



## Feast of Tabernacles 2024: Family Around the World

by Heidi Braun

“From many lands we raise our eyes toward Thee, our voices joined as one great family.” This quote from one of the songs in our hymnal, “One Faith, One Love,” speaks of the precious bond God’s people share as a part of His spiritual family. As we traveled to the Feast this year, we were greeted with open arms and joyful hearts of the brethren—both familiar faces, and people we had never met before.

Whether it was your first Feast or 50th, whether you came with parents, grandparents and children or traveled on your own, God’s Church provides you with family wherever you are.

At our Feast sites, we have long emphasized that “Family Day” is for everyone—not just parents and their children. Around the world, we hosted many events that appealed to all age groups—children, teens, young adults, men, women, couples, singles and seniors! In



Church family in Ocean City, Maryland

the Church, you can truly feel at home wherever God’s people are.

The United Church of God had 70 Feast sites (and 14 satellite sites) this year with a total of 15,216 brethren attending in person. The United Church of God also provided a service for those unable to attend with two daily national webcasts. Panama City Beach served the eastern time zones, while Klamath Falls served the western time zones. Only 233 brethren registered for keeping the Feast at home this year, compared to 292 last year.

In this issue of the *United*

*News*, the Feast experiences of God’s people around the world are highlighted in the Feast of Tabernacles reports (pages 4-14 and 19-20). A gallery of photos from the Feast sites (pages 2 and 15-18) has been provided for your enjoyment along with an attendance report.

The Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day help us look forward to the time when “the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people” (Revelation 21:3). Let’s rejoice that all mankind will have the opportunity to be a part of God’s family! **UN**



Church family in Penang, Malaysia



Church family in Nkhwazi, Malawi

## Ogembo, Kenya Hosts Young Adult Event

by Monte Knudson



Forty young adults gathered to enjoy a fabulous week together with six elders, plus a number of staff. The food was delicious and the activities were a blast. Attendees came from across Kenya to spend time together learning more about godliness and how to apply it in their lives. Some of the topics addressed were: dating and courtship, financial discipline, baptism, career guidance, time management, decision making, tithing, leadership in the Church and how to be a good leader. **UN**



## In This Issue

### Operation Managers' Updates

Read updates from MMS and from Media and Communications Services—p. 3

### Feast of Tabernacles Reports

Read reports and view photos from Feast sites around the world—pp. 4-20

### Announcements

Births, weddings and obituaries—p. 21

### Local Church News

Recent events held by Church family and news from members—pp. 23-24

### Resources for the Whole Family

Featured content for all ages—p. 29

### Camp Reports

Reports and photos from camps around the world—pp. 30-31

### The Good News

#### Fuel and Fan the Feast Flame

(Don Hooser)—pp. 25-26

#### Pray More, Fast More, Take Godly Action!

(Robert Curry)—pp. 26-27

#### Giving From Out of Our Abundance

(Deanne Trahan)—p. 28





## Feast of Tabernacles Attendance Around the World

### Canada

Calgary, Alberta.....	200
Kelowna, BC.....	137
Midland, Ontario.....	158
St. John's, Newfoundland .....	15

### Caribbean

Montego Bay, Jamaica .....	140
Stonehaven Bay, Tobago .....	32
Soufriere, St. Lucia.....	44

### Latin America

Chinacota, Colombia.....	56
Gobernador Roca, Argentina.....	40
Guyana .....	9
La Paz, Bolivia .....	19
Licán Ray, Chile .....	110
Panajachel, Guatemala.....	155
Porto Seguro, Brazil .....	51
Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.....	685

### Europe

C. M. La Gaillarde, France.....	211
Crete, Greece.....	702
Southport, England .....	189
Tallinn, Estonia .....	47
Titisee, Germany .....	170
Tuscany, Italy .....	308

### United States

Aransas Pass, Texas.....	404
Branson, Missouri .....	567
Cedar City, Utah.....	249
Cincinnati, Ohio .....	267
Gatlinburg, Tennessee.....	724
Klamath Falls, Oregon .....	436
Morehead City, NC .....	704
Ocean City, Maryland .....	180
Panama City Beach, FL.....	1,008
Sturgis, South Dakota .....	257
West Yellowstone, Montana.....	152
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin .....	520
Satellite sites.....	638

### Africa

Blolé, Côte d'Ivoire .....	52
Burundi.....	441
Cape Coast, Ghana .....	320
Douala, Cameroon .....	22
Ìgbàrà-Òkè, Nigeria .....	141
Lake Naivasha, Kenya.....	245
La Mé, Côte d'Ivoire.....	28
Lubumbashi, DR Congo .....	64
Madagascar .....	58
Malanje, Angola .....	1,655*
Mossel Bay, South Africa.....	144
Momé Hagou, Togo .....	25
Mufulira, Zambia.....	206
Nkhwazi, Malawi .....	79
Nsobe, Zambia .....	191
Ouidah, Benin.....	19
Rwanda .....	22
Yagoua, Cameroon.....	31
Zimbabwe .....	90
Zomba, Malawi.....	111

### Asia/Pacific

Albury, Australia .....	144
Agra, India .....	34
Bangladesh .....	38
Baguio City, Philippines .....	131
Bukidnon, Philippines.....	213
Hong Kong.....	25
Kalutara, Sri Lanka.....	58
Malaysia .....	107
Myanmar.....	83
Pakistan.....	35
Rockingham, Australia .....	73
Sunshine Coast, Australia .....	448
Taupo, New Zealand .....	106
Thailand .....	35
Visayas, Philippines .....	158

**Grand Total**  
**15,449**

### Feast at Home

CD/DVD/online.....	233
--------------------	-----

\*The Feast of Tabernacles in Angola was held by our partner organization.



# Operation Managers' Updates

## Ministerial and Member Services



Tom and Lisa Damour

In mid-August, Tom Damour began serving as interim pastor for the congregation in Lubbock, Texas, following the death of Pastor Dan Taylor.

At the end of September, Aaron Creech was appointed as the pastor for the congregations in Mansfield and Columbus, Ohio.



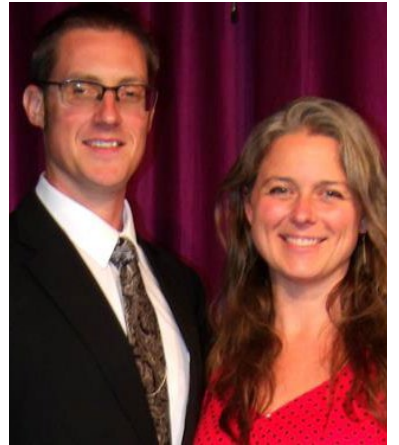
Aaron and Whitney Creech

On September 28, 2024, Jon Atkinson was ordained into the ministry. He and his wife, Cynthia, serve the congregation in Burlington, Washington. On the same Sabbath, Darren Henke was also ordained. He and his wife, Amber, also serve the congregation in Burlington, Washington.



Jon and Cynthia Atkinson

Thank you for your steadfast prayers for our ministers, their families and God's Church. As Romans 10:14-15 reminds us, how can they preach unless they are sent, and how can



Darren and Amber Henke

we hear without a preacher? Your prayers are vital for these laborers as they fulfill their calling, and your dedication is deeply appreciated. **UN**



Steve Myers is the Ministerial and Member Services operation manager for UCG and an elder who serves in the Cincinnati, Ohio area. He can be reached at [steve\\_myers@ucg.org](mailto:steve_myers@ucg.org)

## Media and Communications Services



### Statistics: Daily Bible Reading Program

Thank you for all who participated in the special Book of Deuteronomy daily Bible reading program. We have had more than 73,400 views of our Bible Reading Program pages by 6,765 different individuals.

If you missed any of the daily readings, you can still catch up by going to: [ucg.org/members/news/daily-bible-reading-the-book-of-deuteronomy](http://ucg.org/members/news/daily-bible-reading-the-book-of-deuteronomy).

### Update: Reaching those Incarcerated

On April 19 of this year, Media and Communications Services began airing *Beyond Today* television in United States prisons through the Edovo app. A total of 1,085 correctional facilities are now carrying our content on the app.

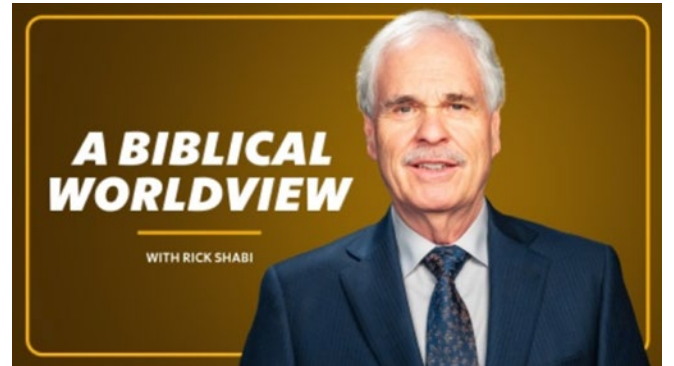


Edovo is a non-profit organization providing educational, vocational and rehabilitative curriculums and content to incarcerated people. While the Church pays for this service, it is available at no cost to the incarcerated learners. More than 800,000 learners view content on the Edovo platform daily, and more than 35 million hours of content have been viewed.

Since April 19 our content has been watched in 1,085 different prisons, with 66,125 unique program starts and 44,835 unique program completions. So, 68 percent of the programs were viewed to the very end, which is a very good percentage.

The most-watched programs so far are (starts/completions):

- Globalism and Prophecy —7,078/4,379
- Russia and Bible Prophecy —5,016/3,697



- Have the Ancient Gods Returned?—4,564/2,886
- You Become What You Think—4,242/2,819
- Hell Unleashed: The Spirit Behind the Hamas Attack—3,760/2,539

Please pray that preaching the gospel of the Kingdom to those incarcerated in almost 1,000 prisons across the United States will have a positive impact on those persons' lives, and that the Father will call to salvation those whom He will.

### Reminder: Watch Biblical Worldview Videos

Remember to join United Church of God president, Rick

Shabi, as he discusses various topics focusing on the truth of the Bible, giving a biblical worldview on what is happening in our world.

These 10- to 15-minute videos are the Church's response to headlines you might see in the news, with the aim of reaching people outside our membership, and preaching a warning message, a message of repentance and a message of the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the nations.

You can view all episodes online at [ucg.org/beyond-today/beyond-today-daily/a-biblical-worldview](http://ucg.org/beyond-today/beyond-today-daily/a-biblical-worldview). **UN**



Peter Eddington is the Media and Communications Services operation manager for UCG and an elder who serves in the Cincinnati, Ohio area. He can be reached at [peter\\_eddington@ucg.org](mailto:peter_eddington@ucg.org)



## Argentina

### Gobernador Roca

The Feast of Tabernacles 2024 was a great success! Held on the beautiful UCG grounds in Gobernador Roca, Misiones, Argentina, the Feast hosted 12 families, bringing 40 brethren together. The atmosphere of the Feast was one of peace and harmony, making it a special celebration of moments of brotherly love and friendship. The sharing of traditional meals and barbecues strengthened the bonds of brotherhood and of the family of God. Overall it was a wonderful Feast!

*Marcelo Saavedra*

## Australia

### Albury, NSW

This year, a new Australian Feast site opened in Albury—a large regional city situated in southern New South Wales. It is very close to the northern Victorian border and hugs Australia's longest river, the mighty Murray.

About 144 brethren gathered daily for services at the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Club, a spacious facility within easy reach of the city centre, yet private and quiet. The convention facility contained

of Australia chose to travel to Albury to observe God's Feast. Overseas visitors were also welcomed, including those from Colorado, Alabama and Washington state.

The opening night message by UCG President Rick Shabi set the tone for the sermons which followed. Brethren were exhorted to maintain a sense of urgency regarding our unique calling, as the world experiences a profound cultural shift. We are patiently waiting, committed to a promise from a faithful God who is preparing us for something remarkable.

Uplifting special music was a feature throughout the festival. A delightful rendering of the song "Abraham's Faith," sung by the children's choral group excited everyone, and a very moving performance of "Let There Be Peace on Earth" was performed by the festival choir on the Eighth Day.

A variety of post-service activities provided something to suit all ages and tastes. These included a teen and young adult canoeing activity, a seniors' outdoor lunch in a garden setting, barefoot bowls, a potluck dinner, and a game night. In addition, Bible-based lessons for both children and teens were provided throughout the Feast, along with Bible story time for the little ones.



Ouidah, Benin

restaurants which were enthusiastically patronised by many Feastgoers. The well-equipped meeting hall provided plenty of space for attendees' fellowship before and after services, with the sounds of animated conversation and laughter a testimony to the truth of Psalm 133:1.

Brethren from many parts

The sumptuous Eighth Day lunch at the Feast venue provided further opportunity for animated fellowship, as brethren broke bread together. The concluding hymn following the final service was sung with great fervency, as brethren asked in song that "God be with you till we meet again."

*Stephen Clark*

### Rockingham, Western Australia

There are many positive things to say about the Feast in Western Australia this year. A scenic location that sits on the bay area of Rockingham, the site offers panoramic views across calm and clear waters, lending a relaxing feel to each day.

Approximately 70 people

joyed a special high tea and lunch in a country chic-themed setting after the morning service. During the evening of the following day, an interactive games evening was held with the condition of entry being a hat of some type. There were many creative and whimsical headwear designs that added to the fun atmosphere.



Sunshine Coast, QLD, Australia

were registered for the site. Services on the opening night were well attended and everyone appreciated the optimistic video message from the home office. The next afternoon, the attendance increased. Most were from the Perth and Bunbury congregations, while others had traversed the country from New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria. There was also an enthusiastic visitor from Canada.

After the first service, members from Western Australia hosted a wonderful array of food and drink for the meet and greet activity. This gave everyone the opportunity to begin settling in with one another for the duration of the Feast. Throughout the rest of the time, there were lots of laughter, good conversation and friendly fellowship.

On Friday evening, a casual hymn sing-a-long in the hall gave some of the teens and young adults an opportunity to lead songs with live piano, violin and guitar accompaniment. It was a nice way to enter into the Sabbath. The next morning, the teens and young adults met for a Bible study on baptism as it relates to the coming Kingdom. The children engaged in a Sabbath lesson about God's promise and power to raise people to life in the second resurrection.

On day four, the ladies en-

The afternoon youth activity on day six was adventurous and challenging—indoor rock climbing! All these activities added to God's command to rejoice and to rehearse the great hope found in the knowledge of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ on earth.

Following the service on the Eighth Day, everyone sat down for one last time to enjoy a delicious lunch and say farewell. Throughout the Feast, individuals and groups provided delightful special music. Overall, the Feast in Rockingham was warm, friendly, inclusive, peaceful and uplifting, with a whole lot to be encouraged about for the trip home. God be thanked!

*Matthew Sieff*

### Sunshine Coast, Queensland

Our 18th year at Venue 114 in Kawana Waters was a success. The attendance on the first Holy Day was 448 and remained well over 420 throughout the Feast. We enjoyed many visitors this year coming from the United States, England, Sri Lanka, Chile, Canada and New Zealand. All enjoyed the beachside location, with rain holding off until just after the final service of the Eighth Day.

Our area is a family-oriented site that has many outdoor

recreational activities. Activities sponsored by the Church included a family day at a beachside park with a spit roast BBQ. There was a dance and social evening with Australian meat pies and ice cream served. This year we also had an over 55s lunch at a local restaurant with 135 attending. Teens and preteens enjoyed an afternoon of roller skating. The young adults started with a "meet and greet" on the first Holy Day and enjoyed a beach activity day later in the Feast.

We have the venue booked for another year and look forward to welcoming more to this beachside paradise in 2025. A massive thank you to all those who served tirelessly to allow the many facets of this Feast to run smoothly. How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

*Joe Rivers*

## Benin

### Ouidah

The Feast of Tabernacles in Benin was a time of great rejoicing and spiritual edification, bringing together many of the faithful around the Word of God. The event was held in accordance with biblical precepts, particularly those set out in Nehemiah 8:18: "And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. They kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule" (English Standard Version). As a reminder of the importance of this Feast in the lives of believers, a special study program for children was designed to impart moral and spiritual values to the youngest members of the community.

From the first to the last day, participants had the opportunity to deepen their faith through Bible studies. Each teaching focused on the prophetic and spiritual significance of the Feast of Tabernacles, highlighting our relationship with God and the fulfillment of His promises. In the evening, moments of praise and worship were organized, allowing everyone to express their gratitude and love for the Lord through song and prayer.

We took advantage of this time to understand the spiritual



meaning of this celebration: to be in communion with our Creator, to draw closer to His Word, and to renew our commitment to walk in His ways, for therein lies the real blessing. Children, young people and adults all contributed with a variety of artistic performances, including skits, traditional songs and dances.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to all those who supported us from near and far, whether by their presence, their prayers, or their financial contributions. The festival was a success and left an indelible mark on our hearts. May God continue to bless everyone who works for His glory.

*Pierre Ogoudélé*

## Bolivia

### La Paz

For the second time since 2003, the brethren gathered in La Paz, Bolivia to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. There were 19 brethren from Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Chile who attended the Feast site.

All the brethren shared their joy and happiness during the days of the Feast, making this celebration a wonderful time to share and get to better know each other.

Among the support staff during the nine days, I can mention Walter Ruben Ortiz from El Salvador who provided the technical support to webcast services, and his wife Magdalena helped with meal preparation. Thanks to this technical support, we were able to transmit all the services of the Feast to the Peruvian brethren who could not attend the Feast in Bolivia. Likewise, Oscar Quemé from Guatemala helped as hymn director and gave several sermons.

Services were held every day according to the schedule and we appreciated the opening message and the main sermon by our president, Rick Shabi. In the afternoons we had three Bible studies.

We also took time to go sightseeing in La Paz on a tour bus where we viewed many interesting things. On another afternoon, we took a trip on a large cable car built by the Swiss that crosses the entire city from north to south. All the brethren were quite impressed

with this engineering marvel which gave us this unique high-altitude view of the city.

At the end of the Feast, all the brethren returned to their respective countries with their spiritual batteries recharged and very grateful to our Father for making it all happen and for giving us good weather. We have also improved our spiritual knowledge in relation to God's master plan of salvation that He created so that we can be part of His family forever.

