

UNITED NEWS

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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2015

Beyond Today Travels to Texas

by Milan Bizic

For the first time ever, *Beyond Today Live* hit the road for a three-event tour in Dallas, San Antonio, and Houston, Texas. *Beyond Today* hosts Darris McNeely, Steve Myers and Gary Petty each presented a segment of the program titled *America: The Time Is Now!* The hosts presented a message that explained why we have issues in the world and our personal lives: sin; what the solution is: repentance and realizing your potential as God's literal child; and the next critical steps: following Jesus' example in everything, including Sabbath observance and baptism.

The messages were intended to be both uplifting and challenging for our guests, some of whom were experiencing the message of the Bible for the first time. Others represented our current subscriber base, some of whom have been reading and watching our message for years. We hope this represents a new step in their engagement with the work of the Church and in their spiritual growth as individuals God is calling for His purpose.

The three hosts were accompanied and assisted by Church president Victor Kubik and Media and Commu-



Gary Petty Presents at the Beyond Today Personal Appearance Campaign in San Antonio, Texas.

Clint Porter

Please see page 18

Feast of Tabernacles Reports for 2015



Cochobamba, Bolivia



Kalutara, Sri Lanka



Branson, Missouri



Ghana

FEAST REPORTS
pages 3-12 & 17

FEAST PHOTOS
pages 13-16

The United Church of God held another inspiring Feast of Tabernacles to worship God and keep His festival at sites around the world from Sept. 28 through Oct. 5. There were 13,780 brethren who attended United festival sites throughout the world—a 5 percent increase over last year's count of 13,118.

Read the reports from each site, arranged by region, beginning on page 3. The center fold starting on page 13 has one photo from almost every site around the world. If you would like to see more photos please visit the United Church of God Flickr site to see each of these photos published and more. You can see the photos on Flickr at the website address <https://flic.kr/s/aHskny7RB3>

Adding to the sense of unity and community, the Church ran a hashtag campaign across social media sites, encouraging Feastgoers to post their photos using #ucgfoto on Twitter and Instagram. On the festival website, photos with the hashtag were gathered in a cascade of photos as the Feast progressed. See the archive of the photos at <http://feast.ucg.org/ucgfoto-2015>.

Once again, the millennial spirit of the Feast blessed the Church as the Body rejoiced in the foretaste of the return of Jesus Christ and His rule on earth.

May God's Kingdom come. **UN**



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BY THE NUMBERS

13,780

Participated in the Feast of Tabernacles 2015

Ambassador Bible College Opens Doors to a New Class

by Aaron Dean

It is the 17th year of the Ambassador program but its first year opening as Ambassador Bible College. The name was changed last year to make it easier to bring international students to attend ABC.

The first event for our 24 new students was the welcome picnic on Aug. 30. Alumni created a “big top” atmosphere with red and white circus decorations. Two of our alumni dressed as clowns to add to the atmosphere. Frank Dunkle—who replaced Gary Antion as ABC coordinator after Mr. Antion’s retirement—welcomed students before the day’s activities entered full swing.

The “people scavenger hunt” gave students a chance to get to know one another and even alumni, faculty and staff. Lunch featured beef hot dogs or chili dogs with all the trimmings, pretzels and lemonade. The traditional circus traditions of popcorn and ice cream completed the course.

After lunch, students and alumni were divided into teams to compete in novelty olympics type games. The friendly competitions built more camaraderie and helped to bind the new students as a group. The day’s events ended with the students pitching in to help set up the lecture hall for the next day’s orientation meetings.

Orientation day provided the usual “high-speed download” of information on how ABC works and what to expect. The students gave close attention as the various faculty members took turns explaining policies and expectations. Although there is new leadership, Ambassador continues operation very much as it has, continuing to serve as a “character-building institution.”

Victor Kubik and Dr. Dunkle both highlighted that the revised mission of ABC is to “diligently uphold and faithfully teach the truths of God, as found in the Bible, to equip disciples of Jesus Christ for a life of faithfulness and godly service.” Throughout the year, students will not only study and increase their understanding but will have opportunities to practice the type of godly service they can continue in the Church for the rest of their lives.

We all look forward to a successful class of 2016. **UN**



Photos by Aly Johnson

Top photo: ABC students and alumni come together as a team to play in relay games. Bottom left: Alumnus David Kovalchick and student Lance Wallis work together to achieve their goal in the game. Bottom right: Sydney Bradley and Ron B. Bell play a version of Chinese telephone as part of the relay games.

ABC Appoints New Officers for 2016 School Year



by Frank Dunkle

Ambassador Bible College has appointed officers for the class of 2016. Eric Fike will serve as class president, closely assisted by secretary Jennifer Browning and treasurer Sydney Bradley. Ronald B. Bell will serve as class monitor, keeping equipment and facilities in their proper order.

Additional leadership positions include the service projects committee, led by Annick Stefanin and Sheila Derr, and the social activities committee, jointly led by Rachael Boise and Josef Franke. *The ABC Times* will be edited and produced by Joel McNair and Lauren Lewis. Karen Suppes will organize the message board, and Lance Wallis will provide the class’s technical support. The class music coordinators will be Joel McNair, Rachael Boise and Amanda Richards.

This year’s class has quickly developed friendships and good working relationships while demonstrating strong leadership potential. The faculty has enjoyed working with them through the start of the academic year and look forward to very good results as the year progresses. **UN**

Back row: Lance Wallis, Ron B. Bell, Eric Fike, Josef Franke, Joel McNair.

Front row: Sydney Bradley, Annick Stefanin, Sheila Derr, Karen Suppes, Jennifer Browning, Lauren Lewis, Amanda Richards, Rachael Boise

Linda Merrick

Feast of Tabernacles Reports 2015

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OVERALL TOTAL.....	13,780



Canmore, Alberta, Canada

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Africa

Benin Cameroon Ivory Coast

More than 103 brothers and sisters celebrated this year at the Feast of Tabernacles in four sites: **Benin** (at the Hotel KOB in Cotonou with 22 participants), **Ivory Coast** (at CENRA Center in Lamé with 34 participants), **Cameroon** (at our church complex in Douala with 25 participants) and **Congo** (in Centre Verbis Mbudi in Kinshasa with 22 participants).

Peace, joy and harmony were among our brothers and sisters. In all our Feast sites there were special music, an evening of dancing and cultural activities.

We thank God for His protection and blessing this year, and we also thank the brothers and sisters for their help and their support.

Moise Mabout

Ghana Accra and Agona

Ghana was home for two Feast sites this year. Thirty-nine rejoicing brethren gathered at Value View University campus just north of Accra. It was a peaceful setting with a family atmosphere. Senior pastor Mark Mickelson and his wife Michelle, along with Darrell and Janet Keisel from the U.S., were in Accra for the first few

days and the last few days of the Feast. The brethren all stayed on the campus and were able to have meals together, play some outdoor and indoor games. It was also an opportunity for the family speech club to meet, and for all members to sit in and learn from the meeting. Table topics were led by Franklin Hiagbe, and speeches given by Meekness Kuvedzi, Alex Kuvedzi and Franklin Hiagbe. Mr. Mickelson encouraged the members to keep up the good work. Another evening, the teens presented speeches to allow them to show what they had been learning in the teen studies. They all showed exceptional poise and organizational skills. Even the youngest member of the teen study group, 9-year-old Yayara, gave a speech on faith.

During the middle of the Feast, the Mickelsons and Keisels traveled to the Agona site, where about 250 happy brethren celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles on Church-owned property. There were opportunities for games and family activities and lots of fellowship. Most of the members stayed in the village and walked to the Feast site daily. The Feast site gave us the feeling of sitting under our own fig tree. There were no fig trees, but there were nim trees, a cornfield close by and goats roaming peacefully. American visitors were welcomed with hugs, handshakes and smiles by all. About a third of the members speak English and the rest speak the local dialect, Fante. Translators were provided for the English speakers. The language difference did not hinder

the warm welcome or enthusiasm. Song services were typical African style of raising the rafters in song.

Messages at both sites focused on the meaning of the Feast, learning to fear God, preparing to be leaders, studying God's Word, determining not to compromise with God's law, and having peace in our lives.

Many pictures were taken while we made lasting memories and new friendships. We all look forward the Kingdom.

Janet Keisel

Kenya Got Kachola, Ogembo, and Meru

There were 477 members from the East African countries of Kenya and Tanzania who observed an inspiring and encouraging Feast at three Church-owned sites spread across Kenya.

Above the village of Got Kachola, 239 from Southwest Kenya and Northwest Tanzania rejoiced together in temporary dwellings with a panoramic view of Lake Victoria. Sunny days in the semi-arid region were packed with services, lots of music, and plenty of food and fellowship. Activities for the youth included a boat ride on the lake to visit a nearby island.

A four-hour-drive heading northwest found 123 more brethren who joyously celebrated the festival near the village of Ogembo. The lush, tropical mountain

setting there affords beautiful landscapes with abundant foliage. Brethren from various tribes across the region enjoyed being together and receiving the blessings of the festival's food, fellowship and daily services.

Another 10-hour drive northwest was where 115 members from Eastern, Central and Western Kenya gathered to keep the Feast in a private rural setting away from the town of Meru. The snow-capped peak of nearby Mt. Kenya provided both an interesting backdrop and the sparkling clear water supply for all the facilities at the Feast site. A variety of weather added to the daily activities of spiritual food, fellowship, music, games and evenings around big campfires.

Many, many East African brethren expressed their great desire to have international visitors come join them at the Feast in Kenya in 2016. *Karibuni sana* (a warm welcome)!

John Elliott

Lake Malawi

This year's Feast was a successful one. We started the first half of the Feast at this beautiful lake shore resort with 88 people. We were not able to hold the Feast at our usual place because it was being used by an international music festival.

The number of people increased as we entered the second half of the Feast to 112. Out of 156 who applied to attend the Feast this year, only 44 failed to make it.

We were privileged to have Aaron and Michelle Dean during the first half of the Feast. Mr. Dean delivered very inspiring sermons that addressed the spiritual needs of the members. And the rest of the days were taken over by the local leaders, who also delivered inspiring sermons. Feast activities included children's treat, variety show, youth barbecue, sports, women's seminar and men's marriage seminar.

The highlight of the Feast activities was a men's marriage seminar, where there was interesting and lively participation of discussion on "five basic needs of women." Most members commented that they have never attended a seminar of that nature before where they were told how to love and take good care of their wives.

All in all, it was a very successful Feast, and people are looking forward to next year's Feast of Tabernacles.

Gracious Mpilangwe

South Africa

Margate

The Feast in South Africa was a great success! Our highest attendance was 150, which with the usual number of unwell Feastgoers suggests a total of approximately 160.

Apart from South Africans, we were

pleased to have visitors from Australia, Canada and the U.S.A. All indicated having thoroughly enjoyed the Feast and the opportunity to travel to various tourist destinations at minimum cost.

Many functions were enjoyed by all, and the highlights were three Bible studies, a family day, a dance, a seniors luncheon, a youth day, a games evening, welcome and farewell functions and a catered lunch between services on the Eighth Day. Beach outings are always very popular with the families, as our fine sandy beaches, warm water and lifeguards on duty make for enjoyment.

Special music was outstanding and was a highlight of the Feast. A further highlight was the baptism of two new members to the Body of Christ.

We are already looking forward to and are planning for next year's Feast of Tabernacles in Margate. Due to the Feast falling very late next year, Oct. 17 to Oct. 24, it is most likely that it will fall after school holidays, meaning that even more accommodation will be available at even cheaper rates. We look forward to even more overseas visitors next year.

Roy Demont

Togo

Kpalime

God in His great love helped us once more to celebrate this festival with great joy. It was in Kpalime, a town surrounded by mountains with lush vegetation, where we hosted the Feast of Tabernacles.

We had 48 participants, all dressed in their best clothes during all eight days where God had allowed us to enjoy His songs and be educated by His life-giving Word.

To enhance this beautiful festival, Mark and Michelle Mickelson had brought a large suitcase containing various gifts for the women and children. As per our custom, and as a Feast gift, we rewarded our students by giving them some special school supplies and added a little monetary gift of 15 euros per student to help the parents with school fees.

Women and young ladies had made necklaces and earrings during their leisure time. We also had a visit from Moise Mabout, minister in Cameroon, and our sister Kemi who came from Cotonou and had spent two days with us. Mr. Mabout had urged us to be vigilant during his two sermons, which were very constructive.

These eight days once again gave us a vision of the next life we will share with our brother Jesus Christ. It was wonderful. God has given us everything for the success of this Feast, and we are very grateful to Him.

Our thanks also go to all those who directly or indirectly contributed to this perfect success.

Kossi Fiaboe

Zambia

Lusaka and Copperbelt

Zambia had three Feast sites this year. Lusaka hosted 170 people. Copperbelt hosted 79 people. Kalukanya had 120 people attend the Feast, which brings a total of 369 participants for 2015.

In Lusaka, we had a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles at the Garden Hotel. We were blessed with visitors from South Africa and the U.S.A.

When we assembled, we had an opening night service on Sept. 27. A minute of silence was observed in memory of pastor Wilson Nkhoma, who died on the May 26, 2015.

We received spiritual messages from one of our guests, Howard Davis, until he left for Malawi on Oct. 1. Shannon Lucas joined us and graced us with special music and uplifting messages.

Other activities during the Feast were special music from different congregations, and one from Nomusa from South Africa. We had 12 children who were blessed by Mr. Lucas, and 22 were prayed for and anointed. We had seven baptisms, and the occasion was exciting as both members and non-members came to witness the baptism at the pool. We had the ordination of Filius C. Jere from the eastern province of Zambia to become a deacon. He helps the Church to air the *Beyond Today* program on the radio. He brought with him two prospective members to the Feast. Children also had Sabbath school with Tabo, Mukumbuta, Nancy and Daniel. Oct. 1 was youth day where the youth were given an opportunity to conduct the entire service.

Mr. Davis donated wine and a cake to the seniors lunch that was held, and added to what the church had bought. It was exciting—all enjoyed it and had a lot of fun!

A seminar was held for the ladies that included sharing the Word of God by Felicia—she talked about commitment. Deaconess Maureen Phiri shared with the ladies a presentation about being a godly woman.

The ladies had a gift exchange from ladies of different congregations. Mr. Jere and his wife Chosiwe conducted a conservation-farming seminar. Mr. Davis initiated the seminar, and he encouraged farmers to farm in a different ways.

Sadly, our deacon Jonathan Katapya of Mapoko congregation did not attend the Feast as he was nursing his son who was admitted in Mumbwa hospital and subsequently died after the Feast.

Major Nawa Talama

Kalukanya

Brethren arrived at Kalukanya Feast site safely. This is the third year the Feast was held there. The Feast was characterized

by inspiring messages from Richard Kayame, Patrice Sinyenga, Luke Banda and Alfred Siame.

On Oct. 2 in the afternoon, 13 women from Isoka and women from Kalukanya exchanged gifts. It was marvelous, and it attracted some women from outside the Church from nearby villages as they heard our women singing and dancing during the occasion. On the same day 16 children were blessed.

On the fourth day of the Feast, a boy from a village near the Feast site died of malaria and anemia. Some brethren visited the funeral house, encouraged the parents and later attended the burial. On family day, different games were played. It was a joyous occasion as women proved to be stronger than men during the tug-of-peace game.

Some brethren who came with notable illnesses were treated and healed. They were happy and wanted the Feast to continue.

The Feast was blessed by two visitors. One of them was a village head man, and a member from Shalom Church. They both attended the entire Feast. We hope the messages touched them, and we thanked them for visiting. The day of departure was a happy one, with mixed feelings as we bid farewell to each other.

On behalf of the Zambian people and myself, I would like to send special thanks to the home office and all those who made our Feast in Zambia a success.

Major Nawa Talama

Zimbabwe

Victoria Falls

Fifty-three members met at beautiful Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. Derrick and Denise Strauss from Dallas were able to attend the entire Feast there, and contributed to the messages. Regional pastor Aaron Dean and wife Michelle were there for the last four days, filling in the assignments. Mr. Dean baptized two new members, blessed the children and anointed the sick. Local pastor Mike Mukarati had health and family issue that kept him from attending the Feast, leaving a number of assignments to be filled by others.

All but four of the baptized members were able to come to the Feast. They enjoyed a family day of games and swimming in the camp's pool accompanied by the monkey who roamed freely on the grounds. Deacon Mabasa Chichaya was able to set up the site we have used for many years and took care of local members who are scattered across Zimbabwe. The brethren enjoyed a tea at Victoria Lodge and a tour of Victoria Falls courtesy of the Strausses. It was a very fulfilling Feast, both spiritually and physically.

Aaron Dean

Asia/Pacific

Australia

Merimbula

Another excellent Feast of spiritual and physical blessings was enjoyed by 223 Feast attendees at the pretty seaside town of Merimbula. Two little children, Samantha Schofield and Sam Backman, were blessed during services. Sermons and sermonettes provided strong spiritual food from both older and younger speakers. The flowers, the stuffed toys for the children (excess toys going to Sydney Children's Hospital), and special music (solo, duo, groups and choirs) gave added pleasure each day.

The children's choir, which sang on two occasions, was a special treat—it was heartwarming to see young dads Martin Kusz and Antoine Smiley, as well as Jenny Kusz, enthusiastically guiding the exuberant youngsters. Nicole Ryan and Martin Kusz composed songs that their groups sang. While veterans and other stalwarts provided the benefit of their experience, much of the success of the Feast was due to the energy and input of younger members, including ministerial trainee Nathan Ekama from the U.S.A.—all very encouraging for the future of the Church. The video service from the U.S.A., downloaded by the dedicated communications team, comprised of Trevor Christie, Jamie Ryan and Roy Dyball, was greatly appreciated.

Activities included a seniors Asian banquet, teen tree-climb challenge, dinner dance and the Eighth Day luncheon, plus the usual Merimbula spirit of happy hospitality, open-house and other member-initiated events. The weather was perfect—and there were whales.

Beatrice Stefanovic (Wollongong, New South Wales) said, “The whole Merimbula package is wonderful for everyone; it's lovely that so many people enjoy ‘open house’—even having 30 people over for breakfast!” She found that the sermons “hit the spot” and appreciated Bruce Dean's direction to meet someone new each day. “That opened a lot of interesting doors. It was especially encouraging to see people from the past return this Feast,” she said. The beauty of the Laisa Ha'angana's floral displays also added greatly to the Feast, Beatrice said.

Richard Chapman (Melbourne, Victoria) kept the Feast in Merimbula for the first time. An experience-seeker who travels to different sites each Feast, he said that he and his wife Jessica would actually return to Merimbula. It was a welcoming environment, even apart from Feast attendees, and they enjoyed the scenery and fishing—and fresh fish for dinner! The Feast was very sociable and inclusive, and the services were inspiring.

