent said they had new or expanded ministries related to social action, with some involving voter registration or anti-racism initiatives.

In a finding similar to the first study, most congregations said they are using a hybrid form of worship, with 85 percent offering both in-person and virtual options. Fifteen percent of those surveyed in November said they were solely gathering in person and 3 percent opted only to meet virtually.

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## Should the Church Change the Dress Code?

Editor

### We would like to hear from you.

Many churches feel that clothing should not be a hinderance, and people should feel comfortable when they enter the house of God. Others feel that wearing jeans and a t-shirt to church shows disservice to God, while more formal clothing is a sign of reverence. Is there any truth in either of these views? What does the bible say?

...continued on page 8

## The Vision

We hope you have enjoyed the current edition of The Vision. Thank you to all of our contributors.

We are truly grateful for your ongoing participation in making our newsletter a continued success. Please also consider getting involved in our future publications by making submissions to the Public Relations Officer (PRO) at your local church. Although we may not always be able to accommodate every submission, your support is truly appreciated. Thank you.

~ The Vision Team: *Christene*; Editors: *Alicia, Dianne, Tanesha, Nikki*

### Church Directory

**Canada**  
Brampton  
Mississauga  
Rexdale (Headquarters)  
Scarborough  
Montreal  
Oshawa  
Ottawa

**United Kingdom**  
Mitcham  
Wembley

**United States**  
Syracuse

**Pakistan**



### Local Public Relations Officers (PRO)

**Brampton:** Christene Cousins - [pr@cogsabbath.org](mailto:pr@cogsabbath.org)  
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**UK:** Sean Harvey

**Now, therefore, you are ... fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; In whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord: In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.** ~ Ephesians 2:19-22 (NKJV)

## Rexdale Rundown

Karen White

Despite all that is going on, our congregation has remained committed to doing God's work. With the use of platforms like Zoom and YouTube, our members have been able to continue to connect and fellowship with one another through our regular ministries. Prayer warriors have been meeting three times a week for powerful prayer sessions, and the church joins together on Wednesday nights for midweek Bible study.

The Lighthouse Children's Ministry continues to empower young children both online and in person to pursue relationship with God. The team has been developing a nurturing environment where children are free to build friendships, expand on their God-given talents and engage in play-based activities. The little ones have been contributing virtually to church services by scripture readings, through song and presentations.

In addition to regular ministries, so much has gone on this year:

- ♦ **August 21<sup>st</sup> - Seniors Day.** The seniors were recognized for their years of dedication, loyalty and commitment to the body of Christ. It was an excellent program to celebrate the individuals who have paved the way for the younger generations who have and will come after them.
- ♦ **September 5<sup>th</sup> - Bus trip to Sandbanks Provincial Park in Picton, ON for the annual Church Picnic.** From the bus ride, to the time at the park, and including the fantastic food, this was an awesome getaway for all who attended.
- ♦ **September 12<sup>th</sup> - Men of Honor** held their annual Men's Prayer Breakfast. The men fellowshiped, engaged in captivating discussions, and united to seek God in prayer. The event was capped off with a delicious hot breakfast
- ♦ **Backpack Program** provided school supplies for children in need
- ♦ **October 2<sup>nd</sup> - Annual Thanksgiving and Local Outreach Mission.** Through the generous donations of church members and sponsors, we were able to give away turkeys, non-perishable items, and clothing to individuals and families in need. Thank you to our congregation for your time, support and generosity.
- ♦ **December 11<sup>th</sup> - Daughters of Zion End of Year Social.** The women played games, followed a recipe to mix non-alcoholic cocktails, shared laughs, and had a wonderful time of fellowship.

There are two missions that we are currently supporting in Jamaica. One that provides food hampers to those in need, as well as a soup kitchen. Through the congregation's support we were able to send multiple barrels of food and supplies to the island. The church has also been able to offer financial support to our brethren in Pakistan as they work to erect the first Church of God Sabbath Keeping overseas.

We look forward to what God has in store for us for the future.



### RIDDLE:

First is the last. Last is the first.  
You are in the middle. What am I?

Find

## Message from the Board

Pastor Maurice Blagrove

### A Message from Your Pastor

Well, here we go again! We ended 2020 the same way we are closing out 2021, with a pandemic ravaging our world. With uncertainty over the Omicron variant persisting, the challenge endures, and we continue to move forward with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a time when the world does not seem to have any appropriate response.

During the darkest days of the pandemic, many families have been left with more questions than answers. Despite this, we've made a huge amount of progress this year, and are moving into 2022 with more velocity, clarity and energy than I have ever seen from our church. Consider this! We had more Baptisms than we ever had during what would have been considered "The Good Times". This is not new; history illustrates it again, and again, and again. In times of crisis, people look up! Many who were on the sidelines finally crossed over.

