



STORY

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TESTIMONY

## AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS A GOSPEL DESTINATION IN THE MOST UNLIKELY PLACE

### Een Gospelbestemming Op De Meest Onwaarschijnlijke Plaats



Photo by Brother Ricky Johnson



**Brother Ricky Johnson**  
**TOG Newsletter Manager**  
**Headquarters Temple, PA**

According to greatvalue.com, there are nine amazing reasons to visit Amsterdam: museums; food; beer; canals; parks and gardens; café culture; bikes galore; history and culture; and the Red-Light district. As you might have guessed, "a place of worship" is not included in the suggestions for visiting the European country. But that did not stop the Truth of God from rolling in town to celebrate its well anticipated First Combined European Convocation in Amsterdam, Netherlands, on Sept. 22-24, 2023, at the Wi Eegi Kerki Building.

Well, that message has been sinking in. Having traveled quite a bit with Pastor Jennings to many of these international events, I have seen the number of people from America and foreign countries increase since our Jamaican Convocation in 2022 after the COVID-19 ban was lifted and in other areas where Pastor has been preaching. Upon landing at the airport, I saw many familiar faces from Headquarters, branch locations and international locations eager to attend this convocation. For many saints, this trip was their first time flying and their first time leaving their native country. One sister previously interviewed by the TOG International newsletter team, Sister Esther Fitzgerald from the Pine Bluff,

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New York Temple, expressed she had been wanting to travel with the Truth of God and what motivated her the most was to do the work of the Lord and meet her brothers and sisters. The Welcome Committee warmly welcomed us when we arrived in Amsterdam. Soon after, members of the transportation department escorted the saints to their hotels. The next day, we had a scheduled tour of Brussels, Belgium, that the European Convocation Committee hosted. During this tour, we met some of our brothers and sisters (new and old alike) while enjoying the food, culture, conversation, and, of course, shopping.

### "Most Unlikely Place of Worship"



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# OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY: BEHOLD, ALL THINGS BECOME NEW



**Sister J. Sibaly**  
Contributor  
F.C. Mauritius Island

## “Simply Have Faith In God”

Greetings, saints. Truly, God is good to those who are pure in heart. This is a testimony of one of our brothers in Mauritius. I hope it will be an encouragement to many as we all went through so much before our eyes finally opened to see the Truth.

An ‘Ichthys’ bumper sticker is what ignited the curiosity of Brother Ajay Maddoo when he saw it on one of his colleague’s cars. The Ichthys symbol is supposedly a marker for one that believes in Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, Bro. Maddoo never had the occasion to approach his colleague until one day he saw him near a store and asked if he was a Christian. The colleague responded positively, adding that he attended the Assembly of God church. Yet he had a cigarette in his hand.

Bro. Maddoo proceeded to invite him to a First Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ Holy Convocation in Mauritius. And when he came and heard Apostle Gino Jennings preaching the Word of God, he was furious because the Apostle spoke negatively against his church. He therefore refused to listen to anything and left the assembly.

A full year went by before Bro. Maddoo received an unexpected phone call from him. He reported that he was bedridden due to a nerve pinch and the Chikungunya virus, which had made things worse. He reached out for help from our Minister, as he could not work in this situation. He said he would very much appreciate it if he and Bishop Sibaly could come visit him to pray for him. They immediately responded, and upon reaching there, they saw how bad the situation was.

They prayed for him, preached to him and clarified his doubts.

He told them though he was paying tithes, his pastor did not bother to pay him a visit or worry about his situation. According to him, “I was searching for God, truly, when going to these churches, but I was still living a life full of sin. I was gambling, smoking, and drinking. I went to many churches, and all I heard was give your money, give your money! My wife and two sons would accompany me.”

After preaching to him, he was convinced that this is the Truth, and he asked to be baptized right away. They continued to visit him until he was back on his feet and could attend church service.

However, his wife refused to follow him saying that she will not step in that church until she sees him turning away from his old ways. God worked in this man’s heart in such a way that he buried his old ways and was turning into a new man. She eventually saw the change and came to church, not only to listen, but she asked to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.



