

# UNITED NEWS



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## Look Inside for Special UYC Insert

### An Investment in God's Way of Life

by Steve Nutzman, UYC Coordinator

The 23rd year of United Youth Camps is over, but joyous memories and spiritual growth are alive and well for the 452 campers and 263 staff who attended one of the four summer camps in the U.S. in June or July.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support of this camp program, and we especially thank our very dedicated staff who served at camp. God has richly blessed UYC with another very positive season. Our Christian living theme was "God's Vision for You," based on Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV): "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." The campers and staff were "all in" with the Christian living classes.

I can think of no better way of capturing what UYC is about than to have you read what a mother wrote after her son returned home from one of the teen camps (edited for brevity): "My son returned from camp spiritually invigorated and refreshed, as he has each of his previous times at camp.



Left: Campers at Camp San Gil in Colombia.



Right: Teen staff at preteen Camp Ironwood in Minnesota.

I wanted him to understand that the joy and fullness that he feels from his camp experience is what God intends for us to experience all the time as followers of His way of life. When God is central in all you do and when He is the focus, then your life is filled with joy—a joy that lasts and satisfies versus the temporary or fleeting thrills that worldly experiences provide.

"My son tells me that the campers want to be there; they want to learn more and are seeking God's way of life. What a tre-

mendous tool for these young people—a wonderful wholesome environment where they can taste firsthand how satisfying God's way of life is, and how fulfilling proper fellowship and community can be.

"They are learning, listening and investing in God's way of life—God's way moving through the generations. No doubt God the Father is pleased to see these young people being taught His truth. Camp has been absolutely profitable to his young life." UN

### Ambassador Bible College Begins Its 20th Year

by Frank Dunkle

The 20th ABC class kicked off the school year with a welcome picnic hosted by local alumni on Sunday, Aug. 26. The student body consisting of 32 students from across the U.S., Australia and Ukraine gathered for a late lunch and a number of fun get-acquainted games. A theme of "winter in summer" inspired the decorations and games, reminding everyone that while it was warm and sunny that day, a change of season lies ahead.

This year's class is unique in several ways. The most prominent is that 11 of the students are siblings of ABC graduates, and a few more are cousins. Also to add to the international flavor, a student from India and another from Malawi plan to join the class for the second semester.



Top: ABC students during orientation.

Right: ABC students at the dessert social held after orientation.

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### Video Recording Studio: Building Completed

by Peter Eddington

We are excited to report the construction of the video recording studio is now complete. We have received our Certificate of Occupancy from local county and city officials, and have taken possession of the new space. As an addition to the project, an updated curbside sign for the Church was installed and new lettering placed above the lobby entrance.

We are now moving our existing TV studio equipment over to the new studio and finalizing equipment lists for new cameras, lights, cabling and set pieces. Our old studio has been out of commission since June. We are mostly running re-runs at present and need to get new programming going as soon as we can after the Feast.

#### On-Camera Set Design

Negotiations have been finalized with a set building company for construction of our new on-camera set. We looked at five different companies over the course of the past six months, and narrowed it down to three of them. We finally settled on a company out of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They service nationwide, but in particular the New York City and east coast video markets, and have some major clients.

The set will be built off-site and will be installed on Oct. 8-9. Our production team at the home office gave detailed input along the way. It was a challenge to include all the aspects everyone wanted, and yet keep it all within budget!

The design covers over 50 linear feet of set, 10 to 11 feet high—with three different areas to use for stand up, sit down and dailies, plus room for a studio audience of 40-50 people. The design is very pleasing to the eye and quite expansive. It also

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#### BY THE NUMBERS

452

campers attended camps in the U.S.A.



## Video Recording Studio

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includes a professional video wall.

In addition to the formal set, a large “sound stage” area is adjacent. This flexible space will be used for many types of video recordings, “reenactments” and photo shoots. The new building also includes two equipment storage rooms, a radio studio, the video studio control room, a green room and restrooms.

Our crew is very excited about how this will look on camera, and how flexible it will be for many years to come. We are currently finalizing and selecting wall coverings, textures and colors from swatches and samples sent to us.

### Funding the Project

Construction of the building itself was

fully funded by generous donations, at about \$750,000, and our anticipated costs for the set, lighting, cameras and audio equipment will be about \$200,000. This totals \$950,000 and our special fund for this whole project now totals just over \$890,000. So, we are just \$60,000 from the entire job being fully funded.

Donations are still coming in each week, and we certainly appreciate the faithful and generous offerings made by our brethren in this regard. Anyone who still would like to help us reach our goal of being fully funded is welcome to send in a donation marked for the “Video Recording Studio” fund.

Thank you very much for your prayers and support of our Media and Communications Services department and staff, as we work diligently to effectively preach the good news of God’s Kingdom across the country and around the world. **UN**



Photo by Scott Ashley

Top Left: Plan view of the new Beyond Today set.

Top Right: Computer rendering of the new Beyond Today set.

Bottom: Peter Eddington gives Council of Elders members a tour of the new recording studio space.

## Council of Elders



Back Row: Jorge de Campos, Rainer Salomaa, Dan Dowd, Scott Ashley, Mario Seiglie, Aaron Dean and Len Martin.

Front Row: John Elliott, Rex Sexton, Donald Ward (chairman), Bob Dick and Anthony Wasilkoff.

The council of elders met Aug. 20-23 at the home office. The newest addition to the council is Len Martin.

To see videos of selected discussions and read the reports once they are available, head to <http://coe.ucg.org>. **UN**



Photos by Linda Merrick and Kur-Lytops



Photos are from the ABC welcome picnic held on Aug. 26 at the home office. ABC students enjoyed meeting each other, meeting alumni and the faculty. Get-to-know-you games and novelty Olympic games were played.



## ABC Begins

continued from page 1

On Monday, Aug. 27, the students gathered in the ABC classroom for Orientation. The resident faculty explained policies and procedures, while encouraging students to make the most of this special opportunity. UCG President Victor Kubik emphasized that preparation for future service to God and His Church is an important part of the ABC mission. During the afternoon, the new students took a tour of the home office, including the new video studio, enjoyed a desert social with the home office staff, and then met with choir director Ken Shoemaker to begin the process of forming this year’s choir. **UN**

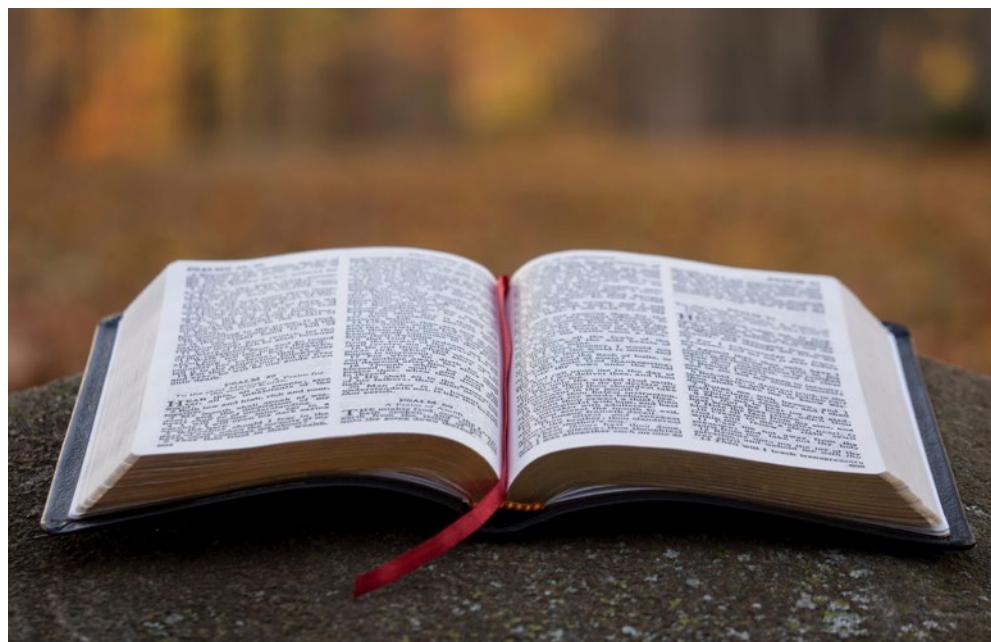


**VICTOR KUBIK**  
President

While in California, we visited the headquarters of Facebook in Menlo Park, California. It is the world's most widely used social media platform. It is used by two and a half billion people, including other Facebook-owned services such as Instagram and WhatsApp. Most likely you are on one of them. More than 25,000 people work for Facebook. We were given a private tour by Michael McNally a director of engineering at Facebook, supporting the News Feed Integrity Team. His team of 70 engineers uses artificial intelligence to fight misinformation called "fake" or "false" news. His group also fights spam, fraud and abuse in the Facebook feed.

This experience gave me insight not only into cutting-edge technology, but into ever-present human nature in an interconnected world where we human beings come up close and personal to one another. On social networks there is the freedom to say what you please to the world with your viewpoints and biases.

## Are You a Carrier of Truth?



*Do you speak the truth in your words and teachings?*

### *How seriously do we take promoting what is true and accurate?*

But, questions arose: Is true objectivity and neutrality really possible? How much bias is "acceptable" and at what point does content become deception and falsehood? And then the next step, how does that affect those consuming what may be

manipulated content?

Misinformation is ever-present. Those who provide content on social media platforms are then forced into taking action by restricting or removing material that crosses a line of decency (by using complex algorithms developed by an exceedingly intelligent team of engineers).

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## From The COUNCIL



**by Mario Seiglie**

On our Church logo we have two commissions given by Jesus Christ: preaching the gospel and preparing a people (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19-20).

Whether the world believes it or not, as Peter said, God has called us to be a "chosen race, the King's priests, the holy nation, God's own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his own marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9, Good News Bible, emphasis added throughout).

How can we carry out these tasks Jesus has assigned us? Certainly there is a work of God to do while we are alive on this earth, and that is why we are not only to

## The Perfect Law of Liberty



*It is crucial to preserve God's righteous way and to help others who show interest through God's calling. We do this by how we live our lives and how we walk in His way.*

### *Whether the world believes it or not . . . God has called us to be a "chosen race . . .*

prepare a people, but also to preach the gospel to the entire world.

Since we are God's representatives as a "holy nation," one way to do so is to teach and defend a core concept of that King-

dom, what James calls "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25). It is crucial to preserve God's righteous way ever before us and to help others who show interest through God's calling in how to walk in it.

Notice that God's law is described here as having two wonderful descriptors: "per-

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## Restoring Oneness to the Family of God

by Ryan Hall

As the Day of Atonement approaches I can't help but think of how the restoration of the family of God plays a part in the fulfillment of this day (Hebrews 9:1-28, 10:1-23). Since the Garden of Eden, the unified family system has been under attack. The fulfillment of what Atonement pictures gives us hope of that unity and oneness being returned to the family. From its inception, the true intent of the creation of mankind was an intricate plan to expand the God-kind, and to increase the God family (Genesis 1:26). This plan would be unlike any other creation that God and the *Logos* had performed. Their sincere desire to expand was fueled by a great love—*agape*. Through this *agape* the family environment would thrive (1 John 4:7-19). This special bond that promoted oneness was carefully designed so mankind could experience as a member of the God family (Genesis 1:26-28, 2:15).

When we look back at the details of creation in the book of Genesis, it can be best described as a moment in time that dreams are made of. This utopian environment was something we can only imagine today: the perfect Creators, His perfect creation and His plan filled with hope. Since the time of creation, God desired to have a personal relationship with His creation—mankind (Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 8:38-39). This creation was definitely not an accident, nor was it left up to chance. It was a deliberate design with every detail configured to perfection (Job 38:4-7). When it was completed, God stepped back, marveled at the work of His hands, and called it very good (Genesis 1:31). God enjoyed His new creation and found pleasure in it. His desire was to be a part of this creation, to provide them everything they need to grow together in unity. This marked a special and unique time of oneness between God and mankind, and all was at peace.

Scripture is unclear how long this peace had lasted, but during this time they lived as a perfect family in this pleasant environment. God wanted this first man and woman to continue in this unity and keep this environment growing. He blessed this first union between man and woman, and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply, to cultivate this unity (Genesis 1:28, 2:18, 24). Both were to be joined together, and establish a household united as one. This is the foundation of unity as designed by God. It was planned to last for an eternity.

However, this perfect family environment and plan of unity would

not last. A being who hated the idea of a peaceful, unified family would soon enter the picture (Genesis 3:1-6). Through his influence, sin would come forth, putting this unified family environment in jeopardy. Satan's influence over mankind destroyed the oneness, introducing sin, and causing a separation between them and God (Isaiah 59:1-2). This marked a time of division, that has continued on through today, creating the very first broken family situation in mankind's history.

The family was meant to operate in unity—never was it meant to become divided (Matthew 12:25). Satan, the father of all sin, is the sole being responsible for creating the broken, divided family environment (Genesis 3:14-15). He hates the idea of family and unity. Believing he has the power to destroy the hope of God's plan, Satan continues to this day to break up the family environment in our marriages as well as in our congregations. We were created and called to be a united family, not a divided group of strangers. Failure is imminent if unity is not sought after and achieved.

To keep this unity, we must operate by the principle that God founded us upon *agape*. He passed this principle onto His creation so we can learn how it applies in living a fruitful, unified life. This unity through *agape* is a selfless action, a true sacrifice for others. It teaches us to let go of our own selfish desires and be joined together to produce a wonderful new creation. Satan, on the other hand, wants us to abandon the idea of sacrifice for others and place our attention on selfish gain. He pulls us away from seeking unity; in fact, he promotes the destruction of unity.

### An Object Lesson in Oneness

What then does the Day of Atonement have to do with unity and the restoration of the family of God? I wondered this myself, and as I began to search for the answer, I was taken all the way back to my childhood.

