

# UNITED NEWS



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## news

### AT A GLANCE

#### First Round of Kingdom of God Bible Seminars a Success

After concluding the September round of our Kingdom of God Bible Seminars, the guest count stands at a very encouraging 1,514. A total of 176 congregations filled out the online survey, so thank you very much to the pastors and presenters for taking care of this important avenue of feedback for us. We understand that some of our seminar guests are now showing an interest in greater commitment to the church, which is also encouraging to see.

A management meeting was held on September 27 to discuss how best to move forward with the program, and based on the overwhelming success of this first round, it has been confirmed to proceed as planned with the January 2012 seminars. We already have over 100 people signed up for the January 21 seminars.

Mario Seiglie gave some interesting information about their seminars held in Santiago, Chile. They had 25 new people in attendance. But in addition, 25 guests joined the seminar on the Internet via webcast from countries across Latin America. Afterwards they sent in questions that Mr. Seiglie answered. One person flew all the way from Buenos Aires, Argentina, to attend the Santiago seminar! They plan to have the next seminar in mid-January.

The two new seminar outlines are being worked on, and advertising is being planned. *Beyond Today* will continue to promote the seminars with each airing, *The Good News* magazine will carry another ad, online Google ads will be ramped up again and pastors will be able to send out personal letters of invitation. Power-Point presentations will be produced

See "News at a Glance," page 22

## "All With One Accord"



David and Mandie Cobb spent the Feast with their children HannahBeth and Joshua in Prince Edward Island, Canada.

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.

Once again this year, thousands of people gathered at various sites around the world to refresh their vision of the Kingdom, which God promises to bring and of which the world is in desperate need.

Starting on page six, 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.

One common thread in all of the reports this year was a general sense of unity, peace and being of one accord. Another shared observation in many of the reports is the acknowledgement of God's blessing on the site, both in physical ways such as nice weather and in spiritual ways. That does not mean there

were no pre-Feast or even during-Feast trials. But many of those trials seemed to be resolved by God. In fact, read the Feast report from Davao City, Philippines, and you will find an incredible story of miracles God performed!

"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 and families and parents and children found themselves saying it and feeling it. God truly did bless this year's Feast of Tabernacles. **UN**



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#### BY THE NUMBERS

# 1,514

Number of guests for the first Kingdom of God Bible seminar.





news from

AROUND THE WORLD

## Our Brethren the Wapishana in Brazil

by Chevy Vulchev

After a very long trip into the Amazon, including three hours by car over axle-breaking roads, Jorge de Campos and I met with the Wapishana, the native tribe in Maloca de Moscow, Brazil, who make up the United Church of God congregation there. This was my first meeting. The days we spent there were memorable in the way that sticks with one for good. The people are kind, friendly, genuine and very quick in manner and action. In my days there I felt sometimes as if I were the one being educated. These people were eager to listen and patient to show us who they were. We ate outside at a large table. The food was good and more sophisticated in its preparation than I expected.

I was continually fascinated by the mixture of ancient and modern cultures interacting in the people to produce a lifestyle that was at once both very traditional and adaptive. For instance, the Feast of Trumpets was held in a open grass hut with a dirt floor, but we had hymns accompanied by a CD. I felt genuine warmth from these people, which was gratifying, not merely because it reassured me that I was doing the right thing

by visiting them, but also because outsiders have traditionally remained so in Wapishana culture. The men were quiet and soft-spoken but engaging. They enjoyed talking to us, and both the men and the women were willing to question me through Mr. de Campos, and then listen thoughtfully to my responses. They were eager to show me the things I was curious about—the production process for manioc root, climbing like a monkey up the perfectly smooth and very tall trees to retrieve the fruit, and most of all swimming in the rivers, which they laughingly told us indeed contained piranhas and snakes (they were amused by our concern). I will remember that swim for a very long time both for the fear of it and for the feeling of the very refreshing and cool water.

The thing I was most impressed with though—and the reason Mr. de Campos and I were there—was their mature understanding of the Word of God, which stood in stark contrast to their most remote and primitive surroundings. God places His name where He chooses. I have brothers and sisters in a place I could never have imagined. **UN**



Photo: Jorge de Campos

From left: Chevy Vulchev, Jorge de Campos, Benedito Gomes da Silva and Bonifácio Venâncio Mateus.

## Our Travels to Visit the Brethren in England and Europe

by Denny Luker

I hope you all had a profitable and inspiring Feast of Tabernacles! All of the reports that I have received have been very positive and encouraging.

Let me share with you the uplifting and enjoyable visits that LeeAnn and I had with so many wonderful brethren in England, Germany and France for the Feast, and in Italy after the Feast. We were in England for Atonement and the first Holy Day of the Feast. John Schroeder picked us up at the airport very early Friday morning (it was an overnight flight) and took us to his home, not far from Bricket Wood, where the campus used to be. His wife, Jan, fixed tea for us, and we had a wonderful visit with two long-time friends. John and I graduated the same year (1963) from Ambassador College in Pasadena. John and Jan gave us a tour of the church office, and then we had dinner together before Atonement began that evening. I gave the sermon in the London congregation on Atonement, and we connected there with Frank Jarvis, the pastor, and his wife, Dorothy.

From London, LeeAnn and I traveled southwest by train to Winchester, where the Feast was held. About 90 brethren were there from various countries. They were warm and friendly and sang exceptionally well during the song service. There was joy, peace and unity. Frank Jarvis, festival coordinator, requested that I give both the opening night sermon and the next afternoon sermon because of leaving the next day for Germany. I must mention the enjoyable meal and fellowship we had with Gerhard and Diane Marx and the Jarvisses, at the end of the first Holy Day. We much appreciated their warm hospitality.

LeeAnn and I flew on to Germany after the first Holy Day and were there for about two and a half days. Paul Kieffer met us at the airport and drove us to the delightful

Feast site in Schluchsee. About 230 brethren from many countries were there. The spirit and attitude was very positive and truly inspiring. I gave the sermon on the weekly Sabbath, and Paul spoke on Sunday. He gave an excellent message using PowerPoint, showing how man is destroying the earth because of greed and how God will destroy those who destroy the earth (Revelation 11:18, last part). He showed how Christ, with us assisting Him, will restore the earth to health and beauty during the thousand years. It was a unique and well-prepared message. LeeAnn and I had an enjoyable meal with Paul and Monica and thanked them for their long-time faithful service in Germany, the Netherlands and other areas of Europe. We also had wonderful fellowship with many of the other brethren while there. We were physically tired but spiritually energized by our visit to Germany.

From Germany we flew to France for the last two days of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day. There were just under 80 in attendance from various countries, and the spirit of joy and happiness, especially for the French brethren, was truly inspiring. We were able to reconnect with our faithful elder in France, Mr. Bernard Audoin, and his wife, Colette. We had met them years earlier at a Feast in France and had been communicating recently via e-mail with the help of his two daughters, Annette Bernal and Maryse Pebworth. Maryse is married to Tim Pebworth, one of our elders in the San Jose, California, congregation. Tim and Maryse have been instrumental in helping to preserve the United Church of God in France during our recent crisis. During the Feast in France, Tim was chosen by their national Council to be their new president. He replaces Mr. Audoin, who has served faithfully and will be 80 years old on his next birthday. Tim, of course, understands and speaks French and

will be able to serve as president from the U.S. because of modern means of communication. His wife, Maryse, will also help make this possible by working closely with her family and the other French brethren.

After the Eighth Day, LeeAnn and I flew to Rome, Italy, where Carmelo Anastasi picked us up at the airport and drove us to the Feast site in Sabaudia. About 30 brethren stayed after the Feast to keep the weekly Sabbath together, and we were able to have a wonderful visit with many of the Italian brethren that we have known for many years. LeeAnn and I were the first ones to visit the Italian brethren who wanted to be with United in 1995. We have had a special relationship with them ever since. We feel a strong bond of love and friendship with Carmelo and his wife, Antonella, and with our other elder and wife there, Angelo Di Vita and Ann Maria.

After the weekly Sabbath with the brethren in Italy, we drove with Carmelo and Antonella to their home and the church office in Bergamo, which is in the far north of Italy. Along the way Carmelo gave us a tour of Florence, Pisa and other interesting places that we had never had time to see on previous visits to Italy. LeeAnn and I had an interesting experience in that we were able to climb to the top of the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa. It was quite a climb but, because of our regular exercise and walking, we made it just fine. When we got to Bergamo and visited the church

office, we were very impressed.

It isn't very large, but it's beautiful and brightly lit and very well organized. Carmelo walked me through many of the things they are doing to build the Church and work in Italy. That is not an easy task with the power and influence of the Catholic Church everywhere. Please pray for Carmelo, the national council and all the brethren in Italy that God will guide and bless them in their efforts to serve Him and do His work.

I will bring this to a close by saying that our visit to these four areas was incredibly encouraging and inspiring for LeeAnn and me. We came back very tired physically but very energized spiritually and emotionally. We hope we were able to encourage the brethren we were with as much as they encouraged us. Thanks to all of you who are reading this report for your love, faithfulness and service to our Great God and to His wonderful people around the world. **UN**



Photo: Carmelo Anastasi

Denny and LeeAnn Luker with Antonella Anastasi at the Italian office.



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Profile: Chuck Zimmerman

Born in Wyoming, Chuck has seen fruitful plains and majestic purple mountains. God began working in Chuck’s life when he was just a child. His family started attending the Radio Church of God in the 1950s and moved to Pasadena in 1957 so his father, Clint Zimmerman, could attend Ambassador College. Chuck attended Imperial School and graduated in 1967.

He moved to England to attend Ambassador College and traveled extensively. During those years he wrote Joy Brinkman very often. They met in 1965 at S.E.P., a church camp in Orr, Minnesota. After seven years of letters, they married and have enjoyed nearly 40 years of marriage since. They were blessed with three beautiful children, all of whom are now married.

The oldest, Clint III, is a mining engineer and superintendent of a precious mineral sands mine. He and his wife, Annette, have two handsome sons; the eldest was born on Chuck’s birthday! Courtney and her husband, Jim, live in Phoenix, Arizona, where she uses her PharmD. degree managing a pharmacy. They have two beautiful daughters. The youngest child, Chelsea, is a newlywed! She and her new husband, Anthony, are both juniors at Northern Arizona University, in Flagstaff, Arizona.

“Serve God’s people well” is Chuck’s motto, and he has been privileged to perform that service from sea to shining sea, in Britain and the Caribbean. He was ordained an elder in 1975 and currently serves in the Caribbean and over the following Florida congregations: Tampa, St. Petersburg, Miami, Fellsmere/West Palm Beach and Ft. Myers.



His favorite verse is Isaiah 35:1:“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.” “Rose” is better translated as being a crocus or daffodil, a bulb that requires the qualities of four seasons such as light, dark, moisture, heat and cold. This tells us there is a cycle to life and it promises the hope of the resurrection. That promise of resurrection is central to the life of the Zimmerman family. **UN**

FORWARD! Trim Your Lamp Now



PETER EDDINGTON  
Media and Communications Services Director

When you read the following passage from the gospel of Matthew, how does it make you feel? What is your initial reaction? Can you imagine yourself in this very situation?

I’d like to have you place yourself in this situation right now. Imagine that you’re there:

“Ten bridesmaids...took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. But *only five of them were wise enough* to fill their lamps with oil, while the *other five were foolish and forgot*. So, when the bridegroom was delayed, they lay down to rest until midnight, when they were roused by the shout, ‘The bridegroom is coming! Come out and welcome him!’ All the girls jumped up and trimmed their lamps. Then the five who hadn’t any oil *begged* the others to share with them, for their *lamps were going out*. But the others replied, ‘We haven’t enough. Go instead to the shops and buy some for yourselves.’ But while they were gone, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, *and the door was locked*” (Matthew 25:1-10, The Living Bible, *emphasis added throughout*).

These powerful, sometimes personally incriminating verses can apply to the actual return of Christ and the marriage supper, but also to our present spiritual condition and whether or not God’s Spirit dwells in us. Or put another way, how much we let the Spirit influence our thoughts and actions! How much oil do we have on a daily basis?

How much urgency for the truth do we have?

We are told that we will be blessed if Christ returns to find us as faithful and wise servants—doing the work He has given to us and allowing His Spirit to guide us in our daily lives. If we are watchful and awake, His return will not be at a time in which we are unprepared.

However, if we are *not* aware of the coming of the Bridegroom—that is, do not have God’s personal presence in our lives—and allow ourselves to get caught up in thoughts and actions that are sinful or even just unimportant, then we are *not* awake, and we will be unaware and unprepared until it is too late!

I guess the question for you and me is: Will we be watchful, alert and awake in preparation for that day? Are we ready at

this moment, if *now* is the defining time for us? God does not lie, and He says that the salvation He offers to us will be forever.

“Later, when the other five returned, they stood outside, calling, ‘Sir, open the door for us!’ But he called back, ‘Go away! It is too late!’ *So stay awake and be prepared*, for you do not know the date or moment of my return” (Matthew 25:11-13, TLB).

*Now* is the time we have to prove ourselves. Now is when we have to be most vigilant in our duties. Now is when our oil lamps must be full and the wicks trimmed. Now is when we must do the work given to us. *Now is the time to recapture a sense of urgency*. We must be awake, doing the work of our Father and living righteously in preparation for the return of the Bridegroom for the wedding supper. **UN**



Photo: Photos.com





## What I Learned From Being Unable to Attend the Feast

■ My wife and I couldn't go to the Feast this year. Here's what I learned.

by Melvin Rhodes

Throughout the summer this year, Diane and I were eagerly looking forward to going to India and Sri Lanka for the Feast.

On September 1st I went into a local hospital for routine foot surgery. I was told I would be back on my feet in a week or two. That left me with plenty of time to recuperate before the Feast.

I was also told that in one percent of cases there is a risk of infection. I turned out to be that one percent!

The rare bacterial infection I got required hospitalization. At the same time, the wound in my foot would not heal. It soon became clear that we were not going anywhere. Even now, two weeks after the Feast, I still cannot go far out of town. I have to go to the hospital three times a week to have the dressing on my foot changed.

At first we were rather discouraged at having to stay behind. There were a few others in the area, and we planned on getting together. But then I struggled with nausea as a result of the infusions of antibiotics, and I was not up to going anywhere.

### Empathy

We now know what it's like to miss the Feast of Tabernacles. As a result of that, we have much greater empathy for those who, usually for reasons of health, cannot go.

The apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."

Not only do we feel a great void in our lives at having missed the Feast, we also feel a renewed commitment, determined to be present in every future year, fellowshiping with God's people "so much the more as [we] see the Day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25).

### Encouragement

What was very encouraging during the Feast was knowing that people were praying for us and, in particular, for my health situation. The nausea I was feeling lifted at



Photo: Meryl Macareag

Youths and singles in the Davao City, Philippines, Feast site.

the end of the Eighth Day, which I attribute to the prayers of God's people. Throughout the Feast, we received many cards and phone calls, flowers, baskets of fruit and other food and even two bottles of moonshine from Gatlinburg (still unopened)! So though we were absent in the flesh, we certainly felt present in the Spirit!

When people called from different Feast sites, including international sites, one thing that kept on bringing joy to our ears were their reports of the peace and unity they felt at the Feast. I was reminded of Psalm 133:1: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

### Hope

Only a few months ago, dissident rumors were spread claiming that the United Church of God was going to do away with the Sabbath and the Holy Days—entering mainstream Christianity. Brethren, as you know, there was never any such plan. Not one of the people spreading these false allegations had the common sense to call me or any other member of the Council or admin-

istration to see if there was any element of truth to them.

I came out of the Methodist Church well over 40 years ago into the Church of God.

It wasn't easy giving up some of the traditional days that the

end of the tunnel—the glorious return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

The apostle Paul described our feelings and emotions so well in Romans 8: "For we know that the

We are reminded of God's plan every Sabbath and every Holy Day. In fact, the Kingdom of God should be at the forefront of our minds and in our thoughts at all times. Jesus Christ taught us to pray daily, for our physical needs

*We are reminded of God's plan every Sabbath and every Holy Day. In fact, the Kingdom of God should be at the forefront of our minds and in our thoughts at all times.*

Methodist Church kept, especially as doing so complicated family relationships. But it was worth it to know the plan of God, which mainstream Christianity does not understand. God's plan gives us something the rest of the world doesn't have—peace of mind. We know what it's all about. We know what it's all leading to. We know that, in spite of all the problems reported constantly on our news channels that daily darken our existence, there is light at the

whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body" (verses 22-23). This is what we live for. This is what we have dedicated our lives to. This is why we faithfully attend the Feast of Tabernacles each year and observe the other Holy Days in our home churches.

("our daily bread") and for the Kingdom of God (Matt 6:10-11). "Your will be done." Until His will is done, this world will know no peace and people will continue to flounder, not knowing how to solve their problems. We are to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt 6:33).

Having missed this year's Feast, Diane and I are already planning for next year. We look forward to seeing some of you then. **UN**





# Standing in the Gap

■ More than 20 elders—new, retired, volunteer and part-time—are serving anew this year. In this recurring column, we will profile them.



