

AUGUST 2019

TIME

WE OWN OURSELVES

VPCOG makes me
proud everytime
I think about what
we've accomplished

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

As Pastor of Vernon Park
Church of God

Jerald January, Sr.

PASTOR OF THE YEAR

VERNON PARK CHURCH OF GOD 1975 E. JOE ORR ROAD LYNWOOD, IL 60411

20th Anniversary Featured Speaker



Rev. C. Jeffrey Wright

Rev. C. Jeffrey Wright is the Chief Executive Officer of UMI, (Urban Ministries, Inc.) During his twenty plus years at UMI, the company has established itself as an innovator in Christian media content serving thousands of churches and over a dozen denominations. Rev. Wright has been active in ministry for over 30 years. He was licensed at Greater St. James Missionary Baptist Church and has served several other congregations as Associate Pastor, Director of Christian Education, adult bible study teacher, Vacation Bible School Director and in various teaching and administrative roles. His preaching and teaching engagements have included numerous national and international conferences and church conventions and he has provided consulting to several national ministries including Focus on the Family, Promise Keepers, and Wycliffe Bible Translators, among others. Rev. Wright joined UMI in 1994 after a fifteen-year career in the consumer products and

healthcare industries working for two Fortune 50 companies, Johnson & Johnson, where he was a winner of the Johnson & Johnson Leadership Award, and Bristol Myers Squibb. His work in marketing, strategic planning, and business development included brand management, new product development, licensing, and mergers and acquisitions work for these firms. His last position was Vice President of Corporate Development with responsibility for acquisitions in the global consumer products business of Bristol Myers Squibb. His work also included a three-year assignment as head of corporate development for the European pharmaceutical business of Bristol Myers Squibb. Rev. Wright's educational background includes prep school education at St. Albans School (The National Cathedral School for Boys) in his hometown of Washington, D.C. and a B.A. degree received with honors from Fisk University. He went on to graduate from Georgetown University Law School completing his Juris Doctorate (JD) degree. He was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar and the U.S. Supreme Court Bar. He later earned an MBA in Finance and International Business from Columbia University Graduate School of Business in New York and completed additional studies in business development at the Wharton School (University of Pennsylvania) and at the Harvard Law School Program of Instruction for Lawyers. Rev. Wright taught courses in marketing as well as in jurisprudence and ethics for 4 years in the graduate school at the University of Evansville. He is the author of the book and media literacy bible study guide, *God's Vision or Television: How Television Influences What We Believe* and is also a contributing author to the book *Non Profit Leadership in a For Profit World*. Rev. Wright is married to Lakita Garth Wright, the noted national speaker, author, television personality and youth culture expert. The Wrights have four children, Stephen, Amanda, Natalie, and Justin Wright. They have board memberships at Circle Y Ranch (Christian Camp and Conference Center), board chair Fuller Theological Seminary Evangelical Christian Publishing Association, executive committee Baker Publishing Group Oasis International (book and bible distribution in Africa).



Vernon Park *Church of God*

Words of Encouragement



Pastor January, on behalf of the VPCOG membership, under your leadership and guidance, the church has grown in not just numbers, but more importantly spiritual development. Because of your inspiration and teachings, Vernon Park Church of God looks forward to continued growth and progress. God loves you and we love you and we appreciate the fact that God sent you AND First Lady Maura to us. So don't give up, don't give in because God is still working and has more labor for you in the vineyards. Today, more than ever, young and old need spiritual guidance and direction and you along with VPCOG serve as a beacon in the community. So please know that even though you may not see me as often as in days gone past, you are always in my heart and my daily prayers. ***Rev. Alice J. Dise***



Pastor January *is* and *has been* a great mentor to me. Actually, more than just a mentor but a father figure. I have gained so much knowledge from his wisdom, so much so, that I find myself passing on some of the things he has told me to those that I mentor and coach. I appreciate the fact that he saw something in me and gave me the responsibility to lead the younger generation of Vernon Park. It is my goal, first to make God proud, but also to make Pastor proud of me. I appreciate our one-on-one talks that have really given me great direction and perspective in pursuit of God's assignment over my life. He even pushes me to be a stronger preacher by giving me encouragement, honest feedback, and helping me to find my own voice. It is of great value to me how he has accepted my family as an extension of his own and for that I am even more grateful. He is overall a great example of integrity, manhood, and leadership and I am truly honored to have Reverend January as my mentor and guide. ***Pastor Frank Miller***



Vernon Park *Church of God*

Words of Encouragement



Pastor January, or as I call him like many other people, “Pastor J.” I met Pastor J July 2001 at VPCOG on Stony Island in Chicago. I will never forget when I said to the late great Rev. Anthony Biddings that I needed to speak with Pastor face to face so he would know who my wife (Sherri) and I were since we had joined the church. Rev. Biddings stated, “Let me see what I can do.” Rev. Biddings came back 3 minutes later and said, “Pastor will meet with you for a few minutes.” I stated that I only needed 5 minutes. When I went into his office, the first thing I noticed on his wall were pictures of his pro athlete friends. I felt right at home. We talked about God and then, “BAM,” right to sports. To this day, we still talk about God and sports. Ten years later, Pastor J chose me to head the Men of Destiny Ministry at VPCOG, which is our men’s ministry. This is a big highlight of my life because I get the chance to not only work with Pastor J, but also with some awesome men at VPCOG. **Aubrey “Coach V” Volious**



Wow! Has it been 20 years, Pastor January? It seems as if it was a few months ago that you were introduced to VPCOG and The McKinnis Family.

