



United Church of God an International Association

eNews from Ministerial and Member Services

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Personal From the President...

Dear fellow servants of God,

Beyond Today Recording

Yesterday, three *Beyond Today* programs were recorded in our new studio. All of us who were part of the studio audience exclaimed how compelling all three presenters were! All three categories of content were represented: prophetic, doctrinal and Christian living. We have now produced 366 programs.

- Darris McNeely: *Three Signs Before Jesus Returns* (364)
- Steve Myers: *Will I Go to Heaven?* (365)
- Gary Petty: *Prayer: Key to Spiritual Growth* (366)

The new spacious set gives the presenters greater freedom of movement. This, coupled with the live studio audience and the attractiveness of the set itself is producing a much higher quality program that we pray should engage our viewing audience in a greater way than before. Please join us in praying for the success of the program and that it will allow people to hear these words of life. All three of the programs recorded yesterday were indeed words of life.

Scott Ashley Teaching at Ambassador Bible College



Scott Ashley lectures to the ABC Class of 2019.

Scott Ashley is teaching Harmony of the Gospels this week and next at ABC. We always appreciate him coming to visit. We also appreciate being able to consult with him in person on current publications that we work on.

Visit to Austin, Texas

This past weekend Bev and I traveled to Austin, Texas, and visited our congregation there. Elder Tim Seelig and his wife hosted us. We visited with Carol Lester whose husband Harold died in October.

One of purposes for being there was to celebrate Coleman and Waco pastor Stan Erickson and his wife Judy's 50th wedding anniversary at an event that had been planned by their children. It was indeed a most wonderful way to share this happy moment with good friends.

We have been emphasizing the subject of marriage more of late. The November/December issue of *Beyond Today* had a marriage theme and the cover article was "How You Can Have a Lasting Marriage."

Since we are living in a time when foundations of untouchable values are crumbling, we as a church need to be pro-active and positive in dealing with marriage. We need to revitalize our vision of marriage with a mature, practical outlook, well-grounded in God's Word. If we approach marriage like we approach our spiritual conversion, we will do well.

Marriage serves not only you and your spouse, but also the Church and society. Marriage may more successfully handle activities such as caring for orphans and aged parents than do social agencies.

It is the best relationship for nurturing children.

A good marriage is a powerful witness for young adults to emulate, especially in a society that suffers from too many deficient role models.

I am happy to hear of upcoming marriages in the Church and pray for all of them to subscribe to God's values that yield happiness.

I used the occasion of the Austin, Texas, visit to write a subscriber development letter to our nearly 15,000 donors and co-workers and highlighted the subject of marriage and offered our booklet *Marriage & Family*.

I'd like to share some of what I said in that letter:

Today I'm very pleased to offer you our special, absolutely free study guide: *Marriage & Family: The Missing Dimension*. Whether you are married or not, the material in this booklet will open your eyes to the subject of marriage and family as being much more than a biological or cultural event. This bond reveals a relationship between God and man, and is one spoken of throughout the Bible.

I have just returned from a special celebration of my friends' 50th wedding anniversary. Their two children surprised them along with about 60 of us who delivered tributes and recollected memories past. I have known my friend for 54 years and his wife almost that long. It was a beautiful and joyous event of lives wrapped in love and held together with faithfulness.

The marriage relationship between a human male and female was created in the Garden of Eden and is described in the first chapters of the Bible. Here's how it started:

"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it'" (Genesis 1:26-28).

And in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

An outcome of a faithful and loving marriage is children and family. All this was fashioned by God's mindset--which the apostle John defines as, "God is Love" (1 John 4:8). This is how marriage was created and meant to be. It is beautiful, loving, secure and produces good fruit. Having the mindset of God is the only way to genuine happiness and lasting fulfillment in a marital relationship.

The Bible does, however, relate a history of mankind trying alternative means for "love." Polygamy and other aberrant relationships entered the picture. Man decided on new "rules" for marriage. But, they all had their problems and disastrous outcomes. The same is true now with same-sex marriages as well as all other lifestyles deviating from what God intended.

