



## Feast of Tabernacles 2012



Clockwise from top left: children at the Feast in Zambia; a sack race in Davao City, Philippines; Feastgoers in front of Castle Carcassonne in France; Feastgoers in Maloca de Moscou, Brazil; a girl with a kangaroo in Rockingham, Western Australia.

### Fitly Framed Together.

by Mitchell Moss

The Feast of Tabernacles is a time for refreshing our vision of the coming Kingdom of God. It's a time of heightened rejuvenation of our relationship with God and with our brethren in the Body of Christ. Hopefully when we keep the Feast, we come away with stronger relationships with God and Christ and with our brethren. We hopefully have a more firm resolve to serve God in our journey to the Kingdom. We hopefully have considered what it means to be

part of the body of Christ and reflected on how we can better serve the whole.

Thousands of people gathered in 2012 at more than 50 United Church of God Feast sites around the world. From the Bengal Coast of India to the jungles of Brazil, brethren met together in service, rejoicing and praise to God. They sang together, learned from the Scriptures together, shared meals and worshiped together.

Starting on page two, you will find the reports from each of the Feast sites the United Church of God held around the

globe. Starting on page 11, you will find photos from nearly every site.

The Feast video's theme of being fitly framed together seemed to come out in many of the reports this year. Many sites had additional discussion and Bible study on that topic.

"Best Feast yet!" is a phrase maybe as old as our modern-day keeping of the Feast, but in so many cases this year, individuals, families, parents and children found themselves saying it and feeling it. God truly did bless this year's Feast of Tabernacles. **UN**

## news AT A GLANCE

### Northwest Family Weekend—Play, Learn, Dance, Ski!

The Portland congregation would like to welcome you to the annual Northwest Weekend on Dec. 22-25. We will again be at the beautiful new Hilton Hotel in downtown Vancouver, Washington, for Sabbath services, teen and adult dances on Saturday night and our annual day of educational seminars.

This year we are excited to announce a shift of our sports day to a new location—Club Green Meadows. Club Green Meadows is the largest and most complete private recreational facility in the Northwest, located just 10 minutes north of the Hilton. We

Please see page 22



### INSIDE UNITED NEWS

Feast of Tabernacles Reports	2
Forward! How Thankful Should We Be?	3
International News	3

From the Council: The Mind of Christ vs. the Mind of Satan	4
From the Word: Leap	5
Feast Photos	11-14
Preteen Camp Ironwood Report	10

Announcements	19
Local Church Updates	20
Preteen Camp Tomahawk Report	21
Children's Corner	23
What's New in Media?	24

### BY THE NUMBERS

**5,160,203**

Visitors to UCG.org since November 2011



# Feast of Tabernacles 2012

## Reports from around the world

See photos on pages 11-14

### Feast Attendance

#### Australia

Merimbula, N.S.W. ....	158
Rockingham, W.A. ....	85
Sunshine Coast, Qld. ....	380
Ulverstone, Tasmania .....	62

#### Benin

.....	30
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#### Bolivia

.....	24
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#### Brazil

.....	35
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#### British Isles

.....	169
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#### Cameroon

.....	63
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#### Canada

Abbotsford, British Columbia..	130
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Canmore, Alberta.....	300
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Point Edward, Ontario.....	110
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Prince Edward Island .....	87
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#### Chile

.....	129
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#### Colombia

.....	63
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#### Congo

.....	52
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#### Estonia

.....	24
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#### France

.....	164
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#### Germany

.....	193
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#### Ghana

.....	35
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#### Guatemala

.....	189
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#### India

.....	45
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#### Italy

.....	228
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#### Jamaica

.....	189
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#### Kenya

Migori.....	309
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Ogembo .....	110
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Nakuru.....	99
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#### Malawi

.....	123
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#### Mexico

.....	580
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#### New Zealand

.....	96
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#### Nigeria

.....	101
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#### Philippines

Baguio City .....	125
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Davao City.....	410
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#### South Africa

.....	116
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#### Sri Lanka

.....	30
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#### St. Lucia

.....	25
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#### Tobago

.....	172
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#### Togo

.....	47
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#### Tonga

.....	8
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#### United States

Bend-Redmond, Oregon.....	729
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Branson, Missouri.....	588
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Escondido, California .....	503
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Gatlinburg, Tennessee.....	562
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Jekyll Island, Georgia .....	629
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Lake George, New York .....	385
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Lahaina, Hawaii.....	574
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New Braunfels, Texas .....	433
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Panama City Beach, Florida .....	1135
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Steamboat Springs, Colorado .....	327
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Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin .....	919
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Satellite sites.....	692
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#### Zambia

.....	287
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#### Zimbabwe

.....	57
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#### Total Attendance

.....	12,763
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#### Shut-ins who received Feast sermons from the home office

.....	453
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#### TOTAL

.....	13,318
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Note: Highest daily attendance figures. Webcast connections are not added into this total.

## Australia

### Merimbula, New South Wales

Once again, God's Feast of Tabernacles was held in the small bay town of Merimbula, New South Wales. It was one of the four festival sites that were held in Australia. And once again, it was a Feast that produced a wonderful atmosphere for God's yearly observance.

The average attendance was 137 people (158 was the peak attendance) with most attending from the states of New South Wales and Victoria. For those members, it was an annual reunion as many of them have gathered at Merimbula for past festivals. Seeing brethren after another year always strengthens relationships within the Body of Christ and encourages us to keep on keeping on.

Merimbula was blessed to be able to have a guest elder and his wife from the home office in Cincinnati, Ohio. Richard and Emma Kennebeck made the long journey to serve wholeheartedly in various ways. Mr. Kennebeck prepared sermons that resonated with the Australian members, while Mrs. Kennebeck directed a festival choir that added to the Feast musically.

The first children's Bible lesson produced a mini mock-booth complete with leafy branches. It was decorated with colored pictures of harvest fruits. The furnished booth then became a feature in the main hall for all to see for the eight-day duration. It served as a reminder of temporary dwellings.

The teens were given an interactive study on the topic of understanding God's observances and where the religious observances of the world originated.

There were also plenty of activities for all ages.

The seniors had a two-course luncheon overlooking the Merimbula Bay entrance at the headlands to the sea. The teens attempted to play nine holes of golf on the relaxing Tura Beach course. There was a vibrant and warm open house dinner for all, hosted at the accommodation of

two members. On another day, members boarded a boat cruise on a beautiful afternoon where some playful whales were spotted migrating past Merimbula. And finally, there was a night of exotic dining at a Tapas and Bar Cantina, which filled everyone with delicious food.

Overall, it was a festival in which God's presence reaped a friendly and peaceful spirit. We can never underestimate how the keeping of God's Feast of Tabernacles enriches our lives to keep looking to His coming Kingdom!

*Matthew Sieff*

### Rockingham, Western Australia

What a wonderful privilege it is to be invited by the Living God to share in His Holy Days! Our good and gracious God certainly blessed us with a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles at the sunny seaside town of Rockingham, a half hour drive from Perth in the far west of Australia. Rockingham is flanked by beautiful, peaceful beaches and is home to some amazing sunsets. A high attendance of 85 brethren gathered to share God's Feast together, and were encouraged and inspired throughout the eight-day period. Once again God provided us a wealth of spiritual understanding through the sermonettes, special music and sermons, and the hearty fellowship was a demonstration of the peace, unity and love which results when people are striving to practice God's way of eternal living.

The message on the opening service encouraged us to consider the incredible insights God grants us into His plan for the entire human family, and with that in mind to ask ourselves: "Am I becoming more like God?" Messages followed on from this theme through the Feast, prompting us to consider why it is that man cannot govern himself, the fact that we are on the threshold of a new age, with a godly justice system, and that we need to "fit that culture." We were reminded that God is preparing us to be shepherds, that our service under Christ will be an eternal kingly role, and that

we as individuals are just one part of that greater spiritual Body God is fashioning together.

Organizers put a great amount of time into planning some wonderful Feast activities, including a "meet and greet" supper on the first Holy Day after services, a family barbecue and games afternoon, a ladies afternoon tea and discussion, a bus trip to a recreation and conservation reserve that covers nearly 4,000 hectares of natural bush land and leisure facilities, and an exciting and fun-filled games night evening!

What a wonderful blessing it was to be able participate in God's Feast! Through this Feast God inspired us all with His wonderful vision of His soon coming Kingdom, and encouraged us to continue to strive to become more like Jesus Christ in thought and deed. It is then we can truly be "fitly framed together," and share a part in the fulfillment of His wonderful plan for the entire human family.

*Paul Vaughan*

### Sunshine Coast, Australia

This year at the Sunshine Coast, Australia, Feast site one could feel the tempo being set even before the first hymn was sung with many attendees coming out to help with the set up of the hall. The spirit of service was truly in the air, and you could sense the anticipation of genuine fellowship to come.

The first night you could hear the excitement in everyone's voices as we sang the opening hymns. For the first major activity, 40 young adults kicked off with a boat cruise of the harbor on the evening after the first Holy Day while enjoying a delicious dinner. The young adults group was spoiled with a second activity as they gathered on one of the afternoons for a beach party.

The teens, as in years past, enjoyed their 10-pin bowling bowling activity and a roller skating activity.

The Feast family fun day on the third day was again a roaring success with more opportunity to fellowship. Talented young adults

face painted the younger group, a friendly soccer game was enjoyed by almost everyone, and a final tug-of-war expended the last bit of energy left. Organic sausages were again a hit this year, as well as the local coffee van.

Our valued seniors relaxed with a lunch served by our young adults group and games at the Lake Kawana Community Centre overlooking the beautiful Kawana Waters lakes.

By popular demand the Saturday night Aussie Bush Dance was back this year with a new band that kept everyone, adults and young ones, on their feet and dancing the night away. This year Aussie pies were enjoyed as usual, but keeping up with a healthy diet they were pure Angus beef!

The special music was some of the best ever, and the children's choir was in good, entertaining form!

The messages were especially focused this year on the 1,000 year period that the Feast pictures. The spiritual and physical differences in the next world and today's world were contrasted starkly. The messages given by all the speakers left us longing to see the next age of man under the rule of Jesus Christ.

We saw this year at the Feast God's sincere love expressed in so many ways by our brethren for each other. So many comments were made about the outgoing concern seen in the attitude of service toward others at the Feast.

On the Eighth Day we closed services by singing "As For Me and My House," signifying everyone's commitment to continuing the uplifting spirit they had all experienced at the Feast 2012. We webcast our services for those who could not attend this year and included them in our greetings throughout the Feast.

A special thank-you to all who participated in making this Feast one to be remembered.

*Kirsten Barton*

### Ulverstone, Tasmania, Australia

The Tasmanian festival site was again at the Ulverstone Civic

Please see page 6





**DENNIS LUKER**  
President

I hope you were blessed with a spiritually uplifting and inspiring Feast of Tabernacles this year! LeeAnn and I kept the Feast in Canada—the first half in Point Edward (Sarnia), Ontario, and the second half in Prince Edward Island, which is an island province in Southeast Canada.

There were about 100 brethren in attendance at each of these Feast sites. They were small in size but very large in terms of the quality of the fellowship, the inspiring messages and music, and the family activities.

I have heard good reports from many other Feast sites around the world mentioning how much God blessed the weather and all of the services and activities. It is obvious that God poured out His Spirit of love, peace and unity as we worshipped Him and kept the Feast picturing His coming Kingdom, and the opportunity of salvation for all mankind.

How thankful are you, brethren, for this precious and priceless knowledge of God's true plan and purpose? How thankful should we be? Let's look at a few scriptures.

In Psalm 107:21-22, it says: "Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing."

Psalm 100:4-5 tells us: "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts

with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations."

Thanking and praising God is so important that David appointed some of the Levites to form choirs of singers and musicians just to thank and praise God.

"Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy" (1 Chronicles 15:16). "And he appointed some of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, to commemorate, to thank, and to praise the Lord God of Israel" (1 Chronicles 16:4). Many of the Psalms were written as songs of thanks and praise to God (1 Chronicles 16:7).

Let's look at this same emphasis in the New Testament. The writer of Hebrews wrote, "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Hebrews 13:15). Paul was inspired by God to write, "...giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20). And he added these words: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"

from Isaiah and explained why they had come. I was able to discuss at length the meaning of God's Feast days and why we keep them. They knew of the Holy Days, but did not know how they fit into New Covenant worship or why they should be kept.

They were moved by our hospitality and joined the activities, including purchasing fruit and ice cream for family day. They also decided to do wells in two villages for our people instead of one. They invited me to come to Portland to visit with their group. Mr. Kubik is already planning to visit them later this year.

## Visit to South Africa

Prior to the Feast, Michelle and I visited South Africa where I was able to tour the office housed in the home of Neil and Isella Wallace and have dinner with Jason and Monique Webster. Growth has been significant as the *Good News* mailing list has gone from 5,000 at the recent split to over 28,000. The Kingdom of God Seminars were some of the highest attended this year. I was able to discuss the recent return of many brethren to UCG after they found out we are not changing doctrines or any of the truths of God.

I spoke on Atonement in Johannesburg prior to departing for Malawi and laid out Christ's reconciliation plan



Mr. and Mrs. Luker at the Feast in Prince Edward Island with "Anne of Green Gables."

(1 Thessalonians 5:18).

How do we give thanks to God when we are suffering a serious trial? Peter gives the answer "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4:12-13). "Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator" (verse 19).

So brethren, let us give constant and abundant thanks to God for His many blessings in our lives, including our trials, which help us become more like our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as God prepares us for His Kingdom. **UN**



Sergey Batrutdinov and Arkaedyi Antononvich from the Church of Christians Seventh Day, whose trip to Zambia to investigate drilling a borehole coincided with the Feast.

with all nations when Satan has been removed and Christ begins his Millennial rule. It had been 27 years since I had been in Johannesburg with Herbert Armstrong on his last visit to Africa. It was good to know that God's Spirit is alive and well with the faithful members in South Africa. May we all seek to esteem one another as we serve Christ in obedience and humility.

Aaron Dean

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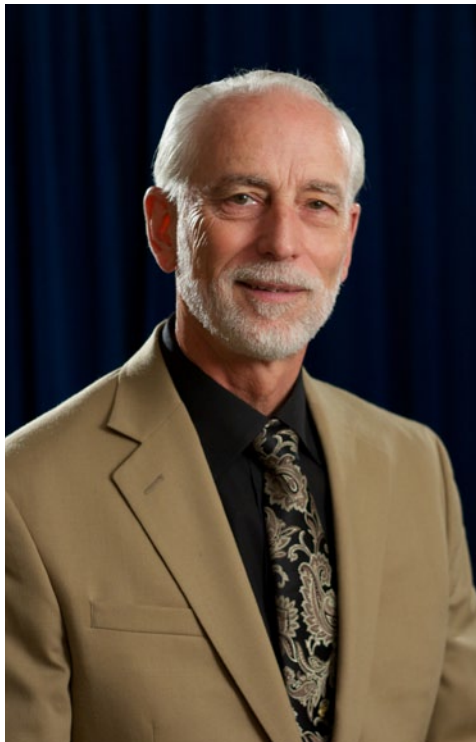




## From The COUNCIL

# The Mind of Christ vs. the Mind of Satan

■ Two opposing ways of life are portrayed by the mind of Satan and the mind of Jesus Christ.



by Mark Mickelson

Our mindset determines how we live and what our values will be. God's mindset is love. Love is an outward focus and the way of give. Satan is self. Self is an inward focus and the way of get. Paul instructed the Philippians to put away selfishness. To not do anything through selfish ambition or conceit. To look out for the interests of others. To esteem others better than themselves. He described that as taking on the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:1-11).

We can take the contrast between the mind of Satan and the mind of Christ one step further by considering Proverbs 29:11: "A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back." Christ's way of loving and giving includes exercising restraint. Satan's way of selfishness and getting is to cast off restraint. Esau is described as a profane person who sold his birthright for one morsel of food. He traded his incredible future promise for just a moment's satisfaction. Later, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, there was no going back. His desire for immediate gratification caused him very deep regrets (Hebrews 12:14-17).

### Works of the Flesh vs. Fruit of the Spirit

Our flesh cries out to be satisfied but, in responding, we must be careful to act with restraint. The works of the flesh include outbursts of wrath and selfish ambitions while the fruit of the Spirit includes exercising self-control (Galatians 5:19-24). The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit take us in totally opposing directions.

Exodus 32 is the account of Israel worship-



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*Christ's way of loving and giving includes exercising restraint.  
Satan's way of selfishness and getting is to cast off restraint.  
Our flesh cries out to be satisfied but, in responding, we must be  
careful to act with restraint.*

ping before the gold calf that Aaron made. The account records that after Aaron fashioned the molded calf and declared a feast, the people sat down to drink and rose up to play. It says that Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame. In response, God determined to destroy them, but Moses pleaded on their behalf. Verse 14 records, "So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people." God punished Israel for their sin, but even in correction, He exercised restraint. He continued to work with them as His people. It is instructive that God sent a plague on Israel when they gave themselves up to craving for meat (Numbers 11), but He was going to destroy them for idolatry. There is a difference between temporarily giving in to sin and making provision to sin day after day after day.

One sin we face today that goes beyond just temporary weakness is involvement with pornography. It has become particularly destructive in our time because of its

easy access in the media and on the Internet. It becomes deeply embedded in people's thoughts and habits and also impacts the relationships they maintain. Still, as difficult as any battle may be, we must not make provision for sin. Paul listed doing so as being in opposition to putting on [the mind of] Jesus Christ (Romans 13:11-14).

### The Sons of Eli the Priest

Eli was a priest and a judge in Israel when the tabernacle stood in Shiloh. His sons were disrespectful and corrupt, and they troubled the people when they came to make sacrifices and to give offerings. They even had sex with some of the women. It ultimately cost them their lives. It cost Eli dearly as well. By giving in to them in their sin he brought a curse of suffering and death on his descendants, and his lineage was removed from the priesthood. Even though Eli had warned his sons against what they were doing, he took no action. The Bible says, "His sons made themselves

vile, and he did not restrain them" (1 Samuel 3:13). It is not enough for us to just refuse to do evil. We must also choose to do good.