All Photos From Sister J. Sibaly



# OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY: BEHOLD, ALL THINGS BECOME NEW

The first time Bishop Sibaly visited the brother's home, he saw his two sons. At that time, he noticed that there was an issue with the elder one. He was quite short for his age, and the younger one was much taller than he was. Little did the parents know that their son was suffering from a hormone deficiency and had stopped growing. Bishop advised him to take his son to a doctor after praying for them. The results showed that the child had no growth hormone.

The doctor explained that he needed to fill in a request for funding and send it to the Ministry of Health for his son to get the relevant treatment. However, the treatment was expensive. After Bishop received the news, he encouraged him and told him to have faith that God would surely make a way. The doctor contacted him again and advised him that since it is a rare disease, there was a possibility that the government would not acknowledge it since the treatment was extremely expensive, amounting to Rs 600, 000 (approximately \$17,000) per year. In addition, his superior would probably not approve the application. Bishop, again, encouraged him. He told him to submit the application for funding for the treatment, and to have faith and continue to pray.

His faith in God bore fruits. Approval was granted by his superior and he received free treatment for his child for FIVE YEARS! Today, his son is living a life as a normal young man, all thanks to God.

Some years later, his wife, our faithful sister, passed away. It was a difficult time phase for the family, but God pulled them through. He did not let go of God's hand. He continued to strive, and the Lord filled him with the Holy Spirit. Many times, he testified telling us that this fight is hard, but he refused to let go of the Truth. We saw his determination, his love for God, his humility, his obedience and thirst for spiritual growth.

Today, our brother Indiren Cheenacunnan is a Minister of the Truth and is responsible for the temple at St. Croix, Mauritius. He built that same temple, for he had the desire to have one there. It is always an encouragement when we hear the testimonies of the brothers and sisters, for it strengthens and renews faith.

Please Saints, stay encouraged and do not let go of the Truth. Continue to pray for one another. Let your Love for the Truth be as strong as ever. Peace be unto you.

Sis. J. Sibaly  
F.C Mauritius Island



# FIRST CHURCH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The story of the establishment of FCOOLJC U.K.



**Sis Peggy Beckford**  
Editor and Writer  
London Temple

The story of the establishment of the First Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the United Kingdom is, in essence, the convergence of three life paths that would culminate in the planting of the Truth of God seed in hard and often impenetrable soil. Today, that seed has germinated into large active temples in various locations in the UK, opening the door to launching several new works in Europe.

The beloved and now deceased Elder Johnson took the first of these pathways. Like many young men that left Jamaica in the 1950s-1960s, he responded to the Motherland's call for laborers to rebuild Britain after the years of wartime devastation. They came to England with great enthusiasm and ambitions.

In Jamaica, Elder Johnson had previously been familiar with the teachings of the late Bishop SC Johnson (no relation). So when he arrived in England, he was underwhelmed by the formality and deadness of the English State churches, a far cry from what he had left behind.

Soon after, like many young men he formed his home groups, meeting in their homes. When they slowly outgrew them, they moved into community spaces or small halls in traditional churches. When they slowly outgrew them, they moved into community spaces or small halls in traditional churches.

By the time the work in High Wycombe had been born, Elder Johnson, who, like other men who had formed their group, joined a circuit of other small assemblies

that took turns visiting each other's churches in rotation. Brother Winston Morris, from the High Wycombe temple, recalled that he was the designated driver responsible for driving the High Wycombe saints to visit the other assemblies.

However, as the years passed, Elder Johnson became increasingly dissatisfied as he watched in despair; many of the old landmarks he had grown up with ceased to be preached against. The emphasis on the Oneness of God seemed less urgent, while the previous strict teachings against women preachers, modesty and the prohibition against divorce and remarriage were no longer emphasized. He often contemplated who would succeed him in a climate of deteriorating Biblical standards.

Brother Morris shared that it was at this time that a young man, Danny Thompson, emerged (our own Elder Dan Thompson). Elder Johnson was familiar with his family, especially his father, Elder Hezekiah Thompson. The families and other saints from High Wycombe often went to Bristol, where Elder Thompson lived, for services in the home of Elder Hezekiah Thompson

in the 1960s. Daniel Thompson (who had migrated to America) informed Elder Johnson about an emerging young, dynamic preacher he had been exposed to, Pastor Gino Jennings.

