



Western Georgia Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction
Church Of God In Christ
2703 Brittany Rd.
Albany, GA 31721

OFFICE OF THE JURISDICTIONAL PRELATE

28 January 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Sharing the Way Forward

Thank you all for your support and professionalism during the past few years of my tenure as Jurisdictional Prelate especially during the pandemic era. Your competence, commitment, and sincerity - reinforces my belief that Western Georgia is full of great people who love God.

I look forward to more growth as we embark upon this new year. The purpose of this address is to clearly communicate why we exist - our purpose, our priorities, and the essential functions that allow us to accomplish that which God has commissioned us to do; preach the word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine...

A clear sense of purpose is key to the success of any high-performing organization. Our purpose in Western Georgia is to be an instrument of God to transform the lives of people so that they may live holy; to ensure souls are prepared to spend eternity with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We will do this together by being great teammates, not just amongst our local churches and districts, but with our fellow churches throughout our Jurisdiction, our sister Jurisdiction, and the national church. Relationships matter and we must all work together to achieve the Jurisdiction's largest transformation after this pandemic.

Western Georgia has three priorities in support of our purpose: prioritize people, establish long term(2+years) planning, and execute short term (1year).

People are our number one priority. We have an incredibly talented and experienced team in Western Georgia. We must remain focused on retaining people across the Jurisdiction who make invaluable contributions every day in support of our mission. Concerns vary among our diverse churches and districts, and I am personally committed as your Prelate to listening, understanding, and exploring reasonable and innovative solutions to build and maintain the team; while also enabling and incentivizing excellence.

Evangelism is the second key piece of prioritizing people - both inside and outside our church. The Jurisdiction will support districts and local churches wherever necessary to address the current evangelism challenges. Our leaders, department chairs, districts, and local churches across the Jurisdiction are postured to bring unique perspectives on ministry opportunities to reach people abroad. It is essential that we all maximize opportunities to engage our local communities and centers of education to carry the Jurisdiction's message. We must also optimize evangelism both face to face and virtually. I challenge every person in Western Georgia to reach three people before the end of this year, 2023. I challenge every local church to double their membership and every district to expand their district by one church. We have a great team now and through effective evangelism at the individual level will help build on our success as a Jurisdiction. Lady Thomas and I love you all and our prayer is that "above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth".

John F. Thomas

//Original Signed//

Bishop John F. Thomas

Jurisdictional Prelate

Western Georgia, Church of God in Christ