



news

AT A GLANCE

Educational Task Force Meets

Several members of the educational task force met to discuss educational matters such as Feast lessons for children, Sabbath school programs, young adult educational tours, focused education plans, an online education pilot and a new perspective on our task force.

Gary Antion, coordinator of educational programs, chaired the teleconference and began with re-focusing on the goals and aims of the task force. The task force is composed of educators and promoters. The members are Scott and Michelle Delamater, John Karlik, Jim and Sue Kocher, Randy and Kay Schreiber, Arthur and Marsha Suckling, Keith and Christy Tomes and Julie Zutz. All of them are enthusiastic about education for the church. We discussed the need for follow-through in making sure that the program decisions are carried out by the administrative personnel. We will more diligently try to get feedback on the various projects that are recommended to be implemented.

The main discussion was about how to move on the Feast lessons for young children, kindergarten age through grade five. We also want to put out sermonette material or a DVD explaining how parents may teach their children about God's Holy Days. We all agreed that parents are the ones to teach their children about the meaning of the Feasts, but we have also had several individuals write and ask about having some classes for the young people at the Feast so that they may learn with other children about God's Way and Holy Days and have interaction with other youths. We are hopeful of moving this along. Julie Zutz and Kay Schreiber will support this project with input from Keith Tomes.

Other past projects were brought

See "News at a Glance," page 21

Ambassador Bible Center Begins 13th Year



Clockwise, from top left: Zach Hoover throwing the lasso, Becca Dishaw finding people on her list, Larry Harris nocking an arrow, Amanda Boyer blowing on the fire to get it burning, Charles Wilson and Jennifer Styer searching for a scripture, students at the sing-along, Musa Mazibuko in his western outfit, David Jones with his daughter Sarah and wife Joy at the sing-along.

by Mitchell Moss

Many alumni, faculty and local members gathered for a picnic at the home office in Milford, Ohio, to welcome the 34 students from the Ambassador Bible Center class of 2012 on Sunday, August 14. The western-themed activities began at 1:00 p.m. as the students arrived and had a chance to meet each other and the alumni, who, under the leadership of faculty member Randy Stiver, had prepared and decorated the kitchen and lecture hall earlier that morning. After 45 minutes of

fellowship, the organized activities began with a get-to-know-you game, where each person received a list of experiences and had to find at least one other person in the room who had experienced each one.

The students were then given different-colored handkerchiefs to assign them to different teams. Each team designed its own cattle brand and then was given clues indicating where to go to participate in seven different activities scattered around the grounds and inside. Alumni and staff manned each activity and instructed the

teams what to do and then gave a clue where to go next. The seven activities were: lasso, where each team member tried to lasso a stationary dummy sheep; archery; horseshoes; glove milking, where a rubber glove was filled with water, two fingers were punctured and they had to "milk" the fingers of the glove; find that scripture; tell the instructor, where biblical questions were asked and they had to recite the correct answer; and the final activity, fire building, where a rope was

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BY THE NUMBERS

467

Number of "likes" on the United News Facebook page.



Our Family in Cameroon and Congo

by Gabriel Vautour

On our recent trip to French Africa, Mark Mickelson and I had the opportunity to meet our brethren from Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, where there were 20 adults and 14 children present, and Douala, Cameroon, where there were approximately 30 adults and five children present.

It is so amazing to see that even though we live many thousands of miles apart and we come from totally different backgrounds and cultures, there is still something that unites us as one family. It was as if we had always been family and we were seeing each other again after a long time apart. At the Feast of Tabernacles every year we have an opportunity to live this very exciting family reunion.

The fact that we have the same views and the same understanding of God is why we all come together as one family. But even more important is why we do

what we do and why we believe what we believe. It all has to do with the choice that we made at baptism and our purpose in this life.

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

This is one of the most well-known verses concerning baptism. And by God’s grace, four new members have had the opportunity to get baptized: Yvon Mabout, Sadrack Ndjewel, Laurette Balla and Richard Wasafuka. What a great blessing it is to be able to welcome new brethren into the family of God.

All four members have interesting stories concerning how they came to the truth, but Richard Wasafuka’s story was especially interesting considering his age of 81.

It was 1967 when he first heard about the Worldwide Church of God through *La Pure Vérité* (*The*

Plain Truth, French edition). For five years, he kept receiving the magazine and reading the material carefully. In 1972 he was visited by Harold Jackson, after which he began attending services.

He asked about baptism, but for unknown reasons his request for baptism was denied. For many years afterwards, he remained faithful to the teachings that he knew were biblical. In 1995, Mr. Wasafuka left the Worldwide Church of God due to doctrinal changes he could not agree with. He was still not baptized, but certainly longing for it 28 years after his first contact with the Church. It was only in 2010, 15 years later, that he came into contact with the United Church of God.