The importance of our mindset can hardly be overstated. The words we say, the example we set and the actions we take impact our future and the future of those around us. My wife Michelle was in a head-on car accident in college. A drunk driver came across the line and hit the car she was a passenger in. The driver, in his consumption of alcohol, had cast off restraint. It is Satan's way. The actions of a complete stranger, in just a moment, left her with serious consequences that remain to this day.

In this life we can strive to give, or we can seek to get. We can be outwardly focused, or we can be self-focused. We can exercise restraint in the fear of God, or we can cast off restraint. These choices all have one thing in common. They portray the difference between the mind of Satan and the mind of Jesus Christ. **UN**





## From THE WORD

# Leap

■ Knowing enough to really know better.

by J'Non Whitlark

Caught.

Clinging, trembling, in the space between where we've been and where we should be. We can't stay here long; we have to make a choice. We can, by sheer negligence or succumbing to the paralysis brought on by indecision or fear, allow ourselves to be pulled back to the temporal comfort of the familiar; the crumbling ledge below our feet.

Or, we can leap.

Baptized or not, you will face this if God is working with you. Depending on where you are on the spiritual continuum that God has customized for you, this moment of choice will happen infrequently at cross-roads of crisis, or perhaps it will happen multiple times a day, hundreds or thousands of times a year with relatively smaller matters. We may even be faced with the same choice over and over again until it becomes a habit—for good or bad.

If we know enough to recognize our own fears of truly submitting to God and seeking Him, we have a choice to make. Do I cling to the emotional safety of my crumbling ledge? Or do I let go and leap toward the other side? Fear overwhelms us: the fear of letting go of the fingerhold that connects us with our world. The world.

Putting our attention on those tenuous connections can blind us to the infinitely better things God has prepared for us. We know the prophet Daniel became a great tool in God's hand, but consider how the story of his life in Babylon began. Imagine what it might have been like to have friends and relatives killed in a conquest, to be yourself captured and taken away from home to live in Babylon and to serve the very king who was responsible for the aforementioned. How alone and defiled Daniel might have felt! He was truly surrounded by pagan society and it would have been so very easy for him to just do whatever his captors said, while reasoning that God could not expect him to do otherwise in the face of such impossible odds.

However, 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" (Daniel 1:8).

Daniel did two things: He made the decision internally to do what he knew to be right, and then he took a physical action to show God he meant it. Can we remember this, when we're caught between choices? To God, Daniel was "a man greatly beloved." And when Daniel was making one of his leaps, and looking to God for his salvation, he was sent a messenger from God who said, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand,



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*But my life at these points was much more focused on not technically breaking God's law in the black-and-white, and less focused on drawing closer to God by seeking His preference in gray areas.*

and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come because of your words" (Daniel 10:11-12). How encouraging this is to see that God is faithful if we make better choices.

Jehoshaphat is known as a king who made big mistakes, and he was told by the prophet Jehu that the LORD was angry at him, but "nevertheless good things are found in you, in that you have removed the wooden images from the land, and have prepared your heart to seek God" (2 Chronicles 19:3). In his example we again see two layers that are important to God: a physical action and a spiritual action. God requires both.

We have to purpose in our hearts to not only obey God's commands (the law), but to also heed His guidance, which may not be listed specifically in any scripture, but is given to us through His Holy Spirit daily, as long as we are willing to accept His help.

### The Holy Spirit and You

So how do we really know when God is trying to work with us through His Spirit?

If we are living on the edge of commitment, it could be an annoyingly persistent thread of doubt winding around areas of our lives. *Should I really be watching these kinds of movies? Did it really happen like I just said it did? I probably should have done something better with my time. I forgot to pray today! Again!*

It could be a niggling question that we quickly brush aside. *Is this really good for my mind to have access to? Should I really be talking about this? Should I really be here? Am I putting myself in a situation where it will be easier to do wrong than right?*

What questions keep popping up that you really don't want to know the answer to? What seemingly small prickles of conscience keep ping-ponging you throughout your daily life? These are usually not just random, but are frequently how God works with us through the Holy Spirit! (See 1 Samuel 24:5, John 14:26).

If addressed quickly and with open, honest prayer, these kinds of questions will serve to draw us closer to God, which in turn will

help us avoid much heartache and struggle. Brushing them off may be more convenient for the moment, but really means that we are brushing off God's helping hand! We're in effect saying to God: "No, thanks. I'd rather keep hanging on to this fraying rope than trust You completely."

I speak from experience, as I have done it myself, many times. I have been unwilling to give up things I wanted, and went through the mental gymnastics routine required to make those things seem as though they were "probably okay" with God. *Probably. God didn't say specifically not to do that, so...*

I have many times been caught up in a world in which either I was the center, or my family, or my secular education. God was around...well, somewhere. At least I thought He was because I went to church every week, and read the Bible at least semi-regularly, and prayed for God to forgive me for my sins (at least the ones I would admit to). But my life at these points was much more focused on not technically breaking God's law in the black-and-white, and less focused on drawing closer to God by seeking His preference in gray areas.

But God has helped me realize that allowing such flimsy reasoning to guide my behavior and attitudes was leading me away from the Kingdom of God, not toward it. That Kingdom-of-God compass can be a huge help when facing any choice we have as Christians. In the gray areas, where discerning right and wrong seems much more complex, we must ask *where* we are being led, and *by whom*?

### Forgetting Those Things Which Are Behind

For most of us, a road-to-Damascus kind of intervention is pretty rare. Our calling is quiet but persistent for a time. Our Father is waiting for a response from us before He comes closer. He's waiting for us to take that deep breath and say something like: "Yes, Father, I want You more than I want any of the temporary satisfaction that comes from putting other things first. I am going to *do something* about it *right now* and I'm asking you to please help me, because it's really hard to let go."

We have to let go of all our pretence, all our self-deceit in order to let God work wonders in us (John 4:21-24). Once we do, God allows us into another level of closeness with Him, and *nothing else* can compare to the beauty and pleasure of that relationship! It's the euphoria of first love, multiplied by a hundred (Hosea 10:12).

We also have to talk ourselves down from the unhealthy fears that keep us separated from God. Once, when Jesus' disciples saw Him walking on the sea to their boat, they were understandably afraid of what their eyes were seeing! But after He told them, "It is I; do not be afraid," they welcomed Him into the boat. Jesus then had a miracle for

Please see page 23

Centre in the north of the island of Tasmania. The highest attendance was on the very last service, when we had 62. There was a positive and relaxed spirit with wonderful singing. We did appreciate the hymn playing of Craig McQueen. We had sunny but cool conditions for the Feast.

The Feast started well with a wonderful festival brochure prepared by Karinya Siphthorp from Melbourne. It had great details of the Festival site and local attractions with lots of graphics. At the conclusion of the opening night service we had the traditional cutting of the festival cake. The retired pastor and wife for Tasmania, Barry and Sue Williams, were asked to cut the cake. Members then enjoyed cake, tea and coffee as they greeted each other. The members from Tasmania provided cakes and other treats with tea and coffee every day of the festival.

The theme of many of the messages was the need for God's Spirit to be on earth and for people to accept His Spirit before any of the changes we look forward to can come about. Many speakers showed how we must respond to God's Spirit now, and then we can help, support and teach others in the Kingdom.

On two days at the Feast, Jeanette Dean took story time for the children who were all five years old and younger. Jeanette read stories from children's Bible stories.

On the fifth day we had the blessing of Craig and Natalie McQueen's daughter Sage. This was done during the Feast as Sage's grandparents, Rod and Martha McQueen, were at the Tasmanian site. For a small site like Tasmania it is very encouraging to be able to share in an event like the blessing of the children.

Most members traveled through rich green countryside with rolling hills to Wings Wildlife Park. The highlight was being able to watch the feeding of the Tasmanian devils. Yes, they are real, not just a cartoon character. Members were able to hand feed large goats, kangaroos and even a camel. Many of the children were able to pet a koala. There were even two North American bison in the park. Other highlights included a pizza and puzzle night, a visit to the amazing Annsleigh gardens and the final luncheon together. Many members traveled to the world-famous Cradle Mountain, where some rode quad bikes. It is worth travelling to Tasmania for the Feast to see some of the most wonderful country in the world.

*Bruce Dean*

## Cotonou, Benin

The Feast of Tabernacles took place this year in Cotonou, with 30 in attendance. A true spirit of sharing, love, and humility was

demonstrated during this Feast. We were blessed by spiritually rich teachings, giving us very specific instructions regarding our future responsibilities in the Kingdom of God.

We were pleased to have Yemisi Ibirogba visit us from Nigeria for the first couple of days. On the third day, our pastor Oludare Akingbo came with his family. He reminded us of the importance of forgiveness and discussed our role in the Kingdom of God as well.

The kids were overwhelmed with joy after studying the 11 lessons on the plan of God through the Holy Days. They learned the fruits of the Spirit and how they can put them in practice in their daily lives, with the promise that it will change their lives. Rose Ogoudele led the children's lessons.

On the fourth day of the Feast, we had an outing to the beach where a variety of games were organized. During this outing Mrs. Akinbo was able to check the eyes of some people, and she personally gave eye glasses to those who needed them.

We left this Feast very motivated and very grateful to God for His blessings.

*Pierre Ogoudele*

## Coroico, Bolivia

The Bolivian brethren again joyfully celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles at the Old Mill Hotel in Coroico, Bolivia. It is located 60 miles from La Paz, the capital of Bolivia, amid the lush vegetation of a semi-tropical setting.

There were 24 celebrating the Feast, a true spiritual and physical banquet in an environment, which invites much rejoicing. From the first Holy Day until the last day of the Feast, there was unity and harmony as we shared meals and had Christian fellowship.

Services were held every day of the Feast, and we also had Bible studies in the evenings, viewing the *Beyond Today* program that is dubbed into Spanish, and thus enjoying its wonderful teachings as a spiritual complement.

We all enjoyed the excellent facilities provided by the hotel, with a large pool and assorted games that were a delight for youths and children.

We could all feel the blessings and protection God gave His small flock in Bolivia, as a preview of what will one day happen as our loving King and Prince of Peace returns to establish the long-awaited Kingdom of God.

*Raul Machicao*

## Maloca de Moscow, Brazil

The Feast in Brazil was held in the Indian reservation of Maloca

de Moscow, in the Northern Brazilian state of Roraima, bordering English Guyana. There were 35 United members rejoicing during the Feast in the hall built with funds from United's Good Works program.

Just before the Feast, Jorge de Campos visited the brethren to give them sermons and videos in Portuguese, including the Church's Feast video, to conduct a short leadership training session and a youth Bible study. During that trip, after counseling, Thais Mateus da Silva was baptised. A number of family members and brethren watched the baptismal ceremony.

The opening night started with hymn singing by every single one of the adult members as well as by the children. Morning and afternoon services were held on the first day of the Feast. On the next day, in addition to the daily church service, all were invited to the wedding of a cousin of most of the brethren, in a sister congregation.

Services were conducted every day with various sports activities, such as football (soccer), volleyball and children's games. In the evenings they had various activities, such as a talent show, a variety show, individual songs, and games such as "introduce a friend" and "identify the secret friend."

On the Sabbath, services were conducted in the morning, with a Bible study in the afternoon. A number of visitors attended services, including a young man who stated that he wished to attend regularly.

Regrettably, on the Eighth Day, Renato Carlos da Silva, son of Church members Carlos and Vanda da Silva, had a motor bike accident with his uncle Nestor da Silva. Renato had a head fracture and Nestor broke a leg. Prayers are requested for them.

*Verônica Gomes*

## Llandudno, Wales, British Isles

There was a warm, friendly atmosphere throughout the Feast of Tabernacles in Llandudno, Wales, in the British Isles. Among the 179 brethren who registered a serving attitude prevailed. Services were held in the St. George's Hotel in the recently refurbished Wedgwood Suite, which proved to be an excellent venue. The room capacity was 180, and with only 140 expected, it was full on most days with the highest attendance of 169. 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. Special music added to the enjoyment.

In addition to the Feast video,

this year for the first time, we were able to video record every service and send DVDs to those who were unable to attend. Although we had several technical problems, we were able to get several recordings posted out with the remainder following after the Feast. Hopefully next year our equipment will ensure that all but the last sermon will be posted before the end of the Feast.

Although it was cool for the time of year with the occasional rain shower, we had sunny days when we could go and visit the many attractions that Wales has to offer and appreciate the beautiful mountain scenery. The children spent a lovely afternoon at a "hands-on" farm on the edge of the town. This was a marvellous opportunity for our many city children to experience close encounters with cows, sheep, llamas and horses—the nearest that we could get to the millennium for them!

We hope that all our overseas visitors enjoyed the Feast with us and that they, and others, will visit us once again in Stirling, Scotland, next year.

*David Payne*

## Douala, Cameroon

Our church complex in Douala was once again our Feast site this year with some 41 participants. I arrived from Congo on the fifth day of the Feast. I was able to give one sermon and read the translated script of the Church video.

We were blessed with the choir singing every day. The children had youth lessons, led by Mrs. Mabout, on the plan of God, and on the Holy Days using the translated work books designed by our sisters in the United States. The children were very happy to receive a little gift. The ladies also received colorful bags with the logo of the lion and the lamb, led by a little child.

We enjoyed a talent show with skits, a recital, a secret pal gift exchange, a small play and a traditional dance.

We had 11 people listening to sermons on a CD in their home as they were not able to come to Douala for the Feast.

Our sister Feast site was Yagoua in the far north of Cameroon, with 22 people in attendance. They celebrated the Feast in our brand new church building, which was built with the help of our brothers and sisters in U.S.A.

Thank you very much for everything you did for us.

*Moise Elisée Mabout*

## Canada

### Canmore, Alberta

This is the second year that we held the Feast in Canmore. The

weather was great even though we did have a light dusting of snow on Oct. 2. Some of our American brethren from the "Deep South" thought that it was magical! By all reports, it's a popular site. Our high attendance of 300 was 47 above what was projected. We had five salaried elders and 10 non-salaried, so it provided a good variety of speakers. Randy Stiver, who was here for half the Feast, gave two sermons, conducted a Bible study, and had a meeting for A.B.C. Bob Dick gave two sermons, on the two Holy Days. The rest of the speakers filled in, giving spiritual food in due season. David Meidinger and his son Aaron looked after the inspiring special music and the festival choir.

Cathy Ward did a fantastic job in decorating the stage. Her husband Wayne took care of the lighting and data projection. He projected the hymns onto the screen. He also used a camera to project the speakers, making it easier for those at the back of the ballroom to see. The sound crew, led by Neil DeLong worked well as a team. All of the Feast sermons were uploaded onto the Church's festival website.

This year, instead of a seniors lunch, we had a seniors Sabbath brunch. The teens and young adults also went through the line and had a Sabbath study in one of the adjoining rooms. We had 148 attend the *O Canada Eh?* dinner theatre. Their capacity for that is 215, so we pretty well took the place over. We also had a dance, deejayed by Kevin Spahich. It was well attended. Bruce Bird emceed this year's variety show, which lasted for about an hour and a half. Robert Berendt led a hike on the Grassi Lakes hiking trail. He served up turkey hot dogs to the first 50 who arrived. After that, he ran out. We had about 75 enjoy the hike. Two of our teens took a swim in the small lake, but not for long! We also had a youth day. Guenter Brauer of Calgary donated almost all of the stuffed animals that were handed out, by draw. Two teens took turns leading hymns, and two gave opening and closing prayers. We also had two children's festival lessons, looked after by Evelyn Davis. The teens and young adults did a rope course at Rafter's Ranch. We got discounted gondola tickets for close to 40 on family day.

It was truly a delight feasting together with God's people in Canmore, Alberta!

*Rainer Salomaa*

### Abbotsford, British Columbia

Blue skies and warm sunshine throughout the entire festival greeted Feastgoers this year on Canada's west coast. Close to 140



gathered in Abbotsford, British Columbia, with attendance over 100 each day and a high attendance of 130 on the Eighth Day.

There were several visitors from the United States from places including Kansas City, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Michigan, Texas, Ohio, Washington and Hawaii. They, along with our Canadian brethren made for a wonderful opportunity to make new friends with lots of warm friendship and fellowship.

Visiting elders Paul Moody from Spokane and Lonnie Johnson from Kansas City, as well as local speakers and song leaders, provided strong messages with an emphasis on preparing now for the soon coming Kingdom.

Music director Corbin Rose from Michigan conducted special music each day, including performances from the Abbotsford festival choir.

We were also blessed to have several musicians accompany the recorded hymn music. As well, the hymns were projected on screen.

Activities were all well attended. Many American brethren enjoyed a bowling game they had not experienced before, five pin instead of 10 pin.

Both the dance and the buffet dinner were highlights. The dance featured a nine-piece orchestra with nearly 100 attending. Another well attended and popular activity was the talent show, a variety of music mixed in with some skits and emceed by the assistant festival coordinator Dale Craniford.

Festival greetings from other sites read each day were very much appreciated. While God's people may have been many miles apart in observing the festival, the spirit of unity was very evident.

There were lots of handshakes, hugs and even some tears as brethren departed after another wonderful, uplifting Feast of Tabernacles.

*David Palmer*

## Point Edward, Ontario

“Wonderful,” “very enjoyable,” and, “the best Feast that we have had in many years,” were some of the comments made from the brethren that attended the Point Edward Feast of Tabernacles.

The weather was almost perfect with sunshine and temperatures holding steady in the mid-60s (or 14 Celsius for those in Canada).

The high attendance was 110 on the morning of the Eighth Day. The record high was 101, which we had on the first Holy Day. In between, the average was 88 each day.

Opening night services provided 78 brethren with the message from Patrick Read to learn to “Love and Support the Family,”

reminding them that they were at the Feast as a result of an invitation from none other than God himself.

We had the honor of having Dennis and LeeAnn Luker with us for the first half of the Feast, and the first Holy Day message was given by Mr. Luker. “The Wonderful Good News of God's Kingdom on Earth” inspired the brethren to stay focused on what lies ahead with the reminder that “the success of the Church is going to be from God, not from men.”

Starting on Tuesday afternoon, 42 brethren had the opportunity to hear Ron Muir and Marlow Koller relate their stories of living with blindness and guide dogs in a presentation called “Special Partners.” Donations were collected for LifeNets.