*Raúl Machicao*

## Brazil

### Porto Seguro

Porto Seguro, located in the far south area of Bahia, was the site for the Feast in Brazil this year. It is a quaint village known for being the first landing point

strong family relationships. Topics like reconciliation begins at home, striving to be a peacemaker, how to be an overcomer and the need to stay close to God in these troubling times were some of the core messages. The prophetic roll out of events and related encouraging meaning of the Feast and the Eighth Day were abundantly expounded.

Feast activities included a family welcome evening, a 10-pin bowling night for the young adults, a children's party, a family cheese and wine evening, a boat ride along the coast, a ladies' tea and a health presentation!

Definitely, one of the highlights of the Feast was the abundance of beautiful special music every single service, and often two pieces of special music! Also, a highlight was the ordination of Giovane and

## Karusi

In Karusi, Burundi, we held a Feast site with 40 members in attendance. We all



enjoyed the Feast together, celebrating this time by worshipping our Creator and rejoicing with one another. We give God the credit for everything.

*Remy Nsengiyumvaremy*

## Ntamba

In Ntamba, Burundi, 85 members celebrated the Feast together. We are so blessed to be part of this calling. We are thankful for the funds we received to unite, worship, fellowship and rejoice.

*Jean Marie Nduwimana*

## Nyabunyegeri

In Nyabunyegeri, Burundi, 256 members attended the Feast. We all enjoyed celebrating this time together, worshipping our great God, and fellowshiping together in the plan of salvation we are all blessed to be part of. The area was balmy with some rain, but all went very well, and we rejoiced together.

*Jean Marie Nduwimana*

## Cameroon

### Douala and Yagoua

This year, 53 brethren celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in Cameroon: 22 in Douala and 31 in Yagoua. In Cameroon, it is difficult to get permission for children to take time off school for the Feast. However, the Feast was otherwise an enriching and beautiful experience.

We thank God for His grace and protection. We also thank the home office for their help and support.

*Moïse Mabout*

## Canada

### Calgary, Alberta

In Calgary, Alberta, 200 brethren came together to rejoice from across Canada, the United States, Ireland, Britain and the Philippines. A new family who had contacted the Church just prior to the Feast and had planned to attend the first two days, had what they described as "a crisis of conscience" and stayed the whole Feast. We were blessed to have Darris McNeely present a *Beyond Today* personal appearance on Friday evening with seven new individuals attending.

The messages were inspired by God to teach and encourage His children to remember the basics and why we are here, looking forward to the time when all people will have their opportunity to know God (Isaiah 2:3).

We had outstanding special music every day during the Feast, including many inspiring solos, two festival choir pieces and the children's choir. Everyone did a wonderful job.

We had several group opportunities to grow our relationships with each other. On the first evening we had a reception prior to the opening night video. The first day of the Feast, we had a group buffet dinner followed by a family dance. In the middle of the Feast, we all had the opportunity to visit the Calgary Zoo. To round out the week we had a group trip to Banff and an opportunity to experience the memorable gondola ride to the top of the mountain. We had our traditional seniors' luncheon with many people volunteering to perform musical selections and some humorous stories for our seniors.

For our teens and young adults there was a meet and greet at the beginning of the Feast and a Bible study later in the Feast. For the teens, we had a planned teen activity and an impromptu activity. Additionally, we had family mini golf and bowling. For our children we had children's lessons twice during the Feast.

The weather in Calgary in October was unusually warm (although one evening and morning we did have a bit of snow which quickly melted). An abundance of fellowship, bonding as brothers and sis-



of Portuguese navigator, Pedro Álvares Cabral in April 22, 1500. The area is safe and is a popular vacation spot for families and young people.

There were 51 brethren in attendance from different areas: 12 from Maloca de Moscow, 11 from central and southern Brazil, 16 from the United States, six from Angola and six from Chile. This is the second year that Angolan brethren were granted visas to travel to the Feast in Brazil.

Messages were given in Portuguese or English, depending on who spoke, and they were automatically translated live to whatever language you chose to listen in (over 50 languages were available), with the use of an Artificial Intelligence translator tool.

The festival's main theme was the family and how to build

Laura Macedo as deacon and deaconess.

At the end of the Feast, we all met on the beach to watch the sunset and to say our farewells. We plan to have the Feast in the same town next year, and welcome anyone to join us at this lovely and safe site.

Até o próximo ano!

*Kathy de Campos*

## Burundi

### Buganda

In Buganda, Burundi, 60 members attended the Feast. We are very grateful for God's blessings that He continues to pour out on us. It was a blessing to learn, grow and fellowship together.

*Remy Nsengiyumvaremy*

Please see next page



**Calgary, Alberta, Canada***Continued from page 5*

ters in Christ and feasting (physical and spiritual) occurred throughout the Feast. Truly bonding as a spiritual family, we rejoiced and praised God together!

*Michael Erickson***Kelowna, British Columbia**

Around 140 people from all over North America made the Okanagan Valley their setting for the Feast of Tabernacles this year. At its heart, the city of Kelowna served as host for daily church services and for many joyful gatherings of fun and fellowship.

During the Feast, 14 engaging speakers, including seven elders, fed us with rich spiritual knowledge about the many aspects of what is represented in these days. This came in the form of daily sermonettes and sermons, three Bible studies and a very endearing Bible talk session by two of our very respected retired pastors and former Council members, Robert Dick and Robert Berendt. Most of the registered attendees turned out an hour and a half before church on the Sabbath to hear each of them share a personal lesson learned during their service to the Church as an encouragement to everyone to keep up the good fight.

Children enjoyed three fun-filled educational lessons prepared just for them to teach the basic harvest principles that are a part of the feasts. A giant Feast mural project was a major part of their learning plan.

We delighted daily in music—singing hymns, enjoying the children's choir, a children's ensemble and many heartfelt solo piano offerings.

We enjoyed many fellowship opportunities, including three catered activities—a meet and greet reception, a seniors' banquet, and an Eighth Day lunch. Also, many enthusiastic individuals stepped up to take the lead on many area activities—including a wineries tour, golf, bowling, a VR escape room, food bank volunteering, thrift shopping and a family day amusement center outing.

We look forward to reprising this exciting Feast experience in 2025. Please look for it in next year's festival planning

brochure. Then, book early as this location fills up fast.

*Wayne Ward***Midland, Ontario**

Approximately 160 enthusiastic brethren gathered in the picturesque town of Midland, Ontario, situated on the shores of the ruggedly beautiful Georgian Bay to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. It was a joyous crowd with some individuals keeping the Feast for the first time, some returning to larger group setting observance and still others who have kept it for decades. The stage decor was fall-themed and included a return of Lambert the Lion and Lionel the Lamb. The information table was likewise decorated in fall colors with much-appreciated Feast souvenir pens, delect-

Members continued with many games in the gorgeous atrium area of the hotel throughout the week. The teens and young adults enjoyed a fun-filled adventure at a local laser tag arena, followed by a Bible study.

On the Sabbath, the seniors were duly honored with a brunch hosted by the attending ministry. We had an orienteering/escape activity attended by many of our outdoor-minded brethren. Our family day activity was held at a local five-pin bowling alley where we had exclusive use of the facility for the afternoon. We enjoyed the various acts presented at our customary variety night, hosted by Dennis O'Neill. Our last activity was a farewell luncheon between services on the Eighth Day and provided members a final opportunity to spend quality time together.

**Tallinn, Estonia**

table sweets and hand-folded paper flowers.

We have met at the same location for several years, so the hotel staff greeted us as friends and were very accommodating to our many needs. They gave us permission to use various areas of the hotel for get-togethers and allowed us to have a baptism in the pool one morning.

Several commented on the meaty, inspired messages. Our high attendance of 158 was on the first day; each service had quite a number of connections via Zoom. In attendance were a number of very talented musicians. Special music each day was wonderful as was the hymn accompaniment each day. The choir performed admirably well.

Activities were well attended, starting with a meet and greet and games after sunset of the first day of the Feast.

Overall, it was a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles; we are already looking forward to next year's Feast. We hope you can join us in Midland!

*Paul Wasilkoff***Chile****Licán Ray**

Brethren from Chile and Argentina traveled to the south of Chile, specifically to the town of Lican-Ray on the shores of Lake Calafquen. The complex "El Conquistador" welcomed us for the Feast of Tabernacles. It featured comfortable cabins, green parks and a large meeting hall to accommodate the 110 brethren gathered, not only from Chile and Argentina, but also brethren from the United States, Canada, Peru, Columbia and Mexico.

The beautiful town of Lican-Ray also has much to offer:

beautiful scenic walks along the shores of Lake Calafquen, hot springs from the waters of the volcano Villarrica and a scenic tour along the lake on a catamaran.

**Chinácota, Colombia**

In the beautiful, clear waters of Lake Calafquen we had two baptisms: a young man (Tomás Rodríguez Cerda) from the UCG church in Santiago, Chile and a young woman (Gisela Melipan Jimenez) from the UCG church in the southern part of Chile, the city of Temuco.

*Marcelo Saavedra***Colombia****Chinácota**

For the third time, we celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles at the Incanto Hotel in Chinácota, Colombia, having been at this hotel in 2021 and 2022. Of course, the hotel staff was very pleased to welcome us back. The maximum attendance was 56 people. On this occasion we were visited by John Elliott, a member of the Council of Elders, and his wife Merrie.

As every year, we truly rejoiced before our loving Father who provides us with everything we need to continue to grow and gives us the opportunity to gather in an atmosphere of Christian fellowship. We enjoyed both physical and spiritual nourishment. We are already accustomed to the traditional food at this hotel, which has taken great care to provide for us a variety of fine dishes and good service.

As for the spiritual food, all the messages during the eight days were uplifting. One of the most impressive was the Bible study presented by Mr. Elliott, in which he contrasted the difficult life in the arid desert with finding a refreshing oasis. The comparison was clear, as this

present society is like that desert where life is very difficult in contrast to the oasis of living close to God and enjoying life as members of His Church.

The social activities also went very well with great enthusiasm. We had the traditional karaoke night with new participants. Special mention should be made of the family dance, which this year had a more formal atmosphere, good music, drinks and carefully prepared snacks.

Something very important to mention was a trial we went through. We had to cancel an activity outside of the hotel facilities due to a strike scheduled by the miners in the region for Monday, October 21. Moreover, due to the complications derived from this protest, once the Feast was over, we did not know how we would return to our homes for the roads were blocked. We sent a prayer request to other Feast sites around the world and prayed that God would intervene powerfully on our behalf—as He did.

The attendees were able to leave the hotel early on Friday, Oct. 25 and had to use transportation (cars or motorcycles) to reach a certain point where the road blocks began. Then they had to carry their bags on foot under a harsh sun, pass the blockade and take another transport on the other side to continue on their way. Having spoken by telephone with one of the strikers, we decided to get through in three cars filled with the elderly group that could not walk. It was a bit unsettling to arrive at the site and not know which of all the protesters to address. After being stopped several times and explaining the same thing, at the last stop it seemed that maybe they would not let us pass, but, suddenly a voice of another protester was heard shouting from far away: "they are authorized, let them pass."

Thus, we all achieved our goal of getting home safely. While it was an unusual and difficult trial, the consensus was that we managed to keep the faith that God was protecting us every step of the way. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:7, "We walk by faith, not by sight."

We all rejoiced to prove once again that we are the children of the Almighty God who will take care of us in every Feast until His Kingdom comes.

*Jaime Salek*



## DR Congo

### Lubumbashi

This year, 64 brethren celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Although it can be challenging for parents to bring their children to the Feast, because schools don't give permission for time off, the Feast was otherwise beautiful and enriching. We are thankful to God for His grace and protection, and we thank the home office for their help and support

*Moïse Mabout*

## Côte d'Ivoire

### Blolé

In Blolé, 52 brethren met once again in our temporary church structure on the church property. Blolé is in the north-west of the country. This year we welcomed many who traveled from the village of Loneu to attend the Feast of Tabernacles for the first time.

We thank our brethren around the world for their prayers and financial support which makes possible the chance to observe such a beautiful Feast of Tabernacles.

*Albert Oulai and Mamadou Tokpa*



**Club Miléade La Gaillarde, France**

### La Mé

In La Mé, 28 brethren rejoiced to observe the Feast in our recently updated church hall. La Mé is in the south of Côte d'Ivoire. On one of the evenings of the Feast, we invited the entire village to a special celebration with singing and dancing. During this evening, we preached to them about the

meaning of the Feast days. We held services each day in both locations.

We thank our brethren around the world for their prayers and financial support which makes possible the chance to observe such a beautiful Feast of Tabernacles.

*Albert Oulai and Mamadou Tokpa*

## Estonia

### Tallinn

The northernmost Feast site, Tallinn, Estonia hosted 47 brethren from six countries. We were well-blessed each day with marvelous special music to complement the solid Feast messages of hope.

We enjoyed dozens of different restaurants that were within easy walking distance of our hotel. Several grocery stores and many shops were nearby. The ferry dock was a few minutes away on foot for day trips across the Baltic Sea to nearby Helsinki, Finland.

We had a guided walking tour of the nearby medieval city of Old Town Tallinn. We also enjoyed a guided bus tour that included an open-air museum of area history, a music performance hall and library in the woods, a visit to a waterfall park

us next year to encourage the Nordic and Baltic/East European brethren.

*Tim Martens*

## France

### Club Miléade La Gaillarde

This year's Feast of Tabernacles in France brought together 211 people from 13 different countries at the Club



**Panajachel, Guatemala**

Miléade la Gaillarde on the French Riviera. The all-inclusive site offered abundant and delicious buffet-style meals, allowing brethren to spend lots of time together over meals or enjoying a cup of coffee or a drink on the terrace, overlooking a beautiful view of the Mediterranean. The messages, which alternated between French and English, focused on the coming Kingdom of God and what is required of us now in terms of our spiritual preparation and readiness. Other themes included perseverance, being pilgrims and spiritual healing.

We gathered for the opening night message via video from President Shabi and then later, during the daylight portion of the first day, we held regular church services. Afterwards we enjoyed a welcome drink hosted by the director of the resort and then had a "Welcome Bingo" mixer event to facilitate meeting and getting to know one another. A highlight of the Feast was our special music as we were blessed with talented musicians from around the world. Truly the time just flew by and so many people expressed how encouraging it was to all be together in one location for these eight days.

The site's location right on the Mediterranean afforded Feastgoers breathtaking views of God's creation with beautiful sunrises and sunsets. The brethren were also able to go on different tours such as visiting the beautiful port cities of Monaco and Cannes, as well as wine-tasting at a local winery. Towards the end of the Feast, we had our talent show where about a dozen participants, young and old, shared their talents in music and en-

were a number of international families visiting this year, there were two organized youth activities: first the "Titisee Rally" where teams raced against the clock and each other to solve challenges which took them all around the town, and the second an afternoon of water slides and swimming at the local water park. Additionally, those 16 and older could relax in a "palm tree oasis" of mineral baths and a steam sauna.

Other fellowship opportunities included a women's discussion on the term "Koinonia," men's discussion, planned and spontaneous youth Bible studies, and Bible discussions based on the sermons that were presented. A dance and games night as well as a hymn sing and karaoke evening provided further opportunities to gather together for fun and laughter.

The bus tour this year was a fascinating look into the rural and cultural history of the Black Forest at the Vogtsbauernhof working farm and museum.

Translation into English or German was provided at every service, and an a cappella children's choir was a special music highlight. Children's Bible studies were also given in both English and German and many local brethren enjoyed practicing their English skills with our international visitors.

The exceptional weather encouraged walks around the lake or in the forest full of moss, mushrooms and autumnal colors, and the local staff at the Kurhaus where services were held commented that every year we are where the sun shines.

The Feast this year ended with the joyful announcement of three baptisms and the encouragement to let our light shine in the coming months ahead.

*Claire Kasper*

## Germany

### Titisee

Brethren from Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria joyfully celebrated this year's Feast of Tabernacles along with several international visitors in the beautiful Black Forest town of Titisee.

A maximum of 170 attendees enjoyed plenty of opportunities to fellowship and grow together in God's Word. Early in the Feast was the annual mystery dinner, which allowed for people of all ages, nationalities and languages to eat together in each other's temporary dwellings and build bonds that lasted the entire Feast. As there

## Ghana

### Cape Coast

In a flash, it seemed, the eight-day, nine-night sojourn of 320 local and foreign brethren in Cape Coast for this year's Feast of Tabernacles came and went!

Keeping pace with the hopeful and inspiring tone set

*Please see next page*



**Cape Coast, Ghana***Continued from page 7*

by President Rick Shabi in the Opening Night video, all the subsequent messages over the rest of the days were highly encouraging and consistently exhorted the brethren in various biblical themes. Special

boat rides, cooking classes, golfing tournament, Jeep rides, etc. This Feast site had the perfect combination of children, teens, young adults, couples and senior citizens.

The opening welcome video set the pace for solid, effective and rewarding spiritual messages. A Bible study and three interactive “Ted Talk”-type

adults, game night and fellowship for young people. Also, there were a ladies’ afternoon tea, family day, a senior breakfast, a boat trip around Lake Atitlan, a talent show, a sports afternoon, a typical Guatemalan dinner and an Eighth Day dinner. All these activities gave us moments of unity, harmony and brotherly love.

When God transforms the minds and hearts of His children, through the power of His Holy Spirit, people can submit and obey God willingly and sincerely, visibly making it evident in their lives the fruits of love and unselfish concern for one another.

We thank God for His many blessings and our brethren from different congregations for having taken us into account in their prayers, for the success and provisions of the needs of one another.

*José Israel Robledo Serrano*



**Nkhwazi, Malawi**

music was in good supply from Ghana’s 10 congregations to enhance our collective praise and worship of God.

Various indoor and outdoor games, a Bible quiz, children’s party and a marriage seminar completed the joyful family atmosphere that prevailed over this special gathering.

It all fell nothing short of a small-scale group rehearsal of God’s coming Kingdom—a successful run-through, which left us spiritually buoyed up in enthusiastic expectation of the installation of God’s government of peace on earth!

Having now renewed commitment to this great and privileged calling from our God, we look forward to the sure reality of God’s Kingdom.