As a child, when I heard the word "Atonement" I automatically interpreted it into another completely different word—fasting. I only viewed Atonement as that dreaded day that stood between me and the Feast of Tabernacles. I remember my mother teaching my brothers and me the importance of why we keep this day. My mother took the word "Atonement" and divided it into three small words, "AT-ONE-MENT." She explained that this day was designed and meant (ment) to instruct us on how we are becoming "at one" with God the Father and Jesus



Photo by Neonbrand/Unsplash

*Just as God will soon unify His family, we all hope for unity within our own physical families. Atonement and its symbols (Leviticus 16:1-34) point to the only solution that will ultimately bring unity back to this creation: the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ.*

Christ. I remember her explaining that our longing to be connected with what we desired, food, is a way that we could relate to how God and Jesus Christ long to be connected with us. As a child I didn't fully understand how feeling hungry had anything to do with this being "at one." In fact, I didn't understand what being "at one" actually meant until our family's life was turned upside down.

When I was about five years old, my brothers and I began to notice a change of atmosphere beginning to take place in our home. Our world was never perfect, but it was our home, mommy, daddy, and us three kids. Although we were still young, we were not ignorant to the fact that some type of separation was beginning to take place. An uneasy fog hovered over our household, and the blatant absence of our father began to be questioned by my brothers and me.

Before long, our family was destroyed by a nasty, heartbreaking divorce. We were left destitute, broken emotionally and physically. The smiles faded and laughter was seldom heard in our home. Our eyes were now full of tears. Oneness was no longer part of our family; sin had snuck in, planted its evil seeds, and shattered our world. I remember praying and asking God why did we have to have so much pain? I felt alone in the world and all I wanted was a family that was together.

As I look back at the painful experience divorce had on my family, I now view oneness in a completely different light. Every year as Atonement approaches, those lessons always come to mind and re-energize my desire for oneness to return. My experience is a prime example

of why oneness is essential for peace and growth. The family environment, spiritual and physical, has suffered far too long due to the consequences of separation brought on by sin (Isaiah 59:2). We all eagerly wait for the restorations of unity between God and mankind, in fact this whole creation groans for it (Romans 8:18-22).

The oneness designed through marriage is vital for us to learn now. Marriages—good ones—take time to properly develop, and take both parties actively working together toward unity. Marriage provides the perfect opportunity for us to learn this type of godly unity (Ephesians 5:22-32). In return, we can recognize and fully respect the work that They have done for each of us.

The Day of Atonement reminds us of the need for sacrifice and a heart willing to seek unity. Atonement and its symbols (Leviticus 16:1-34) points to the only solution that will ultimately bring unity back to this creation: the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ. This day should encourage us to continue to work on our part: overcoming, seeking repentance and staying active in developing a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Atonement emphasizes the culmination of both God the Father's and Jesus Christ's selfless actions to build a holy family (Hebrews 2:9-10). We can be assured that sin and the author of it will be cast away, giving way to a time of unity with God once again. This day pictures the ultimate fulfillment of this sacrifice, removing forever the cause of division and the restoration of our relationship within the family of God in perfect unity. **UN**

## Proclaiming the Gospel at the Feast of Tabernacles



Last year at the Feast of Tabernacles in Visaya, Philippines.

by Dan Deining

In 1 Kings 19 we read that Elijah thought he was the only person left in the whole nation who was still striving to obey God, and he was going to be killed because of his obedience. He was so convinced he told this to God twice (1 Kings 19:10, 14). Yet in verse 18 God tells Elijah He has 7,000 (!) who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Sometimes we may feel similar to Elijah—that we are the only ones left in the whole world who are striving to obey God in this day and age. But just as in the days of Elijah, God is more active than we may think.

Each year we have individuals contact us that are looking for a place to come and keep God's Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day. They have read about the Holy Days in the Bible and have decided they need to do what God has commanded. They are looking for a place to keep them. Some may have never kept

the Feast before in their lives. Others may have tried to keep it on their own or in a small group with family or others in their own area. Some may have kept the Feast in the past and feel compelled to keep it again. Maybe they are "waking up" from having fallen asleep spiritually and they want to once again obey God. There are many reasons and ways God works in people's lives.

As they search the Internet they find our website and see that they are welcome to keep the Feast of Tabernacles with us—the members of the United Church of God. In fact, on the second page of our Feast registration page where it asks which local congregation they attend, there is a box they can check that says "I don't normally attend with UCG." And directly under it

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## What If I Can't Go to the Feast of Tabernacles?

by Jay Ledbetter

While worshipping God away from home in temporary dwellings during the Feast of Tabernacles is in keeping with the command found in Leviticus 23:42-43, there may be times in your life in which you find yourself having to observe at home.

One year when my wife was due to have our first child during the Feast of Tabernacles, we had to stay home. It felt so empty and lonely knowing that almost all of the brethren were gone enjoying the Feast together while we were stuck at home alone.

God tells us that the time is coming when the whole world will celebrate the Feast! Use this time at home to think about how beautiful, wonderful and lovely it will be when everyone will be in unity together!

If you can't attend the Feast this year, take heart! You can have a fulfilling Feast of Tabernacles at home!

Here's how you can nurture an atmosphere of Feast worship in your home to ensure you are refreshed, instructed and strengthened during this special yearly celebration with God.

### Make Bible-Reading a Part of Your Daily Routine

The Feast is a training seminar for God's truth. Plan to use these eight days to spend time in study. Take time to learn more about this future time by studying the scriptures about the Kingdom and Millennium. Memorize and meditate on Scripture. Each day, choose a Scripture verse

or passage to focus on, and write down the verse or verses so that you can keep them nearby for reference throughout the day. If able, listen to the Feast messages taught online each of the eight days. If a particular sermonette or sermon strikes an interest, spend time studying the topic further that day.

### Make Conversation With God a Top Priority During This Time

When God says we should celebrate the feasts, he uses a Hebrew word that means "appointed times" or "appointments." Honor this appointment with God and demonstrate your love for Him by taking uninterrupted time to be alone with Him. Look for ways to use Scripture in prayer daily. For example, thank God for Isaiah 2:4,

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### Travel Options 2018 and Benefits

#### Delta Airlines

The United Church of God can accumulate frequent flyer points in addition to your personal Skymiles with Delta. If you book online you can directly enter this code along with your Skymiles number. The code is US954529758. This code can be entered on any Delta flight you take. Look for the box to check that reads "My company is a Delta SkyBonus program member." This option is also available year-round for any Delta flight.



We have to make both reading the Bible and prayer a priority of the Feast no matter if you are keeping it in a far away land or in your very home (due to circumstances beyond your control).

Photo by Priscilla du Preez/Unsplash

## Teen Feast Photography Contest!

**Attention all teens!** Would you like to help serve the Church? If so, this assignment is for you! We are in need of some great Feast of Tabernacles photographs to be taken this year. The photographs should include Feast activities, nature scenes and people. Anything that portrays the Feast of Tabernacles to you! (Please remember if you take pictures of people try to get photos of their full face and not the back of someone's head.)

After the Feast we request that you

send your photos as a JPG file to both Sue Dunkle at [suedunkle@yahoo.com](mailto:suedunkle@yahoo.com) and Linda Merrick at [linda\\_merrick@ucg.org](mailto:linda_merrick@ucg.org).

In addition to your photograph, please list your name, age, where you are from and the name of the Feast site. The best photo will be chosen as the cover for the 2019 Festival Teen Book. Depending on the amount of photographs we receive, we will try to display the rest inside the 2019 teen book.

The Education Team

# Important Information on the Feast of Tabernacles

## Going Outside the United States for the Feast?

■ You'll Need to Know These Holy Day Offering Procedures

by Rick Shabi

There's a lot of excitement and planning that accompanies the Feast of Tabernacles. When you are going to a Feast site outside the United States, in addition to travel plans, hotels, and currency exchange, you might want to consider how and when to make your Holy Day offerings. If you would like your contribution to be included in your year-end receipt for tax deduction purposes, read on.

Each year, the question arises from U.S. members traveling to foreign Feast sites (including Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean) whether they should mail in their Holy Day offerings to the home office or if they should contribute directly at the Feast site they are attending.

It comes down to this: If U.S. members traveling abroad want their Holy Day offerings to be included in their end-of-year donation receipt, they should mail their offerings directly to the home office in Cincinnati, before or after the Feast.

United States law states that only contributions to the Church in the United States

are tax-deductible. Contributions to foreign church organizations (which include donations at foreign Feast sites) cannot be taken as tax deductions, and the Church cannot issue donation receipts on those offerings.

So by mailing your Holy Day offerings to the home office, your contributions will be appropriately receipted and reported to the IRS, allowing you to take a tax deduction at year end.

Of course, so as not to "appear before the Lord empty-handed," and out of courtesy to the international area hosting the Feast where you attend, please consider giving some of your offering (preferably in the local currency) on the Holy Days at the site you attend.

To summarize: Only those offerings received at the home office can and will appear on your U.S. donation receipt for tax purposes. Any offering given at an international Feast site will be kept in the country of donation, and no donation receipt will be issued for those funds.

If you have any questions on this longstanding Church policy, please be sure to contact us through your pastor.

Check back later at this website <http://donate.ucg.org/> to donate for the the Holy Day offering. **UN**

## Festival Youth Lessons and Festival Youth Instruction Booklets

by The Education Team

In recent years confusion has arisen over the difference between the Festival Youth Lessons and the Festival Youth Instruction Booklets that are offered at the Feast of Tabernacles each year.

First, the Festival Youth Lessons are written for the festival youth instructors who will be teaching the children who attend the two festival youth classes held at each Feast site. These lessons are to be downloaded by the teacher from the member's website at the following address: [ucg.org/members/news/2018-feast-of-tabernacles-youth-lesson-plan](http://ucg.org/members/news/2018-feast-of-tabernacles-youth-lesson-plan). These lesson plans are not intended for parents.

Second, the Festival Youth Instruction Booklets are booklets created for every child, and are divided into four categories: K-1, 2-3, 4-6 and Teen. These booklets are to be a fun educational tool for both kids and parents alike. Each page focuses on some aspect of the Feast, provides an activity and a family discussion question located at the bottom of the page. The family discussion questions are for parents to use with their children to help nurture and encourage engaging conversations about God's plan for man. The booklets are handed out at each Feast location.

Many have wondered why the Festival Youth Instruction booklets are not sent directly to each local congregation. The answer: it saves the Church money on shipping costs.

Another concern raised by some is that their child did not receive a booklet when the parent had registered their child for the Feast. While we strive to receive accurate numbers from parents who have registered on the UCG Feast website, sometimes mistakes happen. This year we have tried to prevent mistakes so we waited until July 20 to gather registration numbers, and we ordered more Festival Booklets to send to each Feast site. However, if you registered after July 20 for the Feast we may not have accurate numbers, which is why we urge families to register for the Feast as soon as possible so that we can provide these booklets for each child. **UN**

## Don't Forget to Support the Festival Fund

by Rick Shabi

The Feast of Tabernacles is the highlight of the year for many. It is a great blessing to be able to gather together at Feast sites around the world to picture the coming Millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

A lot of planning goes into preparing the Feast every year. Those involved are happy to dedicate their time, effort and expertise, and the ministry looks to God as they prepare messages for our spiritual food.

But the Feast costs a lot of money. Hall rentals, equipment rentals, second tithe assistance for those who don't have adequate funds, printing expenses, activities expenses and more add up to a lot.

We need your help in being able to provide the Feast venues that enhance our celebration. Please consider sending a portion of your second tithe to help support the Feast.

To donate, you can go to <http://donate.ucg.org/> and click on Festival Fund to support the Festival Fund now, or cut out the form below and send it with your check to the home office.

If you have any questions, please contact your pastor or the treasurer, Rick Shabi, at any time. **UN**

Use the form below to accompany a check or money order.  
In the memo of your check or money order write: **Festival Fund.**  
Send slip with the money order or check to:  
**United Church of God, PO Box 541027 Cincinnati, OH 45255**

### 2018 Festival Fund

In order to provide meeting places and financial assistance for people otherwise unable to afford to attend the Feast, U.S. members are asked to contribute a portion of their festival tithe to help with these expenses. **Canadian** members may make a similar donation to the Canadian office.

- Please indicate the amount you are sending in the space below.
- Include your personal identification number (PIN) from your latest *United News* or *Beyond Today* label.
- Make your check payable to United Church of God and label it "Festival Fund."
- Clip out and enclose the completed form, along with your check, in one of the labeled reply envelopes mailed to you from the home office.
- Affix postage and mail.

Your PIN:

U \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Donation Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name:

Address:

State/Province:

City:

Zip/Postal Code:

## Keeping the Feast at Home

by Milan Bizic

For a variety of reasons and differing circumstances, you may be unable to attend an official Feast site and will be keeping the Feast at home this year. If you're in this situation, we have some resources available to help you enjoy a fulfilling and meaningful Feast of Tabernacles 2018.

First, even if you aren't able to attend one of the Feast sites, you can still register for the Feast by going to [ucg.org/members/feast/sites/2018/celebrating-the-feast-at-home](http://ucg.org/members/feast/sites/2018/celebrating-the-feast-at-home) and clicking on "Register Now." If you don't have Internet access, you can ask your local festival advisor to help you register.

Through the Celebrating the Feast at Home site, you'll find greetings from the different festival sites shared throughout the Feast, links to webcast Feast services and recorded sermons, and spiritual articles written especially to help you have a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles.

For those of you with children, you can find activity books at [www.ucg.org/members/news/2018-youth-festival-booklets](http://www.ucg.org/members/news/2018-youth-festival-booklets).