A boat cruise down the St. Clair River on Wednesday provided the brethren a chance to get connected. The following day, warm and sunny weather provided the backdrop to a fun-filled family day at the Korny Korners Farm.

On Friday, 57 of our seniors were treated to a heartfelt story by Garry Lucas and prizes of hand-made scarves of many colors were provided by Emmie Lucas. Saturday evening's variety night concluded our activities.

After a well attended lunch between services, the closing sermon was given by Mr. Read, titled “From Grave to Glory.” It reminded us that there will be billions of individuals that have never known God's way of life that will need to be taught by a “Kingdom of Priests,” of which we are, and those who accept that way will enjoy the glory that comes from it.

Services concluded with “God Be With You” and with many warm words and hugs. The family of God that had come together in Point Edward, Ontario, began to head home with the hope of seeing each other again next year.

*Patrick Read*

## Prince Edward Island

A total of 92 brethren from Canada and the United States attended the Feast in Stanley Bridge, Prince Edward Island. Many of those attending mentioned the beautiful millennial setting overlooking London Bay and the Stanley River. The weather was nearly perfect, which made the sunsets spectacular. The scenic drives along the coast with historic lighthouses, beautiful beaches and the rolling green pastures were absolutely breathtaking. The entire island was a perfect setting for the Feast, which was only a snapshot of the beauty that all can look forward to in the millennium.

There were 75 registered, but 92 brethren attended, with 65 percent from Canada and 35 percent from the United States. The majority

of the members stayed on-site at the resort with the others staying in cottages nearby. It was encouraging this year to see a good representation by our young singles who kept in contact about Feast plans through Facebook. It was a wonderful family atmosphere again this year with the addition of several new babies, young families, and rounded off with adults and seniors who filled the role of grandparents with ready arms for the young, which gave the moms a little break.

Once again we were graced with visits from our Anne of Green Gables look-alike who attended several of the Feast activities including the meet and greet, where brethren had time to get acquainted with others in a social setting. Members who weren't camera shy took the opportunity to have their picture taken with the renowned lady of the Island. Our barbecue dinner was a hit again this year with the organic beef and chicken served with local roasted P.E.I. potatoes, farm fresh veggies and dessert topped off by the fantastic entertainment from two humorous local singers.

Family day was very well attended by all ages. There was something for everyone, including volleyball for the young adults, kites made and flown, along with horseshoes and lots of food. Later in the evening there was a campfire sing-along with guitar strumming from one of our members and an employee from the resort who also led the sing-along. The children were in a nearby tent where they played games and read stories by flashlight.

The two off-site activities turned out to be quite a success. Half of those attending took the Anne's Land bus tour, which included a brief visit to Green Gables, then along the coast to Cavendish Dunes beaches and lighthouse with a stop at the Preserve Company. The stop was brief due to the many bus tours, however many returned on their own for further enjoyment. New this year, a deep sea fishing excursion, well attended by 22 people who fished for mackerel. Their catch of 167 fish was filleted by the boat's owner and later fried at one of the cottages for a scrumptious maritime fish dinner.

The spiritual food satisfied our palates with messages about the coming reign of Christ and our part in it.

We were instructed that how we live our lives today is part of the training that will be needed during the time of peace ahead when God's way will be taught to the whole world. Brethren were very encouraged that the Lukers were able to spend the last half of the Feast with them. It was a joy to see the ease in which they blended into the Church family attending

in P.E.I.

The special music was outstanding, with a choir of 20 blending their voices together in praise. Parents and children joined for the family choir, appreciated by all. For a small site we were blessed by several vocal and instrumental pieces as well. Eight days had passed far too quickly though we each took away memories of “the gentle Island,” having experienced perhaps the best Feast ever.

*Dennis Horlick*

## Tongoy, Chile

The Feast of Tabernacles in Chile was again held in the beautiful seaside resort of Playa Blanca, near the town of Tongoy, four hours from Santiago, the capital. The resort gets the name from its long, white sandy beach. We had the opportunity to be in this breathtaking place with 129 brethren from Chile, Argentina, Peru and three American visitors, including Mark Rorem, an elder from the Oakland, California, congregation.

Activities included a welcoming gathering, a barbecue and talent night, a childrens' party, afternoon games on the beach, a seniors' event that was served by eleven ladies and a “coffee concert” by the youth group of Santiago, who delighted us with their musical and artistic gifts in a live music presentation.

The experience this year of the Feast reminded us in many ways of Psalm 133, in particular, the phrase, “Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in harmony...for there is the blessing God and eternal life.”

The Feast proved to be one of both physical and spiritual blessings. We enjoyed excellent weather in a peaceful and edifying atmosphere, which invited us to concentrate on the wonders of God and His ways. The great atmosphere also encourages us to continue moving confidently ahead in this way of life.

*Jaime Gallardo*

## Chinauta, Colombia

A count of 63 brethren gathered in Bogotá to meet the buses that would take us to the Hotel Chinauta Real, in Chinauta, Colombia. The 15 visitors from Brazil, Canada, Chile and the United States gave the Feast an international flair. Most of the brethren stayed in the two-bedroom, five person cabañas, and a few stayed in regular hotel rooms designed for two people.

The gated hotel complex is beautifully landscaped with tropical trees and flowers, four swim-

ming pools, and features gorgeous mountain views. The secluded nature of the hotel gives it a millennial feel. Brethren were able to fellowship on terraces, share coffee or play a game of dominoes.

Most of the men were given the opportunity to give a sermonette or split sermon. The messages focused on looking forward to God's Kingdom and making ourselves ready as the Bride of Christ. Special music was provided each day by a variety of people. The children sang a Spanish version of “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory” with such enthusiasm and joy that it brought tears to a few eyes. This day was highlighted when the youngest attendee, 2-month-old Sara, was blessed.

Warm summer days were perfect for pool or outdoor activities. One very popular activity was the family dance, where the wearing of outlandish wigs gave the evening a lighted air. There was also a children's Bible activity, a ladies' Bible study, and another Bible study for all attendees. Almost all attendees participated in the talent show, where a main highlight was the traditional Colombian dances.

Meals were eaten together each day in the restaurant, which served typical Colombian food. Fresh tropical fruit juices were the beverage at each meal.

The night before the Eighth Day, the Colombians serenaded their new-found family members from around the world, and told them how much they were loved. Everyone gave hugs all around and spoke about keeping in touch throughout the coming year. God truly shone on and blessed His Feast in Colombia, and the congregations of Colombia and the visitors became a family during these eight days.

*Scott and Gayle Hoefker*

## Kinshasa, Congo

This year we reunited to celebrate the Feast in Kinshasa using the facilities of the Catholic Sisters' Social Center. We had 52 in attendance coming from three different areas, Binja, Bas-Congo and Kinshasa.

I had the pleasure to baptize Esther Tshidibi at sunset on Sept. 29, right before the Feast. I was in Congo for the first four days of the Feast, before traveling back to Cameroon for the remainder of the Feast.

During the Feast, the children were very happy to have youth lessons. Michele Mickelson had given us all the necessary instructions and supplies, so I was able to show the ladies in Congo how to lead the classes. The children received a little gift as well as the

ladies to whom we distributed a special bag with the Millennium logo.

Mr. Bamongo was able to organize various activities including an excursion. We were blessed with special music every day of the Feast. There was much joy, happiness and friendship looking forward to the Millennium.

Thank you very much for your help and support.

*Moise Elisée Mabout*

## Saaremaa, Estonia

On the beautiful island of Saaremaa, situated in the Baltic Sea off the coast of Estonia, 24 brethren met to picture the world as it will be. Representatives of nine countries with different languages and cultures quickly bonded into a close family, enjoying meals, activities, spa facilities and seminars together. Sheltered from the world in the same hotel, eating breakfast and lunch together gave ample time to become close friends. On game night, Henrikas Klovass, a chess master from Lithuania, shared tips to improve the game of other players.

The theme of the Feast was vision and preparing ourselves for the coming Kingdom. Sermons were given by Shannon Lucas, Boyd Yahn and Johnnie Lambert. Two very interesting and informative seminars were given by Mehernosh Damania showing scenes from their trip to Jerusalem, Patmos and the seven churches of Revelation.

The brethren all had a wonderful Feast and pray for the Millennium it pictures to come quickly!

*Johnnie Lambert*

## Mèze, France

This year in France, 164 people celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in Mèze, under a beautiful sun and a temperatures of about 70 degrees throughout the week.

Thalassa village was a lovely location with beautiful gardens right next to the beach. People would bring their chair out on the lawn and fellowship for hours by the beach while enjoying a sip of wine and a bite of French cheese. Some also played the guitar and sung.

We heard inspiring messages, which helped us to grasp a better picture of the Kingdom of God and the part that we will have to play. It seems that everyone helped in some ways, lending their talent to serve others.

With over 30 children present, we were able to have children's festival classes for the first time in France. For family day, people could relax on the beach, play

some games, swim in the lagoon, rent kayaks, or bicycle. We also had a family dance that was a great success.

Excursions were organized to the nature park of Camargue, where we admired beautiful wild horses, flamingos and racing bulls. Other excursions included a boat ride on the Canal du Midi, a visit to the fortified city of Carcassonne and a glass-bottom boat ride on the Thau Lagoon.

The French brethren expressed much gratitude to all the visitors who came from abroad, allowing them to have a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles with lots more fellowship opportunities in a very brotherly atmosphere.

*Tim Pebworth*

## Schluchsee, Germany

The beautiful Black Forest in southern Germany was the site of the Feast for 193 brethren from 10 different countries. 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 and a very nice restaurant. 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 Feast activities began with a Bible study for the seniors, children's party and youth activity that again challenged their go-cart driving skills. This year the afternoon tour led us to an outdoor museum in Alsace, France, where we were able to see how families lived centuries ago. There was also bowling for the seniors, volleyball, women's breakfast, men's and women's discussions, hymn singing, game night and of course lots of food and fellowship.

The dance evening was a success as live music was provided by the band until late into the night. The youth also had several Bible studies in which they shared with each other what spiritual lessons they learned in the last year as well as how one should understand tolerance from Jesus and how it should be applied today.

There were two baptism ceremonies at the end of the Feast, one lady from the church in Holland and the other lady from the Dormagen, Germany, congregation.

The farewell evening after the Eighth Day gave us the opportunity to say goodbye to each other. There were many handshakes, hugs and good wishes as

we wished each other safe travels, good health, and a blessed year until the Feast of Tabernacles in Schluchsee, Germany, next year.

*Susan Miller*

## Ghana

"This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it" —Ralph Waldo Emerson.

We most certainly knew what to do with the very good, precious time provided by keeping God's Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day (as per the guidelines set by God). Nevertheless, Feast time simply flew by!

The we consisted of 35 brethren (highest daily attendance) including several visitors: from the United States, our assistant pastor Fred and Lucretia Kellers and Caleb and Laci Janicich; our Cameroonian brethren Joseph and Julia Ngeneba, who also are domiciled in the U.S.; and Patricia Bosu from Nigeria; with the remaining 28 being Ghanaian brethren.

This family ambiance yielded a diverse but united family that moved in unison and lived an eight-day, nine-night sojourn at Akosombo, 55 miles east of Accra (Ghana's capital). The high temperature and humidity levels were mitigated by a couple of out-of-season heavy rainfalls, which considerably reduced the heat levels for some time and added to the overall enjoyment of the Feast.

God ensured it was a Feast for us in every sense of the word—a feast of inspired special music, including a performance by the children's group using recorders (flutes) they had practiced using for only a few months; a feast of several communal meals made possible by the generosity of some brethren in the United States; a feast of games and sports, which saw, among others, some brethren learning to throw and enjoy Frisbees for the first time; a feast of fellowship; a feast of Bible lessons for the children; and even a feast of a supply of reading glasses (donated by U.S. brethren) for members in need, some of whom got two pairs; and best of all, a feast of sermons and sermonettes, which provided spiritual focus and a closer look at God's Word. They expanded what His plans are for us and the rest of humankind who ever lived.

The third day of the Feast saw all of us go on a sponsored excursion, again made possible by the love and generosity of our U.S. brethren, to the Akosombo hydroelectric power station, which produces the bulk of Ghana's electricity supply. Lessons that were not lost on us during the guided tour were how potential power could be tapped and channeled to meet the needs of humanity and also to

not take power for granted, but to use it wisely for the benefit of everyone.

Mr. and Mrs. Kellers left Ghana about midway through the Feast to spend the remaining time with our brethren in Togo.

It definitely has been a memorable and refreshing family affair that keeps us in eager anticipation of Christ's millennial rule on earth and our part in that, and the subsequent opportunity for countless billions more to be partakers of God's grace and glory. What a stupendous blessing it's been!

*Henry Aikins*

## Panajachel, Guatemala

The Feast in Guatemala was carried out in an atmosphere of peace, harmony and Christian fellowship, led by God's Holy Spirit. It was again held in Panajachel, Guatemala, on the shores of Lake Atitlan. We had brethren attend from the United States, Canada, Panama, Costa Rica (the first time for a family), Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. There were 189 brethren in attendance.

We began the Feast with a delicious Guatemalan welcoming dinner. Fred and Lidia Nance, who serve the Arkansas congregations in the United States, were there to provide support, and Fred delivered several sermons in Spanish. The sermons and sermonettes focused on the future establishment of the Kingdom of God here on earth, and the urgent need to remain ever faithful to God the Father and Jesus Christ as we participate to prepare for the long-awaited world tomorrow.

There were different choirs: an adult choir, a youth choir, a children's choir, a choir from San Marcos, and a choir from Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. God blessed us with great weather and an opportunity to enjoy all activities with great success.

The ladies' tea was an opportunity to share diverse Christian life issues, and they received a gift consisting of a beautiful pearl necklace and earrings prepared with much love for them by the Church.

There were different games during family day for all ages, including pinatas, cake, juices and gifts for the children. We concluded with a delicious barbecue of churrasquito (grilled meat, avocado and beans) for the entire Church.

The talent show included folk dancing, skits, costume parade, children's songs and dances, which created an atmosphere of much happiness.

In the youth seminar, there were five topics of interest discussed with teens and young adults, with a wrap-up by the pastor, Israel

Robledo. We also had a fine youth dance where they enjoyed two hours of fun and fellowship.

The trip on beautiful Lake Atitlan was a success. On the ship, we enjoyed the beautiful scenery and fellowship. There were four baptisms, all from Guatemala.

What a wonderful Feast God has given us, with the fine spiritual and physical food in this marvelous place. To God be the honor and the glory, for calling us to be part of His true Church now.

*Israel Robledo*

## Chirala, India

A Feast of many firsts was held in Chirala, India, where 45 of our brothers and sisters kept the Feast of Tabernacles in a quaint fishing community. The location is off the coast of the Bay of Bengal in Southeast India in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Brethren came from Agra and Bangalore, India, as well as Australia and the U.S. Together we celebrated one of the most wonderful and most inspiring Feasts ever.

Three languages were spoken within our small group: English, Telugu and Hindi. Services were translated from English into both languages. Special music included enthusiastic songs of worship from traditional Indian songs as well as beautiful songs sung in English. It was a special Feast as we hosted for the first time many Sabbath keepers who dropped in from the surrounding area wanting to know more about God's Feast of Tabernacles. India is thirsty for the Word of God, and many are seeking to understand the meaning of God's Feasts. All were inspired by the messages, which centered around the Kingdom of God. This knowledge is precious and gives hope in a country that faces many economic challenges and extreme hardships.

In our small group, eight had never seen the ocean before. Living in a city, surrounded by the noise of traffic, honking horns and throngs of people, the Feast in Chirala was a perfect "getaway" from the world. This quiet beach resort added to the spirit of the Feast as we all looked forward to a time of peace, tranquility and beauty as the knowledge of God's truth fills earth.

The awesomeness of the Feast was the way all worked together and contributed their God-given talents to make the Feast so special. Each person who attended gave so much of themselves and added greatly to the services, special music, the variety show, family day activities and day trip. It was truly a blessing to see God's Spirit working in love, unity and service to one another.



The location of next year's Feast in undetermined, but for members who enjoy international travel, you will be greatly moved and your life will be forever changed to visit your loving and humble brothers and sisters in India.

*David Schreiber*

## Tuscany, Principina, Italy

The Feast of Tabernacles in beautiful Principina, Italy, was celebrated by 228 enthusiastic brethren attending from various countries: United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, Brazil, Switzerland, and of course Italy. We were living proof that different languages and nationalities need not to be a barrier to getting to know and love one another in Jesus Christ. We were truly God's family on earth, united by the Holy Spirit. A special event during the Feast was the baptism of two members, warmly and joyfully received by the feasting brethren.

Most importantly, we greatly enjoyed and were inspired by heartfelt messages given by ministers and senior members who proved to be very committed to God's work through the United Church of God.

Physically speaking, the weather was excellent throughout the eight days of the Feast, with some rain only before and after the Feast. God really blessed the Feast also with delicious food. The brethren were very appreciative of the educational tours to Florence, Pisa, Siena and San Gimignano. The other Feast activities such as the visit at a Tuscan winery, the talent show and evening dance were most enjoyable as a true family reunion in brotherly love.

The Feast choir and special music were uplifting and inspiring. Our heartfelt thanks go to all Feast Participants—particularly to all deacons, ministers, senior speaking members, musicians and choir singers as well as many other brethren—who helped in making God's Feast in Italy very memorable to all of us and to God's honor and glory. We hope to see them again in a not too distant future. As you can imagine, the generous offerings of brethren who faithfully keep God's Holy Days are a vital, additional support to the work of God in Catholic countries such as Italy. We are very grateful to God and to all of you for your continual remembrance of us living so near the large presence of the Catholic Church.

With the hope of seeing both long time and new brethren next year here in Italy, we send our warmest greetings to all God's people around the world.

*Carmelo Anastasi*

## Ocho Rios, Jamaica

The Riu all inclusive Ocho Rios resort was again an excellent host to God's Feast in Jamaica! With 189 attending, we enjoyed many spiritually uplifting sermons and sermonettes about seeking the Kingdom of God. We also had five different seminars on biblical topics, including some Power-Point presentations. These spiritual activities were held in the well appointed private ball room.

