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# United News™

News of the United Church of God, an International Association

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September/October 2009

## News At a Glance

### Treasurer Reports Year-End Figures to Council

Treasurer Jason Lovelady said we ended the 2008-2009 fiscal year with a total income of \$23,840,000. While this was 2.7 percent under what was budgeted, it still represented an increase in income of approximately 1.5 percent over the previous year. Expenses for last year were \$23,463,000. In the context of the budget, we ended the year with a net income over expenses of approximately \$376,000.

To bring things up to date, the treasurer gave an income summary report for the current 2009-2010 fiscal year showing that total income stands at an increase of 4.02 percent over the same period last year for the first six weeks.

### Good News Print Advertising Campaign Launched

An extensive print advertising campaign will be conducted between August and December 2009 using card-pack co-op mailers. For this effort we are employing the services of Marketshare Publications Inc., a well-established, 24-year-old commercial publishing company.

Over 3,500,000 U.S. households will be offered both a subscription to *The Good News* and one of the following foundational booklets: *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*, *Heaven and Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach? Is There Really a Devil? Jesus Christ: The Real Story, Are We Living in the Time of the End?* and *Why Does God Allow Suffering?*

See "News at a Glance," page 2

### United Statistics

**YouTube Views as of Aug. 18**

172 GV Commentaries  
165,509 Views

249 Beyond Today Videos  
606,952 Views

www.youtube.com/beyondtodaytv

## Council Decides on Texas Property, Public Message and Communication

by Gerald Seelig

*This report is condensed from the Council reports. Visit the new Council of Elders Web site, [coe.ucg.org](http://coe.ucg.org), for full reports.*

The United Church of God Council of Elders decided to place the property in Denton, Texas, on the market and to reexamine how to use the space at the home office facilities in Milford, Ohio.

The Council also approved working with a company recommended by the Branding Task Force and approved a Council communication strategy.

### Denton Sale; Home Office Space-Needs Study

Aug. 13, Aaron Dean presented a resolution that had been edited by the Strategic Planning Committee after extensive discussions Aug. 10. Jason Lovelady asked the Council to consider the potential real estate investment of the Denton, Texas, property with the idea to hold on to it for five years or so, with expectations of appreciation in its market value and a better chance of receiving a more advantageous sales price later.

He further mentioned that this is not a good time to sell the property. Aaron Dean responded that there is talk of appreciating value, but the opposite could be just as likely with today's economy.

Doug Horchak mentioned that he is not against selling the Denton property, but does not want to sell the property



Britton Taylor gives a presentation on the UCG retirement policy Aug. 11 (photo by Elizabeth Cannon)

simply to send a message that Cincinnati is where we are. He stated that he is worried that "quick" could mean losing money on a sale of the property.

Jason Lovelady asked the Council to consider how the Church can maximize its value in this property. He will present a market analysis at a teleconference Sept. 10.

Aaron Dean then moved, Scott Ashley seconded and, of the 11 Council members present, 10 voted "yes" and one voted "no" (Doug Horchak), to adopt the resolution. (Jim Franks was not in attendance that day due to a previous commitment.)

The resolution states a number of action steps. There will be no new

study on home office relocation at the present time. The property in Denton, Texas, will be listed for sale and sold when an acceptable offer, as determined by the Council in conjunction with the treasurer, is made.

A space-needs study will be undertaken to determine what we can do with and without expansion of the present home office building. The administration will do a cost-benefit study of off-site space relating to residential housing for approved UCG education/training programs.

Although some pastoral trainees may need to take part in the ABC program,

See "Council," page 7

## ABC Kicks Off 2009-10 School Year

by Gary Antion

Ambassador Bible Center students began their classes Tuesday, Aug. 18. The orientation weekend began Aug. 16 with a welcome picnic hosted by

the ABC alumni living in the Cincinnati area.

Orientation was held on Monday, Aug. 17, with the administration and faculty giving presentations on what to expect and how to be successful at ABC.

The 40 students who will attend this year come from 15 different states and three countries outside of the United States. Two are coming from Canada, one from South Africa and another from Australia. Six students hail from California, the most for a single state, followed by Texas, Indiana and Ohio, with four.

This year will see a collegiate-like age group that will provide a lot of enthusiasm and energy for the class. The average age of students over the past 10 years of ABC is 22.

We are now accepting applications for next year's class. If you want to be a part of this spiritually uplifting, dynamic institution that teaches the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and encourages the development of godly character, check our Web site at [abc.ucg.org](http://abc.ucg.org). Look over our new catalog and download your application to be a part of the class of 2011! **UN**

Gary Antion is the director of admissions at ABC.



ABC class of 2009-2010 listens to orientation presentations Aug. 17 (photo by Michelle de Campos)

## Survey Update to Take Place After Feast

by David Register and Julie Zutz

In January 2008 a survey of United Church of God attendees was conducted to solicit feedback from members, attendees and elders regarding the progress, needs and services the Church provides.

Over 3,100 usable responses were received representing 18.6 percent of all members worldwide. It is encouraging that so many people took the time to give their input, and it demonstrates the concern and desire they have to see the work succeed.

We will conduct an update to this survey after the Feast of Tabernacles to gain more perspectives and to update the input to programs based upon the changing needs within the Church.

The survey numbers will now become part of our benchmark for measuring effectiveness. We plan to conduct an attendee survey every two years to measure progress and get feedback on our projects and programs for future strategic planning.

According to David Register, director of Education Programs and coordinator for the attendee survey project, "the Council and administration continue to take into consideration the information from the survey as we are developing plans and objectives.

See "Survey," page 12

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## News At a Glance

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Potential readers will be given the option of mailing one of six newly designed postage-paid cards or going to the Internet to place their order. Aaron Booth, Internet managing editor, and Paul Wasilkoff, senior programmer/analyst, have developed a new Internet landing page for this purpose: [www.gnmagazine.org/freebooklet](http://www.gnmagazine.org/freebooklet).

During this campaign we expect to add an estimated 16,000 new *Good News* subscribers at a cost of only \$3 each. As always, we greatly appreciate your prayers for God's blessings on this important advertising effort.

John LaBissoniere

## Good Works Develops New Program

The new director of the Good Works program met at the home office July 27 to 30 to discuss and develop the direction and scope of the new Good Works program with the administration.

Since August 2003 when the program was first rolled out, there have been many efforts to serve the Church around the world—often in conjunction with LifeNets (run by the pastor of the Terre Haute and Lafayette, Indiana, congregations, Victor Kubik, and his wife, Beverly).

The pastor of the Los Angeles, California, congregation, Larry Greider, and his wife, Bonnie, recently accepted the job of heading the new Good Works program.



Good Works coordinators Larry and Bonnie Greider meet with LifeNets coordinators Bev and Victor Kubik

Mr. Kubik has developed a policy statement with Ministerial Services and the Council of Elders that helps define areas where the Church's own Good Works program would fulfill the principle of Galatians 6:10 to specifically serve members of the Church, while LifeNets would continue with programs that involve projects outside of the UCG membership as well as continue the programs they currently manage for UCG members.

There is much to learn from the decade of experience of LifeNets, and the two programs plan to support and aid each other. A shared project sometime next year is in the planning stages. Contributions to the Good Works program can be made online, and local ini-

See "News at a Glance," page 16

## Profile: Rudy and Judy Rangel

The Media and Communications Services department welcomes Rudy Rangel to the home office as a new associate media producer.

Rudy comes to the home office by way of Southern Illinois where he was born and raised in a small town across the river from St. Louis, Missouri. Yes, he's a Cardinals fan. Rudy studied mass communication at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and graduated in 2008.

While in college, he worked at the campus jazz radio station that broadcast over the entire St. Louis metro area. He also helped produce his university's half-hour news show as well as a promotional video for the department to recruit new freshmen. He later completed an internship where he worked as a production assistant on commercials and edited small projects. Since graduation, he has worked as a freelance editor on projects such as a 50-minute documentary.

Baptized in 2002, Rudy is a second-generation Christian. After attending ABC in 2001, Rudy met his future wife, Judy, a proud Canadian gal, at Camp Heritage. Rudy and Judy were married in 2005 and have since attended the Fairview Heights, Illinois, congregation where they served in various facets including Sabbath school, teen Bible studies, hall set-up, kitchen service, counting the offering, songleading and speaking.



Rudy, Judy and Edie Rangel

Rudy attributes much of his success and happiness to strong family roots and the amazing people God has brought into his life through the Church. The couple also strongly endorses the United Youth Camps program as a major influence in shaping their paths as Christians.

Both have served at various camps for over 10 years.

Having both grown up in the Church, Rudy and Judy believe their greatest challenge as Christians is staying vigilant and close to God while living in an extremely liberal society.

"Know your Bible so the truth will always outweigh the postmodern thoughts and ideas that are so pervasive in our society," Rudy commented.

In their spare time Rudy and Judy love listening to music, going to concerts, reading, traveling, spending time with their families and friends and, now, raising their new daughter, Edie. Rudy enjoys spending time working in motion graphics as often as he can.

His passion for filmmaking and editing make him extremely excited to work at the home office. Rudy believes there is nothing better than doing the work of God in a field that he loves and is so grateful to God for the chance to do His work daily! **UN**

## FORWARD to the Feast!



by Jim Franks

By the time this issue of *United News* goes to press, the Feast of Tabernacles will be just six weeks away. With close to 22,000 brethren attending in over 60 sites around the world, the Feast is the major undertaking of the United Church of God on an annual basis.

Much of my time in Ministerial Services for the past week has been devoted to reviewing and distributing the speaking schedules for this year's Feast. Ministerial Services is responsible for 11 U.S. sites, and we assist in areas outside the United States as requested. This year we have U.S. elders traveling to France, South Africa, Canada, Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Estonia, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Jamaica, Barbados, Mauritius, Zambia, Malawi, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Peru and Italy.

The theme for this year's Festival video comes from Romans 14:16-19. In my memo to all the U.S.

speakers I quote from these verses, emphasizing verse 19: "Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another." In addition to being the theme of the video, this verse provides instruction for all our speakers—our goal in preparing messages is to edify.

Almost two years ago we surveyed the membership of the United Church of God and their views about the Church—what we are doing right and what areas are in need of improvement. The Feast of Tabernacles received the highest favorable rating—78 percent. The surveys simply reinforced the fact that the Feast is the spiritual (and physical) highlight of the year for all of us. We eagerly anticipate it and pray that God will provide the inspiration so that when it is over we truly feel edified. Albert Barnes, in his *New Testament Commentary*, writes this about the word "edify" in the section on Romans 14:

"The word *edify* means, properly, to *build*, as a house; then to rebuild or reconstruct; then to adorn or ornament; then to do anything that will confer favor or advantage, or which will further an object. Applied to the church, it means, to do anything by teaching,

counsel, advice, etc. which will tend to promote its great object; to aid Christians, to enable them to surmount difficulties... Christians are thus regarded, according to Paul's noble idea (Ephesians 2:20-22), as one great temple erected for the glory of God, having no separate interest, but as united for one object, and therefore bound to do all that is possible that each other may be fitted to their appropriate place, and perform their appropriate function in perfecting and adorning this temple of God" (emphasis added).

I really like the reference to the Church as "one great temple erected for the glory of God, having no separate interest, but as united for one object." The Feast of Tabernacles is both a family affair and a Church affair. The speakers have one object—to edify those who will be attending. If we collectively pray for God's inspiration, I believe God will provide it, and this year's Feast will be the best ever. It is exciting to look forward to another great family activity that will promote unity and edification for God's people around the world. "Forward to the Feast" has a great ring to it! **UN**

Jim Franks is the Ministerial Services operation manager.

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## News From **Around the World**

### Deacon Ordained During Visit to Brazil



The congregation in Maloca de Moscou, Brazil

Saul Langarica, pastor of congregations in Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Uruguay, visited Church members in northern Brazil in July.

He departed Santiago on July 23 bound for Maloca de Moscou in the north Brazilian state of Roraima. Maloca de Moscou is only about 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Brazil's border with Guyana. Forty-nine people (including children) from this tiny settlement now attend United Church of God services, and 17 are baptized members.

The majority of brethren in this congregation emigrated from Guyana some years ago in search of a better life in northern Brazil. Nearly everyone—except the children—speaks English, Portuguese and Wapixana (the official dialect of the Amerindians from Guyana). The children and the youth speak only Portuguese and Wapixana.

Mr. Langarica arrived in Boa Vista, the capital of the state of Roraima, which shares a border with Guyana. Geraldo de Souza and Clyde Chinian were waiting for him at the airport.

After staying two nights in Boa Vista after losing the keys to an old minivan Mr. de Souza had purchased for the use of the local brethren, they left

early on Sabbath morning for Maloca de Moscou, which was 80 kilometers (50 miles) away, to attend services scheduled for 10 a.m.

“We had a very emotional service,” continued Mr. Langarica, “because it had been a year and a half since I had last seen the congregation. We were all very eager to see each other again.”

There were 49 in attendance, including children. The sermon was given in English, but it was translated into Wapixana by Geraldo de Souza. Thankfully, Mr. de Souza speaks English, Portuguese and Wapixana!

“After services we took the van to get the food we had bought in Boa Vista, and there in the box with the food was the lost key! But it was already too late because we had bought new keys,” Mr. Langarica recalled.

Following a fiesta of a lunch, Mr. Langarica delivered a large shipment of clothing donated by the Chilean brethren. The children were particularly delighted to receive clothes appropriate for Sabbath services.

#### Deacon Ordained

On Sunday, Mr. Langarica announced that due to the increase in size of the congregation, Leon Walker,

regional director of Spanish-speaking areas, had given him permission to ordain one of the men as deacon. After a Bible study, Mr. Langarica ordained Geraldo de Souza as deacon.

Another pleasant surprise was a small house that the brethren had built exclusively for the use of visiting ministers.

“It was my honor to be the first guest in this house. On my first visit with the congregation several years ago, I had the opportunity to sleep in a hammock.”

