

June 22, 2018

A lot of news from the Home Office this week with updates from camps and congregations around the world. Kim and I are headed to Jackson tomorrow for Sabbath services and a Bible study. If you haven't signed up for the Nashville/Murfreesboro picnic it still isn't too late. If you would like to eat the chicken and ice cream that will be provided you can contact Janie Childers at janiejchilders@gmail.com (or you can bring your own). The monthly Bible study in Murfreesboro is this coming Wednesday as we continue to cover 1 Corinthians. The third quarter speaking schedule will be out next week.

The Young Adults Bible Study has been moved to June 30 at the Horvath's home.

I received this message from Stan Martin, "Stan and Penny Martin would like to thank everyone for the cards and those that visited the funeral home concerning my mother's recent death. It is wonderful to know our family cares and we certainly love you all for your comfort at this time."

Nashville/Murfreesboro Picnic



Please join us for a day of family fun and fellowship at the Nashville/Murfreesboro Picnic Sunday, June 24th beginning at 10:00 A.M.

Location: Cane Ridge Park (Shelter #1) 419 Battle Road Antioch, TN Look for the red balloons at the park entrance.

Games for children 12 & under - 11:00; Lunch - 12:00; Corn Hole tournament and other games after lunch. Chicken will be provided by the church. A homemade ice cream bar will be provided after lunch. Plates, cups and silverware will be provided.

A signup list is in the hall. Please list the total number in your family attending as we need a head count for the amount of chicken needed. Please sign up for a dessert or side dish. 3-4 people from each congregation are needed to bring ice.

Please bring your own chair and drinks to share (no alcohol is allowed in the park).

Feast of Tabernacles Announcements

Feast Registration

If you haven't yet registered for the Feast, this is a reminder. This is the time of the year most coordinators are planning activities, so accurate numbers help.

Also for those not able to attend a Feast site, a category has been developed called "Celebrating the Feast at Home." If

you know you will not be able to attend in person, please register. Those registered in this category will receive e-mails in advance about Feast webcasts and other ways to enjoy the Feast of Tabernacles.

Anchorage

Anchorage has plenty of room for transfers if you are interested.

Puerto Vallarta

We have great news regarding the Feast in Puerto Vallarta: We have several rooms available that have opened up this past week. Members wanting to attend no longer will be placed on a waitlist and can apply right away. Please visit feast.ucg.org and click on the Puerto Vallarta site for instructions on how to register.

Nashville Early Bird Special- Summer Lunch Potluck

Our next potluck and fellowship opportunity will be a lunch potluck before services on Saturday July 14th @ 11:30 a.m. We suggest lite summer foods, such as sandwiches, salads, pasta salad, fruits, desserts, etc. We will have water, lemonade, tea, and coffee. We need volunteers to bring tea, and bags of ice. Feel free to email or call Sherie Spalding and Tina Cason with any questions.

We've been asked to pray for Michele Michelson, wife of UCG elder Mark Michelson. I received this email from Michele: Test results came back clean. They got all the cancer and I will only need to do radiation and not chemo! I have had no pain, just side effects from the medication. All is well.
Love,
Michelle

eNews from Ministerial and Member Services

Issue 330
June 21, 2018

Personal from the President...

Dear fellow servants of God,

Our 2017-2018 fiscal year is coming to an end on June 30. This is a good time to reflect on the past year and what we have accomplished through God's blessing, and also to consider what we can do better with God's direction and help. While we don't have final numbers for this year yet, it is evident that we will easily exceed the "income" budget (in all categories, including General Contributions, Festival Assistance, and Holy Day offerings) and the "net income" budgets for the year. We are ever-grateful to God, our members and the many coworkers and donors who support this work.

Beyond financial statistics: during the year more than 120 people were baptized in the United States (a number comparable to recent years), plus many more in other countries around the world; three additional ministerial trainees were hired, the *Beyond Today* TV program was moved from the Word Network to WGN-America, the circulation of the *Beyond Today* magazine print run has held even at around 300,000 copies each issue; and Internet and print advertising efforts resulted in over 100,000 new people requesting literature and adding their names to our data base.

Construction of the new Video Recording Studio is about 80 percent complete and will be finished in early July. The studio has been financed through donations that exceed \$875,000 as of this date. Just this week, painting neared completion and the pipe battens that will hold the studio lighting have been hung. You can see a brief video clip of this at twitter.com/UCGmedia. In addition, a company to help us design and build the on-camera set has been chosen and drawings are being reviewed as I write this.

We pray that the tools provided by the new recording space will enable us to make an even greater impact for our mission. We know that God has a purpose in our efforts to more effectively and dynamically preach the gospel. We are grateful to God for the opportunity to serve Him and for the blessings He has provided for His Church and His people.