Mavis Stucci

Rockingham

Once again God's Feast of Tabernacles was held in Rockingham, Western Australia. This was one of four sites God had placed His name in the Land Down Under. It is a beautiful location that played host to a wonderful spiritual atmosphere as around 90 people gathered to worship, honor and rejoice before God.

The Feast began in a good manner and only got better. The opening messages encouraged everyone to rejoice with laughter and look ahead to what Christ will restore across the earth. The West Australian brethren then served up an abundant spread of food to conclude the first Holy Day. This gave opportunity for everyone pres-

ent to introduce themselves as first timers to Western Australia, or for others to get reacquainted with familiar faces.

The rest of the week provided the means to share God's Word about the greatness and necessity of His coming Kingdom, and the important role of the first fruits during the Millennium. Other activities gave members the time to fellowship, such as a family picnic and games afternoon, 10-pin bowling, a Bible quiz evening, an outing to a nearby maritime museum, and a fun-filled dance night.

By the Eighth Day there was a positive and disappointed air among the brethren—positive because of the privilege to be brought close together as God's people and disappointed to have to part ways. Overall, God had made it possible for a warm, friendly and service-orientated Feast that was spiritually uplifting and rewarding. This annual observance truly does rejuvenate the heart and mind to seek first the Kingdom of our Heavenly Father and His righteousness.

Matthew Sieff

Kawana Waters, Sunshine Coast

“Why are we here?” was a most-relevant question asked early in 2015 Feast of Tabernacles at Kawana Waters on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. Top attendance was 311, and the brethren were treated to a wide variety of uplifting and poignant messages from speakers, many with strong international accents. The opening address was due to be given by visiting U.S. speaker Peter Eddington (Media and Communication Services operation manager at the home office in Cincinnati), but unfortunately a severe hailstorm at the Brisbane airport delayed his flight. Festival elder Reg Wright, however, rose to the challenge and enticed us with a vision of a world restored with Jesus Christ at the helm.

All brethren were urged to use our Feast as preparation time, to garner strength and support each other and to rise and overcome the challenges that lay before us. The youth were encouraged to answer their calling (from a persistently ringing mobile phone), while a bullock-team whip reminded us all that working together with teamwork can achieve great change. Victor Kubik's festival message about the kind of people God wants in his family also resonated loud and clear. Further memorable messages developed around the theme of being a Christ-like example in today's world, God's plan of salvation for all mankind, and preparing for our role in the first (and better) resurrection at the return of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Many thanks were offered to those helpers who willingly took on the coordination of events, provided special music, prepared the community center for services, ran the sound system, staffed the business office, provided the essential cup of tea or coffee before and after each meeting, and served behind the scenes to ensure the festival was enjoyable for all involved. The loudest and longest acclamation was a standing ovation on the Eighth Day to acknowledge and thank Christ for His loving involvement in the Feast.

To complement the inspiring messages and fellowship, the weather was near perfect, and the mixture of activities offered opportunity for all to assist or participate. The traditional family dance catered to all age groups, while the waterpark allowed the teenagers and young adults a chance to revel in the Sunshine Coast backdrop. Seniors were taken care of well, and the family day offered to

all an opportunity to relax, play sports, have your face painted or casually attempt to break some unofficial UCG-Australia world records.

All too soon the Feast was over and we had to return to the harsh realities of this world. However, the take-home message comforted us by ensuring that, with the essential ingredient of faith, we can keep firmly fixed in our minds the vision of God's future Kingdom. A new world is coming for which we are all most thankful.

Mark Cant

India

New Delhi

A joyous Feast was held in India with 30 brethren rejoicing and worshiping together in New Delhi. There were 14 international and 16 Indian brethren in attendance. Brethren enjoyed inspiring messages and Bible studies, shared daily meals together and rejoiced in a millennial atmosphere as they grew to love one another, forming deep bonds of friendship.

India is known as the land of contrasts, and a visit to this country warmed the hearts of all who attended. Several of our international brethren said this was a life-changing experience.

New Delhi is rich in history and was the place from where the Mughal emperors ruled. It's been the capital of India since olden times. Later in the 18th century when the English ruled the country, Kolkata became the capital. In 1911, the British transferred the capital back to Delhi. The brethren had the opportunity to explore the city and nearby points of interests on three afternoon tours during the Feast.

A variety show was held, and international and local Indian brethren participated with a variety of dances, songs and reciting of poetry and stories. It was an enjoyable evening, followed by a lovely dinner in a quaint outdoor Italian setting. Only in India can you travel to “Italy” for dinner.

Another special dinner was held outside on the beautiful lawn and gardens of the Umrao Hotel, where music was played and the staff graciously served our small group hors d'oeuvres and wonderful Indian and international cuisine.

Services during the Feast were primarily in English with translation into the Hindi language for the local Indian brethren. David and Jolinda Schreiber were able to attend the first half of the Feast in India and then departed for Sri Lanka. Ken and Ruth Murray came from Sri Lanka and spent the last half of the Feast in India.

Several international brethren joined the Murrays for a memorable post-Feast trip to Agra, where they toured the world famous Taj Mahal and then again enjoyed time with the Agra, India, brethren.

For those interested in enjoying a once-in-a-lifetime experience in a part of the world many seldom visit and rejoice with your brothers and sisters at the Feast in 2016—you are encouraged to come to incredible India!

David Schreiber

Malaysia

Penang

There were 51 brethren who travelled from Malaysia, Singapore, the United States, the United Kingdom

and Australia to the island of Penang, Malaysia, for the Feast of Tabernacles this year. The warmth of the fellowship was matched by daytime temperatures averaging 33 degrees Celsius (90 degrees Fahrenheit). God's hand was evident in the messages, which fit tightly together and provided a wonderful, hope-filled reminder of God's purpose and plan for all mankind.

Activities included a fun-filled social and games evening, a tour of Penang Island's historical sites and points of interest followed by a sumptuous Indian banquet, an amazing race, and a trip to the famous Monkey Island.

Many more opportunities for sharing meals and inspiring conversation were also enjoyed throughout the Feast, a benefit of everyone staying onsite at the Bayview Beach Resort accommodation. God truly blessed us with an inspiring and encouraging Feast of Tabernacles.

Paul Vaughan

New Zealand

Acacia Bay

The New Zealand Feast was held at the spectacular Lake Taupo region on the North Island of New Zealand.

The high attendance was 89. We enjoyed a positive, uplifting atmosphere of brotherly togetherness. People commented that the spirit was wonderfully uplifting as brethren focused on sharing and building family bonds. The many speakers delivered enriching sermons that focused on the purpose of the Feast and our individual and collective responsibilities as called-out-ones to God's plan. Our meeting place and accommodations overlooked the pristine waters of the mighty Lake Taupo, which is framed by snow capped mountains, lush shades of green vegetation and spring time blooms.

First-time Feast attendee Glenda explained her Feast in this way: "My first Feast of Tabernacles was outstanding. Every day I learned something new about the importance of this Feast, and each day the sermons built on each other, linking so much so that only God could have a hand in the type of knowledge and learning I received. My foundation in God is getting stronger because I know it's God's truth and not man's. How blessed I feel to be with others who love God as much as I do and to celebrate his holy Feasts and special calling. I encourage others to seek God's truth about his Holy Days. It will change your life."

What was memorable for me was how the brethren quickly formed a group and prayed for God's intervention when my husband had a heart attack just before services on day seven of the Feast. It demonstrated the great bond formed over the Feast and the faith of those present in God's mercy and healing power. I will always be grateful.

It brought home that the Feast is also a time of healing when those who are broken-hearted. Those who are physically and mentally hurt will have peace. "For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Revelation 7:17).

God speed the day.

Ruth Edge



Philippines

Albuera, Leyte

More than 160 attendees rejoiced together before God at the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day held at Baybayon Ni Agalon Beach Resort in Albuera, Leyte, Philippines from Sept. 28 to Oct. 5, 2015. This number comprises brethren from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, as well as a few guests from the United States and Australia.

Most attendees arrived at the Feast site a day earlier to make sure they didn't miss the opening night service. It was a blessing to have three visiting ministers with us as well. David and Denise Dobson spent the first three days of the Feast with us before moving to the Baguio City site. Senior pastor Earl Roemer arrived on day three from the Davao City site and spent two days before moving to the Hong Kong Feast site. Luzon pastor Rey Evasco and his wife Cynthia arrived on day four and spent the remainder of the Feast in this site.

Various activities contributed to the rejoicing atmosphere at the Feast. Brethren enjoyed games, food delicacies, fellowship and friendships during the orientation night and the family day. Talented and enthusiastic brethren showcased their God-given talents, surprising everyone during the variety show. Wild monkeys seemed to enjoy watching the brethren as they went through cave and mountain trails, and zip-lined during the outing activities at the Hindang Nature Park. Brethren were also given some livelihood ideas as Karlo Santos shared his knowledge on mushroom production. During free time, brethren would enjoy simple activities such as viewing the sunset, a talk at the seashore with family and friends, and bonding with friends at the swimming pool. Other activities included seniors night, movie night and a dinner for those serving.

On the fifth day, as activities begin to wind down in preparation for the Sabbath, Rey Evasco conducted a very lively, interactive and lesson-packed youth and singles forum. He also conducted an open-forum Bible study on Saturday afternoon, where brethren were given the chance to raise questions and clarify some biblical issues. We were also privileged to have one child blessed on the Eighth Day. The brethren did not only enjoy the physical and material provisions at the Feast, but also spiritual blessings through the edifying activities and the many inspiring and uplifting messages given by various speakers.

The Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day in Albuera, Leyte, was once again successful because of the wonderful fellowship and the participation of the enthusiastic brethren, the selfless volunteers who untiringly served in various committees, and above all, the divine help from the Almighty God who Himself hosted, appointed and blessed His festivals and the people whom He has chosen to keep them.

Jose T. Campos

Baguio City

Baguio City was once again one of the three Feast of Tabernacles sites for the United Church of God here in the Philippines. For the 15th consecutive time, the United Church of God's Feast of Tabernacles was again held at the grounds of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines located at the South Drive in Baguio City. We have been privileged to use their newer and improved multipurpose hall for a third time.

The Feast started out our traditional opening night service on the evening of Sept. 27 with the message being

delivered by the festival coordinator. We were expecting an attendance of only about 110 this year but were pleasantly surprised to have our highest attendance reach 162 on the seventh day of the Feast, surpassing our expectations by 147 percent! This was even higher than our highest attendance last year of 127. We had a few of our overseas brethren come from Australia and the United States, as well as a good number of prospective members attending the Feast with us for the first time.

Although there was a typhoon during the second half of the Feast that brought in some rain and strong winds, we were still blessed with relatively good weather conditions during most days of the Feast. The city tour, which was scheduled on the day the typhoon hit the city, was only activity we had to cancel during the Feast.

We were privileged to have David and Denise Dobson for the second half of the Feast. The Dobsons spent the first half of the Feast with our brethren in the Visayas in our Leyte site.

The messages were all uplifting, inspiring and encouraging. Although the webcast sermon by Victor Kubik was not downloaded in time during the Feast, we were still able to view his message on the following Sabbath after the Feast.

The festival show this year was held on the fourth day, in time for the arrival of the Dobsons. It featured festive songs and dances from a number of countries from around the world. Featured were native Filipino songs, popular music and classic folk dances, which included the famous Tinikling. Various wholesome activities were prepared for both the young and old, where everyone had the opportunity to enjoy fun, food, fellowship and games. Among the activities were the youth day activities for the pre-teens and teens held on the second day, the family day on the third day, and the seniors dinner on the sixth day hosted by the teens and young adults.

Everyone present seemed to have felt they were so much blessed by our great God with a greater level of joy, unity, love and togetherness during this year's Feast. This year's Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day will again be remembered as one of the most inspiring and spiritually uplifting Feasts ever.

Rey Evasco

Davao City

The Davao City Feast site at the GSP Camp Alano in Toril hosted 322 brethren, including two overseas guests from the U.S. and New Zealand. Senior pastor Earl Roemer was with us for the opening night service and the first Holy Day. Tom Harbottle was the other foreign guest this year. Of course, as usual, we also had visitors from various parts of the country.

Beginning with the opening night service, inspiring sermonettes, sermons and Bible studies edified the brethren with the vision of the soon-coming Kingdom of God, featured by the theme "Your Part in the Restoration of All Things." God blessed us with excellent weather—sunny with light breezes throughout the Feast. Creative daily flower arrangements added a touch of natural beauty. It was also a joy to experience the warm fellowship with brethren in the serene atmosphere of the GSP camp.

Afternoon activities included tours, livelihood workshops, games for children, fun activities for youths and singles, a seniors' social, and an enjoyable family and sports day with feasting on Davao City's luscious tropical fruits.

Evening activities included a fellowship night, an entertaining variety show, and a church leaders appreciation dinner—which also served as a ladies night and graduation for the Spokesman Club. We also had prac-

tical Christianity sessions on four separate evenings, each devoted to issues relevant to teens, singles, married couples and parents.

As an added blessing, eight individuals were baptized on the seventh day of the Feast: Melvin Baldeovar (Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur), Leonora Bustamante (Davao), Loreto Macadangdang (Davao), German Horil, Jr. (Tagum), Renello Daclan (Davao), Ge-Ain Manlabian (Mati, Davao Oriental), Connie Rose Nagtalon (Davao), and Johny Natad (Alegria, Surigao del Norte). We also had two children blessed on the same day: Sofia Entrina Infantado and Rondel Dave Obsequio Ligo.

As usual, lunch was free for everyone, with roasted calf as part of some of the meals. A few members from abroad sent used clothing, Bibles, and other gift items. Balloons for the children were given as well.

We are very thankful to God for His many wonderful blessings of peace and very inspiring messages, as well as the help and prayers of the brethren in making this recent Feast another very memorable one.

Daniel Macaraeg

Sri Lanka Kalutara

This year Sri Lanka had the most attendees since the 1980s. There were 100 who attended the Feast this year in Kalutara, Sri Lanka, at the beautiful Tangerine Beach

Hotel, where all the brethren stayed and shared meals together. Messages were inspiring and focused. Many talented musicians attended the Feast from Sri Lanka, America and Australia and provided various special music sets.

Many activities were planned for brethren. A cricket game started off the activities at the beginning of the Feast, where many were able to participate in their very first cricket game. Family day consisted of relay games where many got wet and dirty but had a blast anyway. A variety show showcased talent and fun of many from around the world. A family dance was planned where everyone came together to learn new Australian line dances and spend the rest of the time dancing to popular American and Sri Lankan music. On the Sabbath during the Feast was a saree day for all the ladies who attended. Sarees are traditional dresses worn by Sri Lankan women. Sri Lankans and foreigners took part in saree day.

Two exciting excursions were planned. One excursion consisted of sightseeing, a boat ride to a cinnamon plantation, and ended at a baby sea turtle hatchery. The second was for an elephant orphanage, where a few were able to ride an elephant and to see where babies are bottle-fed.

Most would agree that the most exciting aspects of this year's Feast would be spending time with people and getting to know fellow brethren. There was great conversation in a family orientated atmosphere.

The Sri Lankan brethren love to have guests visit them

from around the world. If you want to come visit next year, they will welcome you with open arms for the 2016 Feast of Tabernacles.

Linda Merrick

Tonga

Malo e lelei (hello) to our brethren around the world. We had a wonderful Feast in Tonga, with some of our family from Australia joining us. We had a high attendance of 18 people.

The Lord has blessed us this year with good weather for the Feast. We had rain for the plants and sunshine for activities. Also the air was cool at night.

We prepared an *umu* (underground oven) for the opening night and the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles. Everyone pitched in to help prepare the *umu*. It was a highlight to share the *umu* with our family and guests at the Feast.

Samisoni and Ann Ha'angana prepared activities at the beach with swimming in fresh water in a cave called Anahulu, and they set up a volleyball court. We had the privilege to hear Mrs. Ha'angana and her children, Larisa and Nathaniel, sing for special music. We had special music, "The Lord is My Light," sung by four girls—Larisa, Litia, Priscilla and Sonia. Every day we had our church service with sermon DVDs from America.

We look forward to more visitors next year.

Ofa Lahi atu (love you lots).

Frank and Mohefo 'Osika

British Isles/Europe

France Roquebrune-sur-Argens

The Vacancel resort in Roquebrune-sur-Argens on the French Riviera welcomed 200 brethren from around the world for this year's Feast. In addition to our daily services alternating between French and English, we studied God's Word in two separate Bible studies on the books of Revelation and Daniel, we listened to a lecture on creation vs. evolution, enjoyed a special hymn singing hour in French and English, a family dance, and a talent show. Two baptisms at the Feast energized an already youthful group. Our young people created and decorated special festival booths from sugar cubes, and 18 babies under 2 years old kept their moms busy during services!

For family day we visited Europe's largest marine park, Marineland, marveling at the diversity of marine animal life from orcas, sea lions, dolphins, to sharks and tortoises. Monaco's majestic palace and dramatic sea cliffs provided another day of opportunities for learning, as well as a little shopping. Aix-en-Provence, the beaches of St. Maxime (site of the "Second D-Day" allied invasion of Southern France in August 1944), and the canal city of Port Grimaud rounded out the list of excursions to local sites.

In the middle of the Feast, we were protected from a terrible storm that passed over us, leaving a wake of destruction and death in nearby towns. It was a powerful reminder of God's protection and direction over this year's Feast in France, a Feast filled with wonderful sermons and many special days where friendships were made and reinforced. It was really a foretaste of God's Kingdom.

Maryse Pebworth

Germany Schluchsee

The beautiful Black Forest in Southern Germany was the site of the Feast for 259 brethren from 10 different countries. The Feast site was blessed with seven days of spectacular bright sunshine! The nice weather and beautiful scenery added to the focus of the Kingdom of God in this year's messages. The services were held in the village hall, which provided a beautiful view of the lake. The services were translated simultaneously into English or German as needed.

The Feast began with rousing music, beautiful flowers and glowing candles, setting the stage for a wonderful Feast. The welcome evening provided us the opportunity to greet old friends and meet new ones. The German brethren expressed much gratitude to all the visitors who came from as far as Australia and the U.S., allowing them to have a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles with lots of fellowship opportunities in a family atmosphere.

The Feast activities began with a Bible study for the seniors and a youth activity that challenged their go-kart driving skills.

This year's excursion tour took us to Lake Constance, where we enjoyed a beautiful boat ride. There was also bowling for the seniors, volleyball, a ladies' breakfast, men's and women's discussions and hymn singing.