Throughout those years, Mr. Wasafuka told us that what kept him alive spiritually was the old *La Pure Vérité* magazines, which he had kept. He would go back to them often as a reminder, knowing that what they taught was the Word of God.

On our visit in June and July of 2011, his dream came true. When we visited him in his house, he immediately asked about baptism and how he could be baptized. After counseling, Mr. Mickelson and Mr. Mabout judged that he was ready. After patiently waiting for 44 years, at the age of 81,

Richard is now part of the family of God. He was so happy to finally be baptized that he couldn’t withhold himself from praising God out loud, thanking Him for this most wonderful gift.

What an inspiring story and a reminder of the commitment we have made to God! **UN**



Left to right: Mark Mickelson, Richard Wasafuka, Gabriel Vautour, Moise Mabout

Photo: Gabriel Vautour

UCG Caribbean Coordinator Visits Trinidad

by Tiffany Bissessar

Chuck Zimmerman, UCG coordinator for the Caribbean area, visited the Trinidad congregation for four days in July 2011. This was his first visit to the island of Trinidad, and he arrived on the afternoon of Thursday, July 21, on a direct

flight from Miami, Florida. The following morning he was taken by Dale Bissessar, a local deacon, on a quick tour of the capital city of Port-of-Spain and the west coast of the island. For lunch, he was able to sample a chicken roti, which

See “Trinidad,” page 4



The congregation in Trinidad at Sabbath services.

Serving in Ukraine

by Gregory Zajac

In July, LifeNets sent me, my sister Stephanie, Oleh Kubik, his daughter Natasha and niece Heather to Vinohradiv, Ukraine. The purpose of the trip was to teach English at a children’s summer day camp run by Vasil and Irina Polichko, pastor and wife of a Sabbatarian church there.

About 30 kids enrolled in the camp, ages

7 to 18, including children from the community as well as boys that the Polichkos, along with another couple in their congregation, have adopted. Many of the children in the program are poor or come from broken or abusive families, and the Polichkos use the camp to show these children the love of God.

See “Ukraine,” page 3



Gregory Zajac with two campers celebrating at the end of a successful camp.

Photos: Gregory Zajac

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FORWARD! You Are Approved



VICTOR KUBIK
 Ministerial and
 Member Services
 Director

Over the past 12 years I have been mentored by a wonderful couple in my philanthropic work. He has been president of different colleges and director of various non-profits. She is a renowned author who has won awards for her books and travels around the world in her philanthropic consultant work. She helped with the start-up of LifeNets, and he is currently on our board of directors.

In watching them work with donors and constituents, I noticed their very special care and attention to those who help them. They practice the philanthropic algorithm of never ceasing to thank donors and supporters. There is the point of never saying thank you enough time.

One way they do it is with constant statements of approval and respect via e-mail or a note. He told me when he was president of a college in Nebraska that he personally wrote many thank you notes to donors because he realized that it validated the donors, not to mention that it brought in more donations to the college.

As we try to learn more about Christian techniques for getting the work done, it's interesting that the apostle Paul knew the importance of expressing gratitude and approval for the congregations he estab-

lished. In his letters to those churches, he lavishly thanked God for their faith and gifts. He knew what effect those words would have on them.

In Romans 1:8-12, Paul wrote, "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world...that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers...For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me."

Can you imagine what a rush that would have given the Roman brethren, some of whom were slaves and had no pastor? Paul really knew what to say!

To the Corinthians he wrote similarly, "I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge...so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:4-7).

Once again, these were words that must have raised the Corinthians' spirits as they heard them read.

And to the Ephesians, Paul's pattern continues: "Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention

of you in my prayers" (Ephesians 1:15-16). Paul was very well aware of the effect of words fitly spoken. So should we be.

The phrases that we like hearing most are "I love you" and "thank you." Both express approval and affirmation. We may not be able to express words of love as easily as those of gratitude. It's a lot easier to say "thank you" and voice approval for specifics as Paul did. And the good it does is inestimable.

Do it today with those whom you interact with. They're waiting. Your words may just be what a parched plant needs to revive. Some are good at expressing gratitude and praise and do it naturally. For most others, we need to be reminded to be aware of those around who could use a statement of approval, a compliment or a note of respect.