Yesterday our media team met to discuss one of our new products which will be a documentary series engaging people who are already searching for life's purpose (and there are plenty of people who do wonder, but don't know where to find answers) and to direct them towards God's Kingdom and His plan for mankind. As we humble ourselves and let God use us, we are confident of good outcomes. That is my unceasing prayer.

And, as reported in the May 31 *eNews*, we mailed a cover letter and a complimentary copy of the May-June 2018 issue of *Beyond Today* magazine to various government officials in the United States and Israel, and to a number of public and private organizations. This week we sent out our third and final mailing to additional consulates, embassies and government officials. We did receive a very nice reply from the Consulate General of Israel in New York's director of regional affairs that said in part: "On behalf of Ambassador Dani Dayan, I wanted to thank you for sharing your insightful magazine with our office. We are grateful for your support and friendship." We pray that this effort will bear fruit in our overall mission to preach the gospel of the Kingdom, and also provide a witness of God's way of life. I appreciate the work of John LaBissoniere and our media team in getting these mailings taken care of.

Modesty

On Tuesday evening we held an online class as part of our Pastoral Development Program on the subject of modesty that was moderated by Steve Nutzman, Steve Myers and myself. We had a good discussion about what is sometimes a sensitive subject, yet one not to be dismissed because talking about modesty is far more than just talking about appropriate dress.

The definition of modesty is the quality or state of being unassuming or moderate in the estimation of one's abilities. Some synonyms for modesty are self-effacement, humility, unpretentiousness, self-consciousness, reserve, reticence, timidity. It is also behavior, manner, or appearance intended to avoid impropriety or indecency.

Modesty is a trait of character that transcends and embodies appearance, speech and attitude. But, often when we bring up modesty, it centers on specific codes of dress at specific events. In discussion we talked about how important it is to educate our brethren about what the Bible says about public behavior as part of our conversion and maturation. By discussing the subject and educating with a holistic view of modesty for all, we can all become the kind of person Jesus Christ would like us to be.

Visitors from Ukraine



Victor Kubik and Ivan Yurishko

Ivan Yurishko, a leader among Sabbatarians in western Ukraine, visited the home office last week. I first met him in 1992 in Rokosovo, Ukraine, when we discovered that there were thousands of people keeping the Sabbath and espousing similar doctrinal views about the Passover, Holy Spirit, non-use of the cross, not keeping the Roman holidays, and the state of the dead to name just a few. Many Sabbath-keepers in Ukraine emigrated to the United States over the past 20 years as a consequence of the Helsinki Human Rights Accord adopted in the days of President Jimmy Carter. Under that accord, many small persecuted religious groups were given preferential status to come to the United States. Thousands did and settled mostly in Portland, Oregon. Two of Ivan and Nina's children have settled there and Ivan was in the United States to visit them.

Over the years we have worked together on various projects through the Ambassador Foundation when we sent eight Ambassador College students and volunteers for a summer to Ukraine to teach English in 1994. We have worked together on humanitarian projects. For 15 years we supported a street children's program run by a Sabbatarian pastor.

Ivan Yurishko is an entrepreneur who owned several businesses. He owned a print shop. We called it the "Kinko's of Ukraine." He reprinted a lot of our Russian-language literature, including thousands of copies of the entire 12-lesson Bible Study Course which they passed out freely among their brethren. Their favorite booklet is *Sunset to Sunset* which they have declared to be the best treatise of any Sabbath-keeping group about the Sabbath.

One area they had resisted doctrinally was the keeping of the Holy Days. Some groups who had tried to do so slipped into Judaism and away from Jesus Christ. On my visits to Ukraine, I would preach about various topics of common understanding, but in the summer of 2006 I spoke about Pentecost, the day that New Testament Church was established. I pointed out that not only was Passover centered around Jesus Christ, but Pentecost was also commanded by Jesus Christ to be observed as the day of the founding of the Church of God. The fall Holy Days point towards Jesus Christ's return and the establishment of His Kingdom. In 2011 Ivan and his family came to our Feast of Tabernacles in Estonia. Since that time, we have talked about a combined Feast somewhere in Hungary, but this has never materialized. The good news is that his congregation in Khust has adopted the keeping of all the Holy Days. Most Sabbatarians still balk at their observance.

On this visit, Ivan proposed a closer association with the United Church of God as we have with the Sabbath-keepers in Misiones, Argentina, Mizoram, India, and in Angola. One of his sons who has a European Union passport is applying for Ambassador Bible College.