*Henry Aikins*

presentations also provided spiritual nourishment. Church members illuminated a great godly example as staff and management made numerous favorable comments about our members. However, most will agree that the special music every day could have been called extra-special music. The choir directed by Kourtney Kovanis had over 50 on stage and was exceptional.

Biblical sites like Athens and Corinth were toured by many pre- and post-Feast, plus visitors toured some of the popular Greek islands like Santorini and Mykonos.

*Charles Melear*

## Guatemala

### Panajachel

With the Feast slogan “By their fruits you will know them,” 155 brethren from the United States, Mexico, Canada, Panama, El Salvador and Guatemala celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in front of the beautiful Lake Atitlan in Panajachel, Guatemala.

All the activities were able to be carried out due to good weather during the Feast. There were inspirational messages given and 22 special music presentations. There were Bible studies for children and

## India

### Agra

Brethren from the United States joined our Indian brethren to observe God’s Feast of Tabernacles at the Grand Mercure Hotel overlooking the famous Taj Mahal known as one of the seven wonders of the world.



**Montego Bay, Jamaica**

We enjoyed the Indian tradition of all members staying in the same hotel, eating three buffet meals together, and having services in the hotel meeting room. This quickly brought our Church family closer together.

Services were in English with interpretation into the Hindi language. When Mr. Shabi’s English Feast messages were played, the brethren gath-

ered together in a large circle and reviewed the messages with our bilingual English/Hindi speaking brethren.

The Feast days were full of daily fellowship and tea time as well as iron sharpening iron in Bible workshops and Bible trivia. Other fellowship opportunities included a game night with prizes, two Bible movie nights and a variety show, showcasing local and international talent.

There was enjoyable fellowship on the rooftop of the hotel which has a beautiful view of the world-famous Taj Mahal. An enjoyable puppet show was provided by the hotel. Lastly, we had “Pizza Night” at the Rooftop Cafe which was a delightful evening under the stars for everyone.

Our Indian brethren don’t have opportunities to go to a swimming pool, and they experienced such fun and laughter as the children and adults splashed, jumped and giggled with joy. A couple of children and one adult learned how to swim after three days of diligent practice. Several brethren also took advantage of taking an afternoon tour of the Taj Mahal and the Agra Fort. They also visited two of the local Agra Church members’ homes. This is especially enjoyable for our United States brethren to get

You are invited to join your Indian brothers and sisters at next year’s Feast. A visit to India will be a life-changing experience. If you want to travel internationally and you earnestly seek to meet and serve your brothers and sisters in Christ who live overseas, the Feast in India would be an exceptional opportunity for you. You can make a difference by sharing your time, talent and love with your Indian brothers and sisters. There is a need for Church elders and speakers to serve at the Feast in India in 2025 and share daily messages during the Feast. For all who come, this will be a Feast you will not soon forget.

*David Schreiber*

## Italy

### Tuscany

Fabulous sunsets greeted 308 brethren at the new UCG Feast site at the Leopold II spa on the Tuscan coast of Italy. Having the entire hotel made for a wonderful safe experience for the many families with children in attendance. Three days were in Italian with English translation and the rest were in English. There were three tours after morning services, Florence, Sienna and Pisa.

Prior to the Feast, about 40 kept Atonement in Milan and departed Sunday for the pre-Feast tour that included a boat ride along the coast and several wineries.

Weather and fellowship were pleasant throughout the Feast and all-inclusive meals brought everyone together. The hotel lowered the 18-year-old spa age so parents could take their children into the heated spa pool. Family day was at the beach across from the hotel. The Feast also featured a teen study and a talent show—something for all ages.

Everyone appreciated the Italian brethren’s efforts to put the Feast site together in such a short time.

*Aaron Dean*

## Jamaica

### Montego Bay

This year’s Feast theme, 1 John 3:2, inspired the sermonettes, sermons and special music we enjoyed in Montego Bay

## Greece

### Crete

The island of Crete and the Creta Maris Resort hosted 702 attendees who enjoyed perfect weather the entire Feast along the northern coast and beach. The all-inclusive facility has many pools, restaurants and recreational options for all to enjoy.

Additional off-site optional tours were available to visit the island for archaeological, historical and cultural sites,



at Iberostar Waves Rose Hall Beach. Up to 140 brethren (ages 12 weeks to 90 years) gathered at the Calypso Theater each day in peace and unity, thankful to God for His calling, His blessings and His wonderful plan of salvation.



Fellowship opportunities were abundant: a ladies mingle and interactive seminar (Psalm 46:10), teen lunch, young adult mingle and Jamaican-hosted evening meal at a nearby condo. A day pass and Eighth Day lunch also provided time for brethren to share experiences.

Activities also included a praise and worship hymn sing, two teen Bible studies, a conflict resolution seminar by Randy and Kay Schreiber, a family dance and an interactive Bible talk in which attendees shared what they “treasure” about God’s way of life.

Special highlights included two separate blessings of little children and an ordination of a deacon, Rohan Walker, who attends the Kingston congregation with his wife, Addijah, and their children, Rushaye, Brenae and Jovantae.

We appreciate the service of so many this year—thank you! We hope you had a joyous Feast and will consider joining us next year to help the work’s efforts grow in Jamaica!

*Jeff and Alisa Lockhart*

## Kenya

### Lake Naivasha

On the shores of Lake Naivasha, 245 people kept the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day together. The brethren lodged in tents and cottages. The countryside featured beautiful surroundings and even a few hippos. The messages and the fellowship were inspiring. God’s plan of salvation is so awesome and beyond belief!

*Simon Nganga and Monte Knudson*

## Malawi

### Nkhwazi

It was a blessing to celebrate the Feast at the Nkhwazi church property in Mchinji, about 60 kilometers (37 miles) to the west of the capital city, Lilongwe.

This year’s Feast began on opening night with an attendance of 68 people. The daily services were held at 10:30 a.m. local time, and included choir singing and recitation of Bible verses mostly by Sabbath school children. The highest attendance at the Feast was 79 of which 5 percent were under 13 years.

The sermons and sermonettes focused on the Millennium, painting a picture of the paradise which is to come. A question-and-answer session was also exciting because it sparked discussions that helped bring clarity on topics about which there are common misconceptions.

In addition to church services, the attendees had a chance to share meals and participate in daily physical activities which were done around the Feast site. We also had an entertaining day in which we were separated into different age groups and held discussions relevant to each age demographic. One evening was dedicated to a variety show, which concluded with a Feast dance. The seniors were given a chance to dance first and then the whole group joined them.

On the Eighth Day we held a blessing of three boys and one girl (the youngest was eight months old) from the prospective families who have been attending with us for almost two years.

We look forward to the 2025 Feast of Tabernacles. May God’s Kingdom come!

*Cephas J. Chapamba*

### Zomba

The powerful opening night message from Rick Shabi, United Church of God president, set a joyful mood for the 111 brethren who gathered on the outer slopes of Zomba Mountain to celebrate the soon-coming Kingdom of God.

This tone remained in the sermonettes and sermons that came thereafter, expounding the meaning of the pinnacle of God’s feasts. The messages were well-spiced with beautiful special music from various groups of people.

The mornings started with aerobics (exercises), followed by breakfast, a church service, lunch and dinner (except for Sabbaths, when we took a break from exercises). The messages were focused on what the wonderful Millennium will be like under the reign of Jesus Christ and the saints. Other messages also focused on the relationship between physical marriage and spiritual marriage of Christ and the Church.

There was incredible rejoicing during family activities and other treats. We all ate breakfast, lunch and dinner together as one big family because we all lodged at one place, occupying all the rooms. For most of the members, the food that we ate is not eaten daily in our homes, so it was indeed a foretaste of the

east Asia this year with a new venue secured on the island of Penang, Malaysia. The Shangri-La Resort, situated on the water’s edge at Batu Ferringhi Beach, was blessed with beautiful views of Ferringhi Bay in front of peaceful, lush green vegetation. It was an ideal location for 55 brethren from around the world to gather together on-site and keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The resort boasts a large expanse of lawn, palm and shade trees, absolute beach frontage, lagoon-type swimming pools and delicious cuisines from four on-site restaurants. A particular pleasure was enjoying the western and Asian cuisine buffet breakfast each morning with brethren who had traveled



Millennium, a time of abundant food supply.

To crown it all, we were entertained by a variety show whereby a few members showcased their talents and then we enjoyed a Feast dance.

This year’s Feast was remarkable because God blessed us with cool weather for the first four days of the Feast. We only experienced hot weather the last few days. Additionally, we did not experience any major illnesses from the members. To many, they said it was the best Feast ever. Many thanks and appreciation to the home office for financial support for us to meet both accommodation and food expenses.

*Gracious Mpilangwe*

## Malaysia

### Penang

There was much anticipation for the Feast site in South-

from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, United States, Canada, Netherlands and Australia.

The six-course welcome dinner following the first Holy Day provided an excellent way for everyone to come together and break the ice; similarly, the buffet lunch on the last Holy Day a wonderful way to share a last meal together and say final goodbyes.

Members organized many activities, including a visit to historic George Town, the famous Monkey Island, and to Entopia butterfly farm which boasts more than 15,000 butterflies. The youth activity at Adventure Zone saw parents and their children sharing thrills and spills as they raced each other down exciting drop slides. Street food stalls and a wide range of restaurants and busy night markets with many across the street or within walking distance of the Feast venue facilitated more opportunities for brethren to share meals and

inspiring conversation.

Thought-provoking messages focused on our role as leaders and teachers in the Kingdom, helping and loving others in a future that is pictured by abundance and truly seeing the greatness of God. We were reminded to rejoice and be happy in the knowledge we have of God’s awesome plan for mankind.

Our Southeast Asian brethren appreciate all who came to Penang to support them. Some are totally isolated all year, unable to travel to another country themselves, and are glad for the opportunity to celebrate the Feast and meet other like-minded brethren. Their faith and trust in God is an inspiration to all who talk with them. God truly blessed us with an inspiring and encouraging Feast of Tabernacles.

*Louise Kleinbergs*

## Mexico

### Puerto Vallarta

We had a vibrant Feast in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. There were 685 brethren attending and we truly experienced the beauty of God’s family from across the globe—brethren coming from the United States, Canada, Guatemala, Jamaica, Chile, St. Lucia, England, Australia and, of course, Mexico. Among us there were 150 brethren from Mexico and 520 from other parts of the world, all joyfully sharing the same all-inclusive hotel which is reserved exclusively for our Church family.

The highlights of our time together have undoubtedly been the inspiring sermons, enriching Bible studies and the beautiful voices of both the English and Mexican choirs, lifting our hearts in worship.

This Feast site has proven to be especially wonderful for families with children. We’ve shared precious moments together for all through activities like the turtle release, lively dances, ministerial brunch, delightful magic and Mexican shows, and a children’s costume party with superheroes enlivening the activity.

Organizers worked very well together and went over

*Please see next page*



**Puerto Vallarta***Continued from page 9*

and above what was needed to be done. All department heads performed their jobs smoothly. Health was generally good and there were relatively few anointings.

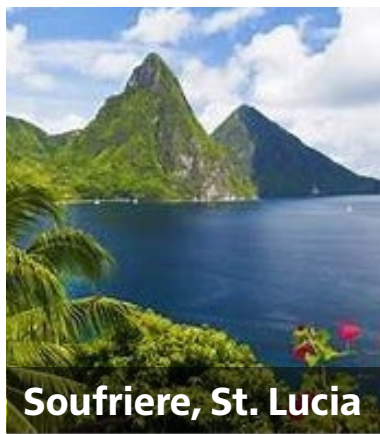
The management knows our people very well and we maintained that cordiality throughout the Feast. Because we have been at this venue for 12 years, there was not improvisation to do and God blessed us with good weather.

*Victor Kubik***New Zealand****Taupo**

This year, Taupo hosted a family-themed Feast attended by 106 members not only from New Zealand but from several other countries. Taupo is in the beautiful central region of the North Island of New Zealand. Services were held at the Lake Taupo Yacht Club with views overlooking the lake and the snowcapped mountains in the distance. Taupo is a bustling scenic and popular lake town—the main tourist town—right in the heart of the North Island.

Lake Taupo was formed from a volcano and is the largest lake in the southern hemisphere with safe, clean water for swimming and scenic walks to explore God's creation. The area features a wide range of available water-related activities such as fishing, sailing, visiting the hot thermal pools and kayaking. The area is rich in history and culture.

Highlights of the Feast this year included the opening message that got everyone focused and excited about the meaning of the Feast and the future ahead of us. Feastgoers enjoyed activities together throughout the week, such as a game night, ladies' high tea and Bible Jeopardy. Family day consisted of a trip to the Agrodome, which was a fun family farm experience. The highlight of the farm show and farm tour was the children feeding the small lambs with bottles. Family Day was capped off with a visit to Rotorua's Eat Street for dinner. A fishing trip on the lake was a success with photos to go along with the fish stories.

**Soufriere, St. Lucia**

God's Feasts are encouraging and still point to a much better world. God placed His name in this beautiful region, and He allowed us to have that vision of His plan for the world through these celebrations. As we celebrated with God on these Feast days, we reflected on His plan and His promises. We wrapped up the Feast with everyone looking forward to next year's Feast of Tabernacles. He allows us to have that vision of His plan for the world through these celebrations. As we observed and worshiped on these Holy Days, we reflected on and remembered what they mean for the world as we enjoyed this foretaste of the beautiful future that will shortly come to pass.

*Michael Fike***Nigeria****Igbàrà-Òkè**

The Feast of Tabernacles in Nigeria was spiritually enriching and joyous. The serene location in Igbàrà Oke, Ondo State provided a peaceful ambience for spiritual rejuvenation, nestled amid rolling hills with breathtaking views and tranquility ideal for reflection and fellowship.

The highest attendance was 141 brethren. Inspiring sermons addressed spiritual needs and members bonded with spiritually uplifting activities. A visiting elder from the United States, Maduawuchi Nkwocha, and his family joined us for this Feast.

Activities included the women's hangout, fostering meaningful connections among women, and the youth day, featuring a fun-filled trip to a mini-amusement park about 45 minutes from the Feast site. Additional events comprised reading the book of Deuteronomy, singles' night and a couples' hangout.

Members expressed a lot of excitement, thrill and spiritual refreshment and mentioned experiencing a foretaste of the Kingdom of God. The Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day were highly successful, generating anticipation for next year's celebration.

Gratitude goes to God for a truly enriching festival, the visiting elder for his participation and oversight, the organizers and the members for their dedication and warmth, making this Feast an unforgettable one.

We look forward to coming Holy Days—may our heavenly Father keep us all in good health till we gather together again.

*Paul Ogundipe***Philippines****Baguio City**

For the 22nd time, the Feast of Tabernacles was held at

Feast with a song in our hearts coupled with recorded music really helped us look forward to what the Feast pictures and joyfully celebrate God's wonderful plan for us and all of mankind.

All the messages were very uplifting, inspiring and encouraging. The afternoon message of the Feast Day delivered by Senior Pastor David Dobson, who encouraged us ask God during the Feast to see His glory the way the apostles did and to take time to listen to the "still small voice" as the prophet Elijah did and, finally, to ask God for more humility.

On the fourth day, the downloaded Sabbath message from Mr. Shabi was played as the main message for that morning's service. In the afternoon, we invited *Beyond Today* subscribers to a *Beyond Today* seminar where we explained the relationship of the seven annual festivals of God to the

and games.

An enjoyable seniors' social and dinner was held on the fifth day hosted by our teens and young adults. The teens, young adults and some of the seniors performed music for the event.

A festival entertainment and sing-along night was held on the fourth day of the Feast. Many among the brethren volunteered and contributed a number of songs, dances and instrumental pieces. The evening ended with everyone joining in a song together.

The spiritually inspiring messages, warm fellowship and the spirit of serving and outgoing concern the brethren shared and experienced here at the Baguio Feast site really made this year's Feast extra special. Everyone present felt that they were blessed by our great God with a deeper level of spiritual understanding, joy, unity, trust, love and togetherness. This Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day was one of the most spiritually inspiring and best Feasts ever!

*Rey Evasco***Bukidnon**

The Feast of Tabernacles 2024 in Bukidnon, Philippines took place at the Hotel de Susana and Resort. This marked the third consecutive year brethren have gathered at this welcoming venue. The celebration began with a lively welcome dinner on the opening night, setting a joyful tone for a meaningful week of worship, fellowship and spiritual rejuvenation.

On the first day, 213 attendees were warmly greeted with a powerful and inspiring video message from UCG President Rick Shabi, emphasizing the significance and purpose of the Feast of Tabernacles. The messages delivered throughout the Feast provided abundant spiritual nourishment, strengthening and inspiring the brethren. The day also included a blessing of a newly born two-month-old girl and a special fellowship night, fostering unity among all age groups.

Throughout the Feast, a range of activities catered to each group in the congregation. On the second day, children and youth enjoyed games and team-building activities while seniors gathered for an evening of shared testimonies, games

**Mossel Bay, South Africa**

the "Ating Tahanan" grounds of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines in Baguio City. We have been blessed to use their multi-purpose hall for the 10th time since it was constructed in 2012.

The Feast started out with our traditional Opening Night service on the evening of Oct. 16. The festival coordinator delivered a short message welcoming our brethren coming from many areas of the country as well as from overseas locations such as the United States and Australia.

We eagerly watched the prerecorded and inspiring welcome video sermon from our president, Rick Shabi, during the morning of the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. The message about rejoicing at the

message of the gospel of the Kingdom of God. We welcomed 11 *Beyond Today* subscribers, who appreciated the invitation and opportunity to listen to the seminar.

The highest attendance was on the third day at 131.

Various activities were all enjoyed as planned, both by the young and old alike as well as the whole family, where everyone had the opportunity to enjoy wholesome fun, food, fellowship and games. Among the activities enjoyed were those for the preteens and teens held on the second day, finishing off with a question-and-answer Bible study conducted by the festival coordinator. The family activities were held on the fourth day, welcoming all members to share in the fun



and dinner. Parents attended a marriage and parenting forum, discussing valuable biblical principles for teaching reverence and ethical guidance to children during church gatherings.