And finally, if you know of any shut-ins or others who would benefit from our Feast at home resources, please assist them or speak to your local festival advisor. Thanks for helping our brethren have a fulfilling Feast of Tabernacles! **UN**

## Our Miraculous Unanswered Prayers

■ The dramatic events of my childbirth helped me understand how our unanswered prayers can reveal God's purpose being worked out.

by Amanda Miller

They say every woman's story of childbirth is different. I never really believed it, until it happened to me. I had done everything imaginable to prepare for the birth of our daughter—and more—yet nothing could have prepared me for the life-changing event that took place. In my story, I learned that God can perform miracles through unanswered prayers, and that life itself is a gift of God's mercy.

When I reached full term, my husband and I anxiously awaited the arrival of our precious little one. Every day that passed by after my due date brought highs and lows as we tried to cope with the unknowns about her arrival. We prayed night and day for God to bring on labor, and after a week went by past her due date, we began to have concerns about why there was no progress. I was anointed that Sabbath, which rekindled my hope in God's timing, but continued to wonder about the purpose for her delayed arrival and our unanswered prayers.

After a second week passed by my doctor recommended that labor be induced, since carrying on with the pregnancy imposed significant risks for the baby and myself. Though we feared having an induction and other medical interventions, we tried our best to trust that God was still involved even though we had our hopes on a natural delivery.

It was a Tuesday night when we checked into the hospital. We started with non-medicinal methods of inducing labor and waited to see if my body would respond. In the hours that we waited, I heard the woman in the room next door deliver her baby. Hearing her pain frightened me, but when I heard her baby scream for the very first time I began to cry with overwhelming joy

for her! I'd take a deep breath through a contraction and remind myself that it was only a matter of time before our daughter would also scream her first beautiful breath of air.

In the middle of the night, I was started on Pitocin, a synthetic form of oxytocin to create stronger contractions. It was one of the longest nights I have ever experienced. The pain from the induced contractions made it nearly impossible to breathe.

By Wednesday afternoon, labor finally progressed into transition and my contractions began just 30 seconds apart, with only moments in between one ending and another beginning. I felt that at any moment I would faint from the pain I was experiencing. After 11 hours of labor, I asked for something to reduce the pain, and the medication they gave me helped ease the tension in my chest. Though I had always hoped and prayed for a natural delivery, this too became a blessing of an unanswered prayer.

After such a long night, I joked with my doctor about how nice it'd be if I could just "wake up" and my baby would be here. He and I discussed my fears of having a cesarean, and he reassured me that it would only be done if it was an absolute necessity—and anesthesia would not be used unless there was an emergency. I knew he meant it since his practice had an average of only two C-sections a year, and I felt confident that he knew how to coach me through every step of the delivery.

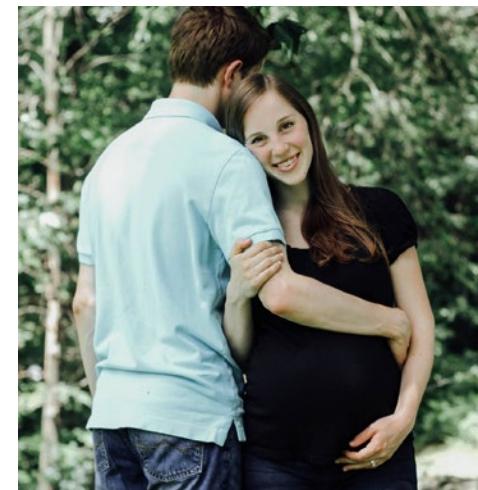
But then my water broke, and a rush of medical staff came running in. My baby's heartbeat dropped from an average of 130 beats a minute to 50 bpm. My unborn child was in distress, and something was terribly wrong. Her umbilical cord had prolapsed, and her lifeline of oxygen was being cut off.

A nurse put an oxygen mask on to my



Left: Adria Miller poses for a photo.

Right: Amanda Miller before Adria was born and her husband Mark.



Photos by Twila Yoder

face, and my doctor took every measure possible to try and relieve pressure off the cord. In shock, my body began shaking uncontrollably. My husband held my hand and we stared into each other's eyes, with the most precious part of our lives hanging on by a thread. One of the nurses asked our doctor if our daughter's umbilical cord was "still pulsing," and in that moment I wished my heart would stop and beat for her.

After they successfully raised her heartbeat to 100 bpm, I was rushed into the surgery room. A nurse exclaimed, "We don't have consent (to give the anesthesia)!" My doctor, given the previous conversation we just had, immediately replied, "Yes we do!" With just two breaths of anesthesia I was unconscious, and within three minutes my daughter was outside the womb.

Over an hour later, I became conscious, and through my fuzzy, dark vision I could see my husband holding our little girl. She made it. She was alive.

For days I cried with overwhelming gratefulness over her life. I have never experienced such joy in my entire life. There was no doubt in my mind that the reason God had not answered my prayers in the way that I had hoped for labor and delivery to take place naturally during the weeks I was

overdue was because, if it had, our daughter would not have survived. If I had been at home when my water broke, it is possible our precious baby girl may not have made it.

God truly had mercy on us. He was involved in every aspect of her delivery. For instance, I don't know why I felt the need to talk to my doctor about cesareans just moments before my water broke, giving him consent to take action in the most critical moments of my daughter's life without any hesitation. Likewise, if I had not needed muscle relaxers from the contractions, I'm not sure that I would have been able to stay calm enough for the medical staff to take action as quickly and effectively as they did. Our prayers were for a natural delivery, without medical interventions. However, what God wanted was for our daughter to be brought safely into this world, and there is not a day that goes by for which I am not thankful God did not answer our prayers. "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Psalms 73:26, New International Version).

No two stories are the same, yet every story of childbirth is a miracle. Life itself is a gift of God's mercy. Ask a mom—she'll tell you. **UN**

## What If I Can't Go to the Feast?

continued from page 5

which teaches that the Feast of Tabernacles foreshadows a time in which "they will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Ask God that he help you to gain more peace in your heart now. Pray for the ability to effect peace in your life and those around you.

### Feast Your Eyes on God's Creation

Seeing God's glorious handiwork in nature often leads to focus on the new world that Jesus Christ will usher in at His return. The book of Psalms is filled with examples of worship inspired by the psalmists' awe in the beauty of God's creation. Take time to enjoy nature in and around your home. Open your windows and let in the light. Take a walk and take special notice of all the beauty that showcases God's glory in creation. Watch a nature documentary either online or from the library. There are many beautiful nature photos online or books with photos from the library to help you delight in God's creation!

Reflect on the time noted in Psalms 23:2 when He will make us to lie down in green pastures as He leads us beside the still waters.

### Praise the Lord in Song

Include hymns and songs of worship and praise in your daily worship at home. Play musical recordings that draw you into worship. Select hymns and worship songs that will tune your heart to praise God throughout the day. "Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and

the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:18-20).

The largest benefit of the Feast is the rejuvenation of our spiritual lives.

If you are unable to stay in temporary dwellings, focus on the fact that the Feast of Tabernacles reminds us of the temporary nature of our physical life, and it helps us to focus on what's permanent: our goal for eternal life in God's Kingdom.

God tells us that the time is coming when the whole world will celebrate the Feast! Use this time at home to think about how beautiful, wonderful and lovely it will be when everyone will be in unity together! **UN**

## The Ten Commandments Series

### The Second Commandment

by Don Hooser

*“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments” (Exodus 20:4-6; Deuteronomy 5:8-10).*

Yes, this absolutely is the Second Commandment. It has a meaning very different than that of the First Commandment, stated in the previous verse. Remarkably, many Bible-believing people think these two commandments are just one commandment—like part A and part B. Others accept them as two commandments, but are quite confused about the differences. This confusion tends to water down the importance of both of those commandments.

So what is the difference in meaning of the first two commandments? If someone worships *anything* other than God, including any image (like a statue or painting), that is breaking the First Commandment. And if someone is worshipping the true God, but is physically, visually or mentally portraying Him with images, that is breaking the Second Commandment.

The First Commandment forbids false gods. The Second Commandment forbids false worship.

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:23-24). Therefore, it is absurd and even blasphemous to portray Him with anything physical—a human being, animal, bird, fish, “creeping thing,” sun, moon, stars, etc. (Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 12-19, 23-24; Isaiah 40:25).

Truth—ultimate truth—is defined by God’s Word (John 17:17). God’s Word tells us how to worship God and it forbids worshipping with any non-biblical practices (Deuteronomy 12:1-4, 28-31). In addition, God demands that we not “add to” or “take away from” His Word (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Revelation 22:18-19). God forbids us to *invent* a religious practice or *copy* a pagan practice.

Furthermore, to “worship in spirit” means to worship and love God with one’s mind and heart (Matthew 22:37) and is best done by those who have “the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38; Romans 8:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14).

The Second Commandment is not a criticism of art, artists and decorating. God’s temple was decorated with designs of flowers, palms, pomegranates, lions and oxen (1 Kings 7). The artwork and images forbidden by this Commandment are those used to represent, remember or revere God (see Exodus 20:5).

#### What Is an Idol and What Is Idolatry?

Here are three definitions of the word “idol:” “A false god. A representation of a false god. A physical representation of the true God.” For this Ten Commandments series, “idol” refers to the first two definitions. Thus “idolatry” refers to breaking the First Commandment, but breaking the Second Commandment is likewise a great sin.

People who use images in their worship of God generally have good intentions. They often think they are honoring God and are using the image to feel closer to God and as an aid in their worship. In actuality, they have separated themselves from God by inserting something physical between them and God. And people tend to confuse image with essence, so breaking the Second Commandment often eventually leads to breaking the First Commandment.

#### Human Nature Craves a God Who Can Be Seen!

Human beings are by nature uncomfortable with trying relate to a God who is invisible, infinite, immortal, transcendent, intangible and humanly incomprehensible. (The literal meaning of tangible is touchable.) As a result, people want to reduce and humanize God so He is less heavenly and more down-to-earth.

What people have chosen to represent God has often been ridiculous. God derisively laughs at this irrationality! (see Isaiah 40 through 46, especially Isaiah 44:6-20). Today our images are more sophisticated but are blasphemous nonetheless.

The Second Commandment is unique because every other religion makes images of their gods! Paganism is very visually oriented. People of other religions feel sorry for those who literally obey the Second Commandment! “How can you believe in a God when you don’t even know what He looks like?”

In contrast, the Bible emphasizes the mind—factual and rational thought, knowledge, understanding and wisdom.



Photo by Chris Ensej/Unsplash

*Paganism is very visually oriented. We have to be focused on keeping God’s commandments by not trying to create an image of how He might look.*

God gave us a book to *read and contemplate*. We must *listen* to God rather than *look* at pictures.

Another reason pagan practices are popular is that they are financially profitable! See Acts 19:23-41; 1 Timothy 6:10; and the article “Paganism Is Popular Because It Is Profitable” at [ucg.org](http://ucg.org).

#### Views of Other Religions and Churches

Most Protestant churches have the same numbering of the Ten Commandments as United Church of God. But whereas we regard Exodus 20:2 as the *preamble* to the Ten Commandments, Judaism regards it as the First Commandment and Exodus 20:3-6 as the Second Commandment. The Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church follow the teaching of Augustine and combine the first two commandments into one and divide the Tenth Commandment (against coveting) into two commandments.

Those churches use a lot of physical imagery and visual symbolism in their worship. They teach against *worshipping images*, but by believing that Exodus 20:3-6 is only one commandment—forbidding the worship of idols—they feel justified in using the images and symbols in the worship of the true God. Thus they transgress the Second Commandment.

#### Picturing God With an Image Is Blasphemous!

Portraying our supernatural God with something physical is insulting to God! To liken the Creator of the entire universe to a tiny part of His creation is ludicrous, blasphemous and evil!

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*Truth—ultimate truth—is defined by God’s Word.*

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To some, the Second Commandment may seem relatively unimportant. But read the entire Commandment! It has the strongest warning of all the Commandments! It shows how strongly God feels about actions that falsify His identity and degrade His glory, actions that are demeaning, disparaging and humiliating toward the Almighty Creator God! In spite of that, people *imagine* all kinds of *images* of God and Jesus Christ!

There is one “image of the invisible God”—God’s Son! (Colossians 1:15; see also 2 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 1:3). Jesus came to earth to reveal the nature, character and plan of God. (Significantly, God did not allow anyone to record anything about the physical appearance of Jesus.) Over time, God will invite everyone “to be conformed to the image of His Son!” (Romans 8:29; also Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

#### Understanding the Rest of the Second Commandment

What does God mean by “visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me” (Exodus 20:5)? It does not mean that God punishes children for the sins of the parents, as God’s Word forbids that (Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18:20). First of all, sin often results in children and grandchildren suffering. Secondly,

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**Please see next page page.**

# The Second Commandment

continued from previous page

religious beliefs and practices (both true and false), along with their consequences, are often passed on from generation to generation.

In the Bible, “love” and “hate” are generally and primarily not referring to emotional feelings. Usually they are action verbs. Loving God means obeying God and hating evil, and hating God means disobeying God (Psalm 97:10; Matthew 6:24; 7:21-27; John 14:15; 15:18-25; Romans 9:13; 1 John 2:4-5; 5:2-3; 2 John 6).

In this commandment, “thousands” might refer to “thousands of generations.” Notice how the rewards for loving God and keeping His commandments far exceed the penalties for hating God! God is amazingly merciful and generous!

## Common “Christian” Violations of the Second Commandment

Using the following visual pictures,

symbols and designs to represent Christianity, God or Jesus Christ are violations of the Second Commandment: Paintings and drawings intended to represent Jesus Christ or God the Father. The Latin cross and the crucifix. The outline of a fish or dove. Any three-part design intended to represent “the Trinity.” Relics supposedly related to the life or death of Jesus. A steeple, especially when on a church building. Halos and other circles and disks used to indicate what is sacred. A star used in certain ways, such as at the top of a Christmas tree. Any of the numerous abbreviations of the Greek for “Jesus” and “Christ.” The Greek letters Alpha and Omega written together.

