



United Church of God an International Association

eNews from Ministerial and Member Services

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From the Home Office...

Dear ministers and brethren,

As we approach the end of the summer season, things and our focus can change.

Our children go back to school, we finish up our vacations or plan to take one if we haven't had time to take some time off over the last few months, and our thoughts turn back to work and being ready for the months ahead.

It's the same here at the home office. This week, the *Beyond Today* TV team recorded three new episodes that will air later in the fall. It was good to see the whole crew working together, the video studio set up and a live audience there to support the presenters. The programs that were recorded were timely, topical and educational. You will enjoy them, and they send a strong message to the world around us.

Things are gearing up for Ambassador Bible College (ABC), as classes begin the week of Aug. 21. This year there are 26 students who will be in attendance, arriving here next week. Instructors and staff are busy preparing for their arrival and the school year. As something new this year, we plan to make video recordings of an ABC class available to the membership on a weekly basis so you can follow along in the teaching of one of the books of the Bible, as taught by an ABC instructor.

Next week, the Council of Elders will meet and there is a full agenda of items to discuss as the Church moves forward. As I have been in this role for a few months now, I see just how big this responsibility is. This is not a job, it is a responsibility to God. This is His Work, and we all have a part in it. Just like God the Father and Jesus Christ are always at work, we must always be at work seeking direction and guidance from Him, and using the resources He provides to do His will.

As we look ahead, for all of us there is a reminder in the sky that an important time of the year is quickly approaching.

Last night, I woke and went outside for a while and noticed the bright, what seemed to be full moon shining down. Tonight (Thursday) is actually the full moon—God signaling to us that just two full moons from now we will be celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles. Physical preparations for the Feasts wherever you are going have been underway for a while, but Feast coordinators are in the final stretch of their plans making sure all is ready as the Church of God leaves their homes and journeys to the place where He has placed His name for the Feast.

As physical preparations are underway, and all of the ministry and so many of our members have a vital and important role in the Feast, now is the time for all of us to be making spiritual preparations.

Take the time to think about what these upcoming Holy Days mean. The Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth (or Last Great) Day all have a specific meaning in God's plan. He has given us the great blessing and privilege of understanding His plan for humanity, and what a great, loving plan it is—for all humanity! No other body except the true Body of Christ understands this great truth of God.

Make sure your physical preparations for the Feast are complete, but do not neglect the spiritual preparation that is absolutely requisite if we are to derive the absolute joy, rejoicing, peace and assurance that comes from observing God's holy, appointed times with our hearts, minds and souls.

Remember, too, that the weekly Sabbath is one of those holy convocations and appointed times God provides. "Don't forsake the assembling of yourselves together."

Have a wonderful and productive day of preparation and inspiring Sabbath day.

If you will be in Cincinnati for Sabbath services, in person or virtually, we look forward to being with you.

In Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Shabi', followed by a period.

Rick Shabi

From Ministerial and Member Services...

Celebration of Life for Dianne Clark

A Celebration of Life for Dianne Clark will be held on Thursday, Aug. 18, in Torrance, California. Details on the in-person gathering and instructions for how to attend through Zoom are posted on the webpage for the Freeland, Michigan, congregation: ucg.org/congregations/freeland-mi/posts/dianne-clark-celebration-of-life-890421.

Report From Camp Buckeye

It was another wonderful year at Pre-teen Camp Buckeye located in north central Ohio's Amish country. This year 74 staff members came to serve 64 campers amid beautiful weather with sunny skies and gentle breezes. A more extensive write-up will be in an upcoming issue of the *United News*, but here are a few highlights.



Many of our regular activities returned, included archery, arts and crafts, broomball, court games, canoeing, fishing, field games, kickball, duck-duck-splash and watersports. It is worth noting that this was one of the most productive years for fishing we have had in nearly a decade. Campers from every dorm caught fish; some campers caught multiple fish and a total of 42 fish were caught this year!



One new activity this year that proved to be a big delight for the children was Escape Room. The campers entered a room filled with Bible-based clues. They worked together to solve each clue and move on to successive clues in order to “escape.”



Our evening campfire highlights included a skit provided by our support services staff, several minute-to-win-it games, kettle corn, and a few campfire songs conducted by Mrs. Cobb.

As always, we thank God for His blessing upon the camp, the campers and the volunteer staff who worked very hard to help our children have an enjoyable camp experience.

—Len Martin, director, Camp Buckeye

Report From Camp Woodland

Our teens completed a wonderful week in beautiful Camp Woodland in Temple, Georgia!



Our UYC camp theme, “Becoming Sons and Daughters of God,” was emphasized throughout the week in our Christian living sessions, in our “extra” interactive discussions and even before bed in conversations with our dorm parents and their campers.

The campers once again amazed the staff with their depth of thought, courage, bold ideas, positive attitudes, leadership and kindness displayed throughout the week.

Every evening we ended the day gathered together for our “campfire” which was led by a different trio of young adults each day. Steve Parker worked with the young adults on their presentations before each session to ensure they were successful, reemphasizing the day’s theme and getting across the message they wanted to share with the campers.



And before we said goodnight, we prayed together and sang our camp song, arm in arm, swaying along to guitar accompaniment provided by camper Dane Howard. Our camp song was “God is Calling Children.” The lyrics to that hymn were particularly meaningful to our

theme: “God is calling children to His royal family. Sharing in His blessings, living in His love.”

A couple of other highlights this year were gathering on buses for an evening event at the local skating rink and our 70s-themed dance with lots of fun and comical attire from both staff and campers.



We worked hard, played hard and learned some wonderful things from one another. One camper shared, “I feel like I’ve really grown closer to God and understand better what my purpose is.”

God provided for our every need throughout camp and both campers and staff are very grateful for another wonderful camp. Hope to see you at Woodland next year!

—Jay Ledbetter, director, and Philip Aust, assistant director, Camp Woodland

Pray for the Gospel to Have Free Course

(2 Thes. 3:1 KJV)

The Work of God in French-speaking West Africa—Part 2

Tim Pebworth, pastor for congregations in France and senior pastor for French-speaking West Africa wrote:

“In part 1 of this report we asked for your prayers that the Church can be formally registered and recognized. In Côte d’Ivoire, registration would allow the Church to organize and advertise large-scale Bible studies. Because of the previous civil wars, any event over just a few people must be registered with the police and the Church must pay to have local police present. Registration greatly simplifies this process. Registration would also smooth the

transition from our current church hall in the northern region of Man onto a new 2.5-acre parcel where the Church can farm a portion of the land while also increasing the size of the church hall and adding facilities for Feast observance.

“In Benin, registration would allow the Church to host public campaigns at its facility. Unfortunately, registration requires that they have church hall in the first place, something they have never had. However, thanks to donations from a congregation in California, land was purchased last year and they are now raising funds to start construction of a church hall, office, kitchen and apartment. At the same time, the congregation is working to open a reading and language-learning center on the property to help address the literacy problems in their area. The reading center would also help employ some of the local church members. In Togo, registration would allow the Church to register its existing properties in the name of the Church to support continued growth.

“The challenges are great and the brethren know that all these things are in God’s hands. They would greatly appreciate your zealous prayers so that God’s word can go out in this region.”

—Peter Eddington, Operation Manager, Media and Communications Services

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United Church of God | PO Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027

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