

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Jesus said, “*Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*”
(John 4: 21-24)

We just completed the Virginia Annual Conference for 2014. The event was held in Hampton again this year and it was another blessing to gather with so many Christian brothers and sisters, both clergy and laity, all excited to share in the work of the church.

There was a lot of singing and worship, Bible teaching, speakers on many topics, encouraging words by leadership, opportunities to share our material wealth with others in the world that have needs, speaking words of fellowship with persons we have not known and old friends that we have not seen in a while, youth involvement in the service to others, local church musicians and singers sharing their talents and gifts, beautiful slide shows and videos, colorful brochures and handouts, charts, statistics and information updates, visits to various booths set up by the many ministries that the church supports throughout the world, and **THEN IT IS ALL OVER.**

Reminds me of the song, “Is that all there is ?” A song written by American songwriting team Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller during the 1960s. It became a big hit for American singer Peggy Lee in 1969. The song was originally recorded by Dan Daniels in 1968, then by Leslie Uggams in 1968, Guy Lombardo in 1969, and Tony Bennett in 1969.

There was so much excitement and enthusiasm at the Annual Conference that you felt the “Spirit filled High that you don’t want to loose. **But then we return to our local churches and what happens ?** Same old church ? Nothing seems to change ? People do not change ? Ministries do not change ?

Our doors are open – but no one seems to notice. The memberships within the local churches is becoming fewer and fewer.

Let’s take this time to look into our hearts and ask ourselves, “Is the Holy Spirit in this church and these congregations ?” What is it going to take to revive the hunger for God that once existed, but now seems to be lost ? Are we just “doing church” instead of “being the church” we are called to be ?

God is still here – God is still desiring much from the church – God has great plans for the church – what are we going to do “different” than church as usual ?

Pray for the church !