When counterfeit Christianity imitates pagan holidays and rituals—Christmas observance, for example—that reinforces numerous perverted ideas about God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Bible. When Mary and other dead “saints” are venerated as mediators with God, that breaks the Second Commandment. When religious clothing and objects are regarded as sacred, that breaks this Commandment.

Even religious music and worship services can be the *worship of worship* more than the worship of God.

## Accurate Analogies, Metaphors and Similes Are Not a Problem

The Bible frequently uses literary *analogies* and *figures of speech* to teach us characteristics about God and Jesus Christ, so these do not violate the Second Commandment. When Jesus spoke of a person bearing “his cross,” He meant his sacrifices and suffering. When Paul spoke of “the cross,” he meant God’s plan of salvation made possible by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The Bible uses *similes* when it says God “is like” a “bridegroom” and “a refiner’s fire” and “launderers’ soap” (Psalm 19:5; Malachi 3:2). The Bible uses *metaphors* when it calls God “a consuming fire” and “a sun and shield” (Deuteronomy 4:24; Psalm 84:11). Jesus used *metaphors* when He said, “I am the bread of life... the light of the world . . . the door . . . the good shepherd . . . the true vine . . .” (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 15:1).

## We Are Called To Be Lights in a Dark World

Tragically, what has been regarded as “Christian civilization” is increasingly rejecting the Bible as the source of ultimate truth. Thus as we gain secular knowledge, we’re losing wisdom, sanity and godliness. This spiritual darkness coincides with a rising emphasis on images. Ignorance and images usually exist together.

The good news is this: One day Jesus Christ will return and then “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

Those who already have that knowledge must continue to *worship God in Spirit and in Truth*, thereby being lights in the midst of a world that is once again growing very dark (John 4:24; Matthew 5:14-16; Philippians 2:15). **UN**

*This article is part of a series. To read other articles that focus on the Ten Commandments in this series please go to the following website: <https://www.ucg.org/tags/the-ten-commandment-series>.*

# A Gift From Ambassador Bible College to You—Many Classes Available Online

by Jean Updegraff

Have you wished you could be a student at the Ambassador Bible College? ABC students have a concentrated, dynamic series of classes that cover the entire Bible and truths of God, in nine months with about seven hours of instruction per day. But suppose that you could get much of the same instruction at home on your own schedule? You can!

Now you too can soak up the benefit and blessing of a systematic study of the Bible that goes book by book, and also fundamental doctrine by doctrine. At home or wherever you access the Internet, you can hear the very same classes, taught by the faculty ministers of the United Church of God.

This is because Ambassador Bible College has recorded and made available online many of the same class sessions that the students attend. Some of these

were recorded last year and some recorded in previous years.

The number of class sessions that have been recorded and available now are an astounding 420 sessions, with a total of 360 hours of valuable material—all available free of charge through the website of ABC (<http://abc.ucg.org>).

Recordings currently available are the biblical books of the Pentateuch, Minor Prophets, the Gospels, Epistles of Paul, General Epistles and Revelation. Our fundamental doctrines are explored in depth as well as the fundamentals of theology and comparative religion. Other courses will be recorded in the future.

These classes are very easy to access at <http://abc.ucg.org>. Under the “Courses” tab on the home page you will find a listing of classes. You can click on a course listing, see if that class has yet been recorded for our listening and if so, click,



Even if you can't be in the classroom with the current ABC students, you can still be part of the class and forever a student of the Bible. Class of 2014 is pictured above.

You can find many of the ABC class recordings at:  
<http://abc.ucg.org/courses>

listen, learn and enjoy. Most sessions are in an easy-to-listen-to length of about 45-50 minutes.

Please take advantage of this fantastic resource, blessing and gift from the Ambassador Bible College. **UN**

# Proclaiming the Gospel at the Feast

continued from page 5

the following appears, “Even if you don’t attend with UCG, we would love to host you for the Feast of Tabernacles this year!”

What an exciting opportunity it is to have those new (or coming back) to God’s way of life attend the Feast of Tabernacles. What a wonderful way for them to see us as God’s children anticipating the coming Kingdom of God and living in peace and harmony for eight days, just as we look forward to in the Kingdom. Coming to the Feast allows them to be exposed to our

*The Feast is an opportunity for all of us to share the wonderful good news of the Kingdom of God.*

core teaching of the coming world tomorrow: the Millennium, the soon-coming return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. They also hear messages of God’s purpose for us and all mankind.

We may think of the Feast just as a time when we focus on how this world is temporary and what it will be like for us and our families to experience a wonderful foretaste of the coming Kingdom, but it is more than that. It is also a time when

we can fellowship with others, including those newer to this way of life and God’s plan, and in a very natural manner teach them more about God’s way and how to live it. It is an opportunity for all of us to share the wonderful good news of the Kingdom of God. It is an opportunity for us to gently and meekly help others to become disciples of Christ by sharing God’s Feast with them. It is also a time for others to witness first hand our love one for another (John 13:35). And it is very possible, by their exposure to you and others at the Feast, that they may decide they want to continue to fellowship with us in their local area after the Feast.

We all long and yearn for the time described in Zechariah 14:16, when all

the nations from year to year will go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. As in the days of Elijah, there are many that God is calling and preparing for His use . . . and He may be calling them to attend the Feast with us.

Let’s be sure that we make a special effort to welcome them and include them as we rejoice before God. Recognize this special opportunity God is giving us to share His way of life, His plan and His purpose with those He is calling and inspiring to attend the Feast of Tabernacles with us. Let’s seize the opportunity to proclaim and model the coming Kingdom of God at this year’s Feast of Tabernacles. **UN**

# Honoring Retiring Ministry

## Earl Roemer

Earl Roemer retired from the full-time employed service to the United Church of God on June 30, 2018, after 52 years. In July, following church services in Anchorage, Alaska, he was honored for his love, service and dedication to God's Church and brethren from around the world. David Dobson (on behalf of the home office) presented Mr. Roemer with an engraved crystal globe honoring this event. Previously, on Memorial Day weekend, long-time friends and brethren gathered together in Soldotna, Alaska, for a cookout and retirement celebration, where Earl was presented an engraved crystal drinking glass.

Mr. Roemer recalls many adventures over the years, including pastoring in the south and central-eastern U.S. during racially charged times of the mid-1960s, serving brethren of all races. He was involved with starting several congregations, including Paducah, Kentucky, and was active in starting the S.E.P. camps in Big Sandy, Texas.

### Longtime Friends and Co-Workers Shared These Sentiments:

**Bob Dick:** "Earl and I have been friends since 1957 when both of our families arrived in Pasadena and we began attending Imperial Schools. Our friendship continued to grow, fed by annual trips to Alaska to stay with Earl and visit the churches.

"Earl has spent much of his ministerial career in remote areas—Hawaii and Alaska. Only since United began has he moved into leadership positions overseeing the Philippines and later Hong Kong, and in retirement, portions of Southeast Asia.

"Earl is a true renaissance man. He is a skilled mechanic, a craft learned from his father; a fixed wing and helicopter pilot, an excellent hunter and fisherman, author and chef and the list goes on from there. All these things are notable, but what stands above all

of these is a very generous and giving heart and a love for the people he serves."

**John Elliott:** "Our families have known each other for 60 years, since Earl's family moved to Pasadena. When Merrie and I think of Earl we appreciate the grand scale in which he and his late wife Carol have aspired to serve and accomplish in their lives. Most of us live lives amid 'normal' endeavors, perhaps visiting faraway places and maybe seeing an extinct volcano. But Earl and Carol lived in remote places and Carol longed to participate in a volcanic eruption. Her chosen nickname was 'Volcano Violet.'

"While I learned to drive cars, Earl learned to drive transcontinental diesel trucks. When I learned to fly airplanes, Earl was building helicopters. When I was calling 'breaker, breaker' over a CB radio, Earl was a shortwave radio Public Information officer for Civil Defense with a security clearance from the Pentagon. While I once watched a sitting U.S. President give a speech, Earl was driving the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to his conference. And during several landmark events that impacted Church leadership in the early years, Earl was often at or near their epicenter.

"So many of us love and appreciate the friendship we have with Earl and his family. That friendship is likewise reciprocated on an unprecedented scale. Whether sacrificing themselves to serve brethren in the largest region (Asia), the most complex nation (7,000 Philippine islands) the largest state (Alaska), the most remote state (Hawaii), managing an eight-church circuit with an airplane (Montana), and currently senior pastor of the most populous country (China), he and Carol appreciated all those opportunities.

"Like his father Charles, Earl deals with challenges and situations in a no-nonsense manner. I've learned that he doesn't have much patience for stupidity, so I make it my

aim to not seem daft when I'm around him. He has a lot of wisdom from experience, so when Earl speaks it's usually a good time to listen. Another characteristic Earl has that I personally have come to deeply appreciate is his loyal faithfulness to God and to the members he serves. Coupled with his courage to take on challenges that most would avoid, he is also a generous man. He and Carol not only gave of their time and energies in doing God's work and helping others, but also helped others using their personal resources when needed.

"Merrie and I are honored to be considered friends of Earl Roemer and his family. May God give him many more good years in retirement and bless his ongoing efforts."

### Mr. Roemer Reflected On His Years of Ministry:

"Serving the great God in Heaven and His Son in shepherding thousands of called and chosen ones has been a rewarding experience beyond compare! It is an experience beyond the average human consideration and understanding. To have been allowed to share in the lives of many thousands of individuals—their hopes,



their dreams, their struggles, their accomplishments—is a blessing beyond compare. (My dear wife has been deceased six years; she would have agreed to the above!)"

Earl Roemer and his late wife Carol had four children, three who are still living, and seven grandchildren. He will continue to serve as the senior pastor of UCG in China, Myanmar and Thailand.

Lisa Fenchel

## Health-Focused Cookbook



Photo by Brooke Lark/Unsplash

Most of you have a variety of cookbooks at home on your shelves. Your cookbooks may range from recipes for baking cakes to healthy eating, or even gourmet cooking. Over time, we develop a repertoire of our favorite and most often used recipes.

We would, however, like to produce another cookbook—one that will be both useful and one you will not find in a store or online. Many of you have requested healthy recipes, as well as gluten free and recipes for special-needs diets. This cookbook would also have an emphasis on unleavened bread recipes in those three categories: healthy, gluten free and special needs.

If you have a favorite recipe you would like to share with us, and would like it to appear in the cookbook, please send it to [healthy.cookbook.2019@gmail.com](mailto:healthy.cookbook.2019@gmail.com).

Please include your name, city, state and phone number. We will do our best to include as many of your recipes as possible.

The proceeds of this cookbook will go towards the Ambassador Bible College student international fund. As more international members are applying for ABC, there is an increasing need to help them with daily living expenses. The estimated cost of the cookbook will be approximately \$15.

We are also looking for a title for our cookbook. Please send us your suggestions and if we choose your title, your cookbook will be free! Remember, the emphasis is on healthy eating.

Thank you for your help and support for this very worthy cause.

Kathy de Campos



## Upcoming Events Northwest Weekend

The 53rd annual Northwest Family Weekend will be held in Portland, Oregon, from Dec. 21-25. Location will be the Red Lion Hotel nestled on the beautiful Columbia River.

The weekend's events will begin with a Friday night Bible study followed by a Teen Bible study and Sabbath services the next day. Other exciting highlights include seminars reaching all ages, a speakers workshop, good fellowship and plenty of dancing. The teens will enjoy "A Moonlit Forest" at the teen dance, and there will be plenty of fun for everyone at

the family dance. Monday will be a day of sports, including volleyball, basketball, bowling and preteen games. And don't forget to head up to our beautiful snow-capped mountains for skiing, snowboarding and tubing on Tuesday!

Mark your calendars and keep an eye out for updates at [www.ucgpdx.org](http://www.ucgpdx.org) and on our Facebook page, "NWWeekend UCG Portland." Feel free to email us at [nweekend@gmail.com](mailto:nweekend@gmail.com) with any questions. We look forward to seeing you there!

Katlyn Slocum



# Cotubic

Ohio—June 10-17



# Pinecrest

Missouri—July 1-8



# Hye Sierra

California—July 1-8



# Northwest

Oregon—July 22-29





Mexico



Mexico



Ghana

# Latin America

Colombia—July 22-29

Mexico—July 22-29

# Africa

Ghana—Aug. 5-12

# British Isles

England—July 27-Aug. 5



Mexico



Colombia



British Isles



British Isles



Ghana



Colombia



Ghana



Colombia



British Isles



# Preteen Camps Around the World



Northwest



Colorado



Northwest



Buckeye



Germany



Ironwood



Colorado



Ironwood



Piney Woods



Wildrose



Nacome



Nacome



Piney Woods



Wildrose



Germany



Seven Mountains



Buckeye



Seven Mountains



## Camp Cotubic

Ohio—June 10-17

God's blessings are often evident in our summer camp program, and that was certainly the case for Camp Cotubic this year.

More campers than ever attended the program—139!—largely because Camp Woodmen was not available for the Church's use this year. Half a dozen or so of the staff who would have served at Woodmen joined the Cotubic staff this summer, as did many campers. With teens and staff from around the U.S.—as well as staff members from as far as Brazil, South Africa, Mexico, Trinidad and the Philippines—an attitude of unity and cooperation prevailed

from the start. That we are one spiritual family was clear.

The activity program included the normal team sports and water activities, along with dance, arts and crafts, and the "Amazing Race." Cotubic also has an extensive high ropes course, a climbing wall, "big swing" and zipline to challenge all comers. Still, the Christian living program was the center and focus of camp. Morning classes explored an element of the theme, "God's Vision for You," which could then be echoed throughout the day at activities and dorm discussions—with a related story wrapping up the evening campfire program.