Now the congregation has provided a house with a bed, a thick comfortable mattress and even a mosquito net. Incredibly, the house is furnished with a bathroom that has an elevated water tank filled by a waterwheel equipped with small rotating buckets.

“I was overwhelmed and deeply inspired when I realized the tremendous amount of labor that had been put forth by the members,” said Mr. Langarica.

During the rest of the trip, Mr. Langarica had a meeting for the blessing of seven children, baptized a married couple who had been attending services for three years, discussed plans for the upcoming Feast of Tabernacles and conducted a question-and-answer session with all the adult attendees.

“Prior to the Feast we plan to purchase a DVD player so the Feastgoers will be able to hear the sermons [sent] from the home office in Cincinnati, and we will also repair the electric generator that is in bad condition,” reported Mr. Langarica.

Mr. Langarica left on July 29. “I told the brethren I would return next year. They all said their good-byes, happily looking forward to the next time a minister can come to visit with them.” **UN**

*This article is a condensed version of Saul Langarica's report.*

### International News At a Glance

#### Venue Change at Llandudno, Wales, Feast Site

The ministry of the United Church of God in the British Isles has recommended moving the venue for services at the Feast of Tabernacles in Llandudno, Wales, from the Town Hall to the Wedgwood Suite at the St. George's hotel. After receiving more overseas applications for Llandudno than were expected and after considering the number of new families now attending UCG services in the British Isles, it was decided that a bigger venue was needed. The Wedgwood Suite can take up to 250 people, 200 more comfortably in theater rows.

“There are quite a number of other benefits of using the Wedgwood,” said Festival coordinator Peter Hawkins, “like a good meeting place for members before and after the service in the lounge areas, where coffee and snacks are also available. Also the technical set up is done by the hotel with their staff who is using the equipment all the time.”

For more information about this new venue, visit [www.llandudno.com/georges.html](http://www.llandudno.com/georges.html).

#### ABC Goes to Guatemala

An Ambassador Bible Center Continuing Education seminar was held in Guatemala City, Guatemala, July 18 to 20. Dr. Ralph Levy, an associate professor at ABC, and Leon Walker, a former instructor in doctrine at ABC, taught the classes.

Due to varying complications, it is not easy for non-U.S. citizens to attend ABC classes in Cincinnati on a full-time basis. In addition, many U.S. members are unable to do so because of family, financial or other reasons that prevent them from traveling to Cincinnati and living there for nine months. Because of these obstacles, ABC instructors have held ABC seminars in various parts of the United States and Canada over the years.

The seminars in Guatemala marked the first ABC classes given outside of the United States and Canada. This was also the first time that ABC classes were presented in a language other than English. Both Dr. Levy and Mr. Walker speak Spanish and were able to present their classes in Spanish. Since members in Guatemala were unable to go to Cincinnati for ABC, ABC went to Guatemala!

Members throughout Guatemala were invited to attend the classes.

Attendance ranged from a high of 218 on Sabbath morning to a low of 54 on Monday, when most members had to be at work. It was encouraging to see individuals from 6 to 93 years of age, all taking notes and listening attentively.

Dr. Levy began his session with Genesis 1 and continued through the first mention of Abraham (chapter 11). Leon Walker covered three of the fundamental doctrines of the Church—the Sabbath, the Resurrections and the Passover. Dr. Levy also gave the sermon Sabbath afternoon.

Members commented that they were appreciative of having ABC lectures presented to them—especially in their own language. They also commented that they hoped that more ABC lectures could be provided in the future.

Leon Walker

#### Work Expanding in Nordic/Baltic/Eastern European Areas

The United Church of God booklet *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind* has been translated into Russian. In addition to this booklet, we also offer *The Gospel of the Kingdom* and *Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest* along with the complete 12-lesson *Bible Study Course* in Russian.

We have expanded the reach of Internet keyword advertising of *The Good News* magazine to include Iceland. As a result, we have recently added 14 subscribers in this Scandinavian nation. Our total *Good News* subscription list in the Nordic/Baltic/Eastern European area is approaching 2,000.

Victor Kubik recently met with members and new attendees in various countries in Scandinavia in June and July. In Aarhus, Denmark, he met with a longtime member and a prospective member at a courtyard beside an old church. “We really enjoyed the afternoon and held a two-hour discussion and Bible study about some of our fundamental beliefs,” said Mr. Kubik.

After this visit, he took an eight-hour ferry ride to Oslo, Norway, and then took a bus to Karlskoga, Sweden, to spend time with Paul and Kira Spenser, who help with much of the Swedish translation of UCG literature.

The next stop was Budapest, where Mr. Kubik met with LifeNets volunteers Dan and Cindy Harper and Ken and Cherie Zahora before traveling to Vinogradov, Ukraine, where they conducted a two-week program teaching English as second language as part of a day camp program for disadvantaged children.

For more details about the trip, visit [tinyurl.com/scandinaviatrip](http://tinyurl.com/scandinaviatrip) and read Victor Kubik's blog.

### Membership Increases 100 Percent in Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic received another visit from minister and ABC instructor Ralph Levy, from July 21 to 27, 2009. This lovely Caribbean nation occupies the southern and eastern portion of the island of Hispaniola, sharing the island with French-speaking Haiti.

A small group of brethren and prospective members has begun to grow since 2004, when Zoraya Diaz de Gabriel became the first person baptized in the United Church of God. This visit brought a 100 percent increase in the number baptized by UCG, with the addition of Altagracia Melenciano Rosario to the Church on Sabbath afternoon, July 25!

During his visit, Dr. Levy also met and talked with José Merán, who has just come into contact with the United Church of God via an Internet search

for a Sabbath- and Holy Day-keeping Church.

He and Dr. Levy met and talked in the lobby of the Meliá Hotel in Santo Domingo on Wednesday, July 22, where Mr. Merán expressed his appreciation for the literature of the Church and asked a few questions about our beliefs.

Bible studies were held in the home of Zoraya Díaz and her husband, Orlando Gabriel, on Friday evening, July 24, and Sabbath morning, July 25, with some six people present.

After the Sabbath morning Bible study, Altagracia was baptized at the summer home of Orlando and Zoraya



Ralph Levy baptizes Altagracia Melenciano Rosario in the Dominican Republic

in the same swimming pool used for Zoraya's baptism five years ago.

Plans call for at least one visit per year to the Dominican Republic. **UN**

# Good Works Program Project Highlight: Choices of the Heart

by Jada Howell

Every day, our lives are filled with choices. Sometimes our choices are about little things and sometimes our choices require us to make major changes or sacrifices.

With the economic downturn this year many people have had to make certain sacrifices. At times, it may be small, such as giving up the cup of coffee at Starbucks or having to peruse the weekly grocery ads to determine the best price. A family may have to start buying clothes at a consignment or thrift shop. Many people see these as major sacrifices and may grumble about what they have to do.

However, these scenarios are not all that bleak. They are not even close. These choices are a blessing compared to what some people experience every day of their lives. In this country, we have little comprehension of what sacrifices people around the world have to make. Until recently, I was not fully aware of what some of our brethren, our Church family, have to face daily.

Earlier this year, I was asked to attend a committee meeting for the KeEP Project (Kenya Education Project). This project began a few years ago to provide a scholarship fund for girls in United Church of God congregations in Kenya. With these scholarships the girls are able to finish their secondary education. After com-

pleting school, these girls will hopefully be able to find jobs to help support themselves and their families.

The KeEP Project's hope is that when they return to their Church areas, they can help other girls continue with their education or possibly set up micro-businesses in the future.

When I heard what these girls have to endure just to receive a high school education, I was shocked. Currently, there are eight girls in the program. Several have only one parent living. One of the girls is an orphan.

Some of them have had to drop out of school completely for a year or two, but they are still expected to achieve the national test scores required to be accepted into a school. The entrance exams are in English, and most of the girls have no tutors to help them navigate the foreign language. They don't have enough money to buy basic necessities we take for granted here in this country.

But they do have the desire to learn and *what a gift to possess*. Despite the hurdles they face, they still yearn to strengthen themselves in order to help others.

These young ladies in Kenya and the ladies on the committee know what true sacrifice is. The girls in Kenya accomplish much in the face of adversity and challenges. The women on the KeEP committee sacrifice their time, their efforts and their love in hopes that these girls, and other

girls in UCG-Kenya in the future can have the opportunity for basic education and the opportunity to thrive in their world.

God admonishes us in James 1:27, "Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles, and refuse to let the world corrupt us" (New Living Translation). Because these girls are a part of God's Church, they are a part of our family. We have a responsibility to care for them.

The KeEP Project has accomplished much in the last two years. The eight girls now receiving scholarships are enrolled for the present school year, which runs from January to December 2009. But next year is not as certain. Besides the current girls, the project hopes to add several new girls for the 2010 school year. Funds are urgently needed to continue this project.

If many of us are willing to make a small sacrifice, several young ladies will have the opportunity to better their lives.

So, next time you think you are making a sacrifice, think about these girls and the difficulties they endure. And make a choice of the heart to help them. **UN**

For more information on KeEP and the students currently involved in this project and to find out how you can personally help, visit [www.kenyaeducationproject.com](http://www.kenyaeducationproject.com) and register to receive updates from the KeEP committee.

# United Youth Corps: Behind the Scenes

by Doug Horchak

On Sept. 13, 2009, two media department employees, Clay Thornton and Clint Porter, will be accompanying me to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to get a behind-the-scenes look at this very unique United Youth Corps project and the various institutions where our five volunteers are serving for the next 11 months.

Both professional videographers, Mr. Thornton and Mr. Porter plan to gather some valuable footage of our volunteers as they teach at the Amman Baccalaureate School (ABS), assist and teach at the Young Muslim Women's Association Bunayat Center for Special Education and do research at the Regional Human Security Center (RHSC).

The history of our presence in Jordan goes back to the early 1980s when a select number of Ambassador College students were chosen to serve at either the YMWA Centre for the Mentally Challenged, American Center for Oriental Research, Al Hussein Society Center for the Physically Challenged or the Amman Baccalaureate School.

During that 15-year period, many representatives of the Ambassador Foundation built a reputation of trust, honesty, integrity and service in assisting at these different educational venues that were under the patronage of members of the Royal family in Jordan.

More recently, after a trip taken to Jordan by elder and Jordan Festival coordinator Cory Erickson and director of Education Programs, David Register, our young people were again

requested to serve at the Amman Baccalaureate School in the 2007-2008 school year and, since that time, additionally at the YMWA Bunayat Center for Special Education and the RHSC. This year, our new volunteers (who arrived in Jordan Aug. 15) are Eduardo and Stephanie Elizondo, Audrey Bauer and Jamie Franks. Kelley Schreiber, our fifth volunteer, will arrive before the Feast.

During their stay in Amman, I will be spending time with the five UYCorps volunteers as they get fully oriented to the project's service venues. In addition, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Porter and I will be visiting each of the project venues to catch our volunteers "in action" as they serve.

While at the schools and RHSC, we also plan to interview the directors of each of these organizations soliciting their comments on the experience of having United Youth Corps volunteers from the United States serving in Jordan. We also hope to get some video footage and comments from Princess Sarvath, the patron of both ABS and the YMWA, and her husband, Prince El Hassan bin Talal.

As God provides us with opportunities to serve and build meaningful relationships with peoples in the very unique setting of the Middle East, we will strive to go through those doors in order to build bridges of communication and understanding—bridges that could lead to sharing the true path to peace with others in a most significant part of the world! **UN**

Doug Horchak is co-coordinator of the United Youth Corps.

# Campers From Six Countries Attend UYC-British Isles

by David and Barbara Fenney

The UYC Summer Camp 2009 took place July 24 to Aug. 2 at the Foundry Adventure Centre in Great Hucklow in the Derbyshire Peak District.

Twenty-nine campers from six different countries participated in swimming, hiking and a full-day challenge of rock climbing, traversing and "weaseling" (clambering over, under and through rock formations) out on the wilds of Burbage Moor.

Various craft activities took place in the center; and sports, games and team-building exercises took place on the grounds. Outings included a tour of Castleton's Peak Cavern, which incorporated a rope-making demonstration and a trip to the spa town of Buxton.

Most poignant was a visit to Eyam (pronounced "eem"), a small village that in 1665 was infected with bubonic plague when a bundle of flea-infested cloth arrived from London, where

the disease was rampant. As the villagers began to die, they agreed to quarantine themselves, rather than risk the disease spreading through the surrounding countryside. One third of the 600 inhabitants died a terrible death.

That evening the daily camp forum discussed the self-sacrifice of the villagers, and the topic arose later in the week during a discussion asking, "Is God Fair?"

During camp, a daily forum addressed questions posed by the young campers such as: "Is the devil red?" "Is science a religion?" "What is the trinity?" "Is God the Father the same person as Jesus Christ?" and "How can God hear everyone's prayers all at once?"

On both Sabbaths, services were held at the center. Speakers were Bryan Ellams, David Fenney and Peter Hawkins. Following the final dinner on the final Sabbath, campers and staff produced skits and songs about the activities.

Several former campers acted as dorm leaders during the week, which was a great help to the other staff. We are also very grateful to those who came from far and wide to help as cooks, kitchen crew and camp organizers. Hopefully, many of those participating in camp this year will be able to return next year. **UN**



Sarah Habicht from Germany traverses the ropes course



Campers gather for a group photo on the first Sabbath of camp

# Campers Gain Insight in Jamaican Paradise

by Todd Carey

From the shores of Trinidad, Barbados, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Jamaica and the United States came 21 campers and 12 staff to spend the week of July 19 to July 26 in the *Zone* at the third United Youth Camps in the Caribbean, held in St. Ann's Bay, just outside Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

Though the temperature was in the 90s each day, God provided a soothing, light breeze each day promptly at 8 a.m. that was greatly appreciated during the morning activities, which included soccer, volleyball, flag football, novelty Olympics and speedway.