The youth had several interactive Bible studies, and the little ones—along with their parents and grandparents—enjoyed a walk through the Black Forest accompanied by a forest ranger, who showed them the many dams built by beavers.

A true highlight this year was the homeland evening with an orchestra from Blasiwald and folklore dance

group from Schluchsee, who performed traditional music and dances in traditional Black Forest costumes.

There was one baptism ceremony at the end of the Feast.

The farewell evening after the Eighth Day gave us the opportunity to say goodbye to each other. There were lots of handshakes and hugs as brethren departed after eight days of warm fellowship in a millennial setting.

Jesmina Allaoua

Italy Saubaudia

Brethren from the United States of America, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, South Africa, Mexico, Chile, and of course Italy, gathered for eight days in the beautiful site of Saubaudia. The highest attendance was 205. We were a small but enthusiastic group of God's people enjoying heartfelt and inspiring sermons, delicious food and Christian fellowship. We were living proof that language need not be a barrier to getting to know and love one another in Jesus Christ.

During the Feast we baptized two new members: Pasquale Russo (from Naples) and Anna Maria Galatolo (from Palermo). We gave them our warmest welcome to God's Church.

The weather was wonderful. Many participated in cultural tours to famous historical places like Pompeii, Rome and the Vatican museums. It was history coming alive before our eyes. Social activities like the talent show, the evening dance and wine tasting at a Roman winery were also held for the enjoyment of all Feast participants.

The *arrivederci* section of the Feast was very moving,

with unforgettable moments at the end of the Feast. Many of the brethren from outside Italy have already written to us in appreciation. Yet we are the ones who have to sincerely express our gratitude for your brotherly presence, friendship and support. There are not adequate words to thank all the non-Italian brethren who have served and contributed in various ways to make the Feast truly memorable to God's glory and honor.

The Italian brethren would like to express their heartfelt thanks to all those who have celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles with them in Italy this year. We are already looking forward to next year's Feast. Indeed, our heartfelt thanks to all of you.

Carmelo Anastasi

Wales, British Isles

Llandudno

There was a warm, friendly atmosphere throughout the Feast of Tabernacles in Llandudno, Wales, in the British Isles. Among the 141 brethren who registered, a serving and caring attitude prevailed. This attitude was typified by a 12-year-old boy, who, seeing a need to distribute and collect hymnals, stepped in without being asked and fulfilled that role for the entire Feast.

Services were held in the St. George's Hotel in the recently refurbished Wedgwood Suite, which proved once again to be an excellent venue. Messages were very encouraging and pointed to the coming Kingdom and

what our role will be in the future, helping the rest of mankind become reconciled to God. The wonderful special music, performed by just a few musicians, added to the enjoyment of the Feast and our thanks go to them for all their hard work. Our thanks must also go to the sound crew who worked late into the night to make it possible for us to see Victor Kubik's Feast sermon.

The weather was outstanding for the time of year. Warm, sunny days enabled attendees to visit the many attractions that Wales has to offer, and appreciate the beautiful mountain scenery.

We hope all our overseas visitors enjoyed the Feast with us and that they, and others, will visit us in Southport, in the northwest of England next year.

David Payne

Bolivia

Cochabamba

For the second time in a row, the brethren from Bolivia and visitors from other nations joyfully celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in Hotel Regina Resort and Convention, located in the area of Tiquipaya, Cochabamba, Bolivia. There were 23 brethren present, and they truly rejoiced, as Deuteronomy 16:15 tells us.

There were inspirational messages that were appropriate for this Feast. Each day we had special music by the Bolivian ladies and children, led by our deacon Wander-son Esquerdo.

As a nice complement, we had two trips during the Feast, the first to the picturesque city of Cochabamba and second trip to the Rodizio restaurant, where we had a delicious lunch. We also enjoyed pleasant, sunny days with an average temperature of 29 Celsius (84 Fahrenheit).

Also during the days of the Feast, the children had Bible classes alluding to the seven Holy Days, both in Spanish and English, thanks to our Bolivian teacher, and the help from one of the members who came from Australia.

There were three Bible studies during the Feast, which the brethren found quite instructive. Also, almost all the brethren enjoyed the benefits of the spa that the hotel provided.

What stood out at the informal dance (and is customary in our country) was the joy of the children, who sang and danced happily alongside the older people.

Everyone strove to do their part for our Feast to be better than last year. We are very grateful to our Father for allowing us to celebrate, in advance, the wonderful coming Kingdom of God.

Raul Machicao

Brazil

Boa Vista, Roraima

For the second year, Eco Park Water Resort, in the town of Boa Vista, Roraima, was the site for the Feast of Tabernacles in Brazil. There were 72 brethren attending from Guyana, the Brazilian village of Maloca de Moscow, and Southern Brazil. Services were conducted in Portuguese with an English translation. Blue skies and sunshine with temperatures in the upper 90s Fahrenheit prevailed during the Feast.

Latin America

Messages centered on God's Kingdom, reconciliation, and the urgency of our calling. The Bible studies held included messages of the letters of virtue, principles of tithing, and how we are to appear before God in His solemn assemblies during the three seasons in God's calendar. Victor Kubik's Feast message was also a spiritual highlight of the Feast.

There were many lively, festive activities that were held during the Feast. These included a heroes of the Bible themed teen dance, a circus-themed children's party, complete with a clown and games, a family dance, and a Bible bowl games night. The ladies also enjoyed an afternoon tea and crafts. The theme was "jewels" and how we are God's precious jewels. Each lady made a necklace and earrings from an assortment of decorative beads and stones. A nutrition presentation also covered the importance of having a balanced diet and incorporating a variety of fruits and vegetables into our diets.

Eight days filled with inspirational messages of the Millennium and the Kingdom of God and a family atmosphere filled with activity came to an end too quickly!

Até o próximo ano—until next year!

Kathy de Campos

Chile

Olmue

For the third time in a row, we held the Chilean Feast in the picturesque town of Olmue. It is located 60 miles northwest of Santiago, the capital of Chile. Olmue is in a fertile valley between the Andean mountains and the Pacific Ocean, with a temperate climate.

We had 115 brethren from Chile, Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala and the United States who enjoyed a peaceful and wonderful Feast at this nice resort. As in previous years, God gave us fine weather throughout the Feast. Delicious meals were included in the cost of the Feast and gave the ladies a break from cooking for most of the Feast.

The messages were inspiring and edifying. Activities included a family barbecue, talent night, a seniors and a ladies tea, and a children's party. We also had one baptism.

We are very thankful to God for the marvelous Feast all the brethren had in the Southern Cone region.

Jaime Gallardo

Colombia

Cartagena

Sunny, warm and humid days greeted us in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, where 73—representing five countries—gathered for the Feast of Tabernacles at the Hotel Regatta Cartagena for the third year in a row. Several visitors joined us on various days throughout the Feast at this family-friendly location where we worship, fellowship, eat and play together. On the opening night, when we were asked "Do you want to live forever?" until the last message on the Eighth Day, when we were told "Don't forget...there is always hope!" we were blessed with messages that had us looking forward to a better time in the future!

Spiritual lessons were learned through the daily messages and three additional Bible studies—children, teen, and family. A focused education seminar titled "The Effects of Pornography on the Mind" was given by the Feast coordinator. A seminar for the ladies, "Modesty: A Controversial Topic" was given by Gayle Hoefker and Lidia Nance to further enhance the spiritual diet. The welcome visit during the Feast by Fred and Lidia Nance was an added plus. Another highlight of the Feast was the video presentation, inclusive of Victor Kubik's sermon.

Other spiritual highlights during the Feast included the baptism of two Colombian members in the Caribbean Sea, a church wedding ceremony and reception for Oscar and Rocio Martinez, and the blessing of three small children on the morning of the Eighth Day.

Throughout the Feast we were blessed with many fun and enjoyable activities. A visiting member rented a jet ski for an hour and a half to give each of the Colombian teens a new adventure. We danced the night away with a Disney theme where many came in various costumes, and we enjoyed a Chiva bus tour around the city of Cartagena, which included a stop for ice cream for everyone.

On other days, the ladies enjoyed an afternoon learning a painting technique, the children spent an afternoon at the beach, all participated in an afternoon craft auction, and one evening we were entertained with a variety of talent at the annual talent show.

We were all fed physically and spiritually with an atmosphere this year that was positive, uplifting and full of rejoicing. Foreigners and Colombians united as one family in celebrating and looking forward to the Kingdom of God!

Gayle and Scott Hoefker

Guatemala

Panajachel

Thanks to the blessings of God, we held the Feast of Tabernacles in Panajachel, Guatemala, in honor of our Father Creator and His Son Jesus Christ.

Opening services focused on the theme “Preparing for Being in the Kingdom of God.” At the end of the Feast, we enjoyed a typical Guatemalan dinner with the whole congregation.

Our highest attendance was 231, with visitors coming from Canada, U.S.A., Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica and El Salvador. The participants had the opportunity to fellowship, and we spiritually feasted on 10 sermonettes and 11 sermons, which focused on the main theme of the festival, the Kingdom of God. There were nine baptisms during the Feast, and it was encouraging to see most were young adults.

A highly anticipated event was the family day, where we enjoyed outdoor activities, including a children’s party with a piñata, games for the seniors, and a luncheon.

After the weekly Sabbath, we celebrated the wedding of Antonio Carlos Merida and Lilian Elizabeth Lopez.

All activities were planned in order to give honor and glory to our Creator. We are grateful to God for inviting us to celebrate the Feast with all its spiritual and physical blessings!

Israel Robledo

Mexico

Puerto Vallarta

For the fifth time in a row, the Feast of Tabernacles in Mexico was held in sunny Puerto Vallarta at the Hotel Friendly. There was a high attendance of 421 people from Canada, Bolivia, Chile, the Netherlands, the United States and Mexico.

There were many fun excursions, including a Spanish galleon cruise that went around the bay, snorkeling, zip-lining, interacting with dolphins at a water park and visiting the nearby zoo. Thankfully, God blessed us with sunny days, although the weather forecast predicted that it would rain for the entire time of the Feast.

All the brethren stayed at the same hotel with similar rooms, all with air conditioning and an ocean view. The food and drinks were all-inclusive, with meals served around-the-clock in the three restaurants on the prem-

ises. This year, the food included a variety of fresh pizza from a large brick oven. All day long you could enjoy the variety of drinks and juices for all ages, around the pool or directly at the bar. This made for wonderful fellowship, and the ladies did not have to cook at all.

We had many activities, including mariachis singing at the beach and later at the lobby, a mechanical bull and bungee jumping, a youth dance, a family dance, a children’s costume party, a ladies speech club luncheon, two shows at the theater (Mexican folkloric dances and a modern circus presentation), plus a soccer and volleyball match. There was also excellent deep-sea fishing only two miles from the beach, where many delicious bluefin tuna were caught and then cooked at the hotel.

The messages were inspiring and varied, reflecting the different cultures of the speakers. Hymns were sung in both Spanish and English. There were three Mexicans baptized.

We thank everyone who helped to carry out this wonderful Feast and thank God for having placed His name in this wonderful place, where we lived with our Church family for eight days with great joy.

Gabriel Garcia

North America/Caribbean

Bahamas

Freeport

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity” (Psalm 133:1).

As our great Creator held back Hurricane Joaquin, for eight days Feast-keepers from many areas of the U.S. and other lands celebrated God’s holy time with their Bahamian brothers and sisters. There were about 70 of us all together each day, in the peaceful beauty of the Grand Lucayan resort in Freeport, Bahamas.

With warm sea breezes drifting across bluer-than-blue waters, under a canopy of gesturing palm trees, the children played and practiced their special music to be performed on the Eighth Day. The energetic among us enjoyed parasailing, snorkeling, fishing and exploring underwater sea life through various venues, while others of us lounged, relaxed and basked in the tropical climate of the islands.

Dining opportunities were plentiful, from informal to more conservative settings. To the delight of shoppers there were unique items to be purchased and brought back home to remember their Feast of Tabernacles. And for the pleasure of all attending there was a bounty of spiritual food, precious words spoken via messages God gave us through those who blessed us each day with their ability to paint a picture of tomorrow’s world and the return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Added to this, a fascinating Bible study presentation provided a radiant view of our heavenly Father’s creation in all of its wonder and splendor.

Our Bahamian night featured a potluck buffet—savory samplings of local cuisine—offered by our Bahamian brethren at the hall where they meet in Freeport for weekly Sabbath services. All visiting brethren on this festive occasion were captivated by the Bahamian warmth, hospitality and genuine show of outflowing love. “How good and how pleasant.”

Eric Myers

Canada

Canmore, Alberta

Following the injunction of “Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,” 180 attendees in beautiful Canmore, Alberta, were blessed with gorgeous weather, a fresh dusting of snow, pristine alpine air and a warmth of fellowship as we cocooned in the beautiful Canadian Rocky mountains to hear inspiring messages and wonderful music. A spirit of cooperation and service prevailed.

Activities included an excursion to world-famous Moraine Lake, a teen study with a bonus of a helicopter ride, a seniors reception, festival youth instruction and a ministerial dinner.

Events went smoothly and there was plenty of time to explore parts of this world heritage site. Night after night, the full moon shone bright, and the stars twinkled brightly.

Numerous comments were made such as, “We plan to return here.” One wrote saying, “This [Feast] was absolutely wonderful...there was really something special about this one.” Many also commented on the excellent messages that were given. Truly God was kind to us.

Rainer Salomaa

Gros Morne, Newfoundland

Forty-two brethren from the United States and Canada attended the Feast in beautiful Gros Morne National Park, Newfoundland.

As everyone traveled north to the Feast site, they were treated to beautiful scenery, the table lands of the Long Range Mountains to the east and the expanse of the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the west.

Services were held in one of the convention rooms of the Shallow Bay Motel. The room features a wall of windows opening up onto a deck that is literally on the edge of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The lapping of the waves, the coming and going of the tide and the peaceful serenity

of the national park offers a perfect millennial setting for the Feast.

Four elders, Dennis Horlick (pastor of Ottawa, Kitchener, the Maritimes and Newfoundland), Ralph Redline (from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), Monte Knudson (from Phoenix, Arizona), and the festival coordinator Larry DeLong (from Lethbridge, Alberta), shared the speaking assignments along with Dale van Zant (from Toronto), and Gary Ridi (from Kitchener). Also Victor Kubik’s sermon was much appreciated.

The messages were all spiritually uplifting. As the Feast progressed it became obvious that the theme of the messages was for us to be about our Father’s business. We are to take personal responsibility, and to remain on task in our individual and collective relationship with Him and our Savior as we seek and prepare for His Kingdom. How special each and every firstfruit child is to God and His Kingdom!

Music is a major part of the culture of Newfoundland, and it was reflected at the Feast. Special music was very much appreciated with duets, vocal solos and the choir. The ladies of the choir performed one piece, and the combined choir sang four pieces.

We were also very blessed to have David Hannaway in Gros Morne to play the piano for hymns, special music and the choir.

Activities included a festival dinner that everyone attended, a boat trip on the Western Brook Pond, a trip to a marine research center to view all of the marine life in the area waters, a fine dining experience sponsored by the local community, as well as a musical concert featuring traditional Newfoundland music, also sponsored by the local community. We also had a hymn sing on Friday evening and finished off the Feast with a two-hour variety night with 18 separate “acts” on Sunday afternoon.

Once again the Feast in Gros Morne proved to be the best Feast ever as brethren toured, ate and fellowshiped together. The hotel staff were asking questions about the Feast and our beliefs as they, too, experienced Feast fever. They contributed to the success of the Feast by serving

their hearts out to make our time there as memorable as possible.

One elder commented that the Feast was characterized by “the overwhelming and consistent warmth that was experienced by me and my family. The desire to work together, all being engaged to make this a most remarkable Feast of Tabernacles. Don’t mean to overuse this word but it was the most family oriented and focused Feast we have ever had.”

One young man said, “I have been keeping the Feast for 23 years, and this was truly my best Feast ever.”

So I must thank all the brethren in attendance for doing their part in making this year’s Feast spiritually refreshing and uplifting, but even more we thank our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ for being there with us in spirit.

Larry DeLong

Kelowna, British Columbia

As with last year the festival was held at the Sandman Inn, which is central in the city. We had coffee service each day and an area set aside as a “hospitality area” that provided members the opportunity to fellowship before and after services. We used the space for an early meet-and-greet dessert social that allowed members to get together to fellowship early in the Feast. The majority of the members stayed at the hotel and had access to the meeting rooms which provided the opportunity for spontaneous activities.

Doug Lesh gave the opening night message titled “Rejoicing in Brotherly Love,” and it set a positive tone. The following day Mr. Lesh was ordained as an elder by Michael Erickson, Ed Dowd and John Petrisor. Many commented it was a positive experience, and the positive tone continued for the rest of the Feast.

On youth day we were blessed with many young men who participated in the service, from prayers to song leading, to leading the children’s choir and speaking. Giving his first sermonette, Matthew Erickson, a young adult from the Prince George congregation, gave a message titled “Growing to Your Potential,” focusing on doing so both in and outside the church. Ed Dowd gave the sermon titled “Will You Receive Your Family Inheritance?” and later gave a teen and young adult Bible study on the power of choice.

Many made comments on how the positive tone carried through all the messages and activities, which flowed together seamlessly. How wonderful it was to have so many youth participate in the Feast, especially on family day. It truly was a Feast to remember.

Michael Erickson

Midland, Ontario

“It will be a Feast that we will remember for a long time,” was one of the many comments made by the brethren that attended in Midland, Ontario. Another remarked it was a wonderful family Feast.

Our high attendance of the Feast was 125. Opening night services were enjoyed by 97 brethren as they heard a message from Patrick Read reminding us that it was not about us—it was about learning and growing and helping the many individuals who will come to know and love the God who has always loved them.

Our meet-and-greet mixer started the activities off with 61 family members getting reacquainted with each other.

On Tuesday evening we held our first-ever ladies seminar, presented by Pam Kuver. The ladies in attendance listened to a heartfelt address encouraging them to stay close to God and be women of faith.

The following evening provided the brethren the opportunity to enjoy a family square dance that also proved to be a highlight of the Feast. Both young and old enjoyed a hearty workout and many laughs.

Other activities included a games night, family day, Bible study, variety show and a hymn-sing. The seniors enjoyed some special time with each other as they listened to a message provided by Ken Skorseth, who reminded them that getting older does not diminish their ability to provide an example to others.

Our messages were encouraging and enlightening, providing the brethren with the desire to continually move forward drawing on the power of God’s Word to make it to the Kingdom where we will have the opportunity to share it with others.