As a Pastor in the Church of God, my role is to prepare people to meet God. In addition to this, there is the daily "pick me up" that is compulsory. People look to the Church for answers, and we are still the light in a very dark world with the role to deliver hope in times of hopelessness.

I know another wave can seem daunting, but fear not, for we have made it this far by God's amazing grace and we will continue to dig our way out of the mess of Covid. Since your health and peace of mind are critical to our success, we continue to monitor the situation on a daily basis and make decisions accordingly. To date, we have decided to delay our back to full-Church plans until further notice. We are eager to have us all together again as soon as we can. We continue to monitor the advice of our government officials, and the data closely, so we can give you plenty of notice when we believe it is appropriate for a full return to the Church.

It is difficult to put into perspective of everything we have been through together over the last year. I am reminded of the old quote, "A winner never quits and a quitter never wins". You have proven yourselves to be resilient and committed to reviving our spirits.

With that said, I want to thank all of our ministry leaders. You have been on the **front-line** caring for everyone from the seniors to the children. You have been there! I want all of you to know how much you are appreciated; the Praise & Worship Team, the Usher Team, the House Cleaning Team, the Parking Attendants, the Audio/Video Team, our Administrators and Secretaries. As we strive to "GALVANIZE" the organization, you are critical to making this happen. God bless you.

So please get some rest over the holiday season and come back revived and invigorated with much energy to do the masterly work we are called to do.

I am excited about 2022, because we are that much closer to our Lord and Savior's return.

### Mississauga Muse

**New Location:** 3341 Winston Churchill Blvd, Mississauga ON

**Zoom link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7614039294?pwd=K0VlVjZDg5ektrNlhUeUNDRIk5Zz09>

**Zoom link:** <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/247270757>

**Password:** 5JS3kx

### Scarborough Scoop

**Zoom link:** <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/247270757>

**Canada dial in:** 647-497-9373

**Access Code:** 247-27-757

**United States dial in:** 1-517-317-3116



The first 6 individuals that send an original article, poem, or testimony to [editing@cogsabbath.org](mailto:editing@cogsabbath.org) before May 1st will win.

Next Edition of the Newsletter: April 1st. All submissions due by March 18, 2022.

\*Contest not open to members of the editing team, PRs, board members, and senior pastors.

## Study: Church Outreach

continued from page 1

Adelle Banks

While attendance remains depressed, the survey found the rate of attendance decline between 2019 and 2021. In those years there was a nine percent drop. It had been down 12 percent in the summer.

The number of congregations reporting a severe decline of 25 percent or more fell from 35.2 percent in the summer to 30.3 percent in November. And the number of reporting growth, 5 percent or more, increasing from 28 percent to 37 percent.

With the Omicron variant contributing to the continuing pandemic, researchers acknowledge it is hard to predict future plans for activities, such as fellowship events and religious education, which were still below pre-pandemic levels.

“For many churches, their situation will never be the same,” the report concludes. “They will never be the same because of the loved ones and members that they have lost. They will never be the same because of the ministries that they have started and expanded.”

The findings in the new report, “Congregational Response to the Pandemic: Extraordinary Social Outreach in a Time of Crisis,” have an estimated overall margin of error of plus or minus four percentage points. It is part of a multiyear project funded by the Lilly Endowment.

Excerpt from Christianity Today

### TRIVIA

What is the longest name in the Bible? ( Answer on pg. 8)



“Our family is trying one of those old-fashioned churches, with preaching, the Bible, and all that stuff.”

## Birth Announcements



Maddison Bradbury born April 9, 2021 6lbs 13oz to Joel and Karen



Daniel Dontae Sadler born October 17, 2021 8lbs 2oz to Alvin and Latoya



Noah Xavier Chambers born September 14, 2021 7lb 13oz to Matt-Trill and Crystal



Raelle Jordyn Robinson born July 26, 2021 5lbs 3oz. To Mathurin and Bethany

## Ottawa Outlook

Kelub Martyr

2021 was an eventful and productive year for the Church of God Sabbath-Keeping Ottawa branch despite the ongoing pandemic. We relaunched our Men’s, Women’s and Prayer ministries, incorporated panel discussions through our various services, celebrated the return of our Gospel Feast service, welcomed new members and launched our website.

We ushered in the new year with a special Sabbath service under the theme, “New Beginning: Forging Ahead”. During this service, Pastor Karel Wilson admonished that to forge ahead, we must put the past to rest. Sis. Ann and Elder Devon Simmonds led an inspiring discussion on the theme as well. They emphasized that to “forge ahead” means to make progress; to overcome obstacles and to push against the tide. The “Forging Ahead” aspect of the theme would form the basis of the sub-themes for the various events hosted throughout the year.