Elder Johnson conducted a lengthy telephone conversation with Pastor Jennings to ensure their beliefs were compatible. Reassured, he invited Pastor Jennings to England to attend a conference in 1997, which Pastor Jennings humbly accepted. Many of Elder Johnson's associates at that time were excited to accept the invitation and attend the conference to listen to the upcoming young preacher Elder Johnson had so emphatically spoken about. Pastor Jennings, undaunted by the faces, went to work in the bible. His message on that first occasion focused on the "stone that was cut out of the mountain, without hand." The audience loudly endorsed their agreement with shouts of Amen and other words and gestures of encouragement until Pastor proceeded to hammer the doctrine against women preachers, marriage and divorce with the same force.



Photo by Brother Ricky Johnson

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# AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

## A gospel destination in the most unlikely places

On Friday, it was back to business and attention to the reason for being in Amsterdam, the preaching of God's Word. Each night, Pastor Jennings brought forth the Word of God and asked the congregation very sobering questions that resulted in "put-on-your-thinking cap" moments.

The auditorium was almost full on the first night. Unfortunately, Minister Williams was absent due to chronic back pain and sent his apologies for not being able to make it.

Pastor Jennings opened with I Corinthians 2:1-5, instructing the audience to serve God with their lives and pray that their faith stands in God's Word.

He asked the congregation if the Lord came for us would we be ready? This question seems to get the same response every time he asks it: complete silence.

On Saturday, Minister Williams arrived and rendered an emotional testimony of thanks and praise to God for the wisdom, knowledge and understanding he has given Pastor Jennings. Minister Williams also acknowledged Pastor's dedication and consistency in the Ministry.



All photos by Brother Ricky Johnson



Pastor Jennings took the time to reflect on the Vision that God gave him more than 46 years ago and how the present Combined European tour and many requests from so many other European countries humbly began with a small congregation in High Wycombe, England, with the late Elder Filbert Johnson as the officiating bishop at that time.

Pastor Jennings then began to teach the congregation to put a difference between themselves and the world. He went on to encourage us not to be ashamed or scared to be different in God.

The Word is designed to bring people back to God. Before concluding the service, he asked the congregation how badly they wanted to get to God.

On Sunday, Pastor announced what everyone was waiting for: the Second Combined European Convocation will be held in Berlin, Germany, in 2024. Pastor Jennings went on to say that holding the convention in Berlin would be historic for the Truth of God since so much bloodshed and racism had occurred there, and it's where Adolph Hitler spent his last days.

He opened in Isaiah 62:10, instructing the people that God has a standard and it's not easy, but the benefits outweigh destruction. As Pastor taught, he also used the example of eight souls were saved in Noah's time, and Lot and his household were saved, but his wife looked back, turning into a pillar of salt.

These biblical examples illustrate the point that although many people lived during both times, only a remnant was saved.

He then turned to the congregation and asked if they struggled with looking back and whether they desired to go back to what the Lord had delivered them from. He quoted the scripture that reads "Whosoever commits sin is of the devil" while emphasizing whosoever, not excluding the Apostles themselves.

To open Sunday evening's service, Pastor Jennings thanked God for Evangelist Taj's dedication and faithfulness and stated he had a reputation for not deviating from the Scriptures. Pastor Jennings addressed Evangelist Taj as his forerunner because he has sent him to many locations in Europe that he has not visited yet.

Pastor Jennings also chatted one-on-one with the young people, addressing many of the ill behaviors that are prevalent among youth, including lack of responsibility for their actions, disrespect toward the elderly, indecent appearance, teenage pregnancies (while unmarried), murders and gang participation, to name a few.



# MOTHER MATILDA ROSE

## An over a century interview



**Sis Mary Bailey**  
Contributor  
Headquarters Temple



At the time of this interview, Mother Matilda Rose celebrated her 100th birthday on February 26, 2022 and was very thankful to God for blessing her. She is now 101!

She was born in Philadelphia, PA and is the oldest and last surviving of her parents' three children.

Mother Rose heard the late Bishop Sherrod C. Johnson preach the Word of God at a young age. Bishop Johnson kept preaching Acts 2:38 to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

She attended church at 22nd Street and Montgomery Avenue, hearing Bishop Johnson preach moreover, "repent and be baptized or die and go to hell."

