



## United Church of God *an International Association*

### eNews from Ministerial and Member Services

Issue 481

July 29, 2021

#### Personal From the President...

I would like to begin by asking for prayers for all of our brothers and sisters who have been afflicted with the Delta variant of COVID-19. As mentioned last week, a number of staff and campers returned from Camp Pinecrest with this illness. Some have suffered fevers lasting for days.

Our camp staff members have been on the front lines of selfless service for our youth. I want to thank all who put their whole heart into providing an unforgettable camp experience including both Christian education and recreation for our young people.

We also know of many around the world who have been infected, including those in other Church of God groups. We pray earnestly that they recover quickly from this highly contagious illness.

#### **Trip to Rome last Sabbath**

Last Sabbath on the way home from Camp Woodland in Georgia, Beverly and I stopped to visit our congregation and ministry in Rome, Georgia. Friday evening, we had dinner with the newly arrived assistant pastor Nick Lamoureux along with his wife, Megan, and eight-month-old daughter, Maddie. We have valued our relationship for the past nearly two years, starting with their year-long assignment in Malawi, then more training and study at the home office, and now ordination and service in our field ministry.

On the Sabbath, we visited the Rome congregation. It is a very engaging church and we thoroughly enjoyed being with them. Afterward, we went to the home of pastor Rick Beam and his wife, Angela, where we spent the afternoon visiting. Please pray for Angela, who is recovering slowly from colon cancer surgery. Please pray for all others who we come to know who have serious health matters.

I am ever grateful for our ministry—veterans and young alike—who are driven with a pure mission to serve the people whom God has called.

#### **God's Work in Italy**

Carmelo Anastasi, the director of our Italian work, wrote this encouraging report to me which I will share with you.

“I am pleased to inform you that on July 25, 2021, our Lord has added ten more new members to His Church in Italy. Last year, we had nine baptisms. These new members were aided by Facebook and more than 120 video sermons published on our YouTube channel LaBuonaNotiziaTV.



On Sunday, July 25, eight new people were baptized in Sirmione, Italy.  
Two more were baptized by Angelo Di Vita.

“The video sermons on YouTube deal with biblical themes aimed at awakening our audience (that is predominantly Catholic) from spiritual numbness. Our channel has over 20,000 subscribers and we have had over a million views of the video ‘Evident Signs That Christ’s Return Is Near.’

“All of our video sermons on YouTube include a link to the UCG.org website. Many viewers contact us and want to know more. We invite them to follow our Bible studies every Tuesday evening, where they can ask questions and receive our answers live. This method has proved to be very effective over the past two years. It has, in fact, produced nearly 100 new people who regularly return to connect with us via video conference and participate in our Sabbath services.

“It is really true that faith comes from hearing the Word, but also from reading it. We have recently been able to produce an Italian version of the brochures on clean and unclean meats, biblical Holy Days, marriage and family, the Ten Commandments and the time of the end. These are some of the topics that most highlight our doctrinal identity to the Italian public.

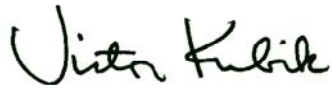
“Over the past two years, we have shipped over 1,500 pieces of each booklet. We plan to translate and print more brochures gradually as funds permit.

“The coronavirus pandemic has awakened the consciences of many towards biblical prophecy. It seems that the Church in Italy has finally begun to experience significant numerical as well as spiritual growth.

“The Feast of Tabernacles in Italy this year will see about 120 participants, of which 50% are from the United States, the United Kingdom and other European countries. We hope everyone can travel and participate. We will be providing more information soon. God’s work in Italy would not be able to progress and grow if not for the help of the Church at

the international level, towards which our gratitude, loyalty and sincere Christian love always go.”

In Christ’s service,



Victor Kubik

## Report from Camp Buckeye

Pre-teen Camp Buckeye, located in North Central Ohio, ended on Wednesday, July 28. This year, we had 62 campers and 54 staff members. The weather was hot and sunny, with daytime highs in the mid to upper 80s, but the overnight temperatures were in the low 60s.



Our list of activities included archery, arts and crafts, broomball, court games, canoeing, fishing, field games, indoor games, kickball, nature walk and watersports. A couple of our evening campfire highlights included the Monday night sing-a-long, led by Mark Graham, and kettle corn on Tuesday night after “minute-to-win-it” games.





The Christian Living classes each morning had messages on “Being Anchored to God,” “Keeping our Minds Fixed on the Kingdom of God” and “Proof of God’s Existence as seen in Creation.”



We’re very grateful to God for blessing us with a wonderful, safe camp and an amazing group of volunteer staff that worked very hard to help our children have an enjoyable camp experience.

—Len Martin, camp director, Camp Buckeye

## Report from Camp Woodland



Many of you, as well as campers and staff, have been praying fervently every day for God to protect the camp from any outbreak of illness or injuries and we are extremely grateful to report no COVID cases as of Thursday. Please continue to pray for no illness as everyone returns home. Our God is more powerful than anything we could face and we have seen it this week, no doubt in our minds. 70 campers and 55 staff members are wrapping up an amazing week of teen camp in Temple, Georgia! Some of the highlights this week:

- The courageous campers who have been willing to open up and share their challenges and to express their gratitude for the support and encouragement they've received at camp.



- A wonderful team of dedicated dorm counselors who've encouraged their campers in a meaningful way every day. It's the most intense job at camp, but also the most rewarding.
- Amazing campfire time led by a different team of young adult staff members each night. Many had an interactive theme and have led to some very meaningful moments. Our young adults have so much to offer and we are thankful for their enthusiasm and dedication to come to camp to serve their younger brothers and sisters.



- Tubing the river! Dorms have taken a fun bus ride to a tubing outfitter and were served lunch at the park afterwards by a lovely couple from the Atlanta congregation.
- Many fun sports and activities have filled our week and we could not be more grateful to God for the opportunity to be here, as many campers and staff have expressed in so many prayers and conversations this week.
- The dedication of many behind-the-scenes staff members who make camp possible, we appreciate them all so much. Every role this year was critical—on account of being short

staffed due to last minute quarantines of some staff and campers before camp began. God filled in the holes and all has gone smoothly, if not exactly to plan.

One camper summed up Camp Woodland this way: “It doesn’t just *feel* genuine here, it *is* genuine.” What greater compliment could we ever hope for?

—Jay & Jennifer Ledbetter, Camp Pinecrest

## Inside United Podcast



### **Aaron Dean—Representing the Gospel to Communist China**

With the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party recently in the news, Aaron Dean, International Advisor, shares his experiences with high-ranking members of that regime, and others, while assisting Herbert W. Armstrong on his global evangelism for the Worldwide Church of God.

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