The camp setting was gorgeous! Just picture it—our campers running the soccer field, energetically passing the ball to team members, alongside a backdrop of the Caribbean waves crashing on the shore. We could not have asked for a more beautiful camp and thank God for such a blessing.

In keeping with the camp theme of "Insight Today, Leadership Tomorrow," the daily

Christian Living classes included topics such as "Essentials of an Effective Team," "Are You Ready to Accept the Challenge?" "Your Belief System: Preference or Conviction," "What Does God Expect of Youth?" and "Laws of Leadership."

Campers actively took part in these informative classes and will easily be able to apply the lessons learned in their daily lives as they return to their homes. Split sermons on the Sabbath, titled "Foresight/Insight" and "Does the Bible Significantly Influence Your Life?" were attention-getters that kept everyone busy taking notes. The campers thirsted for more insight each day. Even with all the spiritual food on the menu, one group requested an additional morning Bible study be added to their schedule each day!

Afternoon and evening activities included Bible baseball, karaoke, songleading and a craft class where everyone, campers and staff, designed and painted a T-shirt. These colorfully decorated T-shirts were worn on the next day's field trip to Dunn's River

Falls, when campers and staff climbed the beautiful 600-foot falls. Each climber successfully ascended to the top of the falls with the help of fellow campers. (Though there were, admittedly, a few slip-and-falls, a lost pair of sunglasses, and a pair of jeans, shoes and a wallet that were left behind. No problem, mon, they were safely returned, and everything is *irie!*)

Manners class provided the campers with basic manners for all aspects of daily life, reminding us all that God is the originator of manners (1 Peter 2:17), knowing their necessity in order to interact with others in a peaceful and loving manner. The

camp nurse gave a presentation on emotional control—information all of us, whether camper or staff, will definitely be putting to use.

Not only were we provided wonderful spiritual food for our growth, we were also blessed with a wonderful cook who provided three tasty and filling meals each day, giving the Americans oppor-

tunities to try cuisine indigenous to the Caribbean, such as acai salt fish breakfast, curried goat, chicken foot soup, turkey neck stew and oxtail—yum yum!

Are we looking forward to the next Caribbean youth camp? Yea, mon! **UN**

Todd Carey is the director of the United Youth Camp in the Caribbean.



Campers and staff sit in the midst of a waterfall at Dunn's River Falls (photo by Michael Lowe)

# Wind Rivers Expedition Prepares Campers for the Kingdom



Right, the Wind Rivers Expedition relaxes for a moment on rock-climbing day. Above, the expedition proudly shows the catch of the day

by Jared Saylor and Angela Helseth

Indescribable!

It's the only word to describe what happens when you join together 11 young adults and three ministers all impassioned and zealous for the same goal: The Kingdom of God! Mix in spectacular scenery, intense challenges and numerous spiritual lessons and you've got Challenger II Wind Rivers Expedition.

On Sunday, July 19, we arrived at Jackson Hole, Wyoming. After taking in the sights of Jackson Hole we piled into a van and drove to the little town of Dubois, where we camped for two nights at a campground.

Monday was a full day of preparation and training in backpacking, orienteering, topographical maps, wilderness first aid, water safety, fishing, rock climbing, cooking, team dynamics and leadership skills.

Tuesday we drove to the trailhead where we were divided into two teams and were told, "You're on your own." It was up to each team to use our training to make it to the destination marked on our maps before nightfall. Carrying 30- to 40-pound packs, we hiked up switchbacks while taking in the incredible scenery of peaceful lakes, thick forests, distant meadows overlooking river canyons, glaciers, majestic mountains, wildflowers and moraine boulder

fields. Cresting the last hill for the day, exhaustion was replaced with exhilaration as we saw what would be our backyard for the week. We set up base camp in the midst of a pine forest at 10,400-foot elevation.

endure under adversity. Further challenges included eating dehydrated meals, sleeping in tents barely big enough for two people and "bathing" in a frigid stream.

The next two days were spent navigating through woods, over deadfall, around massive boulder

outcroppings and through boulder fields to spend each day at two different rock-climbing locations. The second rock-climbing day ended atop a high rock promontory with a spectacular view overlooking the rugged landscape we would be crossing the next day.

Friday began with a challenging navigation exercise through rough, steep terrain and bushwhacking our way to the beautiful, serene Hidden Lake for a day of fishing. A fast-moving inlet was negotiated by crossing over a downed tree to

reach to some of the best fishing boulders lining the lakeshore. The 16-member expedition caught and cleaned 34 trout before scrambling back up and over treacherous terrain to base camp to make ready for the Sabbath.

Sabbath morning began with an oatmeal pancake breakfast followed by Sabbath services and then separate men's and women's Bible studies. Saturday evening we feasted on our trout, which had been kept cold in a nearby spring. We baked and pan-fried the tasty fish over glowing coals.

Sunday we hiked back down to civilization; we had not seen any other humans from the time we left to the time we arrived. Mr. and Mrs. Wil Berg welcomed us back that evening with a delicious meal that included elk, venison and beef stew.

In addition to the challenges, spectacular experiences and edifying and uplifting conversation, the messages during the Challenger II expedition were profoundly thought provoking and gave a greater vision of the Kingdom and what is needed to prepare for it. The parallels drawn from this backpacking experience to our spiritual fight back in "reality" could fill paragraphs.

We left feeling rejuvenated and uplifted spiritually, physically and emotionally and are already sharing the memories made and lessons learned. Challenger II is an investment of time, money and personal sacrifice, but those of us who participated would do it again in a heartbeat. The only question now is, are you ready for the challenge? **UN**

Jared Saylor and Angela Helseth were participants of the Wind Rivers Expedition.



# Campers and Staff Brave the Heat at Camp Carter

by Andy Burnett

Seventy-four campers and 41 staff members braved the heat at Camp Carter in Fort Worth, Texas, in early July for a week of fun-filled activities and friendship. Most of the rigorous outdoor activities were held in the morning and evening to avoid the high temperatures in the afternoon.

Camp kicked off with orientation and dorm team-building games on Sunday night. Morning Compass Checks, Christian Living classes and life skills courses as well as question-and-answer sessions centered on this year's theme: "Insight Today, Leadership Tomorrow."

Each dorm experienced a full set of daily activities during the week, including low and high ropes challenge courses, waterskiing, tubing and kayaking on Lake Worth (about 20 minutes

from camp), horseback riding, archery, skeet shooting, strength training, swimming, dance, crafts and a variety of team sports (flag football, speedway, volleyball, softball and basketball).

The oldest dorms were able to enjoy golf and rappelling, in addition to the other activities. This year's youngest dorms, 3B and 3G, set the record for having the most first-time water skiers who were able to stand up and stay on their skis.

After dinner, campers chose their own activities. On two evenings we held camper-staff challenges in speedway,

basketball and volleyball. Tuesday and Saturday nights were taken up with all-camp dances.

This year we initiated a "campfire night"—even though it was held in the comfort of an air-conditioned hall—where we listened to dorm greet-



John Jeffords of dorm 3B gives the thumbs-up (photo by Joanne Gonzalez)



Campers scramble up the climbing wall (photo by Krissie Thomson)

ings and held fun competitions such as "the laughing game" and "Mr. Mumble" with campers and staff.

As the Sabbath began on Friday night, after enjoying a leisurely steak dinner grilled by the staff, dorms participated in a Bible

Challenge Game working together while searching their Bibles to answer biblical questions.

The Sabbath came as a welcome rest as everyone was able to sleep in, fellowship and read Sabbath notes of appreciation they had written to one another. A 20-member combined choir, consisting of both campers and staff, performed during Sabbath services to the delight of all listening.

The final dance included dance competitions and the awarding of certificates to those who had met proficiencies during the week in basketball, volleyball, waterskiing, pamper pole and strength training.

By Sunday morning, campers (and staff) were exhausted, but sad to leave and eager to get together again next year. **UN**

Andy Burnett is the director of Camp Carter.

# Camp Hye Sierra Rocks Campers' Socks Off

by James Capo

"I knew [my daughter] would love camp but I had no idea what an impact it would have on her," wrote one enthusiastic parent after camp. "She is already looking forward to being on staff someday, which is a long way off since she is 12!"

For a first-timer, camp can be a powerful experience of the love, fun, unity and peace represented by the *Zone* at camp. For long-time campers returning year after year, their growth in love and appreciation for the way of God, which is at the heart of the camp experience, is real.

Camp Hye Sierra 2009 was a wonderful time for the 108 campers, 86 staff members and nine "junior campers" (children of staff serving at camp) that gathered in the beauty of the California Sierra Nevada mountains for a week of activities, lessons and fun.

Campers participated in archery, kayaking, basketball, rock climbing, a *Survivor*-themed team-building course, volleyball, fishing, capture the flag, dance, a hike among the giant sequoia trees, novelty Olympics, speedway, campfire skits and entertainment.

There was the "Gnip-Gnop Open" (Ping-Pong tournament) played throughout the week, and camper-staff basketball and football games. After camp, 12 of the older campers also participated in a three-day Challenger extended session (see sidebar).

Each day began after breakfast with a Compass Check by one of the ministers to set the spiritual theme and focus for the day and

ended before campfire with dorm meetings with dorm parents for Christian Living.

The overall theme for the United Youth Camps this year was "Insight Today, Leadership Tomorrow," and our daily themes focused on insights needed to be successful in five different areas of leadership that God expects each of us to exercise in life: personal leadership and character, peer leadership, work leadership, family leadership and Church/spiritual leadership.

Was camp successful? "I really like how we all come together and form a family," wrote one camper, "being around others who believe in the same thing as I do." Said another, "I love this place!" One camper simply said of his camp experience, "It rocked my socks!"

It's tremendously encouraging to see the enthusiasm our teens have for living and learning the way of God at camp. Hye Sierra was blessed this year with nearly perfect weather, but most importantly, with a wonderful spirit of joy and harmony that made this year's camp "the best ever."

At the end-of-camp banquet, camp manager Gary Langely asked to be able to speak to the campers and staff for a few minutes. "You're my favorite camp every year," he said, proudly wearing one of our UYC staff shirts. "But there's one big problem I have with you. You don't stay long enough. Your camp is over all too soon."

Our campers would certainly agree. **UN**

James Capo is director of Camp Hye Sierra.



The girls from dorm G1 make a kayak star (photo by Fred Crow)

## Campers Find Adventure at Extended Session

Twelve intrepid Hye Sierra campers and three staff members spent three days and three nights in the heart of the earthy—well, actually the majestic Sierra Nevada mountains of Central California. We did spend one night literally in the heart of the earth, though—caving and sleeping overnight in the depths of a cavern!

After the full week of activities concluded for Hye Sierra campers on July 12, a new adventure still lay ahead for some. The "Challenger" extended session would be an opportunity to test oneself, build teamwork and deepen friendships while hiking farther into the high country of the Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks.

Our first day was spent backpacking 5 miles up to camp beside Emerald Lake. At an elevation of over 9,000 feet, it was surrounded on three sides by high granite cliffs that glowed with the rays of the setting sun. Next day we hiked another mile to swim in the pure, snowmelt waters of Pear Lake, before returning to the trailhead that afternoon. The views were spectacular.

We drove through the mountains, descending to the banks of the Kings River in the deepest valley in the country. There, we ate dinner beside the rushing whitewater before donning climbing helmets and entering Boyden Cavern to explore the rooms and

tunnels of the cave by flashlight and to bed down in one of the larger rooms for the evening. We spread out our sleeping bags in a room filled with cave formations—stalactites, flowstone, and "cave bacon"—and turned out our flashlights to pitch darkness.

In the morning we left the cave to have breakfast again beside the river and to gear up for that day's adventure—canyoneering down the lower portion of Ten-Mile Creek. The creek carves a side canyon to the Kings River, and we scrambled, waded and swam our way down the canyon. We slid down natural water slides and rappelled over a waterfall.

That night around the campfire for our last night together, we shared memories and lessons from the trip. Compass Checks each morning and Christian Living each evening focused on themes related to the outdoors and each day's activities.

The extended session "expanded my horizons," said Greg Zajac, one of the participants. "I was able to see and experience things I never have before."

"It was an eye-opening experience, physically and spiritually," said Erica Bennett. "And plus, it was fun! Fantastic friendships and the experience itself aside, I learned several really valuable lessons... when you're staring up at a sky full of shooting stars, you realize what's really important is the One who created all of that!" **UN**

## “Council,” continued from page 1

it shall remain a nine-month program. An additional period of education/training, if implemented, will be part of the pastoral training program, not ABC, and will be for pastoral candidates and the occasional ABC student who would be asked to participate.

Council Chairman Roy Holladay later wrote, “Please pray that God would send a buyer to allow us to recover our investment in the property in Texas so those funds can be put toward the vital need of preaching a gospel of hope, as well as preparing a people that God is actively striving to bring to the full measure of Jesus Christ.”

## Branding

Darris McNeely presented the findings of the Branding Task Force to the Council Aug. 13. Branding, for the Church, is about a compelling story of the gospel—a story of telling people what the meaning of life is. It is about creating a crystal-clear message about what God the Father and Jesus Christ are doing.

Four agencies made presentations to the task force, and the task force recommended that the Northlich Company of Cincinnati would serve the needs of the Church the best.

The 11 members of the Council present voted unanimously to approve using the recommended agency to assist the Council and administration in establishing a brand for the United Church of God.

## Council of Elders Communication Strategy

The Council members present unanimously approved a Council of Elders communication strategy presented by the Media Committee. The proposal’s 12 points included Council members speaking on *About Our Father’s Business*, on sermon DVDs, at the GCE annual meeting and in local congregations through reinstatement of the travel budget. It also included a chairman’s letter before and after each quarterly meeting and “town hall meetings” with ABC students, home office employees and Cincinnati area elders.

However, one point, the renaming of the *Ministerial Services Newsletter and Journal* as *The Ministerial Journal: A Publication for the General Conference of Elders*, is pending based on further input from Jim Franks, operation man-

ager for Ministerial Services, who was not present at the meeting.

## Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

Paul Kieffer discussed a proposed amendment to Article 8, Section 8.6.2, of the Bylaws. The proposal was submitted at this point by six members of the Council—Scott Ashley, Bill Eddington, Roy Holladay, Paul Kieffer, Victor Kubik and Robin Webber.

Roy Holladay commented that over the years many of the members of the General Conference of Elders have quoted the Bylaws—the Council only has oversight—while others have quoted the Constitution—the Council has direct involvement in the affairs of the Church. This amendment will make it consistent between both of those governing documents.

After discussion, the amendment was supported by three more Council members: Robert Berendt, Aaron Dean and Darris McNeely.

Earlier in the week, on Tuesday, Aug. 11, the Council assessed the treasurer, Jason Lovelady, in executive session, then discussed some proposed changes to the retirement policy. The retirement policy will be discussed further in a teleconference Sept. 10. After that, the Council discussed budget priorities.

## Restructuring Budget Priorities

Roy Holladay stated that, in the recent Strategic Planning and Finance Committee meeting, it was determined that the upcoming December and February Council meetings were too late to begin discussing next year’s fiscal budget. Therefore, it was decided to begin preliminary discussions for the 2010-2011 fiscal year at these meetings.

Paul Kieffer mentioned that the opinion of the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee is that more weight should be given to preaching the gospel, involving a rebalancing of the priorities.

The committee suggested reallocating 1.25 percent, or \$300,000, of the current fiscal year budget to Public Proclamation. The committee further suggested that, at the end of a fiscal year, any funds allocated to proclamation, but not spent, be allocated to the next fiscal year and not be put into the general reserve fund.

The committee proposed that the percentage allocated to Public Procla-

# Council Hosts Picnic for Home Office Staff

by Janet Treadway

After a busy day of meetings, Monday, Aug. 10, the Council of Elders, along with their wives, headed off to Doris and Floyd Phelps’ home to host a picnic for the home office staff.

Chairman Roy Holladay asked everyone to gather around while he asked God to bless the food and the evening’s activities. Then it was time to chow down on some awesome burgers and hot dogs, grilled by Glenn Creech and Council member Darris McNeely. There were plenty of wonderful fixings to choose from—not to mention desserts! The Council and staff sat, fellowshiping and eating together.

Even the rain did not dampen our spirits, as it helped to cool down the 90-degree temperatures—especially for those who hate the heat. We were all protected from the rain under the roof of a very nice pole barn. Dorothy Shoemaker, who works in the mail processing department, pointed out that she “loved the rain hitting on the tin roof.”

There was a lot of positive feedback from the evening’s activity. Chris Stewart, who works in the IT department, said, “It was nice to be off-site, unplugged, in a very relaxing environment with fellow coworkers and Council members. It really helped with solidifying relationships.”

Emma Kennebeck, who works in the mail processing area, commented, “While enjoying a perfect evening of food and fellowship, a beautiful double rainbow appeared



Emma Kennebeck and Norma Holladay

across the sky, which really added to what was already a perfect evening.”

Thanks go to all the Council members and their wives for hosting this wonderful activity for the staff. Thanks also go to Doris and Floyd Phelps for opening up their home. And especially thanks to God, for He did honor Mr. Holladay’s request and blessed the entire evening.

Special activities with the Council, such as these, are great ways to bond even closer together as we all work together to do God’s work. **UN**

mation be increased by 1 percent annually for the next five years starting with the 2010-2011 fiscal budget. As well, the committee proposed that, if overall spending needed to be reduced, priority be given to maintaining the level of funds allocated to Public Proclamation.

Doug Horchak said that he would be more inclined to consider the suggestion to reallocate the current budget if there was a reason given for recommending the increase.

Jim Franks said that the treasurer, the president and the operation manager for Media do not support the recommendation to reallocate the budget. He said that he would like to have had the opportunity to talk about this first.

Roy Holladay said that this is a good-faith attempt to “get the ball rolling” on reexamining our budget priorities. He agreed that the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and the administration should sit down to discuss these issues. He said that this whole issue cannot really be finalized until the branding discussions are completed in December.

President Kilough said that media has always been a difficult area to get

a handle on. The biggest challenge is getting a balance in media. He mentioned that anything that is done symbolically will be short-lived. In the last two years, there has been positioning to make the Web the primary mode of media and proclaiming the gospel, but not the only focus.

He said that what will change the perception of the membership is when a clearly defined plan is put into place. We need an outside-in view of what we need to do, but without the defined plan, we will just waste time. He said that the money is not the issue, and the money is not the solution. People want to see results once a plan is defined and the priorities are laid out for all to see. Plans must drive the budget. Without a plan we are simply reallocating funds.

After much discussion, Mr. Holladay asked that, over the next couple of months, the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee, in conjunction with the treasurer, establish an access to reserves policy. He then requested that Clyde Kilough, Larry Salyer and Darris McNeely get together and ratchet up the recommendations for a media mix. He also asked the Strategic Plan-

ning and Finance Committee to meet with the administration to propose a plan as to how the proposed reallocation of funds would be used.

## Upcoming Teleconferences

At the end of the meetings Aug. 13, Chairman Holladay called a teleconference of the Council for Monday, Aug. 24, to discuss three outstanding issues.

As well, Mr. Holladay called a Council teleconference for Thursday, Sept. 10, to consider and discuss the treasurer’s market analysis and other issues with regard to the property in Denton, Texas, as well as to address the retirement issues discussed earlier in these meetings.

## Acknowledgement of Service on the Council

Chairman Holladay, on behalf of the Council of Elders, acknowledged the eight years of service by Clyde Kilough on the Council of Elders with a plaque and gifts for both him and his wife, Dee. Chairman Holladay stated that gifts will be sent to John Foster, previous Council reporter, and Richard Thompson, who served many years on the Council of Elders. **UN**

# President’s Report

At the Council meeting Monday, Aug. 10, President Clyde Kilough gave an update on the Church’s success in completing the strategies and objectives set forth by the Strategic Plan and Operation Plan.

Under the goal of **Public Proclamation**, the number of first-time Web visitors was 4,362,000. This is slightly ahead of our objective of 4 million. Most of our first-time Web visitors come as a result of search engine marketing (SEM). In addition, more than 152,000 new subscribers were added from the SEM efforts for fiscal year 2008-2009.

SEM is our main method of gaining new subscribers and offering booklets on various subjects to the public at large. The magazine subscriptions are either on target or slightly over target: *Good News* circulation currently stands at 356,659; *Vertical Thought*, at 23,500; and *World News and Prophecy*, at 68,100.

During the last fiscal year, Media and Communications Services hired one editor, one Web designer, one associate video

editor and a part-time writer/editor who was an Ambassador Bible Center student. The online *Bible Study Course* being written now has 20 lessons complete with 11 more in the pipeline.

Under the goal of **Congregational Care**, it was noted that, from surveys and recommendations, we currently have a list of eight men for potential hire over the next three years. By hiring these men, the current ratio can be maintained, barring any catastrophic illness to any current pastors. The current pastor/congregation ratio is 1:2.4, which is still the goal of Ministerial Services.

One-day conferences are planned for each region in fiscal year 2009-2010, with all pastors to attend and participate in a conflict resolution workshop conducted by the regional pastor and Ministerial Services.

United Youth Camps have been very successful this year. The American Camp Association gave two of our camps a 100 percent rating this year during analytical visits.

This is the third year for the Church’s outreach program in Jordan. The two previous groups have set a very pleasing

example, and the Jordanians want more of our young people to serve. The third group is making preparations to leave this Thursday.

Under the goal of **Organization**, all home office employees completed an “Experience of Work” (EOW) survey in July 2008. The goal is to increase the satisfaction level of employees and elders. The analysis of the survey results was prepared by McNeely and McNeely, CPAs. The baseline figure of 54.6 percent represents the percentage of positive responses on a five-point Likert scale. Positive responses were considered to be “agree” and “strongly agree.” The baseline will provide a basis for future measurements. The summer of 2009 is the date for the next survey.

On Dec. 30, 2008, an all-day home office meeting introduced employees to personal goal statements and performance evaluations. On May 27 another home office meeting further explained to employees the purpose for performance evaluations and personal goal statements. This summer we plan to implement a formal performance appraisal program. **UN**

# Treasure Digest

## The Christian Remodeling Project

Before I was hired into the full-time ministry, my wife and I decided to do one last big project on our house in Rhode Island. We had never liked the setup between the kitchen and the family room—there were too many doors and windows to make effective use of the space.

We set about demolishing the wall and then subsequently repairing the adjacent walls. The dust from cutting, sanding, dry walling, etc., infiltrated the whole house. Everything—and I mean everything—had dust on it. It took us six months to finish the project and put the house back in order.

Often to improve something, we must first make a mess. Our calling in Christ is similar. God has called us to change from our carnal nature to His nature (Romans 8:5). He has also called us to grow in His knowledge and understanding (2 Peter 3:18). When God calls us to follow Him, we are to begin the process of “remodeling” ourselves to be more and more like the Father, taking on the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5).

Like remodeling a house, becoming a true Christian will at times be messy. To become something better requires undoing much of what is already there. Even in new construction there can be a great deal of mess, but God is most interested in the end result. God calls us out of sin and encourages us to take on His character.

Change in any situation in life can be uncomfortable. Our spiritual transformation from carnal nature to God’s righteousness is especially challenging. But like remodeling, if we focus on the end result, the interim can be endured. And like remodeling, the messy portion is necessary for improvement to be possible.

God has given us a vision of an awesome future if we are willing to yield to His righteous



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character. We can rejoice that God has called us to be part of His family, which is worth more than the struggle in the meantime.

*Dan Dowd*

*Pastor, Milwaukee, Oshkosh and Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, congregations*

## Weaning Doesn't Work With Sin

Growing closer to God requires replacing our carnal human nature with His divine nature through the power of His Holy Spirit. However, godly character cannot develop within us if we have not yet removed sin from our lives. There is no room for righteousness when sin occupies a place in our hearts and minds.

While we recognize that completely extricating sin takes a lifetime of work, we must not become apathetic. Sin happens when we go against the will and commandments of God (1 John 3:4). True repentance involves a complete change of direction. For example, if you repent of the sin of drunkenness, you have decided never to become drunk again. Simply decreasing the frequency or extremity of drunkenness does not equate to godly repentance. If we do repeat the sin, we must repent again.

This concept is in contrast to our culture and Satan’s influence. As the father of lies (John 8:44), Satan entices us to sin by slowly encouraging us, hoping that the shift will occur almost imperceptibly. Mixing good with evil, he persuades us to gradually become comfortable with things that are closer and closer to sin, until the momentum of the process propels us directly into evil. We cannot follow the same pattern; as long as sin is present, it can tempt us to go in the wrong direction.

How can we find the strength required to completely get rid of a sin? First and foremost, we must implore God to assist us by coming before Him in prayer, Bible study, fasting and meditation. When we humble ourselves before Him, His strength makes up for our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9) and enables us to accomplish all things (Luke 18:27; Philippians 4:13).

Secondly, once a sin has been removed, we need to replace it with something that promotes godliness. Paul used this principle when he explained that the thief must not only stop stealing but also replace his selfish approach to life with a life of giving (Ephesians 4:28).

One of the most effective means of change involves the environment in which we put ourselves. God calls us out of the world and instructs us to separate ourselves from it because its influence unceasingly bombards our minds with temptation (2 Corinthians 6:17). We must realize we are actually working for Satan when we engage in the questionable activities of the world. Until we are convinced that temporary bouts of mindlessness are spiritually harmful, we leave the door open for the god of this world to creep in (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Instead, we are instructed to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). True, as imperfect human beings, we will always fall short (Romans 3:23), but God is eager to forgive us as long as we continue to pursue righteousness (1 John 1:9). We should also assist one another in achieving this goal by supporting one another in choosing godly influences and by seeking His Kingdom and His righteousness first and foremost in our own lives (Matthew 6:33).

Let’s work together to grow in the mind of Christ on our journey toward His amazing Kingdom!

*Melody Schmidt*

*Cincinnati, Ohio, North congregation*

## Prepare to Be a King!

Are you ready to be a king? How about a priest? As joint heirs with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:16-17), what will we be doing during this time?

## Shepherds Ruling With a Rod of Iron

As kings we will be the leaders in the Millennium. Today we grieve when we see all the injustices caused by the rulers in the world. It will be part of our job description to bring righteous justice to all people. Our rods will be shepherds’ staffs to those who are humble

## Turning the Hearts . . . Don't Forget!

“What are you so sad about, dear?” Her reply: “You forgot our anniversary!”

What’s the big deal about forgetting special events or important people in our lives? Each time we forget, we miss an opportunity to show respect, love and appreciation for that special someone.

Spouses appreciate being remembered on special events. When we remember, we reinforce love and care we feel for one another. When we forget, well, we send a message that the other person is not very important. Our lives can get busy, but we cannot let ourselves get so busy that we forget those we love.

Our children especially like us to remember the special times in their lives, such as their first day at school each year or turning another year older or a promise to take them to some special event. Remembering tells your children that they are special to you. It bolsters their self-esteem—something they need to get from their parents.

Think about it. If you buy two very expensive tickets for a theater showing of *Phantom of the Opera*, for instance, you will make it a point not to forget when the show starts and what time you need to be there. Why? Because that expensive event is important to you. How much more important is it to remember the special events in our family members’ lives?

Friends are also important to us and deserve to be remembered on anniversaries, retirements and other special happenings in their lives.

When we remember those significant events, we let them know that they are important enough to remember. Spouses, children, relatives, friends and associates all appreciate being remembered and not forgotten.

### How Can We Remember and Not Forget?

- Plan to remember by using a calendar to mark special remembrances.
- Check the calendar regularly.
- Daily or weekly take the time to reflect on the next day’s or week’s events.
- Think more about our loved ones.
- Find a method of reminding yourself. For instance, tie a string around your finger. (Although if I could remember to do that, I could remember the event just as easily!)