The preaching finally pricked her heart, and Bishop Johnson baptized her at the temple located at 22nd and Bainbridge Streets before fire destroyed the church.

Mother Rose was a faithful member in Holiness under the leadership of Bishop S. C. Johnson, along with her three daughters.

She enjoyed the Holy Ghost-filled Senior and Young Adult Choirs and loved the song "Look on the Brighter Side" sung by the Young Adult Choir. She could not sing in the choir because she had not received the gift of the Holy Ghost yet [a requirement in Bishop Johnson's ministry].

During our interview she joyfully sang "Look on the Brighter Side." Mother Rose brightened up with a beautiful smile and started singing along with her daughter, Sister Marva Johnson and me, happily praising God!

Mother Rose retains what she was taught to this day as she continues to hold to the teaching of God's Word. She firmly believes one has to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and continue to obey and serve God or die and go to hell.

Mother Rose attributes her long life to being faithful in church and not living in sin. She remained active throughout her time attending church, praying and listening to the Word of God. She never relinquished her faith, still believing in God and striving to be saved.

Mother Rose started attending First Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ when it was headquartered at 2431 Frankford Avenue and still remains a member under Pastor Gino Jennings's leadership.

She shared she would tell everyone to listen to Pastor Jennings as he teaches the Word of God if she were given the opportunity!

# AMSTERDAM

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He didn't spare parents as he went on to address those who have not been role models and allowed their kids to fall victim to the council of ungodly advice. Pastor Jennings advised the youth to remember the scriptures that read "You will reap what you sow," and everything you have done will come back to you one way or another. And as in all the previous services, he asked the youth a simple question: "What are you going to do with yourselves?"

The convocation was a great success. A total of 60 souls were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. The European Youth Choir and The European Mass Choir did a wonderful job of rendering various selections.

The European Convention Committee planned and organized the convention very well. We would like to thank the baptismal team for their hard work and for having everything ready for the candidates every night. Also, we want to thank all our ministers in attendance: Minister Winston Bogle, Elder James Fletcher, Minister Alastair Barnett, Minister Steven Williams, Evangelist Taj Utsey, and of course, our beloved Pastor and General Overseer, Pastor Jennings, for bringing forth the Word each night. Also, we want to thank all those who worked behind the scenes to make everything run smoothly. Continue to keep Pastor Jennings, all of our ministers, and one another in prayer.

Lord willing, we will see you in Berlin, Germany, in 2024.





# FIRST CHURCH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

## The story of the establishment of FCOOLJC U.K.

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A lull descended, most notably from the pulpit. One preacher, when he could take it no longer, left the meeting, leaving behind the members that had accompanied him. Immediately when the preaching concluded, a host of the visiting preachers surrounded Pastor Jennings in defiance, bombarding him with questions.

Pastor Jennings addressed their opposition to his Biblical doctrine calmly and confidently, in accordance with what is written, challenging their doctrines and preconceived notions.

Pastor Jennings made regular visits to the UK for the annual conferences. Each time, he ferociously challenged the Biblical misconceptions. Many resisted the strictness of the teachings. During this period, the Church witnessed a great falling away. Brother Morris commented that Elder Johnson decided that the High Wycombe church would no longer visit the associate churches since their biblical doctrines were incompatible.

To encourage the saints, the brethren from Headquarters (HQ) visiting the UK brought tapes and video cassettes of Pastor Jennings' recorded messages. The UK Saints eagerly circulated them among one another as they listened repeatedly and intensely. They also attended conferences held at Headquarters in Philadelphia, fellowshiping with saints and acquiring even more tapes each time they visited to feed upon when they returned home. During this period Pastor Jennings occasionally sent (Elder) Dan Thompson to encourage the saints in High Wycombe.

As Elder Johnson advanced in age, he repeatedly expressed his heartfelt desire that the Lord send the right person to care for the souls of the little flock he loved dearly and openly confessed that he had been praying for over 40 years for such a man to emerge. Before passing at 88 in 2005, he repeated this mantra before formally handing the church (a congregation of 15 regular attendees) to Pastor Jennings, asking him to look after them, to which Pastor Jennings replied, "Yes, Sir."