The fourth day featured a Women's Enrichment Forum themed "Seasons of Service," where women across generations shared experiences, discussed challenges and celebrated overcoming trials to serve their families, communities and the Church. Afterward, men enjoyed their own fellowship gathering.

Midweek, the site welcomed Senior Pastor David Dobson and his wife, Denise, who had just arrived the night before after attending the first three days of the Feast in Baguio. That evening, brethren showcased their talents during the festival show, adding excitement and joy to the festivities.

On the sixth day, the brethren were blessed with a baptism, marking a joyful beginning to the day. Later, young adults visited Lake Apo Park in Valencia City and shared pizza and fellowship afterward. Meanwhile, the youth attended a Bible study on dating, deepening their understanding of relationships from a biblical perspective.

The seventh day culminated in a family day filled with games and tournaments, providing joy and bonding time for families and friends alike. The day concluded with a festival dinner, allowing everyone to celebrate the Feast's blessings together.

The Eighth Day was greatly anticipated, as it concluded with a message of hope, mercy and love from God, underscoring His grace extended to all humanity. God's presence was felt throughout the Feast, leaving everyone deeply grateful for the support, prayers and fellowship that made this year's Feast both fulfilling and inspiring.

Reflecting on the rich experiences shared, we look forward with hopeful hearts to the ultimate fulfillment of these days in the coming Kingdom of God!

*Noel Roy Gilos*

## Visayas

The recently concluded Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day celebration at Visayas State University in Baybay City, Leyte was a re-

markable and spiritually uplifting event. This year's theme, "Stand Strong in the Lord," provided a powerful foundation, inspiring attendees with messages of faith and strength. The opening day's service set a vibrant tone and God's Holy Spirit brought our hearts to see



once again the foretaste of His soon-coming Kingdom while President Rick Shabi firmly expressed God's words in his welcome video message. The day was concluded with a joyful acquaintance night, in which participants bonded over games and fellowship, establishing a strong sense of community.

The youth and young adults were thrilled by a special horseback riding activity, generously sponsored by VSU's Animal Science Department. This engaging experience offered both fun and fellowship, creating lasting memories. The VSU also gave lectures on poultry raising and production attended by brethren engaged in farming. As the celebration continued, a special gathering was held to honor the dedication and service of local leaders from the Visayas region. This event, graced by guest minister, Nicholas Lamoureux, was filled with gratitude, appreciation and deepened connections among the brethren.

A dynamic festival show followed, featuring impressive performances from talented members representing various congregations. Despite challenges including weather threats, the event pressed on, and the festival proceeded smoothly, unhindered by these challenges.

During the final days, participants experienced heavy rains and strong winds, yet daily

services continued without interruption. The university's decision to suspend classes and activities due to the storm allowed the brethren to complete the Feast unhindered. This experience beautifully demonstrated the truth of Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work to-

gether for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

The Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day celebration proved to be an inspiring testimony of God's protection, favor



and ability to turn trials into blessings, strengthening the faith of all His children.

*Jose Campos*

## Rwanda

From the Feast site in Rwanda, 22 brethren are thankful to God, who guided and blessed us during these Holy Days. We are also grateful to the brethren who sent us assistance as we kept these eight days holy. We are very thankful for the brethren and the messages. We had a

wonderful time worshiping our great God.

*Jose Campos*

## South Africa

### Mossel Bay

Mossel Bay experienced another inspiring and blessed Feast, despite a slightly lower attendance of about 140 people. This included 13 visitors from the United States and Canada.

As always, messages were good, special music inspiring and fellowship in abundance. There was a concerted effort this year, particularly from our young people, to be more involved in serving and participating, and part of our youth discussion and activity emphasized UCG's vision statement and Ephesians 4:16, "from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love." This demonstrated how true it is that the Feast, when approached with the right atti-

nator decided whom they would spend the evening with.

We were blessed with great weather just when we needed it for our numerous outdoor activities, such as daily morning fellowship walks along a beautiful stretch of white sand beach, a family picnic and "braai" (a barbecue, but better), an open-air dinner overlooking the bay, a game drive at a nearby game farm and a visit to a family strawberry farm with the largest natural maze in the southern hemisphere. We truly have been blessed to have such an abundance of activities available in a beautiful part of the country.

We also enjoyed numerous indoor activities which encouraged interaction and getting to know one another.

A welcome evening activity included a hilarious challenge of teams coming up with a problem and then presenting the most complicated solution possible. There was our lively-as-ever musical evening and hymn sing-along, seniors' lunch and ladies' tea, and as always, the bingo evening, enjoyed with much laughter by all ages.

We've always been fortunate to have beautiful flower arrangements for our stage decor, and this year was particularly inspiring, with an incredible display of indigenous flowers centered around our national flower, the protea.

What a wonderful blessing from our loving Father we have in the Feast of Tabernacles. Only upon experiencing it do we realize how much we need this opportunity to reconnect and refocus in an increasingly distracting and troubling world.

*Vivien Botha*

## Sri Lanka

### Kalutara

At the lovely Turyaa Hotel in Kalutara, Sri Lanka, 58 brethren from the United States, Canada, U.K., Australia and Sri Lanka celebrated yet another great Feast of Tabernacles.

The hotel is sprawled across six acres of ocean-front land, and features lovely sea view rooms with private balconies. The brethren stayed next to each other in three clusters of rooms in two wings of the

*Please see next page*



**Kalutara, Sri Lanka***Continued from page 11*

hotel. Smiles and laughter of the rejoicing brethren were continuous during the Feast. The fellowship and unity throughout the Feast were remarkable.

The continuous rainy weather soon halted after we arrived at the Feast site. God blessed us with great weather and we did not have any interruptions during the outdoor events.

All brethren enthusiastically attended daily services at the conference hall absorbing God's Word from the opening night to the second service on the Eighth Day. The respect and reverence for God was amply demonstrated by His children in how they chose their priorities at the Feast. The opening night message and the sermon from Panama City Beach by President Rick Shabi were thought-provoking. The spiritual messages delivered by the speakers were the highlight of the Feast. They were renewing, encouraging and motivating the attentive listener to reach their potential to be a Spirit-born son or daughter of God for eternity.

occasionally did take on the strong ocean waves.

The overseas brethren enjoyed a visit to Galle Fort and the turtle hatchery and also took a safari in the Ridiyagama open zoo. These tours brought much joy to them and some awe of God's creation. Other activities included cricket, beach volleyball, water polo, family day, game night and swimming.

This Feast was one that will be remembered for a long time. The local and overseas brethren made good friendships and bonded well. Many overseas brethren said they would return, God willing.

We thank our Almighty God and Elder Brother Jesus Christ for the many blessings and protection at this Feast. We eagerly pray that God's Kingdom will be set up on earth soon.

*Frank Reckerman***St. Lucia****Soufriere**

Thanks, glory and praise go to God Almighty who gave us the opportunity to keep the Feast in a part of St. Lucia designated a World Heritage Site. Services were held at the



The special music pieces provided by the local and visiting brethren were outstanding. The lyrics of the songs were meaningful and were great messages by themselves. The ambience of the conference hall, with lovely flower decorations and curtaining, enhanced the festive mood.

In the evenings, some brethren would stroll on the beach and find some time to watch the sun go down beyond the horizon. A few brave men

modest Leisure Inn in Soufriere where the maximum attendance was 44. Brethren from Australia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, the U.K., United States and St. Lucia gathered together before God to enjoy a foretaste of His Kingdom.

President Rick Shabi's opening night message of anticipating the return of Jesus Christ with singing and praising God for His blessings set the tone for the Feast. The

interactive Bible study the Friday evening on the topic "What Lessons Did You Learn From the Book of Deuteronomy?" sparked much discussion on the relevance of the book to the New Testament. Other messages during the Feast focused on how to know

sunny weather most days and this enhanced the social activities which included a karaoke and dance evening, a boat trip to Buccoo Reef and Nylon pool on a glass bottom boat and a joint Family Day with another Church of God group. Brethren also visited that Church of God



God's way, go God's way and show God's way.

Apart from a few showers, we had predominantly fine weather and enjoyed activities including family day, a hike to Gros Piton, a historical tour of one of Soufriere's estates during which we sampled a variety of rum and chocolate, a karaoke/dance evening and a catamaran cruise during which we were blessed with a display of dolphins and an island tour.

*Kelland Barthelmy***Tobago****Stonehaven**

The beautiful island of Tobago in the southern Caribbean was the host to 32 brethren gathered to celebrate God's Feast of Tabernacles. The Stonehaven Villas located on a hill overlooking the Caribbean Sea provided an idyllic setting for brethren from Grenada, Bahamas, Curacao, United States, Canada and Trinidad and Tobago to enjoy a foretaste of the coming millennial rule of Jesus Christ. Messages during the Feast focused on the theme of the restoration of all things and encouraged brethren to prepare for when they will be assisting Jesus Christ in teaching others God's way of life in the Kingdom of God.

The Feast was blessed with

group for an evening of games and fellowshiping. On the Eighth Day, brethren enjoyed a delicious lunch together between the two services. Brethren left the Feast rejuvenated and refreshed and with a renewed vision and enthusiasm for the coming Kingdom of God.

*Dale Bissessar***Togo****Momé Hagou**

The Feast of Tabernacles was once again celebrated in Momé Hagou, a town 90 km (about 56 miles) from Togo's capital, Lomé. In this beautiful site God chose, 25 people attended. We were truly blessed by edifying sermons, enabling us to continue our walk with our Creator.

The family grew with the baptism of a brother and two sisters who decided to walk hand in hand with our Lord Jesus Christ past the door of doubt. We did two evangelistic sessions in the locality, which enabled people to discover us and ask many questions about our fundamental beliefs, especially that of the Sabbath and the divine feasts. We will never cease to thank our Creator and all those who contributed in any way to the success of this celebration.

*Kossi Fiaboé***United Kingdom****Southport**

Nearly 200 Feast-goers assembled in the beautiful ballroom at the Prince of Wales Hotel in the Victorian seaside town of Southport, in the northwest of England. Local members traveled from Scotland, Northern Ireland and various parts of England.

Some U.K. members had taken advantage of the lateness of this year's Feast, which overlapped schools' mid-term break, and gone abroad. Thankfully, overseas visitors stepped in to support the "B Team" in vital areas.

The inspiring Feast messages and Bible studies were complemented by musicians who accompanied the hymns and produced wonderful special music. An overlapping group also supported the work of the audiovisual team. The ministry and other speakers during the Feast were a mixture of local U.K. men and visitors from the United States. A Bible study for teens was offered one evening, and shorter Bible lessons for younger children were held as breakout sessions during two morning services.

Apart from church services, activities included: swimming and 10-pin bowling for children and teens, go-karting, a discussion for the ladies based on Titus 2:1-5, traditional dancing and Scottish country dancing. Several took the train south to the nearby city of Liverpool for its museums, exhibitions, galleries and shopping opportunities. Informal welcome and farewell functions provided an opportunity for everyone to mix and fellowship in a relaxed setting.

A Zoom link for all services was available to members unable to attend the Feast in person. Members linking in from more than 20 connections appreciated this option, which allowed them to fellowship before and after services.

By the end of the Feast, 189 attendees had registered their presence in person, 79 of whom were overseas visitors, mainly from the United States. The highest attendance was 189, recorded during the afternoon service on the Eighth Day.

*David Fenney*



## United States

### Aransas Pass, Texas

More than 400 brethren gathered to celebrate a truly uplifting Feast of Tabernacles in the scenic coastal town of Aransas Pass, Texas. The Feast was marked by an extraordinary spirit of unity and cooperation, with a team of dedicated volunteers ensuring that everything flowed seamlessly this year.

Each day, inspiring messages guided us toward a deeper anticipation of the coming Kingdom of God and encouraged us to live with purpose in our calling now. In addition to these daily messages, preteens participated in the Festival Youth Instruction class, while teens and young adults enjoyed their own Feast Bible studies, receiving tailored spiritual nourishment throughout the week.

The Feast was filled with activities for every age group. Families explored the Texas State Aquarium and took an insightful tour of the USS Lexington aircraft carrier museum, where teens embraced the challenge of high-tech escape rooms. Young adults experienced the wonder of nighttime illuminated glass-bottom kayaking across the bay, and many delighted in the sandy shores of Mustang Island along with the local cuisine. A family dance and fun night closed the week with joy, offering delicious food, lively fellowship, games for the kids and a dance floor enjoyed by all.

A special highlight was the senior luncheon, honoring our cherished elders for their years of faithful service and devotion.

God's abundant blessings were felt and deeply appreciated by everyone attending in Aransas Pass this year.

*Rod Foster*

### Branson, Missouri

As the Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day have now concluded, we can all rejoice in the knowledge of God which shows His plan for the salvation of all mankind in His perfect timing.

This and other important themes were among the spiritual banquets served by God through the ministry to the 567 brethren attending in Branson, Missouri. They included messages that focused on our need

to deeply love and respect our great God and the mercy He has extended to the firstfruits He has called in this age. Anthony Wasilkoff opened the Feast with a sermon on the need to express the love of God for one another.

Our seniors enjoyed a delicious luncheon hosted by Anthony and Linda Wasilkoff and music and humor provided by Dan Smith from the Fulton, Missouri congregation. Special thanks go to brethren from Springfield, Missouri for their labor of love in assisting in set-up, serving the meal and clean-up after the event.

Family day activities included a menagerie of stuffed animals to distribute to our children. Ninety-five ladies were treated to a Tea and Talk organized by Merna Leisure-Eppick and hosted by Carol Szymkowiak and LeeAnn Luker. The theme was "Jewels in His Crown" and hats and fascina-



**Morehead City, North Carolina**

tors were an option to wear for this special occasion.

Vince and Carol Szymkowiak and the St. Louis brethren provided a fun evening at a Church family dance that was enjoyed by 100 brethren with music for all ages. Everyone cheered as the final dancers slid under the "limbo" pole and the most limber of all was a young man named A.J.

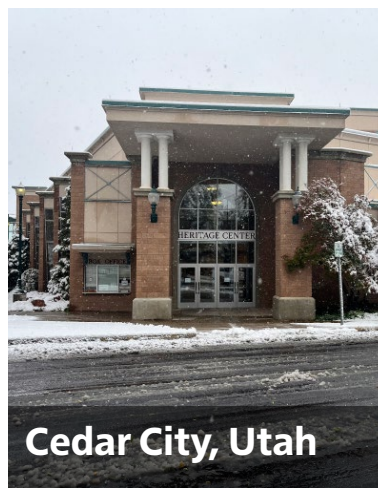
Our general Bible study presented by Tom Robinson titled "Why a Temple and Sacrifices in the Millennium?" was attended by almost 200 brethren.

As expected, brethren were extremely generous in their donations to Families Helping Families enabling us to cover many of our activity expenses.

*Joe Dobson*

### Cedar City, Utah

For the first time, Cedar City hosted at the beautiful Heritage Center Theater. The city is surrounded by five national parks, including Arches, Bryce Canyon, Canyonlands, Capitol Reef and Zion. The red rock



**Cedar City, Utah**

canyons, towering spires and expansive vistas were an awesome reminder of the power and majesty of our Creator God

and harmony during the Millennium. The overwhelming consensus of the brethren was that this was a very inspiring, uplifting and motivating Feast of Tabernacles, with many stating this was their "best Feast ever!"

*Ken Loucks*

### Cincinnati, Ohio

Over 250 attendees gathered in Cincinnati, Ohio where they enjoyed warm fellowship and inspiring instruction on God's plan! Messages focused on the joy of the Millennium and our role of teaching God's way in the Kingdom, reminding us that the best is still yet to come.

Many attending at the Holiday Inn Eastgate found great convenience in having services in the same hotel where most members lodged. After the first day's services, most of the brethren sat down for a group buffet dinner in the next room.

A youth activity was arranged earlier in the Feast at The Escape Game Cincinnati, providing the teens an opportunity to get to know each other. Family Day began with an afternoon of bowling at Batavia Bowl and ended with a taco bar dinner and a family dance back at the hotel.

Following tradition for the site, the Eighth Day was welcomed in with a group hymn sing followed by a dessert social. The brethren had the opportunity to enjoy one last group meal together between morning and afternoon services on the Eighth Day.

*Ryan Hall*

### Gatlinburg, Tennessee

The Feast in Gatlinburg, Tennessee was held at Rocky Top Sports World. There were 724 people in attendance on the first day. The messages were very timely with a personal touch. A special Bible talk was held on one of the mornings, as well as two other seminars. One discussed red heifers, sacrifices and whether a temple will be built in Jerusalem, while the other special seminar, titled "Removing the Shackles," was held before connecting to the messages from Panama City. The special music was exceptional, with an adult choir, teen choir and children's choir.

The activities were well attended, including miniature

golf and pizza at a local park for the teenagers. The young adults had lunch at Mellow Mushroom followed by a Bible study, then a trip to the Sky Park. For an activity, the seniors went to one of the dinner shows in the area. Perfect weather complemented family day. Volleyball, soccer, cornhole and a bounce house were enjoyed by all those attending.

A special thanks for all those whose hard work made this a wonderful Feast.

*Skeets Mez*

### Klamath Falls, Oregon

This year, 436 brethren gathered together in the beautiful confines of the Running Y Resort, in Klamath Falls, Oregon to keep God's Feast of Tabernacles. Klamath Falls is known as the "City of Sunshine," and despite a couple of cooler cloudy days with some threats of snow periodically, we mostly enjoyed days in the high 60s and low 70s with sun, and cooler, drier nights.

Fellowshipping together was a wonderful experience with the majority of the brethren staying onsite at the Running Y. It felt like an all-inclusive site as you consistently ran into brethren wherever you ended up for the day. Whether down at the driving range, up at the restaurant at the lodge, down at the Sandhill Spa, or just walking the trails around the resort, there were many opportunities to connect with spiritual brothers and sisters.

We enjoyed time together at Epicenter, a 32-lane bowling alley and arcade in Klamath Falls for Family Day, with many commenting that they hadn't bowled in years, and had forgotten how much fun it was. The smiles and laughter illustrated how much fun they were having together.

The messages this year dovetailed together well, and painted a picture of what God is doing, and will do to bring His plan to fruition. The various studies and Bible talk reinforced the need for us to stay connected to God as His sons and daughters, loving one another and standing in the gap for His truth and way.

