



# United Church of God *an International Association*

## **eNews from Ministerial and Member Services**

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### **Personal From the President...**

Dear fellow servants of God,

Beverly and I have just returned from a trip that took us to South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois for a number of notable church events and visits. It was time shared with our brethren with a history going back almost half a century.

On the Sabbath of July 14, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Sioux Falls, South Dakota, church. I was so happy to see those who were at services, particularly those who were there one year after the start of the church when I started serving there as a ministerial assistant. It was also gratifying to see their children and grandchildren, who are now leaders in our congregations. I was so moved to be with these people with whom we had invested our lives in our common faith. We thank God and the brethren for their faithfulness!



Services at the Sioux Falls 50th Anniversary

Much, of course, has changed as our spiritual journey is not always smooth. There were many who came from groups that are not part of UCG. The atmosphere was very cordial and warm. Ken Skorseth narrated a PowerPoint slide show of church history that covered the decades of changes and the list of ministers who cared for the area. Split sermons were given by elder Glen White and myself. Glen White served the area from Omaha before the official

start of the church. The final song of the services was led by Orley Wangsness who I knew from my first Sabbath in Sioux Falls.

Elder Ken Skorseth commented:

"More than a year of planning culminated in a wonderful day this past Sabbath celebrating 50 years since the first Church of God congregation was established. It was a privilege for the United Church of God congregations to host this event in Sioux Falls, SD. Many of us had prayed that we could let our lights shine as Christ instructs us and that people would glorify God as a result. That came to pass as many visitors joined us from the time the doors opened at 10 AM until they closed about 10:30 PM that night. All were welcomed no matter what their current fellowship was. We simply wanted to provide a wonderful opportunity for reflection and fellowship.

"There was ample time to visit and renew old acquaintances. After dinner on Sabbath evening, a formal presentation was delivered highlighting the history of the Church of God in South Dakota beginning in the 1950s when many people heard the *World Tomorrow* program and began to respond. Despite the fact there was no congregation until 1968, a number of people were baptized beginning in the early 50s. By 1963, Bible studies were conducted by visiting ministers.

"The presentation also highlighted early ordinations, a couple of the first pianists and the first Spokesman Club and its officers. The evening ended with a session of sharing by who wished to do so via a roving microphone. This included comments from five pastors who were present who had served South Dakota in the past and one who sent a video greeting also showing some people and events he remembered. This event will be long remembered by all who attended. The attendance was 140 for Sabbath services and upwards of 180 for the evening dinner."

Pastor David Jones commented:

"When Ken Skorseth and I first began planning this event, I had hopes for a reunion that would bring about healing. I didn't know how much it would do, or if it would be successful, but I felt very strongly that we had to reach out to all those who we once called brethren and family.

"There were obviously some who said they didn't want to revisit the past, but in the end, some who said they would never want to reunite, said 'thank you for a truly wonderful evening.'

"We have been called to a ministry of reconciliation which is a responsibility to reach out to each other, to try and heal old wounds, by remembering all the love, fellowship, and blessing of our relationship with God and with each other. We were not trying to get everyone under the same organizational umbrella again, but rather just under the same roof, at the same table, sharing food and laughter and love.

"God truly blessed all the efforts of everyone who worked so hard to make this come about, because unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. Seeing

so many people, hugging and sharing happy tears made everything worth it. We could not be more pleased with how our 50th reunion of family and friends went."

We thank pastor David Jones and his wife, Joy, who along with others care for the Sioux Falls, Watertown and Rapid City congregations.

### **UYC Preteen Camp Ironwood in Minnesota**

On the way back from South Dakota, we stopped at UCG Preteen Camp Ironwood near Stewartville, Minnesota, and spent two days there where our four grandchildren were campers and our son and daughter-in-law worked as counselors. The venue is a beautiful and well-equipped camp location where we have also been holding regional ministerial conferences. There were the added activities of horseback riding, zip line, mini-farm and petting zoo and much more. I commend the dedicated work of pastor David Schreiber and his wife, Jolinda, as well as many others for a well-planned and executed experience for our children. The camp theme this year was "Friendship."



Camp Ironwood staff photo

David writes a report in this edition of the eNews telling more about Camp Ironwood last week.

### **Death of Leroy Cole**



Leroy Cole

We are so sad to announce the death of pastor Lee Cole. He died early the morning of July 17, with his wife, Laura, and two of their daughters by his side. Lee and Laura would have celebrated 56 years of marriage on July 29th.

Funeral services will be held this coming Sunday at Emigrant, Montana, near Yellowstone National Park. Glen White will be officiating.

Lee Cole graduated from Ambassador College in 1962. His first assignments were in Australia. He served there from 1962 to 1974 before coming to the United States and pastoring in Modesto, California, Denver, Santa Rosa, and Phoenix, among other places. The last assignment was Bethlehem, Lewistown and York, Pennsylvania.

### **Miscellaneous**

While on the way to South Dakota, we stopped in Chicago for the Sabbath on July 7. We were hosted by pastor Randy D'Alessandro and his wife, Mary, where we spent Friday night. Over the years we had become acquainted with many of the Chicago brethren through working together at the Wisconsin Dells Feast of Tabernacles site. Randy D'Alessandro is a most caring pastor who takes care of the Chicago congregation extremely well along with elders Bill Bradford and John May. John May's wife, Melanie, works for the home office from home as Web content editor.