On the Eighth Day we heard a heartfelt message from Tom Kuver titled “God’s Power Over Death,” where he explained that there will be billions of individuals who have never known God’s way of life. They will need to be taught, and those who accept God’s way of life will enjoy the benefits that come from it.

After a well-attended lunch between services, the closing sermon was given by Mr. Skorseth. It was titled “Endure to the End,” and was a message of hope, reminding us that God’s promise to provide us with His Kingdom will happen.

Services concluded with “When Christ Shall Come,” and with many warm words and hugs the family of God who had come together in Midland, Ontario, began to head home with a renewed desire for God’s Kingdom and the hope of seeing each other once more in the future, perhaps at next year’s Feast.

Patrick Read

Jamaica Montego Bay

There were 158 people who kept the Feast in Montego Bay, Jamaica, this year. The Feast was off to a good start with a spectacular view of the lunar eclipse and blood moon over the ocean after opening night services. On the second day of the Feast, overseas brethren enjoyed a pleasant afternoon hosted at the beautiful villa, which served as accommodations for many of the Jamaican brethren. Visitors were treated to Jamaican music, snacks, and drinks, including sorrel and June plum juice. They also had the opportunity to swim in the pool and to learn the lively Jamaican game of “loodie.” The Jamaican brethren were, as always, wonderful hosts.

Other activities included family/youth day at the Riu Montego Bay, a lady’s social and a community outreach project at a local children’s home. The messages and special music came together beautifully to create a most inspiring vision of the future we were all there to celebrate. Throughout the Feast, brethren exhibited a spirit of peace, joy and generosity—just the way God’s children should be!

Chuck Smith

St. Lucia Vieux Fort

Eighty enthusiastic attendees enjoyed a taste of God’s Kingdom at the beautiful Coconut Bay Beach Resort in Vieux Fort, St. Lucia. The messages and special music were most inspiring, and helped everyone focus on the wonderful world to come.

As usual, the lovely St. Lucian brethren were gracious hosts and provided several activities, including a catama-

ran sail around the twin peaks of the Pitons, and a family day at Sandy Beach filled with games, laughter and fellowship. A highlight was a community outreach project at the Holy Hope Children’s Home. The local brethren arranged the visit to the home. Visitors were given a list of items needed by the children and were encouraged to donate an item or two as able. The response was overwhelming! So many items were donated that some had to be saved to deliver at a later time, perhaps to an additional children’s home the local congregation assists.

When it came time to settle the Feast expenses with the hotel, the sales manager expressed his appreciation for our group. He said it was the best group he had seen in his years of arranging conventions, and he enjoyed having us. We were informed that the \$195 per day meeting hall rental would be waived! This was indeed a blessing from God, as this money can now be applied toward preaching the gospel on the island.

Thanks to all who worked so hard to make this Feast site such a wonderful one and to everyone who attended and “let their lights shine.”

Chuck Smith

Tobago Crown Point

The serene and beautiful island of Tobago was the perfect setting for 40 attendees to enjoy the Feast of Tabernacles in Trinidad and Tobago. Brethren came from the U.S., Australia and Suriname to join Trinidad and Tobago members in a joyful celebration of the Kingdom to come. Most brethren stayed at the Crown Point Beach Resort and were able to spend many hours of fellowship in a family atmosphere.

The annual tradition of Trinbago night, hosted by the Trinidad and Tobago congregation, was held again this year. This is an evening of feasting on local food and drink with music and dancing. It is always a favorite of visitors at this Feast site, and this year was no different. Family day at Canoe Beach was another highlight, where everyone enjoyed a light-hearted contest of tug-of-war, as well as other games and fellowship. Additional activities included a bus tour around the island and a boat trip to the famous Buccoo Reef. Many gathered at the ocean’s edge in the evening to enjoy the brilliant sunsets so common in Tobago. Feeding the fish on the reef just outside the hotel was also a favorite pastime, as the clear water afforded an amazing view of the varied sizes and colors of reef fish.

Messages and special music were very inspiring, and so was the fellowship. After eight days spent together, this small group left feeling more like family than before.

Chuck Smith

United States Bend-Redmond, Oregon

God blessed us with another wonderful Feast in beautiful Central Oregon. Except for opening night and Eighth Day afternoon attendance was consistent throughout the Feast, averaging 655, peaking at 684 on the first Holy Day.

Messages by 14 different speakers covered relevant topics, with thought provoking information regarding millennial conditions. Victor and Beverly Kubik spent the first half of the Feast with us. Mr. Kubik gave a sermon on the Sabbath before the Feast and the opening day message that helped set the tone for the Feast. He also conducted a Bible study that consisted of a panel

of Ukrainian Sabbatarians from Portland whom he has known and worked with, telling how they became Christians. A quintet from this group also treated us to an hour-long concert.

Temperatures were above average the entire Feast. Every day was sunny, warm and pleasant, except for light rain on the weekly Sabbath. The highest temperature of 78 degrees was on our special outdoor family day that featured carnival-type game booths with prizes, arts and crafts displays, table games including bingo, a bounce house for young children and field day games and races. The day concluded with a teen and young adult dance.

Members donated generously to offset costs of activities in response to the family helping family initiative. We also collected \$2,350.52 in cash donations and 800 pounds of food and household items for the local food bank.

Larry J. Walker

Bigfork, Montana

God is gracious and again supplied the warm and pleasant weather we were praying for. There were 152 brethren and friends gathered to worship and rejoice in this richly picturesque area of Montana. We enjoyed our sixth continuous year in this location.

Brethren travelled from Montana's four Church areas, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas, Wyoming, Missouri, Utah, Alabama, Idaho, Washington and Oregon to tabernacle together.

The opening night message began with the annual reminder of God's vision and desire for an ever-expanding family. Vernon Hargrove moved this theme forward with a message of fellowship. The additional messages added reminders of the key attributes of godly character and looking forward to eternal life with our Father and Jesus Christ.

The choir blended together with the direction of Mark Graham. This year we enjoyed an all-ladies festival choir, contributions from the teens and a growing children's choir. Special music added special moments of enrichment to the services.

The stage decoration was well planned for this autumn festival, and with the usual labor of love the beautiful results speak for themselves. The theme of rejoicing and peace was emphasized with scrolled wooden reminders of the fruit of the Spirit. These were placed throughout the stage decorations for all eight days. A selected piece was placed in prominence each day.

Family day again was a highlight. This year proved to be one in which we had the most volunteers and participants. Races, contests and games added to the excitement, which culminated in the annual piñata shower of delightful things for the children. The daily activity was rounded out by a barbecue hamburger dinner for the entire congregation.

The annual challenge of the zipline and ropes course was enjoyed by those who participated. Many daring ones added their names to the growing chronicle of courageous zip line travelers.

The Church dance drew enthusiastic and joyful brethren. This year's theme of a barn dance was decorated with straw, saddles and hand painted backdrops. Everyone who attended had all the music and dancing they desired.

The annual glacier day trip to the scenic area of our awesome mountainous area was well attended. For many, it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The ladies tea took place in the Conrad Mansion in Kalispell. This historic setting was visited and enjoyed by our ladies.

Though late in the Feast, the message from Victor

Kubik was well received and added food for thought to many conversations.

Willingness to serve and support was the prevailing attitude throughout the Feast. Many thanks to those who served in the public address electronics, ushering and administration. We all tabernacled together with the flow of God's Spirit, first from our Father and the Christ, to each of us, and then toward each other.

Glen White

Branson, Missouri

An average of 466 happy brethren attended the Feast in beautiful Branson, Missouri.

God's blessings were evident throughout the festival. Inspiring sermons and uplifting special music were given on a daily basis.

The Friday night Bible study was presented by Anthony Wasilkoff, comparing the building of the Old Testament tabernacle with God's Church today.

A special seminar was presented by Merna Eppick on the topic of addiction recovery.

The spirit of service was evident throughout the Feast. There were volunteers for youth instruction, ushering, special services, choir, special music, family day, as well as other areas. Dozens of personally made greeting cards signed by the attendees were sent to brethren who were not able to attend the Feast this year. Cards to prisoners were sent as well.

One of the highlights of the Feast was the giving away of stuffed animals to all of the children who attended the Feast. Each child walked to the stage area after services and took one stuffed animal home as a Feast present. Since there were many more stuffed animals the brethren purchased, the remainder of the animals will be given to local children's shelters.

Vince Szymkowiak

Galveston, Texas

In 2015, the United Church of God returned to Galveston Island to observe the Feast of Tabernacles. Services were held in the beautiful grand ballroom of the Galveston Convention Center. Each day that the brethren gathered for services, they could look out on Galveston Bay.

The Feast opened with light rain on Sunday night and on Monday. But the rain did not deter 442 attendees from enjoying the Holy Day message given by Don Ward. In the opening message he asked, "What is most important to God's people in the here and now?" and emphasized that what is most important to God must also be important to the Church.

Throughout the remainder of the week the ministry focused the brethren on the coming Millennial Kingdom with messages concerning being pilgrims and sojourners; God's plan for global success; the reassurance that God finishes what He starts; our discipleship; God's investment in His people, who will be great in the Kingdom; how we will provide comfort, teaching and leading to the people of the Kingdom; our need to look forward; and preparing to lead the world tomorrow.

On Friday evening, Bible studies were held for teens, young adults and adults. In the main Bible study, Dr. Ward presented a study titled "Zion: Past, Present, and Future."

Preteens also enjoyed two sessions titled "Being Like Our Heavenly Father." Also, the youth choir performed wonderful renditions of "He Will Be There" and "I'm Gonna Wait on the Lord," led by Karla Bonner.

The special music added to the uplifting Feast environ-

ment by providing praises to God. The choir was led by Ken Japhet with assistance from Kayleen Schreiber and Kourtney Kovanis.

By Tuesday, the skies had cleared and brethren could enjoy the beaches, restaurants and historical features of the island. Highlights of the activities available included a mini-golf outing for the teens, family day at Moody Gardens, and Sunday at Schlitterbahn Waterpark.

The Feast in Galveston was a wonderful spiritual and physical foretaste of God's coming Kingdom.

Gary Smith

Cincinnati, Ohio

The Feast site in Cincinnati continues to grow in attendance. This year 370 people filled the room to capacity and beyond! While hearing messages about the coming Kingdom of God is always the best part of the Feast, the extended opportunities for fellowship are a special feature of the Cincinnati site. Most members stay in the same hotel where services are held, and during the hours before and after services many can be seen relaxing and talking in the restaurant, the lobby or on the mezzanine.

Activities held in the same venue included a circus-themed family day, a bluegrass jam session and an old-fashioned movie night. Additionally, many members took advantage of the opportunity to share group meals together on the Holy Days.

Those looking for fun or educational opportunities beyond the festival venue visited such local attractions as the Cincinnati Museum Center, the Newport Aquarium and the Creation Museum.

Thankfully no hurricane weather visited the area this year. The weather turned a bit blustery some days, but overall it was quite pleasant. We expect next year's Feast in Cincinnati to be even bigger and better than ever.

Frank Dunkle

Jekyll Island, Georgia

Beautiful weather and wonderful fellowship highlighted the Feast for nearly 500 people who assembled to keep the Feast at Jekyll Island this year.

This year marked the 53rd anniversary of the first Feast of Tabernacles observed on Jekyll Island back in 1963. Numerous brethren commented on their Feast observance under the Jekyll tent before the construction of the first convention center on the island. Over the years, the "tabernacle" of God's people have met in here on this island that has evolved from a very large two-acre tent, to a small convention center, to the beautiful, state-of-the-art convention center that we meet in today. Even though the buildings have changed, the spirit, the worship, the tranquil and millennial-type natural setting of the island, and the purpose of assembling before our God for the Feast of Tabernacles have remained constant.

The messages at this year's Feast pointed us to the coming Kingdom of God to the earth and the focus of God's plan for mankind. Sermons were given by Jim Wilkins, Gary Beam, John LaBissoniere, Ray Cowan, Doug Wendt, Gordon Hannaway, Bill Cowan, John Massie and Stan Martin. The high attendance was 479, and services were supplemented by youth education on two days, as well as adult and teen Bible studies during the Feast. Spiritually we were very well fed at Jekyll Island this year.

The physical aspect of the Feast was also well served on the island. On Tuesday, we had a teen bike riding activity. Family day was on Wednesday, and the majority of those attending the Feast were treated to beef brisket and smoked turkey under a covered pavilion. After lunch many of the teens and younger ones played vari-

ous games, while others fellowshiped with new and old friends.

The senior citizen luncheon was a great success again this year, as the luncheon included a choice of fish or chicken along with salad, drink and dessert. Group horseback rides, dolphin boat tours, kayaking, and trolley rides were offered. The variety show and dance was a big success as well.

The weather was outstanding this year, with every single day being sunny and warm with only a couple evening showers during the entire Feast. God certainly blessed the Jekyll Island site in so many ways.

There is a rich history and heritage of the Feast of Tabernacles on Jekyll Island. We are so thankful for the peace and safety as well as the other physical blessings God has given the Jekyll Island Feast site again this year. The most important part of the Feast was to be able to worship our great God in spirit and in truth. We hope many more will be able to enjoy the Jekyll Island Feast experience in the future as we look to God's Kingdom coming to this earth.

Stan Martin

Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii

Blue-turquoise waters and swaying palm trees greeted more than 300 brethren keeping God's Feast on the tropical island of Maui in Hawaii. The first Holy Day service set the stage to give us a vision of the millennial reign of Christ with a morning message by Joe Horchak titled "On the Threshold of Eternity." The theme continued in the afternoon message by Bill Bradford titled "1,000 Years." Our enthusiasm continued to build as God supplied a great spiritual feast of messages each day through to the Eighth Day.

There were also many other learning activities, including Bible studies for the teens and young adults. Also featured was a Bible study by Mr. Bradford titled "The Promised Plan of God: The Unifying Message of His Word."

We also had the privilege of meeting in the exquisite Maui Theatre, with much improved lighting. Brethren enjoyed the outstanding special music of the Feast choir, and many other delightful vocal and instrumental performances.

There were activities for all ages. Seniors enjoyed a special luncheon in their honor at Longhi's Restaurant, overlooking the Pacific waters on Front Street. Young adults and singles gathered after the first Holy Day at the condo of Bill and Joanna Bradford for a dinner reception. Teens and preteens went to the Maui Ocean Center Aquarium, featuring sea life unique to Hawaii. After viewing the aquarium, they met at the Reef Café for ice cream.

This year a highlight of the Feast was the family day picnic at the Ali'i Kahekili Beach. A large pavilion was a gathering spot for fellowship and food. Snorkeling, swimming and games enhanced the enjoyment of all.

On Saturday evening many brethren enjoyed a Hawaiian dance at the Waiola Center, with food and refreshments. Brethren were able to dance the night away on an outdoor patio and enjoy the cool ocean breezes of the evening.

God blessed us with peace and encouraged us by reminding us of what He has prepared for us in the future. We are very thankful for God's mercy and blessings that we can rejoice and be together another year in Hawaii!

Jim Tuck

Ocean City, Maryland

The beautiful Delmarva Peninsula was again the set-

ting for the Feast of Tabernacles in the Mid-Atlantic region. Over 360 were in attendance at the Carousel Oceanfront Hotel in Ocean City, Maryland. Most of the members stayed in the hotel rooms and condos right in the Carousel resort, which afforded endless opportunities for fellowship well into each evening.

The messages were most inspiring. We heard of the transition that will need to take place as the Kingdom of God is set up and had messages about the fairness, rightness, forgiveness and mercy of God. Galen Morrison presented a Bible study titled "Inheriting All Things." Randy Stiver delivered a seminar titled "Where Did the Twelve Apostles Go?" Special music performances were high quality and inspiring.

As the Feast began, we learned of the approach of Hurricane Joaquin, with early models showing its path heading right for Ocean City! But after a few days (and countless prayers), the hurricane was redirected out toward the open sea! Even so, high winds, cooler than normal temperatures, and considerable rain still dominated our weather for several days and caused the cancellation of our family beach bonfire. While the weather may have kept many indoors, that only gave us more opportunity for fellowship.

The weather was perfect for our teen activity at Baja Amusements go-kart track. A morning rain had just ended when the outing was to begin, and the wind and driving rain held off until just after the event ended. The hotel's indoor ice rink and indoor pool saw lots of use, as the next few days were perfect for indoor activities. Other events included a family dance, where nearly 200 danced to a wide variety of music, from the limbo to classical music. There was also a seniors lunch, where 86 seniors were treated to a buffet lunch and entertainment. All in all, it was a very memorable Feast in Ocean City!

Don McCoy

Oceanside, California

There were 565 brethren who came to rejoice before God where He placed His name for one week at the Q.L.N. Center in Oceanside, California. The one-story facility's cheery interior created an intimate and wonderful festival home. The 50-member choir and instrumental ensemble certainly added to our sense of worship before God. Soloist Greg Hilgen opened up services on the two High Days with a selection titled "Come Let Us Worship Him," and on the Eighth Day the audience joined him in the chorus. After the final Eighth Day message, he sang and led the congregation in the chorus of "The New Jerusalem" by Michael Card, which is a Southern California tradition. Several times during the two festivals, both teenagers and adults commenced services with Scripture reading from passages pertaining specifically to the meaning of these days. The weather was balmy but delightful with temperatures hovering in the low to mid 80s. By the end of the festivals, autumn weather settled in for a delightful contrast.

Those attending Oceanside were able to partake in our standard church services, plus a special night activity of welcoming in the Sabbath with a hymn-sing accompanied by a Bible study presented by Robin Webber titled "World Without End." There was also an interactive Sabbath teen class, a couple of workshop sessions for younger children, a very interactive young adults study titled "What Does a Christian Look Like?" and a full afternoon of a two-part presentation by Tom Robinson titled "The New Testament in Its First Century Context." The Seniors Banquet for 100 "seasoned citizens" and ministerial couples were graciously served by our young adults and teenagers.

Beyond services and Bible studies, Oceanside attendees were able to enjoy the nearby sites of the La Jolla and Del Mar coastlines, Oceanside Harbor, the San Diego Zoo and Balboa Park, Seaworld on Mission Bay, Old Town San Diego and nearby Legoland. Many simply settled for downtime with family and brethren resting on the warm sandy beaches of Oceanside and nearby Carlsbad.

Most importantly, the entire membership of all ages came prepared to fully be involved in a spiritual feast. They came prepared to give of themselves, volunteer on a moment's notice, and share their smiles, warmth and a helping hand to all they encountered. Attendance at all activities was up! We plan to utilize the Q.L.N. Center in Oceanside again next year.