The weather was very beautiful, and the sea was as calm as glass most mornings. This let us enjoy two baptisms in the Caribbean Sea, Paul Reece and Trevor Daley, both from Jamaica.

Activities included a bus tour of the area so we could get an overview and a visit to Dunn's River Falls. Another walking tour of the Sunvalley Plantation was a real treat. The edible produce of the island and exhibitions of the flowers and spices of the area were displayed, culminating in a lunch of the native foods. We also took in a traditional senior dinner provided to us by the resort.

The ladies had a formal tea, which was an outstanding success. The 60 ladies who participated would like to do it again. The theme of the tea was "What Is Your Spiritual Fashion?" The Bible text was Colossians 3:12-14.

We have tentatively booked the same resort for next year's Feast of Tabernacles.

*Chuck Zimmerman*

## Kenya

### Migori

A total of 309 brethren attended the Feast in Migori this year. Most attend congregations in western Kenya, and it is an annual treat for everyone to be together keeping the Feast here.

Members traveled to the Feast with a good quantity of food and animals, and there was plenty for all. No one went hungry even though the number of attendees exceeded those registered. There were plenty of chickens, and there was so much flour to make ugali that a good quantity was given to the widows to take home after the Feast. Goats were also donated by members, which were roasted and heartily enjoyed on the Eighth Day. These foods were in addition to generous donations given to supplement our food for which we are most grateful. May God bless all who assisted us.

Sunday's activity was a football match for the teens. It was really exciting to see the young boys showing their talents with the soccer ball. The teens really enjoyed the game, as did the members who cheered them on.

A highlight of the Feast was that 15 people were baptized and added to the family of God on the Eighth Day. Baptisms were done by pastor John Otieno Owak and Darris McNeely at a local lake. It was a real joy for them and also for the eight children blessed on the same day.

The messages were very uplifting, and many people enjoyed hearing inspired words from God during these eight days. There was uplifting special music during services including brethren from Magenche who sung in the Kisii language.

It was disappointing to see the end of the Feast coming, and members were emotionally filled when they departed after the last day.

We really enjoyed the Feast and are looking forward to next year when we hope that it will be as nice as this year's Feast. We really enjoy being with international guests during the short time we were with them, and we hope that more come to keep the Feast with us next year.

*John Otieno Owak*

### Nakuru

The rented facility of Rhino Camp site is located 12 km from Nakuru town amidst a panoramic setting of picturesque hills surrounding the gated 50-acre compound. Once in, the eyes are greeted by the arrangement of trees on each side of the driveway that give a warm canopy and a perspective look. This great scenery quickly obliterates the worldly worries and sets the mind into a serene mood.

This beautiful site was host to seven local congregations including Nairobi, Meru, Mombasa, Bagaria, Matuu, Kitale, Elburgon, Narok, and international visitors from United States, Australia and Switzerland. Members of Meru and Narok congregations were attending the Feast for the first time. Loads of foodstuffs were brought by members from these groups making everyday a literal "Feast!"

God blessed us with perfect weather, giving us a great amount of sunshine. He also poured His blessings on us in form of rain on two occasions that ushered in the Sabbath and the Eighth Day.

The attendance was 99 persons including nine international guests. Darris McNeely, a co-host of the *Beyond Today* program, was our guest speaker this year. He was accompanied by his wife Debbie, along with Aaron and Whitney Creech, who work at the home office.

The daily spiritual food was inspiring and nourishing. Sermonettes and sermons were based on the coming Kingdom of God, His laws and Holy Days

that highlighted the significance of the Feast of Tabernacles. Messages were delivered by many local leaders as well as the international guests. Beautiful special music complemented the messages.

Activities included outdoor games, swimming, family day, Bible studies and a women's seminar.

With the help of the international guests, we learned a new hymn, "Great God Who Made the Universe." It became so popular that brethren were overheard humming the tune at other times. After three wonderful days the internationals had to leave us in order to attend the Feast at the other two sites. Following common practice in African society, when a guest leaves after a visit they are escorted with gifts. Not only were the international guests given interesting gifts, they also got African names. This farewell was crowned with a group photo taken of all Feast attendees.

The youths and young adults assembled at the meeting hall for indoor games such as "spoons" and "Concentration," which were fascinating. One person was baptized at a swimming pool in a neighboring secondary school. As I announced the good news the following day, loud applause filled the air. It was a great joy for everyone even as it is a great joy to the angels in Heaven.

Days went by quickly, and soon it was the end! Though goodbyes are hard to say, the Feast of Tabernacles was joyous, memorable, and an event overflowing with God's blessings. Indeed, to some it was the best Feast ever.

Let us all keep watch and be praying for the Kingdom of God to come quickly.

*Antonio Ndung'u*

### Ogembo

The Ogembo, Kenya, Feast site is located in a mountainous region of Western Kenya where rainfall and greenery abound. Our Church-owned facility hosted 113 attendees from area congregations.

The host congregation at Ogembo arrived early to pitch tents for the rest of the brethren. We were blessed to be joined by nine international guests who attended with us for three days before moving to the Migori Feast site. These included Council member and *Beyond Today* co-host Darris McNeely and his wife Debbie. Other guests included Aaron Creech and his wife Whitney from the home office, and the other five internationals from Australia and Switzerland.

Messages about the peace that will be realized when the Kingdom of God will established on earth, along with the resurrection of all who have not yet lived God's

way, were inspiring.

Food contributed by the members included plenty of sweet bananas, maize flour, potatoes, chickens, goats and beef. Members greatly enjoyed their meals. All the milk used in food preparation during the Feast came from cows donated by a LifeNets heifer project.

Activities included soccer games, family day, Bible studies, women's fellowship and a tour of the heifer project. After meals in the evenings members gathered around the campfire to fellowship.

This year we had plenty of water available for food prep, washing and bathing at the Feast site due to donors having helped us install four large water tanks that collect rainwater. During the days we were blessed with two days of heavy rainfalls to replenish the water and at the end of the Feast some water was still left in the tanks.

And lastly we were blessed with two newborn babies during the Feast days. On the fourth day of the Feast Thomas and Rhodah Ondieki were blessed with a baby boy and named him after Aaron Creech. To crown the Feast we were also blessed to have our first grandson just a day after the Eighth Day, born to our son Job and his wife Mercy.

We look forward to the Feast of Tabernacles being held here next year and welcome all who wish to come be with us at Ogembo, Kenya.

*Musa Meraba Nyaira*

## Lake Malawi

The Sunbird Lodge on beautiful Lake Malawi was the site for the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles for around 150 Feastgoers. The weather was perfect, and brethren gathered peacefully for the eight-day Feast. An air-conditioned building was to house the services, but because of faulty construction, the roof had begun to collapse and it was declared unsafe. The management erected a large circus-style tent large enough to seat up to 300.

Giving sermons with the lake as the backdrop reminded me of Christ speaking at the Sea of Galilee. It was unique to speak with wild monkeys doing antics in the background and goats running back and forth across the beach. The gentle breeze from the lake made it comfortable for services. The lectern, however, was placed over an ant hill, making my first sermon a bit more lively than intended. About 80 brethren were unable to attend because of the cost of travel to the Feast. The brethren are very scattered, and the Feast is the only time many get to see their spiritual brothers



and sisters.

Most brethren were able to camp right on the site in tents, or stay in some small walled chalets or structures with drop down tent siding. Meals were cooked in the camps or in community settings. There was no minister in Malawi, but Gracious Mpilangwe had been approved by the Council for ordination, so on the first Holy Day, Howard Davis and I performed the ordination ceremony to the rejoicing of the brethren. We were also able to anoint many who were sick, and 27 children received special prayers during the blessing of the little children. The Feast was filled with Bible studies, a movie night and fun show. The brethren in Malawi were very appreciative of funds collected from England, Canada and the U.S. that allowed them to have an enjoyable Feast. It would have been very difficult without these special funds. They all look forward to the actual return of Jesus Christ and his rule over the earth and a time of plenty. Michelle and I will miss the brethren in Malawi and pray for the day when no one is left out from rejoicing at the Feast.

*Aaron Dean*

## Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

The Mexican Feast was again held in sunny and warm Puerto Vallarta. We witnessed how God truly controls the weather, for the weather forecast had predicted heavy rains during a week of the Feast, but instead we only enjoyed sunny days.

There were 580 brethren in attendance, 500 from the United States, 65 from Mexico and 15 who hailed from the countries of Chile, Canada, Australia, Barbados and Austria. The messages were inspiring and the activities awesome, including visiting an aquatic park where you swim and play with dolphins. The next day there was a cruise on the replica of a Spanish galleon, with snorkeling at a private beach and meals included aboard.

The Feast site resort gives the appearance of boarding a big cruise ship. The hotel is all inclusive (all meals and drinks are included all day long), and it was virtually exclusive to the Church. Not much traveling off-site was necessary because the meeting hall was on the second floor of the hotel and the pools and beach are a stone's throw away.

What we are most thankful about was how God miraculously spared two of the Mexican brethren (one was a deacon) from a fatal car accident as they traveled to the Feast site. They were going downhill on a slick, rainy mountain road when the deacon

lost control of the vehicle. They were headed directly off a cliff, but suddenly, he felt the steering wheel turn sharply and the pedal accelerate so instead of going off the cliff, the vehicle made a perfect U-turn and was stopped by the guard rail at just the right angle so the van was halted and they avoided going off the cliff. One of them just had a few scratches, and they both made it to the Feast in other vehicles.

Another miracle happened when a "Mexican couple" arrived right away with a big pickup truck and told them to hand them the most valuable Church equipment from the damaged van. Why did the deacon become so trustful in such an unlikely circumstance? He said the man had the same facial features as a young boy that was like a nephew to him, so he felt perfectly at ease to turn all the valuable Church equipment over to them, although the Feast site was four hours away.

The man told the deacon, "Give me all the valuable equipment and I will take it to the hotel where you are holding the convention, since I'm going that way." Then he said, "Do it quickly, for 'the vultures' [the looters], will soon arrive to pick clean the damaged van of all the valuable goods [which is the norm]."

A few hours later, at 12:00 a.m., the couple arrived at the hotel with all the Church equipment intact (which included sound and video equipment for the start of the Feast later that day). Yet they refused to take any money either from the deacon at the site or from me at the hotel. It was all very strange, as if they were horrified at taking any money for their services. They then disappeared into the night, and left me with an uncanny feeling of having met "angels unawares" (Hebrews 13:2). Thanks to this, the Feast was able to start without a hitch.

*Mario Seiglie*

## Kerikeri, New Zealand

The opening night sermon set the tone for the Feast, when New Zealand pastor and Festival coordinator Daniel Porteous emphasized God's command, repeated many times in scripture, to rejoice at His Feast.

Subsequent messages addressed the subjects of peace and how to achieve it; the big plan of God, and how all of His firstfruits have an individual part to play in it; how to identify and make use of our unique spiritual gifts, and our need to cultivate softness of heart in a hard-hearted world.

Focus on the world tomorrow continued with sermons explain-

ing the kind of freedom that will be experienced then, as opposed to the bondage of today's "world held captive." Other messages explored the frequent use of "water imagery" in the Bible, and how to change our perception of reality to align with God's reality. The Feast concluded with messages regarding the significance of the number "8" in the Bible, and the wonderful time ahead when all mankind will be given the opportunity to know God.

New Zealand is famous for its spectacular scenery. Post-service activities included a steamboat ride and a boat trip to the famous Hole in the Rock geological feature in the Bay of Islands, where baby dolphins could be observed in close-up. A mystery tour featured spectacular views of a majestic waterfall and a walk through a rainforest with its spectacularly tall timber and unique ecology.

Other activities included a mini-golf tournament, a senior's luncheon and an evening of chocolate bingo. All outdoor activities were blessed with fine weather.

The atmosphere throughout the Feast was one of goodwill and camaraderie, with much good-natured banter between the Australian and New Zealand brethren. One longtime Church member from overseas remarked that it was one of the friendliest Feasts he had ever attended. Another visitor commented that it was "the Feast of Hugs," as brethren interacted with warm expressions of affection and goodwill.

Brethren left the beautiful Feast site with their cups of blessing running over, having rejoiced enthusiastically before the Lord, and in the process having progressed along the path of learning to fear God always: the two vital Biblical reasons for making pilgrim Feast.

*Elizabeth Burchard*

## Nigeria

This year's Feast of Tabernacles in Nigeria took place at a new Feast site called JABU Resort, Alakeji, Osun, state, which is located in the southwestern region of Nigeria. Brethren from the three church areas and other parts of Nigeria converged at the Feast site for a much anticipated foretaste of God's Kingdom in the fellowship, messages and activities. Highest attendance was 101. It was indeed one of the best Feasts ever for all. We had power all through the Feast period, enjoyed excellent meals, fellowship, as well as inspiring messages.

The Feast theme of "Pressing towards the goal" was taken from

Philippians 3:13-14.

On the second day of the Feast, the preteens and teens in Nigeria were treated to a wonderful time: games, a Bible quiz, drama and skits acted by them to teach spiritual values and lots of fun. Three indefatigable ladies from the United States sacrificed a lot of time, energy and resources to prepare Bible lessons for the preteens, with great souvenirs for the lessons learned about the fruits of the spirits, being crowned at Christ's coming and many others. Because of their effort the preteens in the west African regions all had great every morning Sabbath schools that they looked forward to with so much relish. Our sincere thanks to these women for their labor of love, as well as those who sent gifts to us that made it possible for so much more to be done to make this year's Feast truly the best Feast ever for all!

A first in this year's Feast was a Feast of Tabernacles t-shirt made for everyone. All the preteens were given orange color, and all the teens to adults had a beautiful cream color. The Church logo and Feast of Tabernacles Nigeria were beautifully embroidered into the front left side. Everyone wore this for the sports day and various activities. The festival choir, in beautiful dresses specially made for the Feast, spiced up the Feast with beautiful renditions of "Hallelujah Amen," "Hallelujah Praise the Lord" and "Not a Sparrow Faleth."

On the sports day, from 7:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., Mrs. Akinbo conducted eye screening/refraction exercises while Mr. Akinbo, with his background in biochemistry and masters in clinical biochemistry, did a fasting blood glucose and blood cholesterol test for everyone. A sack race, relays, swimming, indoor games and various activities on the talent show night enriched the Feast enjoyment on the sports and family fun day. In the evening, members were given a health talk on eating for a healthy life and how we must be responsible in our lifestyle and eating habits to maintain and care for the wonderful body that God has given us.

On the last day of the Feast, a prospective member was baptized into the body of Christ.

Messages were inspiring, encouraging and thoroughly stimulating, covering such topics as forgiveness from the heart, focusing on the sure promises of God, dealing with "self," striving on towards perfection, preparing for a greater work, and much more. The final message on the p.m. service of the Eighth Day used the program "Solar Walk" to fire the brethren's minds about the great expanse of this universe and the work ahead for God's people

beyond the Millennium and Great White Throne Judgment period. It brought vivid clarity and significance to the words in our hymn 135 about God creating a jewel called earth and giving it honored place in the universe. It also encouraged us to walk worthy of our calling by always pressing on towards the goal set before us and not getting distracted with living and surviving.

Our sincere thanks to our brothers and sisters in congregations abroad for their gifts that made it possible for many to attend and enjoy God's Feast, as well as almighty God for another spiritual boost to help us focus on His Kingdom and the work he is doing in and with all of His children worldwide.

*Oludare Akinbo*

## Philippines

### Baguio City

Baguio City once again was one of two Feast of Tabernacles sites for the United Church of God, here in the Philippines. For the 12th consecutive year, the United Church of God's Feast of Tabernacles site was once again held at the Ang Ating Tahanan grounds of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines, located at the South Drive in Baguio City. This year we were privileged to use their new multi-purpose hall, instead of their much older conference hall, which we used in the past.

The Feast started out with our traditional opening night service on the evening of Sept. 30, with the opening night message being delivered by the festival coordinator for the Baguio site. We were expecting an attendance of only about 80 to 100 this year due to a number of transfers, but we were pleasantly surprised to have our highest attendance reach 125 on the very first day of the Feast, surpassing our expectation by some 25 percent! This was even much higher than our highest attendance last year of 115. We also had overseas brethren who came from the United States who kept the Feast and rejoiced with us.

We were again blessed this year with relatively beautiful weather conditions during the entire Feast, with very good sunshine and a few scattered rain showers just to cool the day.

We were privileged to have David Dobson and his wife with us for the first half of the Feast. Mr. Dobson spoke in the afternoon of the first day of the Feast about "Looking for the City," where he expounded on the idea that the Feast is a time to dream of what will be, as God's Kingdom becomes reality on the earth. He explained that God has placed

**Please see page 15**



# Feast of Tabernacles Photos 2012



**Merimbula, Australia**



**Rockingham, Australia**



**Sunshine Coast, Australia**



**Ulverstone, Tasmania, Australia**



**Cotonou, Benin**



**Coroico, Bolivia**



**Maloca do Moscou, Brazil**



**Lladudno, Wales, British Isles**



**Douala, Cameroon**



**Canmore, Alberta, Canada**



**Point Edward, Ontario, Canada**



**Tongoy, Chile**



**Prince Edward Island, Canada**





**Chinauta, Colombia**



**Kinshasa, Congo**



**Saaremaa, Estonia**



**Meze, France**



**Schluchsee, Germany**



**Akosombo, Ghana**



**Lake Atitlan, Guatemala**



**Ocho Rios, Jamaica**



**Chirala, India**



**Principina, Italy**



**Migori, Kenya**



**Nakuru, Kenya**





**Lake Malawi, Malawi**



**Puerto Vallarta, Mexico**



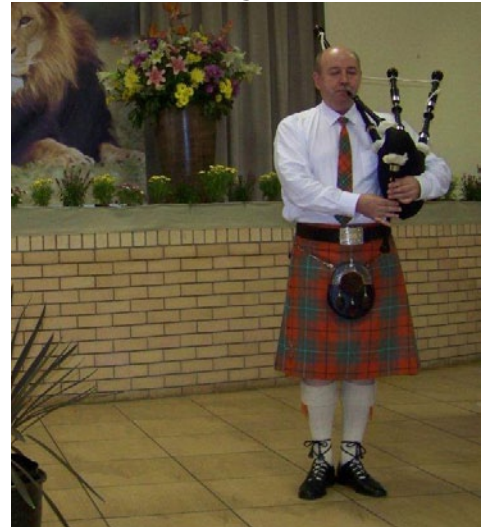
**Aleki, Osun, Nigeria**



**Baguio City, Philippines**



**Davao City, Philippines**



**Margate, South Africa**



**Vieux Fort, St. Lucia**



**Crown Point, Tobago**



**Kpalimé, Togo**



**Kalatura, Sri Lanka**



**Bigfork, Montana, United States**



**Bend, Oregon, United States**





**Branson, Missouri, United States**



**Escondido, California, United States**



**Gatlinburg, Tennessee, United States**



**Jekyll Island, Georgia, United States**



**Lake George, New York, United States**



**Lahaina, Hawaii, United States**



**New Braunfels, Texas, United States**



**Panama City Beach, Florida, United States**



**Steamboat Springs, Colorado, U.S.**



**Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, United States**



**Lusaka, Zambia**



**Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe**



“eternity in our hearts” and He wants us to anticipate where His plan leads. For the second half of the Feast, our senior pastor, Earl Roemer, who first spent the first half of the Feast in the Davao festival site, joined us for the rest of the Feast up to the Eighth Day.