Throughout the year, under the direction of Bro. Kelub Martyr and assisted by Elder Devon and Sister Ann Simmonds, the Ottawa youth showcased their God-given talents and blessed our hearts throughout the year. They ministered in song, instrumentals, insightful discussions and not forgetting the various fun-filled bible quizzes that have increased our “biblical IQ” by leaps and bounds!

Upon relaunching, the Women of Virtue Ministry led powerful and engaging sessions each month with a variety of programmes under the theme, “Reaching Up, Reaching In, Reaching Out”. In April, Sis Monique Chambers-Watson delivered a riveting sermon on the Topic, “The Good Part” targeting the “Reaching In” aspect of the theme. In May, Sis Ann & Elder Devon Simmonds, in conjunction with the Women’s Ministry, spearheaded the celebration of our children and youth through a special Sabbath service. The Women’s Ministry also hosted two personal finance sessions; focusing on planning for retirement and financial freedom.

Despite not hosting a Gospel Feast in 2020, we held our first ever 3-day virtual Gospel Feast on August 20 – 22 under the theme, “Forging Ahead for His Glory”. Brethren from various parts of the globe logged in to support and glorify the name of the Almighty God! Some highlights:



Pastor Howard Green delivered a well-received opening sermon under the sub-theme: The Glory of God Explained. He focused his message on, “What God manifests, When God manifests & Who God is”. Elder Devon Simmonds moderated an insightful discussion into how we can personally glorify God, and how the glory of God culminated in the death and resurrection of Christ who conquered sin and the grave giving us access to eternal life.

Pastor David Graham and Pastor Edwin Scott drilled down into the word by expounding on the sub-themes, “Designed & Transformed for His Glory”, and “His Glory, Our Empowerment”, respectively. Minister Michael Hall exhorted us that as believers we are commissioned to win souls for the kingdom thereby bringing glory to God.

As we come to the end of the year, we realize that our work is far from over. The future still remains uncertain, but we will “Forge Ahead” into 2022 under the divine leading of the Holy Spirit.

Church of God Sabbath-Keeping, Ottawa

# GOSPEL FEAST

## “Forging Ahead for His Glory”

FRIDAY AUGUST 20 - SUNDAY AUGUST 22, 2021

			
FRIDAY NIGHT “The Glory of God Explained” Pastor Howard Green	SABBATH “Designed & Transformed for His Glory” Pastor David Graham	SABBATH “His Glory, our Empowerment” Pastor Edwin Scott	SUNDAY NIGHT “Forging Ahead for His Glory” Min. Michael Hall

## Oshawa Overview

Victoria George

### OSHAWA LADIES MINISTRY

**The Word of God is my Compass**, is the theme for Nassau St ladies in 2021. At each meeting, the ladies have been encouraged to memorize and recite our declaration for 2021:

**“We are building our lives on the promises of God; because His word is unbreakable, our hope is unshakable. We do not stand on the problems of life, or the pain in life, we stand on the great and precious promises of God.”** (Max Lucado, Unshakable Faith)

To date, we have covered the following topics, with different ladies volunteering to research and present on each.

⇒ **The weakest link: What the bible says about UNITY-**  
Sis Pat Samuels.

We were particularly blessed as we listened in on a segment of Pastor Duff’s series on The Church is a Community. We were reminded that sheep need sheep; we are mandated to care for one another.

⇒ **My hiding place: Maintaining Your Secret Place -**  
Sis Tracy Wilmot

We were exhorted to remember that the hope and security and strength we need; to be able to stand and overcome is highlighted in Psalm 91. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall...” Women of God were encouraged to have a secret place and to do everything we can, daily, to maintain it.

⇒ **Me and My House: How can we live in peace in our families –**  
Sis Aretta Hines

We were given the following foundational principles to build healthy families: 1. Acknowledge and honour God’s divine order; 2. Wear the carpenter’s pouch; 3. Keep your spiritual armour on; 4. Take care of You; 5. What it takes to build is exactly what it takes to maintain - keep the carpenter’s pouch nearby! If you are dying of curiosity about the carpenter’s pouch, feel free to reach out.

We are thankful for this year’s focus about how critical it is: to know, study, feast on and live the Word of God. It is our compass! We are committed to wearing the belt of truth daily. Be blessed!

### AMBASSADORS OF THE KINGDOM MINISTRY

The young adult’s ministry celebrated their leader Stefanny Kerr’s new book launch titled: “Trust: Moving forward when you don’t have all the answers”. The book is written in 6 parts with 6 separate stories connecting to one common theme—evolving. Through each women’s story, readers are encouraged to trans-

form their own experiences into a testimony and move forward into who God has called them to be. The AOK ministry cheers on our young author as she continues to be inspired by God in all she does. Her book can be purchased on Amazon.

