

March 9, 2018

Special Announcement: Please remember that Sabbath services tomorrow in Nashville will be at 10:30 am and in Murfreesboro at 2:30 because of the Murfreesboro social that night. There will be a Deut. 6 class in Nashville.

I know all of us are preparing for the Passover which is on March 29. Passover services will be at 7:00 pm in our regular halls in Jackson, Murfreesboro and Nashville. This is the only service that is for baptized members only. Jesus instituted the New Testament Passover ceremony on the night before His death as the announcement of the prophesied New Covenant. Just as only those who were physically circumcised were participants in the Old Covenant, only those who are spiritually circumcised, symbolized by baptism, are participants in the New Covenant. The Passover commemorates the death of Jesus Christ for our sins and the covenant God has made with those who have entered into the New Covenant.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 2:9-13: "For in Him (Christ) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses..." We will be covering some important aspects of our attitude towards observing the Passover in the sermon tomorrow and next week.

The first day of Unleavened Bread is special this year because it falls on a regular Sabbath. This doesn't happen that often. Services in Nashville will be at our regular 2:00 pm time. Services in Murfreesboro at 1:30 pm. Services in Jackson are at 10:30 am. Friday night, March 30, is the celebration of the Night to Be Much Observed. Murfreesboro brethren need to remember to sign up if you want to participate in the potluck we are planning for that night. Nashville and Murfreesboro will have combined services in Brentwood on the last day of Unleavened Bread (April 6) with services at 10:30 am and 2:30 pm. There will be tables set up downstairs for those who want to bring their lunch.

REMINDER: There is a Proverbs 31 Women's Study on Sunday, March 18, at Fred Keller's house at 10:00 am.

Update on Jim and Sue Robbins

Another good report today for Sue. We thank God. She has gotten a cold, though, and we appreciate your prayers on that. Everything is progressing well since my head surgery. I am scheduled to get the metal clamps or stitches out Wednesday of next week. Appreciate your prayers on that as well.

Jim

Mailing Address for Chuck and Mary Smith

Several have asked for the mailing address, for Chuck and Mary Smith. I am sure they will appreciate receiving a card.

Mr. and Mrs. Chuck and Mary Smith
400 North Federal Hwy. #408
Deerfield Beach, Fl. 33441

Passover Announcements for Nashville

Anyone that needs assistance for foot washing on Passover to please either see Regina Horvath at church or call/text her at (615) 513 -8726. This is a reminder for those participating in the foot washing on Passover evening. Each person participating should **bring his/her own foot washing basin and towel**. Questions – contact Michele Franke 615.300.7476.

Nashville/Murfreesboro Prom

The Nashville and Murfreesboro congregations cordially invite all teens and young adults to the United Church of God Southeast Regional Formal!

This year's event will be held at the Baird Chapel of Cumberland University in Lebanon, TN on March 24. Sabbath services will be at 2:30 pm. Senior presentations will be at 6:00 pm followed by a catered dinner. The dance will be from 7:30 pm to midnight.

UYC Camp Woodmen Update

The current owners of Camp Woodmen in Alabama do not plan on opening the camp this summer unless the camp sells. The camp may yet be sold, but potential campers and staff to Camp Woodmen should apply not only to Camp Woodmen but also to one additional camp, such as Camp Pinecrest or Camp Cotubic. Unless we are notified that a buyer has been found by April 1, we won't be able to use Camp Woodmen this summer. We will see what God has planned, so please pray about this situation.

ABC Accepting Applications

Ambassador Bible College is currently accepting applications for the 2018-2019 academic year, and this is a good time to apply. A number of international students have already been accepted, and we want several Americans to join them. ABC provides a focused, intense study of the entire Bible over a nine month program so that students can learn the precious truths of God's word, live by them, and pass them on to others.