*All photos by Brother Ricky Johnson*

The second pathway, being trod simultaneously, was that by an unassuming man, Elder Bryan, who had been operating under the auspices of a bishop based in Southeast London. Elder Bryan, a very faithful brother, had already developed the discipline and commitment of traveling each Sunday between two small assemblies in North and South London. He, too, would occasionally visit Elder Johnson's church in High Wycombe and was soon exposed to Pastor Jennings' Holiness teachings. Many of his followers, however, were not persuaded by the strict teachings and fell away. Soon, only Elder Bryan and Sister Sandra remained. They attended meetings in London in the mornings and traveled to high Wycombe in the evenings.



The third and final pathway that would converge to form the founding members was that of the late Brother Walters and his wife, Sister Barbara. Sister Barbara shared that she had been familiar with Elder Johnson's family since childhood, having come up through the Apostolic movement. Once introduced to Pastor Jennings via Elder Johnson, they tuned in regularly to the shortwave radio broadcast even though the signal wasn't clear. They, too, were reliant on tapes, CDs and video cassettes. Soon, they also met regularly in High Wycombe.

They all fondly remembered that Pastor Jennings requested a meeting in South London (Brixton Town Hall), which a good contingency from HQ, including Minister Steve Williams and Mother and Sister Jennings also attended.

Despite the local church's limited members in High Wycombe and London, after the passing of Elder Johnson, Pastor Jennings asked Elder Bryan to be caretaker of the church. Elder Bryan faithfully attended the morning service (attended by a handful of saints) and then traveled 60 miles for the evening service in High Wycombe. Pastor Jennings periodically sent ministers from HQ when he could not attend.



# FIRST CHURCH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

## The story of the establishment of FCOOLJC U.K.

In 2018, the London church was relocated to Hooley Hall in Coulsdon, South London, and in 2019, the Birmingham Temple launched. Elder Bryan continued faithfully until his sad departure in 2018 at 91.

God rewards faithfulness: Once the foundation of the Church was established, the platform to build and expand was now in place. The exponential growth of the TOG viewers on both YouTube and TOG TV mirrored the significant growth of the London Temple and the start of the Birmingham Temple. From the High Wycombe Church, many temples in the UK and Europe emerged. Some of the temples have grown so large we are actively seeking larger premises to accommodate the congregations.

Brother Morris and his wife, Sister Carmen, Mother Lynette Pitt, Sister Sandra Owens and Sister Barbara Walters kindly came together to share their memories of the early years of First Church in High Wycombe. I ended the session by asking each of them, in turn, about the challenges they have faced and whether they have ever been tempted to turn back.

Each agreed that England is a particularly tough ground to harvest. The decline in organized religion and growth in atheism, paganism and the now fashionable attitude to profess no faith, have increased the challenges to the growth. Mother Lynette shared that many nights she cried out to the Lord to send a minister as the church numbers dwindled. She reported that she prayed and fasted the more.

Even when those around her attempted to stop her fasting, she gave them the illusion that she was eating and continued earnestly with her fasting and petitions unto the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing that only He could carry her through the storms of life.

Brother and Sister Morris commented that few stayed faithful and endured the course. They opened their home to the believers, and Sister Carmen often called the High Wycombe brethren to check on them. Sister Sandra said she often thinks of the song that says, 'I wonder how I got over,' but she is convinced Pastor Jennings is a true apostle and his prophecies are being fulfilled. Sister Barbara concluded that, ultimately, she doesn't want to go to hell, and although she lost her husband, her love is anchored firmly in Jesus Christ.

They all concluded that the spiritual warfare is real, but they are all determined, by God's grace, to hold on to the end. While writing this article, another faithful foundational member, Mother Williams, passed. We offer our condolences to her family and associates.

