

Transcript of Oral History Interview with Reverend Anthony Guy

Interviewee: Reverend Anthony Guy

Interviewer: Speaker 1

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Abstract: Reverend Anthony Guy talks about not only how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected his faith and beliefs but also how those faith and beliefs have affected his views on the pandemic. He also talks about how his church made changes to continue holding services and what community service activities they've engaged in to help alleviate issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Interviewer 00:00

Okay, right here I got with me I am going to be interviewing Reverend Anthony Guy. He is a licensed minister with the UPCI, known as the United Pentecostal church International. He is also a public minister, a local minister at Statesboro United Pentecostal church. Reverend Guy, the first question I've got for you is: how has the COVID-19 affected your faith or beliefs?

Reverend Anthony Guy 00:24

Well, I feel like this strengthened my faith and my beliefs because we've learned, through our readings of the Bible in our studying, that the Bible speaks about the end times being similar to what we're facing now. And also, through this, we've seen our local assembly, people draw closer to God through this, um, we've seen people get the Holy Ghost over the phone through this pandemic, we've seen, we've seen a lot of people just really, really get closer to God during this. So, I feel, like, personally for me, it's strengthened my faith and my belief in God and it's just showed me that from the Bible speaks of end times, it's exactly what we're dealing with what we're going through now.

Interviewer 01:11

So just to reflect basically, this, this COVID-19 has strengthened your beliefs and your faith more than it has dampered them. It's been a, it's been a, it's been a positive change towards your faith and belief versus a negative.

Reverend Anthony Guy 01:26

It has, it has, because I know for me personally, since I was a child I've heard that, you know, "God's coming back soon, God's coming back soon." And we've read in the Bible, we've heard about just times being like it is now and I'm 28 years old and I went my whole life hearing that and then, just seeing the way the world is reacting now and what's going on, it just reflects the teachings that I've received in my whole life. So, for me, it's even more confirmation of what I believe.

Interviewer 01:54

Gotcha, gotcha. Well, the second question I got for you Reverend Guy is: is your religious community still gathering currently? And, if they are, how has COVID-19 affected your participation in your religious community?

Reverend Anthony Guy 02:07

So as of right now, we have stuck to what our local city guidelines have been from our sheriff's department and our local, local authorities and governing body. So, we are meeting 10 people or less and we're staying six feet apart. We've been doing a lot of online services were just a few of us gather. We've also done parking lot services where the cars are spaced six feet apart, everybody stays in their vehicle. So, for us, personally, we are still meeting but we're sticking with the guidelines that have been laid out for us. And, for me, it hasn't really changed how much I gather, the way I go. Because I mean, we believe in using wisdom and, you know, being careful with everything we do but, at the same time, we also trust that God is going to protect us through this. So, I think, for me personally, it hasn't changed the way I've gotten involved or attended church. And, as a local church, we've still continued to have services and conduct them the best way we can.

Interviewer 03:05

All right, and just to touch again on. So how has this this COVID-19 affected your participation in your religious community? As far as you in general has it made it more, more, more, you know, with conflict showing up or has it made it more easily? How, how's it really just affected your participation and what, and what you do?

Reverend Anthony Guy 03:31

Alright, so as far as like, we're given the option like, our pastor has given us the option, you know, we don't feel pressured or forced to come and meet more than you're allowed to. He's given us the option, if we feel safe staying at home, then just stay at home or if we feel comfortable enough coming, come. So, for me, I've just, it hasn't really affected anything. I've stayed comfortable with coming to church and we've just utilized everything that we can from, whether it's Facebook Living the services or meeting the parking lot services. We've seen that that is just as effective right now as us having our regular services. For instance, in the parking lot service, we've seen the same type of results. There was a lady in our neighborhood who came out and listen to the service and she received the Holy Ghost in her yard. So, for us, the results of how we're having to conduct service now is similar to when we was able to meet and congregate together. So, I feel like it hasn't really changed much for us except we can't go 10 or more.

Interviewer 04:35

Gotcha. So, you know, the, the religious community that you're a part of is still gathering and it hasn't changed your participation much with the COVID-19 crisis. The third question I have for you is: is your religious community supplying or engaged in any kind of community service and attempt to alleviate issues caused by the pandemic? And, if there are those that the religious community is engaged in, like helping with community self-service, what are those? And, yeah, what are those efforts?

Reverend Anthony Guy 05:09

So, right now we're involved in a few different things. The first thing we did, with us being a church, is we've started a prayer line because we've seen the studies where suicide depression, anxiety is like an all-time high because of this pandemic. So, we've started a prayer line where people can call in for an encouraging word, a word of prayer. And we've seen the difference that's made, because you know, just that encouragement that we can give to people during this pandemic. We've also partnered with the local sheriff's department, and we've have started delivering meals to the elderly who, who may fit, they can't get out of their house, or they can't travel right now. So, we're involved with that, as far as getting them food. We've also reached out as a local church, and we've provided dinners for the local law enforcement here in our town. And we've also provided dinners for local healthcare workers at a doctor's office. So right now, pretty much we're providing dinners for those that we can and we're also offering that word of encouragement and prayer to those who may need it.

Interviewer 06:15

Awesome. Awesome. So, you're, what part of your religious community, in the community service ranges from a prayer line all the way to creating meals for the elderly, and those that are on the frontlines of this pandemic, and actually, you know, facing it on a daily basis?

Reverend Anthony Guy 06:31

Yes, yes, we, we've tried, you know, just to do all that we can for our local city and community. And just to reach out and help those that are in need during this time. So, we'd like to expand and do more but for right now, those are the areas that we're involved in.

Interviewer 06:48

Awesome, awesome. Reverend Guy, I want to thank you for the opportunity of allowing me to interview you, and also allowing me to be able to make this recording public on the issue COVID archive project. I really appreciate your time, sir. Thank you.

Reverend Anthony Guy 07:00

Yes, sir. Thank you.