## **Leroy Cole—Bethlehem, Lewistown and York, Pennsylvania**

Leroy Cole was born in the small town of Jefferson, Oregon, located in the rich farming land of the Willamette Valley, in 1939. His parents had moved to the West from Oklahoma after losing their home to a tornado in 1936. He attended a small one-room country school until the eighth grade and graduated from Albany Union High School in 1958. The Willamette Valley and farming were the center of his life during his teen years.

Mr. Cole stated, "Living in the Willamette Valley brought my family into contact with Mr. Armstrong in the mid 1930s." He continued, "The Sabbath and the Church of God have been vitally important parts of the Cole family history for as long as I can remember."

"Some of my fondest memories are keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days in Oregon. Beautiful Belknap Springs, where the Feast of Tabernacles was held for several years in the mid to late 1940s, and Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong and their family are special memories."

Ambassador College and the Church of God have been the most important parts of his life. He was baptized in 1959 (52 years ago) at Ambassador College. He met the love of his life (Laura Jean Counts) in 1960. They married in 1962 (49 years ago) following graduation.

Three life-changing events occurred in 1962—graduation, marriage and moving to Australia. Australia became their home for the next 12 years. Their three daughters, Julie, Lynda and Laurretta, were all born in Australia. Their family has grown over the years to include seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Ordination, in the fall of 1965, was the beginning of 46 years in the ministry. "Four major factors enriched and strengthened my ministry," Mr. Cole said. "The most important one, other than God, has been the presence of my beautiful, loving wife by my side for 49 years. Three other events enriching my ministry have been living in Australia for 12 years, taking a five week baptizing tour of New Zealand and holding the first full Feast of Tabernacles in Malaysia in 1973. Traveling and seeing God's children in other parts of the world have been the most exciting and educational experiences in the ministry."

Mr. Cole and his wife have served and/or pastored congregations in 12 different areas, both in the U.S. and internationally.

His two favorite scriptures are on expressing our relationship with God and His Church. They are Isaiah 66:2, telling us what kind of a person we should be and 1 Peter 2:9, telling us what we should be doing. He is now pastoring Bethlehem, Lewistown and York, Pennsylvania.



## **Joe Horschak—Sacramento, California and Reno, Nevada**

Joe Horschak was born in Detroit, Michigan, on Jan. 3, 1948, to Joe and Betty Horschak. Joe spent most of his younger years in Ferndale and Madison Heights, Michigan, where he graduated from high school in 1966 and went to Central Michigan University for a semester before enlisting in the U.S. Air Force. He got out three years later as a conscientious objector and applied for Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, in 1970. He and his two brothers, Mike and Doug, attended Ambassador for two years together. Joe also has a sister, Jacqui, who is the youngest of his siblings. Joe is a 1973 Ambassador College graduate and currently is the United Church of God pastor of Sacramento, California, and Reno, Nevada. Joe also received his master of science degree in marketing management as well as an M.B.A. in finance and international management.

In addition to serving as a church pastor for UCG, first in

Columbus and Cambridge, Ohio, then in Sacramento and Reno, Joe had a 20+ year career as a sales and marketing consultant serving several Fortune 1000 companies, conducting business and self-improvement seminars on four continents.

He and his wife Jackie have two children, Joe and Jessica, who live at home and are both attending college. Joe and Jackie enjoy golfing, swimming, playing pinochle, gardening and relaxing on a warm, sun-baked beach or by their backyard pool. Being beach lovers, they've really enjoyed being able to attend the Feast in Hawaii four times, Jamaica once and Escondido multiple times.

Joe says that the greatest lesson he has learned serving in the ministry is that God is very patient and does not condemn us when we make mistakes. As a result of this, his favorite scripture in the Bible is Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."



## **Dale Schurter—New York City, New York**

Dale L. Schurter was born and reared on a diversified farm near Burlington, Oklahoma, by God-fearing parents.

He attended Oklahoma Northwestern State College in Alva, Oklahoma, and Ellis Business College in Elgin, Illinois. He received bachelor's and master's degrees (theology major) from Ambassador College in Pasadena. His master's thesis, "World Crisis in Agriculture," was published and distributed both nationally and internationally. He is presently pursuing a doctorate in holistic health with the Clayton School of Natural Healing and the American Holistic College of Nutrition.

He was the founder and director of Agricultural Education, Research and Production at Ambassador College, Big Sandy,

Texas for 10 years, developing and practicing regenerative agricultural methods from a biblical perspective. He was also director of Development and Public Affairs at Ambassador College, Texas, for three years.

Ordained into the ministry in 1965, he continued to serve in this capacity along with serving the agricultural community. He has served several years as local, district and regional youth coordinator along with serving as festival convention site coordinator for 26 years.

"I have been happily married for 48 years to my faithful wife, Mona; we have two sons, one daughter, two daughters-in-law and 10 grandchildren."

Mr. Schurter has pastored congregations in Texas, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania, and assisted in Nigeria. He is presently pastoring the New York City congregation.



# Feast of Tabernacles 2011

## Reports from Around the World

### See photos on pages 11-14

#### Feast Attendance

<b>Australia</b>	
Merimbula, N.S.W.....	160
Rockingham, W.A. ....	98
Sunshine Coast, Qld.....	357
Ulverstone, Tasmania.....	65
<b>Benin</b> .....	33
<b>Bolivia</b> .....	29
<b>Brazil</b> .....	37
<b>British Isles</b> .....	95
<b>Cameroon</b> .....	55
<b>Canada</b>	
Canmore, Alberta.....	282
Collingwood, Ontario ....	158
Prince Edward Island.....	77
Satellite site.....	58
<b>Chile</b> .....	162
<b>Colombia</b> .....	52
<b>Congo</b> .....	32
<b>Estonia</b> .....	70
<b>France</b> .....	79
<b>Germany</b> .....	228
<b>Ghana</b> .....	32
<b>Guatemala</b> .....	186
<b>India</b> .....	25
<b>Israel</b> .....	58
<b>Italy</b> .....	165
<b>Jamaica</b> .....	165
<b>Kenya</b> .....	445
<b>Malawi</b> .....	135
<b>Mexico</b> .....	230
<b>New Zealand</b> .....	67
<b>Nigeria</b> .....	105
<b>Philippines</b>	
Baguio City .....	115
Davao City .....	420
<b>Portugal</b> .....	56
<b>South Africa</b> .....	90
<b>Sri Lanka</b> .....	25
<b>Tobago</b> .....	52
<b>Togo</b> .....	35
<b>Tonga</b> .....	10
<b>United States</b>	
Bend-Redmond, Oregon.....	729
Branson, Missouri .....	648
Escondido, California ....	500
Galveston, Texas .....	526
Gatlinburg, Tennessee.....	1,285
Jekyll Island, Georgia.....	418
Lahaina, Hawaii.....	574
Panama City Beach, Florida.....	882
Steamboat Springs, Colorado.....	248
Virginia Beach, Virginia ...	476
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin....	783
Satellite sites .....	555
<b>Zambia</b> .....	171
<b>Zimbabwe</b> .....	47
<b>Total Attendance.....</b>	<b>12,385</b>
<b>Shut-ins</b> who received Feast sermons from the home office...	438
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>12,823</b>

Note: Highest daily attendance figures. Web-cast connections are not added into this total.

#### Australia

##### Merimbula, New South Wales

What a wonderful Feast! Perfect weather, warm fellowship and inspiring services combined to make this Feast very memorable. About 160 people attended on average each day. As usual, there was much fellowshiping among brethren; our beloved bachelors put on an open house evening *par excellence*; there were full houses at the seniors luncheon at a Chinese restaurant and the dinner dance at a tapas restaurant, plus activities for families and teens. A large donation was raised for LifeNets. The children and teens had lessons before sermon time. There was no pianist, but Anne Sasse and Peter King sang two songs (one being *a cappella*), Nicole Ryan and Matt Sieff (on guitar) contributed another and the children's choir and festival choir gave their all. Jamie Ryan and Trevor Christie contributed their expertise to the audio, video and webcast needs—which was seen overseas as well as in Australia.

Matt Sieff effectively set the theme of focusing on the Kingdom of God on opening night. Interestingly, the Garden of Eden became a regular reference throughout the Feast. Bruce Dean used it to exemplify the restoration of the land that will occur in the Kingdom of God. David King told us to “dream big,” using economics to demonstrate the differences between God's way and the world's. Bill Bradford made a flying visit over the weekend and spoke on the differences between the world now and the Millennium, then on living by the power of the Kingdom of God. Bruce Dean gave a heart-rending sermon on God's message to orphans, which featured a video about African children “living rough.” On the last day of the Feast we heard three split sermons: Peter King spoke on our future roles as scribes, Tom Korrelvink spoke on being shepherds and Ross Smith spoke on becoming priests. Sermonette speakers (Wayne MacDonald, Jamie Ryan, Peter King, Matt Sieff and Kevin Shaw) all shared aspects of what we must become to work with Christ in the future.

On the Eighth Day, David King reminded us that being very well

trained comes before a good performance. Matt Sieff's sermon was about God's desire to be with His children. Following an excellent lunch, Bruce Dean kept us alert with a fascinating look at the repeating patterns of the Garden of Eden, the cherubim in the Tabernacle, the Temple and the future—all of which are based on the reality of what is now in Heaven and how all help keep our focus on God.

Mavis Stucci

##### Rockingham, Western Australia

The Feast site in Rockingham, Western Australia, enjoyed ideal weather, which provided a great atmosphere for all activities. Top attendance was 98, with visitors from most Australian states plus international visitors from Canada and Singapore. There was a great feeling of togetherness and participation numbers were high in all aspects of the Feast. The Western Australian members spared no effort in making everyone feel welcome.

The admonition to come together to rejoice and learn was adhered to, and the messages were directed to the coming Kingdom of God. We learned of the greatness of God's creation; what was yet before us, and what was required for us to be part of His plan of salvation for this world and the need for the Spirit of God to achieve this. The importance of the resurrection and the enormity of the period of the Great White Throne Judgment were stressed.

Positive feedback was received from many of the members expressing their thanks to all who put in the effort to make the Feast so enjoyable—the speakers, those who produced the special music, the organizers of the activities and especially to the members who went out of their way to serve and encourage on a daily basis.

Barry Williams

##### Sunshine Coast, Queensland

The Sunshine Coast lived up to its name this year, with about half the Feast in sunshine and the rest in tropical overcast weather that portends the beginning of the rainy season.

Activities were well attended and featured our traditional family day, a surf afternoon with instructions from professionals,

seniors outing to the Ginger Factory, young adult get-acquainted night and our Saturday night social dance. Aussie meat pies were the fare for this popular social occasion. The world-famous Australian Zoo and other scenic attractions in the area were frequented by our Feast attendees.

The children's classes produced models of the millennial picture, featuring every man living under his vine and fig tree and all peoples going up to the house of the Lord to hear the Law of God.

The messages painted a picture of the new millennial world as ruled by Jesus Christ and assisted by the saints. How God's Law will be applied and how it will result in the completion of the whole person and fulfillment of their purpose in life was the most prominent focus. The encouragement to persevere and to make a strong finish was a regular thread. The spiritual services were most uplifting, and so many remarks were made about this being the best Feast ever for them. A spiritual high was maintained throughout the Feast, with each day's messages building on the previous inspiring messages. We don't normally mention this, but I have to add here: The sermonettes were exceptional. Those who had never spoken at a Feast before stepped up to the mark. It was indeed memorable.

Our high attendance day was on the weekly Sabbath with 357. We had fewer overseas visitors this year because of the high Australian dollar, but the few brethren who did come from the U.S. and England were enjoyable additions.

Bill Bradford

##### Ulverstone, Tasmania

What an incredible blessing! God's Spirit produced peace and harmony as we came together to honor and fear God at His Feast. Ulverstone, Tasmania, was certainly another recipient of an abundance of God's blessings, as 65 brethren from around Australia gathered at this beautiful seaside community.

Some nine weeks before the Feast, we had to change venues due to a double booking. Yet that proved to be a blessing, not only because a venue close by was available for the entire Feast, but because it also turned out to be a more suitable venue for our ser-

vices and activities.

We began the Feast with the traditional cutting of a specially prepared cake with text from Isaiah 65:17-19 written on the top. After the Holy Day service, we held a meet-and-greet supper. Other activities included chicken/pizza Cranium night, a family picnic and games in the park and a mini-golf evening. On the Eighth Day, we enjoyed a catered meal together between the services. All social activities were very well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The highlight will always be the spiritual meat in due season we received. We gained a glimpse into the glory of God revealed through the fulfilment of His Feast, as well as having received practical instruction on how to make the most of our sojourn in this world so as to be perfectly prepared as peacemakers with Christ. We looked at four foundational changes that will occur in God's Kingdom: 1. One universal faith, 2. All governmental action directed to the perfecting of mankind, 3. Education will be based on God's Word, 4. The family will be the focus of social systems. From all the messages we received, we were served up a spiritual feast.

Now we pray more earnestly for the fulfilment of this wonderful celebration!

Stephen Clark

#### Benin

##### Pobe

An enthusiastic group of 33 brethren attended the Feast in Benin. I went with my wife and another brother from the Nigeria congregation, Olawale Lawal, mid-way through the Feast. I had also picked up a Canadian on my way there, who was visiting Benin. While the Feast environment and sleeping arrangements were humble compared to the Feasts I have attended since being in the Church, it was a happy group, and the high points were the meal times. It was indeed a Feast laid out on the table during lunch and dinner. My first message focused on the reason why we keep the Feast and the hope it points to for us and countless people not called today. My second sermon pointed out the wisdom and love of God in the second tithe arrangement He planned

and put in place for us to be able to keep the Feast.

I would have a young man, Peter Ogoudele, read my Bible verses in French after I had read it in English, and Mr. Lawal read it in Yoruba. Mr. Lawal had an English-Yoruba Bible while I was using the NKJV on my iPad.

Everybody was enthusiastic, singing in French, even though the three of us from Nigeria and the Canadian could not understand a word.

There were people who needed to be baptized, but there was nowhere suitable at the location, and I will be returning before the end of November to Cotonou, where I can baptize them at the beach.

Everyone very much enjoyed the Feast in Benin and look forward to the time when its meaning is fulfilled at Christ's return.

*Oludare Akinbo*

## Bolivia

### Coroico

The Feast in Bolivia was again held in Coroico, Bolivia, a beautiful semi-tropical town a two-hour drive from the capital, La Paz.

The high attendance was 29 brethren, and all were able to eat all their meals together, which helped solidify the warm fellowship. Two baptisms took place.

Youths were able to enjoy the pools and entertainment center in the Hotel El Molino. There was a family dance and a talent night. Vicente Martinez and Gabriel and Andrea Garcia came from Chile to serve, and the two men gave some of the messages. Raúl Machicao, a recently ordained elder, coordinated the Feast with the help of Wanderson Esquerdo, a deacon.

God inspired His small flock to be more united and focused on that glorious goal that our King of Kings has in store for all of us.

*Raúl Machicao*

## Brazil

### Maloca de Moscow

The Feast of Tabernacles in Brazil was held in the Maloca (village) of Moscow, an indigenous community in the peaceful northern region of Brazil, located approximately 40 miles (65 km) from Boa Vista, the capital of the State of Roraima.

The weather was pleasant throughout the Feast. The average temperature was around 88 degrees, and the sky was clear. We know that our loving God gave us this wonderful time, because in the evening of the Eighth Day, at the conclusion of services and after the official photo was taken, a heavy rain fell over most of the state, causing power outages, fallen trees on roads and various other complications.

All the brethren shared a climate of great affection and Christian fellowship. We had

an attendance of 37 people. The dominant theme in the messages was the righteousness of God, as each message given demonstrated that God will execute justice and mercy to the inhabitants of the land. This has an application for us in His Church today, but will spread over the whole world in the future. The lack of justice in this world will be supplanted by the merciful righteousness of God, which, indeed, the world urgently needs.

There were various activities during the Feast. It is interesting to note the participation of both men and women from other nearby COG fellowships, particularly during the football (soccer) games. This was because, according to the young people, United's festival site was "alive," and the word spread around about the climate of extreme joy that was enjoyed by United's congregation.

Young people were especially excited because, according to them, they never had an activity during the Feast that was unique to them, such as the youth dance. Additionally, all the families were very excited about the family dance, which had been the first during the Feast of Tabernacles in Maloca de Moscow. And the younger ones were ecstatic during a children's party, during which a play was put on by young people reenacting the story of Lazarus and the rich man. The play was very popular and had many attendees. There was also an event of arts and crafts for the ladies where they learned how to embroider ladies sandals.

We are very grateful to our God for having blessed us with a Feast that was marked with a spirit of harmony and peace, allowing all the brethren to experience a foretaste of the World Tomorrow.