The tuition fee of \$2,500 covers not only instruction, but also breakfast and lunch five days per week. Students typically share housing to minimize expenses. Many work part time jobs in the area, and all build memories and experiences for a lifetime. More information is available at <http://abc.ucg.org/applications>, where applications may also be downloaded.

eNews from Ministerial and Member Services

Issue 317

March 15, 2018

Personal From the President...

Dear fellow servants of God,

Yesterday marked the five-year anniversary of the death of our previous president, Denny Luker. I believe that he would be pleased to see where the Church is now, what voice it is projecting and how our brethren are being cared for. As well, he would be pleased to see what we are doing for the future development of both our media efforts and congregational care.

The latest issue of *Beyond Today* magazine should be arriving at your homes soon, and I find this issue particularly interesting. The issue's theme is *Empires on the Rise, What Does it Mean?* Managing Editor Scott Ashley writes this in his opening column:

"We are living in a world of massive change. As American power and influence rapidly recedes, previous major powers such as Russia, China, Germany, and even the Islamic and Ottoman Empires seek to regain their former might and glory.

"In Daniel 4:25 and Daniel 4:32, we're told that a spiritual dimension is at work in world affairs that can't be seen with the human eye: 'The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.'"

On Tuesday, Peter Eddington gave me a copy of the newly-printed *Strategic Plan, Operation Plan and 2018-2019 Budget* booklet that will be mailed to the entire ministry for review before General Conference of Elders annual meeting this May, here in Cincinnati. The Council of Elders, in its last meetings, approved all of the Strategic Plan elements.

While our video recording studio is under construction, we are considering various set designs and hope to start using it as quickly as possible after completion of the building, which should be in late June or July.

The Passover service will be held two weeks from tonight. There are some very fine current sermons about the Passover given last Sabbath that you may want to consider listening to on UCG's sermon page at <https://www.ucg.org/sermons>. The list on this page dynamically changes. As of this writing there are sermons by David Holladay, Gary Petty and Don Ward that directly deal with the upcoming Holy Days.

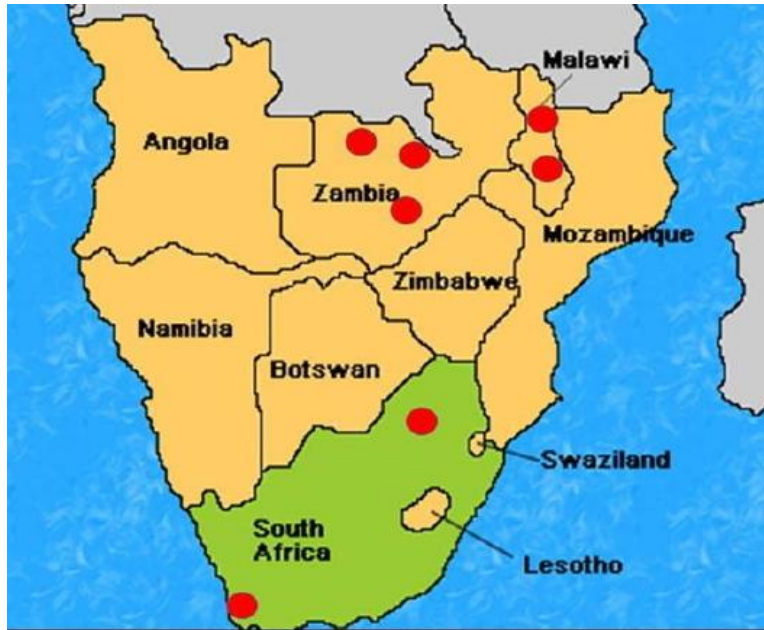
Our ministry from the home office will be traveling to various places in the United States and the world to help serve our brethren. Peter Eddington is headed to Tennessee, Chris Rowland to South Dakota, Darris McNeely to Mississippi and Gerald Seelig to Pennsylvania.