Robin Webber

Panama City Beach, Florida

More than 1,200 Feast of Tabernacles attendees enjoyed outstanding spiritual food as well as great weather, picturesque sunsets and an incomparable sugar-sand beach during the 2015 Feast in Panama City Beach, Florida. The days were comfortably warm; the nights pleasantly cool. More importantly, the daily messages were uplifting and encouraging, focusing on the coming Kingdom of God.

This special Feast site is perfect for families since a lot of activities are available on site, including an incomparable beach that stretches on for miles, caressed by endless blue green waters. Other readily-available family activities included on-site tennis and basketball courts, a nine-hole golf course, a modern fitness club and 11 swimming pools.

Registration was over 1,000, yet our high attendance was 1,234 and, unofficially, it stayed very close to 1,200 over eight days. Harmony and peace were palpable and pervasive throughout the Feast.

The messages were well structured, well researched, and delivered in understandable, heartfelt ways that closely identified with the brethren's needs. The positive seminar "Win With Your Strengths" helped brethren to focus on their God-given talents and strengths.

All family-oriented activities were well-attended, including family day at Rock-it! Lanes, the family dance and the teen dance. The Australian Card Program netted \$1,812. The children's choir was a delight to see and hear. And finally, the seniors luncheon at Captain Jack's was a Feast highlight.

The Feast of Tabernacles at Panama City Beach is a great family Feast site, and its tropical setting helps to portray, in part, a future Garden of Eden environment.

Jerold Aust

Phoenix, Arizona

There were 188 gathered in Phoenix for the Feast of Tabernacles, and they were not disappointed. Instead they were amazed by the outpouring of blessings.

Although the weather was warm, the fellowship was warmer. Even when the weather cooled, the fellowship stayed warm.

The willingness of so many to serve and to work at making this Feast a place of peace and a wonderful breath of fresh air was something available for all to enjoy.

On Tuesday evening there was great amount of laughter at the fun show, and the following ice cream social was a refreshing treat. Many enjoyed the wholesome and stirring Old West stage show, singalong and dinner at the Rockin-R-Ranch on Wednesday evening.

The hospitality suite before services was a big hit and

Please see page 17

Africa



Kinshasa, Congo



Accra, Ghana



Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe



Lamé, Ivory Coast



Meru, Kenya



Margate, South Africa



Cotonou, Benin



Lusaka, Zambia



Lake Malawi



Agona, Ghana



Ogembo, Kenya



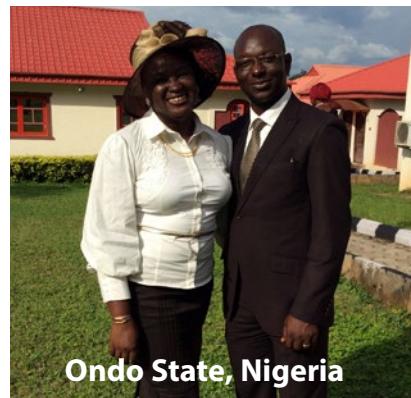
Kpalime, Togo



Canmore, Alberta



Douala, Cameroon



Ondo State, Nigeria



Kelowna, British Columbia



Gros Morne, Newfoundland



Midland, Ontario

Canada

Asia/Pacific





Saubadia, Italy



Schlussee, Germany

Europe/ British Isles



Roquebrune-sur-Argens, France



Llandudno, Wales



Cochobamba, Bolivia



Roraima, Brazil

Latin America



Olmue, Chile



Cartagena, Colombia



Puerto Vallarta, Mexico



Panjachel, Guatemala

United States & Caribbean



Bend-Redmond, Oregon



Bigfork, Montana



Oceanside, California



Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii



Branson, Missouri



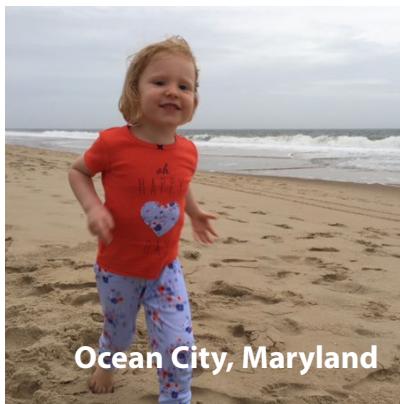
Panama City Beach, Florida



Galveston, Texas



Cincinnati, Ohio



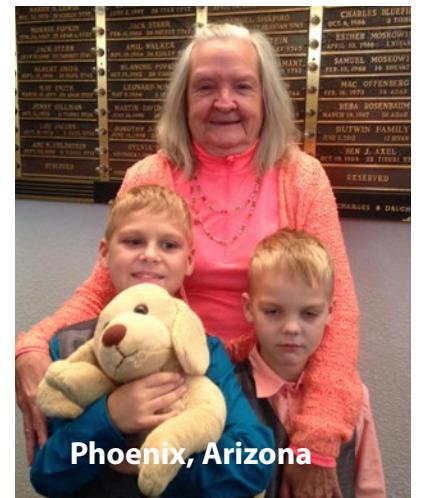
Ocean City, Maryland



Sevierville, Tennessee



Wisconsin Dells



Phoenix, Arizona



Jekyll Island, Georgia



Vieux Fort, St. Lucia



Montego Bay, Jamaica



Steamboat Springs, Colorado



Crown Point, Tobago



Freeport, Bahamas

a wonderful place to fellowship and share a light lunch. Sixty-five participants enjoyed the seniors luncheon. During this time they enjoyed a Bible trivia quiz and great entertainment imported from Texas.

A wonderful Bible study was given by Ralph Helge, whose expertise was much appreciated.

This Feast was a great bonding experience for all.

Mike Miller

Sevierville, Tennessee

The United Church of God Feast site in Sevierville, Tennessee, was beautiful. The meeting facility is basically new and was very comfortable. The other meeting rooms were convenient. We ended up with over 100 more than registered and had to scramble to find overflow space. Although our attendance stayed strong the entire Feast, the highest attendance was 783 on the Sabbath. This was the same day that we had the webcast from Sevierville. From all reports the webcast went off without any problems.

The messages were inspiring and uplifting. While they focused on the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day, the information was helpful for our present development as Christians, not just for the roles we will have in the Kingdom. The theme in Sevierville this year was “righteousness,” and special music was outstanding.

The brethren were a total delight—friendly and helpful. There was a palpable positive energy in the congregation all eight days. Those who served did a magnificent job and did their jobs with smiles and joy. We are grateful to all who helped set up before the Feast began, those who served during the Feast and as well those who helped take down after the Feast ended.

All in all, the Feast in Sevierville this year seemed to capture the essence of what the Feast represents: peace, harmony, generosity, good fellowship, good food and good fun. It was great!

Frank McCrady

Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Beautiful fall colors, majestic landscapes, mostly

warm, sunny temperatures, and an inspiring view of the full moon eclipse on opening night welcomed the more than 300 people who observed the Feast in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, this year.

The beautiful and accommodating Steamboat Grand Hotel served as the location of the Feast for the 13th consecutive year.

All aspects of the Feast worked well together this year. Messages centered on God’s Kingdom, His love, and what we need to do to let God prepare us for that Kingdom. The attitude of those attending was wonderful, and the fellowship was warm and inviting. Excellent special music, first-rate sound, stage, and lighting—and the help of so many volunteers in all areas—complemented everything else, creating an atmosphere that made many comment that this was “the best Feast ever.”

Attendees enjoyed a variety of planned group activities, as well as exploring the area. The charming little town of Steamboat Springs has many fine restaurants and quaint shops. Nearby you can take in the beauty of a majestic waterfall, enjoy natural hot springs, horseback ride through the hills, or even go fly fishing in the river that runs through the town.

Scheduled activities included a day of ice skating and ice bumper cars at the local ice arena, of which we had exclusive use of for the afternoon. Bumper cars on ice was a new experience for most, and it seemed to be enjoyed by all. Family day was held at a local bowling alley, which was also reserved for just our use. From the very young to teens to young adults and those “up in years,” everyone seemed to enjoy bowling, along with the pizza, tacos, and fellowship. The bowling alley owners mentioned that there had never been so many people in that facility ever before. A fine example was set by all.

The teens enjoyed a pool party and pizza one afternoon, and a games night was held for those who wanted to get together and enjoy each other’s company.

The family dance, with karaoke, was again a popular and well attended activity, and the seniors lunch was quite enjoyable. The food and fellowship was great, and a very nice program of entertainment was put together that set that event apart.

Thanks to everyone who spoke, served, and attended the Feast in Steamboat Springs this year. We all had a

wonderful time and experienced just a foretaste of what life will be like in the Millennium. It was an inspiring and enjoyable Feast for all.

Rick Shabi

Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

More than 700 members of God’s family gathered to be instructed, to worship Him with song and to grow closer in fellowship and activities in the Wisconsin Dells this year! The weather was unseasonably warm at the beginning of the Feast, but was pleasant all week with the fall colors erupting toward the end of the Feast. Many deaf brethren gathered with us in the Dells, and their presence really added to the family environment.

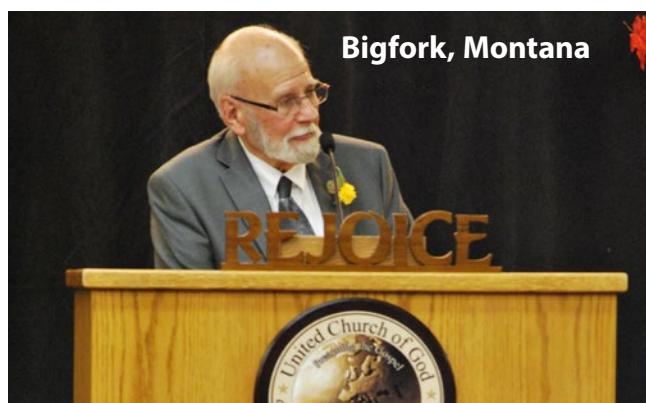
Wisconsin Dells is known for the extra musical element. In addition to a choir, there was an orchestra. A variety of music was presented during the week—an octet, a trio by the Myers brothers, orchestra and choir selections as well as the inspiring hymns sung by the members! On Sabbath evening the Myers brothers gave a benefit concert for Good Works, raising more than \$3,500.

In addition to the full complement of messages during services, this year the schedule included two general Bible studies, two teen/young adult Bible studies and two homework sessions. The family dinner and dance was a big hit again. This evening combines a meal to honor the seniors (joined by families), which transitions into the family dance. This year there was a puzzle table, face painting, a craft table as well as an “extreme” photo booth.

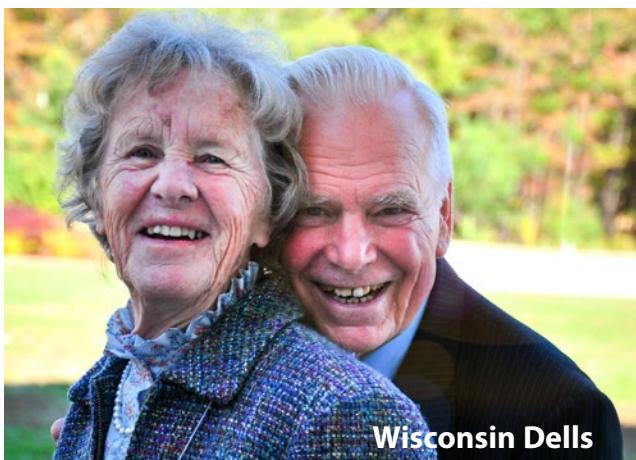
High attendance was 744 on the first Holy Day with the average attendance for the week staying in the 600s. Attendees were able to sign large cards for those members who could not make it to the Feast—a tradition that those who could not be at the Feast truly appreciate. The whole week was peaceful, harmonious and service-oriented, which only added to the meaning of the festival.

I would encourage you to join us next year in the Dells for the Feast of Tabernacles!

Dan Dowd



Bigfork, Montana



Wisconsin Dells



Panama City Beach, Florida



Vieux Fort, St. Lucia



Cincinnati, Ohio



Cartagena, Colombia



How to Keep the Feast Alive All Year

by Linda Merrick

There may be times where we anticipate the Feast of Tabernacles so much that by the time it's over we are almost depressed. And sometimes life gets so busy we forget the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles. So here are some ways we can keep the Feast alive throughout the year.

Seek the Kingdom daily

In Sri Lanka, where I attended the Feast this year, David Schreiber gave a sermon where he focused on keeping the vision of the Kingdom alive and how we have to put God first. We must seek the Kingdom of God daily. The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the Kingdom. If we seek it daily then we have a little bit of the Feast with us every day during the year.

Put God first through prayer and study

Just as we seek the Kingdom daily, we must seek God daily by putting him first in our life. We can continue to thank Him for our experiences and thank Him for our new friends. Let's ask God to keep the light alive in us.

Review your sermon notes

The sermons given at the Feast are there to inspire us and remind us of God's plan. So if you are ever having trouble thinking of something to study during the year, why not dig out your notebooks from the previous Feast and go over your notes and look up scriptures. This will help us carry on the idea mentioned above and help you find new insights you may not have noticed before. This is a great way to stay connected to previous Feasts.

Stay connected to new and old friends

To this day I still keep in touch with some of the friends I have met at the Feast in years past. With today's technology it is easier than ever to keep in touch. We can write a letter, write an e-mail, make a phone call, or chat on Skype. Staying connected will help establish good



Mitchell Moss

relationships and help us to continue to learn how to be part of the family of God. In reality, we may not be able to keep in touch with everyone we saw or met at the Feast, but we can keep in touch with a few who we spent the most time with.

Buy one special thing to remind us of that Feast

It's nice to be able to buy something special that stands out over everything else. Something you almost feel you can't live without. If you are like me, you might buy several things and lose sight of what made that Feast special. It's not all about spending all your tithe money just to get rid of it. If you have left over after buying that special token, donate to the church or family in need instead. Having that one special thing will help remind you of all the great memories you made at that particular Feast.

Share your stories

One of the most exciting Feasts I've ever had was in 2011, when I went to Guatemala. It was rainy season, and it was raining so much that there were landslides

blocking many of the roads. Since the roads were blocked or flooded we were stranded in the city of Solola. However, it was a great experience because all of us who were stranded were able to spend quality time together. That year at the Feast I connected more to the brethren than any other Feast. What a great story I have to share years later. It's important to share your most exciting stories of this current Feast now and for years to come. We should want to share our adventures and connections we had with people.

I hope you will find these ways to keep the Feast alive useful in your own life. Remember to keep the vision of the Kingdom alive daily. **UN**

How do you keep the Feast alive throughout the year?

Go to <http://www.ucg.org/united-news/how-to-keep-the-feast-alive-all-year> and add a comment and share your ideas.

Beyond Today Travels to Texas

Continued from page 1

communications Services operation manager Peter Eddington, along with a crew of six home office employees. Equipment for the events was also provided by the home office and traveled along with the technical crew.

The first event in Dallas on Tuesday, Oct. 20, drew 168 total people, with 57 of those being new guests invited to attend via ads in The Good News, GN subscriber letters, online advertising, e-mail advertising and Pandora radio ads. After each event Mr. Kubik took to the stage to invite guests to stick around for a while after the event to meet and chat with the hosts, and many took the opportunity to do so.

After Dallas the crew traveled to San Antonio, where the second event was held on Thursday, Oct. 22. The San Antonio event was similarly a success, with 45 guests out of a total of 159 attendees. Much like the Dallas event, the audience was attentive, and guests took the opportunity to meet and talk to the hosts.

The approach of Hurricane Patricia from the southwest



Home office employees work together to unload equipment from the truck for the Personal Appearance Campaign in Texas.

as it made landfall in Mexico complicated matters for the third and final event in Houston. The huge hurricane pushed a rain system deep into Texas, and the resulting three-day downpour caused flooding in various parts of the city of Houston. Thankfully it wasn't as bad as it could have been. The venue of the third event suffered

no worse than a leaky roof and overflowing swimming pool. Still attendance was affected due to the rain and flooding. A smaller but more intimate crowd of 76 total with 21 guests enjoyed the high-energy presentation by the hosts, and as before, many stuck around to meet the hosts and ask questions.

Much thanks has to go to the pastors and members of the Dallas, San Antonio and Houston congregations for their help in making the tour such a success. The membership of all three congregations provided support for the events in the form of planning assistance, ushering and greeting. It simply would not have gone as well without their help. Special thanks to the Houston congregation for hosting the hosts and crew on the Sabbath and supplying a wonderful potluck dinner.

There were many requests to bring *Beyond Today Live* back to Texas and present follow-up events, and there have also been requests to take the *America: The Time Is Now!* program to other cities and metro areas in the U.S. With God's blessings we will hopefully be able to do so! **UN**

Peter Eddington



PETER EDDINTGON
Media and
Communication
Services Operations
Manager

What do you think of when you hear the word harmony? Do you think of music? Do you think of dating? Do you imagine an environmentally intelligent community? Do you gaze into the heavens at the International Space Station? Or do you think of something else?

Harmony is the art of using chords in music. In Western music, harmony is the use of different pitches simultaneously in music.

But harmony is also the “utility hub” of the International Space Station. And as you have no-doubt heard, Pasadena-based eHarmony was launched in 2000 and is now the Internet’s number-one trusted relationship services provider.

Plus, there is Harmony, Florida, a master planned community that is “a relaxed yet tight-knit community of friendly people, living side-by-side with pristine Florida nature and wildlife...offering

the strong cultural foundation to live harmoniously and securely in the 21st century” (fhvr.net).

That sure sounds like harmony, doesn’t it? But where will you find true harmony?

Harmony Destroyed

In the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, God created mankind to cooperate with Him harmoniously in a beautiful relationship characterized by love,

After Christ’s return God will bring the entire creation back into harmony with Him and peace will no longer be the exception.

peace and obedience to His laws. At the completion of His creation, God saw everything He had made, and indeed it was very good.

But that environment of harmony in a true paradise abruptly ended because of Satan’s deception and man’s disobedience. This deception cut mankind off from God’s way. However (and here is

the good part), after Christ’s return God will bring the entire creation back into harmony with Him and peace will no longer be the exception.

Restoration

God’s plan for mankind involves restoration. The latter part of God’s annual festival plan symbolizes a restoration process that will start with the return of Jesus Christ (pictured by the Feast of Trumpets), the banishment of Satan

(depicted by the Day of Atonement), and finally the Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day (when all of humankind will be offered salvation). These festivals picture the process being put in

place for the restoration of all creation to peace and harmony with God.