We noted that there were many young children in this congregation. This is always a joyous sight to us. After services on the Sabbath, Bill and Joanna Bradford invited us over to their home before we headed northwest.

On the way back from Camp Ironwood, we were invited to the home of Milwaukee pastor Dan Dowd and his wife, Roxanne. We also visited with newly-ordained elder Devin Schulz and his wife, Tiffany. He has been mentored by Dan Dowd. The Schulz family will be moving to Kalamazoo, Michigan, after the Feast of Tabernacles. Devin will be an assistant pastor for Kalamazoo, Lansing and Grand Rapids with pastor Mike Joseph.

Our trip these past two weeks was a profound journey of church history, experience, ecstasy and some sadness. I was so happy to see brethren who stayed the course of what life consists of. Seeing the brethren in Sioux Falls was very emotional to me as this is where I first began a journey in the pastoral ministry. To this day, the people of the Sioux Falls church who have God's Spirit have made a deep impression on me and the relationships run deep, spanning decades.

While visiting all the churches, I am encouraged to see the young step into the role of us adults who, with the same Spirit, carry on the Mission of the Church both to the world and within to one another. I thank God for this journey and am thankful to be part of it.

In Christ's service,



Victor Kubik

## **From Ministerial and Member Services...**

### **Pastoral Update**

Lewis VanAusdle now serves as pastor for the three congregations previously served by Howard Davis: New York City, Northern New Jersey, and Hartford, Connecticut. Mr. Davis retired from employment at the end of June.

### **Feast Sermon CDs**

Connie Seelig needs the names, addresses and PINs of those people needing a Feast sermon MP3 CD for the Feast of Tabernacles by July 29. You can obtain the PINs from your church listings. If you need a church listing, you can request that from Kathe Myers or Connie Seelig.

### ***Beyond Today* Bible Studies on Summer Break**

Please note that live webcasts of our *Beyond Today* Bible studies are currently on summer break with the conclusion of the "Judges" series. You can view archives of all previous Bible studies at [ucg.org/beyond-today/beyond-today-bible-study](http://ucg.org/beyond-today/beyond-today-bible-study) and on Roku, Amazon Fire TV and Apple TV. There are 11 previous series to watch if there are some that you missed.

-- Peter Eddington, Media and Communications Services

### **Jelly Makes a New Friend**



Watch Jelly's newest short film, "[Jelly Makes a New Friend](https://www.ucg.org/members/kids/jelly/jelly-makes-a-new-friend)" (<https://www.ucg.org/members/kids/jelly/jelly-makes-a-new-friend>).

When Jelly arrives at school he discovers a brand new student. Join Jelly in his newest adventure as he learns about friendship.

This tenth film was shot in 4K resolution at the United Church of God home office and at a local elementary school. It features a number of children from the Cincinnati East congregation.

View the [entire Jelly short film series](https://www.ucg.org/members/kids#jelly) (<https://www.ucg.org/members/kids#jelly>) and catch up on all nine previous episodes too.

## Preteen Camp Ironwood



81 preteens (which included 13 mini dorm campers ages 2-5 and 6 under the age of 2), 24 teens and 56 adult staff enjoyed 4 days of living, playing and working together "God's way." God blessed the camp with His protection for campers and staff as well as with absolutely beautiful weather. (Rain was in the "long range forecast" all most of the camp dates--but by Friday, the probability of rain showers decreased.) This was one of the biggest camps we have had in awhile, attended by preteens and teens from Ohio, Florida, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Camp Ironwood is located in the beautiful outdoor country setting of Southern Minnesota at Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch, near Stewartville.



Our goal was to enrich the children's lives by giving them opportunities to build relationships with other children who share common beliefs, experience a variety of challenging activities and deepen their relationship with God by getting to know more about their loving Father through daily Christian Living and Music classes. The theme of this year's camp was "Friendship." The theme was emphasized throughout the day in activities and in their evening wrap-up dorm time. Campers enjoyed the new Jelly video--laughing at Jelly and Mr. Jonathan's jokes. They immediately started trying to memorize all the words to the song.



Camp Ironwood is a family camp with many parents bringing their young children, preteens and teens to spend four days together in a loving and nurturing family environment. This year we had a wonderful group of teens who served as assistant counselors and activity assistants

and were the big brothers and big sisters to the campers. Adult staff, which included many dedicated and hard-working parents serving as activity coordinators and counselors, enjoyed the opportunities to interact with their children during the day. Mr. and Mrs. Victor Kubik were able to join us for two days, which was a special treat to campers and staff.

It was a fun-filled four days with a variety of activities including: horseback riding, swimming, tubing down a steep hill, arts & crafts, field games, climbing wall, archery, creek walk, team challenge, campus improvement, sling shot, a visit to the mini farm--as well as evening activities which included a sing-a-long/campfire, carnival, novelty Olympics, treasure hunt and a new activity: Dance with Jelly and Mr. Jonathan.

We praise God and thank Him for another successful year at Camp Ironwood!

-- David Schreiber, Camp Director

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