The messages were all uplifting, inspiring and encouraging, especially the festival sermon video on the Church working on being “fitly framed together,” as delivered by UCG president Dennis Luker.

The festival show this year was held on the third day of the Feast. It featured Filipino folk songs and dances from a number of regions in the Philippines as well as some other surprise songs and dances. Various activities were all likewise prepared for both the young and old alike as well as for the whole family, where everyone had the opportunity to enjoy fun, food, fellowship and games. Among the various activities were the youth day activities for the pre-teens and teens, family day, and the seniors’ dinner, hosted by the teens and young adults at the Feast. For those who love to sing, we also had a sing-along.

With the spiritually inspiring messages we received during this year’s Feast, the fine fellowship, rejoicing and fun time the brethren shared and experienced here at the Baguio Feast site, everyone present felt they were blessed with a greater level of joy, unity, love and togetherness. This Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day will be remembered as one of the most spiritually inspiring Feasts ever.

*Ray Evasco*

## Davao City

The Davao Festival site at Girl Scouts Philippines Camp Alano in Toril hosted 410 (highest recorded attendance) brethren, including overseas guests from the U.S., Canada and Australia. Philippine Senior Pastor Earl Roemer was our guest speaker for the first half of the Feast, while David Dobson, who traveled with his wife Denise, was our guest speaker for the second half.

Beginning with the opening night service, the momentum of powerful and encouraging messages (including the very inspiring Feast video) continued to edify the brethren to the last day. God blessed us with good weather all throughout; a beautiful stage setting with creative daily arrangements of fresh flowers; and warm and joy-filled camaraderie and fellowshiping among the brethren—both young and old alike—in the serene atmosphere of the camp.

Afternoon activities included tours, livelihood workshops, varied games and balloons for

children, bonding activities for youths and singles, a relaxing seniors social, an enjoyable family sports day with a sampling of Davao City’s best fruits, as well as an informative Bible Q&A on the Sabbath afternoon conducted by Festival coordinator Edmond Macaraeg. Evening activities included a fellowship night, a colorful and entertaining variety show, and a Church leaders dinner in appreciation for their help in serving the many congregations in Mindanao and the Visayas. For the sixth time, we also had practical Christianity sessions on three evenings conducted by Mr. Macaraeg, with each evening devoted to teens, singles, then married couples.

We also received donations that became special blessings this Feast. One is a LifeNets donation of two stainless steel water tanks constructed on top of two dormitory buildings at GSP. Each storage tank has a capacity of 2,000 liters (500 gallons) each. This alleviated the low water pressure problem during the hours before morning services. Other blessings were free daily lunch for everyone; two roasted calves served on the first and last day; breakfast food items distributed to families and individuals; and some used clothing and gift items for the children.

Even more wonderful was the spiritual blessing of *seven* baptisms on the Eighth Day: Pablito Amarille (Maramag), Lucena Balabis (Davao), Perpetuo Buelis, Jr. (Butuan), Leticia Mahinay (Diatagon), Gerald Misagal (Leyte), Jay Osing (Kidapawan), and Brigida Tangonan (Cagayan de Oro). We also had *seven* little children blessed during the Feast!

In summary, the inspiring messages, the fun-filled activities and the warm family atmosphere, plus the good weather, created an inviting foretaste of the coming Kingdom of God, when all mankind will be at one. We are very thankful to God for all these great and wonderful blessings.

*Edmond and Daniel Macaraeg*

## Margate, South Africa

The Feast was held in the new air-conditioned Margate Community Hall. The weather was perfect for the first half of the Feast and was rather wet for the second half. Activities were well supported and included welcome and farewell barbecues, a lunch for seniors, a family dance, a family day held in a boating club facility right on the beach, a zip-line experience held in a game reserve, and a catered lunch on the Eighth Day.

Special music included a bagpipe solo, piano solos, a youth

choir as well as the Durban choir.

Guest speakers included Grant Chick from Queensland, Larry Darden from the U.S.A., and Derrick Pringle from Zambia. Overseas visitors were from various countries and added tremendously to the overall ambience and enjoyment.

Messages were well received and the overall atmosphere was informal, relaxed and very friendly.

*Roy Demont*

## Sri Lanka

If the word “family” could be used to describe the Feast of Tabernacles gathering anywhere, it would fit perfectly for the Feast in Sri Lanka. There are many family connections among the members in Sri Lanka, and it was wonderful to see the loving and easy relationships that spanned generations of faithfulness. Some of the older ladies were baptized in the late 1960s, already being “second generation Christians” at that time. And now, there are two or three more generations of faithful members, all sharing their love with those of us who were visitors. Except we were welcomed in as family members too, and the Feast was truly a wonderful gathering of brothers and sisters in Christ.

Because the weekly Sabbath was just two days before the Feast began, we were all able to meet in Colombo for services. Sunday was exciting, as the members had chartered a bus and most of us were able to enjoy a spontaneous sing-along as we rode together to Kalutara, where all 30 of us stayed at the Mermaid Hotel and Club, situated right on a beautiful Indian Ocean beach. One family made the two hour trip in their tuk tuk, which is some sort of cross between a scooter and a tiny truck.

We all partook of the same buffet meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) as the mostly European tourists at the resort, and our group was given two long tables right in the middle of the dining room. Having so much time for relaxed and beneficial fellowship was a highlight of the Feast for all of us there.

The strength of the Sri Lankan congregation is that they love God and each other, and therefore they serve God and each other. Everyone helps in some way. Many members offer special music, and it truly is special to hear a young person or an older lady singing a hymn in heart felt praise to God. Most of the men contribute in song leading, and those who give sermonettes bring very sound and edifying messages. Some of the ladies planned the family day activities, which included a game

of cricket, egg and spoon race, and a treasure hunt over the grounds of the resort. They were all very pleased to see the Feast video, and to realize how much they have in common with their “family” in other congregations of the Church of God.

*David Schreiber*

## Vieux Fort, St. Lucia

Beautiful! This describes the Feast in St. Lucia perfectly. The island is known as “Beautiful St. Lucia,” and so it is: colorful tropical foliage, breathtaking sunrises, blue skies, green mountains, gentle waves, and warm, welcoming St. Lucians. But most beautiful of all was the spirit of rejoicing, love and eagerness to serve that was present among the 172 feastgoers.

The Feast of Tabernacles was opened by a “flash mob” performance of the Hallelujah chorus. Choir members, placed strategically around the meeting hall, began singing as brethren were getting settled in their seats on the opening night. We continued to enjoy incredible special music throughout the Feast.

The speakers who presented sermonettes and sermons gave their “all.” We had a wonderful variety of messages, all inspiring us to keep the vision; to continue along the straight and narrow path to the Kingdom of God. St. Lucia teen, Kendall Barthelmy, painted a beautiful canvas depicting Isaiah 2:2-4. This painting graced the front of the meeting room throughout the Feast, giving us a vivid picture of what we were there to celebrate.

We had an unusually large group of preteens. They enjoyed two Sabbath classes, one of which took place on the beach. They also took full advantage of the beautiful pool area designed just for children, with plenty of shallow water and sprinklers under which they laughed and played. Others enjoyed the two water slides, “lazy river” area and quieter adult pool section at the resort. The Coconut Bay Beach Resort offered something for everyone.

Group activities included a challenging teen hike up Gros Piton, family day on the beach and a catamaran sail around the majestic twin peaks of the Pitons, a designated world-heritage site. Most enjoyable was the St. Lucia cultural night. There was St. Lucian music, dancing, costume demonstrations and food, all arranged by the local congregation. We extend our gratitude and admiration to them for providing such an evening of fun, fellowship, and learning more about local culture.

Brethren also rejoiced over a wedding and two baptisms that

occurred during the Feast.

The beautiful setting, wonderful food, fun activities, inspiring music, great messages, positive, friendly, serving Feastgoers—what more could one ask for? It was a delicious taste of God’s Kingdom, and we pray more than ever the reality of it comes soon!

*Chuck Smith*

## Crown Point, Tobago

This year’s Feast of Tabernacles of the United Church of God in Trinidad and Tobago was held at the Crown Point Beach Hotel in Tobago. The average attendance was 25. We were also embraced by regular visits from brethren who attend other Church of God groups that were keeping the Feast nearby.

The theme was based on Isaiah 2:2-4: “He will teach us His ways.” The messages provided practical advice on “cohesion,” “having our priorities right,” “setting the right goal,” “walk in the joy of our salvation,” “have our feet shod with the gospel of peace,” “how to be thankful and keep our pride in check” and “not take our calling for granted.” Both the sermonettes and the sermons brought out the indisputable truth from the Word of God. They served as firm reminders and encouragement, reaffirming our assurance that for those who “walk in the light of the Lord” there will be no groping in the darkness.

We enjoyed wonderful weather during the Feast, which enhanced the social activities. They included the Trinidad and Tobago night, a bus tour, family day and a movie night for the children. Trinidad and Tobago night was a delight with its delectable cuisines. The bus tour took us to the western side of the country. We got a glimpse of Tobago’s greenery and visited two forts and the second highest peak in the country. Family day was a thrill. Games included water balloon toss, cricket, lime and a spoon race among others. It was held at Canoe Bay, which allowed brethren to bathe in the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea.

This year’s Feast taught us to change our perspectives and make adjustments to our attitudes. The Feast always helps us to envision our future in the coming Kingdom of God.

*Chuck Smith*

## Kpalimé, Togo

Honor and glory be given to our Lord who once again brought us together for the Feast of Tabernacles 2012, in this site of Kpalimé, located 120 kilometers from Lomé, capital city of Togo.



Three countries were represented, the United States of America, Ghana and Togo. We had 47 in attendance. I assure you that it was a successful Feast, specially in regard to organization and discipline. The first four days, we listened to the sermons on CD, and the last four days, Fred Kellers gave us sermons and Bible studies. The translation of the pastor's sermons were provided in our local language (Ewe) by Vincent Hilla, who came from Accra for this very reason.

All our members demonstrated a noticeable discipline during those eight days. We started things on time and the children were quiet during Church. The site was always kept clean by all participants without any pressure. We felt that our brothers and sisters from Mome-Hagou shared a deep love for God. They performed a song and a dance for special music.

Mome-Hagou is a congregation with virtually no leader, so we decided, in agreement with Mr. Kellers, that we would go visit them twice a month.

The Feast was enhanced by an excursion to a waterfall called "cascade de Kpimé."

Since UCG began, no pastor and wife have kept the Feast with us in Togo. Before that, only one Canadian minister had ever kept it with us in Worldwide days. This is the second Feast that Mr. and Mrs. Kellers have kept with us. At the end of this Feast, I stood to thank the Kellers before the congregation and said, "We no longer feel like orphans."

Thank you to all those who helped us celebrate this Feast.

*Kossi Fiaboe*

## Tonga

Eight faithful brethren kept the Feast in the Kingdom of Tonga. They met in the tabernacle built on the family property. The festival was organized by our deacon Frank Ōsika. Songs were sung a cappella with the song leaders being deacon Frank Ōsika or one of his sons Alfred and Edward.

The last three days before the Feast there was heavy rain but on the morning of the First Day of the Feast the sun was shining, and it was a beautiful day. We are coming to the end of God's plan for us humans, and I can see how God loves the people, because today He gives the chance to the people that don't know Him. What an amazing plan He give us. Even though there is no minister here with us in Tonga we know that God is with us as just the same everywhere in the world. God is with His people where His people keep His Feast. Thank you for the prayers and all the DVDs that you send to us. It

helps us so that we can have a spiritual and wonderful Feast. Mrs. Sela Ha'angana is in a very healthy condition, and we are thankful for that. Always remember that you are in our prayers.

*Malo Frank Ōsika*

## United States

### Bend-Redmond, Oregon

Over 700 enjoyed another wonderful Feast in beautiful Central Oregon. God blessed us with warm, sunny fall weather throughout the Feast with temperatures in the 65-80 degree range and no rain. Messages covered a wide range of relevant topics, many with themes of envisioning millennial conditions and the importance of family in God's plan. Cybercasting was well received by well over 100 daily webcast connections.

A wide range of activities was available for teens, singles, young adults and seniors. Our family dance and fun show were very well received and attended. Over 600 participated in family day activities that included carnival-type game booths, sand art, arts and crafts displays, scientific exhibits, table games and field day and a taco bar. Bingo with prizes was one of the most popular attractions. We purchased 100 bingo sets but still ran short.

Several boxes of food and \$2,879 cash were donated to the local food bank. Since the food bank is able to feed someone for only a dollar a day, this will provide much needed help in this down economy.

Speaking of food, four area restaurants offered special prices and special pork-free menu items. Managers and employees were impressed by the patronage and positive example of our members.

*Larry Walker*

### Branson, Missouri

God blessed 588 brethren with pleasant fall weather, peaceful cooperation and an uplifting mood as we celebrated the Feast in Branson, Missouri. The Feast video enhanced the tone for working together and growing toward our future service. As an example, everyone who helped prepare the auditorium and stage for daily services exemplified that wonderful harmony. Many mentioned the abundance of spiritual nourishment at the Feast as well as a loving concern for one another.

Messages focused on our need to prepare to serve humanity as we assist Jesus Christ in bringing peace to the world. Gary Antion encouraged us to desire the Kingdom of God and to see Jesus as our true Hero. Tony Wasilkoff showed us how temporal this life really is

and urged us to truly appreciate God's wisdom as He offers salvation to all in the world to come. Our festival choir, ensemble and special music presenters, led by Neil Lacasse, did a wonderful job of praising God in song and inspiring the entire audience.

Activities were very well attended. Over 200 brethren enthusiastically enjoyed our family day picnic, which was a perfect place for nice conversation in the leisurely warm afternoon. The seniors luncheon had rave reviews as the food was exceptional. Many brethren attended our Bible study on Friday evening presented by Joe Dobson as he explained the millennial overview of the book of Isaiah. Merna Leisure-Eppick presented a very effective seminar on alcoholism. Several commented about the need for understanding this important topic and having support from the local pastor and our congregations. Mr. Antion presented a seminar on the dynamics of aging, which many members appreciated since all of us are getting older!

A highlight of the Feast in Branson is the tradition of collecting stuffed animals found in millennial scriptures donated by brethren to give to our children toward the end of the Feast.

*Joe and Pat Dobson*

### Escondido, California

500 joyful and extremely cooperative brethren assembled together in the lovely Conference Center for the California Center of the Arts in Escondido, California, to hear encouraging and uplifting messages regarding our roles in the coming Kingdom of God and our responsibilities today to reflect those values in our daily lives. We had a number of non-salaried elders, deacons and members who really stepped up to offer spiritual meat from the pulpit during the festivals. Many brethren who normally volunteer their help were away this year at other Feast sites, which created opportunity for others to enthusiastically and responsibly step forward and get involved. It was an immediate on-site example "in the flesh and in the Spirit" of the festival video's message of "being joined and knit together by what every member supplies" (Ephesians 4:16). Informative and inspiring messages were given by individuals from around the nation to an audience that had a number of first-time visitors. We had special classes for youth, teens and young adults. The children especially enjoyed the workshop activity of creating biblical object lessons with their own hands. The special night-time Bible study was conducted by Robin Webber. He offered a presentation entitled "The 7 Beatitudes of Revelation,"

that focused on God's blessings, instructions and encouragement to persevere till He comes.

The Escondido Feast site started out on the hot side to the delight of our beach enthusiasts, but it cooled down by mid-Feast to the mid-80s. This city lies in an interior valley of Northern San Diego County. Within 30 to 40 minutes of each direction, you can either be headed into pine-clad mountains, on a sandy beach, touring the major attractions of San Diego, or walking through the vineyards of nearby Temecula. Each year nearly 40 percent of our people stay in the nearby beach communities of Oceanside or Carlsbad and commute to services.

While metropolitan San Diego has world-class attractions, the primary attraction at the Escondido Feast site rightfully remains the festival activities themselves and the brethren, who plunge in to "keep the Feast" in all its aspects. Throughout the course of the week, our people were able to experience young adult and teen drop-in socials, a teen beach party at Oceanside, and a senior citizens banquet. The most popular event continues to be the old-fashioned family day picnic at nearby oak-shaded Felicita Park that brings all the brethren of God's family, together, no matter how old or how young, to experience in type the peaceful harmony of the wonderful world tomorrow.

*Robin Webber*

### Gatlinburg, Tennessee

The United Church of God's Feast site in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, was outstanding. The leaves were beginning to turn red and gold, yet the weather for the majority of the Feast was warm and pleasant. Although our largest attendance was 562 on the first Holy Day, it remained strong through the entire Feast. In fact, all the scheduled activities in Gatlinburg were extremely well attended.