The Holy Days and festivals of God are designed and arranged in a very specific manner, and in an order to reveal what the Holy Spirit helps us to understand—knowledge that only can be seen from

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From The COUNCIL

Peace-Making



by Robert Dick

On a blustery April morning I walked down the gangplank of the overnight ferry from Liverpool, scanning the faces below for a wave or smile. It was the spring of 1965, and I had been assigned to assist James Wells, pastor of the Belfast, Northern Ireland, congregation with Passover and the First Day of Unleavened Bread. We finally made eye contact and exchanged greetings and then headed for his car. I was curious how Belfast would look after seeing it repeatedly on television news, and I was not surprised. Police and barricades were evident and protests covered miles of graffiti littered walls.

Tension was a way of life in Belfast. Bombings and killings, rock throwing protesters and barricaded communities

were normal. Mr. Wells commented that a bombing had occurred just that week not far from where we were to keep Passover. The hatred between Catholic and Protestant, between the Republic of Ireland and Ulster (Northern Ireland), had existed for so long it defined daily life in Belfast. But these were relatively speaking, “better times.” “The Troubles,” as they were to become known, lasted for 30 years and spilled over into England and even Europe.

Belfast left an impression, but less than three months after my visit I was sent into the U.S. field ministry. The memory of Belfast faded. It was purely by happenstance that my mind was taken back to Belfast one Sunday afternoon in 2008 on the way home from a Portland Spokesman Club meeting. Rick Steves, a locally popular television travel commentator, had recently inaugurated a radio program, and I tuned in.

That Sunday he didn’t talk about travel in Europe or hold a call-in program, but he rather conducted an interview on sectarian fundamentalism. His abrupt shift from being a travel commentator caught my attention, but it was the credentials of his guest that held it.

Rick was interviewing Lord John Alderdice on the topic of sectarian violence with a focus on the current issue of radical Islamic violence. While his guest’s primary experience was with a different group of

people, he was no stranger to the subject. John Alderdice had the most impressive set of credentials for understanding the peacemaking process I had ever seen. By background he was experienced in understanding conflict and conflict resolution from all sides.

John Alderdice is an elder in the Presbyterian Church and the son of a Presbyterian minister. By education he is a psychiatrist, trained at the Queen’s University of Belfast. His special interests included the application of psychoanalysis to understanding and dealing with terrorism and violent political conflict. Politically, he was a member of the Alliance Party, one of Northern Ireland’s five political parties. He was elected its leader in 1987, a position he held until 1998. While his credentials were outstanding the bigger question was what they had produced.

The answer to the question requires an understanding of the times. The tipping point in the history of conflict in Northern Ireland occurred in 1998 with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. The Agreement marked the end of the bloody 30-year period of the Troubles. The agreement created a governing body called the Northern Ireland Assembly, and John Alderdice was selected as its first speaker.

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Announcements



Kaia Elizabeth Knudson

Born July 13, 2015



Conway James Magee

Born Aug. 16, 2015



Gavin Malachi Phillips

Born Feb. 18, 2015



Cian Nathaniel Showers

Born Aug. 20, 2015



Michael Stephens & Mariah Fooshe

Summer 2016



Carlton and Barbara Kennedy

60th Wedding Anniversary



Andy and Tricia Luck

40th Wedding Anniversary



Betty Mae Bontrager

Jan. 26, 1930 - Jan. 19, 2015

Births

Kaia Elizabeth Knudson

Rheo and Courtney Knudson of the Phoenix, Arizona, congregation are thrilled to announce the birth of their firstborn, Kaia Elizabeth Knudson. Kaia, meaning "pure" and "ocean," was born after a three-day, unmedicated labor at 11:45 p.m. on July 13, 2015. She weighed 7 lbs., 0.8 oz., and was 19.5 in. long.

Proud grandparents are Monte and Susan Knudson of Phoenix, Arizona, and Don and Camille Ballo of Fort Myers, Florida. Kaia is the first grandchild for both families and is being spoiled with love and kisses already.

Conway James Magee

Esther and Jonathan Magee are happy to announce the birth of Conway James Magee. He is loved to pieces by his grandparents, Tom and Wanda McKinney and Conway and Juanita Magee and the rest of his awesome family. He was born 9 lb. 14 oz at 4:26 a.m. Aug. 16, 2015 in, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Gavin Malachi Phillips

Mark and Megan Phillips of the Nashville, Tennessee, congregation are pleased to announce the birth of their second son, Gavin Malachi Phillips, who arrived in the middle of an ice storm on Feb. 18, 2015. Gavin was welcomed in the world by his 16-month-old brother Michael Sage Phillips and proud grandparents Michael and Shari Fooshe, along with

great-grandmother Mary Styer (all of whom attend in the Nashville congregation). Gavin weighed 8 lbs. even.

Cian Nathaniel Showers

First son born to Justin and Elizabeth Showers of Columbus, Ohio.

Cian was born on Aug. 20, 2015. He weighed 7 lb., 11 oz., and was 21 in. long. Cian is the first grandchild of Mitch and Anita Showers and the second grandchild of Forest and Linda Shoemaker.

Cian is our first child, and we cannot be happier that he is so beautiful and healthy.

Engagements

Mariah LeighAnn Fooshe and Michael Paul Stephens

Michael and Shari Fooshe of the Nashville, Tennessee congregation, are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter Mariah LeighAnn Fooshe to Michael Paul Stephens, son of Shawn and Susan Stephens of the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, congregation. A summer 2016 wedding is being planning.

Anniversaries

Andy and Tricia Luck

Andy and Tricia Luck of the Nashville, Tennessee, congregation celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on July 19. Their two daughters hosted a small family party in their honor.

Carlton and Barbara Kennedy

Carlton "Carl" and Barbara Kennedy (Durfee) celebrated their 60th anniversary on Aug. 13, 2015. Carl grew up in San Fernando, California, and Barbara grew up in Los Angeles, California. They met through Barbara's cousin, who set them up on a blind date on New Years Eve in 1952. They were married a little more than two years later at the North Hollywood Presbyterian Church. They have one daughter, Carla Willer (Rick); two grandchildren, Christina Ballinger (Toby) and Logan Willer (Anna); and two great-grandchildren, Avery and Brookelynn Willer.

Carl and Barbara have been actively involved in serving the family of God, beginning with hosting a youth group at the Kirk of the Valley Presbyterian Church. After considerable Bible study, they were convicted that Saturday was the Sabbath and began to attend the Worldwide Church of God in the Glendale and Reseda, California, congregations. The Kennedys were ordained as deacon and deaconess in the Reseda congregation of the Worldwide Church of God and have served in that capacity for over 40 years. They moved to Counsel, Idaho, after Carl's retirement from the Los Angeles Fire Department and attended the Ontario, Oregon, congregation for 14 years.

The Kennedys currently reside in Elk Grove, California, and still serve in their local congregation in the United Church of God. On Aug. 22, 2015, the Roseville congregation joyously joined them to cel-

brate with cake, snacks, love and lots of laughter.

Obituaries

Betty Mae Bontrager

Betty Mae Bontrager, age 84, died Jan. 19, 2015. She was born Jan. 26, 1930, in White Pigeon, Michigan, to William Stewart and Edna Mae (Simpson) McClain. She attended the Cook Country School on Vistula Road. Betty was a homemaker who also worked in the shipping department at the Kent Company in Elkhart, Indiana. Betty was married to Louis LaVerne Oswald on Sept. 3, 1948. Vern died on May 13, 1972. She later married Cornelius J. Bontrager in Elkhart, Indiana. Neal died on May 25, 2010, and soon after she moved to Missouri.

Betty is survived by three daughters, Laurie (Randy) Duke, Vickie Chevalier, and Carrie Lattimer; three sons, Thomas (June) Oswald, Robin Oswald, and Todd Oswald; daughters-in-law Marsha Oswald and Pat Oswald; 16 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren; two brothers, Chuck McClain and William McClain; and nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by two sons, Timothy Oswald and Rick Oswald; three brothers, Dean, Kenneth, and Clayton McClain; and a sister, Mary Jane McClain.

Betty was a longtime member of God's Church, having been baptized in the spring of 1969. After she moved to Mis-

Announcements



Donald Lewis Hatchett

Feb. 1, 1927 - Feb. 17, 2015



Dorothy R. Betz Hoops

Jan. 27, 1927 - Aug. 9, 2015



Wanda Leigh Hostetler

Oct. 9, 1936 - Feb. 18, 2015



Greg B. Johnson

Nov. 24, 1946 - May 1, 2015

souri, she attended the Cape Girardeau congregation of the United Church of God as long as her health permitted. She was a true Christian soldier. She was “the genuine article.” She was a true lady of God—soft and feminine with a wonderful sense of humor mixed with a deep humility and sense of humor was present with her right to the end. There was always a twinkle in her eye. She glowed with the sweet and gentle spirit that was hers. She was a true lady of grace and a beautiful lady in every sense of the word.

She deeply loved her family and friends, and she was deeply loved in return. She has left a great legacy with them that is quite a testimony to her. And she deeply loved God her Father and Jesus Christ her Elder Brother, putting Them at the center of her life. Thus, a resurrection to Eternal Life now awaits her at the return of Jesus Christ. How we look forward to that day!

Donald Lewis Hatchett

Donald L. Hatchett, 88, of Benton, Illinois, died at 9:21 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2015, at West Side Care and Rehabilitation Center, West Frankfort, Illinois.

Mr. Hatchett was born on Feb. 1, 1927, in Thompsonville, Illinois, the son of Inman and Agnes Hatchett. He married Elaine LaVerne Shimkus in Chicago on June 13, 1959, and they were married for 55 years.

Donald served in the United States Navy during World War II with an honorable discharge. He attended Southern Illinois University and worked in a veterans hospital in Waukegan, Illinois, to help pay for his tuition. He later worked at Caterpillar Tractor Company in Peoria, Illinois, in the pricing department. He moved to Chicago and attended and graduated from the Mt. Sinai Hospital School of Nursing from 1956-1959. He returned to Southern Illinois and obtained his bachelor of science in nursing in 1961 at SIU. He then worked in the St. Louis Jefferson Barracks Veterans Hospital as a head psychiatric nurse of the ward. He returned to Benton to help his father with his business for seven years. He then became a coun-

selor for the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) in Benton, Illinois, and retired after 20 years of service.

Don was a loving and devoted father, and a loving and faithful husband. He loved God with all his heart and soul. He obeyed God’s laws and put God first in his life. He diligently prayed and studied and had many reference books to refer to and for in-depth study. He became a baptized member of God’s Church in September 1963, and later on served for a number of years as an elder, first in the Mt. Vernon, Illinois, congregation. Then later he served in the Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and Paducah, Kentucky, congregations. He was compassionate and caring to his fellow man. He was an honest and humble man who was willing to help anyone in need. God blessed him with many talents. He was witty and had a great sense of humor. He loved music and played the guitar and sang country songs. For a time he sang in a barbershop quartet. He loved birds and animals and he loved gardening. He was a do-it-yourself man in carpentry, roofing, remodeling, etc.

Surviving relatives include his wife Elaine Hatchett of Benton, Illinois, his children, Jon Hatchett and wife Becky of West Frankfort, Illinois, David Hatchett of Benton, Illinois, Daniel Hatchett and wife Frances “Fran” of Omaha, Nebraska, Jeremy Hatchett of Redondo Beach, California; sister-in-law Marilyn Hatchett of Hudson, Florida; brother-in-law Richard Shimkus and wife Patricia of West Frankfort, Illinois; one grandchild, Rachel Eckles and husband Sam of Marion, Illinois; and two great-grandchildren, Mason Hatchett of West Frankfort, Illinois, and Dominick Eckles of Marion, Illinois.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two infant sons, one infant daughter, his brother Thomas Hatchett, grandson Scott Hatchett and many aunts and uncles.

Don was loved by all who knew him and will be greatly missed. May God hasten the resurrection.

Dorothy R. Betz Hoops

Dorothy R. (Dody) Betz Hoops was

born Jan. 27, 1927, and died Aug. 9, 2015, after a short bout with lung cancer. She was with her husband Bob during the early 1950s while he attended Ambassador College prior to him entering the full-time ministry. She and Bob took care of the home of Herbert Armstrong while he was on travels and related interesting stories about the early years of Ambassador College to the local brethren. Bob left the ministry during some of the turbulent years of the Worldwide Church of God, but both he and Dody never abandoned the faith. Dody and Bob have lived on a local winery for the past 35 years with Bob being the winery carpenter and cabinet maker.

Dody was a devoted follower of God’s way of life and greatly encouraged the local Santa Rosa, California, congregation with her charm, wisdom, insight into the Bible and stories of her life. Dody was an organic gardener of the first class and was known for her fresh garden vegetables and homemade “super juice” blend for those bold enough to try it! Dody is survived by her husband of over 68 years, Bob, and her poodle named Barney. We look forward to seeing Dody when she wakes up in the resurrection!

Wanda Leigh Hostetler

Wanda Leigh Hostetler, 78, passed away on Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015, at her residence in Holcomb, Missouri.

Mrs. Hostetler, daughter of Wiley and Laura Plunkett Tarkington, was born on Oct. 9, 1936, in Russellville, Arkansas.

Survivors include her husband, Ed; two brothers, Kenneth Tarkington of Gideon, Missouri, and Jerry Tarkington of Wardell, Missouri; three sisters, Jean Gifford of Starkville, Missouri, Sue Crane of Gideon, Missouri, and Betty Garris of Maiden, Missouri, and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; four brothers, Wiley Tarkington, Jr., James Tarkington, Charles (Lefty) Tarkington, Larry Tarkington; and one sister, Billie Jean Tarkington.

On Feb. 25, 1965, in Peach Orchard, Missouri, she was united in marriage to

Ed Hostetler. They had almost 50 years of marriage. It was truly a golden marriage. It was rich in love and care for each other. They faced life together and were hardly ever apart, even working together in their landscaping business. Wanda was a beautiful lady who also loved spending time at home working with plants and flowers. She was always in a good mood, even in the face of increasing health problems as the years went by.

On July 19, 1968, 3½ years into their marriage, they were baptized into God’s Church. They stayed the course down through the years, faithfully attending and sewing the congregation in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Now Wanda awaits the resurrection as Ed continues to carry on. How he, along with the rest of us who know and love Wanda, looks forward to that day of resurrection and reunion!

Greg B. Johnson

Greg B. Johnson died May 1, 2015, at the age of 68. He reached his 45-year milestone as a member of the Church of God on Feb. 2, 2015.

Greg was born in Alliance, Ohio, on Nov. 24, 1946, to Leslie Paul Johnson and Beulah Marie Firestein. He graduated from Modesto Junior College and joined the Navy. He became interested in the Church and filed as a conscientious objector, which was granted. He received an honorable discharge.

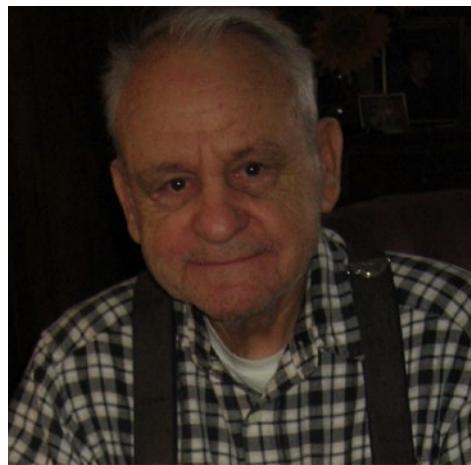
Greg then went on to attend Ambassador College and graduated in 1973. He was then hired by the Worldwide Church of God and married Kathleen Martha Krauter. His first assignment was Edmonton and Westlock, Alberta, Canada. While serving in Canada, he had three daughters. He also served in Roseburg, Oregon; Janesville, Wisconsin; Nashville, Tennessee; and Cleveland, Ohio; from 1980-1996.

In 1996, Greg transitioned from the ministry into career counseling. In October of 1998, Greg married Kathleen Marie Callahan Moore and added two stepdaughters into the family. They lived in Florida and relocated to San Antonio, Texas.



Lorene E. Lyonhurst

May 26, 1920 - Mar. 24, 2015



Scott William Mabry

1927 - Sept. 29, 2015



Mary Katherine Smith

Aug. 31, 1934 - May 25, 2015



Richard Henry Williams

July 13, 1947 - Aug. 14, 2015

For the last 20 years, Greg worked as a career advisor. Greg loved his job, serving people and living God's way of life. He enjoyed hiking, gardening, oil painting, playing the guitar and singing. He always believed that if music was playing, you'd better be dancing.

Survivors include his wife, Kathleen Marie Johnson, of Deltona, Florida; two brothers, Terry and Mark Johnson of Sacramento, California; five daughters, Tricia Moore Montero Merring (Bert), of Clermont, Florida; Krista Johnson, of Portland, Oregon; Letisha Johnson-Lusk (Brent), of Culver City, California; Tracy Moore Nance Cooper (Jason), of Deltona, Florida; Andrea Johnson Haller (John), of Claremont, California. He also leaves behind six grandchildren: Alyssa Soule (Michael), Allison Montero, Alec Nance, Autumn Nance, Brenden Merring and Caleb Merring, with two more on the way; and two great-grandchildren, Micah and Archibald Soule.

Greg will continue to be greatly missed by many. He finished his race strong with love and dedication and awaits his crown.

Lorene E. Lyonhurst

Lorene E. Lyonhurst, age 94, of Mayfield Kentucky, died Tuesday Mar. 24, 2015, at the home of her son. She was born May 26, 1920.

Mrs. Lyonhurst is survived by her son Donald L. (Mary) Lyonhurst of Mayfield, two grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

She was preceded in death by her husband Lincoln Lyonhurst; one brother, Cletus Dowdy; one sister, Alberta Stephenson; and her parents Floyd and Sara Emily Rogers Dowdy.

Lorene was a homemaker, and she was a very gracious and giving lady. She was very positive and cheerful. Always upbeat and outgoing. She considered herself a very blessed lady, even when she had numerous health problems to deal with in the later years of her life.

She was baptized into God's Church in 1951. Paducah, Kentucky, became her home congregation where she attended

for years until numerous health problems made her a shut-in. Lorene proved herself to be a very dedicated and faithful member of the Body of Christ and now awaits the resurrection to eternal life.

Scott William Mabry

Scott William Mabry of Uwharrie, North Carolina, passed away peacefully on Monday, Sept. 29, 2015, in the arms of his wife. He was 88 years old. He died from unexpected complications in Intensive Care at the Veteran's Hospital in Salisbury, North Carolina.

He will be deeply missed by Goldia Mabry, his wife of 65 years, all the generations of the Mabry family, and the many friends he made throughout his life.