I mention my family in particular, because you became OUR Pastor. You’ve prayed for us, married some of us, and you’ve been a blessing to all of us!

Thanks Pastor! We pray for you and only ask for another 15 years from you! Bless you and First Lady Maura! **Deaconess Naomi McKinnis**



Vernon Park *Church of God*

Responsive Reading

August 4, 2019, Joshua 1:1-11 “Be Strong and Courageous”

Lead: After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: “Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them - to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates - all the Hittite country - to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

Cong: No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

Lead: “Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

Cong: Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Lead: Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Together: So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: “Go through the camp and tell the people, ‘Get your provisions ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.’”





Vernon Park *Church of God*

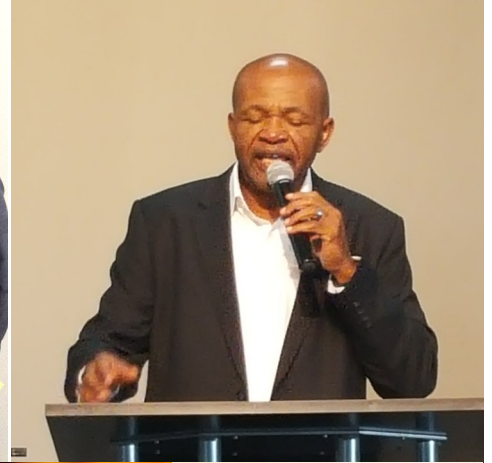
Pastor Jerald January, Sr.





Vernon Park *Church of God*

1999 - 2019





Vernon Park *Church of God*

Responsive Reading

August 11, 2019, Isaiah 55:1-11 “Invitation to the Thirsty”

Lead: “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?”

Cong: Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.

Lead: See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a ruler and commander of the peoples. Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations you do not know will come running to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor.”

Cong: Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

Lead: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Together: As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.





Vernon Park *Church of God*

Responsive Reading

August 18, 2019, 1Timothy 4:1-13, “Set an Example for Believers”

Lead: The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

Cong: For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

Lead: If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.

Cong: Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

Lead: This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.

Together: Command and teach these things. Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.





Vernon Park *Church of God*

Responsive Reading

August 25, 2019, Galatians 5:13-26 “Walking in the Spirit of God”

Lead: You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

Cong: So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

Lead: But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

Cong: I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Lead: Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Together: Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.





Vernon Park *Church of God*

Announcement



Wedding Anniversaries



Keith and Sonja Hawkins Jr - 1 year, August 1st

Revs. Erwin and Libby Lee - 20 years, August 7th

Peter & Rene Mullings - 12 years, August 11th

Robert & Carmen Banks - 24 years, August 12th

Travis & Venita Poindexter - 25 years, August 13th

Roy & Katrice Burns - 25 years, August 14th

Kevin & Jacque Harris - 13 years, August 18th

William & Relda Jackson - 17 years, August 24th

Paul & Veronica Dark - 34 years, August 24th

William & Sharron Fowler - 21 years, August 29th



The Corner of Hope & Possibilities

A Tribute to Pastor Jerald January Sr. and the VPCOG Family.

I could write a book about Pastor, but I have one page to capture some of what I've witnessed. Most of you have known him longer than I have, but few of you know him as well as I do. We all know he doesn't like fanfare; he instead prefers knowing people are grateful. So, in my 6 minutes (wink) I'd like to unpack and highlight what I believe are some of his most valuable qualities. **His vision, character, wisdom and strength.**

What he does in the pulpit is a one of a kind God design because he's an introvert. Underneath that shyness is a mind in motion, visualizing what's next. He saw farmland filled with VP's Faith, a vestibule transformed into a tabernacle, a corridor converted into classrooms and VPV benefiting financially from partnerships. From my front row seat in the stadium of his life I can tell you his thoughts are vast, deep and wide. He consecrates the blueprint of possibility before opening his mouth. He SEES it (in his heart) before he SEES it (in his mind) to ensure we SEE it (with our eyes). **Pastor J has VISION. No brag just fact.**

He is not excitable when hearing good or bad news, his reaction is steady and measured. And while this may cause some to pause, we should be grateful the person at the helm of VPV isn't reactionary, easily angered or vindictive. As a man of discipline and integrity he plans meticulously and is passionate about our purpose. Systematic strategies will not go unchecked. **Pastor J has CHARACTER. No brag just fact.**

If I needed advice for a decision, he would be my first call. He listens intently, asks the intended outcome, and seeks the Father before answering. What we want and expect in a leader is the intelligence and insight to weigh a situation, by balancing our hopes and desires with God's plans and promises. **Pastor J has WISDOM. No brag just fact.**

Pastor gushes about YOU (VP) while traveling, crediting you for all we've accomplished. You are our army of warriors, servants, family, friends and our future hope. So, in my last 30 seconds, let me remind you that our Pastor, my husband and best friend fought off death, disappointment, depression and despair - opened his heart to love again - just to get back to YOU. Had he left 3 1/2 years ago no one would've blamed him. You can only imagine what it takes to drive onto this campus, walk through those doors, fight these legal battles, and take direct body blows from some of your own flock? It takes valor. **Pastor J has STRENGTH. No brag just fact.**



Pastor and I thank God for each of you. Your love, trust and faithfulness are a lifeline for us. Today we're closer to the finish line than ever before, it's just around the corner of hope and possibilities.

In His Grip,
Lady Maura Gale-January

Minister of MauraVation®