*Giovane Macedo*

## British Isles

### Winchester

The Cathedral City of Winchester, England's ancient capital and former seat of King Alfred the Great, formed the backdrop for the Feast of Tabernacles in the British Isles. There were 95 happy and enthusiastic Feastgoers who welcomed UCG President Dennis Luker and his wife LeeAnn to the historic Guildhall for services. Mr. Luker gave the opening night and first Holy Day messages, before leaving to continue the Feast in Germany and France. Mr. Luker's theme of rejoicing in peace and unity was reflected in the rousing congregational singing, which was a feature throughout the festival. We were also privileged to have a visiting elder from the United States, Don Turgeon and his wife Donna with their two children, as well as a number of overseas visitors.

Special music was performed at each service that both moved

and delighted everybody. The music was complementary to the messages, which were both positive and uplifting, focusing on the reality of the Millennium and God's Kingdom. Emphasis was made that our future roles as kings and sriests would be based on service to others.

Elder Gerhard Marx (a retired professional blue badge tour guide), arranged trips to Hampton Court Palace and Gardens, the ancient monument of Stonehenge and Salisbury Cathedral. The Cathedral houses the Magna Carta, one of four existing copies of the 1215 charter, much of which remains on the statute books for England and Wales. Mr. Marx also led a walking tour of historic Winchester, pointing out features of the colleges and dwellings.

Services were held in the recently refurbished Walton Suite of the Guildhall, with a terrace affording stunning views of the surroundings. This was ideal for fellowship in the warm and sunny weather that we were blessed with during our stay.

We were delighted by the ordination to deaconess of Myrtle Herron of the Ballymena, Northern Ireland, congregation, as well as by the four baptisms during the Feast.

We were joined for the latter part of the Feast by David and Barbara Fenney, who were helping out at the Feast in France for the first part of the festival. Mr Fenney, in his role as CEO, updated us on the work here in the British Isles.

Sentiments on the last day both publicly and privately were that we didn't want to leave and go home. It had been that good. In a word—*outstanding*.

*Frank Jarvis*

## Cameroon

### Douala and Yagoua

There were 35 people who attended the Feast in Douala and 20 people in Yagoua, North Cameroon, this year.

During the Feast we listened to sermon CDs and watched the festival video. Ladies attending prepared all our meals, which we ate all together at the church hall in Douala, the complex complete with dormitories.

We enjoyed warm fellowship, which was especially enjoyed during our family day.

*Moïse Elisée Mabout*

## Canada

### Canmore, Alberta

Canmore, Alberta, is a new United Feast site in Western Canada. It is located in the Canadian Rockies, about 20 minutes east of Banff and about an hour and a half from Calgary. By all reports, the Feast was a smashing success. Services were held at the Radisson Hotel and Con-

ference Center. Many of the 282 in attendance stayed on site. Others found accommodations close by. The weather was absolutely gorgeous the entire time, with bright sunshine illuminating the snow-capped mountain peaks. The "Three Sisters"—a mountain range with the names Faith, Hope and Charity—were majestic in the skyline.

The famous Cornerstone Theatre production of, "O Canada, Eh" extended their season by one day so as to accommodate us. The 182 brethren who attended enjoyed a lively two-hour dinner show featuring home style food service and a two-hour musical celebration, featuring about 70 Canadian songs. Other activities included a family day activity—a gondola ride up Sulphur Mountain (elevation 7,486 feet), a variety show that lasted about an hour and a half, children's crafts, a seniors luncheon at the Radisson, a teen and young adults Bible study, followed a few days later by a ropes course activity at the Rafter Six Ranch.

The messages were solid. The Canmore Festival Choir performed four times. The Children's Choir sang on youth day, when we had young people leading songs and giving opening and closing prayers. The stage decorations were attractive, and the overall atmosphere was warm and loving. After the Feast, a member wrote saying: "Our family (and many others) had a super Feast! It was a beautiful setting, the conference room was cozy and comfortable, the activities were very enjoyable, and the messages were inspiring. The gondola trip was perfect—a chance to appreciate and be awed by God's creation all around us. I appreciated the opportunity to serve and enjoyed being a part of the Feast workings, as did my husband and children."

There was a spontaneous round of applause when it was mentioned that we have a contract to be back at the Radisson in Canmore for the Feast in 2012. We are planning to have extra ballroom space. Plan to attend!

*Rainer Salomaa*

### Collingwood, Ontario

Feast attendees in beautiful Collingwood, Ontario, were greeted this year by the stunning colors of the leaves on the trees, especially on the hills of the Blue Mountains, which is one of Ontario's favorite ski locations.

Opening services saw an attendance of 78. Attendees listened to the opening message given by Patrick Read entitled "Where He Leads I Will Follow." Mr. Read related the need to follow God and truly please Him by rejoicing as a family at the feast through this yearly rehearsal.

The average daily attendance was 140, with a high attendance of 158 on the Sabbath. Planned activities were scaled down slightly this year, but were still

well attended and enjoyed by all in spite of the wet, blustery weather that prevailed in the region.

The exceptions were the two days that really required drier weather in order to be successful. One was family day, which was hosted at a local park where over 70 brethren were treated to a fun afternoon with a tasty pizza lunch, warm coffee, yummy dessert, assorted games and plenty of sunshine.

The other exception was the day of the luncheon cruise on the *M.S. Georgian Queen*. On the way to the cruise, it seemed doubtful that we would be able to actually leave the harbor due to high winds and rain. However, after boarding and leaving the dock, the weather calmed and the wind died down, allowing the 110 brethren aboard to enjoy a very relaxing trip. The rain came back only after we returned and docked.

On Friday afternoon, a small group of brethren was treated to a presentation entitled "Special Partners." It was given by Ron Muir, who shared his life with us by relating how he lost his sight, how he learned to cope with blindness and how he came to know about the availability of guide dogs, who truly are special partners.

A total of 42 seniors were treated to a brunch on Sabbath morning with a message from Anthony Wasilkoff. Patrick and Jo-Anne Read arranged for special prizes to be awarded to those who knew their music well enough to "name that tune" while they listened to short excerpts of some golden oldies.

Eric Frandsen ably emceed the variety show. Though the acts were few in number at the beginning of the week, by the day of the actual event there was sufficient talent assembled for an ample program, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the 80 brethren who were present. Feast registration showed only one child registered, so it did not look good for a children's choir. However, Sonia van Klaveren came forward to direct the choir and, as it turned out, we were able to have an exuberant children's choir with 11 lively participants.

The Eighth Day lunch was attended by 59 brethren who took advantage of one last opportunity to fellowship and break bread at the same time. After lunch, we heard the final message given to us by Mr. Wasilkoff, who reminded the congregation through a short story to keep their forks in reference to dessert after a meal, "since the best is yet to come". And so it is with the wondrous plan of God since the best is similarly yet to come.

The rain and cool weather could not dampen the spirits of God's children as we concluded our final service with "God Be With You." With many warm words and hugs the little family



of God in Collingwood began to head home. No doubt all are looking forward to next year's awesome "family reunion" and all that it will have to offer.

*Patrick Read*

## Prince Edward Island

Based on comments from brethren, the new Feast site at the Stanley Bridge Resort in Prince Edward Island was a huge success. Many members mentioned the beautiful, millennial setting overlooking London Bay and the Stanley Bridge River. The sunsets were spectacular. The meeting room was ideal for the almost-80 people who attended, with the info center and ticket sales all in one room. Feast attendees came from as near as Atlantic Canada and as far as eight Canadian provinces and several U.S. states. The highest attendance of 77 was on the first Holy Day. There were 100 people registered, with some unfortunate late cancellations being made due to serious health issues.

An Anne of Green Gables look-alike was able to visit us for many of the on-site activities, including our meet-and-greet, where brethren renewed friendships and made new ones. The ladies' tea was an opportunity for sharing life stories and discovering other "kindred spirits." The barbecue dinner gave everyone an opportunity to taste local organic beef and chicken as well as be entertained with local music and songs by an "Islander" father and son team. Family day was well attended as the children enjoyed artwork and crafts, and the adults were treated to a trivial pursuit with prizes for all age groups. The variety show was a big hit and well attended again this year, with talented songs, skits and instrumental music on the guitar. The only off-site activity turned out to be very popular with an island tour to Green Gables, then along the coast to the Cavendish Dunes and beaches, a lighthouse with a stop at the Preserve Company for a tour and tasting. A beautiful sunny afternoon awaited 70 percent of the attendees who took the bus tour, and they returned content with some added knowledge about the pretty island.

Most of the brethren enjoyed a light luncheon together with soup and sandwiches on the Eighth Day. Many who weren't departing for home until the next day had an added opportunity to dine in groups that evening. It afforded us one last chance to be together before our journey home the next day.

The spiritual food was also well received throughout the Feast, with messages on the coming millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Messages also emphasized and encouraged us to do our part to qualify to rule with Christ as pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles. The special music was uplifting, the Feast choir was inspiring and the family chil-

dren's choir took the spotlight. The general consensus is that we should definitely plan to be at the Stanley Bridge Resort in Prince Edward Island again in 2012.

*Dennis Horlick*

## Chile

### Tongoy

As it was in 2010, the Feast in Chile was held in beautiful Playa Blanca Hotel, a six-hour drive from Santiago, the capital. The Feast site was next to a beautiful beach, and many activities were held there. Youths participated in musical accompaniment during the hymns. There was a family day and a dance.

There was a high attendance of 162 brethren from Argentina, the U.S., and Peruvian residents in Chile. Fred and Lydia Nance, who serve congregations in Arkansas, helped Jaime Gallardo, the Feast coordinator, with the Feast.

All went very well, and it was another inspiring and edifying Feast in Chile.

*Jaime Gallardo*

## Colombia

### Chinauta

There were 47 brethren from Colombia, joined by two from Chile and three from the United States, to celebrate God's Feast in Chinauta, Colombia, at the Centro Vacacional Shalom Resort, about two hours from Bogotá. Having everyone in one location allowed a close family atmosphere to develop in short order. Brethren stayed in two long rows of cabañas that facilitated fellowship during free time. Friendly and helpful restaurant staff served three meals each day, which were eaten together as a group. Fresh fruit juices and typical food from the area were the norm at each meal.

Messages were given by 10 different men, so there was a wide variety of spiritual food. A theme of concentrating on a different fruit of the spirit each day was covered by the sermonettes. The opening night message asked all to ponder that "God is with us here at His Feast." Mario and Caty Seiglie were able to visit one day. On this day, six new members were baptized into the family of God.

A variety of activities were held. One of the highlights was a visit down into the valley by walking or riding on the "Chiva Bus," where fishing, swimming and fellowship were enjoyed by all. Another night, a "fogata," or fire, was held. Tongue twisters, jokes and songs were shared and enjoyed by young and old alike.

Living, eating, worshipping and playing together in one location gave this Feast a family atmosphere. One gentleman summed up the Feast: "I have never felt the love at a Feast before like I have here in Chinauta."

*Gayle Hoefker*

## Congo

### Kinshasa

Greetings from Kinshasa, the capital city of Congo. There were 20 brethren who attended the Feast, including one from Cameroon on the first day. The highest attendance was 32 people on the morning of the third day. Two brethren, David Yoshua and Ossa Lukubama, who was born and grew up in the Church and had been counseling throughout the year, were baptized. We had a beautiful Feast, each day of which was special. The brethren and visitors helped to make the Feast a great experience.

*Moïse Elisée Mabout*

## Estonia

### Saaremaa

There were 70 brethren from Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine, Belarus, Finland, Sweden, Germany, the Isle of Man and the United States who gathered on the Estonian island of Saaremaa in the Baltic Sea in unity and peace to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The weather was perfect, although a bit cool. Of the attendees, 25 were 21 and under. Family atmosphere dominated the mood of the Feast as we congregated, ate and did our activities together.

The hotel we all stayed at was a Scandinavian spa hotel specializing in pools, baths and massages that the brethren enjoyed. The children really enjoyed the pools.

The messages focused on family, respect for human government and the New World coming. One evening we held a storytelling night in which many of those who lived under Communism in the USSR told inspiring stories about their lives and faith in the days of the USSR.

For the third year running a group of 20 Latvians kept the Feast with us. They have adopted our beliefs and we consider them our close spiritual kin.

At the last minute a family from Ukraine attended. They are part of the group of hundreds of Sabbatarians we have been visiting and working with for the past 20 years. One major difference between us has been that they had not adopted the annual Holy Days. However, in the past five years many have begun to keep them. On the Feast of Trumpets this past year, 100 of them gathered in the modest Khust, Ukraine, church for the Feast of Trumpets. I have previously invited these people to our Feast in Estonia. This time one of their leading members, Ivan Yurishko, called me and said he wanted to come and be with us in Estonia. At first it seemed like a long-shot because it normally takes two weeks to get a visa from Ukraine to Estonia. But he made a 12-hour train journey to Kiev, applied at the Estonian embassy and had his application expedited. He made it to Saaremaa just before sunset on

opening night of the Feast.

Ivan Yurishko has organized the printing of larger quantities of our literature in Russian and Swedish that we have sent from Estonia and Sweden. He and his family were definitely absorbed in the activities and spirit of the Feast. He said he wanted to see how we keep the Feast so that they can do likewise next year. They already have preliminary plans for Ukrainians to go across the border to Hungary to hold the Feast in 2012.

All sermons were in English and translated by Antra Kikute and Robert Schultz into Latvian; by Artur Aleksandrov into Estonian; and by Natasha Weatherhead and Victor Kubik into Russian and Ukrainian. To see more photos, videos and reports see our festival website at [www.kubik.org/estonia](http://www.kubik.org/estonia).

*Victor Kubik*

## France

### Collonges-la-Rouge

The Feast of Tabernacles 2011 in France took place in Collonges-la-Rouge, with 79 attendees from the United States, Australia, England, the Netherlands, and of course, France. A real spirit of service, humility and love was present and demonstrated by everyone throughout the Feast.

We were blessed with spiritually-rich messages focused on our future responsibilities in the Kingdom of God. We had several visiting ministers including David Fenney from England, Randy Schreiber from Arizona and Dennis Luker, who reminded us of the importance of humble service as an essential quality to enter the Kingdom of God.

Many brethren volunteered their time and efforts so we could have a children's choir, an adult choir and special music every day of the Feast. We also enjoyed wonderful fellowship, overcoming the language barriers by providing the bilingual attendees with a special badge, so people would be able to enlist their help to communicate through translation. Services were both in English and in French with simultaneous translations.

We were blessed with abundant French cuisine and beautiful, warm sunny days. During family day, on the second day of the Feast, we had games and charades prepared by Andrea Spears and designed to help French and English brethren get to know each other. The English-speaking brethren got to introduce themselves in French, and the French brethren learned some English words by introducing themselves in English. On Sunday night, we had a family dance, with the children demonstrating the use of special puppets; some of the French brethren demonstrated some traditional folk dances, while Mr. De Jong from the Netherlands gave us a short dancing

lesson. We also were able to visit a variety of beautiful sites including the Lascaux Cave, the Gouffre de Padirac (a 300-foot-deep large cave with an underwater lake), the pilgrimage site of Rocamadour perched on a rocky mountain side, and the castle Turenne.

Everyone left inspired and very grateful to God for His Feast as we know He is the one who makes it all possible.

*Tim and Maryse Pebworth*

## Germany

### Schluchsee

A total of 228 people from 11 countries gathered to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in the beautiful village of Schluchsee, Germany, in the heart of the Black Forest. Unity, peace, beautiful weather and good fellowship characterized the atmosphere. Messages during the Feast focused on God's plan and the time when all people will be able to live in a secure and happy world. Two interactive Bible studies were conducted for young adults and teenagers, and children participated in special Bible classes during services.

UCG President Dennis Luker and his wife LeeAnn visited Schluchsee on the weekly Sabbath and Sunday. Mr. Luker gave a sermon and met for an informal question-and-answer session with the UCG-Germany National Council.

One baptism took place during the Feast, and the new member was joyfully welcomed by members when the baptism was announced on the Eighth Day.

A variety of activities offered brethren plenty of time for fellowship and enjoyment, starting with a welcome evening after the first Holy Day. For the children, there was an afternoon of "Kegeln" (nine-pin bowling). At their request, the teens again tested their driving skills with go-karts and also competed in a friendly round of Kegeln. Seniors enjoyed each other's company with an interactive Bible study followed by traditional Kaffee and Kuchen ("coffee and cake"). Special events for the ladies were the women's breakfast and an afternoon interactive Bible discussion. The family dance was once again a major highlight for all ages, with live music representing nearly every genre. This year's bus trip was an excursion to the historic city of Constance on Lake Constance. For the athletically inclined, an afternoon of volleyball provided an opportunity for recreation and camaraderie. The week wrapped up with a farewell evening after the Eighth Day.

*Jesmina Allaoua*

## Ghana

### Winneba

Winneba, a historic fishing town lying 35 miles west of



Accra, in the Central Region of Ghana, was the location for this year's Feast of Tabernacles.

The beautiful Windy Lodge provided a meeting hall and accommodation for the members attending the Feast.