We all had a wonderful time together this year in Klamath

*Please see next page*



## Klamath Falls, Oregon

*Continued from page 11*

Falls. We hope that all of you had a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles wherever you may have kept it, and look forward to seeing you next year in the beautiful Pacific Northwest.

*Ben Light*

## Morehead City, North Carolina

Around 700 assembled where God placed His name on the coastal shores of Morehead City, North Carolina for the Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day.

Eight days of absolute perfect weather and sunshine made it even easier to rejoice as God commanded us to do.

Even God's creation made a splash for our enjoyment at every turn. Dolphin pods put on daily shows outside the civic center we met in and at our Family Beach Day at Fort Macon State Park beach.

Messages were centered around the deep and exciting meaning of God's incredible plan of salvation and the New Jerusalem to follow. This included the messages in the special music selections as well. The lyrics were on point and inspirational to all.

Speakers and singers had a beautifully decorated stage on which to present, thanks to the efforts of our stage decorator and crew.

The senior luncheon served as both an opportunity for fellowship and food among our elderly brethren and for our teens, who volunteered to serve and fellowship for the afternoon. It was a beautiful sight to behold with elements of Titus 2 being put into action.

As this was the first time the United Church of God had met in this location for the Feast, the incredible volunteers in each department helped make each activity and area run successfully. The positive attitudes of brethren kept the atmosphere light and festive.

More than 50 kids participated in the youth education program, learning how to stand strong in what God says is right.

This year Morehead City also served as the designated site for our deaf brethren, so each service was presented in two languages—English and American Sign Language. Mark

Welch showed everyone how to sign “Happy Feast” together before delivering his sermon.

And indeed, it was a “Happy Feast” together.

*Andy Duran*

## Ocean City, Maryland

Ocean City, Maryland, a family-oriented vacation desti-

City Beach Feast site, Marcus Lucas presented a “Bible Talk” titled “The Effectual Power of God's Word.”

On Sunday afternoon, the teens got together at a local bowling alley for an afternoon of pizza and bowling, while the seniors met in the Bayfront Ballroom for a lunch banquet. Later that evening, several

al performers contributed to the musical acts.

Finally, on the Eighth Day, many enjoyed one more banquet together, between morning and afternoon services. Later that afternoon, as we said our goodbyes, we headed home, with a vision of God's Kingdom fresh in our minds, and a stronger desire for it to be here soon!

*Don McCoy*

## Panama City Beach, Florida

Over 1,000 brothers and sisters in Christ celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day in Panama City Beach, Florida this year. Brethren from across the globe gathered together, including a large contingent from Australia. This year was particularly special as it was the 25th anniversary of having the Feast in Panama City Beach. Feastgoers were given a special commemorative pen to mark the occasion.

The Feast was filled with excitement as we focused on God's coming Kingdom. Not only were we challenged to

for all. A family dance was held on Saturday evening with nearly 300 in attendance. The seniors enjoyed a luncheon at Capt. Jack's Family Buffet with 150 in attendance.

The weather was exceptional with temperatures in the low 80s and plenty of sunshine. The waters cleared nicely after the recent hurricanes, and many were treated to glimpses of manta rays, dolphins and some very friendly little fish that like to nibble on your toes!

Special music was a treat this year with an adult, teen and children's choir, along with several other soloists. In addition, this year also brought both an engagement and a baptism to our family.

Something unique for this year was a question-and-answer session with UCG President Rick Shabi. Mr. Shabi gave a short presentation on the work of the Church around the globe and then answered a wide variety of questions from the audience ranging from doctrinal matters to Church policies.

Through God's grace and Spirit, all of humanity will have an opportunity to experience for 1,000 years what we as first-fruits enjoy each year during these festivals. What an awesome future awaits!

*Dan Preston*

## Sturgis, South Dakota

God provided a wonderful Feast for 257 of His people in Sturgis, South Dakota this year. After having this as a satellite site for three years, this was the first year to have the site open to anyone who chose to come. The overall feedback from those attending was very positive. The weather was excellent, fall colors were beautiful and the small city of Sturgis was welcoming to us.

Many commented on the helpful messages delivered during the services and Bible studies. Some key points of the messages were preparing to be Christ's bride, the contrast between the world today and the Kingdom of God, preparing to be priests and teachers under Christ and the peace that will eventually permeate the universe. Those attending the

*Please see page 19*



Sturgis, South Dakota

nation situated on the Delmarva Peninsula, was once again the site of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Mid-Atlantic region. The Bayfront Ballroom at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center provided beautiful waterfront views for 180 Feastgoers.

As the Feast began, with opening night services on Wednesday evening, there was a definite feeling of autumn, with chilly temperatures and overcast skies. That quickly changed, and by the second day, and throughout the remainder of the Feast, we had clear skies with spectacular sunrises over the ocean, and inspiring sunsets over the bay, with every day milder than the one before! Each day we heard encouraging messages that built upon the day before, with topics covering unity in God's Kingdom, the need for strong, living faith as the Kingdom gets closer, and the tremendous work we will be doing in the Kingdom.

On Friday evening, the Bible study was given by Don McCoy. With just 18 days until the United States presidential election, questions regarding whether Christians should have any involvement in political elections was discussed. On the Sabbath afternoon, just prior to connecting to the live Sabbath webcast from the Panama

young adults assembled at a nearby facility for some plastic axe-throwing competition. On Monday, families assembled at a restaurant/arcade where



Ocean City, Maryland

a buffet lunch was served, as kids and adults alike enjoyed various arcade games, a 3D virtual ride, virtual golf and mini-bowling.

Tuesday evening was our second annual Ocean City Variety Show, which included parodies of old TV shows (complete with mock “commercials”), an evening newscast and a late-night entertainment show which also featured several musical performances. In all, 25 actors, ranging in age from 11 to 91, played roles in various skits, and six addition-

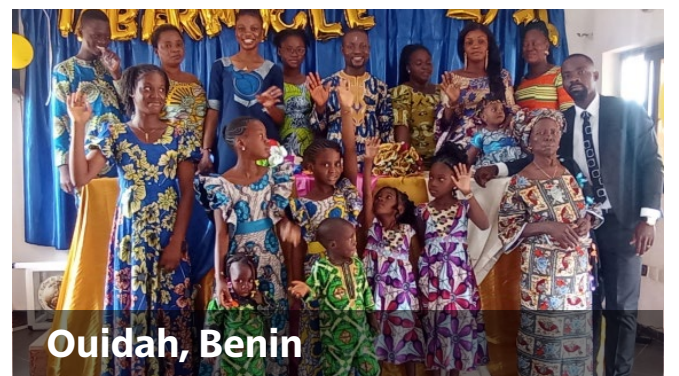
al performers contributed to the musical acts. Finally, on the Eighth Day, many enjoyed one more banquet together, between morning and afternoon services. Later that afternoon, as we said our goodbyes, we headed home, with a vision of God's Kingdom fresh in our minds, and a stronger desire for it to be here soon!

During our gathering this year, we had ample opportunity to enjoy a taste of the future we anticipate. Family Day at St. Andrews State Park was a success, with lots of games including a water balloon toss, limbo and cornhole. The afternoon was capped off with ice cream







**Blolé, Côte d'Ivoire****Buganda, Burundi****Cape Coast, Ghana****Douala, Cameroon****Ìgbàrà-Òkè, Nigeria****Lake Naivasha, Kenya****La Mé, Côte d'Ivoire****Lubumbashi, DR Congo****Mossel Bay, South Africa****Momé Hagou, Togo****Nkhwazi, Malawi****Nsobe, Zambia****Ntamba, Burundi****Nyabunyegeri, Burundi****Ouidah, Benin****Rwanda****Yagoua, Cameroon****Zomba, Malawi**



# Feast Photos: North, Central & South America



Calgary, Alberta, Canada



Chinacota, Colombia



Gobernador Roca, Argentina



Kelowna, BC, Canada



La Paz, Bolivia



Licán Ray, Chile



Midland, Ontario



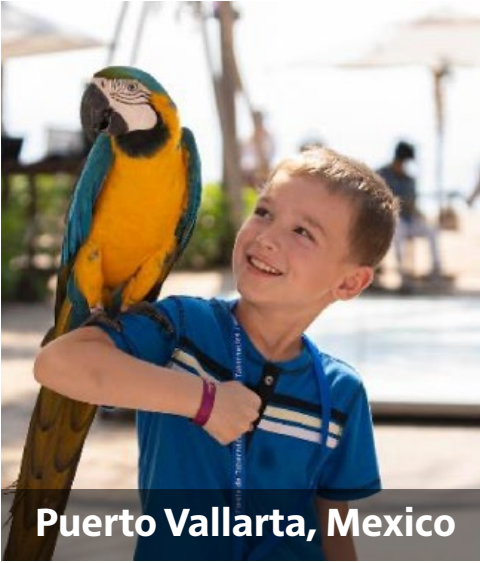
Montego Bay, Jamaica



Panajachel, Guatemala



Porto Seguro, Brazil



Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

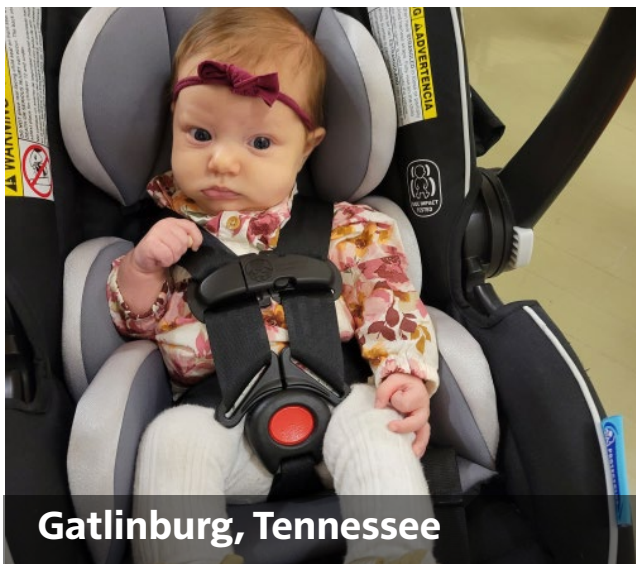


Stonehaven Bay, Tobago



Soufriere, St. Lucia



**Aransas Pass, Texas****Branson, Missouri****Cedar City, Utah****Cincinnati, Ohio****Gatlinburg, Tennessee****Klamath Falls, Oregon****Morehead City, North Carolina****Ocean City, Maryland****Panama City Beach, Florida****Sturgis, South Dakota****West Yellowstone, Montana****Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin**



## Sturgis, South Dakota

Continued from page 14

Bible talk presentation were treated to an ice cream social afterwards, which was very enjoyable.

A highlight early in the Feast was a family evening in a local armory with pizza provided to everyone by some generous donations from members. This allowed many brethren the opportunity to fellowship and meet new friends. Background music was provided throughout the evening, and many took the opportunity to dance.

Later in the Feast, a most enjoyable teen and young adult activity was organized at a local Black Hills attraction with indoor go-kart racing, bumper cars, laser tag, batting cages, arcades and other activities.

There was a remarkable attitude of service to others throughout the Feast which was surely pleasing to God. As the Feast ended, many expressed the hope that this site could be used again. The brethren went home refreshed, encouraged and determined to press on to the Kingdom of God.

Ken Skorseth

## West Yellowstone, Montana

West Yellowstone, Montana hosted 152 happy brethren from around the nation for the first Feast in this location just outside the entrance to Yellowstone National Park. Services were held in the historic Madison River Crossing Event Center—formerly part of the first West Yellowstone Public School. The warm ambiance and smaller space were conducive to fellowship and getting to know one another.

On the first day of the Feast, snow started falling during services and approximately four inches accumulated overnight. The snow allowed Feastgoers a short glance at beautiful winter conditions in Montana before it melted the next day.

Many enjoyed spending free time in the park seeing unique parts of God's creation such as the Old Faithful geyser, Yellowstone Lake and Falls, the Grand Prismatic Spring, Mammoth Hot Springs and wildlife such as buffalo, elk, deer, wolves, bear and foxes. On Yellowstone Day many enjoyed

a motor coach tour of many famous sites. Some ventured beyond Yellowstone to Grand Teton National Park, others to Mesa Falls.

In addition to the sights of Yellowstone, we had a senior luncheon sponsored by Families Helping Families, a family dance, an interactive Bible study on being ambassadors for the Kingdom of God, and beautiful special music including a Feast choir, a ladies' choir, and the children's choir. Additionally, there were Bible studies and activities for teens, singles and young adults. The Sabbath webcast

rational. We also enjoyed two Bible talks covering the relevant topics of "Our Citizenship in Heaven" and "Social Justice in the Millennium." Our general congregational Bible study was entitled "Vandalism to Vision: The Restoration Story." In it, we heard the wonderful truth about the peace and order God will bring from the chaos of this world.

As has become tradition at the Dells, we had tremendous special music offered to our Great God. The choir was full, and their voices united in praise to God. Added to this was a selection of small groups



Nsobe, Zambia

from Panama City Beach came in without any glitches and we enjoyed being connected to our brothers and sisters around the nation and around the world.

We give God and Christ praise and thanks for blessing us with a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day in West Yellowstone. Next year we will be back at Glacier Bible Camp near Glacier National Park.

Daniel Deininger

## Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

The beautiful Wisconsin Dells area served as the backdrop for over 520 of God's people to worship our Heavenly Father at this year's Feast of Tabernacles. It was evident that we shared the focus of rejoicing before and learning to fear the Lord. This attitude made the excitement of God's coming Kingdom palpable.

We had the opportunity to hear God's Word expounded each day at services. The messages were edifying and inspi-

and solos, all wonderfully done. We were also blessed with an instrumental ensemble accompanying hymns and special music.

With a wide range of age groups represented, there were several activities organized to provide additional chances to fellowship. The fellowship was cited by many as a highlight of their Feast experience. Conversations centered around the magnificent millennial vision that has been revealed to us.

Beautiful weather made it possible to enjoy many of the local outdoor activities as well as the astounding autumn leaves changing colors. Many were able to hike and explore God's creation. Others took to the water in the Dells Ducks and saw the historic landscapes of the area.

It was truly a blessing to observe and keep the Feast of Tabernacles in this idyllic setting where our God had placed His name.

Devin Schulz

## Zambia

### Nsobe

Feastgoers from four different countries gathered at the main site in Zambia this year and observed the future 1,000-year reign of Christ and the Eighth Day. Brethren from the United States, Australia, Kenya and Zambia totaled 191 as we learned, feasted, fellowshiped, laughed and celebrated together.

The messages were encouraging and focused us on being godly people today, showing God through our actions that we are one with Him, both now and forever.

Midway through the Feast, we rejoiced at the ordination of three deacons and one deaconess into the service of Jesus Christ's body. All attendees were encouraged to follow the command of serving one another as Jesus Christ also did not come to be served, but to serve.

Throughout the Feast, attendees were given the opportunity to take a wild game drive through the 3,000-hectare property, filled with 13 species of antelope including impala and elan, plus zebras, monkeys, giraffes, waterbucks, bushbucks, black lechwe and warthogs.

The members camped in temporary dwellings next to the water's edge in a millennial environment filled with beautiful flowers, a variety of African birds and plentiful waterfowl. We also saw the Milky Way galaxy on several nights, and countless stars during the clear and cool nighttime.

Family Day saw plenty of laughter and excitement as Feastgoers joined in organized field games. We are thankful to the young adults from America for their creative planning and organization.

A special evening braai (barbecue) was hosted and funded for the attendees through the generous donations of the Oklahoma City and Tulsa brethren. Game meat, beef ribs, chicken and plentiful sides were served. The Bricket Wood congregation generously funded a special drink and dessert to cap off the evening celebrations. The Zambian brethren desire to express their appreciation for this memorable evening.

On the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, 21 new mem-

bers were baptized into the family of God. Pastor Luke Banda and Senior Pastor Ed Dowd waded into the warm water and baptized each member individually. The event was accompanied with singing and praising God with enthusiasm as we know that even the angels in heaven rejoice at the repentance of a sinner. Back on land, Pastors Filius Jere and Patrice Sinyenga joined for the laying on of hands asking God to give His Spirit to each person. The rest of the afternoon and evening contained a special enthusiasm following the baptisms.

The Eighth Day ended with our hearts full, our minds bulging with learning and many photos to take home and remember it all.

Ed Dowd

## Zimbabwe

### Chemba and Kadoma

Greetings from Zimbabwe! A total of 90 brethren enjoyed the Feast of Tabernacles in remote Chemba and in Kadoma.

In Chemba, the brethren enjoyed physically feasting on goat meat and feasting on spiritual food provided by local speakers covering topics such as rejoicing in the Lord and God's warning to His people.

In Kadoma, some of the highlights were guitar music on family day, a quiz for the children, Bible studies and ladies' meetings. The brethren were thankful for God's protection during the Feast. What a great joy to know that our brethren in different parts of the world were sharing the same spirit of love and togetherness!

Mabasa Chichaya

## Satellite Sites

### United States

#### Walnut Creek, Ohio

God provided perfect weather to celebrate His Feast of Tabernacles in beautiful Amish Country. The spectacular, colorful hills of Holmes County and bright blue skies were in their prime fall season.

Please see next page



# 20 Feast of Tabernacles Reports

## Walnut Creek, Ohio

*Continued from page 19*

Services were held for 176 attendees at Timbercrest Camp and RV Park in a big top tent.

The theme of the messages was to “Learn to Fear the Lord our God,” one of the reasons to celebrate the Feast. According to the survey, the highlight of the Feast for many was the messages and close behind it was the fellowship. In addition to services, we held Bible studies and hymn singing several evenings.

Due to the beautiful weather, the campfire area next to the tent was the perfect spot for many hours of fun and fellowship. The iron kettle soup, kettle popcorn, hot dogs and hamburgers were shared, a highlight in the afternoons and into late evenings.

Those interested enjoyed an afternoon of fishing at a local farm lake. A guided tour through the colorful Amish countryside on a wagon provided an enjoyable Sunday afternoon activity.