We can be thankful that God approves us as He has given us His Son to show that great compliment of worthiness. Let's show that to those we interact with. **UN**

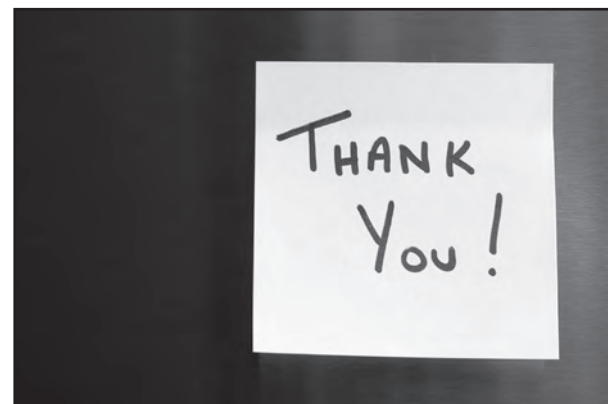


Photo: Photos.com

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I was especially eager to become involved in this project because of my Ukrainian heritage. My father's parents fled western Ukraine during World War II, at a time when the country changed hands between the Nazis and the Soviets. After the war, they immigrated to the United States in 1949. My father grew up speaking Ukrainian, and he taught the language to me and my siblings. Being able to speak some Ukrainian was a blessing when teaching classes and learning about our hosts.

Our primary responsibility at the camp was to teach English classes at the camp. One day for class, Oleh Kubik and I tried to challenge our group of a dozen or so teenage students by setting out a few flash cards with beginning English words in front of them. We reviewed the words with them, then took away some of the cards and asked them which ones were missing. We started the game with six or eight cards but soon realized that the children were strategically working together to identify the missing cards. The students were splitting up the cards so each of them only had to keep track of a few, rather than all of them. We eventually played the game with the entire deck of 60 cards. This class showed me the children's resourcefulness and

ability to think creatively.

We also tried to incorporate lessons about Christian living in our classes, oftentimes drawing material from Bible studies the Polichkos had done with the children, or from posters about common proverbs and Bible verses.

For example, while on an afternoon excursion to an old castle in Vinohradiv, Mrs. Polichko took us on a detour to a camp of Gypsies, or Roma, near the city. The Roma and the Ukrainians have a difficult relationship, and a lot of mutual mistrust and suspicion exists between the two groups, but a Baptist evangelist recently built a church in that neighborhood. The Christian presence has produced some positive changes in the community, and Vasil and Irina were also able to establish a relationship with the Roma community by visiting their church.

We stopped our vans on a dirt road between crumbling buildings. Dozens of smiling children in tattered but bright clothing, with dark skin and bright eyes, greeted our caravan. Many of



Stephanie Zajac with Alina and Erika, two young Sabbath-keepers who helped at the camp.

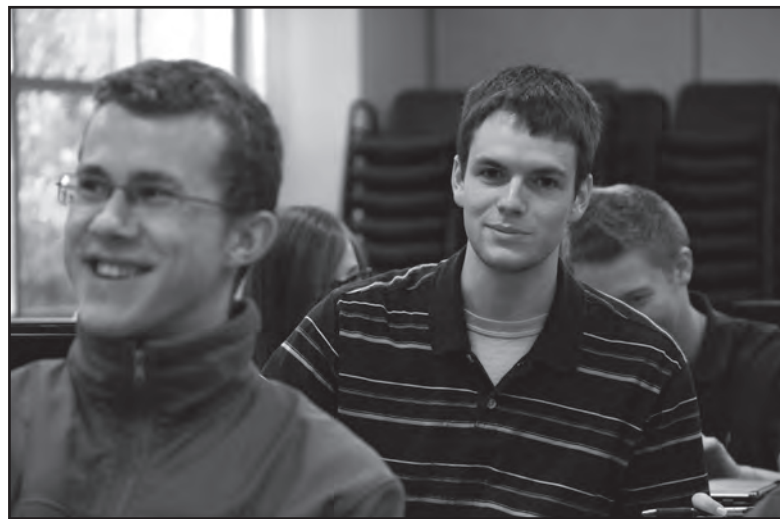
our children were confused and nervous about being there, but once some of us exited the vans the Roma children started singing a hymn for us. In return, our children sang a couple of the English praise songs that we had taught to them. That day, I saw the Polichkos loved not only their church, but also all of God's people, and they were teaching the children in the camp to do the same.

Earlier in the program, we introduced a poster in class quoting the famous scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," and taught the children to translate and recite it. The day after visiting the Roma camp

we brought that poster out again and asked them, "Does God love the Roma?" and, "Are they our neighbors?" To these two questions the children answered, "Yes!" I was glad that we could use our classes to not only teach a few words of English, but also reinforce what the Polichkos were teaching.