The highest attendance of 32 was recorded, including four international guests: two ladies (Lola and Ronke) who transferred from the Lagos, Nigeria, congregation and Fred and Lucretia Kellers from the United States. Mr. Kellers, who assists Mark Mickelson as pastor of the churches in West Africa, served as the guest speaker. The Ghanaian members were particularly appreciative and pleased with this international touch to the Feast.

Attendees enjoyed spiritually uplifting messages and fellowship, which was enhanced by several communal meals paid for by generous U.S. members.

The success of this year's Feast already has members looking forward to next year's Feast.

*Henry Aikins*

## Guatemala

### Lake Atitlan

The Feast was again held by the shores of beautiful Lake Atitlan, some two hours northwest of Guatemala City, Guatemala. Although at the beginning there were problems with some landslides and some were not able to arrive until the next day of the Feast, all the rest of the activities during the Feast were carried out without difficulties.

The high attendance was 186 brethren, and there were two baptisms. Activities included a boat trip around the lake, a ladies' luncheon and family day. Brady and Georgia Veller, who pastor the Miami, Florida, congregation, were there from the States to help Israel Robledo, the pastor in Guatemala. All turned out to be very inspiring and edifying.

*Israel Robledo*

## India

### Agra

There were 25 brethren who rejoiced together in Agra, India, for the Feast this year. Agra is a five-hour drive southeast of New Delhi and is the home of the world-famous and beautiful Taj Mahal.

This year was a very special Feast for many, as this was a "Feast of firsts" for them. This was the first Feast of Tabernacles for 17 of the brethren. Some have attended weekly services for years, but were never able to attend the Feast as the location has been too far away and too expensive for them to attend.

The brethren had services, meals and fellowship together in one location.

Family day included bowling and playing table soccer. This was the first time any of the brethren

had ever bowled, and some had never seen or let alone played a table soccer game. Afterwards we played the "giving game," where we laughed and laughed. Although it is sometimes difficult to communicate with some of the brethren in the Hindi language, smiles and laughter are the same in any language. It was a fun way for us all to get to know one another.

Spiritual messages were much appreciated. The first half of the Feast the brethren heard pre-recorded video messages from Melvin Rhodes and Ken Murray. David and Jolinda Schreiber arrived for the second half of the Feast and Mr. Schreiber continued preaching about the many aspects of the coming Kingdom of God. Comments were made that this Feast enhanced their understanding of God's plan like never before, and it was a wonderful foretaste of the coming Kingdom of God.

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

*David Schreiber*

## Israel

Feastgoers numbering 58 from seven countries gathered in Israel for this year's Feast of Tabernacles—and what an experience! The overall theme of the Feast was what we can learn from the land and history of Israel and Judah and how those lessons translate into the coming Kingdom of God, to be administered from Jerusalem after Jesus Christ's return.

After the group arrived and gathered in Tel Aviv, the first half of the Feast was centered at Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, with the second half in Jerusalem. From these cities we toured the biblical sites of Caesarea Maritima, Mount Carmel, Megiddo, Dan, Caesarea Philippi, Nazareth and the Nazareth Village living history museum, Capernaum, the Mount of the Beatitudes, Hazor, the Jordan River, Beth Shean, En Gedi and the Dead Sea. Other famous nonbiblical sites we visited included Tiberias (where a special treat was a sunset boat ride on the Sea of Galilee), Masada and Qumran.

In Jerusalem we toured the Old City, the Temple Mount, the remains of the Bethesda Pool, the remains of first-century Jerusalem along the southern and western walls of the Temple Mount, the City of David, Hezekiah's Tunnel, the Pool of Siloam, the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Garden Tomb, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Israel Museum. Another highlight was a sound and light show at the Tower of David Museum. Some stayed over an additional two days to visit Jeri-

cho, Hisham's Palace, the Burnt House, Yad Vashem and the Bible Lands Museum.

On-site services, evening Bible studies and messages given on the bus as we traveled between sites added a great deal to our understanding of biblical events that took place at the sites and in the areas we visited. Members' helpful and cooperative attitudes, a highly knowledgeable guide, mild temperatures, a peaceful setting and a pervasive sense of history everywhere we looked truly made this a Feast we will never forget!

*Scott Ashley*

## Italy

### Sabaudia

Our heartfelt thanks goes to all of brethren who celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles with us in Italy. Our Feast hotel hosted 171 people, and our highest attendance was 165 participants from nine different countries: United States of America, United Kingdom, Andorra, Australia, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Norway and of course Italy. Those from Italy who were able to attend the Feast numbered 41. The other Italian brethren couldn't leave their respective families for various reasons, but they are faithful to God and need our prayers.

During the Feast we were spiritually nourished by very inspiring and powerful messages by ministers and senior members. Also, cultural tours to Pompeii, Rome and the Vatican Museums were offered as part of our Feast educational program in relation to ancient Christianity vs. paganism. It was history coming alive before our eyes. Furthermore, we had wonderful weather all eight days of the Feast. This allowed memorable social activities, such as the family day on the beach, then an amusing talent show and an enjoyable evening dance. Brethren of all ages, including singles or families, had the opportunity to renew their long-time friendships as well as to make new friends by spending time in Christian fellowship.

At the end of the Feast there was a send-off towards the blue sky to say "goodbye" to the brethren before their departure from the Feast site—a very moving and unforgettable experience. Letters of appreciation have been sent by many Feast participants. Yet, we are the ones who need to sincerely express our gratefulness for their presence, friendship and support. There are not adequate words to thank all the brethren, adults and children who contributed to a memorable Feast by their presence and spiritual unity once again.

Church services were held in Sabaudia on the first Sabbath after the Feast of Tabernacles. On that occasion, Dennis Luker, President of UCG, and his wife LeeeAnn visited us. To see them and hear their good reports was

very encouraging to all of us. We take this opportunity to thank them for their care towards God's work.

We send our heartfelt thanks to all our brethren and already look forward to the Feast of Tabernacles in 2012.

*Carmelo Anastasi*

## Jamaica

### Ocho Rios

The Jamaican brethren have a word in their Patois language that describes the festival accommodations at the Riu Resort this year—"Irie!"—(pronounced eye-ree), which translates "Excellent!" or "Wonderful!" This was the first year all the Jamaican brethren, many of whom have kept the feast for more than 30 years, were blessed to reside at the same accommodations with the international travelers.

The five-star Riu Resort was all inclusive, with a choice of eight delectable restaurants where we could dine with the brethren, enjoying full-course meals with wine and dessert. Outside activities included swimming in one of the beautiful resort pools; boating and snorkeling in the calm, warm aqua waters of the Caribbean Sea; touring a coconut plantation; climbing the popular Dunn's River Falls; swimming with dolphins; or attempting to ride the challenging zip lines.

The opening night message by our festival coordinator, Chuck Zimmerman, was a reminder of the responsibility God has given each of us, as outlined in Daniel 2. We have the privilege of knowing His "secret dream" and glorious plan, as well as what lies ahead, and we have to share that with others, knowing the dream is certain and sure to come.

Five interactive seminars brought us a greater understanding of God's Word. We were challenged to probe deeper into our beliefs and the importance of being ready to give an answer when defending our faith.

Just prior to the Feast, Dave Kenders and Sue Iverson, who met one year ago at the Feast in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, exchanged marital vows in a quiet ceremony amid the blossoming lily ponds of the Riu Resort's beautiful gardens.

During the Feast on October 17, Jamaica's National Hero's Day, one of our Kingston members, Mrs. Deloris Lewis, was honored for her contribution to the field of education. Mrs. Lewis, a resident of Ellerslie Gardens, Spanish Town, St. Catherine, is principal of the Ellerslie Gardens Basic School. It's believed this is the first time a basic school teacher has been honored in such a way. We were also able to rejoice with the angels as Janette Blake from Rochester, New York, was baptized in the Caribbean Sea.

After Mr. Zimmerman's message on the last Holy Day, we

lifted our glasses and toasted, "To the Kingdom!"

*Chuck Zimmerman*

## Kenya

### Migori and Ogembo

A total of 445 brethren gathered at two church-owned Feast sites in Western Kenya to celebrate the coming of Christ's rule on the earth. The abundance of physical food and replenishing rains during the region's prolonged drought provided attendees with a visible contrast between the present evil age and the Millennium to come. Camping in tents provided ample lodging for most members, while their meals were all prepared by local professionals using animals and foodstuffs brought by the attendees and purchased by the church. Spiritual food included admonition to keep God's laws fully while maturing into like-minded children suitable for the bride of Christ. International guests stayed in rented quarters and attended some services at both sites which gave them the opportunity to meet everyone. Post-Feast safaris offered game drives to the Kenyan national parks of Masai Mara, Amboseli and Lake Nakuru. All the brethren from Kenya and Tanzania express their warmest welcome to future visitors with "Karibu Sana."

*John Elliott*

## Malawi

### Lake Malawi

More than 135 people attended the Feast of Tabernacles in a beautiful air-conditioned hall at Sunbird Nkopola Lodge. Nkopola Lodge is the premier beachside resort on South-Western Lake Malawi and one of the very best places from which to enjoy the attractions of the remarkably beautiful lake shore. This year we were blessed with fine, cool weather in the first five days of the Feast as opposed to the normal hot weather during this time of the year.

The opening sermon delivered by Shannon Lucas, our guest speaker from the United States, reminded the Feastgoers why they were there to observe the Feast of Tabernacles. His other subsequent sermons were powerful and inspiring, painting a picture of the Kingdom of God and our future in that Kingdom, with an added focus on preparations we need to make in our lives for that Kingdom. The local speakers also delivered uplifting sermons and sermonettes about Christ's Millennial rule and urged the people to rekindle their desire to be there with Christ in His Kingdom.

The highlights of activities included sack racing, tug of peace, football, netball and swimming on family day. The baptism of three people in the lake with the whole church observing was



a marvel to behold. The teens had a good time participating in manning the church service on youth day, showcasing their potential leadership skills as future leaders of the Church. Later in the afternoon, the teens enjoyed a beef barbecue with soft drinks. The young ones below the age of 12 were given a special treat of ice cream and some goodies and gifts. Singles had a delicious dinner at a local restaurant.

Excitement and enthusiasm were present everywhere during the Feast. The 18 senior citizens enjoyed a delicious dinner at the hotel. One evening was host to a marriage seminar, where proper intimacy for married couples was expounded upon to expel cultural taboos that prohibit full enjoyment of family life. Singles and teens had their Bible studies on separate evenings as well. On four occasions, a traditional group catering was done to foster interaction and deep fellowship between the brethren. For other meals, a cow was slaughtered and Feastgoers enjoyed delicious meals together while fellowshiping. It was wonderful.

The talent show was outstanding this year, with the selection of music, dances, Bible verse recitals and comedy. The Feast video added a vivid view into our past as a church that left everyone inspired and excited as we focus our trek to the Kingdom of God. Special music was excellent this year with Shannon Lucas performing a wonderful solo, the church choir, Lilongwe Church Quartet and the all women choir doing what they know best with beautiful melodies.

To crown it all, Feastgoers had a rare opportunity to visit the game park, a two-hour drive from the Feast site. Wild animals such as elephants, buffalos, water bucks, rhinos and antelopes were seen in their natural habitat, which was very thrilling to the young ones who saw animals for the first time in their lives.

The general consensus was that this year's Feast of Tabernacles will go down in history as one of the best, with most inspiring sermons and exciting activities.

*Gracious Mpilangwe*

## Mexico

### Puerto Vallarta

What a wonderful place Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, turned out to be for an all-inclusive Feast! There were 235 brethren—65 from Mexico and 170 from the U.S., Canada, Australia, Holland and Chile—that all met at the Hotel Friendly Vallarta, a beach-front hotel with numerous pools, Jacuzzis and a large meeting hall. It was a blessing, as the Mexican brethren were able to enjoy the all-inclusive meals and drinks along with the international visitors. The sunny weather and warm ocean were a delight to all. Through earnest prayers, a men-

acing hurricane before the Feast was broken up by God just in time, and we were able to fulfill all the activities without a hitch.

The highest attendance was 230, and activities included a fun-filled pirate cruise to a secluded beach where the crew provided kayaks, banana boats and entertainment while many went snorkeling and then ate a delicious lunch of chicken and fillet mignon brochettes. The pirate cruise package also included a city and shopping tour on Sunday.

At the Hotel Friendly, three shows were provided free of charge—a Mexican show with dancers, a Latin show at the beach with Italian food provided, and later a circus show with amazing acrobatics. Other activities included a family dance, a seniors luncheon, a ladies breakfast and a childrens costume party. One of the key features of the Feast was the delicious buffet meals served around the clock by professional chefs and friendly waiters. An Italian restaurant onsite was also free of charge on the evenings when it was open.

The messages were very inspiring and looked forward to the coming Millennium. A Bible study and a teen/young adults seminar were provided. The beauty of Puerto Vallarta served as a fitting setting for both a physical and spiritual Feast that was filled with inspiring messages, warm fellowship and enjoyable memories.

*Mario Seiglie*

## New Zealand

### Mount Maunganui

“Kia ora” (Maori greeting meaning be well/healthy) from beautiful Mount Maunganui, New Zealand, where 67 members from New Zealand, Australia and the United States gathered to rejoice together in unity and harmony.

The Feast was enthusiastically started on the opening night with a welcoming message discussing the “Give Way” from Daniel Porteous, who will be relocating from the United States to New Zealand as pastor in early December.

The first Holy Day saw messages from Paul Vaughan, elder from Bacchus Marsh, Australia, and Grant Chick, festival coordinator and pastor of three congregations in Queensland, Australia. The service was followed immediately by a meet-and-greet, where all the members stayed and shared snacks together.

Barry Korthuis, elder from Colorado Springs, Colorado, provided the members with a thought-provoking message to ensure that they finish the race they have started. The Feast video was enthusiastically received giving all gathered the encouragement and desire to pursue the Kingdom of God.

Other activities included an evening of fun playing chocolate bingo, a family picnic and a deli-

cious three course lunch for all between services on the Eighth Day.

*Grant Chick*

## Nigeria

### Ago-Iwoye

The Feast in Nigeria was great, and everyone agreed it was indeed the “best Feast ever.” We have had Feast sites at various places, but none equaled the quality of the rooms and constant power that made this the best. The environment was a quiet town called Ago-Iwoye in the western part of Nigeria, Ogun State.

The total attendance was 105. A number of brethren scattered throughout Nigeria could not attend for various reasons. We were able to start the opening night service with 97 in attendance, with the rest arriving early the middle of the next day.

On the afternoon of the first Holy Day, I ordained Paul Ogundipe to the responsibilities and office of deacon. Mr. Ogundipe was born in the Church and has, along with several others, helped to make my responsibilities lighter with his selfless and willing assistance in the care of the Lagos congregation.

With monetary gifts from friends in the United States, we were able to have soft drinks added to several meals, as well as enriched family fun day and night activities. We also organized and held a special dinner for the senior citizens, honoring them and recognizing their faithfulness and example of commitment to the truth over the years since they were called. All except two have been in the Church for over 30 years. The rest of the brethren were also able to have a higher level of food quality based on the assistance sent. Children's day saw the children being able to enjoy playing, singing, dancing, watching an animated movie, being given special treats in snacks, canned drinks, balloons and a series of goodies.

Two young ladies provided a Feast cake in shape of a Bible with “Happy FOT” written on it. We ate the “word” of God in another way besides through the messages and personal Bible studies!

The children ages 2-13 years had an exciting Bible lesson every morning at the Feast. Beautiful teaching aids and keepsakes to drive home the lessons and help it stick in the minds of the children made the whole experience for them and the teachers a great one.

All the services were held in a fully air-conditioned hall. Every once in a while we turned the A/C off, as people are not used to cool weather. We ate lunch and dinner in the hall together. The festival senior and junior choir rendered several special songs to the glory of God and edification of the brethren.

On the Eighth Day, we had four baptisms, one of whom was a

young man who responded to the Kingdom of God seminar invitation. At the end of the Feast, we were a sober but happy group, thankful for the inspiration given to the messages, the excellent facility and the fellowship of the brethren.

*Oludare Akinbo*

## Philippines

### Baguio City

Baguio City was once again one of the two Feast of Tabernacles sites for the United Church of God here in the Philippines. For the 11th consecutive year, the Feast was held at the conference hall of the “Ang Ating Tahanan” grounds of the Girl Scout of the Philippines located in Baguio City.

The Feast started out with an opening night service being delivered by the festival coordinator. We were expecting an attendance of only about 110 this year, but were pleasantly surprised to have our highest attendance reach 115 on the Eighth Day, surpassing our expectation! We had a good number of overseas brethren who kept the Feast and rejoiced with us, coming from Australia and the United States.

We were blessed with very wonderful weather conditions during the entire Feast—beautiful sunshine and a few scattered rain showers just to cool the day. We were also privileged to have with us for the first half of the Feast Earl Roemer. Mr. Roemer spoke in the afternoon of the first day of the Feast, and he expounded on the meaning of peace and how true peace can be established here on earth when righteousness reigns. For the second half of the Feast we were joined by David Dobson, who spent the first half of the Feast in the Davao Festival site.

The messages were all uplifting, inspiring and encouraging, especially the Feast video.

