Church of God: "Christianity"

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This time I decided to attend a Protestant service by the name of 21st Street Church of God, located at 1601 N 21st in the Church Hill area of Richmond City. I attended this Conservative Christian Church on November 29, 2015. The presiding official was Pastor Silas Oliver who has been pastoring there now for about three years. He is originally from Florida.

21st Street Church of God is really small compared to the services I’ve already attended. You can also tell that it has been there for many years. The exterior of the church is simple to say the least. It’s mainly brick with a tall oval/triangle entrance. There’s a lot of stairs that lead to the front door with an outside elevator alongside. There is also an outside ramp that leads to a door on the side of the building. There are three crosses in the right front yard of the church, one brown and two white. An itinerary is provided to show which services they have on Sunday and throughout the week. You can tell that there’s a basement from the structure of the building and from the stairs on the left front of the building that go under the main entrance. When I walked up the stairs to enter, a man was standing there greeting everyone and opening the door. I’ve never been to a church were I was greeted before even entering the building, this was a nice touch. After we greeted each other, I walked through the very small vestibule of the church before entering the sanctuary. The sanctuary was small as well with a very straight forward look. The whole carpet was red as well as the upholstery on the pews. There were wooden floors, but only between pews.

To the back of the church was a choir room where most of the choir members were waiting to walk down the aisle. I went to take a seat and noticed the beautiful stein glass windows. All of them had the names of the families that had donated the money to create the widows. I see that as being such a touching aspect in a church and it always makes me feel comfortable knowing that a church is so personal and loving. That made me comfortable as well as the people in the congregation. There were only African Americans present except for the first lady who is from Barbados. There weren’t many young kids, the congregation consisted of many senior citizens and the rest consisted of adults and young adults. The congregation consisted of mostly women, but not by a substantial amount. Everyone was very inviting and comforting with the way they greeted me. I ended up sitting with family that had greeted me very nicely and had offered me a seat with them. The service soon started with the “Women’s Choir” and they sounded great. They were very uplifting and full of energy which made the congregation get more excited. Between songs there was an offering and prayer. After prayer, the pastor came down from the pulpit and stood in the middle aisle for anyone who wanted to come get anointed. When I went to get anointed, he asked me if I needed any specific prayer and then he blessed me and placed oil on my
church was casual and natural. Most of the congregation was up and very engaged. I saw
a couple reserved people but they were either teenagers or elders. The service was so natural
that I would have to say it was spontaneous compared to the other services I attended.
This church had no rituals except for praying, which is common in every religion. I can say
that I did enjoy myself and I’m sure others would feel just as I do if they like exciting and
engaging services that make you want to get on your feet.

The service began with singing, and Pastor Oliver walked around to anoint the elders.
I assumed this was a way to connect the congregation. Pastor Oliver then addressed
the congregation about Advent, a period leading up to Christmas, and included the
four preceding Sundays. Three people read about Advent and were followed by a
musical selection and the Pastor’s sermon. Pastor Oliver is very passionate and
moved a lot in his sermon, even making some jokes. This sermon lasted about forty-five
minutes and ended with the congregation very pleased. The benediction ended with
a prayer and a closing song, which the whole church sang. I actually knew the song
and sang along. Afterward, everyone got social, hugging and conversing. The family I
was with introduced me to people, and everyone seemed genuinely happy to talk.
Overall, this church was very comforting, and the service was emotional in a way that
was not forceful.