The meeting facility is newly renovated and very beautiful. It sports two fireplaces and a waterfall, which made excellent backgrounds for picture taking as well as areas for conversation. Services were conducted in the main auditorium. Since we had fewer people this year, there was plenty of leg and elbow room, making the hall spacious and comfortable. Parking and traffic can be difficult during the Feast season because it often coincides with the splendor of autumn leaves, but we were blessed in that neither was as problematic as in past years.

The messages were inspiring and uplifting. While they focused on the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and Eighth Day, the information was helpful for our

present development as well as preparing us for the roles we will have in the Kingdom. There was a palpable positive energy in the congregation all eight days.

The special music was indeed enjoyable. The soloists performed well, and the Gatlinburg festival choir did a fine job. Their music was both energizing and inspiring.

All who served did a magnificent job; performing their tasks with smiles and joy. We are truly grateful to those who helped set up before the Feast began, those who served during the Feast, and those who helped "take down" after the Feast ended. The many willing hands made light work of what would otherwise be an overwhelming chore.

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

*Frank McCrady*

### Jekyll Island, Georgia

The brand new, beautiful and accommodating Jekyll Convention Center was the scene for daily services and many of the events at this year's Feast of Tabernacles on Jekyll Island.

Jekyll Island, with its natural beauty and tranquil, millennial-type setting has long been an ideal setting for the Feast of Tabernacles. This year, more than 600 people celebrated the Feast there, and enjoyed Feast messages that were inspiring and motivational, focusing on the coming Millennium and Kingdom of God. Youth education lessons were conducted on two days of the Feast, along with Bible studies for all age groups. In addition to beautiful special music, performed by the Jekyll festival choir and various ensembles and soloists, daily services were marked by attentiveness and a feeling that we were all "in one place and of one accord." Many people stayed long after services each day to fellowship and get to know each other.

The physical aspect of the Feast was also served well on the Island. More than 400 attended family day, held in the new Great Dunes Park, with its beautiful beach pavilion overlooking wide, white sandy beaches. Everyone enjoyed a great lunch of beef brisket or pulled chicken sandwiches, along with a scavenger hunt for the youngsters, football and other games for the teens and young adults, and just enjoying the beach or fellowship on the covered pavilion. On games night, many Feastgoers gathered together in the Convention Center to play group games and favorite games they brought from home with friends and "family" they just met.

As usual, the senior citizens



banquet was well attended and received. Group horseback rides, group dolphin boat tours, group kayaking instruction, the teen bike ride, mini-golf and pizza outing, and a variety show rounded out the activities. No one at Jekyll could say they had nothing to do, unless nothing is what they wanted to do.

Next year will mark the 50th anniversary of the first Feast of Tabernacles held on Jekyll Island. There is a rich history and heritage of the Feast of Tabernacles here, as tens of thousands of people have made the pilgrimage to Jekyll to celebrate God's Feast over the years.

We are thankful to God for the experience of the Feast of Tabernacles each year. This year, God blessed us at Jekyll Island with a good foretaste of the unity, peace, accord and great attitudes of service and joy that will mark His Kingdom.

*Rick Shabi*

## Lahaina, Hawaii

Attendance reached a high of 325 in Maui this year, and the Feast in Hawaii featured several important highlights.

Members were encouraged and instructed by solid sermons, such as "How Will You Rule in God's Kingdom?" by Paul Smith and "Family, Now and Forever," by Philip Aust.

Members participated in a luau, and Bible studies were held for singles, young adults and teens. Everyone was challenged by Ray Wright to contribute ideas that could help God's Church preach the gospel, reach out to aid and assist former members of the Church and encourage our young people.

The Church was able to contribute to a local charity, the Maui Food Bank, which distributes meals to over 10,000 needy individuals each month on the islands of Maui, Molokai and Lanai. According to Tasha Moline, director of outreach services for the Maui Food Bank, the donations provided by the United Church of God will serve over 400 people for Thanksgiving dinner this year. "Please thank your members for their generous support in our efforts to help those less fortunate on the island of Maui," Ms. Moline wrote us after the Feast.

Once again this year, Kipe Ebana, facilities director of the Maui Theater told us: "One of the highlights of our year is assisting your church at the Feast. This truly is one of the special activities that we host each year."

Mahalo, and please come again next year!

*Steve Buchanan*

## Lake George, New York

The beautiful Adirondack region of upstate New York served as a peaceful setting for 385 peo-

ple to leave the cares of this world behind and be rejuvenated by many inspiring messages and wonderful fellowship. The Feast site had an "international flavor," as we were able to provide translation for Spanish and French-speaking brethren in attendance.

"Joyful" was the word heard most often by people describing how their Feast was going. Walking through the hall before and after services, you could overhear the positive comments about the messages. We were blessed with 13 men from 12 different states who delivered messages that were thoughtfully prepared, inspired and humbly delivered. The messages dovetailed nicely on key points, yet each had its own specific call-to-action, words of encouragement, or inspiration.

Daily attendance at services fluctuated very little. The Friday night Bible study was also well attended as Gary Petty, aided by a PowerPoint presentation, provided a high-level overview of what we understand about prophecy and how it differs from some of the ideas that are surfacing in the world today.

The special music was delightful, with a choir composed of adults and teens, as well as several instrumental pieces, a children's choir and several vocal solos to round out uplifting and inspiring special music selections.

The youth education instructors put a huge effort into creating a memorable activity for the children. The "Armor of God" was so durable and impressive we let the children march into the hall prior to the start of services, wearing their armor. It gave the children a great sense of accomplishment as they were recognized for their hard work.

One of the most talked about activities of the Feast was an outing at the Adirondack Extreme Adventure Course. An obstacle course elevated 10 to 60 feet off the ground with zip lines, suspended bridges, cargo nets, etc., suspended between the tree tops!

The family dance on Saturday night had a wide variety of music for all ages and a relaxing atmosphere for everyone to fellowship, rejoice and reflect upon the Feast. We can be thankful to God for His blessing upon the Feast in Lake George. It truly was one of most wonderful, joyful atmospheres I have ever experienced at the Feast.

*Len Martin*

## Panama City Beach, Florida

"I loved the Feast in Panama City Beach. It was the best ever in my 16 years of Feast attendance. The sermons and sermonettes were to me some of the best ever. Do you happen to know if PCB will be sending and updating the sermons

onto the UCG member's website? I would like to listen to many of them again on my mp3 player, and I have friends who would also, one of whom is not in the Church. Thanks for all you did to make this a great Feast!"

A total of 1,009 registered for the 2012 Feast of Tabernacles in Panama City Beach, Florida. Our attendances for the Feast exceeded the number registered for seven of the 10 services, and the other services showed higher than normal averages. On Sunday evening, we had a high attendance for the evening service, just 239 short of the overall registered number. On Monday, the first Holy Day of the Feast, a dark cloudy sky poured down heavy rains that were accompanied by strong winds, yet the brethren braved the weather to register the highest tally for the entire Feast: 1,135. From then on, attendance numbers remained high, surpassed only by the brethren's rejoicing and peacefulness. With 1,200 chairs set up in the Edgewater Grand Ballroom, it looked like a fullhouse every day.

All the Feast messages were encouraging. The brethren responded to the messages with rapt attention. All of the activities were well attended, including the teen and young adults hospitality get-togethers, the teen and the family dances and the family activity. The Myers brothers Good Works concert was a Feast highlight.

Our family day activity was held at Rock-it! Lanes, and 398 took good advantage of bowling, skating, and pool tables, including specially-prepared kosher pizza at CC's Pizza. Captain Jack's Buffet hosted 179 seniors who enjoyed a sumptuous array of kosher entrees and a delectable variety of vegetables and tasty desserts.

If you've ever thought about coming to this Emerald Coast Paradise, now is the time to prepare for the 2013 Feast of Tabernacles in balmy Panama City Beach. Here the colorful emerald green water pleasingly contrasts with the sugar white sands and, in addition, provides happy Feastgoers with blazing orange sunsets that slowly disappear below a beautiful blue-water horizon.

We hope to see you all at next year's Feast in Panama City Beach, 2013!

*Jerald Aust*

## New Braunfels, Texas

Over 400 attendees gathered in New Braunfels, Texas, for a first-time-ever Feast location sponsored by the United Church of God. New Braunfels, just north of San Antonio, provided a great civic center meeting facility and convenient location for daily Church services and social activities. An added bonus is that many were able to stay in condos or homes.

The sermons and sermonettes were inspired, balanced, and provided a vision of our future. Services were also accompanied daily by a great choir and talented special music. The roomy civic center was conducive for fellowship both before and afterwards. The family dance combined with a group dinner was also at the civic center. So was the senior citizen luncheon, which had a number of entertainers perform. Young girls doing card tricks, singers, musicians and comedy routines kept the event lively. Nearly 75 percent attended a group luncheon between services on the Eighth Day for one more opportunity of fellowship.

The teens did a bowling activity while a combination of families and singles took a dinner boat/barge cruise along the historic downtown San Antonio Riverwalk. The San Antonio area and New Braunfels provide ample recreational activities. Many members hosted smaller groups and dinners in their condos and homes. Weather was warm nearly every day, and some even tubed and rafted down the Gaudalupe River and Comal Canal.

For a first-year site the success was due to so many willing to volunteer to help others at the last minute. New Braunfels will remain a popular Feast site for 2013 and 2014.

*Charles Melear*

## Steamboat Springs, Colorado

God's blessing was evident at this beautiful Feast site. Many men and women contributed in serving each other. The auditorium and ushering crew, as well as the public address staff, did a marvelous job in preparing the hall for the daily services.

Elders, deacons and long-time Church members provided the sermonettes, Bible studies and sermons. The messages were a blend of acknowledging the seriousness of the times that we're in as well as giving inspiring words of hope and encouragement regarding God's coming Kingdom.

It was a very youth-friendly Feast. We were blessed to have youth educational classes on two days of the Feast. We also had a teen Bible study. The theme for these studies was based on the Armor of God, described on Ephesians 6:10-18.

The children's choir performed on Friday, and on the weekly Sabbath the preteens marched onto the stage to show their "Armor of God" uniforms they created based on Ephesians 6.

Members purchased stuffed animals for the children, and on Friday children were allowed to take one toy per child. The generosity of Christ's brethren was quite evident, as we were able to donate

three sackfuls of stuffed animals to the pediatrics wing at the local hospital. A member family also hosted a picnic in the park for the very young preteens.

Attendance had a high of 327 and an average of 296, which was more than the 260 who registered.

We owe a big thank you to the parents who stepped in to make the Feast successful for the 18 or so teenagers. Early in the Feast, a homework session was offered and people with math, computer science and biology backgrounds helped the teens get a lot of their school work finished.

On Friday, there was a pizza picnic at the pool. It was a bit chilly, so much time was warming up in the whirlpool, but the last half was spent playing games. The band of 18 stayed together and had a very active game of sharks vs. dolphins at the end of the pool party.

Parents also hosted 12 preteens in a pajama party and board game night. Milkshakes and popcorn disappeared quickly while they played Monopoly and other games.

Randy and Kay Schreiber hosted 78 members in an interactive sampler marriage enrichment workshop entitled "Differences That Unite," based upon a module from the UCG Marriage Seminar Program. The theme was how to better understand and appreciate differences within marriage and within the Church. It was emphasized that God's intent is that we use the varied qualities in another person to actually enhance relationships. Participants divided into "personality types," and attempted to solve some "people problems" in the Millennium.

I wish I had the space to mention the names of all the people who served here, but then again, I would be listing every individual who attended, as all served in some way at this Feast!

*Vince Szymkowiak*

## Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

This year in the Wisconsin Dells we celebrated 40 continuous years as a location God has placed His name for the Feast of Tabernacles. More than 900 members of God's family listened to godly messages, were inspired by uplifting music and enjoyed the fall colors and temperatures that are the Wisconsin Dells. This year the schedule was expanded and included additional Bible studies, a special family dance with commemorative glasses and mugs given out to all who attended, an energetic teen dance, teen homework/study sessions, a very well received senior luncheon and a variety show.

High attendance was 919 on the weekly Sabbath with the average attendance for the week of 837. The Dells has a tradition of providing large cards for everyone to



sign for those members who could not make it to the Feast; a special treat for those who are forced to miss out on the wonderful Feast experience. Food items as well as cash were again donated to a local food bank, and an arts and crafts display of members' works were available for all to enjoy. The whole week was very family oriented, contributing to the joy of all who attended.

The Feast of Tabernacles in Wisconsin Dells is always inspiring, and we invite you to come next year to keep God's Holy Days with us in the Dells!

*Dan Dowd*

## U.S.A. Satellite Sites

### Big Sandy, Texas

Big Sandy experienced a highly successful Feast with a great deal of participation and cooperation from the attending brethren. We have our own building here in East Texas, and there was a high attendance of 76 on the first Holy Day. Our local group provided an hour morning "kaffee klatch" (coffee and conversation), on seven days. We also had six luncheons together. Some were catered and some were provided by brethren. In addition, there was a pizza party with games and a bunco party. Many contributed to a food drive that was donated to a local food pantry.

The intended schedule was to have three local services with live speakers. However, the webcast we planned to watch was unacceptable for the first part of the Feast, so we improvised the schedule, ending up with five local services. This included three sermonettes, three split sermons and three sermons. We had two piano players and a song leader. We sang hymns locally.

Part way through the Feast, the webcast improved, and we ended up with three services via webcast from the Wisconsin Dells. Many positive comments were heard about the quality of the messages.

We sang most of the hymns locally and had our own special music. We had lovely piano solos and also a vocal solo. On two occasions we had a three-generation performance—a 91-year-old grandmother on the piano, her son playing guitar once and bells once, and her grandson playing the violin. We were able to play the Feast film DVD locally. We appreciated the message.

This year there was increased participation from the attendees.

The brethren were eager to help and did so in a spirit of peace and cooperation. Since the site is so small we had an opportunity to get to know each other on a more personal basis.

*Howard and Sarah Baker*

### Bigfork, Montana

Those of us at Bigfork were delighted to rejoice in such a beautiful millennial setting. The favorable autumn weather showcased the deciduous colors of vermilion, orange and browns interspersed with the Tamaracks exchanging their normally green needles for the vivid yellows of pre-winter barrenness. All this in a well groomed facility perched on a sloping hill above an inviting, azure lake.

As beautiful as this pastoral setting is, the most splendorous experience was being part of the dedicated and Spirit-led brethren who went above and beyond to ensure the flow of the Feast remained positive, upbeat and a place of worship with our wonderful Father and the Christ.

As a restricted site we neared maximum capacity with a high of 154 and a steady attendance of between 141 and 149 throughout the rest of the Feast. The speaking opportunities were well filled by the elders and dedicated members.

The opening Sabbath of the festival was launched with a message by festival coordinator Glen White, followed the next day with a message by Dan Deininger. The activities were opened with the family day. Families and children participated in races, piñata, face painting, a variety of contests and archery. Before enjoying a full steak dinner sponsored by the Bozeman brethren, a zipline was available to the hardy from ages 10 to 88. After a careening ride over a water inlet and safely returning to the launch area, all were ready to eat and fellowship.

The following day was the annual afternoon and evening set aside for Feastgoers to visit one of the world's most scenic parks—Glacier National Park to the north, which sits along the U.S.-Canadian border.

After services the following day, preparations got underway for the family dance and sock hop sponsored by the Missoula brethren and volunteers. The dance was lively, well attended, and the social fellowship was appreciated by all.

Friday was a full day with two split sermons in the a.m. from elders Jack Sturgis and Steve Koon, then an opportunity for the adventurous to tackle the ropes

course while 25 ladies attended a high tea in the artistic community of Bigfork. A church Bible study rounded out the activities and gave us focus entering the weekly Sabbath. The message of "Tribe Tracking" was presented by Randy Stiver. He and family traveled to Canmore for the first half of the Feast and then shared the rest of the eight days with us in Bigfork.

Sabbath was fully scheduled with an a.m. service presented by Mr. Stiver, an afternoon young adult study and a fully attended family bowling outing in nearby Bigfork.

Sunday was the preparation day for the Eighth Day festival. After the a.m. sermon by Mr. Deininger, the ladies took advantage of the free afternoon to enjoy another high tea (an additional group of 26 ladies).

Other highlights of the Feast were the Feast film, the exceptional stage decorations and the children's choirs. The festival booklets were appreciated by the families with smaller children. The teens remained a solidified group throughout the Feast and helped create a most pleasant environment.

We cannot overstate our gratitude for the dedicated and converted brethren that supplied their positive contribution within their ability to give. I feel God was well pleased with your service.

*Glen White*

### Phoenix, Arizona

The 183 brethren attending the Phoenix satellite Feast site were not disappointed. Even before the moment the sun went down on Sunday evening God's presence was evident. Though there was no opening night service because of the facility, many were gathered together in private homes and hotels in the area.

The first day began with a beautifully set hospitality hour, which included gourmet snacks and beverages. The delectable treats awaited all who wished to indulge every day of the Feast except on the Sabbath and Eighth Day. The day started with a sermonette that reminded everyone that the word "satellite" doesn't mean we were not at God's Feast of Tabernacles. Though no theme was planned, it was obvious God had other plans. The messages were focused on the blessings of the Kingdom for all mankind, and taking the focus off self and putting it on serving our God and His goals.

On Wednesday, Don Hooser visited and spoke on God's government of prosperity. It was also family day, a time to put on our

Arizona cowboy. The evening was spent at a nearby venue called the Rockin' R Ranch. Everyone enjoyed eating barbecue, watching a Western stage show and singing along to cowboy songs. It was a boots-and-hat good time, and 103 people attended. A small alternate event held at Organ Stop Pizza, said to be the largest and best organ in the world, was attended by 21 people.

On day four, there was a catered senior dinner with fellowship and games. Our oldest attendee, Cathern Poetz was also acknowledged. Many attendees served that day—and every day for that matter. The running line was, "If you didn't watch out, you'd be run over by someone serving."

The following day was youth day and we had 15 little darlings in the children's choir. Later that day many of the kids enjoyed a local trampoline venue. Joe Horchak visited on day seven to speak to the visualization of the Kingdom. He left us all wanting more. When the Eighth Day came the 13-member choir sang twice, and Mike Miller's Feast sermon left us all uplifted and eager to be better.