Following weeks of hot and humid weather through May, God seemed to turn down the thermostat for the week of camp so we could conduct activities quite comfortably. Then as camp ended, a heat wave gripped the U.S. Midwest, reminding us of what a blessing we had enjoyed.

As good as this camp session was, we learned lessons and are making plans to have an even better one next summer. Of course, teens have an opportunity to revisit "the Zone" before then at Winter Camp in December!

*Frank Dunkle*

## Camp Pinecrest

Missouri—July 1-8

On June 30, 2018, Camp Pinecrest began with 66 staff and 122 campers. Campers came from 25 states and two Canadian provinces. The staff came from 21 states and the province of Ontario, Canada. This year's contingent of campers was the largest number of campers since 2010.

The campers were allocated into eight dorms—four ladies dorms, and four men's dorms. There were 21 young adults who took on the leadership responsibilities of the dorms. Also, this year more counseling staff was provided. Three counselors were chosen for five of the eight dorms to lessen the pressure on counselors and to give training for future head counselors.

With everyone checked in, campers and staff enjoyed their first meal together on Sunday evening. Dinner was followed by camper orientation. The basic guidelines for camp were laid out by camp director Gary Smith, and health care parameters were laid out by camp health care provider Rick DeSouto. As part of camp orientation each

activity head and their staff laid out their activity for the campers. With orientation complete, everyone proceeded to the gym for get-acquainted games.

Camp began on Monday with a full schedule of activities. This year, SUP (stand-up paddle-boarding) was reintroduced and for the first time dorms were challenged by an escape room. The escape room challenged each dorm to work together to find a hidden archaeological object based upon biblical clues. Each dorm found the object, a pim, which was a medium of exchange mentioned in 1 Samuel 13:21.

Additionally, softball, speed-a-way, ultimate Frisbee, riflery, archery, journalism, volleyball, rock climbing/rappelling, low ropes, dance and a Bible class were all scheduled for each dorm to enjoy. Each evening after dinner, a different activity was offered. Campers and staff enjoyed capture the flag, freeze tag, dodgeball and a fun show on Thursday, and an awards ceremony on Friday.

Sabbath morning after breakfast, the campers and staff enjoyed a Bible study, "The Importance of Vision," presented by Gary Smith. The study was followed by an ABC presentation and a Sabbath hymn sing. Split sermons were given by Jay Ledbetter and Randy Urwiller serving to conclude the Christian living theme "God Vision for You." As part of services, a choir presented special music for the first time ever at Camp Pinecrest. The Sabbath activity day ended with a slideshow recounting the past week.

The final activity of Camp Pinecrest was the dance. At the dance awards for the campers displaying the qualities of the Zone were presented to Brianna Foster and Hunter Crawford.

The week at Camp Pinecrest came to a close on Sunday, July 8, as everyone checked out and headed for home. It was a spiritually profitable and fun week for all.

*Gary Smith*

## Camp Hye Sierra

California—July 1-8

Two-time Olympian, the late Bob Mathias, was the founder of Camp Hye Sierra. When the United Church of God began using the facility Mr. Mathias enjoyed giving talks to the campers.

The camp, perched high in the Sierra Mountains with towering trees, gives campers opportunity to get away from the hectic pace of city life to come together to have fun, and to grow in understanding of God and His way.

The weather was nearly perfect with moderate daytime temperatures and cool night temperatures making a warm blanket necessary for comfort.

After getting settled into dorms on Sunday, all gathered at the dining hall to have a nourishing dinner prepared by our kitchen staff. In the evening we had a fun and rousing Novelty Olympics coordinated by assistant camp director, Ben Light.

Activities and evening Christian living classes encouraged campers to begin their story of a close relation-

ship with our Father. The theme "God's Vision for You" inspired us to push forward to the Kingdom of God.

A smashing fun dance took place down by the camp lake pavilion. The lake was also the location of the popular July 4 picnic with the traditional grilled hamburgers and hot dogs with all the trimmings.

It is not uncommon in the Sierra Mountains to see wildlife. For the first time in his life one Australian staff member had the chance to see a doe grazing nearby.

Unique to Hye Sierra is the opportunity to see the great sequoias in King's Canyon at the Sequoia National Forest, and this special trip was enjoyed by all staff and campers who hadn't seen these giant miracles of nature.

All camp activities went well, and we are thankful we had no serious injuries.

The night stars were brilliant. One evening the dorms met for a star-gazing session. Garden Grove pastor, Mario Seiglie, brought his telescope so campers could

get a glimpse of the planet Saturn.

When the Sabbath came, campers and staff gathered at the lake pavilion for services. Songs were led by Evan King with sermonettes given by Josh Cook and Luke Fogelson, followed by the sermon given by ABC coordinator Dr. Frank Dunkle.

During announcements, camp director Jim Tuck thanked all for helping to make the camp successful. He asked Mr. and Mrs. Light to come forward, and Mr. Tuck, on behalf of overall UYC camp director, Steve Nutzman, passed a baton to Mr. Light naming him the new camp director for 2019. The baton was gold, especially made by Mrs. Tuck just for the occasion.

Hye Sierra is a unique and comfortable piece of nature, which has been carved out of the wilderness far from the stress of city life. We encourage you to come see this special place.

*Jim Tuck*

# Northwest Camp

Oregon—July 22-29

The 2018 Northwest teen camp was the largest ever with 135 campers and 76 staff members attending. Campers came from six international areas and 22 states. Transportation was a challenge as we needed to transport 74 campers and staff to the Portland airport after camp!

The staff was impressed with the maturity and dedication of the campers this year. While much of the country was experiencing record heat, camp was on the cool side with temperatures in the 50s and 60s.

Campers learned all week about God's vision for them as the principles in the Christian living lessons were put into prac-

tice. Skill building and challenges are part of all the activities—water skiing, volleyball, pickleball, softball, speedway, archery, kayaking and dance. Paul and Gayle Wilson of Chinook Pass Outfitters provided horseback riding with 18 horses and two mules. Our staff of “wranglers” assisting the Wilsons included Cristine Goethals, Jeannie Williams and Kathleen Kelly.

In arts and crafts, Roc Corbett had each of the campers individually make decorated tiles that fit together to make a mosaic of the “lion, lamb and child” scene of Isaiah 11:6. Keith Tomes and Leeann Holladay taught an “Excellence in Liv-

ing” class this year, encouraging campers to make the right life choices in order to avoid pitfalls and to experience the excellent life that our Creator wants for us.

Aaron and Michelle Dean and Phil and Sarah Aust also served as ministerial staff this year. Mr. Dean and Mr. Aust taught Christian living classes and drove ski boats; Mrs. Dean helped in arts and crafts, and Mrs. Aust worked in volleyball.

After lunch campers had 45 minutes of “horizontal time”—time to relax in their dorms, rest, work on memory scriptures, etc. Even the older boys dorms expressed appreciation for this rest time!

Thursday evening we enjoyed a waterfront ride on the Oregon Coastal Scenic train to Garibaldi and back. The operators of the train come down to the crossing near camp to let us board. The train is drawn by a 1925 Steam Engine and the engine and cars have changed little in almost a century. The campers always rate the train ride as a highlight of the week.

At campfire the seniors gave a short talk about what being a part of camp has meant to them and helped them draw closer to God. Those encouraging words make all of the hard work and sacrifice worthwhile.

*Rex Sexton*

# San Gil de Campo

Colombia—July 22-29

Our sixth consecutive year to hold camp in Colombia was the most productive and fulfilling of the camps so far! There were 14 campers, and seven staff from Colombia and the United States who came to have fun and to learn how to live with a vision for the future!

Campers and staff traveled by bus to Hotel San Gil del Campo, which is a former monastery. It affords a peaceful and tranquil location with vistas of mountains and valleys covered with a variety of green vegetation and wildlife.

Campers and staff stayed in hotel rooms that housed three or four people, and we all ate together in the dining hall that provided three freshly prepared meals each day. We started each day with a spiritual “compass check,” and ended each day with a Christian living class or other Bible activity. Using this year's UYC theme of “God's Vision for You” kept us focused on what we all desired to

learn while at camp. Building bonds of friendship with our spiritual family was a huge part of camp.

Two of our most popular activities returned again this year—the Bible skit activity and the Amazing Race. A new activity was added this year—rock painting. All campers went on a scavenger hunt on the first day of camp to find a rock to be used later. From pebbles to small melon size, campers and staff painted their rocks with various words, designs and scenery. Everyone had a great time and requested to have a similar activity next year.

Fútbol (soccer) is very popular at camp, part of one afternoon was spent watching Colombia play Poland during the World Cup in the hotel lobby. Many wore their Colombian jerseys to show support! Other activities enjoyed this year were swimming and learning to swing dance.

During Sabbath services, camper Ronaldo Medina led

songs and gave the announcements. Using and focusing on the theme, staff members David Sierra and Colombian assistant pastor Jaime Salek gave the messages. After the Sabbath, everyone enjoyed an evening of dancing.

Camp afforded the campers the opportunity to spend quality time together in peace and safety. Everybody developed strong bonds of friendship and spiritual growth. On the last day, many campers shared how they were going to put the camp theme into practice in short two to three minute speeches. The camp director then encouraged everyone to “remember the camp themes,” and to “live your story!” between now and next year's camp.”

*Scott and Gayle Hoefker*

# British Isles

Derbyshire, England—July 27-Aug. 5

Once again United Youth Camp in the British Isles was held at the Peak Centre in Edale, in the beautiful Hope Valley in Derbyshire, England. From July 27-Aug. 5, the community comprised 25 campers aged 7-19 years and 12 staff members with several other adult visitors.

In addition to campers from various parts of the United Kingdom, there were also two from Sweden, one from Germany, one from Italy and six from the U.S.

Warm and mostly dry summer weather allowed for many outdoor activities including archery, abseiling (rap-

elling) and hiking, as well as sports and games. Fencing was appreciated by all the campers, as was breadmaking and an expedition inside a local cavern, one of several in the area. A campfire was considered inappropriate this year given the previous weeks of hot and dry weather.

Mornings began with a hymn and a prayer, a thought for the day and “quiet time” when campers and adults alike spent 15 minutes in quiet reflection, Bible reading or prayer. Bible lessons covered how to pray, how to observe the Sabbath and various aspects of God's vision

for everyone—to live life to the fullest now, and in the future to be in His family and to carry His name. Other seminars included how to handle negative emotions, basic first aid and healthy eating. A highlight was the performance of several items of special music during the two Sabbath services. These pieces had been prepared in advance and practiced as camp progressed.

The drier weather this year compared with that experienced during last year's camp was a great blessing.

*David and Barbara Fenney*

# Africa

Ghana—Aug. 5-12

The 2018 United Youth Camp Ghana was held at the country's premier 70-year-old University of Ghana—Legon, Accra, set in a placid environment with rolling green spaces and tree-lined streets.

The 28 campers and 15 staff arrived late afternoon of Sunday, Aug. 5, for a week-long packed program of learning and fun.

The welcome address and orientation were delivered by camp director David Meselebe and Franklin Hiagbe, and was focused on this year's theme “God's Vision for You.” Prominence was placed on the importance of learning and living the vital Christian lessons of the

theme through each camp event.

Activities for camp included archery, cycling, speed-away, beads craft, team challenge, swimming, volleyball and basketball. There were compass checks and Christian living sessions every morning and evening, ensuring that each day started and ended with God's word.

On the Sabbath the rest of the Accra congregation joined camp for church services. Indeed, it was a festive ambience of unity among brethren, with representation from all four of the church's congregations in Ghana.

On Saturday evening we had an awards ceremony and a dance. Each camper received a certificate of successful

participation with a few others receiving special mention. This was done amidst good food, good music and lots of dancing.

Departure on Sunday morning was characterized by mixed feelings: sadness on one hand because all were going to miss the camaraderie fostered over the period, and some joy in knowing that we would be seeing each other soon at the Feast in September.

All expressed profound appreciation to brethren worldwide for their generosity towards camp and for God's merciful protection over the period.

*Franklin Hiagbe*

# Mexico

Pichucalco, Chiapas—July 22-29

Praise God, camp this year was a wonderful blessing with 16 campers aged 10 to 20, three mini-campers, and 11 staff hailing from many different places in Mexico, the United States, Chile, Guatemala and Bolivia, some traveling 24 hours by bus each way!

Camp was held at the miraculously-provided Seventh Day Adventist camp called Rio de Janeiro located by the small town of Pichucalco, Chiapas, and set right in the jungle. Towering almond trees and coconut palms shade the soccer field. There was also a pool, a covered volleyball court/auditorium, and a basketball court. The incredibly intense green beauty of the landscape kept us in awe.

The theme this year was Nivel Dios, or “God Level.” We focused on God’s goal for us that we would be on His level and would become like Him. We talked about

where we are currently as humans, our potential as spirit beings, how God asks us to demonstrate our commitment now, and recognized that we cannot do it alone. We absolutely need His mercy through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in order to reach the God level.

Each day, activities included delicious meals prepared by the hard-working kitchen staff, an object lesson, Bible class, sports and team activities. Wednesday we went to a nature reserve called Saraguato, which included entry/exit on a zipline, a rappel down a waterfall, and a guided tour of the mountain and the caverns cut by a sulfur spring that makes the rivers run a milky-blue color. Wherever we went, God’s diverse and beautiful creation was mind-blowing.

Friday afternoon, as campers reflected on their experi-

ence at camp, over and over they appreciated the team activities that allowed them to get to know each other better, and shared what they learned from the Bible classes and the object lessons that preceded them.