Mr. Mabry served his country in the U.S. Army during World War II. He was a 1951 graduate of NC State University with a degree in agronomy. He worked for Kaiser Chemical and Mid South, helping North Carolina farmers to enrich their crops with proper soil and fertilization, and later in life for his son Scott's land surveying business. But his true love was working on his small farm, which he did exclusively for the last 30 years of his life.

On Dec. 25, 1949, Scott and Goldia were married in a little church right across the road from a plot of land they would one day buy to raise their family. And what a family they raised! The Mabrys had seven children: Patricia Ann Mabry-Russell of Los Angeles, California; Scott Allen Mabry (deceased); Teri Mabry of Asheboro, North Carolina; Will (Angela) Mabry of Uwharrie, North Carolina; John Mabry of New York, New York; Thom (Bonnie) Mabry of Troy, North Carolina; and Matt (Nina) Mabry of Uwharrie, North Carolina. There are 13 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Scott and Goldia were baptized in 1966 and were faithful, devoted members through the transitions of Radio Church of God, Worldwide Church of God and United Church of God in Greensboro, North Carolina. He was a father to the fatherless and a grandpa to just about anyone who met him. In fact, that's what

everyone called him—Grandpa Mabry.

His life was all about helping his family and his friends. He raised cows and horses and free-range chickens before there ever was a name for such a thing, and gave fresh eggs and milk to his family and friends. He loved working in the garden, sitting on the porch with his bride, taking care of the animals, and feeding the masses that came to visit him on the farm. His home was the venue for many church outings, and he taught scores of children (and even a few adults) the proper way to milk a cow.

If you met him, you had a friend for life. He was loving, patient, caring, faithful and irreplaceable. He will be missed beyond words.

Mary Katherine Smith

Mary Katherine Smith, 80, of Paducah, Kentucky, passed away at 1:30 a.m. on Monday, May 25, 2015, at her residence. She was born in Clendenin, West Virginia, on Aug. 31, 1934.

Mary is survived by her sons, Calvin Rex Smith and wife Jackie of Paducah, Kentucky, and Michael Dan Smith and wife Flora of Paducah, Kentucky; sisters, Ann Campbell of Elkview, West Virginia, and Nancy Samples of Blue Creek, West Virginia; 11 grandchildren, Keysla Hickey, Michael Smith, Tom Smith, Jay Smith, Sam Smith, Callie Smith, Gabbie Smith, Nicholas Smith, Ellie Smith, Katherine Smith and Frankie Smith; five great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by two sons, Stephen Paul Smith and Christopher Glenn Smith; and two brothers, Jimmy Clemmer and Dan Monroe. Her parents were Price Clemmer and Ethel White Monroe.

Mary was a homemaker and attended the United Church of God congregation in Paducah, Kentucky. She was a longtime member, having been baptized into God's Church on Aug. 28, 1962. She was a very dedicated and loyal member. In her earlier years when her health was good, she went out of her way to help out, especially

with the widows in the Church. In her later years when her health had deteriorated, to where she could no longer do for others, she still set a sterling example. She was one of the bright lights in the congregation. In spite of severe health problems, she never missed being in services unless she was sick or in the hospital. She was always positive and upbeat. She was quite a lady and a mainstay in the congregation. She is sorely missed as we look forward to the resurrection.

Richard Henry Williams

Our loving Richard passed away peacefully Aug. 14, 2015, at the age of 68. He was born on July 13, 1947, in Alpena, Michigan. He liked to say he was a "Northern Michigan farm boy." He lived most of his life in Lansing, Michigan.

Richard married Bonnie Fortner Aug. 5, 1973, and they had two beautiful children, Michael and Jessica. He was a dedicated, fun-loving husband and father. He was a gifted master mechanic and teacher. He loved to help people and was a blessing to many in emergency car breakdown situations and repairs. He taught auto mechanic classes at Baker College and helped many aspiring mechanics, young and old, glean from his expertise.

Richard was a faithful servant of God. He was a charter member of the Flint WCG congregation and later the United Church of God in Lansing. His favorite hobbies included photography, playing cribbage and euchre, cooking, and getting together with family and friends, especially his granddaughters!

Richard was preceded in death by his parents, Robert Henry Williams and Caroline Laurene Pardee; his loving wife of 27 years, Bonnie Sue Fortner; son Michael Scott Williams; and his sister, Karen Lerette.

He is survived by his daughter, Jessica Eleanor Williams; his daughter-in-law, Becky Sue Williams; his granddaughters, Mia Sue Williams and Kayla Sue Williams; and his sisters and brothers, Carol Jones, Judy Jenkinson, Alan Stephenson, and Wade Stephenson.



Fort Wayne Honors Its Senior Citizens



Sweet treats were part of the annual senior citizens appreciation brunch in Fort Wayne the Sabbath of Aug. 8. Montana Hermann, assisted by Tiffany Borton, were part of the serving crew.

On the Sabbath morning of Aug. 8, the seniors of the Fort Wayne congregation stepped into an Asian setting of golds, reds and black. The occasion was the annual seniors appreciation brunch and the theme was “wisdom.”

The tables had a gold table cloth and an Asian lantern for a center piece. The servers were dressed in skullcaps and oriental coolie hats. Event co-organizer Joel Borton had painted mustaches on the boys. The chefs outdid themselves as usual, along with the teens who served the drinks and pastries.

“Age should speak; advanced years should teach wisdom” (Job 32:7, New International Version). Placemats with this saying were given as a souvenir of the occasion.

Pastor Bart Bornhorst gave a short talk with reflection to respect of age and the wisdom it can bring. Age and wisdom are also mentioned in Isaiah 46:4 and Titus

2:6. Sprinkled throughout the brunch, several musical performances were given.

Tiffany, Tessa and Farrah Borton sang “The Wisdom Song,” Brenda Wendling and Sophia Borton sang “The Perfect Wisdom of Our God,” and Brenda Wendling sang “You’re Never Too Old to Make a Difference.”

All seniors left with satisfaction reflected on their face as all headed to afternoon services. Thanks to the teamwork of all who organized the event, as well as Dalpha Meier for the decorations.

Phyllis Minton

Spokane Ladies Assemble Baskets for Shut-Ins



The ladies from the Spokane fellowship group pose with their baskets they filled for shut-ins.

On Sunday, Sept. 13, the Spokane, Washington, ladies fellowship group met to assemble baskets for individuals not able to attend the Feast of Tabernacles.

It was a fun learning experience. Many brethren donated extra second tithe for all the items in the baskets. Handmade cards were included in each basket. It was a church-wide effort enjoyed by all.

Linda Swagerty

Then You Will Find Harmony

Continued from page 19

the perspective of God. If we try to figure it out ourselves, we can’t. It has to be revealed by God to us, and He does it through the power of His Holy Spirit.

For restoration to take place there has to be a dynamic change in human nature—and we are given insight into that change. For us, it begins with a life in harmony with Jesus Christ now.

The Whole World Reconciled

As human beings, all have sinned and

come short of the glory of God. But we have a God who is willing to extend mercy to us, to forgive our sins, and to wipe the slate clean through a process He has devised through His Son’s shed blood. Through that, God in His wisdom is reconciling the entire world—all humankind—to Himself so a Holy God can once again be in harmony with His children.

Through the Holy Days and festivals, God shows what He is going to ultimately do, not only for Israel, but what He will do for the whole world.

Young Adult Weekend in Minnesota

The UCG congregations in Minnesota would like to invite all young adults, ages 18-30, who would like to grow in their Christian conviction and be better equipped to defend what they believe, to “Growing in the Faith.”

Located at the beautiful Ironwoods Springs Christian Ranch, near Stewartville, Minnesota, this three-day event will be held over Presidents Day weekend, Feb. 12-15, 2016, and will include seminars, interactive workshops and fun activities that will not only equip you to defend your faith, but will draw you closer to God and each other in the process.

Registration and additional information available at www.growinginthefaith.com.

Brian and ReNae Shaw

Winter Family Weekend



Winter Family Weekend will be held from Dec. 23–Dec. 27, 2015 this year in Cincinnati, Ohio. Once again it will be held at the Great Wolf Lodge. Registration is now open on the website. Head to <http://wfw.ucg.org> to register and book a room.

Winter Camp



Winter Camp is now accepting applications for campers. The deadline for applications is Dec. 1. Camp will take place in West Bend, Wisconsin, from Dec. 27, 2015 through Jan. 3, 2016. For more information check out the website at uyc.ucg.org/camp/winter-camp.

Dan Dowd

Utah Ski Weekend

The Utah ski weekend will take place in Salt Lake City, Utah, from Jan. 16 through Jan 18, 2016.

Steve Nutzman

Local Church Updates: Send us news and events from your local congregation! Check with your pastor and have him forward what you write. We’re looking for 100- to 300-word articles and photos with captions. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you’d like photos returned. Include the author’s and photographer’s names. Please double-check the spelling of names. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give the material to your local pastor** to forward to *United News*.

Blessed Are Your Eyes

What do you think of when I say the word harmony? Do you think of music? Do you think of dating? Do you imagine

Through the Holy Days and festivals, God shows what He is going to ultimately do, not only for Israel, but what He will do for the whole world.

an environmentally intelligent community? Do you gaze into the heavens at the Space Station? Or do you think of God’s Kingdom?

We who have been called at this time are privileged to have access to the Tree of Life, through Jesus Christ. What a wonderful opportunity, something

again that allows us to have insight into the mind of God and the Scriptures. Therefore, of all people on earth, the Church of God should be filled with harmony and unity.

As Jesus said to His own disciples: “But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear” (Matthew 13:16). **UN**



Our World Looks More Like Babylon Everyday

Three Lessons From the Life of Daniel

by Mitchell Moss

We live in extraordinary times, don't we? It feels like we are living at an inflection point in history.

Refugees are flooding into Europe to escape the bloodiest civil war in recent memory. ISIS is gaining traction across the Middle East. Russia has begun flexing its muscle on the world scene, more overtly opposing Western priorities. The United States Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage this past summer. World economies continue to be uncertain and in need of intervention.

We look around, and as people who have chosen to follow God, our world feels more and more alien to us. Maybe once, a generation or two ago, we could feel a bit more at ease among our neighbors, peers and coworkers, because most of them shared values similar to ours. But the world is becoming more and more like that great system that opposes God. It's a system we know will exist in the time of the end: Babylon.

Lately I have been thinking a lot about the prophet Daniel. Like us, he lived at a time of a major inflection point in history—and he came through it with great faith. In fact, he lived through two major takeovers by world empires in his lifetime. He grew up in Jerusalem in the service of the royal family before he was deported to Babylon, where he eventually became a high official. Many years later, he was present when Persia conquered Babylon.

I have been thinking about Daniel because, in some ways, among all the men and women of the Bible, it was his whose life circumstances most resemble our own today. He didn't live in Israel like most in the Old Testament. He didn't live in a Jewish community of believers like most in the New Testament. Instead, he was nearly alone (with only three friends of like mind who are named in Scripture) in a culture both foreign to him and resistant to God.

More and more, our world looks like his world of Babylon. Reading Daniel's story can be incredibly inspiring in times like these because not only did he live in the very seat of the Beast power, he even worked directly for its king at times in his life. Yet he maintained his righteousness (Daniel 6:10).

Let's consider three lessons from the life of Daniel that we can apply today in our own lives.

1- Daniel Followed the Beat of His Own Drum in a Culture Alien to Him

Daniel was among the young men

of the nobility of Jerusalem who were selected to be trained for the service of King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 1:1-4). As part of that deal, they got a portion of the king's food (verse 5), which we can ascertain was largely unclean because it tells us that "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" (emphasis added throughout).

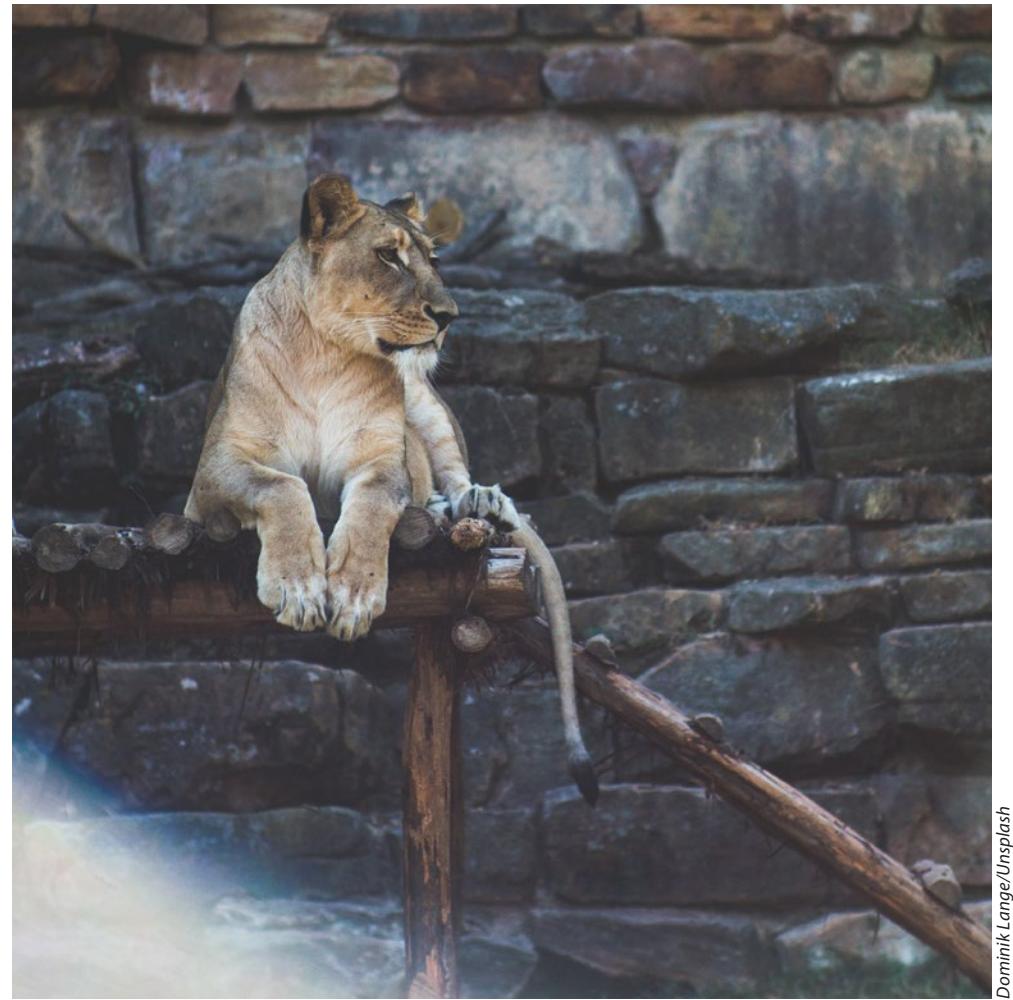
The time frame of this situation is what amazes me because it doesn't seem like Daniel was in Babylon for very long when this happened. I don't know about you, but whenever I find myself in a new situation, I tend to go with the flow. I try to observe and follow what everyone else is doing until I get a feel for my surroundings. Then once I get the lay of the land, I can decide what to do.

But in the case of Daniel, even before he had much time to figure things out, he did the right thing. Most people might compromise once, feel bad about it and make a plan in order not to compromise a second time. But Daniel acted first so he would not find himself in that situation at all. You have to wonder how many other Jewish youths besides Daniel and his three friends were there. They aren't mentioned and I'm guessing most of them didn't have the courage to stand up for what was right when they were thrust into a situation alien to them.

For us today, we have to realize that God's way of life is counter-cultural. And we have to have the courage to stand up for what we know is right as the situation around us gets more and more foreign to our values. We will be thrown into new situations every day. Our light can either shine, or we can hide it under a box by going with the flow.

2- Daniel Worked as if it Were All Up to Him, but He Prayed as if it Were All Up to God

In the next chapter of Daniel, it tells the story of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Either because he forgot it by the next morning or because he felt like going on a crazy power trip, he asked all the magicians and wise men not only to interpret the dream but to tell him what it was about in the first place. Obviously nobody could do that, so he ordered that they all be put to death. Picking up the story: "So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. Then with



Dominik Lange/Unsplash

For us today, we have to realize that God's way of life is counter-cultural. And we have to have the courage to stand up for what we know is right as the situation around us gets more and more foreign to our values.

counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon; he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, 'Why is the decree from the king so urgent?' Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel. So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon" (Daniel 2:13-18).

What is amazing to me here is that when Daniel heard there was a dream to be interpreted and he was going to die, he went to the king to ask for time before he knew God would answer his prayer. It turned out well because it happened that the dream was from God, and making the interpretation known was part of His plan. But Daniel didn't know that at the time. Yet he took that bold step in faith.

Now back in chapter one, where it said the group of young men from Jerusalem

that Daniel was part of were "young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand" (Daniel 1:4). It also says God gave Daniel and his three friends "knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." So Daniel had been educated and had wisdom—talents given by God that he had developed through education and training. In particular, he had been given the ability to understand dreams and visions. So when it came to this moment with the king's dream, it wasn't his first dream-interpreting rodeo. But it doesn't matter how well you can interpret a dream if you don't know what the dream was in the first place. He had to rely on God to show him. So he and his friends prayed and fasted.

The lesson for us today is that we should be developing the talents God has given us, and be using them every day. Not only that, we should be well-versed in God's Word, which contains the words of life and true wisdom. We must be living its teachings day in and day out, being an

Please see page 26

Honoring Retiring Ministry

Robert and Dyanne Dick

Robert (Bob) and Dyanne Dick retired from the full-time ministry on Nov. 1, 2015, after 50 years of service to the Church of God. The Portland, Vancouver, and Hood River congregations are planning to honor the Dicks during a special Sabbath service on Nov. 7, 2015. The Dicks have pastored churches in Michigan, Alabama, Florida, Indiana, Ohio, Washington, Alaska and Oregon. Their first pastorate in 1965 (Mobile, Alabama) was the first integrated congregation in the Deep South. It was one of their more memorable assignments considering the social and political climate of the day. Over the years they've had the opportunity to meet brethren from around the world. Both have considered it to be a privilege and a blessing to live and work among God's people.

Mr. Dick was instrumental in founding and establishing the United Church of God, being a member of the transitional board in 1995 and then the Council of Elders for 14 years (serving as chairman of the Council for eight years). Additional areas of service have included senior pastor for Northern Ohio, regional pastor for the Northwest region, keynote speaker during the Feast of Tabernacles and regional and district Y.O.U. coordinator. Mr. Dick currently serves on the Council of Elders.