*Peace Be*





# NATURAL HAIR TIPS

## A Method to Maximize Moisture/Hydration in Hair



**Sis Vontashia Brown**  
**Contributor**  
**Columbia, SC Temple**

*Greetings from First Naturals & Wholesale LLC!*

My name is Miss Von, and I'll like to share a natural hair care tip, which I use for my natural hair and hair care routine to maximize moisture/hydration. Known as LOC Method or Liquid-Oil-Cream Method, it is used to maximize hydration and consists of a liquid, an oil, and a cream to achieve moisture and hydration. Although some use the LCO Method, liquid first, cream next, and then coating hair strands with oil, I prefer the traditional way - it leads to desired results. It also keeps my hair hydrated while in protective styles and helps length retention, preventing and decreasing breakage, split ends, and dryness.

The LOC Method is perfect for use during the winter when the air is dry and cold and during hot and humid summer months. Implementing the method in the liquid-oil-cream sequence allows moisture to penetrate the hair shaft deeply.

Also, the LOC Method is great for those with low-porosity hair, as low-porosity hair tends to repel moisture. To implement the LOC Method, always apply your hair care product on clean hair. Your hair can either be dry or dampened, whichever you prefer. The liquid can be water or a water-based product. It is important to note that the liquid is the first step to adding moisture to your hair strands.

After applying the desired amount of water or water-based product, apply an oil to seal in the moisture from the water or water-based product.

Then coat your hair with a cream-based product to lock in the liquid and oil into your hair strands.

The reason why a cream-based product should be the last step is that retaining moisture is vital for length retention. It also helps lessen split ends, breakage, or dry/brittle/damaged hair strands. Also, creams have the thickest consistency, meaning they will hold in moisture and create definition in curls while providing shine and hold to your hair. Once you have evenly applied the products to your hair, you can now style your hair as desired. While hair is in protective styles, it helps to hydrate the hair with a spray bottle filled with water or a water-based product. You want to do as little maintenance as possible to your hair while in its protective style to minimize breakage or damage and to allow your hair time and space to grow.

That is all for now! Thank you for reading, and I hope you all enjoyed my tips for maintaining moisture/hydration in your hair!

Until soon,  
First Naturals & Wholesale LLC



All photos by Sister Vontashia Brown

www.firstnaturals.net



# PINEAPPLE AND COCONUT CAKE

Treicha Bakes!



*Sis Tavia Seymour-Lewis*  
Contributor  
England, UK

## Ingredients for the Cake

- 227 grams butter
- 600 grams granulated sugar
- 5 eggs (separated)
- 1 tin crushed pineapple in juice (drained with juice reserved)
- 175 milliliters pineapple juice
- 175 milliliters Greek yogurt
- 175 milliliters full-fat coconut milk
- 6 tablespoons corn starch
- 295 grams plain all-purpose flour
- 5 teaspoons baking powder
- one-fourth to one-half teaspoon almond extract (can be substituted for pineapple or coconut extract for intense flavor)
- 1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla (can be substituted for pineapple or coconut extract for intense flavor)

## Cream Cheese Frosting

- 500 grams Full Fat Cream cheese
- 300 milliliters Double cream
- 65 grams Sifted Powdered Sugar

**Note:** Add all the above ingredients to a stand mixer and beat until stiff.

## Filling

- Crushed tin pineapple
- Desiccated coconut
- Cream cheese frosting (all measurements to your liking)

 Treicha Bakes  treisha\_bakes



Photo by Sister Tavia Seymour-Lewis

## Directions

I usually start by separating five eggs when preparing pineapple and coconut cake. Then, I beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form, after which I'll set them aside for later. In a stand mixer, I cream butter and sugar together until they are pale in color. Then, I add the egg yolks one at a time, making sure each egg yolk is well incorporated before adding the next. Once all the egg yolks are incorporated, and the mixture is uniform in color, I add vanilla and almond extract to the mix (for a more intense flavor, pineapple or coconut extract is a good substitute). After giving everything a quick mix, I alternate between adding my dry (plain flour, cornstarch, and baking powder) and wet ingredients (Greek yogurt, coconut milk, and pineapple juice). My final ingredient is the beaten egg whites, which I gently fold into the batter, ensuring not to over-mix.

I will then split the mixture between two 10-inch baking pans before baking them at 175° for 25 to 30 minutes. Once the cakes are completely cooled, I usually top one cake with the filling, ensuring it gets to the edges before placing the second on top. I finish the pineapple and coconut cake by covering it in cream cheese frosting and toasted desiccated coconut (can be omitted).

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