Sunday morning we packed up, said good-bye and headed back home. Many of us are counting the days until the Feast, which will be the first opportunity to see each other again. Others are just overwhelmingly thankful for the opportunity they had to meet brethren, who, due to the bureaucratic challenges of international travel, it is very unlikely they will ever see again in this life. All of us are very blessed by our shared confidence that we will see each other again when God welcomes us to the God level as part of His spiritual family.

*Gabriel García Roig*

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## UYC 2018 Preteen Reports

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### Camp Nacome

Tennessee—June 3-6

Over 100 campers and staff came together for a fun-filled, Zone inspired three days at the Nacome Camp and Conference Center located in Pleasantville, Tennessee, starting on June 3. Campers kicked off camp activities with Novelty Olympics Sunday afternoon. Everyone enjoyed getting to meet their new dorm mates, counselors and activity staff, while sharing some great fun.

Each day started with a Christian living class that focused on how God’s plan and vision for us to become part of his family is important and something we must work on daily. We may not always see it right away in our

lives, but over time with studying and prayer, we’ll begin to understand what God has planned for us.

Following Christian living, campers and staff dove into a full day of activities of air riflery, archery, low ropes, caving, funyaking, nature and creek walks, arts and crafts, and field activities. Campers really enjoyed the challenging new activities this year with great enthusiasm and Zone spirit. We even had the swimming hole make a come back this year, complete with a water slide.

God’s gift of perfect weather stayed with us the entire week. The weather outlook before camp started had 90

degree days with unusually high humidity. But as soon as camp got underway, our days were blessed cool low 80s with almost no humidity and a nice, cooling breeze. You couldn’t have asked for better weather!

Thank you to all who volunteered this year. Once again you made the camp experience top notch and it showed in every smiling face that left for home at the end of camp. We look forward to seeing you all in the coming months and fall Holy Days.

*Matthew Puckett*

### Camp Piney Woods

Texas—June 10-13

We completed a successful preteen Camp Piney Woods on Wednesday, June 13 in Big Sandy, Texas. There were 41 campers, 29 adult and teen staff, and additional members of the East Texas congregation who all worked hard for four 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 songs—“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 and one day becoming spiritual sons and daughters in His expanding family!

*Jim Moody*

### Camp Colorado

Colorado—June 17-20

The ninth annual preteen Camp Colorado was held this summer from June 17-20. Before camp, the weather forecast was a bit dismal with rain predicted each day of camp. But, we have always had wonderful weather at camp Colorado, only 16 miles south of Estes Park, and this year was no exception! We had to adjust our schedule only slightly, and everything turned out extremely well as we were able to fully enjoy all scheduled activities!

We meet at the Highlands Presbyterian Camp and Retreat Center in Allenspark, Colorado, at an altitude of around 7,000 feet. The camp facility is at the base of Mt. Meeker, rising nearly 14,000 feet into the sky! It is an extremely beautiful area, teeming with all sorts of wildlife.

We had one of our Christian living classes interrupted by a young bull moose—the first time some of our adult and teen staff and preteen campers ever saw a live moose!

There were 81 campers, mini-campers, teen and adult staff who greatly enjoyed one another’s company as they participated in archery, canoeing, challenging and exciting field games, multi-ball (a mixture of kickball, soccer, and speed-a-way), fun and creative arts and crafts, and exhilarating nature hikes—including a visit to the “hidden room” through a narrow passage in a very large rock formation!

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. It is very gratifying to see that many of our adults, teens and youngsters are very adept at learning God’s word!

Our teen assistant counselors enjoyed helping our adult counselors with the preteen campers, but they also enjoyed an hour each evening to spend time with other teen staff in the activity room playing ping pong, foosball, air hockey and just hanging out together.

Camp Colorado is known for excellent accommodations, great food, and above all, a family camp atmosphere where we are all friends striving to love God and each other!

*Mark Welch*

# Camp Ironwood

Minnesota—July 15-18

This was the 17th year that United has held a preteen camp at the beautiful outdoor country setting of Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch near Stewartville, Minnesota. This was one of the largest camps we've had in a few years. There were 170 of us (87 campers, mini dorm campers and six very little future mini campers; 24 teens and 59 plus adult staff) who enjoyed four days of living, playing and working together in "God's way." God certainly blessed the camp with His guidance, protection and absolutely beautiful weather!

Our goal was to enrich the campers' lives by giving them opportunities to build relationships with other children who share common beliefs, and to 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." In Christian living we discussed qualities of a friend

and what the Bible says about friendship and the biblical examples of friendship. On the last day we talked about Abraham being a friend of God, as well as Jesus calling His disciples His friends. Our Christian living classes concluded with how we can become a friend of God by following and obeying Him. Campers also enjoyed the new Jelly video ("Jelly Makes a New Friend").

We wanted campers to experience a variety of challenging and fun activities including horseback riding, swimming, zip-lining, arts and crafts, field games, climbing wall, archery and BB gun shooting, creek walk, team challenge, sling shot and tubing down a long slip-n-slide. Campers also enjoyed evening activities including a carnival, a campfire sing-a-long, treasure hunt, novelty olympics and on the final night, a "Dance with Jelly and Mr. Jonathan."

Camp Ironwood is a family camp with many parents bringing their preteens and teens (as well as those 5 and

under) and spending 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, also serving as the big brothers and big sisters to the campers. Adult staff included many parents who served as activity coordinators, counselors, support staff and dorm parents. Parents also enjoyed the opportunities to interact with their children during meal times and evening camp activities. We also enjoyed a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Victor Kubik. It was a fun-filled four days!

The friendships, camaraderie, nurturing family environment and working and playing together according to God's way of life is an experience that those who attended Camp Ironwood this summer will not soon forget. We praise God and thank Him for another successful year at Camp Ironwood!

*David Schreiber*

## Northwest Preteen Camp

Oregon—July 15-18

This year we hosted our largest group yet at Northwest preteen camp with 96 campers and 77 staff. Our theme this year was "God's Commandments," focusing on not only the Ten Commandments, but on the Great Commandments as well.

The campers enjoyed making Ten Commandment plaques in arts and crafts. The material to make these was mixed right on site and campers had to work fast to get the molds ready, put reinforcing mesh into the mold and insert a hanging hook into the back before the mix hardened. They painted them and took them home. They also created 400 cards to be sent to area shut-ins for the Feast.

Temperatures at camp this year were in the upper 80s and mid-90s. Mornings were cool and started with Christian living where campers learned targeted lessons under the beautiful canopy of the northwest forest, against a backdrop of Mount Hood. As the day heated up, campers found relief with a number of water-related activities like swimming, river float and outside sports where water can-

nons and sprinklers made frequent appearances.

Archery is a favorite for so many, and this year campers got to shoot at a variety of targets designed to challenge and inspire new skills. Winners of the best shot competition were awarded with handmade bows by craftsman Mike Hunicke, with a third bow awarded this year based primarily on attitude and character.

In dance class, older campers learned to swing dance. The oldest dorms had a dance one night after campfire where they learned the art of asking one another to dance, and of escorting their partner out to the floor and back again.

Older dorms also had the additional activity of a challenge course, which taught them about the "Zone," and what it is like to go to teen camp and participate at a different level. Concepts of independent thinking were introduced into each of the elements as they had to learn to work together and pass each level.

Another hit was the addition of indoor sports this year with activities like crab soccer with an oversized ball,

kickball, and a life-sized Hungry Hippos game. The end of the day found us at campfire where we recapped the day, watched hilarious skits, heard clever chants, and sang songs. The last day of camp had a camp-wide capture the flag game before the final awards ceremony. Each year activity leaders present awards highlighting achievements like learning to swim, achieving various goals and showing wonderful attitudes. The final award presented is one that is decided on by each dorm. This year, the award was named after our former director, John Cafourek, who gave so many years to this program and offered the type of leadership that we can all aspire to follow.

Our goal is for campers to leave with the word of God in their hearts and minds, reinforcing that there is a better way to live than this world has discovered. That we can support each other and inspire one another to grow and become faithful members of God's family.

*Jeff Richards*

## Camp Wildrose

Alberta, Canada—July 18-22

Camp Wildrose is located in the farmland area of Darwell, Alberta, west of Edmonton. The Davis' family hosted the camp on their own farm property. This was our ninth summer session with 75 in attendance.

Families attended from the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Entire families attend with their campers, ages 5-15. Those ages 16-18 are called junior volunteers. These teens participated in activities and Bible studies, and developed leadership skills supervising the younger children, teaching sports activities, doing camp chores and organizing whole camp games. Camp Wildrose was able to meet the needs of our church youth, and encourage unity in the church family as a whole.

Our theme this year was "Growing in God's Garden—Bloom Where You Are Planted." Two compass check sessions started off the first day. The first was titled "Bloom Where You Are Planted" and featured a slideshow of plants growing in unusual places, illustrating that we do

not always find ourselves in ideal situations, but must always grow as God has instructed. The second session was inspired by ants and the proverb "Go to the ant, consider her ways and be wise." Six lessons could be learned from this natural hard-working team.

We had a busy schedule with many activities. Archery and canoeing are favorite activities. Soccer, volleyball and softball were our sport events. In crafts, they created wind chimes and added inspirational messages. Team building encouraged groups to work together to solve puzzles. Dance lessons taught popular line dances, and couple dances for our teens. Water tubing was a huge hit, as they tried out the new three-seater tube. Outdoor education introduced knot tying skills, which they used to build lean-tos in the woods. Our little campers were kept busy with nature walks, play-doh, bubble blowing and parachute games.

Our evenings were busy as well. On Wednesday, we roasted bannock and played group charades at the firepit.

On Thursday, we set up a movie theater, with a 10 foot screen and snacks. Friday evening until sunset was our family dance with games, piñatas and prizes. The Sabbath day was extra special this year as we cybercasted from camp. Many youth were involved in the service, doing prayers, leading songs, hymn accompaniment and special music. In the evening, we had special worship music performed by our attendees, a sing along and a Jelly video. The Sabbath included lessons, teen Bible studies and Bible games. Sunday was our final day, and concluded with a wonderful camp game of tag created by our junior volunteers.

Thank you to all the families for supporting the work done to strengthen our children in God's family. With the work of many hands, the prayers of many hearts, and the love of many brethren, Camp Wildrose is maturing into a truly spiritual experience of growth in godly character for everyone who attends.

*Susan Davis*

# Camp Buckeye

Ohio—July 29-Aug. 1

The beautiful Amish countryside of North Central Ohio always makes for a lovely setting for Camp Buckeye. We completed our seventh year at Camp Luz in Orrville, Ohio, and this year we had 70 staff members to support our 80 campers. The campers were divided into four boy dorms and four girl dorms. The weather was more comfortable than in many prior years, with the daytime highs in the mid 70s and evening lows in the 60s. Storms came through on Tuesday morning and some of the outdoor classes had to be cut short because of thunder, but the weather turned favorable again for the remainder of camp.

We had all of our usual daily activities of arts and crafts, canoeing, court games, fishing, field games, indoor games, team building and watersports. Archery returned to the schedule again and this year, with all-new equipment.

Our evening Bible skits were very entertaining and we were blessed once again to have Mark Graham come on Monday night to lead an enjoyable and always memorable sing-a-long at campfire.

The Christian living classes addressed the topics of creation week, choosing the right path, and “God is not a respecter of persons.”

This year, we received a donation from Bass Pro Shops, so every camper was given a brand new fishing rod and reel! Also a church member felt it only appropriate that a starting fisherman would need a tackle box, so they donated funds so each camper also received a free starter tackle box.

We thank our Heavenly Father for His continued protection over the camp, as we had no injuries. Also, we had an amazing group of teens and young adult staffers working alongside the adult staff. Everyone did an amazing job!

We will be returning to Camp Luz next year and the dates will be July 28-31, 2019.

*Len Martin*

# Camp Seven Mountains

Pennsylvania—July 29-Aug. 1

In late July, 74 campers ages 4 months to 12 years old—along with 89 staff, parents and grandparents—joined together for three days of fun, fellowship and faith in the mountains of Pennsylvania. What a great time we had! The story of Elisha was the theme, and everyone from babies to preteens (to adults!) learned about the miracles and wonders God worked through him and his faith. The buckets of pouring rain could not diminish the laughs and spirit of the campers, who boated and swam through the rain with cold glee. God blessed our time with cool days and the rain when it was least disruptive.

Campers’ days were filled with crafting treasure boxes with power tools, making brilliantly colored tie-dye shirts, playing all kinds of sports, massive splash battles while boating and laughing at campfire antics—with or without the fire. In between those times, we managed to squeeze in team building and swimming, as well as archery, volleyball and human foosball.

Our youngest campers, ages 0-3 years old, enjoyed a special grandma camp in the mornings with Bible lessons, activities, songs and games just for them. And what fun would camp be without our annual, camp-wide, capture-the-flag game on the last night? That evening, after

the game, the threat of rain drove us inside for campfire, minus the fire. Our counselors put on a fashion show after the campers gave them an extreme makeover, followed by an egg roulette, which everyone used up their laugh allowance for the year. That is what our kids camp is about—building faith, fellowship and friendship in the body of Christ.

Thank you to our hardworking and wonderful counselors and staff who made this year the best yet. We could not do this without you and we can’t wait to see you again next year, Aug. 11-14, 2019!

*Rachel Massie and Lindsay Massie*

# German Camp

Germany—July 29-Aug. 2

A spectacular total lunar eclipse on the first night was the beginning of many wonderful experiences for campers and parents alike at this year’s European summer camp in Germany.

Around 30 campers aged 3 months to 11 years were accompanied by their parents to once again strengthen their friendships and grow in their understanding of God’s word. Daily Bible studies around the theme of courage were conducted, and on the Sabbath voices were joined in a rousing hymn singing session.