At the end of the day, we all knew that this "satellite" site was indeed God's Feast site, and many left saying they couldn't wait for next year.

*Lorelei Nettles*

## Lusaka, Zambia

The spirits of the 287 members at the Feast in Zambia had a fantastic spirit of love and zeal for the Feast. With services and activities every day, everyone kept busy learning the Word of God. On Friday, Wilson Nkoma and I baptized 13 new members. In addition 33 members signed up for anointing. Being scattered in different parts of the country makes it difficult for the ministry to get to the various villages where members reside. About 130 members found it impossible to attend because of cost or unavailability of transportation. Hopefully they can be helped next year to this once-a-year family gathering for God's Feast.

Halfway through the Feast Michelle and I left Malawi for Zambia. We arrived at the Lusaka campground at about 10:00 p.m. As most know, United had purchased land and buildings for the Feast a couple years before, but these had been claimed by another church group. Since nearly all the members stayed with UCG, the other property sat vacant with no one keeping the

Feast there. We still await a court ruling to prove we are the United Church of God and the return of our property.

Family day saw races and activities for all ages. Races, jump rope contests and a tug-of-war were just some of the activities. Gifts brought from the U.S. were given to the children. The next day saw the blessing of over 30 children. The service was inspiring as each child was held and given a special request for God's protection, both physically and spiritually as they grow in the knowledge of God. Just as the brethren we visited with during the first half of the Feast in Malawi, the brethren in Zambia look forward to when Christ rules on the earth during the Millennium. We pray for the day that they can all make it to the Feast every year.

*Aaron Dean*

## Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Up to 57 brethren traveled to the tourist resort town of Victoria Falls to observe the Feast of Tabernacles this year.

The town is about one kilometer from the magnificent Victoria Falls—the world's largest waterfall. This is a World Heritage site and one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World.

Grant Chick from Australia was the guest and main speaker for the first half of the Feast. Mr. Chick was accompanied by his wife Kim, two sons, and two friends, for a total of six in his party!

We also had another Australian family, Breen and Fiona Schipke and their 14 year old son for the entire Feast period. From neighboring Zambia we had two ladies and their two children. These international visitors are always welcome and appreciated.

Sermon subjects included lessons from Christ's parables of the Kingdom of God, the coming times of refreshing and restoration and preparing now for the coming famine of hearing the Word of God.

Activities included a family day social with ball games, a BBQ lunch, a group tour of the falls and a boat cruise on the Zambezi River.

Three new members were baptized, namely Ocean Mawadze, Sarudzai Muzvimbe and Michael Banda. Four little children were also blessed.

Over all, this was an inspiring and spiritually refreshing Feast.

*Mike Mukarati*

# Please see pages 11-14 for Feast photos from around the world



# Announcements



**Michael Roland Falardeau**

## Births

**Joel and Susan Falardeau** (Fike) are very happy to announce the birth of their first child, **Michael Roland Falardeau**, born on Mar. 11, 2012. His grandparents are **Michael and Michelle Grovak**, who attend the West Lafayette congregation and **Michael and Nancy Fike**, who attend the Tampa congregation. After being born a month early at 6 lbs., 2 oz., Michael quickly caught up and now weighs 17 lbs. at 6 months.

**Brian and Carole Hoselton** of the Fulton, Missouri, congregation are happy to announce the birth of their third child, **Faith Eva Ann Hoselton**. She was born on May 30, 2012, weighed 6lb., 3oz., and was 19 1/2 inches long. After spending almost seven weeks in the hospital Faith is now home with her two big brothers **Max and Jack**. We are very happy to have her home and very thankful for God's healing in her life!

## Obituaries

**Genevieve Ellen Rose Campbell** was born in 1914 near Brookville, Indiana, and died on Aug. 8, 2012. She was blessed with good health for most of her 97 years. She often would remark how she never believed she would live well into her 90s. She attended Indiana Central College in Indianapolis for one year and one year at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Genevieve received a teaching certificate and taught for two years in Indiana. Genevieve and Harold Campbell were married in 1935 and were blessed with three sons. They moved to Idaho in 1951 where they farmed near Jerome. Genevieve was baptized in their farm canal in August 1974.

She enjoyed her family, gardening, crocheting and traveling. Her travels included trips to Hawaii, Australia, New Zealand, plus many states in America. She accompanied hymns at Sabbath services for many years at the Twin Falls, Idaho, congregation. She faithfully attended Sabbath services well into her 90s if her health allowed it. Brethren at services appreciated her keen sense of humor and the interesting stories she shared about her many experiences. Genevieve will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her. Wil Berg and Steve Nutzman officiated at her funeral.

**Marlene (Cupoli) McCready**, 55, of Hill-



**Faith Eva Ann Hoselton**

iard, Ohio, passed away early Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2012, after a two-year battle with cancer. She was an active member of the Columbus, Ohio, congregation of the United Church of God where she published the church bulletin and taught children's classes, as well as coordinated numerous social events. Baptized in 1981, she served God faithfully for over 30 years in any capacity she could. She was recently honored for 20 years of service in doing the local church bulletin. As a child, she and her family were members of the original Columbus congregation when it began in 1965.

Marlene was employed with Ashland Inc. as an administrative assistant for over 30 years. She was much noted by co-workers over the decades for her dedication, helpfulness, sweet personality and bright smile. Dedicated to God's way of life, she strove to set a good example to everyone.

She enjoyed working with children, spending time with family and friends, listening to ABC class recordings, gardening, and traveling—especially for the Feast of Tabernacles.

She leaves behind her loving husband of 22 years, James McCready; her sister Melinda Hardwick; brothers Daniel and Joseph Cupoli. She was preceded in death by parents Ben and Martha Cupoli.

**Hoy Poole** of the Greensboro, North Carolina, church died on Aug. 17, 2012, at the age of 80. Hoy was born Dec. 30, 1931, on a family farm located near Troy, North Carolina. After high school he served in the U. S. Navy for four years. He married



**Hoy Poole**



**Genevieve Campbell**

his wife Peggy on May 25, 1958, a marriage that lasted over 54 years. He and Peggy had three children: Pearl Wallace, Scott Poole and Stanley Poole. They also had three grandchildren. Hoy had several jobs in his life: working in farming, raising chickens and making boots in a factory.

Hoy and Peggy were baptized in March of 1966, and they attended the Greensboro church. Later in 1995 they attended the United Church of God congregation in Asheboro. Due to health problems they have not been able to attend services for the last five or six years, but they have been connected to the church service with telephone hook-up.

Hoy enjoyed gardening and raising cattle. He also loved to play the guitar, banjo and violin. People enjoyed his friendly manner and homespun sense of humor. He enjoyed reading the Bible, sometimes spending hours reading it and discovering things he had not noticed before.

There were around 200 family members and friends present at the graveside service on Aug. 18, 2012. Hoy will be greatly missed by his wife and other family members and friends. It is comforting to know that he is sleeping peacefully until his resurrection from the dead.

**Imaday Augusta Arenz Veit (Tina)**, of the Port St. Lucie, Florida, congregation passed away Aug. 21, 2012, three months after suffering a stroke in May. She was 78 years old.

Her life was a full one, with all the pleasures of a large growing family, a loving



**Imaday (Tina) Veit**



**Marlene McCready**

husband and being surrounded by grandchildren who thought the world of her. She was preceded in death by her husband, John Paul Veit, in 1995, and by two brothers and one sister.

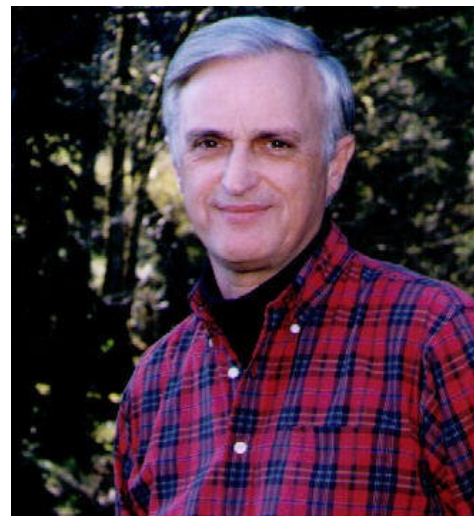
She is survived by four daughters: Jody (and Tom) Adams of Four Oaks, North Carolina; Doreen Harp of Port St. Lucie, Florida; Christine (and Pride) Johnson of Goldsboro, North Carolina; and Laura (and John) Zarnits of Port St. Lucie, Florida; 11 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; and two brothers.

Tina was a member of United Church of God in her later years, after beginning attending the Radio Church of God in 1967 and being baptized in 1968. She attended the church in Baltimore, Maryland, until she moved to Port St. Lucie, Florida, and attended there and in the West Palm Beach church. She attended church services until failing health prevented it.

In April 2012, her daughters moved her to North Carolina. After her death four months later, her celebration of life service was held in Palm City, Florida, on Aug. 26, with her four girls and most of her grandchildren in attendance. Her grandchildren who were not able to attend will also miss her dearly, as will all of her family.

**Gary Werings**, a member of the Portland, Oregon, congregation, died at home on May 16, 2012. He was preceded in death by his sister Joanne in 1979, his father Marvin in 1984, and his mother Rosalie in 2001.

Prior to being called into the Church,



**Gary Werings**



Gary served as a medic in the Vietnam War. Following his military service he attended Ambassador College in Pasadena, where he met and later married Gloria Aukland in 1976. He graduated from Ambassador in 1979.

Gary was employed by the Worldwide Church of God in the television department for many years as a cameraman. From 1980 to 1995 he traveled on domestic and international trips as videographer for the *World Tomorrow* program. He also traveled with Herbert Armstrong and later Joseph Tkach.

During the last 17 years he took on a different dimension in life, owning and operating the farm where he grew up in Oregon. Cattle, hay, trees, gardening and landscaping were a few of the things that kept him active.

As a man of honor, dignity and courage, Gary will be missed by friends, family and especially his wife of 36 years.

**Dr. Clint Zimmerman** died peacefully on Aug. 28, 2012, at the age of 92 in Carpinteria, California. He had been living with his daughter Kamie Mulroy for the last 15

months.

Prior to his move to California he had lived in Sun City, Arizona, since 1994 when he retired from the Worldwide Church of God. He was preceded in death by his wife "Bertie" who died in 1997.

His careers started in 1936 when he moved to Chicago and entered the National School of Chiropractic. He graduated in 1941 at age 21 with two doctorates: chiropractic and non-invasive medicine. He was then awarded an appointment to Kings Point Academy for merchant mariners. After completing his nautical engineering degree he served out his tour as an officer in the merchant marines, serving in the Pacific and Atlantic theaters during World War II.

Clint and Bertie were married on Jan. 1, 1946, and had three children: Clint II, known as "Chuck," Kamie, and Susan. They were born to the couple in Torrington, Wyoming, where "Dr. Z" was a chiropractor.

He was baptized into the Radio Church of God in 1954, and in 1957 he moved the family to Pasadena, California, so he could attend Ambassador College. At his ordi-



**Clint Zimmerman**

nation and graduation in 1960 he was the department head for the Letter Answering Department, where Mr. Armstrong's mail and other general Bible questions were answered.

In following years while working in Pasadena he also served as church pastor

in Bakersfield and Fontana, California. Clint and Bertie were then sent to pastor in Colorado Springs and Pueblo, Colorado, and then back to California serving in the headquarters congregations.

Clint is survived by his three children, Clint II (Chuck) and wife Joy; Kamie and husband Tom Mulroy; and Susan Webber; six grandchildren, Clint III and wife Annette; Courtney Miller and husband Jim; Chelsea Moehling and husband Anthony; Michael Mulroy; Matthew Mulroy; and Logan Webber; and four great-grandchildren, Aiden and Avren Zimmerman; and Amelia and Maggie Miller.

#### **Announcements:**

Members are welcome to submit announcements of the births, engagements, weddings, significant anniversaries (25, 40, 50, 60, etc.) and obituaries in their families. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Most items are 50 to 100 words and should not exceed 250 words. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give them to your local pastor** to forward to *United News*.

## Local Church **UPDATES**



Ladies at the women's Portland retreat making fleece blankets for Project Linus.

### **Huge Attendance at Portland Women's Retreat**

Record numbers attended the ladies' retreat at the Canby Grove Conference Center in Canby, Oregon, Feb. 24-26, 2012. We had 66 overnight guests and 12 day-only attendees as we shared, laughed and feasted our way through the long weekend. One woman even came all the way from Vancouver, B.C., to attend! The theme this year was "Anchors in the Storm," which was appropriate given the trials our nation and we as individuals regularly face. A few arrived early on Thursday and

spent the unscheduled day exploring the area, shopping or visiting. Most of the rest of the attendees arrived Friday afternoon and evening. There was plenty of time for catching up in the common areas and in rooms, as well as opportunity for some friendly competition in bidding on the first of four silent auction tables that included many beautiful handcrafts and luxury items like on-site manicures. The Sabbath began with a nice meal in the dining hall, and then we gathered in the meeting room overlooking the river to hear Sharon Browning sing "Blessings" before Dyanne Dick provided the opening session on staying mentally anchored to the Word of God during



A packed audience at the Portland Women's Retreat.

the stormy trials of life.

The next morning dawned unexpectedly sunny as we trooped to the dining hall for a nice breakfast. There was plenty of time to eat together and get to know others better as we deepened our family bonds. We assembled in the sunlit river view meeting room once again for a Sabbath service of split sermons. John Cafourek spoke on the tenacity barnacles show in holding on to the rocks and objects that anchor them and keep them safe and how we must similarly cling to the anchors God provides. Bob Dick discussed the moments when we need to wait on God to provide direction in our lives rather than stumbling forward on our own. The special music was a ladies' ensemble that beautifully sang "You'll Never Walk Alone" and "You Raise Me Up."

After an enjoyable lunch, we reassembled to hear Karen Walker speak on how to calm our anxious hearts. She generously distributed gratitude journals to every attendee with a handwrit-

ten note in each. Her sister, Lana Cole, sang a powerful rendition of the song "What Faith Can Do" before we got a chance to hear the panel presenters speak. Marilyn Friend, Cheryl Reeves, Pilar Warren and Marsha Schneider shared stories from their lives where they experienced the storms of life and how God helped them through. For many, the moving personal accounts were a highlight of the weekend as we were reminded that none of us are alone in our struggles.

Following dinner, the energy picked up as we began our service project: making fleece blankets to donate to Project Linus, which distributes the blankets to underprivileged children. The hard working group made 103 blankets while playing a getting-to-know-you game and while some sang hymns. There were also quite a few pajama-clad participants and three more silent auction tables brought out the good-natured competition in many of the ladies. All together, the auctions brought in a total of \$556 for the Good Works program.

On Sunday morning, we heard the two final presentations. Patty Sexton spoke on how to support aging parents as well as how to age gracefully and wisely. And Becky Hornor gave a presentation on the "Love Languages" book by Gary Chapman. The weekend wrapped up with a delicious and filling brunch, giving us one more opportunity to enjoy each other's company over a meal. Then it was time to head back home filled with good memories and anticipation for next year's retreat. The hard work of many diligent and





The Tucson seniors dinner.

talented women and men provided us with a wonderful and rejuvenating weekend of friendship and fun.

We hope you'll join us next year from Feb. 22-24, 2013, as we once again get together at the Canby Grove Conference Center. The theme for the weekend is "A Word Fitly Spoken," taken

from Proverbs 25:11. The sessions and church service are designed to teach participants how to apply God's Word and use various tools to master crucial conversations and will include Dyanne Dick, Bob Dick, Dennis Luker, LeeAnn Luker, Sandy Cafourek and Becky Hornor as presenters. Additional panel

presenters will discuss communication challenges and solutions. The service project will once again be the blankets for Project Linus. Early bird registration, which includes a discount, is due by Dec. 15, 2012. The final registration deadline is Jan. 31, 2013. Day-only attendance options are also available. For more information, e-mail Ruby Scruggs at [scruggsjr@canby.com](mailto:scruggsjr@canby.com). See you there!

*Debbie Werner*

## Tucson Members Honor Seniors With Special Dinner and Entertainment

Local church members of senior age status in Tucson and Sierra Vista, Arizona, were invited to attend a special event planned for them on the Sabbath of Aug. 18. In their honor, a formal dinner was served to them by the "younger" members, accompanied by six pieces of special music.

Tables were arrayed with fine china (thanks to several ladies) and fresh flowers. The menu consisted of a three course meal including a chicken or

steak entree grilled fresh to personal preference. Dinner guests were also treated to wine, which was made and donated by a local member. Everyone from the children to the seniors was a part of this service activity; which was a first of its type for the congregation.

Everyone's involvement and serving attitude helped to make this event successful, and expressions of gratitude were heard all around. One couple expressed, "It was very good, and we enjoyed ourselves immensely." Another guest summed it up this way: "It was first class all the way, and how we enjoyed it! You young people 'under 60' did a great job, which will live in my memory forever."

*Cindy Gatlin*

**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 photographs with captions. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Include the author's and photographer's names and your phone number. Please double-check the spelling of names. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give the material to your local pastor** to forward to *United News*.

# Preteen Camp Tomahawk

Nathan Bedford State Park, Tennessee

July 15-18

by Jason Nitzberg

Water breaks. Air conditioning. Trusted friends. These were things that the campers and staff were really thankful for in the hotter-and-more-humid-than-usual weather we had at the four-day Camp Tomahawk in the Nathan Bedford State Park of Tennessee in the third week of July. And maybe it was thanks to the heat that helped make this year the calmest we have ever had in the nine years of this camp, which is situated two hours west of Nashville. There is no doubt God was involved—we asked everyone to pray that God would keep the rain away—and besides some liquid sunshine that lasted 20 minutes on day three, the water in the sky was held back until after we checked everyone out and finished our Italian-dress-up dinner the last night. And then it poured like crazy. God is good!

We made sure that our 43 campers, ages 6-12, were well hydrated and had a wonderfully enjoyable and safe experience. The team of staff, which consisted of about 40 teens, young adults, mothers, fathers and grandparents even came up with a self-organized pool monitoring rotation at the super-fun lazy river. Yes, these same staff did perpetuate some silly antics like squirting cold water on people as they floated by, but the smiles showed that everyone really enjoyed their time.