This was a wonderful visit in our 27 year-history. You can read more about our visits at: <http://lifenets.org/ukraine/>

Colombia Trip Travel Blog

Scott and Gayle Hoefker are in Colombia to do pre-Feast planning in Cartagena, Colombia. The Feast of Tabernacles is the only time that all the brethren in Colombia can see each other at one time. From there they will travel to San Gil, Santandar, Colombia for the annual church camp. You can follow their travels here: http://v2.travelark.org/travel-blog/gayle_hoefker/25

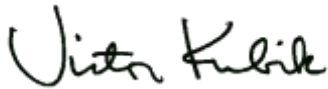
Inside United Podcast

We are regularly producing podcasts featuring interviews with people of note in the Church. We have recently spoken with ABC students and pastors. The interviews are usually about 15 minutes. While we give you a URL to click or tap into a podcast, you may consider installing an app on your mobile phone to more easily find and listen to them.

On my Android phone, I have found *Pocket Cast* to be very convenient. I can see all the podcasts starting with the latest one and then listen to them while driving my car or taking a walk. Those using an iPhone may find *Overcast* to be good.

Today's podcast is my interview with Stephanie Bissessar from Trinidad who just returned from UYC camp at Cotubic and gives her impressions about camp and her home country of Trinidad.

In Christ's service,



Victor Kubik

From Ministerial and Member Services...

Death of Laura Kliewer



Laura Kliewer with her husband, Jerald.

Laura Kliewer, a long-time member and wife of elder Jerald Kliewer, died this past Wednesday morning at 73 years of age. She was baptized with her husband, Jerald, in September 1967, now 50 years ago, and for the majority of the time attended church in Oklahoma City. They have enjoyed traveling internationally for the Feast of Tabernacles over the years including France, Jordan, Argentina, Italy, Costa Rica, Peru, Guatemala, Wales, Canada, and Mexico, plus various US-based sites in Hawaii, Missouri, Colorado and Texas. The Kliewers celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary this past February. Jerald and Laura have 5 children, 8 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren. Laura loved her family deeply, both physical and spiritual. She will be missed by many. Cards of encouragement and memories can be sent to her husband, Jerald Kliewer, 3714 NW Sterling St, Norman, OK 73072.

Southwest Regional Report

The Southwest region covers a huge area from the Rio Grande to the tip of northern California, stretching over Nevada and Colorado clear down to El Paso, Texas, at the border with Mexico.

Most of our pastors serve multiple churches and travel many miles on their church circuits, working very hard to keep up with their responsibilities. Two of our pastors take care of international areas, as well as pastor their local church areas. Tim and Maryse Pebworth serve the San Francisco Bay Area and Petaluma churches, as well as looking after the the French work as Senior Pastor. The pastor and wife for Garden Grove, California, Mario and Caty Seiglie, also oversee the Spanish work in Mexico, Central America, and South America. Both couples are quite busy, also coordinating the Feast of Tabernacles in France and Mexico, respectively.

Monte Knudson, an elder serving in the Phoenix area with his wife, Susan, voluntarily serves as Senior Pastor for the work in East Africa.

Robin and Susan Webber serve five churches in the Southern California area, and he also serves as the feast coordinator for the Oceanside, California, site. You have also probably read one of the many articles he has written for our publications.

Scott and Connie Ashley take care of three churches in Colorado: Denver, Frisco and Colorado Springs. Mr. Ashley is also a member of the Council of Elders. In his "free time" he is the managing editor of the *Beyond Today* magazine.

Charles and Jacque Melear take care of the Loveland, Colorado, church. His other jobs include coordinating the annual meeting of the General Conference of Elders and overseeing the organization and planning for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Joe and Jackie Horchak take care of Sacramento, California, and Reno, Nevada, churches. We were "neighbors" when living in the San Francisco Bay Area before I was transferred to the Phoenix area.

Four of our elders serve as non-salaried pastors. Steve and Terri Buchanan take care of the Tucson and Sierra Vista, Arizona, congregations. Also, they take care of El Paso, Texas, which is 325 miles away from their home in Tucson. Fred and Sue Crow serve the San Jose and Eureka, California, congregations. It is more than a six-hour drive between those two congregations. Upon retiring from the full-time ministry, Randy and Kay Schreiber continue to pastor the Albuquerque, New Mexico, church while living in the Phoenix area. When my wife and I moved to Arizona, Randy and Kathy Love began to pastor the Yuma, Arizona, congregation.

Joan and I oversee the Phoenix, Show Low, and Northern Arizona congregations as well as the Hawaiian Islands, which includes serving as feast coordinator when the Feast occurs there. We also take care of coordinating Camp Hye Sierra in the Fresno, California, area.

On top of all this we have many wonderful elders and deacons and their wives who are actively involved in keeping the cogs and wheels rolling for the congregations they serve in the Southwest Region, and the many needs that must be met could not be done without them. Some travel to various areas within their pastor's circuit to speak on a regular basis.

The ministry of Jesus Christ needs our prayers for strength to continue to do the work God has given each person.