The hot and dry summer this year allowed for plenty of opportunity for outdoor adventure. Activities included basketball and football training followed by a friendly competition, archery practice as well as a tournament, dodgeball, a surprise water balloon fight, a forest hike with a picnic and search for precious stones in a creek,

sessions in survival skills where the children learned about foraging, how to purify water, basic first aid and what to do when faced with wild animals. To keep cool during free time the campers enjoyed water sliding. Campers also assisted in preparing the food for the final night’s barbeque and got their hands into making the dough for cooking bread on a stick over the campfire. The older children showcased their acting skills in three impromptu plays about courage.

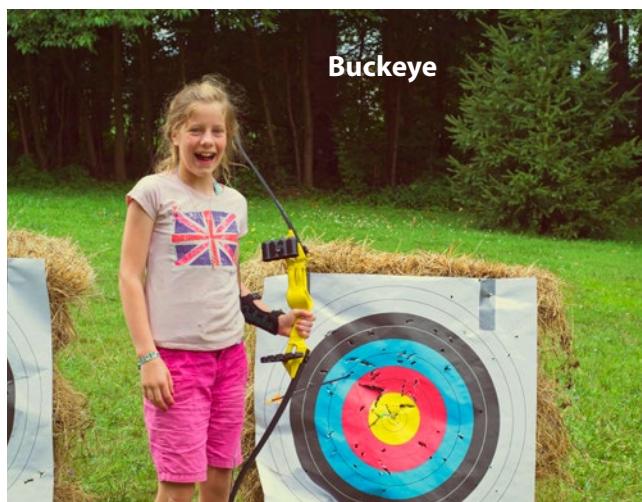
Children under the age of 5 enjoyed plenty of water play to keep cool, getting creative with some artistic “science” experiments, dancing and music appreciation, woodwork crafts including hammering nails into a tree stump and decorating wooden treasure boxes, mini Olympics involving a range of creative and entertaining activities, and free play at the playground.

After dark the parents and children enjoyed singing camp songs around the campfire, stargazing and plenty of interesting discussions and laughs.

The children benefited from seeing improvements in their sports skills; strengthening bonds among their peers, parents and helpers; learning about the important topic of courage; and overall demonstrating outstanding manners and behavior that sets them apart as lights to the world.

Everyone was so pleased with the location chosen that efforts are being made to secure it once again for next year. Camp is proving to be a highlight of the summer vacation time and we all look forward to coming together again in 2019.

*Claire Kasper*



# Announcements



**Wendy Rose Lago**

July 14, 2018



**Gabriel Lago & Alyssa Archer**

June 3, 2018



**Larry Taylor & Kathy Adams**

June 30, 2018



**Roger & Florence Maine**

50th Anniversary



**Joseph Gabriel, Jr.**

Jan. 12, 1931-June 3, 2018



**Gwendolyn Griffith Holfelder**

April 29, 1921-April 24, 2018

## Births

### Wendy Rose Lago

Edgardo and Rosalinda Lago of the Orlando, Florida, congregation are thrilled to announce the birth of their second grandchild, Wendy Rose Lago. She was born on Saturday, July 14, at 5:13 a.m. in Alexandria, Virginia. She weighed 6 lbs., 7 oz., and was 18.9 inches long. Mom Lily, dad Daniel and the rest of the family would like to thank God for this miraculous blessing of life, and the joy and love that she has brought to us.

## Weddings

### Gabriel Lago and Alyssa Archer

Edgardo and Rosalinda Lago are happy to announce that on June 3, 2018, their son Gabriel Lago was married to Alyssa Archer, daughter of Larry and Laura Archer from Lebanon, Oregon.

The wedding ceremony took place in Fort Thomas, Kentucky. After the ceremony, the happily married couple held a reception for family and friends at the same venue.

Following the wedding, the couple spent a few days cruising the Caribbean before returning home to Cincinnati.

Both Gabriel and Alyssa are Ambassador Bible College graduates, and attend the Cincinnati East congregation.

### Larry Taylor and Kathy Adams

On June 30, 2018, Larry Taylor (elder in DeFuniak Springs, Florida, congregation)

and Kathy Adams (Laurel, Mississippi, congregation) were united in marriage, surrounded by family and friends. Larry's son (Randy Taylor) served as best man and Kathy's daughter (Alma Lovett) and daughter-in-law (Tina Adams) served as matrons of honor. Pastor Scott Hoefker performed the ceremony. Immediately following the wedding all enjoyed a delicious potluck meal and warm fellowship.

Larry and Kathy met in January 2017, and for 10 months they corresponded mostly by phone and e-mail. Beginning with the Feast of Tabernacles last year they were able to start spending quality time with one another. They now live in Marianna, Florida, and serve in the DeFuniak Springs, Florida, congregation.

## Anniversaries

### Roger and Florence Maine

Roger and Florence Maine celebrated their 50th anniversary on June 8, 2018. They have been members of God's Church in the Spokane area for 48 years. They have four sons, four grandchildren and one great grandchild. Roger worked for more than 40 years in the sheet metal industry, first as an apprentice, then a journeyman.

They were early pioneers, homesteading 160 acres near Spokane back in 1968. There was no running water, the electric utility consisted of a drop cord to the electric box on a tree. Roger was a sheep farmer, but they had cattle, a team of draft horses and a milk cow from which Flor-

ence made many kinds of cheese.

Roger has given many "down to earth" sermonettes over the years from his vast knowledge of God's creation, and Florence has been our "greeting card" lady for many years.

## Obituaries

### Joseph Gabriel, Jr.

Joseph Gabriel Jr., 87, of Kent, Ohio, died Sunday, June 3, 2018. He was a member of the North Canton, Ohio, congregation where he served the church many years as a deacon.

Joe was born Jan. 12, 1931, in Canton, Ohio, to Joseph and Florence (Norcia) Gabriel, Sr. He was a veteran of the Army during the Korean war, and was the self-employed owner of Envoy Chemical Co.

He is survived by his wife, Bess Detwiler Gabriel, whom he married on Feb. 4, 1983; sons, Joey Gabriel III, and Edward Gabriel; daughters, Meg (Fred) Gemberling, Dina (Randy) White and Felicia (Chris Zitko) Gabriel; step-daughters, Debra McNeely (Darris) and Sam Tucker. He is survived by eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Joe is also survived by one brother and five sisters. Two of those sisters, Jenny Luchitz and Rhoda Gabriel, and son, Joey, are also members of the North Canton congregation. He was preceded in death by a daughter, Deborah Gabriel.

Joe and Bess enjoyed many years of visiting Feast sites around the world, adding to their long list of friends. Their home was the site of many church gatherings over the years. Everyone was always welcome at the Gabriels'.

### Gwendolyn Griffiths Holfelder

Gwen Holfelder died peacefully at home surrounded by her loved ones on Tuesday, April 24, 2018, five days before her 97th birthday.

Born on April 29, 1921, in Flushing, Long Island, New York, Gwen was the younger daughter of Wilson and Agnes Griffiths. She grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, then attended Rollins Col-

lege in Winter Park, Florida, and Westminster College in Pennsylvania.

After college, she moved to Framingham, Massachusetts, where she worked at the Dennison Paper Company. It was there, while sitting outside the factory eating her lunch, that she was introduced by a coworker to Larry Holfelder, a handsome young "Dartmouth College man," who was home on break. After a short, mostly long-distance courtship, they were married. Shortly thereafter, Larry was drafted into the army and was away for over three years, serving overseas in WWII. God "had plans" (Jeremiah 29:11) for this young couple, as Larry was miraculously and dramatically protected during the war. Upon his return, they truly began their life together, welcoming three daughters into the family over the course of eight years. They were married for 57 years until his death in 1999.

Gwen and Larry had attended the Episcopal church for years until she asked her priest a question he couldn't answer. Disappointed, she began to pray for an answer. Shortly thereafter, their youngest daughter got an overwhelming desire to jump on their bed (a big no-no) and in the middle of a leap, felt "someone" push her off the bed! She fell on the bedside table and knocked the clock radio off the stand. Hurrying to avoid detection, she turned the radio on and, hearing only static, she quickly turned the dial to the first station that came in and then turned it off and ran out. The next morning, the radio came on at the usual time, only the voice Gwen heard this time rang out, "And greetings, friends! This is Herbert W. Armstrong bringing you the good news of the world tomorrow!" She was surprised to hear a different program, but she was dumbfounded to hear the answer to her question! She began listening every day. Unbeknownst to her, Larry was also listening from the other room; they were eventually both baptized in 1970 and remained faithful members of God's Church until their deaths.

Surviving are her daughters Carol (Brad) Rosenquist of Nashville, Tennessee, Elizabeth (Doug) Jones of Lafayette,

# Announcements



**Pam Penrod**

May 10, 1940-June 28, 2018



**Earl S. Randle**

Jan. 24, 1936-April 4, 2018



**Dale Richey**

Jan. 19, 2018

Indiana, and Linda (Charles) Graby of Cumming, Georgia; along with 12 grandchildren, and 32 great-grandchildren.

Gwen's race is won and her crown of righteousness awaits her. She was blind for many years, but in her next waking instant she will see not only her beloved Larry, but also her Savior! It doesn't get any better than that.

## Pam Penrod

Pam Penrod of the Eugene, Oregon, congregation of the United Church of God died on June 28, 2018, with her husband, family and friends beside her after a long battle with cancer. She was 78 years old.

Pam was born in Los Angeles on May 10, 1940, to parents Alan and Helen Banks, and was raised in the Salem and Albany, Oregon, area. After graduating from Salem High School in 1958, she married Ray Krueger and moved to Joseph, Oregon. There she became a mother to twin boys, Adrian and Brian. Five years later, their third son Kurt was born.

She responded to God's calling and was baptized in 1969. She married John Penrod in 1973 and moved to Lacombe, Oregon. Apart from four fabulous years in Hawaii with their son Kurt in the mid 1990's, she resided in Lacombe until her death. She and John spoke very fondly of their time in Hawaii during those years and of the wonderful people that they met.

Throughout her life, her guiding passion came from serving God and following in His footsteps. Other than her love for God, her love for her sons and grandchildren was endless. She was a wonderful cook, feeding the masses during her famous Fourth of July cookouts, and she loved working with and organizing activities for children. She had an amazing skill of being able to make a costume out of anything, such as making an Ewok from a beanbag, or the Scarlet Pimpernel out of a brocade curtain. She often served the youth in the church in these costumes.

She loved the water, and taught many kids how to swim over the years, serving in the camp programs. She loved to camp at Beverly Beach, enjoyed travel and spending time with her "Golden Girls." She loved

to sing, read, garden and had an intense interest in ancient Egyptian history.

We are immensely thankful to God for the time we had to spend with Pam. She was a wonderful example, and a much loved member of the western Oregon congregations. We greatly look forward to seeing her again when God's Kingdom is fully realized and that last enemy, death, is conquered once and for all.

## Earl S. Randle

Earl S. Randle passed away on April 4, 2018, at his home in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, with his wife and family by his side. He had been suffering from pulmonary fibrosis. Earl was born in 1936 and was raised on a farm in North Dakota. He attended North Dakota Agriculture College in Fargo and also belonged to ROTC. He met his future wife Betty as a preteen. They dated in high school and were married for 61 years. He lived a full life of 82 years. He is survived by his loving wife Betty, three children: Cynthia Aldrich, Thomas Randle, Stephanie Mörker and seven grandchildren.

Earl was baptized in 1963. He captured the vision and left his North Dakota home and his job at Amerada Petroleum Corp. to move closer to a church area. He was always concerned about choosing the right way for over 50 years. He was a caring and kind father and husband. He will be remembered for his friendly smile and genuine love for others.

A memorial was conducted April 22 by Brian Shaw, pastor of the Twin Cities, Minnesota, congregation.

**Announcements:** Send us announcements from your local congregation! Have your pastor review what you write, and send it in to UN@ucg.org. We're looking for 100- to 300-word articles and photos with captions. Please double-check the spelling of names, and include the author's and photographer's names. **E-mail is preferred**, but we will also take physical mail as well! Please include a self-addressed envelope if you'd like photos returned.

## Dale Richey

Longtime church member Dale Richey died suddenly at the age of 82 on Jan. 19, 2018.

Mr. Richey was preceded in death by his loving wife, Pearl, in 2002, and his daughter, Juanita, in September 2017. He is survived by six children: Teresa Plageman, Diana Golden, Linda Richey, Mark (Doris) Richey, Mike (Bobbi) Richey and Brenda (Kevin) Ketchum; 17 grandchil-

dren, and 12 great grandchildren.

Mr. Richey was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, and married his wife, Pearl, in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, on March 3, 1956. He began attending church in Cincinnati in 1963 and was baptized in 1964.

Upon retiring, the Richeys moved to the Orlando area in 1996, where he lived until his death.

Mr. Richey was an active member of the Orlando church right up to the end, and leaves behind a legacy of commitment, loyalty and dedication to God and His way of life. He was a fine example of father, servant, friend, and Christian, always looking to see where he could fill a need that someone had.

Mr. Richey now sleeps, having completed his race on earth, and waits for the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of His Kingdom on earth.

Mr. Richey's family and all of us in the Orlando church miss him dearly.



## Upcoming Events

### 2018 Young Adults Enrichment Weekend—Northwest Region



#### Calling All Young Adults, Ages 18-35!

Join the western Oregon congregations of the United Church of God for a weekend of enrichment and growth as we host the first annual Northwest regional young adults enrichment weekend at the beautiful Aldersgate Retreat Center in Turner, Oregon. Turner is located a little over an hour south of Portland and conveniently accessible from I-5.

Enjoy seminars, Bible studies, interactive workshops, fun activities and plenty of opportunities for fellowship. Attendees will be staying onsite at Fircrest Lodge. Meals will be shared and you will have full access to the recreation room in the evenings, enabling you to make new friends as the weekend progresses.