The theme for this year's camp was about service, and there were several ways that was shown. The littlest girls learned how to serve drink, napkins and a snack at a very pink tea party. The littlest boys learned with the help of a Lego set that, as one young camper put it, "There is no way we

can build the car without everyone working together." The teens came up with a great way to show the older kids how to help each other through leading their blindfolded fellow camper through a teen-designed obstacle course. "But whoever desires to be great among you, let him be your servant," came to mind (Matthew 20:26).

So although camp had tropical leanings, it led the kids to a thought process that fit perfectly into the then-upcoming festival season, because there are a lot of service opportunities there, too. We at Camp Tomahawk hope you enjoyed your Feast and that it was as spiritually refreshing as camp was this summer. **UN**



The littlest girls being silly (with the camp's teepee in the background).



Left: the girls learning how to make fire starters. Right: two campers making their "happy hot dog women."



Continued from page 1

will have the facility all day Sunday and will have access to their indoor pool, basketball and volleyball courts, racquetball courts, bowling alley, sauna, hot tub and steam rooms. In addition Club Green Meadows has facilities for movies and an on-site café and snack bar.

Monday it is back to the Hilton Hotel for a day of educational seminars aimed at all age groups with additional social activities at the Hilton that evening.

Last year's ski day was such a success that we will again spend Tuesday skiing, tubing, sledding or just enjoying the winter landscape at beautiful Mount Hood. Accommodations for skiers will be at the Lodges at Salmon River Meadows. If you have questions e-mail us at [NWWeekend@gmail.com](mailto:NWWeekend@gmail.com) or find us on Facebook by searching for [nwwweekend](http://nwwweekend.org). More details will be available soon at <http://nww.ucgpdx.org>.

*Bob Dick*

## Winter Family Weekend to Include Art Expo, New Sports This Year

The annual Winter Family Weekend, which will take place on Dec. 21-25, 2012, at the Great Wolf Lodge in Mason, Ohio, will feature additional activities for everyone to enjoy. New events will be a visual arts expo, a performing arts evening and ultimate Frisbee as a new sport this year. The cost to stay at the Great Wolf Lodge will be \$112.19 per night, including all taxes and fees. Two other nearby hotels will also be available to stay in—the Kings Island Resort across the street from the Great Wolf Lodge, for \$60.75 per night, and Comfort Inn and Suites, about a mile away, for \$66.38 per night. To register for activities, such as sports, dances, seminars, karaoke and more, visit <http://wfw.ucg.org> and click the button that says "Register Online!"

Instead of reserving your room via the Church website and paying in advance like last year, make your reservation directly with the hotel this year. For Great Wolf Reservations, call 1-800-913-9653 and tell them you are with United Church of God for the Winter Family Weekend. Or go online to [www.greatwolf.com/mason/waterpark](http://www.greatwolf.com/mason/waterpark), and at the prompt, enter promo code 1212WINT.

To reserve at the King's Island Resort, call 513-398-0115. To reserve at Comfort Inn and Suites, which includes



This year's Winter Family Weekend will have a teen dance, young adult dance and adult dance. There will be new activities to get even more people involved!

breakfast as part of the price, call 513-336-9000. Mention UCG and the Winter Family Weekend for both places while reserving.

All seminars, Sabbath services, family night and many activities will be held at Great Wolf Lodge in Mason.

Not all are sports enthusiasts, so in addition to seminars on Sunday and Monday, we will also have an opportunity for those talented in the arts to display or perform their talents. The expo for visual arts will take place all day on Sunday and Monday, and the performance arts show will be on Sunday evening, which is family night. Please contact Amy Stephens via e-mail about your talents and what your needs for displaying or performing them at [WFW@fuse.net](mailto:WFW@fuse.net). One change this year is a "Welcome to Ambassador" get-together, which will be open to all people as well as Ambassador graduates. It will be a chance for graduates to reunite as well as fellowship with everybody. Information about ABC will be available for who-



Winter camp includes activities such as horseback riding, tubing and fireside chats.

ever is interested.

The seminars will be based on the theme "Our Incredible Future," which allows room for planning for the immediate, medium and long-term goals. A council of elders question and answer session is scheduled as well.

Last year was a remarkable success and with the experience we gained, we expect this year's to be much improved. Be sure to make your reservations so you can enjoy the Winter Family Weekend!

For all information, schedules and any updates, please visit <http://wfw.ucg.org>.

*Gary Antion and Roy Holladay*

## Apply to Winter Camp by Dec. 1 for an Incredible Time

Winter camp is just around the corner, and it's time to get your applications in! Join us in Wisconsin from December 24-30 at the beautiful Camp Timber-lee facility, located on 650 acres of rolling hills and beautiful lakes in the Kettle Murrain region of south-eastern Wisconsin.

We encourage you to come spend quality time with like-minded teens and adults (young and old) growing in God's way through participating in a variety of activities. This year we will once again have tubing/tobogganing, broomball, winter field sports, bank basketball, cross-country skiing, winter survival, dance and team building along with interactive Bible classes, fireside chats and Christian living classes. New to this year's schedule are a creation experience, amazing race (winter style), leather craft and an animal encounter. This year's schedule also includes downtime and additional fellowship time in a game room.

So get your application in today and be part of this amazing experience! Staff application deadline is Nov. 15, and camper application deadline is Dec. 1. Go to <http://uyc.ucg.org/camp/>

winter-camp for more information and to start the application process.

*Dan Dowd*

## Save the Date: Twin Cities 50th Anniversary

On the Feast of Trumpets next year, Thursday, Sept. 5, 2013, the United Church of God in the Twin Cities will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of a Church of God congregation in Minnesota.

A number of festive events are in the early planning stages, including a Trumpets-eve reception, a slide show of the history of the Church in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, a luncheon between services on the Holy Day and a commemorative dinner to conclude the Feast of Trumpets celebration.

A suitable venue is being sought to accommodate the anticipated 250-300 attendees, and a website and Facebook page are in development.

Plan now to attend by saving the date and watching for further updates in ensuing *United News* posts.

*Brian Shaw*

## Update on Education Team's Fruitful Progress

Feast booklets for the youth of United were produced this year and distributed through pastors. Kids were able to attend youth classes at the Feast for the first time in several years at sites where the facilities could accommodate them.

Online ABC is being developed for brethren to take some classes. General epistles and minor prophets are initially being prepared with others to follow on "Moodle," an Internet teaching tool. Marriage seminars have been held in several cities by Frank McCrady and Randy and Kay Schreiber. By all accounts, these have been well received. At the Feast there was a general marriage seminar held by the Schreibers in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, with a good sized audience.

Focused education featured a pilot program at Branson. Merna Leisure-Eppick presented information about intervention and recovery in situations involving alcohol and addictions. More than 80 people attended. Gary Antion presented a session on the dynamics of aging, which was attended by 112 of the Feastgoers. The top attendance represented nearly one in five of those attending the Feast. The mood and gratitude of those who attended gave us the impetus to want to put in motion more of these events for the Feast in 2013. We will begin planning on doing several more at our Feast sites next fall.

Thanks to all of the education task



force and to our president, Dennis Luker, for having the foresight to encourage and execute these important, beneficial events for the brethren of God's Church.

Gary Antion

# 50th COG Anniversary and Family Dance Weekend Celebration in Cincinnati Scheduled for Early March

The Cincinnati East Church is planning a 50th anniversary celebration of the Cincinnati Church of God on Sabbath, March 2, in combination with the family dance weekend.

## Background of the Beginnings

The Cincinnati Church of God began on Feb. 23, 1963, in the Winton Place Vets Hall on Winton Road with Carn Catherwood as the first pastor and an attendance of 191. In just one year, attendance grew to 550! Early pastors were (in order) Carn Catherwood, followed by Dick Ames, David Albert,

Keith Thomas and Ed Smith. Spokesman's Club began Nov. 18, 1962, several months before the church even began. The congregation in Lexington, Kentucky, began March 7, 1964, with another starting in Dayton, Ohio, on Feb. 27, 1965, with many brethren in attendance from the first Cincinnati service.

## Schedule of Events

We will kick off the celebration with a Bible study Friday night at 7:00 p.m. at the home office, with a dessert social to follow. Sabbath services will be held at 2:00 p.m. at Receptions Eastgate (4450 Eastgate South Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45245) with a finger food reception to follow. We will be showing a PowerPoint presentation with pictures from the last 50 years, so anyone wishing to contribute please send photos to [cincinnati50th@gmail.com](mailto:cincinnati50th@gmail.com). Please provide a brief description and date with each photo. That evening, a family dance will be held at Receptions from 7:30-11:00 p.m. with Randy Curran as our DJ. The attire for the evening is dressy Sabbath to formal wear. Snacks and soft drinks will be provided, and a cash bar will be available for those 21 and older. We will be taking a \$5 per person or \$15



Cincinnati Winter Dance 2008. Plan to come to the 2013 winter dance for a 50th anniversary celebration of the Church of God in Cincinnati and dance, the weekend of March 2.

max. per family donation at the door for the dance. We have special rates for that weekend with the Holiday Inn Eastgate (4501 Eastgate Blvd., Cincinnati, OH 45255). They are offering \$75 per night plus tax with a full breakfast included. Attendees will need to call the Holiday Inn at 513-752-4400 and state that the reservation goes under the United

Church of God account to get that rate. The attendees will use their own credit card and pay upon departure. Please come join us to celebrate this momentous occasion! For any questions, please contact Barb and Roy Fouch via e-mail at [fouchb@greatoaks.com](mailto:fouchb@greatoaks.com) or John McClain at [jmccclain@fuse.net](mailto:jmccclain@fuse.net). Barb and Roy Fouch

# Leap

Continued from page 5

them: Their vessel was immediately at their destination (John 6:19-21). In our lives, too, accepting how God may change our lives can be frightening at first, because it means giving up the familiar. But our fears begin to melt away as we invest ourselves in this most important relationship and realize that we didn't actually give up anything valuable. Once we make a real commitment, no matter how small, God gives us a boost! Try to remember the encouraging message that God had for Daniel: "O man greatly beloved, fear not: Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" (Daniel 10:19). As we make finer and finer tunings in the details of our lives in an effort to not only do His will but to *love* His will and *seek it above all else*, He draws us ever nearer. The things we once thought were so important pale in comparison to this personal relationship with our Father in heaven! "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are

before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13-14). It's hard to forget about the things of our world when our eyes are on them constantly. We have to actually make a conscious effort to pull our gaze away from those distractions and look intently for God's instruction.

## A Gift Is Offered

Can we appreciate the awesome opportunity we have, right now? When we read God's inspired words: "Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame" (1 Corinthians 15:34), this should be a wake-up call. Not everyone has been offered this gift right now. And not everyone offered the gift has an ear to hear, but if you do, please consider: What can the Father say about us right now? What about tomorrow? What will Jesus Christ our Brother say about our physical and spiritual behaviors, attitudes and actions? What words will God use to describe our journey? Will our hearts, minds and actions reflect a commitment to righteousness? How wonderful if our Father could say,

"Yes, you've struggled with x, y and z, but I have found good things in you, greatly beloved child of mine, and you have prepared your heart to seek Me. You have

accepted with joy and gratitude the beautiful gift I have offered you." So leap, with eyes open and with all your might, into God's waiting arms. **UN**



# GIVE THANKS TO GOD

## WORD SEARCH

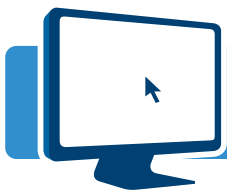
By Brenda Huante

Find the following words by looking up, down, across, backwards and diagonally. It is found in Psalm 116:17.

I	WILL	OFFER	TO	YOU	THE	SACRIFICE		
OF	THANKSGIVING	AND	WILL	CALL	UPON			
	THE	NAME	OF	THE	LORD			
X	T	H	E	B	F	J	Q	T
I	H	X	W	Q	B	O	O	X
S	A	C	R	I	F	I	C	E
J	N	Z	X	F	L	X	B	H
B	K	Q	E	Z	B	L	J	T
Y	S	R	X	N	L	X	Q	Q
O	G	B	J	A	X	T	Z	X
U	I	Q	C	M	Z	U	H	B
X	V	Z	X	E	X	P	X	E
W	I	L	L	X	D	O	X	Z
Z	N	X	Z	N	J	N	B	F
J	G	B	A	Q	D	R	O	L

*In the gray areas, where discerning right and wrong seems much more complex, we must ask where we are being led, and by whom?*





# What's New In MEDIA?

## ■ Beyond Today Airing Schedule

Title	Host	Airing Period
<i>Dancing with the Dark Side</i>	Darris McNeely	Nov. 4-10
<i>Mideast Family Feud</i>	Darris McNeely	Nov. 11-17
<i>Will I Go To Heaven?</i>	Steve Myers	Nov. 18-24
<i>Are You in Sync with God?</i>	Gary Petty	Nov. 25-Dec. 1

## ■ UCG Web Presence Expands

On Nov. 5, Internet manager Aaron Booth reported the following stats for UCG Web activity:

**45,902** total Facebook fans.

**32,202** total Twitter followers.

**989** videos posted on YouTube.

**2,309,732** video views on YouTube.

**208** Bible FAQs posted.

**719,746** Bible FAQs views.

**636** e-mail campaigns (*This Is the Way*, UCG Weekly Update, *GN* Newsletter, *WNP* E-news) sent.

**828,842** clicks to our websites generated by e-mail campaigns.

**217,260** booklet downloads from Apple's iBook Store.

**58,972** booklet downloads from Amazon's Kindle Store.

**2,117** *Good News* iPad app downloads.

## ■ United Church of God 2012 Feast of Tabernacles Video

[www.ucg.org/ucg-feast-film/gods-holy-days/feast-tabernacles-2012-fitly-framed-together](http://www.ucg.org/ucg-feast-film/gods-holy-days/feast-tabernacles-2012-fitly-framed-together)

This year's Feast of Tabernacles sermon video is titled: "Fitly Framed Together." The Kingdom of God is our destination. But, our journey to the Kingdom is not one we make alone. We are collectively preparing ourselves as Christ's bride-to-be. We love, care for and support one another in this shared destiny.



**Jelly is Dream of the Kingdom**

As we look forward to God's Kingdom and anticipate the time when all of humanity will be learning of His ways—pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles—this message will help all of us to be even more committed to serving Christ in everything we do.

## ■ Jelly is Dreaming of the Kingdom!

[www.ucg.org/ucg-short-film/gods-holy-days/jelly-dreaming-kingdom](http://www.ucg.org/ucg-short-film/gods-holy-days/jelly-dreaming-kingdom)

It's time for the Feast of Tabernacles! The Feast gets Jelly dreaming of a world of peace and harmony after

Jesus Christ returns to establish the wonderful Kingdom of God. (Isaiah 11:6, Leviticus 23:29-43).

Visit the URL above to watch the video, see the lyrics in full, download a children's choir arrangement of the song and find more videos.

Special thanks to Mark Graham for writing the music and allowing Jelly to sing it.

Stay tuned for more Jelly videos in the future!

**UNITED NEWS**

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## Periodicals Postage Paid

at Milford, Ohio, and at additional mailing offices

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Dec. 10-13:** Council of Elders Quarterly Meeting, Cincinnati

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

**Dec. 24-30:** Winter Camp, East Troy, Wisconsin

**Dec. 25-Jan. 1:** Young Adults Travel Opportunity, London

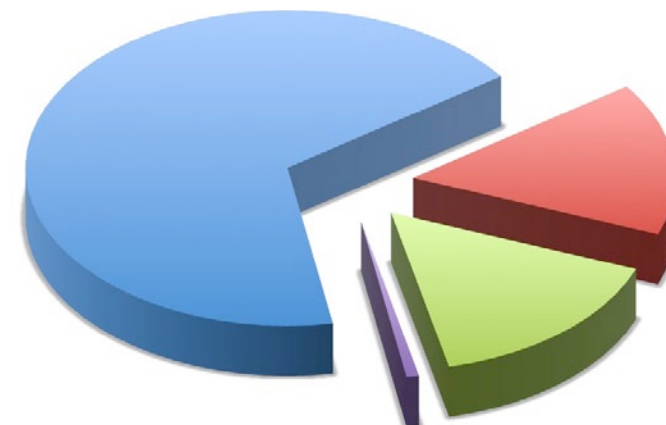
**Feb. 22-24, 2013:** Portland Ladies Retreat, Oregon

**Feb. 25-28, 2013:** Council of Elders Quarterly Meeting, Web conference

**March 2-4:** Cincinnati 50th Anniversary Church of God Weekend and Annual Regional Dance, Cincinnati

## UNITED STATISTICS

### UCG.org Web Traffic Since Nov. 2011



● **Search Engines**  
3,505,564 visits

● **Referring Sites**  
808,048 visits

● **Direct Traffic**  
806,945 visits

● **Other**  
39,646 visits

5,160,203 total web visitors as of 11/7/12

## WRITE FOR VIRTUAL CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE!

*Virtual Christian Magazine (VCM)* is looking for article submissions. Do you have a story to tell, has living God's way changed your way of thinking, or do you have encouragement to share? Then please consider submitting your idea or article to VCM. Don't worry about whether you have good punctuation or spelling; we have editors for that. Look below for what kind of articles we're looking for.

### Subject matter for articles

We share stories of how God dwells with and interacts with people. Accounts of faith's power, love's bond and hope's anchor fill this magazine. Practical solutions to life's challenges will be discussed along with stories about how God has intervened, encouraged or helped us overcome. We seek to include as many first-person, true-life stories as possible. Stories that inspire and motivate people to overcome life's difficulties and offer suggestions about how to live a life centered on Jesus Christ. We also want to hear about how people help one another and help others help themselves. We talk about solving tough personal problems, and building satisfying relationships with family, friends and co-workers. We are ready to laugh, but not afraid of tears.

Subject matter revolves around what's relevant in your life: family, children, marriage, values, strengths, weaknesses, spiritual gifts, relationships, friendships, health, sickness, depression, offense, death.

That's just a starter list.

Submissions on any of these subjects are welcome. Please contact Lorelei Nettles at [loirelei.nettles@gmail.com](mailto:loirelei.nettles@gmail.com).