I was also amazed by how God had called and blessed the Sabbath-keepers in Ukraine. Vasil Polichko's family learned about the Sabbath from studying God's Word in 1947, when he was only 10 years old. God simi-

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From left: Derrik De Moei and Josh Lamoureux in class during the first week of class; Janet Hines in class; Nathan Flournoy taking notes on the first day of class.

strung taut; each team had to build a fire underneath the rope (using only one match and kindling they collected from around the grounds) and the first team to break the rope with their fire won.

After the team scavenger hunt, lunch was prepared and served inside by food services manager Connie Sipes and her helpers with grilled hot dogs, hamburgers, plenty of sides and drinks. After lunch, there was a square dance, and ABC 2003 alumnus Jonathan Magee acted as caller, teaching the Virginia Reel to all who wanted to join in.

The final activity was a sing-along with

old American tunes—"She'll Be Comin' Around the Mountain" and "Home on the Range," among others.

The Monday morning orientation served to inform the students about the academic side of Ambassador Bible Center. Gary Antion and Kathy de Campos planned and prepared the day, where each administrator and instructor in residence gave a summary of their duties and classes and welcomed the students. President Dennis Luker gave a welcome message to conclude the morning activities. He explained the importance of attitude before character using the ABC acro-

nym. He cited several quotes from John Maxwell and more importantly from the Bible as he urged students to approach ABC with a godly attitude. The students were then treated to a hot lunch and were joined by the home office staff for dessert and fellowship. Janet Treadway from the mailing area conducted a tour of the home office for those who wished to see where the office staff works. The day concluded with a meeting for the ABC chorale conducted by director Kenneth Shoemaker.

On Tuesday morning, Frank McCrady welcomed the students to Gospels class. This module will run each day from 8:30-

10:20 a.m. for three weeks. Other classes on the first day of ABC included epistles of Paul with Steve Myers as instructor, comparative religion with Gary Antion and former prophets and public speaking with Randy Stiver. The students appreciated the classes and the books given to complement the Bible for some of the classes.

Ambassador Bible Center is off to a great beginning! The students are enthusiastic about beginning an intense and satisfying year of learning the Bible. We welcome your prayers for a successful 13th year. **UN**

Profile: Tim Sipes

An avid outdoorsman, Timothy Sipes is a rancher with true grit and a heart for service. Saddling up for his job at the home office eight months ago, he is the resident maintenance man and also handles the international mailing.

He grew up in Flagstaff, Arizona, and has an older sister and twin brother. He remarked on his childhood hero, "I was a big John Wayne fan. Even though we grew up in town, I always liked cowboy things and anything to do with the West. I always tried to talk mom and dad into getting some property outside of town where we could have horses."

He developed his love for ranching when he got out of high school, working for the largest ranch in Arizona. Tim thought, "This is the good life, but I want to get married and think about family too."

He transferred to a job in construction and after working for a construction company for over 11 years, built his own business, becoming the biggest framing contractor in Flagstaff.

By 1995, he was getting burnt out on construction. "It really wasn't what I started out doing. I loved working with my hands. I got so busy and big that I had to stay in the office all the time. I wanted to get back into the ranching, so God blessed me with enough that I could look for a small ranch. I found one in New Mexico and moved my wife, Debbie, and two sons there." Tim's oldest son, Cody, is an engineer in Edgewood, New Mexico. He is the father of Tim's first grandson, Logan. His youngest son, Josh, works in road construction in Phoenix.

When Tim was in his mid-20s he happened to see Mr. Armstrong on television. "I sat down and watched *The World Tomorrow* program, and after that I continued to watch the program and send for booklets." He continues, "I didn't really commit until quite a while later through a tragedy in my life when my wife was killed. It made me pay attention to what was really important in my life." Tim was baptized in 2000.

"I look back at it now and see how God has blessed me in many ways. Just with the loss of my wife, how He comforted me through that. I didn't have any bitterness over the incident on how she got killed. She was murdered by some young man on drugs who was driving through that part of



New Mexico. Things like that could eat you up if you really let it, but I knew about the resurrections and God's plan for salvation of mankind."

A service action hero, Tim said it was a blessing to be in a small congregation. He said, "I drove 200 miles one way to go to services from the ranch to Amarillo, Texas, but I had an opportunity to serve in a lot of ways because there weren't very many men; sometimes you had to lead songs and do opening and closing prayer."

When the ABC program first started Tim thought, "Wow this is really neat." While it was something Tim always wanted to do, he may not have gone if it weren't for meeting and marrying his wife Connie. With them both wanting to go and being in between things, there was an opportunity. Tim thought, "Do it now or I probably never will."