The laws that govern marriage are as absolute as the laws of physics. All actions have predictable results. God did, however, allow man to tamper with these principles to see first-hand that non-compliance to His original instructions produces pain. Christ, when speaking about divorce, stated that what was "allowed" was not the ideal. Jesus said: "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so" (Matthew 19:8-9).

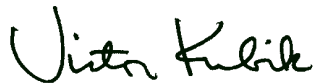
God describes the relationship between Himself and His people as *marriage*. There are many biblical passages that speak directly of this. Examples of this include:

- "For your Maker is your husband." (Isaiah 54:5).
- "'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:31-32).

In the very end of the Bible the imagery of marriage is held up as the relationship between God and man: "Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:2).

Our free 80-page booklet gives a *physical* as well as a *spiritual* explanation of marriage. You can download it immediately from our Beyond Today website at <https://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/booklets/marriage-and-family-the-missing-dimension>. Some of the material of interest covers God's instruction manual for marriage, dating do's and don'ts, popular sexual myths, divorce-proofing your marriage, bringing up moral children and much more.

In Christ's service,



Victor Kubik

From Ministerial and Member Services...

Recent Ordinations



James and Stacey Malizia

On January 5, 2019, James Malizia was ordained into the ministry. He and his wife, Stacey, serve in the San Francisco Bay Area, California, congregation.



Tom and Terry Meece

On January 5, 2019, Tom Meece was ordained into the ministry. He and his wife, Terry, serve in the Petaluma, California, congregation.

Boundary Waters Adventure (BWA)



Boundary Waters Adventure launches July 21-28 and we look forward to welcoming 14 young adults on a grand adventure. Applicants must be between 18 (must be a high-school graduate) to 30+. Apply now at <http://uyc.ucg.org/camp/bwa>.



The location will be the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Voyageurs National Park in northeastern Minnesota. Tuition is \$250. The application deadline is April 15. We anticipate filling up quickly (two applications already) so please don't be disappointed--apply now! For questions please contact Frank Dunkle at Frank_Dunkle@ucg.org.

Video: Highlighting the New *Beyond Today* Recording Studio

We are pleased to make available a short, 6-minute video to share with the brethren that highlights the construction and completion of the Church's new Video Recording Studio. This video is suitable for playing during the announcement portion of Sabbath services.



Below is the link to access downloadable versions of the video for playing. To ensure smooth playback, please use the Downloads link to download it directly to a computer or flash drive for playback at services (rather than playing it in a browser directly off the Internet).

<https://www.ucg.org/beyond-today/beyond-today-daily/the-new-beyond-today-studio>

The first three programs we recorded in the new studio will air in February, beginning on Sunday, February 3. Here is what's scheduled:

- "Are We Living in the Time of the End?" by Gary Petty (February 3-9, 2019).
- "The Four Horsemen of Revelation" by Darris McNeely (February 10-16, 2019).
- "Are You Led by God's Spirit?" by Steve Myers (February 17-23, 2019).



Please pray for success and effectiveness in all aspects of our work to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God.

-- Peter Eddington, Media and Communications Services

Inside United Podcast

Scott Ashley - Archaeology, Part 2

Scott Ashley and Victor Kubik dig deeper into the topic of archaeology and how advancements in technology and technique are making it harder to deny the validity of the Bible.

<https://www.ucg.org/members/united-news/inside-united/inside-united-podcast-103-scott-ashley-archaeology-part-2>

Listen to past episodes or read the transcripts:

<https://www.ucg.org/members/united-news/inside-united>

Sermon Disc Program Set #130 Available

Sermons newly published for the Sermon Disc Program (SDP 130) are now available for download. You can access them, as well as archived SDP sermons at <https://www.ucg.org/sermon-disc-program>

The Sermon Disc Program is a service provided by the home office intended for shut-ins as well as for congregations needing video sermons when a live speaker is not available. If you have any questions, you can contact chaz_leathers@ucg.org or rudy_rangel@ucg.org.

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