The brethren also had the opportunity to learn about the history of the Amish and Mennonites at the Behalt Museum, feed safari animals at a farm and browse at the famous Lehman’s Hardware store where items that Grandma and Grandpa used can still be purchased. The many local shops provided plenty opportunities to enjoy Swiss cheese, homemade chocolates, crafts, baked goods and much more. The Feast activities concluded with the Sight and Sound production of the Bible story “Ruth” at the Ohio Star Theater in Sugarcreek.

The group experienced an exceptional spiritually enriching Feast with gladness. To God be praise and thanksgiving!

*Susan Miller*

## Feast Photos

For more Feast photos, follow **UCG Photos** on Facebook. We welcome you to share photos of your Feast memories in this group.



Calgary, Alberta, Canada



Gobernador, Argentina



Walnut Creek, Ohio



Tuscany, Italy



Agra, India



Zomba, Malawi



Mossel Bay, South Africa



Penang, Malaysia





Aria North Franke

Aug. 15, 2024

Births

Aria North Franke

Justin and Mariah Franke welcomed their firstborn, Aria North Franke, into the world Aug. 15, 2024. Aria weighed 7 lbs 13 oz and was 21 inches long. God’s intervention was very evident throughout it all, as they found out Mariah had dangerously low amniotic fluid when she went in for an induction—something they wouldn’t have discovered otherwise. Aria was delivered via cesarean shortly after, completely healthy. Her parents feel so blessed to have her and are enjoying their new roles as mom and dad.

Weddings

Devon McCaulley and Sarah Auguste

Devon McCaulley (son of Tim [deceased] and Deborah McCaulley) and Sarah Auguste (daughter of Wilner and Marie Auguste) tied the knot on Aug. 18, 2024 in West Bridgewater, Massachusetts. The ceremony took place by the riverside gazebo and was officiated by James Ginn who serves as an elder in Jacksonville, Florida, Devon’s hometown. The reception was a regal indoor scene full of laughter, beauty and dancing.

The couple met online on a dating website made specifically for Church of God singles in October 2018. Three months later they met in real life in Jacksonville, Florida. They attend the Worcester, Massachusetts congregation.

Christopher Pacleb and Heather Braun

Christopher David Pacleb (son of Hilario and Carolyn Pacleb) and Heather Pauline Braun (daughter of Martin and Ailsa Braun) were married on July 21,



Devon McCaulley and Sarah Auguste

Aug. 18, 2024

2024 in Milford, Ohio. The ceremony was held at the home office. Christopher and Heather met at Camp Cotubic in 2018 when they were in dorms B5 and G5. The couple now resides in Amelia, Ohio.

Obituaries

Cynthia Aldrich

Cynthia Lou Aldrich, 66, of Eden Prairie, Minnesota died peacefully at home on July 19, 2024 while steadfastly trusting in God through battling heart-related complications. Though she was eagerly anticipating recovery through her planned heart surgery, Cynthia accepted that her future was in God’s hands, knowing that either healing or rest awaited her. It is with tearful goodbye that we share her obituary. Born on Oct. 20, 1957 in Rugby, North Dakota, Cynthia was raised in a home deeply rooted in Christian values. From a young age, she embraced God’s way of life after her parents joined the Church of God in 1961. As a second-generation Christian, Cynthia lived her life committed to faith and family.

Cynthia pursued her passion for the culinary arts, earning her degree from Le Cordon Bleu with honors in 2001. Her love for fine dining and her ability to gather people around a beautifully crafted meal made her home the center of an enjoyable social life for many years. Whether hosting exquisite multi-course dinners or working as a pastry chef at the Wayzata Country Club, whatever her hand found to do, she did it with all of her might. Cynthia approached every task absolutely wholeheartedly and with finesse and creativity.

While she achieved much professionally, Cynthia loved



Christopher Pacleb and Heather Braun

July 21, 2024

her family. A devoted mother to Crystal, Jennifer, and Jordan, she encouraged them in their passions for music, sports and personal growth. She was always there to support, listen and guide, playing an active role in their lives and celebrating their accomplishments.

In addition to her culinary talents, Cynthia cherished classical music and the joy, especially a piano, brought into the home. She loved singing in the church choir, particularly enjoying the challenge of hitting those high notes. She was also a skilled pianist, seamstress and decorator, bringing her artistic touch to every aspect of her life, filling it with warmth, beauty and grace.

Cynthia’s unwavering faith remained steadfast through every trial. Even during her health struggles, she found strength in prayer, trusting in God’s plan, and finding peace in His presence.

Cynthia is survived by her children, Crystal Aldrich of Bixby, Oklahoma, Jennifer Aldrich of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Jordan Aldrich of Edmond, Oklahoma; her mother, Betty Randle; her brother Tom Randle (Deborah); her sister Stephanie Morker (David); and many nieces, nephews, and members of her extended family. She was preceded in death by her father, Earl Randle.

A private burial was performed on July 25, 2024 at Washburn-McReavy Cemetery in Glen Haven Memorial Gardens of Crystal, Minnesota. A post-funeral service and reception was held on Aug. 25, 2024 at the Newport church hall in St. Paul, Minnesota where many loved ones came to celebrate her life.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the United Church of God community for their prayers, comfort and support during this difficult time.

Cynthia’s legacy will endure in the love she poured into her



Cynthia Lou Aldrich

Oct. 20, 1957-July 19, 2024

family, the joy she brought to gatherings and the faith that guided her through life. She is now at peace. Many were blessed to know her, and she will be greatly missed!

Ken Reid

Ken Reid was born on May 21, 1940 in Cambridge, New Zealand to Northern Irish parents. He grew up on dairy farms on the North Island. After leaving school, he trained as a projectionist and showed films in theatres around the Franklin area. He then became a qualified motor mechanic after completing an adult apprenticeship. With a good friend, he operated the Strand Theatre in Pukekohe in the late 1960s.

More adventurous than his three siblings, Ken traveled to many places. He went around the South Island and to Australia, the U.K., America, Canada and Europe. He went to Northern Ireland three times to visit relatives.

Ken was talking to a fellow worker one day in 1970 and expressed how he felt that there must be more to life than just getting up in the morning, going home to bed and starting it all over again. His friend then took him out to his car and gave him a Plain Truth magazine, introducing him to the Church. Ken was baptized in 1981. He served in spokesmen’s and graduate club in many capacities, such as club president.

Life changed for Ken in the 90s. While working as a mechanic for Avis Rental Cars, he was diagnosed with Sarcoidosis in his lungs which eventually forced him to give up paid work. Ken experienced poor health in recent years and with his deteriorating hip joint, mobility was an issue. When COVID-19 came, he tended to stay home more. He adapted to technology and enjoyed using his computer.

Ken died on Aug. 16, 2024.



Ken Reid

May 21, 1940-Aug. 16, 2024



Charlotte May Stith

May 16, 1938-Oct. 10, 2024

During his 84 years, Ken had varied experiences, saw some amazing places, met some interesting people and achieved plenty.

Charlotte May Stith

Charlotte May Stith of Nampa, Idaho died on Oct. 10, 2024 at Meadow View Nursing and Rehabilitation in Nampa. She was 86 years old. Charlotte was born on May 16, 1938 in Payette, Idaho to Ralph and Rebecca Nees. She was the oldest daughter in a family of 13 children.

She was baptized into the Church of God in 1967. She attended church for many years in the Boise, Idaho congregation, later moving and attending Worldwide Church of God congregations in Lewiston, Idaho and Spokane, Washington and, most recently, the Twin Cities, Minnesota United Church of God congregation. She remained faithful to her calling for 57 years and now awaits the resurrection at our Lord’s return.

Charlotte is preceded in death by her oldest son, Terry Lydick. She is survived by sons David Berry of Burns, Oregon and Tony Stith of Woodbury, Minnesota; daughter Lisa (Lee) Bulkeley of El Cerrito, California; and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren UN



Dan Taylor



Danny Craig Taylor, pastor of the Lubbock, Texas congregation, died Aug. 13, 2024 at the age of 69 from complications of gallbladder surgery. Dan was a loving husband, father and grandfather.

Dan was born in Odessa, Texas and he was the first in his family to graduate from college, attending Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, where he received his AA degree, and then later earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History, Government and Business from the University of Texas of the Permian Basin. Being called into the Church as a young man, he also studied at Ambassador College in Pasadena prior to its closure in the late 1970s. He lived many years in California even though he was always a Texan at heart.

Dan worked as a staff writer and researcher for *The Plain Truth* magazine in the 1980s and 1990s. In the mid 1990s, he moved back to Texas to work for Dell Computer. He would later return to California to work for Intel Corporation and then Cisco Systems where he excelled as a marketing program manager.

Dan won dozens of awards working in technology and was admired and respected by his colleagues and employees alike, many of whom described Dan as the “best boss I ever had.”

He served for many years in the San Jose, California congregation where he was ordained an elder in 2013. With a beautiful tenor voice, he sang in various high school choruses and in church chorales and ensembles. He was a voracious reader and student of history with a remarkable ability to recall details, a talent he would use in service to the Church both in writing and speaking. He loved to work on his home and was a skilled craftsman, restoring many properties including most recently his house in Odessa. However, he always prioritized taking his family on trips all over the world, exposing them to different cultures and languages.

For those who knew Dan, he was a shoulder to cry on, who celebrated everyone’s unique wins, and was a compassionate and kind man who was there for his family, the Church and his local community.

Dan is survived by his wife, Corinne; his son, Cameron; his daughter and son-in-law, Christiane and Marco Lancieri; his grandson Malcolm Lancieri; as well as brothers and sisters. **UN**

Light of Hope Helpline

Shining a Light on Mental Health Through the Scriptures



Proverbs 12:18 states, “There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health.” This verse powerfully illustrates the profound impact of your words. Just as a sword can pierce deeply, your words have the potential to wound those around you. On the flip side, wise and gentle words can uplift, heal the brokenhearted, and nurture loving relationships.

Words matter. Be mindful of your speech. Choose words that uplift and nurture those around you. Reflect on the impact your words have had in your life and in the lives of others. Commit to using your words as a source of life and encouragement.

Make it a daily practice to be a verbal source of godly positivity! Take a moment to offer a compliment, share an encouraging word, or simply listen with kindness. Your words have the power to make a difference—use them wisely!

Light of Hope Helpline

The Light of Hope Helpline is a resource for the brethren and ministry in the Church. The helpline staff are baptized members as well as licensed social workers, counselors and psychologists. As consultants, they will help members find appropriate mental health and addiction services in their communities. They can also provide brief guidance on these issues.

You can reach one of our staff at: **(888) 241-6211** or at **hope.ucg.org**

Good Works Proposal Deadline Approaching

Last chance to submit your proposal for Good Works projects for the first half of the 2025 calendar year! If you have a great idea for a project (local or abroad), please run it by your local pastor, and with his approval, please submit your proposal at:

<https://forms.gle/z5KBRs48FuUFe76F6>

The deadline for proposals is Nov. 30, 2024.

Please visit [goodworks.ucg.org](http://goodworks.ucg.org) for more information, or contact Lena VanAusdle at: **Lena\_VanAusdle@ucg.org** if you have any questions on how to get started!

ABC Student Council Chosen



L-R: Avery McDonald, Brianna Mihalec, Nicole Martin, Leah Charles, Anthea Jennings, Jessica Mihalec, Lauren Schmidt, Sarah Jones, Logan Holladay, Hannah Parada, Declan Watson, Matthew Kusz, Devon Leslie, Kade Brunick. Not pictured: Darius Keeney

This year’s Ambassador Bible College student council officers have been chosen. Matthew Kusz will serve as the ABC student body president, assisted by secretary

Sarah Jones and treasurer Kade Brunick. Anthea Jennings will lead the social committee assisted by Lauren Schmidt. Darius Keeney will lead the service committee

assisted by Avery McDonald. Ensuring the room and materials are prepared for class each day, Hannah Parada will serve as monitor for this year’s ABC class. Leah Charles will keep the class updated on upcoming events and maintain the message board. Brianna Mihalec will ensure that cards are sent to the sick.

Technical support will be provided by Logan Holladay, including class audio recordings. Declan Watson will edit the *ABC Times* and class yearbook assisted by Nicole Martin.

Serving as music coordinator, Jessica Mihalec will be assisted by Devon Leslie and Leah Charles as they prepare for the ABC chorale presentations this school year. *Heidi Braun*



Windsor Congregation Celebrates Haabs

On the Sabbath, Aug. 17, 2024 brethren in the Windsor, Ontario congregation honored newlyweds, Keith and Amy Rose Haab, who were married in a private family ceremony in Michigan on July 28, 2024.

Mr. Haab, an elder in the Ann Arbor, Michigan congregation, and his new bride originally from the Flint, Michigan congregation, received congratulations from the Windsor brethren with a corsage for each, made and presented by Anna Morle. Deacon Joe Brdar

presented them with a wedding card containing a monetary gift. This was followed by a special lunch with a wedding cake made by Slavica Radonic.

At the very thought of the possibility of a Windsor congregation years ago, Pastor Patrick Read and his wife, JoAnne, came weekly for a very small Bible study that started on April 8, 2013, to see if there was interest. Mr. Haab added his welcomed support by crossing over from Ann Arbor to Windsor. The group was recognized as an official con-

gregation on the Sabbath of Oct. 5, 2013.

When Mr. Read asked Mr. Haab if he would fit a monthly Sabbath visit to us, he willingly agreed, and has served us every third Sabbath each month without fail (except during COVID-19 restrictions). Kathy Davisson and her husband, Phil, have come faithfully each month with Mr. Haab for the past year. They, too, support our little group.

Mr. Haab's many years of service to us have taught us to selflessly serve our Heavenly



Anna Morle and Joe Brdar present a gift and card to Keith and Amy Haab.

Father and Jesus Christ. We ask God to give Mr. and Mrs. Haab many happy years of service together as He continues to lead and open new doors at His will.

Marilyn Anderson

LifeNets Provides Accessible Van for Hoselton Family

by Victor Kubik

The LifeNets (www.lifennets.org) team is thrilled to announce the successful delivery of a converted van for Faith Hoselton on Sept. 4, 2024. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to everyone who has supported the Hoselton family through their many trials. Your contributions have made this project possible.

Faith Hoselton is 12 years old and has lived with spina bifi-da her entire life, which has left her wheelchair-bound. Despite numerous surgeries, traveling has become increasingly challenging as Faith has grown.

Her mother, Carole, is the primary caregiver and has

been lifting Faith in and out of the van since her birth. Each trip—whether to the doctor or the store—requires Carole to lift Faith out of her wheelchair and place her in the van, while also loading the wheelchair into the back. As the years pass, this task has become more physically demanding.

Brian, Faith's father, had been saving for an accessible van, but after a fire destroyed his business, he found himself out of work and unable to afford the necessary modifications. A reliable, accessible van would allow Faith to roll in and out without lifting, greatly easing the physical strain on Carole, who drives Faith to most appointments. LifeNets stepped in and solved the problem.

The Hoseltons have faced



many hardships yet remain hopeful and continue to inspire those around them. Brian shared the following note:

"After all these years of picking Faith up, we finally have a mobility van thanks to LifeNets' generous efforts! The conversion was just completed last

week, and we were able to pick up the van yesterday. We found a way to park the vehicles in our garage, allowing the ramp to open inside. It was uncertain how that would work, but it's all come together beautifully. You can see Carole and Faith in the pictures, and now she can easily

push her in and out of the van. This is a game-changer for us. Thank you again for your support; we are grateful beyond words. You've lifted a small burden from our lives. Thank you once more!"

Brian and Carole Hoselton  
(and Faith, Max and Jack)

St. Louis Congregation Celebrates Members' Anniversaries



St. Louis brethren celebrated four anniversaries on the Sabbath of Sept. 21, 2024 with exquisite decorations and options of both delicious vanilla and chocolate cupcakes. Acknowledging the beauty of marriage, one couple celebrated their

50th, two couples celebrated their 40th, and one couple celebrated their 25th anniversary. There were many smiles, laughter and joy in the congregation. Congrats for many more years to these couples!

Carol Szymkowiak



Children Build Temporary Dwelling



The kids of the North Canton, Ohio congregation worked together to build their own temporary dwelling picturing the Feast of Tabernacles. The older kids built the structure while the little ones helped decorate with color-

ful autumn leaves, all the while considering the Sabbath class lesson of booths and the meaning of temporary dwellings. The activity brought great excitement for the upcoming Holy Day season!

Natalie Thouvenin



## Portsmouth, Ohio Hosts Their First Women's Weekend



The first Portsmouth, Ohio Women's Enrichment Weekend was a tremendous success! Seventy-one women from at least six states were able to join together in friendship for the event. The location was in the beautiful hills of southern Ohio which, with limited cell phone service, made for an idyllic venue to focus on God, His Word and the women who were spending the weekend together.

The weekend included lots of spiritual food, traditional music,



physical food and much needed time together. Friday evening began with an introductory talk on the Appalachian area/friendship, followed by two activities to help us get to know each other more quickly. As the Sabbath started we had a dessert social with some traditional Appalachian desserts such as "stack cake" and "potato candy."

Saturday morning began with Sabbath services focused on friendship and reconciliation. After lunch, we had two



seminars focused on aspects of friendship in which numerous women stepped up and spoke, moderated and participated in group discussions at the assigned tables. Following dinner we took a short break before coming back together for an "Appalachian Night" social. During this time, 10 women each set up a table and taught/shared different foods, skills or crafts from our geographic area. These included soap making, candle making, working with



dried flowers, sewing, painting, canning jellies/jams, jewelry, and trying cobbler, beans/cornbread, and Ale 8/Ski.

Sunday morning we had one more seminar with table discussions. Then we eagerly awaited the announcement of the auction winners for more than 30 donated gift baskets. The women were SO generous as they donated a multitude of personal care items for the local women's shelter, as well bidding up the price of the baskets in auction!



We ended up raising \$3,601 dollars for the Good Works program, which was exciting for our first time!

Every single person who attended was an important part in the success of the weekend. We were able to share time, stories, laughs and a few tears during our time together. It was a blessing to be able to serve and spend a portion of our lives with each other. We're already looking forward to the next one!

*Kevin Call*

## Lehigh Valley Youth Day



The Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania congregation held a youth day on the Sabbath of Aug. 17, 2024. Our young people participated as greeters, some read scriptures, a couple young men gave split-sermonettes, and some worked on our audio and video crew. They also took care of our announcements, led

hymns and performed special music. We all had a wonderful time and the local members and the kids really enjoyed participating in our weekly Sabbath worship service.