The festival show this year was held on the fifth day of the Feast. It featured songs and dances from a number of countries around the world. Featured as well were a number of Filipino songs, music and classic folk dances like the famous “Tinikling.” 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 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 loved to sing and dance, we also had a “videoke” night and a dance night as well.

In addition to the fine fellowship, rejoicing, fun times and inspiring messages the brethren shared, we all felt a greater level of unity, love and togetherness. And so the just-concluded Feast of Tabernacles 2011 will be remem-

bered as the most positive and spiritually uplifting Feast ever.

*Rey Evasco*

### Davao City

This was a Feast of miracles! Typhoon Ramon was expected to hit landfall as our 37 Leyte brethren from the Visayas were scheduled to cross by ferry to Mindanao Island. Their chartered bus in Leyte cancelled its trip. I instructed them to proceed by all means to Port San Ricardo at the tip of Leyte Island, where the municipal government unexpectedly hosted them to a free dinner! As soon as the typhoon passed, miraculously, God provided an unchartered bus to seat all of them!

On the return trip after the Feast, in spite of all efforts, they missed their scheduled bus. But God provided for them an air-conditioned bus, which arrived at their destination even earlier!

Another miracle involved our 11 Banisilan brethren, who all jammed into a small pick-up truck headed for the Feast. About five hours drive away from Davao, their vehicle ran off the road, hit and toppled a coconut tree, then slammed into another tree before flipping onto its side. The windshield was shattered and the steering wheel destroyed. Most of their loose baggage were thrown out, including one little child; and the plastic chairs they carried were shattered. The consistent question of passers-by was: How many were killed? Thank God, miraculously, apart from some minor bruises, no life was lost and they arrived on the opening night of the Feast!

The Davao Festival site hosted about 420 attendees, including our Festival speakers from the U.S., David and Denise Dobson for the first half and Earl and Carol Roemer for the second half of the Feast.

Beginning with the opening night service, the momentum of powerful and inspiring messages continued to encourage and edify the brethren to the last day. God blessed us with good weather, beautiful stage setting with creative daily arrangements of fresh flowers and warm and joy-filled camaraderie and fellowshiping among brethren—young and old—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 and an informative Bible Q&A on the Sabbath afternoon conducted by festival coordinator Edmond Macaraeg and David Dobson.

Evening activities included a fellowship night, a colorful and entertaining variety show and a

**Continued on Page 15**



# Feast of Tabernacles 2011



**Merimbula, Australia**



**Rockingham, Australia**



**Sunshine Coast, Australia**



**Ulverstone, Tasmania**



**Benin**



**Bolivia**



**Brazil**



**British Isles**



**Douala, Cameroon**





**Canmore, Canada**



**Collingwood, Canada**



**Prince Edward Island, Canada**



**Chile**



**Colombia**



**Congo**



**Estonia**



**France**



**Germany**



**Ghana**



**Guatemala**



**India**



**Israel**





**Italy**



**Jamaica**



**Kenya**



**Malawi**



**Mexico**



**New Zealand**



**Nigeria**



**Baguio City, Philippines**



**Davao City, Philippines**



**Portugal**



**South Africa**



**Sri Lanka**



**Togo**



**Tobago**





**Bend, Oregon**



**Branson, Missouri**



**Escondido, California**



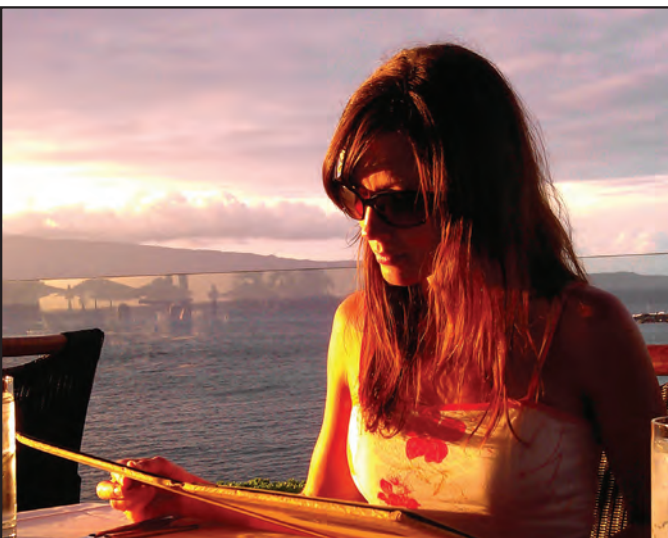
**Galveston, Texas**



**Gatlinburg, Tennessee**



**Jekyll Island, Georgia**



**Lahaina, Hawaii**



**Panama City Beach, Florida**



**Steamboat Springs, Colorado**



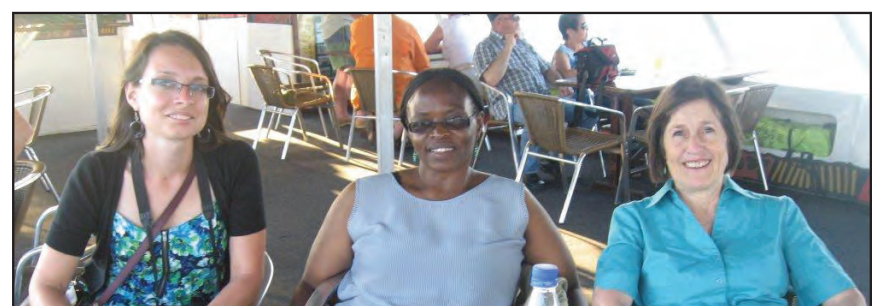
**Virginia Beach, Virginia**



**Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin**



**Zambia**



**Zimbabwe**



church leaders dinner in appreciation for their help in serving the congregations in Mindanao and the Visayas Islands. For the fifth year, we also had practical Christianity sessions in the evenings conducted by Mr. Macaraeg, with each evening devoted to different groups: teens, singles and married couples.

Thanks to some donations, we had special blessings—a free daily lunch for everyone, two roasted calves served on the first and last day, breakfast food items distributed to the families and other gift items.

Significantly, we had two elder ordinations: Jose Campos of Leyte Island and Merlito Tonog of Kidapawan City. Like last Feast, we had 11 baptisms, and 11 little children were also blessed.

In summary, the very inspiring messages, the fun-filled activities and the warm family atmosphere created an inviting foretaste of the glorious coming Kingdom of God. We are very thankful to God for all these great and wonderful blessings and interventions. Not a few have said that this was their best Feast ever. As we strive to continuously improve, we look forward to another “best Feast ever” again next year.

*Edmond and Daniel Macaraeg*

## Portugal

### Costa da Caparica

The quaint fishing village of Costa da Caparica was, for the seventh year, the venue for the Feast of Tabernacles in Portugal. Above-average temperatures welcomed 56 brethren from Belgium, England, Scotland, the Netherlands, Ireland, the U.S. and Portugal.

Services were held in English each day with a Portuguese translation for the Portuguese brethren. Split sermons were also given in Portuguese with an English translation. The World Tomorrow and God’s Kingdom was woven throughout the daily messages given. Love, forgiveness and the meaning of the Eighth Day were also topics that were added to the meaning of the Feast. Special music and the festival choir added a special touch to each day’s service.

The tours to Sintra, Guincho, Mafra and Obidos offered an opportunity to view the surrounding Lisbon area. A highlight of the Sintra tour was going up the winding mountainside to view the Pena Palace. Besides offering a spectacular view from the top, it is steeped in history and gave an interesting background of the Portuguese royal nobility. Another tour highlight included tasting the delectable cherry liquor in Obidos. A dinner evening at *Timpapas* presented typical Portuguese food and music (called Fado).

Other Feast activities included a ladies’ breakfast, seniors’ lun-

cheon and family day at the park.

As our tradition at the end of every Feast in Portugal, we all gathered on the pier in front of the hotel on the Eighth Day to watch the sunset and say our final good-byes. Adeus Lisboa!

*Jorge and Kathy de Campos*

## South Africa

### Margate

The general opinion of all present was that the Feast went off exceptionally well. The abundance of well-priced accommodation along the warm Indian Ocean, a new 6-month-old hall with acoustics that favor music and singing, the presence of overseas visitors, an exceptional atmosphere that was remarked on continually, the absence of problems and a very limited amount of illness contributed to that feeling. Several members of other groups also attended from time to time and enjoyed the prevailing spirit of love, fellowship and general happiness and high spirits.

Special music was outstanding and was coordinated by David Payne, an elder from the U.K. The Diggins family from the U.S. as well as the Mazibuko family from Durban, South Africa, excelled and combined the American and African styles of music to good advantage.

Activities were popular and were well supported, including go-kart racing for the young and not so young, welcome and farewell barbecues, a visit to a game reserve, the longest zip-line slide in Africa, a seniors lunch, a family dance and a catered lunch for all on the Eighth Day of the Feast.

The messages were inspiring, of the highest quality and were directed at the meaning of this wonderful time that we all long for.

The highest attendance was 90, and the offerings were excellent. They will be put to good use in doing God’s work in South Africa.

The same hall has been secured for 2012, and we look forward to more overseas visitors. In spite of the bad publicity South Africa often experiences overseas, I am not aware of one incident of crime or unpleasantness affecting a Feastgoer this past Feast.

A special mention of thanks to our behind-the-scenes workers, especially for the beautiful hall decoration, security and general management of the hall. My thanks to all the wonderful people who attended and made this a most memorable Feast and a wonderful end to a most challenging and difficult year.

*Roy Demont*

## Sri Lanka

### Mahawaskaduwa, Kalutara

There were 25 brethren who joyfully kept the Feast of Tabernacles in Sri Lanka on the beauti-

ful coastline of Mahawaskaduwa, Kalutara, Sri Lanka.

The Feast was held at the Mermaid Hotel, where all the brethren stayed, worshiped and ate meals together. The oneness was encouraging.

The Feast began with a welcome message from Dave Schreiber and a DVD opening sermon from Melvin Rhodes, who was unable to come to the Feast in Sri Lanka.

A special event was the baptism of three ladies who eagerly wanted to follow God and turn their lives over to Him. In a world of so many Buddhists and Hindus, this is a major commitment to know *one* God and they are so thankful to have come to know Him and His awesome plan for all mankind.

The Sri Lankan brethren are very musically talented, and they shared their gifts with all of us at the variety show, which was very enjoyable. The evening was completed with a family dance. Two men, one from Singapore and one from Canada, contributed to the Feast by sharing their many years of experience in the Church and also their talents of poetry, singing and dance with all their Sri Lankan brothers and sisters.

Dave and Jolinda Schreiber enjoyed spending the first half of the Feast with the Sri Lankan brethren before departing for India. The second half of the Feast, the Sri Lankan brethren learned from pre-recorded messages about the coming Kingdom of God sent to them from Ken Murray of Australia and Melvin Rhodes.

If you want to travel internationally, the warm and loving Sri Lankan brethren will welcome you to worship with them next year at the Feast of Tabernacles!

*Dave Schreiber*

## Tobago

### Crown Point

Brethren from Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the U.S. celebrated the Feast together, enjoying very inspiring messages that vividly portrayed various aspects of Christ’s return, His millennial reign and how to stay on the path to His Kingdom. In addition, brethren enjoyed a variety of activities, including a boat trip to the Buccoo Reef, family day at the beach, a ladies’ tea and a gentlemen’s “beer summit.” The highlight of the Feast was “Trinbago Night.” The Trinidad and Tobago brethren prepared delicious local foods, a steel drum band performed, and there was dancing. The evening was topped off by a talent show, and there was much enjoyment and laughter as everyone displayed their talents and sense of humor.

The festival choir, although small, provided powerful and inspiring pieces, as did the individual performers.

Overall, there was an incredible spirit of peace and unity at this

small Feast site. Many brethren noted this, and several remarked it was their best Feast ever. Inspiring messages, precious brethren full of God’s spirit, love and a humble desire to serve one another, front-row views of a calm, blue sea and lovely tropical flowers—it was no wonder many tears were shed as we sang that last song and prepared to go our separate ways for another year. May God speed the fulfillment of the beautiful plan these days portray!

*Chuck Smith*

## Togo

### Kpalimé

The Feast of Tabernacles took place this year in Kpalimé, one of the tourist sites of Togo. This town is situated at the foot of a mountain range, 75 miles from the capital Lome. During our stay, we received some beneficial rains, which gave us a mild climate. Kpalimé is also one of the agricultural regions of the country and it was the harvest season for yams, cassava, maize and various fruits such as oranges, pineapples and bananas. So we had enough of a variety of foods for the whole Feast.

The site, located on the outskirts of the city, is a technical college built on over 10 hectares. One of the buildings is a dormitory, which we rented for our stay. One area of the building served as our church hall for services.

We were 35 people: 19 adults and 16 children.

For the first time since the beginning of UCG, we had visiting a pastor and his wife during the Feast. Fred Kellers and his wife spent three days with us. Their stay was facilitated by the translation of sermons provided by Eyram Fiaboe, a young man who has his license in English.

We were overwhelmed with joy because we were now certain that we were not longer isolated from the rest of our brothers and sisters scattered around the world. Mr. Kellers and his wife had not come empty-handed. They gave us money to buy a generator and a mini audio system for the congregation of Mome-Hagou, located 56 miles from the capital. This will allow them to listen to sermons and learn the new hymns.

Mr. Kellers also financially assisted the widows and orphans who are in the church. Before leaving, he and his wife offered us a lunch in one of the great hotels of the town. It was with a sad heart that we said our goodbyes on the seventh day of the Feast.

After services and the pastor’s sermons, we also had Bible games, skits and religious films during some afternoons and evenings. I can say without a doubt that the Feast was a complete success, and it was with regret that we had to say goodbye, hoping to see each other again next year at the same site.

*Kossi Fiaboé*

## Tonga

There were 10 happy brethren who kept the Feast in the Kingdom of Tonga. They met in a tabernacle built on a family property. Songs were sung *a cappella*, with the song leaders being deacon Frank Osika or one of his sons Alfred and Edward. They enjoyed sermon DVDs from previous Feasts in Australia. They were really blessed that the Feast DVD arrived in time for the eight days of the Feast.

They enjoyed a family Feast with a clearer understanding of God’s great Kingdom coming to the earth.

We began the *Beyond Today* television program two months ago in Tonga three Sundays a month at 6:30 p.m., just before the news. Please pray that the *Beyond Today* television program bears much fruit over the coming year.

*Bruce Dean*

## United States

### Bend-Redmond, Oregon

Over 700 Feastgoers enjoyed another wonderful Feast in beautiful Central Oregon. Despite the lower attendance compared to previous years, the quality of messages, music and fellowship was as good as ever. Those who were given first time opportunities of service are especially to be commended for doing a great job.

God blessed us with warm, sunny fall weather throughout the Feast with temperatures in the 65-70 degree range.

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 by 250 and 378 respectively. Family day was held at a pumpkin ranch that featured a corn maze, petting zoo, train ride, miniature golf and pumpkin cannon.

A total of 1,385 pounds of food and \$2,950 cash were donated to the local food bank. Since the food bank is able to feed someone on only a dollar a day, this will provide much-needed help in this down economy.

Speaking of food, although one of the favorite restaurants that catered to our dietary needs went out of business prior to the Feast, three other nearby restaurants offered special prices and special pork-free menu items and were overwhelmed with business. They were impressed by the positive example of our members!

*Larry Walker*

### Branson, Missouri

God provided a wonderful setting and inspired an uplifting mood for the 648 brethren celebrating the Feast in Branson, Missouri. Our focus was on brethren dwelling together in unity. This emphasis was displayed throughout the Feast as everyone worked together in harmony, preparing the auditorium and stage for dai-



ly services. Members exhibited an attitude of peace and contentment as they fellowshiped. 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, our coming King. We were encouraged to be dedicated to our calling and to move forward as Christian soldiers. We enjoyed gaining a vision of the World Tomorrow and heard messages regarding cooperation, harmony, humility, meekness and conviction.

Activities were very well attended. The seniors' luncheon received rave reviews as the food was exceptional, and all enjoyed "Name that Tune," hosted by Gerald and Connie Seelig. Another highlight was our Bible study on Friday evening presented by Mitchell Knapp. He explained how extensively the fall Holy Days are intricately woven throughout the book of Psalms. Everyone in attendance enjoyed the seminar presented by Don Ward on "Jerusalem: Past, Present and Future."

Members and ministers alike worked together in unity, peace and cooperation.

