

## The Church of God 55th National Convention 10th - 12th July 2009

The Church of God in England held its National Convention 10th- 12th July 2009 at Kings Heath and Moseley Baptist Church. The timely, God-given theme was ***“And five of them were wise and five were foolish”*** a description used by Jesus in his well-known parable about the ten virgins. The convention was permeated with reminders about the lateness of the hour we are living in and the need for us to watch in readiness for our Lord Jesus Christ's glorious return.

The Lord has consistently blessed our National Conventions here in England and this year's was no exception. From Friday through to Sunday we basked in the presence of God as we enjoyed special singing, presentations, testimonies and awesome messages. The preachers were on fire and their sermons were full of flavour! The topics were; ***“And at midnight there was a cry made”*** (St Matthew 25:6) by Pastor Beverley Anderson, ***“...a wise man...built his house upon a rock”*** (St Matthew 7:24) by Pastor Frances Prince, ***“Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion..”*** (Isaiah 52:1) by Evangelist Armena Taylor - Harrison and ***“...the one shall be taken, and the other left.”*** (St Matthew 24:40) by Sister Claudia Prince.

Our song-leaders and musicians did not hold back in their worship. They glorified God in lively joyous music, ushering the congregation into marvellous praise. The choruses were inspired and the words are still sounding in our ears. We gave the enemy a knock out as we sang ***“I'm bound for higher ground”, “The army of the Lord is marching on”, “We are going up in the first resurrection”, “Ready or Not the Lord is Coming”*** to name but a few.

Our auxiliary programmes were packed with food for the soul. The national leaders boosted their respective themes for the last time using a variety of methods including visual presentations, special songs and drama. Sis Delzie Reid our ABM leader reminded us that we must love one another and that without love, everything else is vain. We sang our ABM song entitled ***“Wonderful ABM Glorious Band”*** and the presence of the Lord could be felt. The song could not finish! Bro Michael Reid preached during the ABM programme telling us that we cannot love unless we understand Christ's love for us and that it is through our love that sinners will know that we are Christ's disciples.

Our CPMA leader Sis Julie Clarke presented the theme ***“That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus”*** using a thought-provoking visual presentation about the sower and the seed and the difference in ground upon which the seed was sown. The moist heart responds immediately to the Word of God!

One of the highlights of our convention took place during the outstanding Women's Missionary Band programme. Thank the Lord for moving our leader Sister Evette Edmeade to resurrect our royal blue caps and regalia so that we could march down the high street (not the pavement, the actual street!), church flags and banners in hand, singing, ***“God's got an army”***. What an enormous privilege to march in public in the eyes of the staring crowds who were about their usual Saturday business, singing to the glory of God. Traffic stopped for us, shopkeeper's left their tills and bus passengers fixed their eyes on us. We looked so beautiful marching behind our very own marching band of drummers lead by our National Music Director Bro Ray Prince. Sis Jenetta Hurst played the flute with serenity as we marched into the church to a beautiful musical rendition of ***‘The Banner of Love’***, the perfect way to begin the programme. A spectator of the march visited us the next day of the convention!

Our VLB leader Sis Claudine Brown explored ***‘The Winners Circle’*** with a short drama tying in the convention theme. The programme began with lively praise and worship. One of the highlights from the programme was when we all sang ***“I feel like running, skipping, praising the Lord”***. Our VLBs (and those at heart!) ran around the perimeter of the church singing the song and praising God. VLBs tarried at the altar at the end of the service. Our Sunday school programme was packed full! After an energetic march, each local Sunday school department was eager to update the convention with the things they had undertaken

during the year. There was no time left for our leader Bro. C. Edmeade to preach his message. The Sunday school children sang, did visual presentations and answered questions to rapturous applause.

Our National Overseer's address was given on Sunday 12th July 2009 and he encouraged us to '**Stay Awake**'. Bro. Bennett warned us about the dangers of sleeping, particularly now that the enemy is shooting to kill. We were admonished to stay awake so as to avoid Satan's nighttime stinging and infestation of eggs that will destroy us spiritually. The anointing of God was upon our Overseer as he preached.

It was a marvellous convention. God was with us and was in full control of the programme. The Holy Ghost visited us and had his way also. Some also testified of having been healed. We were visited by members from other denominations and people who walked in from the street. All in all 118 people were registered in attendance. Who could it be but God? We give glory to Your name Oh Lord, for Your name is great and greatly to be praised!