We can turn the hearts of family members and friends in a positive direction by remembering those special times in the lives of people special to us.

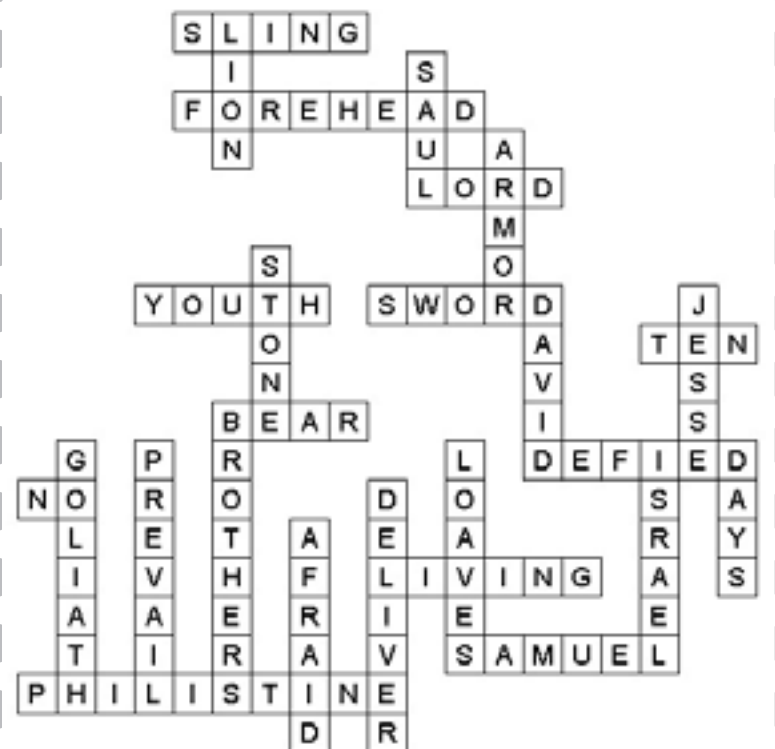
*Gary E. Antion*



Answer to last issue's puzzle:

## David and Goliath

(1 Samuel 17)



and willing, but rods of iron to those who are proud and defiant. God says that during the Millennium no one will be able to hurt or destroy (Isaiah 11:9). In our cities, both young and old will dwell in peace. As kings we will bring peace from chaos.

During our lifetime we are in the process of proving that we are faithful stewards with the things God gives us, and during the Millennium Christ will be able to trust us to rule and judge those He places under us (Luke 19:12-19).



**Our Role as Priests**

When Israel returns to Jerusalem, God will remove their spiritual blindness and give them His Holy Spirit. Then, as priests, we will teach them the way of peace and the difference between right and wrong, between clean and unclean (Ezekiel 44:23). We will be the shepherds that Jesus sends to teach God's way of life (Jeremiah 3:15). When individuals begin to stray, we will be with them, guiding them saying, "This is the way, walk in it" (Isaiah 30:20-21).

We will teach God's way in all the earth. It will start with Israel, as they are to be the model nation for the rest of the world, but we will be sent forth to all lands to teach God's ways.

**Let No One Take Your Crown**

Stop and think more often about God's master plan and the incredible calling He has given us. God the Father has personally invited you and me to be leaders in His Kingdom. He has offered us the privilege of helping bring many sons and daughters to glory.

Yet God warns us not to take our calling lightly and thus lose our crown of glory (Revelation 3:11). Nothing in this world can compare to the glory God wants to give us. But if we're not careful, we can let the cares of this world and the lusts of the flesh cause us to lose out on our awesome destiny.

God called us because He knows we can be great kings. Let's endure until the end so we can stand with Jesus Christ and hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things" (Matthew 25:23).

*Tim Groves  
Jefferson, Georgia, congregation*

**The Tithing Prayer**

Twice a month I sit down to the onerous task of paying our bills. Needless to say, this is not my favorite chore!

As I begin the process of writing checks, typically the first one I write is our tithe check. When doing this, it is easy to take that check, place it in the envelope and set it aside with the others as if it were just another bill to be paid.

It is at this point that I like to stop and offer up a quick prayer of thanksgiving for the opportunity we have to contribute to the work of God. Tithing is one way we can be personally involved in preaching the gospel. By taking the time to ask God to bless what we have to give, we change tithing from being the mundane task of writing a check to a reminder

of the blessing of serving others whom God is calling.

Each time we receive a *GoodNews* magazine, I peruse the articles to see what is in the current issue. My favorite section, and the first that I read, is "Letters From Our Readers." When I read these letters, I am often reminded of the fact that years ago others were faithful in tithing, thus opening a door for my husband and me to be called. I know how much we needed hope in what seemed like a hopeless world. It is a gift to be able to do our part to help others learn that God does indeed offer hope. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

The next time you find yourself writing out your tithe check or making an electronic tithing transaction online, take time to thank God for the ability to be involved in His work. Ask God to bless what you are giving so that it can be used effectively.

Remember to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thesalonians 5:16-18).

*Becky Swope  
Cleveland, Ohio, congregation*

**The Feast Can Quest**

What if you were blind, retired and in need of money for the Feast of Tabernacles?

Barb Westerviller, a member in the Columbus, Ohio, congregation, fits into all three categories, but she has a unique way of obtaining funds for the Feast. Barb and her husband, Steve, who uses a wheelchair, scour the countryside and streets around their home for aluminum cans.

Due to a degenerative spinal disease and severe diabetes, Steve has not been able to attend the Feast with Barb for five years. As a way to ensure that Barb can attend the Feast, she and Steve try to earn enough money by collecting cans.



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They actually travel many miles gathering cans. It is always exciting to come to services and hear Barb say, "I now have enough money for my room expenses." Then, a month or so later, to hear her say, "I have enough money now for my meals, and I am working on travel expenses."

Yet for them the greatest quest is to see Isaiah 29:18 come to completion as we picture at the Feast: "And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness."

*Dottie Seifert  
Columbus, Ohio, congregation*

**Share Your Treasures!**

Do you have any short items of biblical wisdom, humor or practical information that you would like to share? Please send them to your local pastor and ask him to forward them to *United News* at the home office. Guidelines are available on request (UN@ucg.org).

Children's Corner

## Find Your Way to the Kingdom!

"Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 7:14)

Children's Corner



## From the Word

# Entertainment in the Kingdom: What Will Be Different?

■ There is nothing quite like spending the Feast of Tabernacles with family and friends in God's Church. How will our experiences during the Feast compare to those we have after Jesus Christ returns to this earth?

by Mark Winner

Having grown up in God's Church, I have many fond memories of Feast of Tabernacles gone by. When I was very young, I remember the enjoyable time with my family, the abundance of food and gifts. As I grew older and began to mature more, I remember the Feast in a different way.

When I was 19 years old, my family and I traveled to Australia and attended four different Feast sites spread across the country. I remember meeting many people, lots of traveling, great food and the long but rewarding flight home when my father gave me my final baptism counseling before he would baptize me a day later.

I remember the first Feast I attended after being married and the first Feast we spent with our children. In both cases I found myself seeing and appreciating different facets of the Feast of Tabernacles that I had never before considered. There is nothing quite like sharing the highlight of the year with one's spouse and children—not to mention grandchildren for those grandparents in the Church.

As I look back over the many years of keeping the Feast, a few questions occur to me. Why is the Feast so enjoyable? What is it that we do that makes it the highlight of the year? How will our experiences during the Feast compare to those we have during the Millennium after Jesus Christ returns to this earth?

During that time, the firstfruits will serve alongside Jesus Christ in teaching the world the truth of God (1 Corinthians 15:23-24, Revelation 20:6). But how will we teach correct forms of entertainment and fun to all those left on this earth and those born during the Millennium?

When we are young, we tend to concern ourselves with *being entertained*, but as we mature we begin to have an appreciation for the *act of entertaining*. It is an honor to serve others, to spend time fellow-

shipping, and it is most definitely rewarding as well.

In an effort to get us thinking about what entertainment will be like after Jesus Christ returns to this earth, let's consider a few points that we can learn from the Bible on this subject.

### Developing Relationships

Unlike today's world where children and adults seek to be entertained by television, video games and iPods, entertainment in the world following Jesus Christ's return will revolve around developing relationships.

Instead of separating or isolating ourselves from one another, God shows us that He wants people to interact with one another. "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24). He wants people to stimulate one another by fellowshiping, by encouraging one another and by serving one another.

People will be spending time helping one another as the earth will be rebuilt (Isaiah 65:21-23). At the same time, Jesus Christ will be teaching the world all about unity (Philippians 2:1-4). You may or may not have thought about how much entertainment plays a role in unity; but when we entertain one another, we build relationships.

*You may or may not have thought about how much entertainment plays a role in unity; but when we entertain one another, we build relationships.*

As we build relationships, we strengthen bonds between us and create greater unity, as we submit to God and His ways.

### A Lesson From the Zone

One of our most successful programs in the Church today is the United Youth Camps program. We do our best to create an environment that is far removed from this world, an environment that is as millennial as possible. We call that environment the *Zone*.

One of the ways we create the *Zone* occurs the moment the campers arrive. At check-in, campers turn in their cell phones to camp staff. In addition, there are no iPods, and we don't watch television. In short, we

"unplug" for the week. Combine that with daily Christian Living classes, team-building activities, eating meals together, fellowshiping together and playing together and the outcome is an invigorating and uplifting atmosphere that instills confidence, courage and discipline. This is the kind of entertainment that the world will be involved in following Christ's return.



Feast site in India



Feast site in Midland, Ontario



Feast site in Malawi

Entertainment in God's Kingdom won't tear others down. Tragically, entertainment for so many people today is listening to comedy that berates or belittles. That is not how God thinks or operates, and we can be sure that entertainment will not involve anything of that nature during the Millennium.

The apostle Peter reminds us of what we are to be doing today in preparation for Christ's return in 1 Peter 4:7-11, and he also makes it clear how God thinks and what kind of

- Based on what I participate in at the Feast, have I matured? In other words, is entertainment to me still "that which entertains" or has it developed to mean much more than that?

Satan would love nothing more than to have us attend the Feast

entertainment He expects us to participate in, not only at this year's Feast but throughout the year: "Finally brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." How we entertain and what entertains us tells God where our hearts and minds are.

Virtually every Feast site has several planned activities. These activities are designed to educate, to be fun, to promote fellowship with one another and to help us draw closer to God and our spiritual family members.

Let's make every effort to entertain others while we are at the Feast, if we are able. And certainly, we should all make great effort to participate in entertainment that is inspiring, uplifting, encouraging and good clean fun! **UN**

*Mark Winner is the pastor of the Henderson, Lexington and Louisville, Kentucky, congregations. He is also the program director at Camp Woodmen and the Festival coordinator of the Snowshoe, West Virginia, Feast site.*

without really being engaged in it. He would love for us to choose to be "isolated." He would love for us to tie up our time by watching television, by listening to our iPods, by surfing the Internet.

He would love for us to find a way to entertain ourselves that would lead to guilt or regret. We cannot let that happen. We have to choose to be engaged in the work of God. We have to choose to fellowship with one another. We have to choose to uplift and encourage one another. We have to choose to build our relationships with one another.

The apostle Paul, in Philippians 4:8, gives us a real glimpse into what kind of entertainment God's Kingdom has in store and the kind of enter-

tainment He will be teaching at that time. In verse 8 we read, "Above all things have fervent love for one another." Clearly any entertainment that Jesus Christ teaches will not involve harm to others.

### Entertainment at the Feast

When reminiscing of Feasts gone by and in preparation for the Feast of Tabernacles 2009, consider these three questions:

- Am I participating in entertainment today that is pleasing to God?
- What kind of entertainment am I planning on participating in at the Feast? Is it something God would be well pleased with?

# God's Mysterious Command

■ Why does God command us to rejoice at the Feast of Tabernacles? What could possibly keep us from naturally rejoicing during the highlight of the year?

by Gregory Dullum

The Feast of Tabernacles is the highlight of the year for members of God's Church.

We have opportunities to travel to exotic places, stay in fancy hotels, eat at all kinds of restaurants and be with God's people 24 hours a day, seven days a week. What's more, because we spend God's second tithe, it's like an all-expense-paid vacation that doesn't cost us a cent.

It's a wonderful time! So why does God command us to rejoice at this time? Wouldn't it be natural for us to be happy?

Notice His command: "You shall truly tithe all the increase... And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide... But if the journey is too long for you...then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses. And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household" (Deuteronomy 14:22-26).

God commands us to spend His tithe on whatever our heart desires! So why does He follow this statement with a command to rejoice? The answer is simple: instead of rejoicing, we might find reasons to do the same thing the Israelites were known to do: "Now when the people complained, it displeased the LORD; for the LORD heard it, and His anger was aroused" (Numbers 11:1).

Much has changed since the days of the ancient Israelites. What do we possibly have to complain about at Feast time?

## Pre-Feast Trials

Every year before the Feast, a common complaint is pre-Feast trials. Problems crop up concerning jobs, health issues, financial woes, car repairs, etc. Why does it happen that we have these trials right before the Feast?

Satan knows that God commands us to rejoice. If he can give us an excuse to worry and

stop us from rejoicing, he has successfully influenced our decision to disobey God. And if he can discourage us from going to the Feast altogether, he has won a major victory! We would lose all the benefits of going to the Feast!

One of the most important benefits is getting our spiritual batteries recharged from observing the Feast with fellow members of God's Church. Without that annual recharge, it is more difficult to face trials and problems in the coming year.

When faced with pre-Feast trials, we must take a proactive approach and pray for deliverance. Then consciously make the decision *ahead of time* to go to the Feast *no matter what*—and to enjoy it!

## Unable to Go

Every year there are those who cannot go to the Feast because of health, money or other important problems. These are legitimate reasons that sometimes cannot be overcome.

Missing the Feast can be discouraging, especially if plans are made and have to be cancelled. "Hope deferred makes the heart sick," we are told in Proverbs 13:12.