*Joe and Pat Dobson*

### Escondido, California

The 500 brethren who assembled together in the lovely Conference Center for the California Center of the Arts in Escondido, California, heard 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. Robin Webber opened the festival by encouraging us to "Build our Succoth on the Rock (Jesus Christ)" and to be sure we were focused on our spiritual vocation as a "kingdom of priests in training" and not simply experiencing a vacation. Gary Antion encouraged us to consider how applying just one principle such as the "Golden Rule" (Do unto others, as you would have done unto you) in the World Tomorrow is going to have an impact on society, and then offered step-by-step methods as how to practice this during the present Feast. Joe Horchak encouraged us to consider the words of Isaiah that instruct us to "Comfort My people" (Isaiah 40:1)—we are to appreciate the experiences we are going through now for the purpose to share with others during the Millennium. We had a number of non-salaried elders and deacons who really stepped up to offering spiritual meat during this week. The special night-time Bible study was conducted by Mr. Webber. He offered a presentation entitled "Three Gardens With One Purpose," which compared the Garden of Eden with the garden-like setting of Revelation 22 and tied it together with Jesus Christ's words in the Garden of Gethsemane of, "Not my will, but your will be

done." On the Eighth Day festival, Mr. Webber explored the realm of eternity and Mr. Antion explained the depth and breath of God's desire to resurrect His special creation. He concluded by encouraging the brethren to "be here next year!"

The Escondido Feast site experienced eight straight days of pleasant autumn weather hovering around the low 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*

### Galveston, Texas

More than 500 were uplifted by inspiring messages at the Feast in Galveston. God's great plan of salvation, culminating in the Great White Throne Judgment, was thoroughly reviewed once again.

Don Ward preached on both the opening night and first Holy Day. He spoke about our reason for being—to become as God is, because God is love. The unity chapter of 1 Corinthians 12 and the love chapter of 1 Corinthians 13 were stressed. It was emphasized that the greatest gift of all is godly love.

The special music, coordinated by Richard Kmodras, also contributed to an atmosphere of godly worship. We heard from a choir of about 40 brethren and solo performances as well. The children's choir, directed by Tammy Foster, was also a key part of the special music.

The brethren, who came in from many parts of the world, pitched in and contributed a lot of their time and effort to make the Feast enjoyable for everyone. God's spirit of love, peace and unity were evident on a daily basis.

The highest daily attendance for services was 526. Family day attendance showed that 372 went to Moody Gardens, a natu-

ral theme park, and 125 went to Schlitterbahn Water Park (on a different day) as well.

God blessed us with fabulous weather. The locals said that the beach was the cleanest they have seen in a long time. The senior citizens luncheon was held in the foyer of the main hall. With huge picture windows facing the Gulf, the view was spectacular.

It was clearly evident that throughout the Feast, God's protection and spiritual guidance was with us.

*Vince Szymkowiak*

### Gatlinburg, Tennessee

The United Church of God's Feast site in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, was beautiful. The leaves were turning red and gold, yet the weather for the majority of the Feast was warm and pleasant. Our largest attendance was 1,285, recorded on the first Holy Day, and the attendance stayed strong through the entire Feast. In fact, all the scheduled activities in Gatlinburg were extremely well attended.

The meeting facility was the best I have seen for a festival location. The meeting room was spacious and beautiful. The other rooms we used were new and bright. If there was a negative, it would be that Gatlinburg is popular this time of the year, and the traffic and parking were difficult on the weekend.

The messages were inspiring and uplifting. While they focused on the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day, the information was helpful for our present development as 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 special. The soloists performed well and the Gatlinburg Festival Choir was one of the largest and most talented I have seen in recent years. Their music was both energizing and inspiring. Some of the best I have heard.

Speaking of music, something special happened this year in Gatlinburg. We had a Charitable Concert for our "Good Works Program" put on by the Myers brothers (Skip, Steve and John). The idea to have such a concert began germinating about three months ago and ended up being a smashing success. See the full report on the night on page 22.

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

*Frank McCrady*

### Jekyll Island, Georgia

More Feasts of Tabernacles have been celebrated on Jekyll Island than at any other modern-day location. Tens of thousands of people since 1963, when the first Feast of Tabernacles was held here, have gone home saying,

"This was the best Feast ever!" A common refrain among those who celebrated the Feast on Jekyll in 2011 was the same: "This was the best Feast ever!"

We had picture-perfect weather almost every day and a beautiful, comfortable and quite functional temporary meeting center. Nestled into the beautiful garden-like setting of Millionaires' Village on the historic Jekyll Club Hotel campus, our "temporary booth" proved to be the perfect setting for more than 400 happy and joyful people, most of whom stayed long after services each day to enjoy fellowship with each other.

Feast messages were inspiring and motivational, focusing on the coming Millennium and Kingdom of God. Along with special music, performed most days by the Jekyll Festival Choir, daily services were marked by attentiveness and a feeling that we were all "in one place and of one accord."

The physical aspect of the Feast was also served well on the island. The first-ever games night was a big success, as people gathered together to play group games and favorite games they brought from home with new friends and spiritual family they just met. More than 300 attended family day, held in the brand new Great Dunes Park, with its beautiful beach pavilion overlooking the wide, white sandy beaches. A picnic lunch of hamburgers, hot dogs, fruit and vegetables preceded activities that included football, a scavenger hunt, kite-making and flying, a sand castle building contest and just enjoying time at the beach.

As usual, the senior citizens banquet was well-received, this year being held in the beautiful new Morgan Center. Group horseback rides on the beach, group dolphin tours, a family dance in the Morgan Center featuring a popular live local band and a Feast 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!

During the Feast, one new member was added to God's family. Everyone rejoiced in her baptism, which seemed to make the Feast "complete." We are thankful to God for the experience of the Feast of Tabernacles each year. This year, God blessed us at Jekyll 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

With its idyllic beaches, swaying palm trees and cool breezes, Maui greeted 574 brethren keeping God's Feast this year in Hawaii. The Feast began by giving us a vision of the events of the millennium ahead, and our enthusiasm continued to build as God supplied a great spiritual Feast of messages for His people through to the Eighth Day.

We had the privilege of having many elders attending with us, including Aaron Dean and Peter Eddington from the home office.

There were also many other learning activities, including a Bible study for the teens: "Plan for the Best Life Ever" given by Phillip Aust, and a young adults seminar on "Young Adults Serving in the Church" presented by Randy D'Alessandro. Also a special Bible study titled "The King of the South" was given by Rex Sexton.

We also had the privilege once again of meeting in the Maui Theatre which hosts the well-known show *Ulalena*, a beautiful depiction of Hawaii's history. The outstanding special music of the Feast choir and other delightful vocal solo performances were enhanced in this auditorium. Seniors enjoyed a special luncheon in their honor at Longhi's Restaurant, located very close to the auditorium in downtown Old Lahaina. The young adults and singles had a nice get-acquainted reception at the Aston Papakea Resort Molokai cabana overlooking the blue waters of the Pacific. The teens and pre-teens gathered for a special activity at the Golf and Sports Park. Activities there included miniature golf, bumper boats, rock climbing and an extreme trampoline. An authentic Hawaiian luau was attended by 370 brethren at the Hyatt Regency. A fine fare of food included shoyu chicken, island fish and other Hawaiian treats. Hawaiian dancers and musicians demonstrated some of the music of old Hawaii and Polynesia. The show was highlighted by a fire knife dance.

Over 200 brethren attended the family dance at the Lahaina Civic Center, where brethren could fellowship and enjoy the music of the evening.

Family day took place at the scenic Kapalua Beach, where brethren snorkeled, swam, sunned on the beach or simply enjoyed the view on one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. God blessed us with peace and the encouragement of what He has prepared for us in the future. We are very thankful for God's mercy and blessings that we can rejoice and be together another year!

*Jim Tuck*

### Panama City Beach, Florida

"We haven't had a Feast like this in years!" remarked a member to me at the end of the Feast. Another member wrote me a note that in part reads, "I have never written a Feast coordinator before. This Feast was special. I think the church is finally after all these many years becoming spiritually mature. Thank you for a wonderful Feast."

Although 857 registered for the 2011 Feast at Panama City Beach, we had 882 as the two highest attendances! The weather was perfect—sunny skies, emer-



ald green waters and white sugar sands. We had only one day of rain, which helped us appreciate the great natural setting. Comfortable temperatures averaged around 80 degrees during the day and the evenings cooled down to the 50s. The joyous attitudes were pervasive and contagious, reflecting brightly in the faces of happy, secure and peaceful brethren.

The messages were encouraging, uplifting and thoughtful. The attendance figures for services remained high throughout the Feast, and the activities were very well attended. The teens and young adults each enjoyed two hospitality events. A dance for teens, young adults and families were very well attended. We had good attendance at the teen, young adult and regular adult Bible studies.

The family day activity was held at Rock-it! Lanes and 279 people rocked the house with skating, bowling and pool tables. The church honored 179 seniors with a great buffet meal held at Captain Jack's Buffet, a perennial favorite.

Let me share some of the brethren's expressions about the Feast in Panama City Beach in 2011: "What a wonderful Feast we had! Thank you for all the prep you handled." "WOW! WOW! WOW! This was HANDS DOWN THE BEST FEAST EVER!" "My wife and I didn't get a chance to talk to you at the Feast. The feeling of unity and the messages were so inspiring. We heard several folks say that it was the best Feast ever. We wanted to thank you and all who served to make God's Feast such a spiritually strengthening and enjoyable event for all."

Although we had over 1,000 chairs in the Grand Ballroom, the high attendance seemed to fill the room. We also welcomed visitors from other groups nearly every day. Finally, for those who have never enjoyed this Emerald Coast

Paradise, we welcome you to join us in 2012!

*Jerold Aust*

## Steamboat Springs, Colorado

For the ninth consecutive year, Steamboat Springs provided a successful and spiritually-beneficial Feast of Tabernacles. Nearly-perfect temperatures and weather accompanied each day with nice fall foliage too. There was only one day with rain and snow at the higher elevations.

Many comments from brethren praised both the messages and the intimacy of this site. Smaller attendance than normal allowed a number of activities to be planned at the last minute with input from those interested in participating.

An attitude of volunteering to help with whatever needs there were permeated the group in all age brackets.

For family day, a bowling alley was rented for our exclusive use. Two lanes were reserved for the teens and the rest were shared with all members. Included were pizza and a taco bar. Non-bowlers attended, with over 65% of the entire Feast group joining the fun.

Other activities for the teens, preteens, singles and young adults developed as the Feast progressed. For the senior citizens luncheon, volunteer entertainment made it special. Entertainers of all ages included musicians, singers, a teen juggler and a preteen martial arts exhibition.

An enjoyable Saturday night family dance included numerous attempts at karaoke. A variety of music appealed to all age groups. A balanced level of scheduled activities along with discretionary time gave all the opportunity to make it a great Feast.

*Charles Melear*

## Virginia Beach, Virginia

For the first time at the beautiful Virginia Beach, Virginia,

Feast site, 476 brethren rejoiced together in unity and appreciation. One member said the Feast in Virginia Beach could be summed up with these two words: "one accord." This is because brethren enjoyed the unifying fellowship among themselves and were of like minds. Many brethren came from far and wide to attend God's Feast days, and they joined together in Christ-like service, which contributed to the overall atmosphere of joy.

The theme of many messages focused on keeping the vision of God's Kingdom alive, pressing toward the Kingdom of God and continuing to do the work God has given us to do. In addition, there were many positive comments in regard to the Feast video.

The festival choir, children's choir, various soloists and instrumentalists all contributed to outstanding special music each day.

Activities included a seniors luncheon, various on-site mixers, a teen beach outing, family dance, family day at an outdoor park, plus three Bible studies. Historical sites abound in this area, including Jamestown, Williamsburg, Yorktown and Norfolk. The weather was delightful, with temperatures in the 70s and 80s, and only part of one day was rainy.

Many brethren enjoyed staying at various hotels and rental homes on the beach. Additional housing included a hotel across the street from where services were conducted each day. The Sandler Center for the Performing Arts was a perfect venue for conducting services. It offered nice seating, a convenient location, plenty of breakout rooms and the acoustics were superb.

We all rejoiced before God during these eight days, mindful of His calling to eternal life and the responsibility we have in fulfilling His will in our lives. Brethren rejoiced with one another and agreed that the Feast was healing

and provided the spiritual shot in the arm that we all needed.

*Steve Nutzman*

## Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

The Feast of Tabernacles in the Wisconsin Dells this year was truly an inviting family and serving environment. More than 700 members of God's family listened to God-focused messages, were inspired by uplifting music and enjoyed the fall colors and temperatures that is the Wisconsin Dells. The overall schedule this year was lightened in activities to allow for more family and fellowship time, which contributed to a relaxing Feast with time to focus on the meaning God has in store for these days.

High attendance was 783 on the weekly Sabbath, with the average attendance for the week staying right around 740. Once again the Dells provided large cards for members to sign for those members who could not make it to the Feast. Additionally, members contributed 770 pounds of non-perishable food items and more than \$700 to a local food bank. The family dance and teen/young adult dances were combined on the same night for lively dancing and plenty of fellowship. The seniors were once again invited to a wonderful luncheon with great fellowship and recognition of their years of faithfulness to God's way of life. One new event this year was a display of artwork done by members—paintings, sculptures, knitting, photography, stained glass and more were all on display for others to admire. The whole week was peaceful and harmonious, which only added to the meaning of the week.

God truly blessed us with a joyful Feast of Tabernacles in Wisconsin Dells.

*Dan Dowd*

## Zambia

### Lusaka West

On opening night a total of 171 brethren arrived for the Feast of Tabernacles; 10 from Mufumbwe (NWP), 33 from Mulfulira (C/B), 33 from Mapoko and Mumbwa North, 54 from Kasumpa and Nalubanda North, 41 From Lusaka, Kafue and Serenje. A rough total of about 60 brethren did not come due to health problems and other issues.

Apart from the services on Holy Days and weekly Sabbaths, a senior supper was held, with 33 in attendance, and a youth day was also held for those up to the age of 27 years old. Singing, memory verses and all services were conducted by the young people.

The 41 new tents catered for a majority, while the lodge accommodated 18 of us in the chalets and some rooms where the Mills, visiting from the U.S., were there for the entire Feast with us.

A meeting of the entire membership was held, and a UCG

resolution was passed to further empower the ministers in Zambia to continue to pursue the matter of land and other assets legally.

There was enough food and drinks for everybody; a cow was even brought and slaughtered from the local area to supplement the chickens and other foods.

Six baptisms also took place. Two of them came all the way from Mufumbwe, a two-day trip away. One of the older members from this area, Olasi Emmanuel, was on a white wheel chair. The other four baptized were from the Mumbwa area (three women and one man).

There were no major illnesses reported, although Mr. Mills anointed and prayed for quite a number of brethren with minor illnesses.

The weather was quite ideal, as it did not rain, even though it is common to do so during this time of year. Although it was extremely hot, there was a cool breeze, so we conducted family day for everyone at 3 P.M. in the afternoon. It was very enjoyable!

For us this was the best Feast ever for many reasons. Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Mills and to the home office staff.

*Wilson Nkhoma*

## Zimbabwe

### Victoria Falls

The Feast for Zimbabwe this year was held at the tourist resort town of Victoria Falls.

The town is about half a mile 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.

Up to 47 brethren attended services. Doug Gray from Australia, accompanied by his wife Eve, was the guest and main speaker for the first half of the Feast. Another international visitor was a young lady, Nadine Franko, who came all the way from Canada to keep the Feast here with us.

Deacon Mike Mukarati gave sermons for the second half. We also had DVD sermons. Themes covered by the messages included the coming great transformation in the Kingdom of God, conforming to the image of God, the need for us as God's people to be clean both physically and spiritually and living our lives as pilgrims in this world.

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

Much to our great joy, six people were baptized by Mr. Gray during the Feast. These new members of God's family are Naison Zulu, Tatenda Kangwende, George Honye Fibion Mkandla, Douglas Kachilima and Daniel Bushu.

Overall, for many of us, this was truly a Feast to remember.

*Mike Mukarati*







## From THE WORD

# Stay in the Feast Mindset All Year Long

■ Finding it difficult to re-adjust to everyday life after the glory of the Feast? You're not alone. Many of God's people go into a "spiritual slump" after the Feast. The answer is easy: Stay in a Feast mindset all year long! Here are some practical, Do-It-Yourself tips for shaking the post-Feast blues.

by Milan Bizic

The Feast is over. Somehow, even though the Feast is always eight days, it seems like it gets shorter every year. Eight days, three Sabbaths and 10 church services seemed like they passed in a matter of moments, as if Feast time is accelerated and condensed.

After such a spiritual and emotional high, it can be difficult to re-adjust to our everyday lives and become bored, discouraged or lonely. Once these feelings start to weigh on us, they can snowball into a full-on spiritual crisis as our relationship with our Father and Jesus Christ starts to slip—sometimes we drop from a spiritual high to a low very quickly.

If this starts to happen to you, don't worry—the antidote is right under your nose, embedded in the meanings of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day that we just observed!

### Relationship Maintenance Part 1—God and Jesus Christ

Without a doubt the most enriching and fulfilling aspect of the Feast, whether we're aware of it at the moment or not, is our deep fellowship with God for eight days. When we ask for God's presence and guidance in the opening prayers at our Sabbath and church services, we mean that quite literally! We want God to be present and active within our Feast experience, guiding our speech, conduct and thoughts.