Cost of attendance will be \$175 per person. This expense covers three nights lodging and seven meals as well as the meeting hall for seminars and for the Sabbath.

If you are planning to attend, please fill out the registration form located at the link below and suggest seminar topics you would like to hear so that we can best meet your needs. For married couples, please fill out separate registration forms. If one spouse is between ages 18-35 but the other is not, both can attend regardless of age. The registration form is here: [tinyurl.com/2018NWYAWEEKEND](http://tinyurl.com/2018NWYAWEEKEND).

If you have any questions, please contact Benjamin Light at [ben\\_light@ucg.org](mailto:ben_light@ucg.org).

*Benjamin Light*

# Are You a Carrier of Truth?

continued from page 3

A primary function for those of us in the work of God is to disseminate the truth. Jesus' last heart-rending prayer for His disciples was that they would be set apart by the truth of God, because God's Word only speaks what is true: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth" (John 17:17-19).

How seriously do we take promoting what is true and accurate? Do we take care to be true in our teaching of doctrine as we have come to a collective understanding and agreement? Are we

## The Perfect Law of Liberty

continued from page 3

fect" and giving "liberty." They resemble two shields, one guarding the front and the other the back, protecting the valuable contents inside. They guard God's law from those who would try to slander or abolish it. They are two beautiful and powerful expressions defining and ennobling His law. Let's carefully study each one.

### The "Perfect" Law

God's law is described as being "perfect." As we know, only God can create something absolutely perfect. Human creations, though some are remarkably well done, still contain some flaws.

Interestingly, it was David, a man after God's own heart, who first described God's law as being "perfect." He said, "The law of the LORD is *perfect*, converting the soul . . ." (Psalm 19:7).

The Hebrew term for "perfect" is *tamim*, which means without blemish, complete and perfect. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary* mentions this about *tamim*: "An adjective meaning blameless, complete . . . this word described the *blamelessness of God's way, knowledge, and Law* (2 Samuel 22:31; Job 37:16; Psalm 19:7)."

In the New Testament, the word James used for "perfect" is in the Greek *teleios*, the equivalent term of the Hebrew *tamim*. It also means "having attained its end or purpose, complete, perfect" (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1979, p. 809).

If we are preparing to become kings and priests in God's Kingdom, we must deeply cherish and respect this perfect law of liberty. Once Jesus sets up His reign on earth, He says of those having priestly functions: "And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy,

*When we speak, whether publicly or privately, we are confronted with the binary choice of telling the truth or telling a lie.*

discerning of information that comes at us as to its believability? An interesting fact expressed on this tour was that conservatives tended to believe conspiracy-type scenarios over liberals. This was also a trend of the older over the younger in believing extreme content.

When we speak, whether publicly or privately, we are confronted with the binary choice of telling the truth or telling a lie. It is living the Ninth Commandment: "You shall not bear false witness."

Two characteristics that define Satan are that he is a murderer and a liar: "You are of your father the devil, and the desires

and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. In controversy they shall stand as judges, and judge it according to My judgments. They shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed meetings, and they shall hallow My Sabbaths" (Ezekiel 44:23-24).

What a contrast with so many in the world today who consider God's law obsolete!

### The Law "of Liberty"

The second term to describe God's law is "liberty." Remarkably, it is David again who first wrote about this concept. He stated, "And I will *walk at liberty*, for I sought thy commandments" (Psalm 119:45, Jubilee Bible). Here the Hebrew term for liberty is *rachab*, which means, "broad, wide, spacious, large . . . It refers to the *broad freedom or openness of God's Law or to be walking in it*" (*The Complete Word Study Dictionary*).

To the Hebrews, liberty meant freely moving about in open spaces where no one would threaten them and they could live in peace.

"Liberty, as the O.T. conceives it," notes *The New Bible Dictionary*, with surprising candor, "means, on the one hand, *deliverance from created forces that would keep men from serving and enjoying their Creator*, and on the other hand, *the positive happiness of living in fellowship with God under his covenant* in the place where he is pleased to manifest himself and to bless . . ."

"In its continuance, *liberty is a covenant blessing, something which God has promised to maintain as long as his people are faithful. Liberty does not mean independence from God; it is precisely in God's service that man finds his perfect freedom . . . The divine law, as interpreted and exemplified by Christ himself, remains a standard expressing Christ's will for his own freed bondservants* (1 Corinthians 7:22)" (1982, pp. 695-696).

The term "liberty" in the Greek is *eleu-*

of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44).

Lies have inflamed people against one another. Wars begin with words that lead to conflict and destruction.

Not only must we be careful about carelessly believing what we hear, we must also be careful what we pass on. We may be an unwitting carrier of false witness by what we share with others in person or online.

The Ninth Commandment is held up on multiple places in the Word of God. Here are but a few samples:

"Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds" (Colossians 3:9).

"Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his

neighbor,' for we are members of one another" (Ephesians 4:25).

"These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:16-19).

Indeed misinformation, misleading conduct, prevarication, fraud, deception and lies cause conflict, ill will and ultimately destruction. Be careful that you tell the truth consciously and that you don't unknowingly mislead.

We are so thankful for a truthful God who cannot lie (Titus 1:2). So as we go forward, we need to rise to that same standard by the communications that come from us. **UN**

*If we are preparing to become kings and priests in God's kingdom, we must deeply cherish and respect this perfect law of liberty.*

*theria*, and is similar to the Old Testament concept of freely moving about without oppression.

For us, liberty means *gaining the freedom from the oppression of sin and joyfully living within the broad spaces of God's laws in a balanced manner*, since they are liberating instead of enslaving. It means living within God's law that produces inner peace and an uncluttered and an unpoluted mind.

It is quite the opposite of what so many preachers teach today—that it is God's law that enslaves and that we need to be liberated from it. How utterly false! We have seen in the Bible that God's law is described as being *the perfect law of liberty*—it is not defective nor is it enslaving. After all, Paul called God's law "holy, and the commandment holy and just and good . . . and the law is spiritual" (Romans 7:12, 14).

As Peter pointed out to the brethren about the false teachers enticing them to sin under the pretext of being free from God's law, "While they promise them *liberty*, they themselves are *slaves of corruption*; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. For if, after they have *escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning*. For it would have been better for them *not to have known the way of righteousness*, than having known it, *to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them*" (2 Peter 2:19-21).

One day, people will truly appreciate all the dimensions of "the perfect law of liberty" when God's Kingdom is established.

In this respect, Micah 4:1-4 describes so well the results of following that *perfect law of liberty*: "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; he will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion *the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem*. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, *neither shall they learn war anymore*. But *everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid*; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken."

### Conclusion

Once we understand the concepts of the perfect law of liberty, we can readily defend it and apply it in our lives. Remember, there is perfect freedom when living within God's laws.

Moreover, in its context, James described it as a spiritual mirror that shows us our flaws and how to remove them. As He pointed out, "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But *he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does*" (James 1:23-25).

So in our mission to preach the gospel and to prepare a people, let us never forget how important it is to exalt that "perfect law of liberty." **UN**

## Puget Sound Women's Enrichment Weekend

True joy stems from love.

The 2018 Puget Sound women's enrichment weekend in La Conner, Washington, was significant in more ways than one. Not only was it the annual occasion for ladies to build friendships, encourage, laugh and cry together as we refocused on God and each other, but it was also the 20th anniversary of this marked occasion being held. As such, a theme for the weekend was chosen that could seem simple on the surface but complex upon examination and application: joy. As the weekend progressed, we had a plethora of experiences together to encourage the reflection of joy in our lives in the past, the creation of it each day of the weekend, and the mindset of it for us to apply moving forward.

The first night was full of icebreakers and a game to help center our focus. We passed

out stickers to others to acknowledge and represent each moment of joy we felt as we worshipped and engaged with one another throughout the weekend. There were a lot of stickers passed around!

For services, we were privileged to hear a guest speaker from Cincinnati, Matthew Fenchel. His message, "A Journey of Joy," reminded us to focus not only on the destination, but the journey we take to get there, for "the journey needs to transform us, and in it there is every opportunity for joy."

After the sermon, we shared a meal and marked the anniversary weekend with the special event of English tea, properly done with the help of LeeAnn Luker. Lisa Fenchel followed with her own personal journey with joy. In both sadness and grief, joy is a choice that we can make. It is not a feeling that comes and goes, but



Left: Some of the ladies at the weekend.



Right: some of the beautiful cakes served at the Women's Weekend.

rather the attitude we choose regardless of our circumstances, as we remember that God is our ultimate choice and all joy comes from that.

Saturday closed with wine, cheese and reflection on the messages heard with the good company around us. Sunday arrived and the final activity was no less significant than the others. Equipped with questions to guide our conversation, we broke

down our walls and shared our experiences, ending our time together with the edification of one another.

Though short, the weekend was not lacking in memorable moments and profound teachings. A big "thank you" goes to all the women who participated in making the weekend one not easily forgotten. It was truly an experience to remember.

*Annick Stefanin*

## Portland, Oregon, Youth Rodeo



Left: Children chasing small pigs for a fun afternoon activity.



Right: There were fun water activities at the youth rodeo too!

On Aug. 5, the Portland, Oregon, young adults hosted a youth rodeo on the farm of Rex and Patty Sexton near Washougal, Washington. This first annual rodeo was enjoyed by about 100 kids and 50 adults.

The activities included a petting zoo with baby goats, chicks, rabbits and newborn calves to bottle feed. Plus there was a bucking bronco for kids to ride, a BMX bike course, greased pig catching

(or chasing), hay rides, lariat throwing, a 50-foot water slide and a variety of carnival games and face painting. There were also two incubators with chicks hatching. The kids enjoyed ice cream, popcorn, hot dogs, and numerous water balloon and egg throwing contests. God truly blessed this event. What more could you ask for?

*Rex Sexton*

## Updates From Ministerial and Member Services

In July, Andy Duran was hired as a ministerial trainee, serving in the Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation. Andy and his wife, Amber, have relocated from the Springfield, Missouri, area.

*Chris Rowland*



## Frisco, Colorado, Youth Day



The Frisco, Colorado, congregation hosted a special "youth day" for the Sabbath service on July 21, 2018. Colorado teens participated in the songleading, prayers, and the special music at services.

Hard hitting messages were delivered

by Stephen Mapes and pastor Scott Ashley to prepare the kids for Northwest Camp (beginning the following day), and to prepare them for a successful life in the years ahead.

*Stephen Mapes*

## Little Rock, Arkansas, Camping Weekend



On the weekend of June 22-24, the Little Rock, Arkansas, church hosted a camping, floating and fishing weekend. The plan was to float the Buffalo River, America's first national river.

The camping, church services, and fishing went as planned. All the brethren who attended had a great time fellowshiping. Several species of wildlife were spotted.

Church services were conducted Sabbath morning with a DVD. Sunday morning, everyone woke up anticipating the float down the scenic Buffalo. However, before the float began, a thunderstorm moved in. Despite the disappointment of not being able to float, the weekend was still a big success, as brethren improved their friendships while enjoying the beauty of nature. There are plans to make this an annual event.

*Jean Howdeshell*

What's New In MEDIA?  
BEYOND  
TODAY

Television Airing Schedule

Title	Host	Literature	Airing Period
<i>Why Europe Matters: The Lethal Union of Church and State</i>	Darris McNeely	<i>The Book of Revelation Unveiled</i>	Sept. 2-8
<i>Martin Luther: The Unfinished Reformation</i>	Gary Petty	<i>Bible Study Course</i>	Sept. 9-15
<i>The Day of Atonement and the Gospel</i>	Gary Petty	<i>God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind</i>	Sept. 16-22
<i>Why Europe Matters</i>	Darris McNeely	<i>The Final Superpower</i>	Sept. 23-29
<i>Why Does God Allow Suffering?</i>	Steve Myers	<i>Why Does God Allow Suffering?</i>	Sept. 30-Oct. 6
<i>When Demons Are Real!</i>	Steve Myers	<i>Is There Really a Devil?</i>	Oct. 7-13
<i>When God Remembers the Dead</i>	Darris McNeely	<i>God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind</i>	Oct. 14-20
<i>Tearing Down the Walls that Divide Us</i>	Gary Petty	<i>The Gospel of the Kingdom</i>	Oct. 21-27
<i>The Beast and the False Prophet</i>	Steve Myers	<i>The Book of Revelation Unveiled</i>	Oct. 28-Nov. 3

Graduating Senior



Leah Jackson

Leah is the daughter of Walter and Karen Jackson. She attends the Columbus, Georgia, congregation.

Leah graduated from LaGrange High School with distinguished honors and within the top 1% of her class. While dual-enrolling at West Georgia Technical College, she made the president's list for five semesters. Leah also participated in DECA, tennis, and National Honors Society.

Leah has attended UYC Camp Woodmen and Camp Cotubic. In her free time, she likes to draw, read, play piano and enjoy nature.

After high school, Leah will attend Georgia Institute of Technology to pursue a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering.

*Favorite Scripture:* Luke 12:32

*Favorite Quote:* "If I have seen further than others, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."—Sir Isaac Newton



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Sept. 10:** *Feast of Trumpets*

**Sept. 19:** *Day of Atonement*

**Sept. 24-29:** *Feast of Tabernacles*

**Oct. 1:** *Eighth Day*

**Nov. 9-12:** *Young Adult Enrichment Weekend, Turner, Oregon*

**Dec. 9:** *Leadership Workshop, Temecula, California*

**Dec. 21-25:** *Winter Family Weekend, Cincinnati, Ohio*

**Dec. 21-25:** *Northwest Winter Family Weekend, Portland, Oregon*



FEAST REGISTRATION

<https://www.ucg.org/members/feast>