But we must not let our hearts remain sick! We are to rejoice! Even when the only option is to keep the Feast at home, we must make up our minds to rejoice in it! Recreate the atmosphere of Church services by listening to Feast audio sermons provided by the Church. Sing praises to God by singing from the hymnal.

Some Feast sites also offer Webcast services on the Internet for the computer savvy, which allows homebound brethren to hear a live sermon and join with a thousand other voices in song—from miles away.

Those of us who are able to attend the Feast can help homebound brethren rejoice by sending letters and colorful postcards from our Feast sites. Of course, it is not the same as personal fellowship, but letting them know they were in our thoughts will make a difference in how they can rejoice at the Feast. "As cold water to a weary soul, so is good news from a far country" (Proverbs 25:25).

If you must stay at home for the Feast, make the decision to rejoice!

## Conditions at the Feast Site

Sometimes the conditions of accommodations at Feast sites are not up to our expectations.

This too can be cause for complaining.

Many of us have "horror stories" to tell about hotels, motels and campgrounds where we have stayed.

In 1985 my family and I stayed in a small trailer house in an RV

should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, 'Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths' (Nehemiah 8:14-15).

*One of the most important benefits is getting our spiritual batteries recharged from observing the Feast with fellow members of God's Church. Without that annual recharge, it is more difficult to face trials and problems in the coming year.*

park. It was nice except for one thing. When we flicked on the lights at night, black cockroaches scattered in all directions. We nicknamed it "Cockroach Inn."

In 1992 our motel room had no bathtub in which to bathe our baby—just a shower. Halfway through the Feast, the sewer backed up, and then we had no bathroom at all. Motel management would not allow us to switch rooms. Instead, they gave us a key to an empty room across the parking lot, which meant we had to walk through the cold, turn on a space heater and use those facilities.

## What Should We Do When Things Go Awry?

**1. Look on the bright side.** Things could be worse! What did the Israelites live in for eight days? "And they found written in the Law... that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, and that they

In other words, this was not a Marriott Resort and Spa.

How did these Israelites react in these accommodations? "And there was very great gladness" (verse 17). While dwelling in booths, they focused on spiritual things instead of the physical.

**2. Change your situation.** If conditions are unbearable, move to another room or motel. Beware, however, that if you move, you may be charged for the entire week or charged the full rate instead of the Church's discounted rate for the nights stayed. And it may not be possible to get that discounted rate at another motel halfway through the Feast.

Be sure to also fill out the housing survey handed out at the end of the Feast so that you can save other brethren any future trouble that you and your family experience by making note of poor conditions.

When we had another bad experience in 2001, we tried to look on

the bright side. After four miserable nights, we couldn't take it any longer.

By getting the motel manager on the phone, we negotiated an agreement and paid more than the discounted rate for the nights we stayed but less than the desk

clerk wanted to charge us. The extra cost was worth it to get out. And the next motel was very gracious to give us the

Church's negotiated rate for the remaining four days.

We tried to look at the bright side but after four horrible, sleepless nights, there were no more bright sides. Once we moved, rejoicing was a lot easier!

Don't wait to begin rejoicing at the Feast of Tabernacles. In Nehemiah's day, the people were told on the Feast of Trumpets, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep" (Nehemiah 8:9). The people rejoiced greatly because of the messages they heard (verse 12).

What message do the fall feasts proclaim? "The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad!" (Psalm 97:1). These days picture a time when Christ will reign on this earth, and none of our petty trials can compare to the glorious time that lies ahead! **UN**

Gregory Dullum is a member in the Cape Girardeau, Missouri, congregation.

*Those of us who are able to attend the Feast can help homebound brethren rejoice by sending letters and colorful postcards from our Feast sites.*



# Spilled Milk

■ We all carry “pails” of attitudes; and when they spill, we tell the world what we really are like. It may be time to discover what attitudes we are carrying.

by Robert Berendt

When I was a boy, our family would spend a couple of weeks vacationing on my uncle's farm. I learned a lot about farming and helped out with the chores. One chore was carrying two pails of milk from the barn to the room where the cream was separated.

My uncle had a yoke that he used to carry the pails. A yoke is a wooden carrying device that is shaped to fit comfortably over the shoulders and has two metal hooks from which two pails of milk could hang.

It made carrying them much easier than holding the two pails with my hands. But I had to be careful not to bump into anything or anyone when carrying the two full pails of milk. It took a few trips to get used to entering the little shed where the separator stood, and once or twice I bumped the side of the door quite hard—spilling milk all over the ground.

## Pails of Attitudes

As we live our lives, we constantly have to negotiate our way through smaller doorways—and occasionally we are going to bump into one of them, or worse yet, we will bump into people. Many circumstances in life fashion and form us and help determine what kind of character we are forging.

In a way, we all carry “pails” of attitudes and when they spill, we tell the world what we really are like. It may be time to discover what we are carrying in our pails.

We may find it difficult to see exactly what is in our pails as we go through life; what's more, the contents in our pails can change (unlike the milk). Paul wrote that we reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). This is not new knowledge; it is something that has always been true. He also wrote that he who sows sparingly will reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will reap bountifully (2 Corinthians 9:6).

If our lives are full of attitudes of anger, grouching, pessimism, bad temper or an ugly disposition—that is what will spill out of our

much about our inner selves—but bumps come unexpectedly—and that is when we find out what is really inside us.

The bigger the bumps—the more spills out. If we are alert, we will see what really is in the pails we carry. If our lives are happy and full of good things, you can be sure the pails we carry are full of the right

appear in the Bible by accident. It is full of wisdom and helps guide us to live happy lives, as God intended. Problems will come and we will bump people and doors, but we can be sure that what spills from our pails is a blessing to ourselves and to others. Much is written about the heart of a



react strongly when he bumped into

a proverbial doorway before his conversion. He also came to know the need of changing what manner of man he was. His words are written from experience and understanding.

Peter advises us all to give diligence to adding virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance and godliness to what and who we are. He also adds brotherly kindness and tells us that if we possess these items, we will never stumble and we will make our calling and election sure. It is a comfort to know there are things we can do to ensure our election and future in the family of God.

Jesus Christ was always mindful that He carried the “express image” of the Father (Hebrews 1:3). He was responsible for what people thought about God by His own actions.

That responsibility has been passed on to us, though we live almost 2,000 years after Christ became the Passover Lamb. True followers realize that the pails they carry do represent the nature and character of Jesus Christ. We should take care when carrying that load; but unlike the heavy yoke with its pails of milk, His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:30). **UN**

*Bob Berendt is the pastor of the Edmonton and Red Deer, Alberta, Canada, congregations.*



*We can carry bad attitudes for some time without revealing too much about our inner selves—but bumps come unexpectedly—and that is when we find out what is really inside us.*

pails every time someone bumps into us. If our lives are full of attitudes of kindness, understanding, cheerfulness, geniality, optimism and friendliness—that also is what will spill out of our pails.

We can carry bad attitudes for some time without revealing too

friends and life seems to be a chore that we do not enjoy, then we need to change what is in our pails. The good thing is that we humans do have the ability to change what we carry—as long as we have the will to change it.

The book of Proverbs did not

all get angry and frustrated, but a mature person learns to control his or her anger.

## A Lesson From Peter

Christians are commanded to grow in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 1:5-9). Peter was known to

## “Survey,” continued from page 1

It has given us helpful ideas and feedback to improve how we do God's work.”

Over 35,000 comments were received in response to the open-ended questions on the previous survey. Each of these was read and, while there were many positive remarks, many comments also highlighted areas for improvement as well and specific ideas that are now being implemented. Examples of where this feedback has been incorporated include:

### Strategic Planning

The Council and administration used the attendee survey as a basis for their strategic planning discussions with the consultant we used to establish the 2008-2009 Strategic Plan and budget approved by the GCE. That Strategic Plan and budget set the

direction for the Church and all our operations.

### Media

Additional resources have been allocated and personnel hired to be more effective through multimedia and Web technologies, Web design and search optimization. Booklets to serve visually impaired brethren have been created in MP3 format.

### Continuing Education

More ABC and WNP Seminars have been planned for congregations that are more remote. Seminars have been conducted at the Winter Family Weekends in Louisville, Kentucky, and Portland, Oregon, as a result of scores of suggestions in the survey.

### Ministerial Services

Many expressed the need to train new and younger pastors for our congregations. This is now a key element in our Strategic Plan.

The topics for breakout sessions at the GCE were selected in part based upon topics recommended in the survey such as youth education, conducting interactive Bible studies and professionalism among the full-time ministry.

### Feast of Tabernacles

In 2008 six Festival sites held optional education seminars and more are planned in 2009 as a result of survey feedback. Many expressed an interest in sites that are similar to the overseas format where everyone stays at the same location in a smaller venue. The new site in West Virginia is a domestic pilot of this approach.

### Education Programs

Festival Youth Instruction for 2009 incorporates the feedback that suggests parents lead their children in biblical instruction and that the materials provided support them as

the primary teachers of their children.

As part of an effort to make more material available online, a pilot is being conducted to have recent ministerial trainees participate in ABC classes online. This is the first step of a concerted effort to make more spiritually in-depth content available to more attendees online.

The Educational Tours, such as the recent one to Israel during the spring Holy Day season, have incorporated more study materials as well as assessments that address the desire to learn more about the Bible in the context and location in which biblical events occurred.

While many valid concerns were expressed and seriously considered, respondents also shared many compliments for the efforts to date, as well as their personal challenges. It is encouraging to see the primary areas of concern reflect elevated priorities and concerns. Respondents were

grateful for the understanding of God's truth and the ability to observe God's Sabbath and Holy Days.

Many expressed appreciation for the service provided by the ministry and local deacons and elders. Many respondents complimented fellow brethren and admired and appreciated genuine fellowship. Individually, the primary personal concerns revolved around the trials that come from being “in the world, but not of the world” or the time, dedication and obedience to make one's own calling and election sure.

Some responded that the concept of “Preaching the Gospel, Preparing a People” needs to be further developed because, according to the respondents, there is more work to accomplish, but it is also a significant reason why respondents are excited about UCG. **UN**

*David Register and Julie Zutz are members of the Education Advisory Task Force.*



## Local Church Updates

### Parents and Parents-to-Be Complete GKGW Program

After 18 intense weeks, a group of 15 members of the Columbia, Maryland, congregation completed the Growing Kids God's Way



Fifteen participants learned successful child-rearing principles over the course of the 18-week program

course. Attendance held up remarkably well, even though classes ran almost every Saturday night for several consecutive months.

The class enjoyed discussion from a varied group of participants, including those with grown children, tweens, newborns and (as of yet) unborns! Next time you visit the Columbia congregation, be sure to find amazing, problemless children—or at least families that now have more practical child-rearing principles to put into practice to help raise God-fearing children.

Mike Greider

### Hargroves Honored at Retirement

On June 27, 2009, the Elkhart and Munster, Indiana, congregations held Sabbath services in Michigan City, Indiana, to honor Vernon and DeLee Hargrove. Jim Franks, Ministerial Services operation manager, and Mike Hanisko, regional pastor, along with their wives, came for the occasion. They each gave a split sermon, and Mr. Franks presented the Hargroves with a beautiful commemorative plaque. Each congregation had previously given the Hargroves a gift and party. Mr. Hargrove retired in July, and he and his wife will be moving to the Columbus, Ohio, area to be closer to family.

Vernon Hargrove entered Ambassador College in 1957, with DeLee Hans entering three years later. During his senior year, Mr. Hargrove began training in the pastoral ministry. After graduat-



Vernon and DeLee Hargrove

ing, he was ordained a preaching elder on Oct. 13, 1962. He married his beautiful bride, DeLee, on Oct. 24, 1962, on the Pasadena campus. They raised two sons, and now have five grandchildren.

The Hargroves have served God's people in over 18 different congregations, including Phoenix and Tuscon, Arizona; Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana; Jackson, Mississippi; Charlotte and Lenoir, North Carolina; Indianapolis, Columbus, Michigan City, Plymouth and Hammond, Indiana; Columbus, Ohio; and Elmhurst, Illinois. Since 1997, the Hargroves have served in the congregations of Hammond

(Munster) and Elkhart, Indiana. They have been faithful servants of God's people for more than 47 years.

We in northern Indiana will miss them, but pray that they enjoy this new chapter of their lives.

Shawn Cortelyou

### Seven Graduate in Los Angeles

The Los Angeles, California, congregation honored seven graduates this summer by presenting a pocket-sized sword (the weapon of our spiritual warfare, not cold steel) to each high school grad



Zach Garnant, Danica Pinner, Byron Norrod, Gregory Zajac. Not present: Amanda Delamater, Rosemarie Lavaty, Eric Mazzei

and a *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary* to each of their collegiate counterparts. These tools will accompany them as they embark on the next stage of their educational journeys or the beginning of their professional lives.

Amanda Delamater, 18, acquired her diploma from the Pasadena High School Center for Independent Study and will begin work on an education degree at Pasadena City College. She hopes to give back to the next generation of students as a preschool teacher.

Zach Garnant received a Certificate of Fire Technology from Mt. San Antonio College and is eager to be hired as a firefighter and start saving lives.

Rosemarie Lavaty earned a Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara and will put her advanced degree to use as a part of the economics staff of the Food and Drug Administration.

Eric Mazzei, 18, completed his four years at Ruben S. Ayala High School in Chino Hills and

will be attending Mt. San Antonio College in hopes of someday becoming a physician's assistant.

Byron Norrod, 18, completed his stay at Blair High School in Pasadena and will continue his education at Pasadena City College.

Danica Pinner, 18, has closed the book on Ventura High School and will open a new chapter at California State University, Northridge, where she intends to earn a bachelor of music performance degree.

Gregory Zajac, 18, graduated from Arcadia High School and plans to major in print journalism at the University of Missouri.