Our youth day was organized by Matthew and Ariella Rains, and they did a wonderful job.

*Bart Bornhorst*

## Gear Grinder Bike Ride



The second annual UCG 2024 Gear Grinder bike ride was an amazing success!

A huge thank you to the Twin Cities congregation for hosting the ride this year, to the volunteers who manned the rest stops and prepared and served a wonderful post-ride lunch, to those who came to clap and cheer at

the finish, and to the 26 riders who showed up to grind gears along the banks of the beautiful St. Croix River between Afton and Stillwater, Minnesota!

We're looking forward to seeing more riders join us next year for Gear Grinder! Registration will begin in January. Pedal on!

*Tony Stith*



## Member Sets Example of Service at Home



*Members of the Boise, Idaho congregation wearing bathrobes that Shirley Case made them.*



*Shirley Case*

In the Boise, Idaho congregation we have a lovely lady who has served many years in the Church

along with many of our other seniors. Shirley Case has made beautiful wedding, anniversary and special occasion cakes for many people. A few years ago she became home-bound but she continues to remain positive, encouraging others and serving no matter the circumstances.

Shirley is also a wonderful seamstress and the last several years has taken it upon herself to find a way to serve from

home. She carefully handpicks fabrics for each person and has sewn over 120 robes for brethren, family and friends. She says, "I enjoy it, and it is good mental exercise. Things in life could always be worse."

Shirley reminds herself to be thankful for each day God gives her. She continues to do what she does best and that is "acts of service." Thank you, Shirley!

*Carol Dubkowski*



# GN

## The Good News

### Fuel and Fan the Feast Flame

Build on the spiritual foundation laid at the Feast and set some long-range goals.

by Don Hooser

We've been to the mountain top! Most of us were again blessed to be with other Church members to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast is a joyful highlight of the year for several reasons.

God intends that all of His annual feasts help fuel the fire of godly zeal. It should ignite within us good intentions that we will be more zealous than ever during the upcoming year. But coming back to wintertime (here in the northern hemisphere) and the not-so-exciting everyday routines is anticlimactic and it's easy to lose steam.

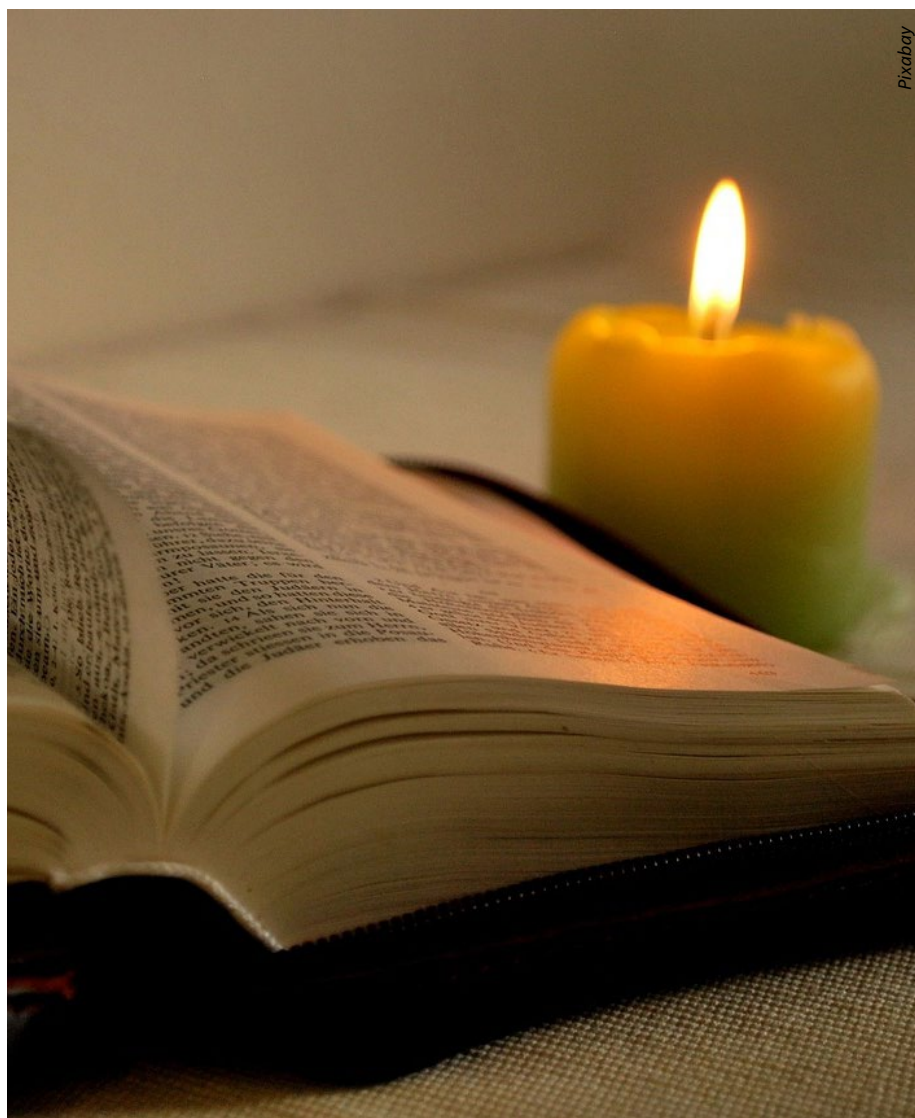
That's normal. That's human nature. Often when we human beings start out with good intentions and enthusiasm, we are naively overconfident. What tends to happen with any resolution or project is losing some of our interest and zeal. People let down, get sidetracked or even quit.

For example, at Mt. Sinai, the Israelites said, "All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient" (Exodus 24:7). However, we know how the people acted shortly after that!

***God intends that all of His annual feasts help fuel the fire of godly zeal.***

Furthermore, we know there will be increasing obstacles, temptations and persecution in this end time. Satan's evil influence is increasingly dominating our society. We must resist the many temptations and distractions.

When times are tough, let's be tough! Let's rise above our human nature and increasingly develop godly nature. Build on the spiritual foundation laid at the Feast and set some long-range goals. Make plans to fan the flames of passionate devotion to



*A major theme in the Bible is the necessity of spiritual perseverance.*

God and keep those fires burning throughout the coming year.

#### **Spiritual perseverance is a major theme in the Bible**

God is highly aware of our weaknesses and the world's temptations, so His Word is full of admonishments for us to endure and persevere. And God is always by our side to help us whenever we ask for His help!

After Jesus warned of the increasing temptations and persecution in the end time, He said, "But he who endures to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22; 24:13).

After Paul warned of the "wiles of the devil," He wrote, "Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:11, 13).

To Timothy, Paul wrote, "You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ . . . If

we endure, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Timothy 2:3, 12).

The parable of the sower in Mark 4 illustrates several spiritual dangers. The seed "sown on stony ground [are those] who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble" (Mark 4:16-17). The seed "sown among thorns . . . are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful" (Mark 4:18-19).

Then Mark 4:20 describes the result of seed sown on "good ground." They are those who persevere, grow and bear much good fruit! The "good ground" is the humble receptive mind of a disciple who is firmly dedicated to learn, grow, serve and remain forever faithful!

#### **Theme of the Book of Hebrews: Perseverance**

A major theme in the Bible is the necessity of spiritual perseverance and that is especially true in the book of Hebrews. The epistle of Hebrews was written primarily to those Jewish Christians long after their conversion. The author of this epistle (maybe Paul) had become aware that many of those Hebrew Christians were discouraged and letting down spiritually, sliding into lukewarm attitudes and actions like

the description of the church of the Laodiceans (Revelation 3:14-22).

Many were discouraged by their increasing trials, including persecutions. They were disappointed that Christ had not returned and were now having serious doubts. Many had come to think nostalgically of their lives in and around the Jerusalem temple with its impressive attractions.

They were tempted to think life was better under the Old Covenant and Judaism. To counter that thought, the word "better" is in the book of Hebrews 13 times! The point is emphatically made that everything that God and Christ offer us under the New Covenant is immensely better!

The book of Hebrews is brilliant writing and full of powerful reminders of how extremely blessed we are to be called by God to become converted children of God! This epistle was written to motivate those

*Continued on page 22*



*Fuel and Fan the Feast Flame*  
Continued from page 25

Christians to rekindle the spiritual fire that they once had and rededicate their lives to Christ.

Probably the best two verses to sum up the message of Hebrews are Hebrews 10:35-36—“Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.”

The book of Hebrews is a priceless book for longtime Christians to occasionally review and meditate on!

***The book of Hebrews is full of powerful reminders of how extremely blessed we are.***

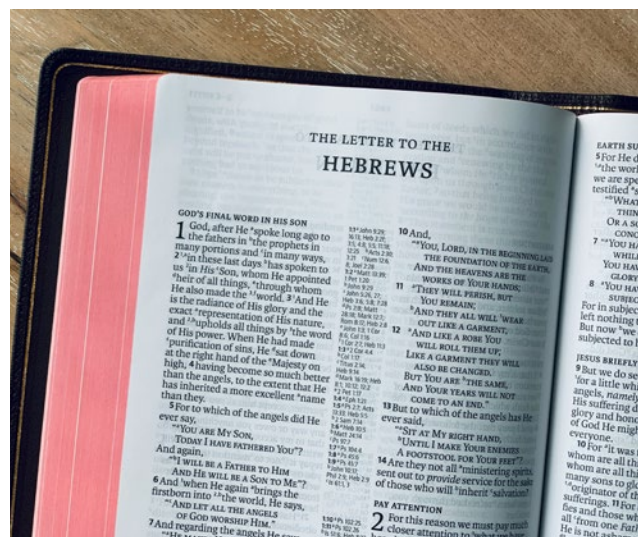
### Persevere in spite of pressures and persecution

Paul wrote his last epistle from a prison cell to Timothy about how to spiritually survive and thrive even through adversities: “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:12-17).

Let’s keep what Paul wrote uppermost in our minds, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

In today’s societies, most people are lukewarm, cold or downright hostile toward biblical values! Don’t let those negative influences or the weaknesses of our own human nature drag us down into lukewarm attitudes and temptations to let down!

God’s Feast days have fueled and fanned the flames of our godly zeal! Let’s be sure to persevere and keep that fire burning brightly this year and every year! **GN**



*The book of Hebrews was written to motivate Christians to rekindle the spiritual fire that they once had.*

Alex Azabache/Unsplash



*There are several important lessons we can learn about prayer and fasting from the example of Ezra.*

## Pray More, Fast More, Take Godly Action!

Ezra and Nehemiah provide a powerful example of how to pray and fast.

*by Robert Curry*

Jesus said some things don’t happen except by prayer and fasting (Matthew 17:21). It’s easier to remember this in a challenging situation, but also a Christian must be praying and fasting regularly to live a spiritually strong life. We must fast more often than just on the Day of Atonement.

A powerful biblical example of prayer and fasting can be found in the lives of Ezra and Nehemiah. God’s involvement and master timing were evident from when He “stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia” (Ezra 1:1) in 538 B.C. to decree that willing Jews should go to Jerusalem and “build the house of the LORD” (verse 3). The 70-year exile in Babylon was over.

Under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest, encouraged by the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah, the temple was completed ca. 516-515 B.C. Yet, Jerusalem and Judah were in dire need of spiritual rebuilding.

### The Example of Ezra

So, in 457 B.C., Ezra, of the Aaronic priesthood, led 1,754 returning Jews, Benjamites and Levites on the roughly 900-mile four-month journey. (Note that not all of the 12 tribes were included in this journey as is often claimed [10:9].)

Ezra, whose name was short for Azariah meaning “Yahweh has helped,” was “a skilled scribe in the Law of Moses” (7:6) who “had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel” (verse 10). Doing and teaching! By Jesus’ definition in Matthew 5:19, Ezra shall be called great in the Kingdom.

There are several important lessons we can learn about prayer and fasting from the example of Ezra.

### Humility

“Humble ourselves before our God” (Ezra 8:21). This is surely a foundational requirement for prayer and fasting! “On this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word” (Isaiah 66:2). Ezra inspired the people to also tremble at the words of God (Ezra 9:4).

To truly act with humility, we need to be open to God’s guidance. Again, in Ezra 8:21, we see Ezra instructing the people to “seek from [God] the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions.”

In seeking God’s way, it’s not wrong to tell God our ideas. In Isaiah 1:18, God invites us to “reason together.” Like a good parent, God is interested in our opinions and wants us to share all the details of our lives. But the key chapter in the Bible about fasting

***To truly act with humility, we need to be open to God’s guidance.***

(Isaiah 58) cautions in verse 4 that we must not try to “make your voice heard on high.” God does not need us to be His counselor (Romans 11:34). The bottom line when praying or fasting, we must trust God the Father to know best and not lean on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5).

### Dependence on God

Another key is to recognize our total dependence on God and be receptive to His will. King Artaxerxes’ letter to Ezra (7:11-26) indicates that he would have

Tim Wildsmith/Unsplash





Aaron Burden/Unsplash

*There are 11 recorded instances of Nehemiah praying, and it is clear that he fasted as well.*

been happy to provide a security escort, but in 8:22, we read that Ezra “was ashamed” to ask because he had boldly told the king in faith that God would protect them. In the following verses we learn that their gold and silver was estimated to weigh over 28 tons! (verse 26). Clearly, God had already provided for His people, and they were depending on Him to continue doing so.

### Repentant Heart

When confronted by the leaders that the priests, Levites and people had not separated themselves from intermarriage with the peoples of the lands (9:1), first Ezra began fasting (verse 5). He prayed like Daniel, acknowledging his and his people’s sins before God (verse 6). He praised God’s righteousness for His mercy to His lowly remnant, too guilty to stand before Him (verse 15).

### Fervency

Ezra prayed “confessing, weeping, and bowing down” (10:1). “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16).

### Inspiration

God can answer through direct intervention but also through circumstances, inspiration or advice. Shechaniah spoke up, surely by God’s inspiration, and forcefully told Ezra: “Arise, for this matter is your responsibility. We also are with you. Be of good courage, and do it” (Ezra 10:4).

***God can answer prayers through direct intervention, circumstances, inspiration or advice.***

Ezra pondered his advice, fasted some more and mourned for their guilt [remember the Beatitude that God will bless those who mourn with comfort (Matthew 5:4)]. Then Ezra took godly and timely action!

### The Example of Nehemiah

In 444 B.C., while serving as King Artaxerxes’ cupbearer, a civil service position demanding the utmost trust of the king, which archeology found in one case merited the fourth highest salary, Nehemiah learned from Hanani that the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the gates burned with fire! (Nehemiah 1:2-3).

There are 11 recorded instances of Nehemiah praying, and it is clear that he fasted as well: “I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven” (verse 4). We can learn from his example as we did with Ezra’s.

### Heartfelt

Nehemiah “sat down and wept, and mourned for many days” (verse 4). No wonder his name means “Yahweh comforts.” Like Ezra, Nehemiah poured his heart out!

### Persistent

Nehemiah prayed to God about the situation day and night (like the persistent widow before the unrighteous judge in Luke 18:1-8). He began by not asking for anything for himself; rather, like in the Lord’s Prayer, humbly hallowing God’s name. He also confessed self and nation like Daniel did and reminded God of His promises to those who return to Him and do His will (Nehemiah 1:6-10).

### Patient

We can follow his persistence with patience. Nehemiah waited four months! Faith is long-passioned. “Nehemiah did not ask in haste, but carefully bided his time, constantly praying to God to grant the proper opening” (Expositor’s Bible Commentary). God is the Master Timer—we must let Him! When we sing “As for Me and My House” about “True blessings come in Your time, never early, never late,” do we ever think they come early?

### Tuned to God’s Will

Nehemiah was in tune with God so that his prayer was according to His will. This is a step beyond just asking with no clue for God’s will to be done.

One lesson from the Bible is that at times we may become the answer to our own prayer! Joseph said Egypt needed a man who could manage the famine and Pharaoh recognized that he was the man. Boaz called Naomi and Ruth blessed for coming to be redeemed, and he ended up no longer being “Ruthless.” Nehemiah left his comfortable life in Persia where he was no doubt positioned by God so he could become His instrument to confront the problems in Jerusalem.

### Silent Prayers Count Too

When the king saw him sad in his presence, which had never happened before, Nehemiah became “dreadfully afraid” (Nehemiah 2:2). Persian monarchs believed that just being in their presence ought to arouse great happiness. And Nehemiah was about to ask to exit stage south!

It’s implied that Nehemiah prayed a silent prayer to God for the right words and favor (verse 4), as this happens in the middle of a conversation with the king. Silent prayers work, and in fact, God knows what we want to say even before we’ve actually formed the thought (Romans 8:26).

### Prepared

Nehemiah had prepared! He was able to tell the king how long he planned to be gone and to ask for the permits he would need for travel and supplies. He had even searched out Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, so he had begun to make the necessary connections.

***We must desire God’s will and not our own, and accept it as He shows it, but why not still prepare for the reality that He might just say “YES!” right away!***

Nehemiah boldly asked God to “let Your servant prosper this day” (Nehemiah 1:11). Though he had prayed and fasted for days, Nehemiah boldly still believed and asked God for an immediate answer to his prayer and fasting! We must desire God’s will and not our own, and accept it as He shows it, but why not still prepare for the reality that He might just say “YES!” right away! (Hebrews 11:6). When we pray as Jesus instructed in Mark 11:23-24 without doubting for a mountainous problem to be cast into the sea, we should already hear the splash!

Remember, as James 2:22-24 teaches, faith without accompanying works is useless—dead!

### Preparing for the coming of Jesus Christ

Judah had to be restored with a temple to set the stage for the first coming of the Messiah. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which the Hebrew canon counts as one book, provide inspiring lessons and parallels with the end-time work of building the New Testament spiritual “temple” of God, the Church—you and me—in preparation for Christ’s second coming.

It’s not ever going to be by our might or power, but by God’s Spirit (Zechariah 4:6).