Jorge de Campos is headed for Brazil and Angola. On this trip he will visit Central and Southern Brazil to conduct four Kingdom of God seminars and fulfill new visit requests. He will also spend time with our brethren in Northern Brazil--Maloca de Moscou--for Passover, Night to be Much Observed and the first part of the days of Unleavened Bread. Finally, he will visit brethren in Angola where he will conduct leadership training workshops.

During his travels, Jorge will maintain a travel blog at: <http://v2.travelark.org/travel-blog/jorgedecampos/8>

Beverly and I are leaving this coming Monday for South Africa, Malawi and Zambia. We are anxious to visit our dear brethren and friends in these countries. Over the past two years we have constructed a number of buildings and plan to dedicate four of them, two each in Malawi and Zambia. For Passover we will be in Lilongwe, Malawi, where I'll conduct

the service with Brennan Hilgen.



This map shows the places we plan to visit on our trip that begins next week.

For the viability of the church in Africa, as well everywhere else, we need to train our future leaders. We are investigating a way to bring potential leaders to one of our facilities in Malawi or Zambia for training.

You can follow our trip at <http://v2.travelark.org/travel-blog/victorkubik/23>

Please note that there will be no *eNews* two weeks from today due to the timing of the Passover.

Our Managing Editor for Internal Publications, Linda Merrick, tells me that the Festival brochure has just gone to press and will shortly be mailed to you. The brochure will be posted on the Feast of Tabernacles web page on April 2. This brings up my discussion topic this week.

Where are you going for the Feast of Tabernacles this year?

And I may quickly add "*Why* are you going to the Feast of Tabernacles?"

I would like to reiterate the instructions and purposes for the Feast of Tabernacles as described in the book of Deuteronomy:

"You shall truly *tithe* all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. And you shall eat before the Lord your God, *in the place where He chooseto* make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, *that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always*. But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or if the place where the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the Lord your God has blessed you, then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the Lord your God chooses. And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and *you shall rejoice, you and your household*. You shall not forsake the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you" (Deuteronomy 14:22-27, emphasis added).

There are five important instructions given in this passage:

1. A tithe is to be saved in order to keep the Feast.
2. The Feast is held where God chooses it be kept.
3. At the Feast we learn to fear and deeply respect God.
4. We are to rejoice.
5. The Feast is for the entire household.

How well are we abiding by these directions?

I'd like to share observations from my early years of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles.

I kept my first Feast of Tabernacles in Squaw Valley, California, as a new student at Ambassador College. I was very new to the Church and not yet baptized. Shortly after the start of the academic year a large portion of the student body traveled by bus to Squaw Valley. I had only \$50 of second tithe money, but was told not to worry. The Church helped the students with housing and many of the brethren we met at Squaw Valley invited us to share meals together with them. I distinctly remember one family from Chicago, strangers to me, who invited me to have dinner with them at their lodge. I appreciated being included and will never forget their kindness. The Feast was truly for everybody and everyone was made to feel welcome.

My parents were also new to the Church and went to Big Sandy for the Feast. They didn't have much money, having attended only a few months. But brethren in the Minneapolis congregation helped my parents, who had four children with them.

My father died the following spring after keeping his first Passover. My mother was widowed with four young children, including my three-year-old brother. While my mother worked and saved her second tithe faithfully, brethren came to her and made her feel part of the "household" of the church. The church knew who needed a helping hand for that year and tried not to leave anyone behind.

That next year I kept the Feast in the Church's Piney Woods in Big Sandy with my mother in a rented camper. There were hundreds, if not thousands, of people camping at the same place, all there for the same purpose. We shared our food and fellowship. We were all together, all mutually supporting one another and all keeping the Feast in the same spirit. Hundreds of us walked about a quarter to half a mile to the huge tent for daily services where we were all eager to learn from the church's leaders.

It was not the most luxurious physical Feast, but the memories of it are sure magnificent.