Pastor Larry Greider said, "I feel that education is important, especially in vocational areas, for you're learning a certain skill set for serving others, but if you leave God out of the picture you're still going to have a deficiency." He chose to present Bibles and commentaries for the young graduates in order to restore the "missing dimension" in contemporary education.

He continued, "We feel like the Church has to step in there and fill the gap, because there is a huge gap in the modern humanistic educational movement, where they discount God as the creator and as someone who understands the purpose of life and has answers as to how to fulfill your destiny."

Gregory Zajac

### Tampa Hosts Annual Family Weekend

More than 200 brethren beat the heat at the annual Tampa Bay Family Weekend June 20 and 21.



Ivan Veller and Katie Yarbrough dance at the Tampa Bay Family Weekend

Arnold Hampton, pastor of the West Palm Beach, Florida, and the Caribbean, delivered an inspiring message, "Sarah: A Woman of Faith." Later, brethren feasted on a potluck dinner provided by the St. Petersburg and Tampa congregations.

"Moses" made a guest appearance during a play about the Exodus performed by St. Petersburg's Sabbath school students. Afterwards, a question-and-answer Bible study was conducted by David Treybig, pastor of the St. Petersburg and Tampa congregations, and Mr. Hampton.

After sunset, dancers kicked up their boots to lively music from the Peterson Family Band at a "Blue Jeans and Neckties" themed dance. Prizes were awarded for the most humorous, shiniest, most unusual and least proportionate neckties.

The following morning more than 100 beachgoers converged on the white sand of Fort DeSoto Park. Some competed in the annual sand sculpture contest, while others bobbed in the salty waves. A catered barbecue lunch completed the weekend.

Kristin Yarbrough

### Mother and Daughter Commended

On May 2, 2009, Christina Inez Hayes received a master of science degree in education from the University of Dayton. Christina's area of expertise is special education, and she is currently employed by Columbus City Schools as an intervention specialist. Christina works with special needs



Christina Inez Hayes



Lily Flory points to her name on the award plaque

children in the inner city area of Columbus, Ohio. While it can be a challenge, Christina sees it as a fun and fulfilling job that she truly enjoys.

Christina also enjoys having her summers free to spend with her husband, Lee, and her three children, Micah (13), Lily (11) and Landon (3). Christina's favorite saying is attributed to Eleanor Roosevelt, "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery and today is gift, that is why it is called the present." Christina and her family reside in Columbus, Ohio, and attend the United Church of God congregation.

Only 13 days later, on May 15, 2009, Christina's daughter, Lily Flory, received the Mike Buckley Award for Outstanding Citizenship. Mike Buckley was a beloved school counselor in the Groveport Madison School District who passed away from cancer in 1999. The award is given to one outstanding fifth grader at Sedalia Elementary School each year.

Lily was one of 45 students nominated out of a total of 100 fifth graders. She was among the top 16 who were selected to write in response to a series of questions regarding what good citizenship means to her. Lily was then selected to be one of five students to be interviewed by a panel of eight educators, one of whom was at the district level. Following the interviews, Lily was selected as the recipient, as her excellent responses stood out from all the others. She was given a plaque and a certificate and her name was added to a plaque with Mike Buckley's picture that hangs in the main hallway of her school beside the main office door. We are all quite proud of Christina and Lily for their accomplishments!

Lee Hayes

### South African Congregation Congratulates Graduate

Mbuso and Lindiwe Duma of the Durban, South Africa, congregation are happy to announce the graduation of their son, Simphiwe Duma.

One of his greatest achievements was completing his senior certificate examination with university exemption. He earned the highest mark in his grade for the dramatic arts practical exam. He was also selected as the C Class representative in 2004

and continued serving in that capacity until graduation.

Simphiwe has been blessed to be able to attend the United Youth Camps from 2002 to 2008. He also participates in the youth speech and development courses offered by the Durban congregation. Additionally, he has participated in organizing various Church activities, such as a youth-sponsored dinner and youth programs at the Feast of Tabernacles.



Simphiwe Duma

He wants to complete a bachelor of commerce at the University of South Africa, majoring in marketing and commercial law. His dream is to be a successful business entrepreneur.

## Columbia, Maryland, Youth Graduates From High School

Alyssa Marie Diggins of the Columbia, Maryland, congregation graduated from high school. Alyssa played violin in the orchestra for a year. She also played field hockey; ran cross-country, where she qualified for county and regional

championships; ran track, where she placed second in the 4-by-800 meter relay in the county championship; and played lacrosse, where she received the Sportsmanship Award.

Alyssa plans to attend Essex Community College for two years to get an associate's degree and then wants to transfer to a four-year university to major in sonography.

Alyssa is the daughter of Steve and Rhonda Diggins.



Alyssa Diggins

**Local Church Updates:** If your congregation's news and events are rarely covered in *United News*, why not check with your pastor and write something for him to send in? We're looking for 100- to 300-word articles and photographs with captions. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Include the author's and photographer's names and your phone number. Please double-check the spelling of names. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give the material to your local pastor** to forward to *United News*.

# Announcements

## Births

Kay and Randy Schreiber are happy to announce the birth of their new granddaughter, Marlea Rae, born July



Blake and Marlea Klobuchar

15, 2009, to their daughter Brandy and son-in-law Ross Klobuchar. Older brother Blake is excited about his new sister. Great-grandparents Leonard and Stella Schreiber and Verline Jantzen are thrilled with their new addition.

Andy and Alisha Edinborough welcomed twin daughters to their family on June 9, 2009, at 1:54 and 1:56 p.m. Aleya Rochelle weighed 5 pounds 15



Aleya and Ashlyn Edinborough

ounces and was 19 inches long, and her sister Ashlyn LeeAnn weighed 6 pounds 12 ounces and was 19½ inches long. Both girls are doing very well. They are happy, healthy babies! Andy and Alisha have two other children, Alana Faye and Andrew Ray, and are members of the Wichita, Kansas, congregation.

David and Robin PerMar of the Orlando, Florida, congregation are pleased to announce the birth of their second child, a beautiful baby girl named Abbey Michelle. Abbey was born on March 30, 2009, weighing 8 pounds 11 ounces and measuring 20 1/2 inches. Older brother Jared (7) is thrilled to be a big brother and loves

to help take care of her. Grandparents



Abbey Michelle PerMar

are Ted and Johanna Japhet and Dey PerMar.

Maurits and Julie de Jong feel privileged to announce the birth of their first son and second child Matthys Isaac de Jong. The lad entered this world weigh-



Matthys and Grace de Jong with their mom Julie

ing 4.3 kilograms (9.5 pounds). God has blessed us greatly with health and prosperity within our family. Currently, the family attends the Bricket Wood, United Kingdom, congregation.

Jan Pieter and Kristina (Harmon) Drijfhout of The Hague, the Netherlands, are happy to announce the birth of their son, Luca James Drijfhout. Luca was born on Feb. 27, 2009,



Luca James Drijfhout

weighing 7 pounds 1 ounce. Luca's big sister Ella was especially excited with his arrival and loves to entertain him. Grandparents are Richard and Mary Harmon of the Eugene, Oregon, congregation and Wijert and Dineke Drijfhout, who attend the congregation in the Netherlands.

Scott and Wendy (Eckman) Englehardt of Alpharetta, Georgia, are excited to announce the birth of their first child, Lydia Grace, on Jan. 3, 2009. She was 4½ weeks early and weighed 5 pounds 11 ounces and measured 19 inches long. Lydia is the long-awaited

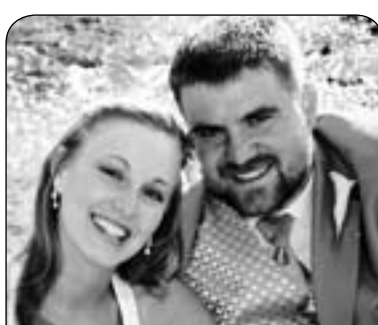


Lydia Grace Englehardt

fifth grandchild of Richard and Dorene Eckman of Wasilla, Alaska, and the fifth grandchild of Nancy Englehardt of Cumming, Georgia, and the late Leland Englehardt. Lydia can't wait to meet her Auntie Mandy (Eckman), Uncle Scott and cousins Aaron, Austin, Ashlee and Anthea Jennings of the Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia. Thank you all for the many thoughts and prayers from around the world on behalf of our precious baby.

## Weddings

Ken Blanchard and Kari Trone were united in marriage on June 28, 2009,



Kari and Ken Blanchard

at a private setting, high in the Sierra Nevada mountains. It was a wedding suited for the bride and groom who are outdoor enthusiasts.

Many brethren from across the country enjoyed the mountain scenery as well as the food, drinks, dancing and bonfire that ended the evening. Kari is the daughter of Dirk and Kathleen Trone, and Ken is the son of John and Linda Blanchard. Kari's grandfather, Dudley Trone, and Ken's father shared in performing the wedding ceremony. The couple now resides in Reno, Nevada.

Kevin and Pam Pettigrew of Charlotte, North Carolina, and Randy and Debbie Diggins of Baltimore, Maryland, are pleased to announce the marriage of their children, Amber and Randy Jr. Their beautiful outdoor ceremony took place on June 14, 2009, at a lake near Charlotte. The weather was beautiful—plenty of sunshine, Carolina blue skies and a nice breeze.



Randy and Amber Diggins

The ceremony was performed by Charlotte elder Larry Lambert. The bridal party included maid of honor Olivia Pettigrew (sister of bride) and bridesmaids Michelle Diggins (sister of groom), Crystal Pettigrew (sister of bride) and Elauna Pettigrew (sister of the bride). The two best men were Scott Buchanan and Brett Diggins (cousin of the groom), with groomsmen Julio Roman and Caleb Creech. The flower girl was Taylor Mihm (niece of the groom). Around a hundred close friends and family joined the couple in celebration.

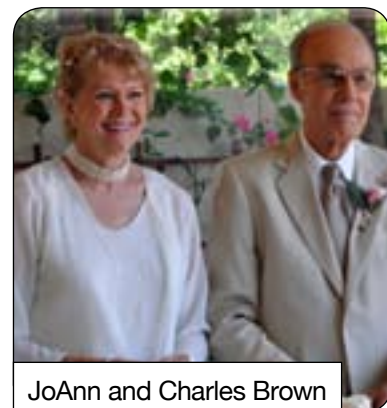
Following the ceremony, guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, an indoor reception, catered meal, emotional toasts and lots of dancing! They all had the time of their lives!

After a two-part honeymoon in Pawley's Island, South Carolina, and Williamsburg, Virginia, Amber and Randy returned to Baltimore, Mary-

land, where they currently reside. They attend the Columbia congregation.

The families of JoAnn Hayes and Charles Brown are happy to announce their marriage on June 14, 2009. The wedding was a family affair at the home of Tom and Janie Hayes. Chuck Zimmerman, a longtime friend of both the bride and groom, performed the wedding.

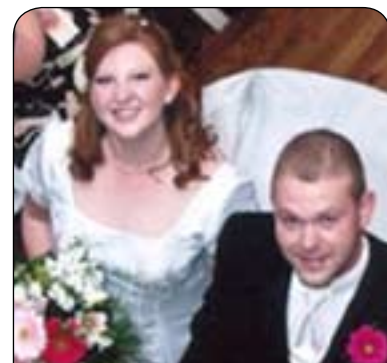
Daughters Kathryn Rapp and Cynthia Hayes as well as great-grandchildren Averie, Raegan and Caleb Hoyer took part in the wedding. JoAnn was escorted down the aisle by her son Tom. The groom's best man was son-in-law Rick McGrath from Kansas City, Mis-



JoAnn and Charles Brown

souri. Other attending family members of the groom were daughter Darcy McGrath and a brother and sister-in-law from Illinois. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful weather and buffet lunch following the ceremony. After their honeymoon cruise, the couple returned to their home in Sun City, Arizona.

Shelley Redd and Nathan Courtney exchanged marriage vows at the Alexander Mansion in Garland, Texas, on May 17, 2009. Shelley is the daughter



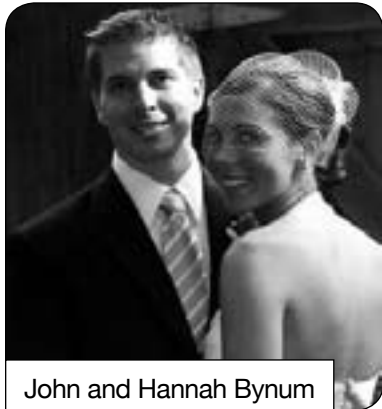
Shelley and Nathan Courtney

of Donna Redd (and the late George Redd), member of the Dallas, Texas,

congregation. Nathan is the son of Bruce and Holly Courtney, members of the Meadville, Pennsylvania, congregation. Don Hooser of Bellingham, Washington, performed the ceremony.

The bride's attendants included maid of honor, Amy Zarate (friend of the bride), Alyssa Redd (cousin of the bride) and Diana Schultz (friend of the bride). The groom's attendants included best man, Jeremy Grundy (friend of the groom) and groomsmen Brian Courtney (brother of the groom) and Ty Aurandt (friend of the groom). The couple resides in Butler, Pennsylvania, and attends the Pittsburgh congregation.

Andy and Tricia Luck of the Nashville, Tennessee, congregation are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter Hannah Rachel Luck to



John and Hannah Bynum

John Alan Bynum. The wedding took place at Old Spencer Mill in Burns, Tennessee, on May 24, 2009. Over 250 guests attended the wedding. The wedding was performed by elder William Vernich.

Hannah's attendants included maid of honor Caroline Luck and bridesmaids Lindsey Croft, Rebecca Baker, Brandi Collins, Morgan Abt and Ashley Neu. John's attendants included best man Danny Bynum and groomsmen Brandon Hahn, Eben Geer, Anthony Bui and Justin Nezda. After honeymooning in St. Lucia, John and Hannah returned to Dallas, Texas, where Hannah is a pharmacist for CVS Pharmacy and John is the vice president of Information Technology for Real Time Resolutions.