Let’s pray more, fast more, and take godly action in faith! **GN**



# Giving From Out of Our Abundance

What is within your heart and how will you give today?

by Deanne Trahan

Are you ready to give more of yourself? Giving more time, talents, gifts, knowledge, wisdom, kindness, goodness, mercy, joy, patience and love is the only way to go if you truly desire to be like Jesus Christ. His example is set before us to glean from, every time we choose to open up our Bibles to feast our eyes on the pages containing His life story.

What do you give? For some of us money is easy to give, while for others they hang on tightly to it, reluctant to part with any in case of need in an emergency situation, or wanting to grow their savings for “a rainy day.” It is good to save for these times when things are lean or when we are in need (Proverbs 10:5). It is also good to share our blessings with brethren and the less fortunate including the poor (Hebrews 13:16). Is there any such thing as giving too much or too little? How much should we give? Should we have balance in giving? These questions have interesting answers and definitely involve wisdom from above. Let’s look at an example in the Bible.

## All That She Had

There’s a woman mentioned in the book of Mark whose name we don’t know, but whose actions we do. In Mark 12:42-43, it’s recorded that she gave all the money she had, dutifully, willingly, faithfully to God. It wasn’t much at all, just two copper coins. What could one buy with so little? There are people now, believe it or not, saying that this account had nothing to do with giving and it was really all about the Pharisees “ripping off” the widows! They did take advantage of these women, but that is not the primary or main focus. We need to recognize that despite her poverty she gave all she had even though it was minuscule . . . but it was certainly not minuscule to God and He commended her for it.

***We could give everything we have to God, but if we are not living righteously this would be futile.***

Since the account mentions that this woman was a widow, we know she had no husband to help her, and her poverty suggests she may also have had no children to help provide for her. This had a bearing on her selfless attitude in giving all the money she had. Hers was a complete sacrifice. Did she need to give it all away? Perhaps she considered herself blessed with everything she had and family provided for her physical needs? But what if she gave all she had, not knowing where her next meal came from? She may have been able to glean from the corners of the field each day to sustain herself. Much we do not know, but the one thing God wanted us to know is that she gave it all in faith. She humbly served God and not mam-

Elaine Casap/Unsplash



*Giving takes many forms. Giving all of ourselves involves more than merely money.*

mon (money) as the scriptures refer to in Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13.

Now enter the rich where comparison is made to those who gave great amounts, so much more than she did. However, it was all relative. This means, by comparison, if we give from our abundance a small amount . . . is this really giving? We would not even miss it. There would be no hardship involved. Conversely, we are left to ponder whether the poor widow could afford any food the next day. What would she do? How would she survive? The widow gave everything she had . . . this is truly giving and it was a beautiful act of faith.

In contrast, the rich put in out of their abundance. They could have given more, but their choice was to give enough to make a loud indication that it was many coins. They wanted to attract the attention of others nearby hearing their money clink and clang rather impressively into the treasury. Jesus made special note of how the people gave and made a comparison between the wealthy and the poor for our instruction.

## Motives Behind Giving

Some would say it is ludicrous to give everything you have, for how would you then live? It can be a hard thing to discern how much we should give. After all, Scripture shows that God desires obedience over sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22). Some find obedience much harder to sustain than regular tithing or free will offerings. We can focus on being obedient by keeping the Ten Commandments, living daily lives that stay close to God and watching our personal state so that we do not enter into sin; and if we do, we immediately pray with repentance.

We could give everything we have to God, but if we are not living righteously this would be futile and meaningless, much like giving everything to the poor without love profits nothing (1 Corinthians 13:3). What would be best is to focus on obedience and pleasing God by showing love to others and filling needs when we see them. Yesterday it may have been trimming and filing the broken fingernails on an elderly man in an assisted living center that you may visit; today it may be giving your cardigan to a young person who is shivering with cold because she does not have one; tomorrow it may be visiting

someone who is unable to leave their home to give them your time, your conversation, your presence and company which could be the highlight of their lonely day. Perhaps you have even brought a healthy, hot, home-cooked meal for her to enjoy as she is no longer able to cook like she used to.

***Giving brings joy to the recipient, and as it turns out, God will bless you too.***

## More than Money

Giving takes many forms. Giving all of ourselves involves more than merely money. If we are diligently giving tithes and offerings, that is all God asks of our finances. We can give more if we can and have the means to do so. But we can also give an offering of our time, our resources, our talents and gifts, and do so from a willing heart. If we see a need and have the capacity to do so, we should fill it.

God’s Spirit will help lead you to do God’s will in areas of giving. Giving brings joy to the recipient, and as it turns out, God will bless you, too, because you have been willing, instead of turning “a blind eye” or hardening your heart (Proverbs 11:25). We are told in 2 Corinthians 9:7 that God loves a cheerful giver. It is no good giving grudgingly as this is not truly giving (Deuteronomy 15:10). We need to examine our motives closely. We must give expecting nothing in return.

The example of the poor widow is a marvelous one, as who among us has truly given all the money they have at any time? We have been given from God such an abundance of blessings in talents, gifts and abilities along with financial benefits to be shared with those who have less. Everything we have is because of our Creator.

Our time is now to give to others in so many ways it would be impossible to remember and document all of them. Our Father is watching us just like Christ Jesus watched the poor widow in the temple 2,000 years ago to discern how we give, more so than the size of the gift (2 Corinthians 8:12). It truly is the motivation that counts. What is within your heart and how will you give today? God is watching to see how you are loving others in preparation for His Kingdom when further needs will be filled. **GN**



Teens

What does God have to say about the popular holidays? Check out this four-part study to learn why these popular days should be avoided.



Young Adults

We are all given talents which we can choose to either throw away or put to use. God gives us every chance to do well.



Singles

Is finding your “one true love” an impossible dream? How can you know when you have found “the right one?”



Men

Godly husbands will treat their wives and children with affection and provide spiritual leadership. How can we men fulfill that role?



Women

The truth is that the Bible describes the role of women as one of great honor and worth. How can we as women truly embrace that role?



Foster Children

One foster child's story of finding encouragement and belonging can give you hope if you or someone in your family has shared a similar experience.



CHILDREN’S CORNER  
Children Bring Honor to Parents

Match these biblical parents with their children.

The Parents

- 1. Mary and stepfather Joseph
- 2. David and Bathsheba
- 3. Isaac and Rebekah
- 4. Jacob and Rachel
- 5. Noah and his wife
- 6. Adam and Eve
- 7. Zebedee and his wife
- 8. Nun and his wife
- 9. Eunice and her husband
- 10. Elkanah and Hannah
- 11. Solomon and Naamah
- 12. Zacharias and Elizabeth
- 13. Saul and Ahinoam
- 14. Abraham and Sarah

Their Children

- A. Jacob
- B. Joseph and Benjamin
- C. Cain and Abel
- D. Solomon
- E. Samuel
- F. James and John
- G. Joshua
- H. Jesus
- I. Shem, Ham and Japheth
- J. Timothy
- K. Jonathan
- L. Isaac
- M. Rehoboam
- N. John the Baptist

Parents

How does God want parents to raise His children? God wants us to have children who love their parents, who love their homes, and most of all who love Him.



Retired

As you retire or approach retirement, how will you know you have made good investments? This article describes the best investment you can make!



Widowed

When we go through suffering, God can handle our grief, and He gives us language for placing our complaints before Him: the lament.







## British Isles Camp

CAMP was held at Dalesdown in West Sussex from Aug. 4-11. The spacious central building allowed us to unite in study, join for mealtimes and engage in pool, ping pong and many other activities. A separate sports hall and art room facilitated sports games and creative sessions, as well as valuable spiritual conversation. Fields containing a football pitch and a volleyball court were a focal point for competition between both adults and kids alike! The children stayed in bell tents which seemed to be the highlight for many in reconnecting after a year apart.

Support from adults including parents, grandparents and nine young leaders all contributed to a thriving environment for the 49 campers (aged 3-18) to learn and grow. We were joined by brethren from England, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Australia and the United States, which brought our grand total to 98 members. We welcomed guests from congregations around the country to share in the Sabbath service and special music brought to us by the children's choir.

After breakfast each morning, David Elliot led a "thought of the day" followed by discussion groups. We then had age-related activity sessions, each led by an adult organizer and supported by the young leaders. Onsite activities included a summer fair featuring a very popular bouncy castle obstacle course, a multitude of sports games, arts and craft workshops, kite-making, music sessions, speed-puzzling, a karaoke evening and a rather rousing quiz!

The first of the offsite activities saw children and adults alike monkeying

around in the high-ropes at the "Out of Bounds" adventure course—with a competitive side of bowling. The latter part of the day was spent at Littlehampton Beach where group ball activities commenced, ice creams were eaten, and the brave even had a dip in the sea!

The second day out was spent paddle boarding and raft-building, which put teamwork skills to the test and succeeded in drawing out the adventurous spirit in all. The adults who volunteered as kitchen staff lovingly prepared sandwiches for the slightly soggy group, who enjoyed them by the lake.

On two occasions we shared an evening campfire and hymn sing—children kept calling for "one more hymn!" What a privilege to share in such enthusiasm for praise!

Strikingly apparent this year was the resounding spirit of unity among all age groups. Support, advice and encouragement were central to discussions about God, His way and His calling. Many poignant talks were held for the older teens, which benefited the adults who attended just as deeply.

The kitchen staff deserve a special mention as they worked tirelessly each day to provide wholesome and varied meals; from everyone at camp, we express our gratitude. A massive thank you is due to all the adults, parents and grandparents who volunteered their time and efforts in preparing such an inclusive space for joy that we were all so blessed to partake in.

*Grace Langford*



## Cameroon and Congo Camp

"KARIBU in Mimbulu!" In the Swahili language, this means "Welcome to Mimbulu!" The youth camp in Congo was held in Mimbulu this year from July 22-28 with 22 campers and four staff members.

We had several exciting activities: football, slingshot, a sack race and competitions for the best song and the best voice, etc. The winners of each discipline received a gold medal and, for second place, the silver medal for encouragement, which motivated our campers to get involved in these activities.

Our youth camp in Mimbulu had a double impact, training our campers but also

marking our presence as a church in this locality where UCG has been holding its Sabbath services for four months. This is also where the Church is constructing a large building that will serve for Sabbath services, various church activities and a primary school.

A week before the camp in Congo, the Church held a three-day camp from July 10-12 for 14 teenagers in Douala, Cameroon.

We thank the home office for the help and support they provided, making camp possible this year.

*Moïse Mabout*



## Malawi Camp

SUMMER camp was held from Aug. 18-25, 2024 at Naming'azi Farm in Zomba, the former old capital city of Malawi. The place is owned by Blantyre Presbyterian Church of Central Africa. It is a convenient and quiet location to hold camp, as it features hostels with ablution blocks, four self-contained rooms and two guest houses. There is also a restaurant on-site that prepares meals of guests' choice.

The overall camp theme of "Stand Strong," taught during morning Christian living classes, encouraged campers to put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6) and apply what they learned in their lives.

The daily activities included morning exercises (aerobics), a sack race, arts and crafts, a Bible quiz, balloon race, "pull of peace" (a different version of "tug-of-war"), volleyball, football, health counseling, a variety show and a camp dance.

The weather was cool throughout the week, and we thank God for His blessings

upon the camp, the campers and the volunteer staff who selflessly served campers well. There was no sickness among the campers and staff, for which we are very grateful.

This year's camp was a special one because we managed to bring four church areas together: Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mayaka/Zomba and Mchinji/Nkhwazi. Some of the campers were at camp for the first time. They enjoyed making new friends.

To crown it all, the manager of the farm reached out saying that he was impressed with the behavior of our campers and staff. He said that other youth from other churches have often created problems for management to handle, but our campers were well-behaved.

Finally, we would like to thank "Good Works" for funding this year's camp, in terms of transportation, accommodation and food. It was one of the best camps we have had.

*Gracious Mpilangwe*



## Nigeria Camp

FROM Aug. 18-25, 2024 we welcomed 38 enthusiastic campers and 29 staff including three Americans and three Ghanaians to camp in Nigeria. Camp was held at a lovely, scenic location on a serene cape between a freshwater river and the Atlantic Ocean off Lagos' coast. This stunning natural setting provided the perfect backdrop for participants to gather in the Zone to strengthen their faith and unity in Christ.

The theme "Stand Strong" guided the camp's spiritual focus. Daily Compass Check sessions revolved around the central message with the daily themes including being empowered by God's Word, resisting the darkness of this age, donning God's spiritual armour, wielding the powerful Word of God, and culminating in fighting the good fight of faith. These aligned campers with God's vision, encouraging them to put their trust in God amid the decadence prevailing in the world today and to deepen and build their relationship with Him.

Throughout the week, campers engaged in various activities fostering teamwork, skill-building and spiritual growth, including Christian living classes, archery, volleyball, chess, swimming, team challenges, kickball, crafts, dance, culinary and etiquette lessons.

The Sabbath service was a highlight, with members of the Lagos congregation joining the camp to reinforce community and shared faith, and the baptism of a member which was performed in the ocean.

After the Sabbath, campers looked forward to the banquet night which involved a Bible bowl, dance, skits and awards presentation during the banquet night.

Despite occasional light showers, the beautiful weather allowed for seamless outdoor activities. We give our utmost thanks to our Heavenly Father for His protection throughout the period. Our heartfelt appreciation also goes to the home office and United Church of God members worldwide for steadfast support; to selfless staff and volunteers for tireless dedication; and the Nigerian congregation members for invaluable participation.

Camp was a resounding success, empowering young people to "Stand Strong" in their faith in God, forging lasting friendships and unforgettable memories. This enriching experience will leave a lasting impact on campers, staff and the broader United Church of God community.

*Paul Ogundipe*





# Zambia Camp

CAMP was held in the Copperbelt region of Zambia from Aug. 18-25 with the theme “Stand Strong.” There were 89 campers and 31 staff who gathered to celebrate and learn God’s way in the Zone, living by God’s law. It was one of the best camps ever conducted in Zambia. Campers and staff enjoyed the activities, which included new games and new lessons.

New this year was public speaking. Campers were taught what to know and do as a public speaker. Entrepreneurship was one of the best topics presented by qualified staff in the Church. Our youth were also taught about career planning, and to help guide them in this crucial decision, campers were able to learn from a variety of qualified individuals, including teachers, nurses, an accountant/auditor, a mechanical engineer and a social worker. These staff are all members of the Church and each had the chance to explain what their career is about.

Thursday was sports and outing day, and the campers had the opportunity to travel about 62 kilometers (about 38.5 miles) from the actual camp site to a special

place where a lot of activities were held, such as swimming, soccer, volleyball and much more. Five ministers who serve from all over Zambia were present during the week to minister and present Christian living lessons. Campers were given a ballcap with the UCG emblem as a gift.

It was a wonderful experience for youth from all over Zambia as relationships were renewed and created. This shows how amazingly God’s way works when people are being led and guided by God’s law and His Holy Spirit. Health-wise, we thank God Almighty that He allowed us to have a sickness-free and injury-free Zone. To all the staff and the ministers who were present, we would like to say thank you so very, very much for your outstanding and amazing support. In camp we worked as a team and we conquered together, as we stand strong in the power of His might and are guided and reminded to make Him our anchor.

Rodrick Epomba





# BEYOND TODAY

Nov. 10-16	<b>New World Order</b> Presented by Steve Myers Literature offered: <i>The Gospel of the Kingdom</i>
Nov. 17-23	<b>Is the Secret Rapture a Hoax?</b> Presented by Darris McNeely Literature offered: <i>The Rapture vs. the Bible</i>
Nov. 24-30	<b>Burning Questions About Hell</b> Presented by Steve Myers Literature offered: <i>Heaven and Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach?</i>
Dec. 1-7	<b>The Forgotten Message of Jesus Christ</b> Presented by Gary Petty Literature offered: <i>Christ's Reign on Earth: What It Will Be Like</i>
Dec. 8-14	<b>Forgive Us Our Debts</b> Presented by Darris McNeely Literature offered: <i>Forgiveness Is Possible</i>
Dec. 15-21	<b>Nine Meals to Anarchy</b> Presented by Steve Myers Literature offered: <i>You Can Have Living Faith</i>
Dec. 22-28	<b>Quitting Christmas</b> Presented by Steve Myers Literature offered: <i>Holidays or Holy Days: Does It Matter Which Days We Observe?</i>
Dec. 29– Jan. 4	<b>The Jewish Temple and Bible Prophecy</b> Presented by Gary Petty Literature offered: <i>Are We Living in the Time of the End?</i>



**United News**  
NEWS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, AN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Periodicals Postage Paid  
at Milford, Ohio, and at  
additional mailing offices

## BY THE NUMBERS

15,216

2024 attendance in person at UCG Feast sites.

## Tell us what you think!

As we near the 30-year anniversary of *United News*, we'd like to invite you to complete a brief survey about this publication and how we can improve it.

Please visit [surveymonkey.com/r/unsurvey2024](https://surveymonkey.com/r/unsurvey2024) or scan the QR code to share your thoughts—what you like, what you'd like to see improved and other ideas you have. We look forward to hearing from you!



## Winter Camp

Don't forget to sign up for Winter Camp!

The dates for camp this year are Dec. 26, 2024 to Jan. 1, 2025 (staff arrives Dec. 25).

Winter Camp will take place at Lake Geneva Youth Camp in Wisconsin and is built on fellowship, fun and friends, with a foundation of Bible classes and Christian living instruction specific for teens. There is no better way to spend your winter break than at camp with us!

Sign up today at [uyc.ucg.org/camp/winter-camp](https://uyc.ucg.org/camp/winter-camp).

## Winter Family Weekend



Join us for Winter Family Weekend from Dec. 24-29, 2024 at Spooky Nook in Hamilton, Ohio.

### Registration

Visit [wfw.ucg.org](https://wfw.ucg.org) for updates and to register.

### Housing

We have contracted with the Warehouse Hotel so all rooms are priced at \$90 per night plus tax.

## UCG Radio

UCG-Radio, an app developed by our UCG-Australia office, is a way to take UCG content on the go! Listeners find it a convenient and interesting way to listen to sermons, music and more while driving, jogging or around the home.

You can download the UCG-Radio app from Google Play or the Apple App Store. You can also listen in your browser at [ucg.radio](https://ucg.radio).