

Worshipping the LORD together:
An Evening with Bishop Smith
Sister Sandra Gillikin



Sunday, April 10, 2005, our church was honored with a visit from Bishop Smith and his choir of Washington, D.C. Singing, fellowship, and worship was enjoyed by approximately 302 people. The spirit was felt so intently, as though the sanctuary was filled with a pleasant, exhilarating form of praise to GOD. There were no barriers, only a combination of joyful praise and worship. Could this have been a sample of what heaven may be? Everyone together in one accord worshipping JESUS, and the LORD with unrestricted levels of praise. What a day! One young lady said to me when their choir marched in, that she felt as if the roof was going to come off—the spirit being so thick and feeling the joy of praise so strongly. For the young to acknowledge this feeling, it is a good thing! Bishop Smith brought the message, opening avenues and touching areas GOD had apparently given HIM for us. Think about how GOD can use people willing to be used, in order to portray HIS plan to us. I sat intensely listening and seeing the LORD work through Bro. Jonathan, Bishop Smith, and the congregation. It was definitely a spiritual movement, undeniably of the LORD.

As I reflected on that morning's sermon, "Moving Out of the Box," I thought what a great feeling it is to move out of the box occasionally and see the many wonders of GOD's work. As the praises, preaching and hallelujahs were going on around me, my mind slipped back into time when I first met Bishop Smith and his wife. It was a time in my life that I was seeking for a closer walk, a more in depth understanding of GOD's word, and a yielding to be a better servant of GOD. I craved everything GOD had to offer, the HOLY SPIRIT, knowledge of the Word, speaking in tongues, dreams, visions, all knowledge that I could acquire from GOD, books on the HOLY SPIRIT and revivals with SPIRIT filled preachers. What better way for GOD to get my attention. I was invited to a revival at Mt. Tabor, North River community, to hear Pastor Smith. I knew nothing about him nor had I ever been in Mt. Tabor Church. At that revival, Pastor Smith gave an altar call and of course I went forward (remember this was some ten plus years ago). I had recently been diagnosed with cirrhosis, needing a transplant. My daughter was a senior in high school at the time, preparing for college. Pastor Smith prayed for me and I felt the power of GOD come over me. Falling out in the SPIRIT, I felt a movement through my inner being I had never experienced before—the power of GOD. While laying there I had a vision of JESUS sitting on a throne dressed in white with Moses by HIS side. I saw the nail-scarred feet, and the wounds were square holes, like a spike. When I came out of it, I testified to a congregation of warm and caring people, who showed me brotherly love and compassion Pastor Smith talked with me afterwards. Pastor Smith's wife, Donna, had a vision of the sickness I had and that GOD would provide me with a new red organ! She knew nothing about me!

GOD can use many ways to get your attention, but we must be open-minded and willing vessels for GOD to work through. Pastor Smith has prayed for my family and me many times since, giving Scripture references to my many questions about the works of GOD. My faith grew deeper in GOD through my seeking and the prayers of GOD's people for me. As far as my first encounter with the vision of JESUS and Moses, I later realized Moses was a sign that my family and I would move out of Egypt and on to the promised land of free worship and praise. (Cont. 13)

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This was prophesied by Bishop Smith to my family, but it didn't happen quickly. I tried everything I humanly knew to do to incorporate my newfound life with GOD, but it was not GOD's Will. We eventually gave in and followed GOD's plan for our lives. GOD has amazing ways of showing us HIS Will for our life. I thank GOD HE allowed Bishop Smith to minister to me and my family. We were turned around into a new and closer walk with GOD, experiencing GOD's power, love, and grace. Yes, GOD revealed, through Bishop Smith, that my family would eventually move out of Egypt. At that same time there was another exodus going on, the new Smyrna Pentecostal Holiness Church was being founded-Praise the LORD GOD! Never has there been an easy exodus, but with GOD's grace, our faith, and HIS answer to prayers we have made it. Early on, prayers to GOD asking for guidance into the direction of growth seemed to go unanswered-but Bishop Smith gave us encouragement that GOD is still GOD, HE's still in control, and HIS Will will be done in HIS time. GOD led us to Smyrna Pentecostal Holiness Church. Reverend Vance Harrell and his family helped us through many difficult times of sickness. Yes, there are times GOD has to shake us out of the box to get our attention, but it is all worth it. Looking back onto those 10 plus years, I see God's hand at work. He was there all the time, working through ministers and church people. His plan for our lives being fulfilled in HIS time—not ours. I thank GOD for the many spirit-filled people that have prayed and encouraged my family. I thank HIM for sending Bishop Smith to show us the way, to encourage, to know GOD's Will will be done in HIS time, and to have faith. I thank GOD for the "Promise Land" we came into. We all have grown together in love, caring, and sharing. GOD's will is being done. I thank GOD for our Pastor, Bro. Jonathan Griffin, a pastor that recognizes the spirit, preaches the Word and knows it's good to move out of the box sometimes. After all, when we all get to Heaven, there will be no more color, no difference, no rich or poor and no boxes.



Celebrating 11 years of the LORD's Blessings

Sister Laura Damren (Cont. from p. 9)

As Christians, we have a responsibility to share His Word with a world that is lost and dieing. Remember God doesn't need us but He wants us.

God- We love you Lord. Thank you for Your many blessings. Your grace and mercy are boundless. I thank you for the church body here at Smyrna. I thank you for the pastors You have called to lead us. My prayer for next year's Homecoming is that each one of us is closer to You than ever before. God help us to hold one another accountable and encourage each other when things are tough. God use us to share your Gospel with our family, friends, and neighbors. I pray that when others look at the people at Smyrna, they don't see us, but see You. Help us to be sold out to You, living our lives so that others know we belong to You. Make us what You would have us to be. Help us to live by faith, obeying You, and answering Your call for our lives. Continue to lead, guide, and direct us in everything we do. -Amen



Forward '05 a weekend of transformation

Sister Sue Mason (Cont. from p. 10)

God truly worked in their lives and I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to see that. The following night was a charge to the kids to pick up their weapons and go to battle for the Lord. It was so powerful and the effects are continual. GOD wants to help the young people in our church stand strong for Him. There is a promise that took place and will continue, "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour our My Spirit in those days."-Joel 2:28-29. I am grateful that the children, and the adults, had the privilege to attend this youth conference and to hear testimonies from young people who are standing for a pure life with God.

It was an experience I will long remember because God was in our midst doing a work in our lives. We came home changed and with new dreams. - Sister Sue Mason