## Montreal Moments



**ZOOM IN** Sabbaths starting at 11:30

Meeting ID: 927 135 8286

Passcode: 8286

**Testimony Service:** Every 2nd Sunday at 5:00pm, use the Zoom link above.

## In Memorial



### January

- ◆ Mother Doris Downer
- ◆ Edley Williamson - Sis Carol Blagrove’s brother
- ◆ Millicent Maxwell - Sis Maxwell’s Daughter
- ◆ Ms. Gloria King January 9, 2021
- ◆ Bro Glendon Edwards’ mother
- ◆ Sis Nesrene Simpson’s father
- ◆ Sis. Carvet Smith’s brother

### March

- ◆ Sis. Lucy Woods March 3, 2021
- ◆ Deacon Robert Brackett Aug 15, 1942 – March 11, 2021

### April

- ◆ Mother Susan Afflick Jan 4, 1935 – April 8, 2021
- ◆ Mother Iris Hibbert July 14, 1917 – April 19, 2021

### August

- ◆ Sis. Geraldine Harris (Kerry-Kay Harris’ mother) Aug 2, 2021

### October

- ◆ Mother Lorraine Archer Sept 27, 1927 – Oct 16, 2021

### December

- ◆ Pastor Derek Evans from the UK December 18, 2021

## From the President

Pastor Howard Green



How do we begin to express our thoughts on the last 12 to 24 months? The enormity of the challenge that lies ahead of us is riveting to the core of our souls. With millions taken away from us all too soon, we are searching our souls for answers. Our deepest regards to the families of the following ministers: Pastor Derek Evans, Deacon Robert Bracket and Pastor Lionel Weir who went to be with the Lord last year.

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal, it is the courage to continue that counts ~ Winston Churchill. Scene 3, then enters the Church of God Sabbath Keeping! Our presence is needed more than ever to help create a bigger, brighter future for our communities.

In spite of the Pandemic, we have made strides as a community. Starting our first Church building in Pakistan stands out as a monumental achievement. We credit the work of Pastor Zeeshan Jan and the vision and contribution of Dr. Walter Treleven, which will be immortalized in our history. God continues to **broaden our reach** and **strengthen our enterprise**. We are so pleased that in November of 2021 Bishop Walter Treleven was appointed as the regional overseer for the Church of God Sabbath Keeping in Europe and the Middle East. This brings the Church of God Sabbath Keeping 7th Day under the leadership of the Church of God Sabbath Keeping Global Ministries. This significant coalition has expanded his mandate with the existing work in Pakistan and the effort in Germany.

After 50 years of existence as an organization with strong Caribbean roots, we are pleased to celebrate the emergence of our first local body on the Island of Jamaica in the 3rd Quarter of 2022. We are inspired to grow our network and continue to leave our footprint on the sands of time. Join me in congratulating Deacon Errol Brown and Pastor Llyod Quarrie on their recent appointments to the role of Deacon at the Rexdale congregation, and Pastor for the Ottawa congregation. Congratulations to Pastor Zeeshan Jan on the commencement of the Church building in Pakistan.

For decades we have believed in the philosophy that training and development of leaders is an essential element to successful organizational development. I am pleased to announce that we are currently in the process of launching our Global Institute of Learning. A vibrant college that is aimed at providing foundational training for all our current and future leaders from across the globe. Many thanks to Dr. Clarence Duff, Dr. Donovan Stanberry and Dr. Jacque-Ann Grant who will be key drivers of this project.

Your Executive Team is working hard to revise our organization’s constitution to reflect the current standards that will cohesively reflect the state of the Church in modern society.

## Rooted Young Adult Ministry

**Winter Clothing Drive**  
January 1 - January 15

Items needed:  
Jackets  
Hats  
Gloves  
Boots / Socks  
Scarfs etc...

Items for Men, Women & Children

Drop off Times  
Thursday's 2pm-5pm  
Saturday's 11am-6pm

Location 6 Westwyn Court Brampton

Contact 416 455 0138

## Brampton Buzz

Christene Cousins

### Titus 2 Mentoring

Under the leadership of Melleta Brown, the **Women of Essence** is embarking on their second session mentoring women as mandated by the scriptures. The program runs for 6 months; it involves reading inspiring novels written by Christian authors, meeting once a month to review the books, sharing testimonies, struggles, and triumphs. This program is open to all women who are looking for a stronger walk with the Lord and desire to connect with other women in their congregation. The program is open to women of all ages.

**Rooted Young Adults** has been active throughout the pandemic keeping in touch and meeting with the young adults. They are currently hosting a clothing drive to assist the needy in our community. The group is headed by Sis. Kenisha and Bro. Kelton.