Post-Feast, this needs to remain our first priority. Proverbs 3:6 instructs us that if we acknowledge God in all that we do, He will be an active, guiding force in our lives. If you're having trouble keeping God in every part of your life, try this: Say an "opening prayer" every morning before you start your routine. Just like we do at the Feast, ask God to be an active participant in the day's activities, and don't forget to thank Him for His presence and guiding hand.

Also make sure to spend time every day studying and meditating on the life of Jesus Christ. Keeping His example of perfect living at the forefront of our thoughts helps us to work hard to live up to that example. When we dwell on and appreciate our Messiah's selfless sacrifice we keep our perspective and stay humble, realizing that without our great God we can never have true fulfillment.

### Relationship Maintenance Part 2—Our Brethren

A big part of the spiritual recharge we get during the Feast is being surrounded by our spiritual family. We get the treat of spending all day, every day with our brothers and sisters, something that very few of us have the privilege to do on a daily basis. I was very impressed by the brethren in Germany this year. For many of them, they only really get to spend any serious time with their brethren once a year—at the Feast. The feeling of excitement and joy was absolutely electric in the meeting hall every day.

So what happens when we leave the awesome Feast environment? Our tapestry of support from our family disappears, and we're faced with our old worldly troubles once more. Psalm 120 is the first of the "songs of ascents." These psalms picture the progression of going up to the Mountain of the Lord to worship at the Temple, just like we do in a spiritual sense every year for the Feast. Notice what was on David's



*Besides keeping our focus spiritually by staying close to God, we can strengthen our resolve by making a commitment to stay close to our brethren even after the Feast.*

### Stay Spiritually Active by Serving God and Others

The Feast is all about service, both in application and meaning. We work hard during the Feast to make it an enjoyable and memorable experience for those around us, whether we're ushering, speaking, leading songs, greeting or doing kind things for people behind the scenes. When the Feast is over, make service a priority in your home congregation. If you're not already involved, make a point to pitch in wherever you see a need. If you know someone in the congregation who has a need outside of services, talk to them privately and volunteer to help them out. One wonderful fact about service is that it's mutually beneficial for all involved: One person gets helped and another gets an opportunity to express the Christ-like attribute of a service-driven attitude. God enriches our lives with bountiful spiritual gifts. He expects us to use them productively in His service for the benefit of others. Peter stressed the importance of this to the brethren of his time: "Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well" (1 Peter 4:10, Contemporary English Version).

During the eight days of the Feast we remember one of the most profound truths of the Bible—that God's plan includes all of mankind, each in his or her own time. With this in mind, don't forget that your service shouldn't be limited to the Church

only. Although the Church is God's primary focus at this time, He is still involved and deeply interested in what happens to those who are at this time outside the household of faith. Don't forget that Jesus' greatest act of service—His willing sacrifice—was accomplished due to His love for all mankind (John 3:16).

While keeping your priorities straight and not neglecting your obligations to serve God in His Church, look for opportunities to serve your communities and your neighbors. There are many worthwhile charitable community-based organizations that provide for the physical needs of the most vulnerable and needy potential members of God's family. Serving in this capacity is even more important when we can establish a personal connection with those we're helping, because it helps us to let our light shine to the glory of our Father (Matthew 5:16). By setting a good example of a godly lifestyle and selfless service, we may be setting an example that will last into all eternity, as the Eighth Day shows us.

To recap: Fellowship with and serve God and your brethren. Build meaningful, lasting relationships and set a good example for those around you. Glorify God in all that you do. By looking at the meaning of the Feasts we just kept and resolving to live these principles past the Feast and throughout our lives, we can do much more than just beat the blues. We can set a standard and establish habits that will last forever. ▀



# Treasure DIGEST

## Noblesse Oblige

When Moses struck the rock in the wilderness instead of speaking to it, God punished him by not allowing him to enter the Promised Land. Can this really be grounds for such severe punishment? After all, he hit a rock, not a human being. He didn't hurt anybody. Why such a big deal?

This is highly instructive. It might not have been a big deal in terms of the sin, but it was a big deal in terms of the sinner.

The French have a term for it—*noblesse oblige*—literally “nobility obligates.” It means that honorable behavior above and beyond what is expected of commoners is an obligation of persons of high birth and rank.

Rabbi Avi Shafron, editor-at-large of *Ami* magazine wrote something similar: “Chosenness isn't a trophy, a bed of laurels, on which to proudly rest...Being chosen is less a badge than a charge. It is not a reward for any achievement, but an obligation to achieve.” The great principle is that the

strong are to help the weak and the concept of civilization depends on everyone sharing the responsibility. This is a biblical principle (Romans 15:1).

In the lives of the disciples we can see this principle in action. Paul was a chosen vessel for God (Acts 9:15). That choosing did not give Paul any special bonuses in life—in the very next sentence, God said, “For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake.” Paul received many abilities and power from God so he could do the work God asked of him—he was able to bring healing to people and was protected from death on several occasions, though he had to go through many trials and troubles.

No doubt there is no greater example of one who had the greatest position—the noblest, but who gave it up for the sake of those who needed help, than that Jesus set. John writes about the *Logos* (the Word) who was with God and was God—but was made flesh for the suffering of death for our sakes (John 1:14). Jesus Christ, for the joy that was set before Him, suffered hardships and suffering (Hebrews 12:2). Part of that joy was in serving mankind.

God shows that He did all that He could possibly do for the benefit of those He was reaching out to help, which is the most selfless act ever done for others. Because He first laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers in

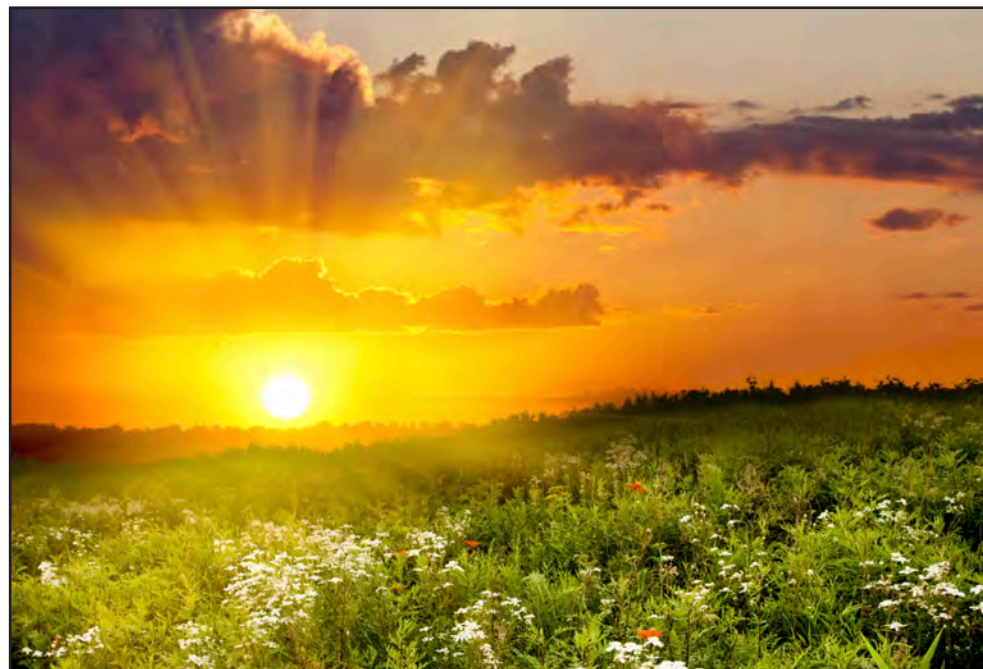


Photo: Photos.com

Christ (1 John 3:16). Most of the world would probably say the opposite—the higher you go, the more you are above the law, can ignore the rules and get away with things. But according to the Bible, the higher you go, the more is expected of you for two reasons: Firstly, you should know better, and secondly, you are supposed to be an example for others.

The Christian calling is a “supreme hon-

or” and a “supreme burden.” That is the way of God. God does give special gifts, but those gifts are to be used for the benefit of the rest of mankind. It is the obligation of all who are chosen.

*Robert Berendt  
Pastor, Saskatoon and North  
Battlefield, Saskatchewan, Red Deer  
and Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
congregations*

## Announcements



**Allison Marie Diamond**

### Births

Joe and Kelly (Good) Diamond of the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation are excited to announce the birth of their third child, Allison Marie. She was born on July 22, 2011, weighing 6 pounds 13 ounces and measuring 19 inches long.

The maternal grandparents are Peggy Good of the Greensboro, North Carolina, congregation and the late Dan Good. Paternal grandparents are Edith Diamond of the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation and the late Bert Diamond.

Big brothers, Ethan (6) and Logan (3) are also very excited to have a little sister!

### Engagements

Allen and Sharlene Turner of Harrison Township, Michigan, are ecstatic to announce the engagement of their daughter, Julia Elyse Turner, to Antonio Joseph Lombardo, son of David and Paula Lombardo of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Julia and Antonio met in Cincinnati, Ohio, while Antonio attended Ambassador Bible Center. A winter wedding is in



**Antonio Lombardo and  
Julia Turner**

order, after which the couple plan to live in the Detroit Area.

### Weddings

Mr. and Mrs. Nsiku Mabenga are pleased to announce the marriage of their son, Raphael Mabenga, Jr., to Sandra Kabangu Mweene, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mweene. The wedding took place on August 27, 2011, in Lusaka, Zambia, at the Fairview Hotel. Here's to many happy and fruitful years of marriage for the new couple!

Heather Wood, daughter of Steve and Ramona (Karels) Wood of the Ruston, Louisiana, congregation and Benjamin Griffin, son of John and Betsy Griffin of Lewisville, Arkansas, were united in mar-

riage on March 13, 2011.

The bride was attended by her sisters, Marian and Bridget Wood and Ben's sister, Erin Griffin. Heather's niece, Vanessa Hernandez, was the flower girl. The groom was attended by Jack McClary, Matthew Ham, Zack Lamkin and Dax Haltom. Heather's dog Ernie served as the ring bearer.

Donald Wood, grandfather of the bride, performed the ceremony under a pear tree in bloom at the American Rose Center in Shreveport, Louisiana. Adriane (Bounds) Hendee played a violin solo and Karen Danapas performed a vocal solo.

Heather and Ben live in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, area. Heather is a designer for Rose Tree (a maker of fine linens) and Ben works for Hertz Corporation.



**Ben and Heather Griffin**

### Anniversaries

Mr. And Mrs. William L. Terry are pleased to announce that they celebrated 40 years of marriage on October 17, 2011, during the Feast of Tabernacles. They have been attending the Church since May 28, 1983, and were both baptized into God's Church on April 7, 1984. They are pleased to share special occasion this with all of their brethren in the Church.



**Knute and Patti Josifek**

Knute and Patti Josifek of the Los Angeles, California, congregation celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married on August 19, 1961, in Baltimore, Maryland. They have been in God's Church since 1967. Knute and Patti have served over the years as deacon and deacon's wife in Orange County, San Diego and Los Angeles congregations. They have one daughter, Tammy Bellotti, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and have four lovely grandchildren. A Jubilee Anniversary celebration was held for them at





## Tribute Jack Elliott

Annapolis, Maryland, and achieved the rank of ensign. Until the end of the war he served on board an aircraft carrier in the South Pacific as Damage Control Officer.

Upon being discharged from the Navy, Jack returned to the University of Texas to complete his degree in engineering. He met and married Anne Gambino between semesters and they attended the university together until he graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering in January of 1947. Later he earned a masters degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Southern California.

Shortly after their marriage they came into contact with the writings of Herbert W. Armstrong, and they began listening to *The World Tomorrow* radio broadcast and studying the literature of the Radio Church of God.

Jack worked for the Gulf Oil Corp as a petroleum engineer for two years.

Jack and Anne were baptized in April 1949, and that summer he was hired by Herbert W. Armstrong to teach mathematics at the fledgling Ambassador College in Pasadena, California. Later he also taught classes in human relations.

Due to his experience in the Navy and in the oil field, where he was trained to supervise work crews, Mr. Armstrong put him over the student work crews at the college. From this humble beginning job he grew into his being made Director of the Physical Plant—over all the construction, remodeling and maintenance of buildings and grounds up to and including the Ambassador Auditorium. Ambassador College was recognized as one

of the most beautiful college campuses in the United States. When it was decided to begin a sister campus at Big Sandy, he also oversaw the set-up of that physical plant until another administrator could be put in place.

Jack Elliott also served as dean of students in Pasadena for 18 years. During those years he earned a second masters degree in theology from Ambassador College.

One of his greatest contributions was the teaching of Ambassador and Spokesman Clubs through which many students and Church members became experienced public speakers. Almost every minister in the Church today got his speech training in one of these clubs.

Upon his retirement in 1977 the Elliotts moved to Longview and began a home building business, which they operated for a few years.

Wanting to serve the work in some way he volunteered to help the minister in Shreveport, who had no local elders available for visiting members during the daytime. He also served the members in Texarkana. After a few years he was ordained an elder and named assistant pastor of Shreveport and Texarkana. After that pastor was transferred to another area, Mr. Elliott served in Big Sandy.

Jack Elliott was the father of three sons, two of whom are in the ministry today, and the third is a teacher.

God blessed Mr. Elliott with seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. He lived to see his children to the third generation, all of whom are in the Church of God. At his death there were 29 members of his immediate family.

Jack Raymond Elliott was born in Palestine, Texas, January 17, 1923—the second son of Paul and Wilmuth Elliott.

He attended the University of Texas at Austin for three years as an engineering student. And then, during the Second World War, he joined the U.S. Navy, went through officer training at the Naval Academy at

the home of Helmut and Carla Rudajs on August 7th. About 70 people, including their daughter and pastor Robin Webber, came to the party put on by friends Sharon Roybal and Carla Rudajs. Their local congregation celebrated with a cake for the couple on the August 20th.



**Ralph and Maxine Pope**

Thursday, June 9, 2011, marked the 55th Wedding Anniversary for Ralph and Maxine Pope. They were married in St. Louis, Missouri. They celebrated their special day with a quiet evening out for dinner. Ralph and Maxine now reside in Cumming, Georgia, and currently attend the Atlanta, Georgia, congregation.

## Obituaries

Della Mae Bennett, born April 22, 1920, died August 29, 2011, at White County Memorial Center in Searcy, Arkansas. She was a long-time member of the United Church of God, Little Rock, congregation in Arkansas, having been baptized on September 24, 1966.

She was married to Hurshel Bennett for

more than 45 years. He preceded her in death on August, 1982. Also preceding her in death was one great-granddaughter.

Mrs. Bennett is survived by her five daughters: Melba Spiroff of Rose Bud, Arkansas; Zerilda Wood (Don) of El Dorado, Arkansas; Ann Mullens (Therell) of Rose Bud, Arkansas; Iris Kurck of Rose Bud, Arkansas; and Vicki Hachmann (Bruce) of Stuttgart, Arkansas.

Mrs. Bennett is also survived by 14 grandchildren, one step-grandchild, 26 great-grandchildren, six step-great-grandchildren and also one great-great-grandchild.

Mrs. Bennett always made her grandchildren welcome in her home, where she spent many hours playing table games with them, creating many fond memories for them.

She enjoyed the outdoors and found many reasons to spend time outside the house. She enjoyed fishing, loved animals and bird watching. She was an avid veg-



**Della Mae Bennett**

etable gardener, and when the weather did not permit her to be outdoors, she enjoyed the art of making quilts.

Mrs. Carrie Greenawalt of Soldotna, Alaska, had a heart attack prior to the beginning of Sabbath services on June 4, 2011. She died a short time later at Central Peninsula General Hospital in Soldotna at the age of 82 years old.

She was born February 13, 1929, in Billings, Montana. In 1970 she and her husband George moved to Alaska from Oregon. She was baptized in the summer of 1981 in the very chilly waters of Campbell Creek. She loved God's way of life with zeal and faithfulness.

She is survived by her son, Gary, and his wife, Linda, of Wichita, Kansas; her son, Richard, of Soldotna, Alaska; three grandchildren; six great grandchildren; four nieces and two nephews. Her husband died in 1989.

Kyle Harrison Martin of Centerville, Washington, died July 30, 2011, of heart-related causes. He was 52 years old. Kyle attended the Hood River, Oregon, congregation. A memorial was held for him on August 20th and officiated by pastor Noel Horner with family and friends attending. He leaves behind his aunt and uncle, Kyle and Darlene Bivens; three brothers, Rory, Josh, and John-Paul Martin; a sister, Tracy Martin, as well as his niece Jessica Vanella (Martin). He was preceded in death a year earlier by his mother Patricia Lynn Bivens (Martin).

Kyle was born in Hood River, Oregon, on July 16, 1959. He lived and grew up in Oregon, Washington and California. In his earlier days he attended with his family in the San Jose congregation of the World-



**Kyle Harrison Martin**

wide Church of God. Kyle worked most of his life in the HVAC field and also possessed skills in construction.

Kyle was a baptized and faithful member of God's Church for over 30 years and truly lived God's ways. He was a friend to the orphans and widows, as well as a true light to all who knew and met him. Children especially loved Kyle. He was a true friend and Christian who will be missed by all.