We appreciate and honor all of our pastors and elders and wives who have laid down their lives in service to God the Father and Jesus Christ. We are constantly reminded by the nature of the work that it is a labor of love and of faith. There is no glory in this life, but the life to come. It is a life of sacrifice and service!

-- Jim Tuck, Regional Pastor

Preteen Camp Colorado Report

We have just concluded a highly successful and rewarding camp experience at Preteen Camp Colorado near Estes Park in the gorgeous Rocky Mountains!



Initially it looked like the weather would present significant problems, but our prayers were once again answered and we were able to enjoy all scheduled activities! 81 campers, mini-campers, teen and adult staff greatly enjoyed one another's company as they participated in archery, canoeing, field games, multi-ball, arts & crafts, and exhilarating nature hikes!

Each day we had compass checks and/or Christian Living classes centered on this year's theme, "God's Vision for You!" We also had nightly sing-alongs, fireside chats, and tested our preteens, teens, and adults regarding their Bible knowledge. There is already a great deal of talk about next year at Camp Colorado. Perhaps you and your family would like to join us?

-- Mark Welch, camp director

Preteen Camp Piney Woods Report



We completed a successful preteen Camp Piney Woods on Wednesday, June 13, in Big Sandy, Texas. 41 campers, 29 adult and teen staff, and additional members of the East Texas congregation worked hard for 4 days to reinforce God's Vision For You to our precious children. In addition to the daily Christian Living classes and numerous teaching moments, we enjoyed a number of activities including fishing, swimming, crafts, music, sports (basketball, dodge ball, gaga ball) among other activities. Parents were on hand to see the end of camp Awards Ceremony where the campers sang two music pieces--"I Am A Promise," and "Everybody Worship."



Stuffed animal donations were requested, and one evening an officer from the Big Sandy police department came by to collect them. They will be used to give to children for comfort when the police go out on domestic calls. While there, the

officer spent time demonstrating a drone outfitted with a high resolution infrared camera, and how they use it to locate runaway children and criminals. Campers and adults alike enjoyed seeing the drone fly away, while watching ground footage video on the officer's tablet, and listening to his fascinating discussion.

We're grateful to our Father in Heaven for blessing us with a wonderful, safe camp. All pointed towards keeping God's Vision for us in mind--that of one day becoming spiritual sons and daughters in His expanding family!

-- Jim Moody, camp director

Rwanda and Burundi Pastoral Visit

Kevin Eboya and I recently traveled from Kenya to visit the six Bible study groups in Burundi and Rwanda, in East Africa.

On June 8, we held a Bible study in the Buganda-Cibitoke province of Burundi, followed by a question and answer session. I have been visiting with the group for 4 years now and those who had been counseling for baptism were eager to resume. A total of about 10 individuals were counseled for baptism and the following morning before Sabbath Services I was able to baptize Remy Nsengiyumva, who is our local contact person for that group. It was a delight to welcome a new member into the body of Christ.



Visit to the group meeting in Buganda-Cibitoke province in Burundi.

During services we sang from United Church of God hymnals that have been translated into the Kirundi Language with the help of Charles Nizigiyimana, who is a musician. Overall, the group is growing in knowledge. Although most of the individuals can only understand the local language, most of them are progressing well in the faith. Only a few of them can understand either some English or French.

We have a Bible study group at Nzangwa, just 20 minutes inside the border of Rwanda. We visited with this group for a Bible study followed by Bible questions and answers. Some of the needs of this group include Bibles. Last year a donation of 34 Bibles was distributed between Burundi and Rwanda. Apparently, the number of Bibles were not enough, as there are more requests for Bibles.

On June 11, we had a board meeting in Musanze with the officials who are working to register the Church in Rwanda. At the board meeting we discussed the progress of the five Bible study groups in Rwanda located at Musanze, Rubavu, Kabatwa, Nzangwa and Mukamira. I am happy to report that there has been much progress through the years. Registration of the Church is at an advanced stage, and is necessary so that those whom God is calling can worship without any legal issues. After the board meeting I conducted a leadership and mentoring seminar.



Visiting the Bible study group in Rubavu.

On June 12, we visited the Bible study group in Rubavu. The next day, we visited the group in Mukamira. Not many were in attendance because there were three burial ceremonies in the area which most of the people of this group were attending. On June 14, we visited another group in Kabatwa. On the Sabbath of June 16, we met with the Musanze congregation. The congregation is dynamic and comprised of 5 committed families. Weekly Sabbath attendance is between 23 to 30 people. The Sabbath services are like those held at any other UCG congregations around the world. Services were conducted in English with translation into the Rwandese language.



Booklets in the Rwandese language.

Three booklets, "Transforming your Life," "God's Holy Day Plan" and "Fundamental Beliefs" have been translated into the Rwandese language and are very helpful to those individuals being called to understand God's truth today.

-- Antonio Ndung'u, pastor, East Africa