Longtime friends, coworkers and members shared these sentiments:

Noel and Becky Hornor: "Bob and Dyanne Dick have provided a strong sense of stability and compassion for the

Church and its members during some very turbulent times. Their love and respect for God's people is evident by their ability to patiently listen, encourage and give well considered and wise counsel. Mr. Dick is especially effective in working with people to understand the underlying issues with a sincere desire and patient dedication to help them grow in their relationship with God. We especially appreciate their dedication and sacrifice for the benefit of God's people."

Colleen Hofer: "Over the past 16 years we have, as a congregation, come to love the Dicks. We look to them as friends, very much like a family. He is such an excellent pastor, teacher and counselor that we all admire and respect. They have been stellar examples to us in leading a happy and balanced life."

LeeAnn Luker: "Bob and Dyanne Dick are the epitome of graciousness. They have always been faithful to God's Word and truth, serving His people with genuine care, warmth and kindness."

When asked what words of advice and insight they would share, their thoughts included:

Mr. Dick: "Always treat everyone under you with respect. If you live long enough at least one of them will one day be your superior."

"When peer pressure reigns it is hard to remember your principles, but consider one thing: When most of your accomplishments have been forgotten the principles you lived by will still be remembered."



"Treat Church members who come to you with serious problems with respect. Remember they didn't have to expose themselves to your scrutiny; they did so because they were converted."

Mrs. Dick: "Be yourself. Be genuine. We all bring different gifts of service to the brethren. Make your family priority as they are a lifetime investment and God's gift to us."

"In our ministry we have been through many changes. Life itself presents us with many challenges. When my mother-in-law was dying she said, 'God has been good to me, I have had a good life.' I can say the same thing reflecting back on the past 50 years. God has helped us every

step of the way."

Bob and Dyanne Dick have two sons and two daughters-in-law (Phillip and Jennifer Dick and Timothy and Elizabeth Dick) and three grandchildren (Emily, Connor and Gavin). They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Oct. 19, 2015. In retirement the Dicks are looking forward to spending more time with their family without counting the "vacation" days. Mr. Dick plans on capturing the beauty of the Northwest region photographically and will use the extra time for expanded research, editing and writing memoirs for his children and grandchildren.

Lisa Fenchel



Dear Readers,

My name is Linda Merrick, and I am the new associate editor of internal publications. As part of my job description I will be focusing on publications that specifically involve the members of the United Church of God. I will edit and layout United News. I will also put together publications involving Ambassador Bible College, such as pictorials. Another important aspect of my job is taking care

Letter From the New Associate Editor

of the members website. I will upload articles, create banners, and maintain it.

I am not just writing to explain my job, but to introduce myself. I was born and raised in Hammond, Indiana, about 30 minutes from downtown Chicago. I grew up in the Church as well.

After high school I attended Purdue University Calumet pursuing a degree in elementary education. While at Purdue I spent several years working for the student-run newspaper, *The Chronicle*. This is where I gained the majority of my experience on how to run, edit and layout a newspaper. I was the production manager for most of my time at Purdue, and I was the managing editor for part of the time.

Attending Purdue was more about life experience for me. I did not receive a degree from the university, but received much experience working with publications and experience in teaching.

In 2007 I decided it would be best to take some time off from school and go to Ambassador Bible Center. I graduated from ABC in 2008 and stayed in Cincinnati to work and save a little money. I went back to school and received my bachelor of science degree in early childhood education at the University of Cincinnati. I spent the last four years teaching preschool here in the Cincinnati area and have enjoyed it immensely.

This summer while I was out of work for summer vacation, two of my roommates encouraged me to apply for this job. I always enjoyed layout design and ran with every opportunity to work with design during my years teaching. So I decided I would apply for the job and allow God to guide me where he wanted me. I prayed that if God wanted me to work for the Church He would open the door to this job, and if He wanted me to

continue teaching He would close the door.

God opened the door, and I was offered the job. I was torn at first because I also love teaching. However God answered my prayer, and I had to follow Him.

Here I am today, doing what else I love. Over the past few months I have read this verse several times: "But Ruth said: 'Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.'" Here Ruth had the same idea when she followed both Naomi and God. I must follow God and allow Him to lead me where He will. I look forward to connecting to brethren through this new phase in my life!

Sincerely,
Linda Merrick

Our World Looks More Like Babylon Everyday

Continued from page 24

example even when nobody's looking. When a problem or issue arises, we can put those skills, that wisdom, that knowledge and that training to use to solve it.

But even if our skills are more than matched to a task at hand, we should ask God for His help. He can reveal things we might not think of. And when we aren't sure whether we are suited to a task or are qualified to tackle a problem, He can use us in ways we wouldn't dream of—and we must be open to that with faith and courage.

Think about it: We have the Holy Spirit! We understand spiritual mysteries that Daniel had a glimpse of in vision! God's very essence and power has been given to us. We can boldly stand before men in the strength of that power.

3- When Daniel Experienced Fear, He Chose to Act in Faith Instead of Succumbing to That Fear

Think about all the stories of Daniel. Put yourself in those situations. He approached the master of the eunuchs to ask for an exception in their meals when he first was deported to Babylon. He approached the captain of the guard, and then the king himself, in only his second year living there to ask for time to know and then interpret a dream. Much later, as an old man, he prayed to God with his windows open when it was illegal to do so in Persia (Daniel 6:11).

These are scary situations. Situations that would require courage to do what was right. I have no doubt his heart was racing when he was thrown into the den of lions. I'm certain he was scared when, as a teenager, he had to ask his Babylonian

task master for an exception in his diet.

We will always experience fear—the fear of dying or being hurt, the fear of the unknown, the fear of what someone else will think, the fear of what failing would look like, the fear of what succeeding would look like, the fear of being humiliated in front of everybody else, the fear of being left out.

Fear is natural and can even be good sometimes. But we can learn from Daniel that when it comes to doing what's right. We should choose to look that fear in the eyes and overcome it with faith. We should choose not to succumb to that fear but instead to boldly act with faith knowing that God will back us up.

As Azariah, Mishael and Hananiah said before they were thrown into the fiery furnace, "The God whom we serve is able to save us...But even if he doesn't, Your Maj-

esty can be sure that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up" (Daniel 3:17-18). Even if we aren't asked to worship a gigantic, pagan gold idol in a literal sense like they were, doing what's right at pain of punishment or humiliation still takes character and courage.

In our day-in, day-out lives, the people surrounding us may or may not share values similar to ours. After an incredible Feast of Tabernacles where we fellowshiped with and strengthened our relationships with God's people, we might feel a little bit alien back in the grind—a little bit out of step with everybody else. But remember when situations arise that challenges us to do what's right: Our light can either shine, or we can hide it under a box by going with the flow.

Will you be like Daniel? **UN**

Peace-Making

Continued from page 19

With his credentials, his success and the obvious respect of his peers, John Alderdice had my attention, and I was deeply interested in his observations. As the interview progressed, Rick asked, "What do you think drove the problem?" Lord Alderdice responded with this comment:

"I think what happens is when you find some people facing a trauma, some kind of assault on their identity as large groups of people, particularly where that involves them feeling disrespected and humiliated, you find that they fall back into fundamentalist ways of dealing with things, not free, understanding, reflective ways of relating, but fundamentalist ways, and they respond with violence and with fear against the other, and they see the other not as someone with whom they can engage, but someone whom they must attack in order to defend themselves."

Lord Alderdice's assessment had the clarity and simplicity one finds in places like the book of James (James 4:1-3), where James answers the question: "Where do wars come from?" Just as James condenses his observation into the simplest elements: Wars come from the fact that you lust for something you don't have. When you don't control your lust, war is the result. Lord Alderdice observed that people strike out at those by whom they feel humiliated or disrespected, and conflict is the result.

How very simple! We respond kindly to those who respect us, and we throw up defenses against those by whom we feel disrespected, going so far as to do battle with those who humiliate us.

Rick Steves' interview that Sunday afternoon only served to enhance my respect

for men like John Alderdice—people who have the heart and skill necessary to broker peace. Peace is a wonderful thing. Every converted person believes in peace. Every converted person wants peace. Every converted person can advocate for peace, even preach peace. But Christ in the Beatitudes was interested in the person who could make peace (Matthew 5:9).

Making peace is a skill; wanting peace is a passive desire. If we can take a lesson from the Northern Irish negotiations, the first step in peacemaking is to reverse the tide.

Making peace is a skill; wanting peace is a passive desire. If we can take a lesson from the Northern Irish negotiations, the first step in peacemaking is to reverse the tide. If you are at odds with anyone stop adding words and deeds that fuel the feelings of being disrespected, or even worse humiliated. Some problems die for no other reason than that we stop feeding the fire.

Apologies, if they are heartfelt, are a powerful step in peacemaking. I have a greeting card I have kept in my desk for over 20 years. On the front is an orangutan sitting with a baleful look. The caption reads, "I'm sorry. I was wrong." But upon opening the card it continues, "Not as wrong as you were, but I was wrong." I have kept the card as a counseling tool—the perfect model of a useless apology. Apologies can subtract from or add to conflict.

Cessation of hurtful words or deeds is a start, and a genuine apology furthers the process. But how do you restore a sense of being respected and erase the feeling of humiliation? Can you find something you both agree upon, something you both like, or even better some good thing you

can genuinely say about the other? These are deposits in a relational bank account. Have you ever noticed how friends can get away with hurtful things that others can't? It's because over time they have made multiple deposits in a relational bank account, and we will allow them to make occasion withdrawals without closing their account. When you have no

relational bank account with someone, any withdrawal triggers a penalty.

Some who have no experience in making peace consider shuttle diplomacy foolish or at best a waste of time, but stop for a minute and make it personal. If someone who has shown you disrespect—or even worse publically humiliated you—if they says one nice thing about you, does that erase everything? No. It's a start—one deposit in a relational account. When walls have been built between people, they usually come down a brick at a time. This is why it takes time to make peace. It also takes a commitment to keep working toward greater and greater peace. Israel and Egypt didn't come to peace overnight, but they have peace now. While the Good Friday Agreement was recognized as the tipping point in Northern Ireland, it took another nine years to cement relations at the governmental level. At the community level it is still a work in progress.

The progress made in Northern Ireland and elsewhere is the result of the efforts of men who have a passion for making peace and who understand how to go about it. Any time you face a conflict, whether between individual or a group, remember Lord Alderdice's observations. If you can take his observations and build upon them, you too can be a maker of peace. **UN**

news AT A GLANCE



Challenger West Returns in August 2016

We are pleased to announce that Challenger West returns in the summer of 2016. The program will once again take place in the Fitzpatrick Wilderness (Wind River) area outside of Dubois, Wyoming. It will last 10 days (including arrival and departure days) and will take place during the first or second week of August. It features backpacking, rock-climbing, bouldering, camping, fishing, spiritual education, hands-on leadership opportunities and small-group dynamics. Applications and finalized dates will be available in December at <http://uyc.ucg.org/camp/challenger-west>.

Matthew & Lisa Fenchel

UYC 2015 Reports

Northwest Preteen Camp

Oregon—Aug. 2–5

This year's 14th annual Northwest Preteen Camp was outstanding! The camp is ensconced in a beautiful millennial setting located near Mt. Hood, southeast of Portland. Seventy-eight preteen campers ages 4 to 12, 42 adult staff, and 28 teen staff enjoyed a wonderful summer camp experience from Sunday, Aug. 2, through Wednesday, Aug. 5. Campers and staff came from Oregon, Washington, California, Montana, Idaho, and Colorado. Camp provided many opportunities to build closer relationships and have fun together.

Our theme was "Let Your Light Shine!" from Matthew 5:16. The boys dorm names reflected our theme, with names such as the Illuminators, Flashlights, Lighthouse Keepers, Lightning Bolts and Reflectors. The girls dorms were the Mirror Images, G.L.O.W. (Godly Ladies of Wisdom), Graceful Glowing Girls, Luminous Ladies, Shining Sunbeams and Sparkling Stars. We had some fun skits and skits emphasizing the theme.

This year's camp activities included the usual Christian living classes, archery, arts and crafts, campfire, dance class, swimming and sports. However with the drought in Oregon, we had to forego the river float. So we had more swim-



ming time in the pool.

The 28 teen staff had just come from a week of teen camp. They were exhausted but kept the usual contagious enthusiasm going without complaining. They loved being together and serving the preteens just as much as the parents. We also



have dedicated staff that continues to come year after year and some who don't have children in the camp program.

We are already anticipating next year's Northwest Preteen Camp with the theme "Love Bears All Things."

John and Sandy Cafourek

Camp Tomahawk

Tennessee—May 31–June 3

Camp Tomahawk returned this year after a brief break to the beautiful location of the Nacome Camp and Conference Center in Pleasantville, Tennessee. Twenty-nine young campers and 35 adults and teen staff from Ohio, Missouri, Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky and Tennessee came together to share with one another a very memorable experience. Our heavenly Father knew exactly what we needed for weather. Even though we had a few short showers, each time was during an activity that didn't require us to be outside. For the remainder of the time, we enjoyed cool, breezy days with light mists that helped keep the pesky mosquitos at bay. We truly thank God for his hand in all that occurred this year. It was a truly blessed return of the camp program in the region, and we truly appreciate everyone's participation that helped make it a great 2015 camp.

Campers enjoyed hands-on Christian living class each morning, which emphasized this year's theme of "Remember Your Creator." Kevin Kenady used a variety of cool and visually engaging science experiments like Diet Coke and Mentos, water-propelled race cars and liquid soap volcanos to show how God's creation is both marvelous and beautiful. After Christian living class, campers were then immersed in exciting activities like caving, archery, fishing, shelter building, creek walks,



rubber duck creek races, arts and crafts, field games, "funyaking," novelty olympics and movie night!

It takes a tremendous amount of time and work from so many different individuals to help make a camp successful. We want to thank our adult and teen counselors for providing a loving, structured and godly Zone for our campers and giving them positive examples they will remember for years to come. We also want to thank those who served as activity staff, kitchen moms, camp nurse, or just wherever there was need to be filled. And we also want to thank those who served in the months before camp who put together fundraisers and many, many other activities that benefited both the campers and staff.



Dates for Camp Tomahawk 2016 will be June 4-8. We welcome both returning campers and staff as well as anyone who would like to be a part of the Camp Tomahawk experience for the first time. We look forward to seeing our young campers, parents, and volunteers young and old return for another memorable year.

Matthew Puckett



Congratulations Class of 2015!

Max Heine

Parents: Tim and Mary Heine

Congregation: Salt Lake City, Utah

School, work, internship, co-op or other accomplishments: Max graduated from Bingham High School on June 4. He maintained a 4.0 GPA throughout his high school career. He represented the state of

Utah at the Technology Student's Association national competition this summer in Dallas, Texas. Max was inducted into the National Society of High School Scholars (NSHSS), served on the yearbook staff and the FBLA and Academic Decathlon competition teams. Max will attend Utah State University as a recipient of the Presidential

Scholarship.

Interests, interesting facts, Church activities, hobbies: Max enjoys basketball, playing the piano, reading, calculus, science and computer programming.

Favorite scripture: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

What's New In MEDIA?



Television Airing Schedule

Title	Host	Literature	Airing Period
<i>Kingdoms at War: Handwriting on Wall</i>	Darris McNeely	<i>The Book of Revelation</i>	Nov. 1-7
<i>Utopia: Is It Humanly Possible?</i>	Darris McNeely	<i>Christ's Reign on Earth: What it Will Be Like</i>	Nov. 8-14
<i>Heaven on Earth?</i>	Gary Petty	<i>Heaven and Hell</i>	Nov. 15-21
<i>What Happens After Death?</i>	Steve Myers	<i>What Happens After Death?</i>	Nov. 22-28
<i>The Bible's Prophetic Puzzle</i>	Gary Petty	<i>The Final Super Power</i>	Nov. 29-Dec. 5

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POSITION POSTED

Human resources and information technology have announced an opening for a help desk/junior programmer analyst.

The help desk/junior programmer analyst is present at the home office each workday. He or she is responsible for providing technical assistance and support related to computer systems, hardware, and/or software. He or she works with personnel in multiple departments at the home office, ministers in the field, as well as with external vendors when needed. The incumbent also provides support for international offices when needed. An additional duty of the applicant is using postal software to prepare mailings for others to print and deliver to the post office.

Skills include: excellent customer service, troubleshooting and communication skills. A good understanding of Microsoft Office, e-mail, Microsoft Windows, antivirus software and PC hardware are a must. Consistent

customer care and quality standards are core competencies of the position. Experience in programming and Web development, especially in Microsoft Access or .NET and Drupal/PHP are a plus.

A college degree or equivalent and two years related experience and training in computer skills are required.

Potential employees must be baptized members of the United Church of God. Applicants must be biblically literate and possess a thorough working knowledge of the doctrines, beliefs and practices of the United Church of God. The deadline for submission of an application is Dec. 30, 2015. The Church does not keep submissions or applications that do not result in the applicant being hired.

For more information about the position and to submit a resume, please contact human_resources@ucg.org.



Periodicals Postage Paid at Milford, Ohio, and at additional mailing offices

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov. 2-4: UYC Meeting, Cincinnati

Dec. 7-10: Quarterly Council Meeting, Cincinnati

Dec. 11-12: *Beyond Today* Recording

Dec. 23-27: Winter Family Weekend, Cincinnati

Dec. 27-Jan. 3: Winter Camp, Wisconsin

Jan. 16-18: Utah Ski Weekend, Salt Lake City

Feb. 12-15: Minnesota Young Adult Weekend

WEB DEVELOPER JOB POSITION STILL OPEN

The United Church of God still has an opening for the Web developer position. The position has the following requirements:

- Custom programming and Web application development for Church websites.
- Testing, maintenance and troubleshooting of existing Church sites.
- Contributing ideas and efforts towards internal projects and working as part of a team to find solutions for various problems.
- Other duties as assigned.

Required skills for this position

- A solid understanding of PHP, AJAX, HTML, Javascript, and CSS.
- Familiarity with source control systems such

as Git.

- Ability to communicate technical ideas to business users and other teams (design, QA).
- Ability to both collaborate with team members and to work independently.
- Eager to embrace current and emerging Web technologies.

The following experience would give an applicant preference:

- Knowledge of SEO coding best practices.
- Proficient in Drupal, including custom module development, key contributed modules and core API.
- Two-plus years of Drupal hands-on development experience.

- Experience integrating open source and third-party applications into existing systems.

A bachelors degree (B.A.) is preferred. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered. Strong language, logic and communication skills, and algebra/geometry level math skills are required. Those applying for consideration and invited for an interview must supply a resume of their education and/or experience.

Potential employees must be baptized members (in good standing) of the United Church of God. Applicants must be biblically literate and possess a thorough working knowledge of the doctrines, beliefs and practices of the United Church of God.

For more information about the position, please contact human_resources@ucg.org.