Julio and Maggie Roman of Westminster, Maryland, are happy to announce the marriage of their daughter, Ana Lucia Roman, to Mark Tannert, son of Walter and Ann Tannert of the Tucson, Arizona, congregation. It was a spectacularly sunny and comfortable day on



Mark and Lucy Tannert

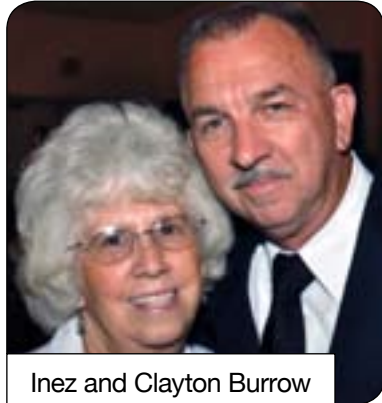
May 17, when vows were exchanged at the private residence of Rusty and Pattie Wayne in North Bend, Ohio.

The ceremony was bilingual, with the English performed by Tim Waddle and the Spanish translation performed by

Ralph Levy, and witnessed by nearly 200 guests. Attendants were Paola Roman (sister of the bride), Brianna Healy, Erin (Roscoe) Tootle, Kurt Tannert (brother of the groom), Julio Roman and Taylor Tootle. The couple also exchanged their vows in both English and Spanish. The outdoor ceremony was followed by an outdoor reception. The couple resides now in Cincinnati, Ohio.

## Anniversaries

Clayton and Inez Burrow of the Asheboro, North Carolina, congregation celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 28, 2009. Family and friends joined together on this occasion with food and fellowship. Their children surprised them with a video montage of their life together.



Inez and Clayton Burrow

Clayton and Inez have five children and 11 grandchildren.

Clayton is a deacon and Inez is a deaconess in the Asheboro congregation. They became members of the Church in October of 1967. After the church service on July 18, the local congregation surprised them with a special reception and a gift of crystal wine glasses, carafe and tray.

William and Kay Hadley of Heath, Ohio, celebrated their 50th anniversary on June 27, 2009, with a family dinner. They were married on June 27, 1959, in Clarion, Pennsylvania, and began attending services in Pittsburgh in



Kay and William Hadley

1963. In 1965 they became two of the founding members of the Wheeling, West Virginia, congregation where they served for over 40 years before moving to Heath, Ohio, in 2006.

They are the parents of two sons, Paul (Karen) and Kevin. The entire family attends the Columbus, Ohio, congregation where William serves as an elder. After dinner, William and Kay were presented with a personalized afghan commemorating their 50 years together.

Walter and Dorothy Hawk celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on

June 20, 2009. An open house/drop-in was held on June 21, and friends and family arrived from across the country to honor the couple.

Walter and Dorothy first began



Walter and Dorothy Hawk

attending God's Church in Akron, Ohio, in 1971 and were baptized in 1972. Walter was ordained a deacon in 1977 and then an elder in 1984. They currently attend and serve in the Canton, Ohio, congregation.

Mr. and Mrs. David Hofer Sr. of the Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, congregation celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 13, 2009, with their family from Des Moines,



David and Sarah Hofer

Iowa; Vancouver, Washington; and Winnipeg.

The Cape Girardeau, Missouri, congregation gave a surprise 50th wedding anniversary celebration for Don and Elaine Hatchett following services June 13. The Hatchetts were married June 13, 1959, in Chicago.



Don and Elaine Hatchett

They met as students at the Mt. Sinai Hospital School of Nursing in 1957. Don began listening to Herbert W. Armstrong on XERA Radio out of Mexico in the spring of 1958. The couple moved to Carbondale, Illinois, and Don received his bachelor of science degree in nursing in 1960.

They began attending services with the Church of God in St. Louis. Don was baptized in Harrisburg, Illinois, by Hal Baird in November 1963. Elaine was baptized in the spring of 1970. The couple attended services in Evansville, Indiana, and Cape Girardeau until the Mt. Vernon, Illi-

nois, congregation was established Aug. 24, 1974.

Don was ordained a deacon in 1976 and served in Mt. Vernon. He was ordained a local elder on March 27, 1994. Don was instrumental in forming a United Church of God congregation in Mt. Vernon with about 25 brethren. Larry Greider later became their pastor. Years later, the Mt. Vernon location for services was discontinued. The Hatchetts currently attend services back in Cape Girardeau and in Paducah, Kentucky.

Gary and Margie Jacques of Warner, New Hampshire, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on Sunday, June 7, 2009. They were married in Bedford and have lived in New Hampshire their entire lives.



Gary and Margie Jacques

The Jacques were called together shortly after their wedding, and they were both baptized on Dec. 24, 1971.

Margie owns and manages a personnel assessment company. She and Gary work for police and fire departments throughout New England. The company just completed 25 years in business. Working together is one of the greatest blessings God has provided.

Margie is a 2002 ABC graduate, and Gary is a 2004 ABC graduate. They attend the congregation in Worcester, Massachusetts.

## Obituaries

Russell Edelbach, 77, a caring and devoted husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, died of large cell lymphoma on July 9, 2009, at his home in Hayfield, Minnesota.

He was born June 17, 1932, in Gilman, Wisconsin, one of 11 children. In 1952 Russell was drafted into the



Russel Edelbach

United States Army during the Korean War and served as a military policeman in Japan. After being released from the army, he and his parents came in contact with the truth and were baptized in the Mississippi River in 1958.

He met his future wife, Wilma Ford, at the Feast of Tabernacles in Big San-

dy, Texas, in 1960 and they were married March 19, 1962.

In 1964, without the benefit of a job, the Edelbachs stepped out in faith and moved to Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, in order to be close to where church services were beginning. They were charter members of the Minneapolis congregation. Russ worked there for 37 years as a carpenter and maintenance man.

He is survived by his lovely wife of 47 years, their three children, Beverly (Charles) Jackson, Jeanne (Toby) Shipman and Timothy (Angela) Edelbach; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Russ's passion was to serve and help others. He was a deacon and couldn't sit by if there was a job to be done. He also loved to travel, spend time with family and work on building projects. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends and the Church.

Thelma Stewart, 96, died on Aug. 3, 2009. Born 1913 to John Ardis and Ola Olivia (Berkey) McNatt on the Honey Creek Farm near Aurora, Missouri. Thelma married John Albert Stewart in November of 1936 until December 2001 when John preceded her in death.



Thelma Stewart

They were married for 65 years. They lived in Halltown, Missouri; Santa Ana, California; and Aurora, Missouri.

Thelma was baptized into the Church of God in 1964. She was a charter member of the Aurora, Missouri, Elk Horn Prairie Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and graduated from Aurora High School in 1931. Thelma moved to Texas to live with her daughter Pat in 2001.

She is survived by son Charles (Joanne) Stewart; daughter Patricia (Larry) Miller; daughter Cornelia (Felix) Heimberg; grandchildren Victoria (Sandy) White, Dan Stewart, Ruth (Scott) Oremland, Tricia (Joe) Souza, Rina Heimberg, Michael Phillips, Byron (Lisa) Phillips. She is survived by eight great-grandchildren and one great-great-granddaughter born on Thelma's last birthday. She was a beloved lady who never met a stranger and loved all.

**Announcements:** Members are welcome to submit announcements of the births, engagements, weddings, significant anniversaries (25, 40, 50, 60, etc.) and obituaries in their families. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Most items are 50 to 100 words and should not exceed 250 words. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give them to your local pastor** to forward to *UnitedNews*.

## News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

tatives to raise money for worthwhile programs are encouraged.

We intend to organize fund-raising efforts and will monitor UCG projects here and in international areas. Our main focus will be our international scholarship programs, the Youth Corps projects in Jordan and other international venues, as well as emergency aid in case of natural disasters.

Larry Greider

### Columbia, Maryland, Hosts ABC Seminar

An ABC Continuing Education weekend was held in Columbia, Maryland, Aug. 1 and 2. Jim Franks, operation manager for Ministerial Services, and ABC instructor Ralph Levy were the presenters for this event.

On Sabbath morning, Mr. Franks gave the sermon, titled "The Two Trees and Eternal Life," with 138 present. On Sabbath afternoon, some 87 remained for the start of the seminars.

Dr. Levy's class was on "Principles of Prophecy and the Book of Ezekiel," and Mr. Franks taught

"The Life and Times of Jesus Christ: A Survey of the Gospels."

Some 51 brethren completed 10 hours of classes over the two days, and comments were very positive. "A definite positive—only made me want more," were the words of one who completed the seminar.

Ralph Levy

### Festival Youth Booklet to Replace FYI Classes

As was announced in the *Festival Planning Brochure 2009*, the United Church of God has decided through a lengthy review process that included the Youth Education Task Force, the Education Advisory Task Force, the Festival coordinators and the Ministerial Services Team, to suspend formal Festival Youth Instruction at the U.S. Feast sites for this year.

In its place, a booklet has been created that we hope will help facilitate rich discussions between parents and their children about God's wonderful plan for our future.

The booklets will be mailed to each U.S. and Canadian congregation before the Feast of Trumpets. There will also be a limited number of booklets available at each Feast site for parents who do not receive one before the Feast.

"The Feast of Tabernacles and the other festivals of God really come alive and personal when we share our thoughts and experiences with others,"



## What's New on the Web?



### How to Log In to Your Local Church Web Site

Each local congregation Web site has a password-protected

section for sensitive information and prayer requests. Ask your local pastor for the user name and password for the page. Go to the "Local Information" tab in the toolbar and choose "Member Login" to access the page. Once you log in, you will find a menu specifically for members in the left sidebar.

### Featured Link

#### Council of Elders Web Site

Visit the newly created Council of Elders Web site to find Council members' bios, Council updates, as well as the latest reports from the quarterly Council meetings at the home office.



If you have questions or comments, please contact: [webmaster@ucg.org](mailto:webmaster@ucg.org)

said Dr. Keith Tomes, chairman of the Youth Education Task Force. "Regularly talking about our passion for the truth can be one of the most effective ways to impress upon our children the truths we hold so dear.

"The booklet will contain an area where your child can jot down thoughts and ideas generated by the day's messages and questions that may arise. We hope these thoughts, ideas and questions can then be generated into meaningful conversation pieces later in the

day or evening—maybe when you sit down for a nice meal.

"With these conversation starters and the thoughts and ideas formulated during the day by the children, we hope some rich, tradition-building dialog can be established. The success of this approach will depend on parents and children alike to create the quality time needed for this type of activity."

### Twin Cities Women's Conference 2009

The Twin Cities Women's Conference will take place the weekend of Nov. 14 and 15, 2009, in Twin Cities, Minnesota. Our theme this year is "Finding Peace." The cost is \$40 if you register by Oct. 28, \$45 if you register after Oct. 28.

The conference will feature keynote speaker Colleen Winner, with breakout sessions given by Sandy Cafourek, RaeAnn Dowd and Julie Zutz. We will do a service project on Saturday night for our brethren in Kenya. Please visit [www.ucgwomensconf.org](http://www.ucgwomensconf.org) for details and registration information.

For more information, you can also contact Colene Erickson by e-mail at [ericksoncc@comcast.net](mailto:ericksoncc@comcast.net) or by phone at (651) 714-4054.

Gale Black

### Midland Festival Choir Needs Singers

There is an urgent need for volunteers to sing in the Midland, Ontario, Canada, Festival choir. Currently, we do not have enough voices to sing each part for a proper choir. We need the participation of those who are able to serve by singing in the Festival choir.

If you are interested in helping out in this important way, please contact the Festival choir director, Paul Wasilkoff, as soon as possible. Remember to give him your (a) name and (b) the vocal part you sing. His e-mail address is

[paul\\_wasilkoff@ucg.org](mailto:paul_wasilkoff@ucg.org). Since the Feast is only a few short weeks away, your response is needed immediately.

Paul Wasilkoff

### Winter Camp Deadline Approaching

The deadline for applications is fast approaching. Those who are interested in serving on staff should turn in their forms by Nov. 1. Campers' applications are due Nov. 15. Visit the United Youth Camps page, [members.ucg.org/youthcamps](http://members.ucg.org/youthcamps), for more information about Winter Camp and to download an application.

Gary and Gale Black

### Travel Education Tour in Turkey Announced

Our next Travel Education Tour is an escorted tour of Turkey during the Days of Unleavened Bread, March 18-31, 2010, following the footsteps of the apostle Paul. More information and reservations may be made at [travelgallery.com](http://travelgallery.com), or by calling (800) 858-6999.

Dave Register

### Calendar of Events

- Sept. 19:** Feast of Trumpets.
- Sept. 28:** Day of Atonement.
- Sept. 29:** Home office closes for Feast of Tabernacles.
- Oct. 3-9:** Feast of Tabernacles.
- Oct. 10:** Last Great Day.
- Oct. 13:** Registration begins for Winter Family Weekend in Louisville, Kentucky.
- Oct. 31:** WNP Seminar, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- Nov. 14-15:** Twin Cities Women's Conference 2009, [ericksoncc@comcast.net](mailto:ericksoncc@comcast.net).
- Dec. 22-26:** Winter Family Weekend, Louisville, Kentucky.
- Feb. 3:** WNP Seminar, Seattle, Washington.



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## Winter Family Weekend Registration, Oct. 13

Winter Family Weekend  
2009  
December 22-26  
Louisville, KY



This year's Winter Family Weekend in Louisville, Kentucky, will take place from Tuesday evening, Dec. 22, and run through Saturday night, Dec. 26. It will begin with a family dance and continue during the week with seminars, sporting events, family activities and Sabbath services.

This event has become a real favorite for our Church families. Last year about 2,000 people enjoyed the new host venue of the Galt House. Announcements with many more details will be coming out following the Feast of Taberna-

cles, and you can also find information about the event at that time at [wfw.ucg.org](http://wfw.ucg.org).

Registration for this event begins Oct. 13. Beginning Oct. 26, reservations can be made at the Galt House.

Be sure to save the dates and join us at this year's event.

Mark Winner