**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



Steve and Kathe Myers with their daughter Prisca. Mr. Myers is now the pastor of the Cincinnati East congregations.

## Cincinnati Pastor Change

The Cincinnati East congregations recently thanked Gary Antion for serving as interim pastor for the past few months. Mr. Antion and his wife, Barbara, cheerfully “stood in the gap” for us until our new pastor was selected and could relocate to the area. Mr. and Mrs. Antion were given a restaurant gift card and a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of their love for the brethren and their efforts on our behalf.

The Antions will be staying in Cincinnati. Mr. Antion will continue to fulfill his administrative and teaching responsibilities at the Ambassador Bible Center. He also currently serves on the Council of Elders.

The Cincinnati East churches also welcomed our new pastor, Steve Myers and his wife, Kathe, with a cake reception after services. The Myers moved here from Minnesota, where they served congregations in Austin and Mankato, Minnesota; LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In addition to pastoring the Cincinnati East churches, Mr. Myers will continue to work as presenter on the *Beyond Today* television program. The Myers were given a book about Cincinnati and a gift card to Graeter's Ice Cream Parlors so that they could enjoy a taste of the city's famous dessert.

*Eileen Sharkey*

## Greensboro, North Carolina, Women's Club a Success

On August 13, 2011, the Greensboro Women's Club opened with 17 women present after a prayer of blessing by Gerald Stanford.

Sadie Parks thanked all the women for the paper products that were donated to the food pantry.



The Greensboro, North Carolina, women's club.

A poem about joy was read by Margaret Dupuis.

A card box was created by Sadie Parks to hold cards of encouragement for those in need of prayer, sympathy, healing and support from the congregation. The card box will be available before and after services to ensure that cards will always be available.

The meeting concluded and refreshments were served.

*Sadie Parks*

## Jonesboro, Arkansas, Picnic

There were 17 brethren and guests who enjoyed fellowship and food at the Jonesboro, Arkansas, United Church of God picnic on Sunday, August 21, 2011. It was hosted by Morris and Ann Collier at their home in Paragould, Arkansas. The picnic-

goers enjoyed fried chicken, hamburgers and hot dogs along with all the trimmings. Everyone enjoyed visiting and getting to know a little more about each other. After the noon meal had settled, all enjoyed home-made ice cream and cake. Everyone is looking forward to a repeat of the enjoyable picnic next year.

*Fred Nance*



Sacramento, California, “octogenarians.”

## Sierra Vista, Arizona, Congregation Faithful Through the Years

Oftentimes as a minister's wife I am asked, “How many members are there in the United Church of God?” You know, I don't know. But I do know about 11 faithful, caring and loving members in a small town in the desert in Sierra Vista, Arizona. These are brethren who have remained faithful through “thick and thin” as the saying goes.

*Gwen La Ravia*



Sierra, Vista, Arizona, congregation.

## Sacramento, California, Congregation Honors Its “Octogenarian” Members

The Sacramento, California, congregation honored their “octogenarians” on the Sabbath of July 23, 2011. As one fourth of the congregation, Sacramento has been blessed with the wisdom and fine examples of these 80+ year-olds. The oldest member—Ken Jackson at 95—was the only one unable to attend the celebration, but he

watched it on a webcast, so he felt like he was there.

The Sabbath began with an apropos sermon by the pastor, Joe Horschak, on respecting and honoring the elderly. That was followed by an interesting, interactive Bible study on the Ten Commandments.

Crystal Trone was the emcee for the event where she introduced the “Guess Who” game. An enjoyable slide show of photos from the senior members' childhoods were shown, as several facts were read about each mystery person. The congregation got every answer correct!

To top off the event, a synopsis of each member's positive attributes and unique characteristics were read, as they received a special gift of their favorite scriptures set in a decorative frame.

The “octogenarian” celebration was an extremely encouraging and fun event for all the senior participants as well as for the entire congregation.

*Jackie Horschak*



Jonesboro, Arkansas picnic.



Continued from Page 1

to accompany the new seminar outlines as well.

*Peter Eddington*

### Charity Concert Raises More Than \$14,000

The night of October 11, 2011, was a “win-win-win” serving opportunity, as Frank McCrady, festival coordinator of the Gatlinburg, Tennessee, site, would say. In the setting of the beautiful and spacious downtown convention center, the Myers brothers (Steve, John and Skip) presented a two hour concert, raising their voices in honor of God while attendees could donate if they wanted to in order to raise money for brethren worldwide.

Serving is a strong Christian desire, and donating to the Good Works Program is a special way in which Church brethren can help other brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. Those who attended the concert gave a total of \$14,155.89 in both in free-will donations as well as in sales of Myers brothers CDs, which were available for purchase.

The night was a win-win-win because praises were given to the great God in beautiful harmonies, brethren were brought together and able to purchase special Sabbath music, and international Church members will receive special assistance from the Good Works Program.

*Amanda Boyer*



John Myers singing at the charity concert.

### ABC Student Council Chosen

On September 22, faculty advisor Gary Antion announced the student council for the Ambassador Bible Center class of 2011. The first meeting had a successful start as the student council, which is composed of class officers and committee heads, discussed their responsibilities and goals for serving their fellow classmates. Mr. Antion admonished the members with the reminder that the classmates had chosen their positions of service for each member and that the council members “are not here to do something on the student body; they are here *for* the students.”

The class positions of office were filled by Josh Lamoureux as president, Amy Hunt as secretary, Chad Johnson as treasurer and Michael Slocum as monitor. There are also six committee heads. The Social Committee heads include Charles Wilson and Adriane Mez, who are respon-

sible for planning activities and setting them in motion. Janet Hines is the committee head for the service projects and helps organize opportunities for students to serve their community and Church brethren. The committee head Nathan Flournoy provides technical support in class sessions and other areas. Hanna Reisdorff organizes the class calendar and messages for the students on the message board and Amanda Boyer edits the class newspaper called the *ABC Times*. The ABC Chorale also performs for church congregations and is headed by David Browning and Amanda Boyer.

The ABC student council is excited about the opportunity to serve their classmates. Every Thursday, each committee meets during the student assembly with the committee heads to work together. On Wednesday of every week, the student council meets to discuss the progress of each committee and searches for ways to help improve overall class morale and serve their student body.

*Amanda Boyer*

### Education Travel Opportunity

We are pleased to announce a guided, organized visit to international sites with a specific focus on the biblical record and prophecy. This program will feature a 10-day itinerary beginning late December 2011, featuring the great cities of Paris and London with their extraordinary museums and histories. This program is scheduled to take advantage of winter break and we invite ALL AGES to participate.

In order to make these unique places and artifacts come to life in light of our scriptural understanding, we are asking long-time friends and students of history David Dobson, UCG pastor, and John Karlik to be the facilitators of this program.

In addition to on-site observations, they will provide suggestions for preparatory study, with specific site visits related to the educational objectives of the program followed by daily discussions. Desired outcomes include gaining new knowledge, deepening existing knowledge, increasing appreciation for the reality and veracity of scriptural accounts and building friendships.

We look forward to making this opportunity enlightening, exciting and fun.

The itinerary, application, and cost

can be found on the Web at [www.TravelGallery.com](http://www.TravelGallery.com) or obtained by mail by calling 1-626-577-9717.

*John Karlik*

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

December 23-26, the Portland congregation will once again host the Northwest Family Weekend—granddaddy of winter weekends. This year we are moving our Friday and Saturday activities to the new Hilton Hotel in downtown Vancouver, Washington, with seminars on Friday and Sabbath services, teen costume dance and adult dance on Saturday. Sunday’s sports—volleyball, basketball and cheer squad will be at Skyview High School in North Vancouver, just 10 minutes from the Hilton. Last year’s Monday ski day was such a success that we will again spend Monday 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. For registration, lodging rates or event information go to <http://nww.ucgpxd.org> and for questions email us at [NWWeekend@gmail.com](mailto:NWWeekend@gmail.com) or find us on Facebook – NWWeekend.

*Bob Dick*

### Atlanta to Host Women’s Weekend in May 2012

The United Church of God, Atlanta, congregation will host their first annual Women’s Enrichment Weekend on May 18-20, 2012. The theme of the weekend will be “Women of Strength, Courage, and Commitment.” The weekend will be held at the Homewood Suites Hotel in Kennesaw, Georgia.

The Homewood Suites Hotel is located 20 miles north of Atlanta, Georgia, in the heart of Cobb County. The hotel has beautiful one-bedroom and studio suites, each with a full kitchen. Each suite will comfortably accommodate two to three ladies. The registration prices will vary according to the number of ladies sharing a room. A payment plan is available for those who would like to use it.

Please visit the Atlanta, Georgia, United Church of God website at <http://atlanta.ucg.org> for further information regarding registration and specific costs for this event. Details about the weekend will also soon be available at [womenofvalor.org](http://womenofvalor.org).

*Sarah Aust*



Steve and Skip Myers singing at the charity concert held at the Feast in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, to raise money for the Good Works program.



# Jamaica UYC 2011

by Clark and Holly Earls

Ocho Rios, Jamaica - We had 18 campers gathered from various cities in Jamaica during the weekend of July 4, 2011, for a “mini-camp” located on the beautiful beach of Ocho Rios, Jamaica, to get in the zone and out of the world.

The camp was directed by Chuck and Mary Smith, assisted by Clark and Holly Earls, all of the Murfreesboro, Tennessee, congregation. Several Jamaican members also provided invaluable help with the camp.

The Murfreesboro and Nashville congregations helped with the funding of the camp by a yard sale, which raised over \$1,700. Clothing items for the brethren and children were also sent from the two congregations. Camp t-shirts were donated by UCG teen and pre-teen campers from all around the southeast.

Camp began with a soup, chicken and rice dinner for brethren and campers at sunset after Sabbath services. The opening address was given by Chuck Smith.

Children and staff were reminded of what the zone is all about. After dinner, campers moved into the living room where they enjoyed popcorn, soft drinks and a movie until the late night.

Camp activities included a beach day, pool fun and trust-building exercises. Games helped teach campers to rely on each other, which symbolized how we need to rely solely on God.

On the final afternoon of camp, each camper was given a challenge to recite the Ten Commandments before the staff judges. Each camper approached the seat and received \$1 for each Commandment they stated. Campers were overjoyed by the surprise and the judges were impressed by the knowledge of the campers.

Even though camp lasted a short time, campers left with a better sense of what God’s Kingdom will be like. Judging by the smiles and laughter of the children throughout the camp, and the tearful good-byes at the end, everyone had a wonderful time. The campers have already expressed their eagerness for a longer camp next year.



# Nigeria Okunkobo Beach

by Stephen Arner

Okunkobo Beach, Nigeria—The United Youth Camp in Nigeria took place on August 15-21, with almost every camper and staff member attending Sabbath services on the 14th in Lagos, Nigeria. It was the first time the camp was held at Okunkobo Beach. Getting to the beach required a 30-minute boat ride in which we crossed through some thickets of plants similar in look to those on the Amazon in South America. The actual location of the camp site was on a land spit approximately 200 yards wide. On one side we had the Gulf of Guinea and on the other we had Badagry Creek.

Camp activities included arts and crafts, dance, kickball, rope bridge, team challenge/obstacle course, volleyball, archery, swimming, novelty Olympics and a Bible bowl. As is typical in UYC camps, every

day started with a compass check, and every evening ended with a Bible study. Camp food was prepared by three very hard-working, wonderful ladies of the Lagos congregation. One of these ladies is 69 years old and slept on the ground in a tent just like everyone else. The cooks used gas stoves that were brought to the camp by hand. Dinner was served on a patio overlooking the ocean. The campers assisted with cleaning the dishes after every meal. The campers slept in 10-man tents with no more than eight campers per tent. There were five shower stalls for the ladies and five for the men. The shower stalls were made from palm tree branches woven together. Showers were taken using a bucket of water. We had no running water. A commode was provided but had to be flushed using water brought by buckets from the sea or a nearby well.

The team challenge course was mostly

compiled from items found on the beach. We had the team trolley, tire change, simulated river crossing, spider web, tray exchange made from palm branches and a baby coconut used as a ball, alligator crossing, coconut toss, coconut walk the plank and coconut roll. Dorms were organized into three different teams: red, blue and green. The teams were co-ed, and each team’s age was distributed as evenly as possible.

We encountered several animals walking through the camp. Chickens, goats, ducks and even crabs were known to take up residence in the tents.

This year’s camp was different than the previous year’s camp in that it was held on a rented beach. The cost of this location was about one third of the cost of renting the previous camp location and far more picturesque. The entire camp was surrounded by palm and coconut trees. Several of us

enjoyed gathering coconuts and drinking the milk and eating the meat.

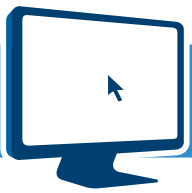
The camp had a Hawaiian banquet night in which the staff served the campers with a wonderful spicy meal. During the meal a picture slide show of the week’s activities was shown. The camp’s only source of power was supplied by a generator, which allowed us to have lights in the evening.

In the evening, the constant and refreshing breeze from the ocean gave some of the staff and campers a chill, making them put on warmer clothes.

To organize the logistics of camp was no small task, and it took a tremendous amount of work and planning. Hats off to Oludare Akinbo and his team for pulling off a wonderful camp. The best way to describe it was a quote I heard while at camp, “This is not a Mickey Mouse run operation.” This camp was easily the envy of Africa. Everyone had an awesome time!







# What's New In MEDIA?

## ■ UCG Web Presence Expands

On November 7, Internet manager Aaron Booth reported the following exciting stats for UCG Web activity:

**39,521** total Facebook fans.  
**19,749** total Twitter followers.  
**654** videos posted on YouTube.  
**1,817,126** video views on YouTube.  
**206** Bible FAQs posted.  
**182,269** Bible FAQs views.  
**467** e-mail campaigns (This Is the Way, UCG Weekly Update, GN Newsletter, WNP E-news) sent.  
**642,339** clicks to our websites generated by e-mail campaigns.  
**112,330** booklet downloads from Apple's iBook Store.

## ■ Beyond Today Airing Schedule

**November 6-12** "Calling Evil Good" with presenter Steve Myers.

**November 13-19** "Would Jesus Attend Your Church?" with presenter Gary Petty.

**November 20-26** "The Coming Financial Squeeze" with presenter Darris McNeely and special guest Rex Sexton

**November 27-December 3** "God's Roadmap" with presenter Steve Myers.

## ■ Writers: Send Us Your Bios!

Media and Communications Services has launched the new UCG.org site. On the new site

we feature a bio page for each writer who has had an article printed in any of United's publications (excluding announcements or "Local Church Updates").

Here's what we need from all writers:

**1. A short bio** (two to three paragraphs, written in third person).

**2. How you want your name displayed** (e.g., Tom versus Thomas).

**3. A high-quality photo** that shows your face clearly. Please do not send a group shot. Photos must be sent in JPEG format.

**4. (Optional) your e-mail address.** This will allow our system to automatically contact you

when someone comments on your article.

Send your information to [bios@ucg.org](mailto:bios@ucg.org). Thank you for helping make the new website a success!

## Featured Links

### ■ Sand

<http://tinyurl.com/ucg-sand>

What do you fill your days with? How do you focus your time and attention? Give priority to the things that matter. Think thoughts that are good and righteous. And boldly serve God and his people. Life is but a flicker. Make each day the product of limited time, well spent.



Sand

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**November 11-13:** Women's conference, Twin Cities, Minnesota

**November 19:** 50th anniversary celebration, Oakland, California

**December 23-26:** Northwest Family Weekend, Vancouver, Washington

**December 23-27:** Winter Family Weekend, Cincinnati, Ohio

**December 27-January 1, 2012:** Winter Camp, East Troy, Wisconsin

**December 27, 2011-January 6, 2012:** Young Adults Travel Education Program

## Web Content Editor Position Posted

Peter Eddington, Media and Communications Services operation manager, has announced an opening for an employee in the Internet and Web department.

The Web Content Editor will work to train, support, troubleshoot, maintain, improve and advocate the best experience for users of the UCG online system. They will be an integral face for our Content Management System to users who need to publish content out to our Web visitors every day.

Candidates must have the following minimum qualifications: Experience with content management software or proven background in working on websites, specifically initiatives that have a marketing and customer-focused aspect to them; strong acumen in Web technologies and understanding of how functionalities such as XML, HTML, XHTML, CSS can work together; prior experience working with Web Content Management System tools and publishing processes; customer-oriented approach and proven record of delivering solutions. A more detailed listing is available.

A college degree or equivalent and one to two years' related experience and training in advanced computer skills and office duties is required. Experience working with databases, Web-based applications, e-mail and general office duties is essential.

Potential employees must be baptized members of the United Church of God. Applicants must be biblically literate and possess a thorough working knowledge of the doctrines, beliefs and practices of the United Church of God. The deadline for submission of an application is December 7, 2011. For more information about the position and to submit a resume, please contact [human\\_resources@ucg.org](mailto:human_resources@ucg.org).

## UNITED STATISTICS

### UCG.org Web Traffic Since May 2011