As I came into the ministry, I was assigned various duties at each year's Feast. They included organizing activities, anointing and counseling, parking, auditorium and communications. At the large sites, these were time consuming jobs. We were told that the Feast was work time, not a vacation (which is still the case for our salaried ministry). There were also many other volunteers who spent countless hours cheerfully helping with the running of the Feast.

So what's the point of these accounts?

I believe that there was a special spirit of service respecting not only the meaning of the Feast, but making certain that it was made possible for everyone, including the elderly, the disabled, single mothers and others who needed help.

I would like to continue that spirit in our time as we consider where we go to the Feast this year. We now have many more festival sites to choose from. In the past, we really didn't have much choice, but it didn't matter. We made things

work at the place that God had chosen.

When entire churches all went to the same site, the knowledge of who needed help was more apparent. However, even as we meet strangers at the Feast this year, we should be able to ascertain who needs someone to help them, keep them company, or just listen to them.

Today, as the Church population grows older and as people come to the point in life where they cannot travel as easily as they did before, how aware are we of them?

When we choose a site, is it only for our own indulgence and rejoicing? Or could we dedicate some of our time and resources to helping out those who need help. In large crowds where people are unfamiliar, one can feel very lonely.

On my recent trip to visit Sabbath-keepers in Argentina, who are coming to keep the Holy Days themselves, I was struck by a first-love spirit for the Feast of Tabernacles itself. The church pulled together money to buy a piece of land and to build a Feast site that includes an assembly hall and small cottages. Some have been intensely studying the Feasts of the Lord in Leviticus 23 and have come to a commitment to keep them. The importance of the Feast, its purpose and being together is foremost in their thinking. I was so inspired to see them so excited about the purity of the Feast's meaning. It was a throwback of half a century to my earliest Feast recollections.

Let's take a special look at this as we consider where and why we will keep the Feast!

In Christ's service,



Victor Kubik

From Ministerial and Member Services...

Recent Re-credentialings



Ken and Sally Parker

On February 27, 2018, Ken Parker was re-credentialed by the United Church of God. He and his wife, Sally, serve in the Barrie, Ontario, Canada congregation.



Bob Trotter

On February 27, 2018, Bob Trotter was re-credentialed by the United Church of God. He serves in the Barrie, Ontario, Canada congregation.

Bowling Green Mammoth Cave Weekend

We are excited about our 2nd annual congregational camping weekend. We will be going back to Mammoth Cave National Park April 27-29, 2018. We will start the weekend on Friday evening with fellowship around the campsite.

Saturday morning we will have Sabbath appropriate fellowship opportunities such as a small museum inside the Visitor Center. Services will be at 2pm and dress for services this day will be casual, modest clothing! That evening we will have a hot dog dinner (donations \$5 per person/\$20 for families) and more fellowship activities. Bring some card games or board games that are family friendly and appropriate for sharing.

Sunday we will do a self-guided tour (cost is \$5 per person). Plus there are a number of cave tours you can reserve to do on your own or with others. We will also have an enclosed shelter for fellowship and lunch before departing from the weekend.

We will be reserving group camp sites, and more if needed. We would like a head count so that we know how many group sites to reserve. Please RSVP by Tuesday, April 24th. I will let those who RSVP know the cost for group sites (significant savings for a group). There will be ample campsites available in the area as well for same day drive ups. Group campsites are near the bathrooms (which do have electricity). There is a bathhouse for showers (bring quarters!). You will need to purchase firewood from the store at the entrance to the campground (I think it was \$6 but lasted the whole weekend).

All others are welcome to make their own reservations at area hotels. And you can also make your own cave tours reservations for Sunday. The number to call is 877-444-6777 or visit recreation.gov or visit the website www.nps.gov for more information on Mammoth Cave and area attractions.

Come for the whole weekend or any part to enjoy the fellowship! Feel free to call or email me with any questions, (and I'll share some of the highlights from last year). RSVP to Sherie Spalding- 615-512-5533 call or text, OR spalding1221@gmail.com