While attending ABC, Tim and his wife had the opportunity to work full time at the home office. "It was funny," Tim reminisces, "I remember reading in the *United News* when they hired the previous employee. I thought to myself, 'That would be a fun job, and it's right down my alley.'" He is very happy God blessed him with this job. It's amazing how God will bless us, knowing our desires! **UN**

Continued from "Trinidad," Page 2

is one of the popular local Indian delicacies.

Friday evening, Mr. Zimmerman had dinner at the home of Dale Bissessar, together with some of the members from the local congregation. Sabbath services were held at 10:00 a.m. the following Sabbath morning, and Mr. Zimmerman was able to meet and fellowship with the 25 local brethren in attendance. He gave a sermon on spiritual discernment. The sermonette was given by Mr. Bissessar. The congregation was also treated to special music by the church choir and an instrumental song on the recorder by Rachael DeLorme, accompanied by Gwendoline Clement. After services, finger foods were served, and this was followed by a Bible study conducted by Mr. Zimmerman.

The next day, Sunday, a social activity was held at the home of Scipio DeLorme, one of the local members who lives on the North coast of Trinidad in a village called Las Cuevas. Members assembled at his home and had lunch, which was prepared by the ladies in the church. After lunch, most of the brethren headed to the beach, which is just a short distance away. While some had a swim in the ocean, others played cricket on the beach. This activity allowed Mr. Zimmerman to get to know the local brethren better and also allowed them to ask him questions. Later in the evening, the brethren returned to their homes. Mr. Zimmerman returned to the United States early on Monday morning after a profitable visit. **UN**

The Vital Value of Volunteering at the Feast of Tabernacles

by Anthony Wasilkoff

The top 10 reasons why it's great to be an usher:

1. You get to wear a badge.
2. You don't have to sit on a hard chair for the whole service.
3. You can slip out to the restroom if you need to, and nobody notices.
4. You get to tell people where to go.
5. You get to take money from people.
6. You don't have to be as friendly as the greeters.
7. You get to eat a lot of breath mints.
8. If a screaming child bothers you, you can do something about it.
9. Preachers preach to the choir, not to the ushers.
10. You get to seat latecomers in the front row.

The above list is credited to Jerry Beres and Russell Snyder, and it appears in *1001 Quotes, Illustrations & Humorous Stories*. Perhaps reading the reasons brought a smile to your lips. Similarly, you could produce a list of ten reasons for why it's great to be in the choir, on the parking crew or on the set-up crew.

Volunteers at the Feast of Tabernacles are vital. In fact, calculations have been made about the monetary value of volunteers to a nation's economy. There are thousands of men and women and youth who volunteer tens of thousands of hours of personal time to help society become a better place. There was a time when as a pastor I would visit people in hospitals and observe youthful "candy strippers" pushing carts up and down the corridors to see if any of the patients needed anything to make their stay in the hospital just a little more pleasant and comfortable. Some hospitals have people come in with special pets to call upon those who wish to be so visited, because a well-behaved dog has tremendous therapeutic value for an ailing patient. In fact, I was recently visiting a member in a nursing home and observed someone bringing in a dog to visit some of the residents. You should have seen how popular "Fido" was and how much the residents in that home

enjoyed talking to that gifted canine and petting him.

Volunteers at the Feast of Tabernacles are equally needed and fulfill a no-less important role. What would happen if the Feast site you were planning to attend had no volunteers whatsoever? What would happen if the Feast site you were planning to attend had what we might call a "no frills" approach? Airlines do that these

probably have heard some people make the same decision. It is instructive to observe how these individuals fare after the fact. When people serve not at all, the Feast typically helps them grow very little, if at all. It is one of those paradoxes where you have to expend in order to take in. If one's aim is only to take in, the actual amount that is subsequently taken is nearly negligible. Why is that? How can that be? It is called

- Singles activities
- Special music
- Teen activities
- Ushering
- Young adults activities

Is it true that many hands make light work? It is absolutely true. The more people who are available to tackle a task, the better the whole project goes. It doesn't

Regrettably I have observed some people proclaim in times past, "This year I am going to have a year off. I am not going to sign up for anything—I am just going to concentrate on me" ... It is instructive to observe how these individuals fare after the fact.

days. Perhaps you are planning to fly to the Feast this year and will be on a carrier (as most of them are these days) that offers the minimum amount of service. This amounts to a drink part way into the flight—and usually not a full can, but only a partial can poured into a plastic glass. Oh yes—and either a tiny bag of pretzels or an equally tiny bag of cookies. Aren't you glad that the church doesn't use the same approach when it comes to organizing and administering Feast sites! A lot of the extras we enjoy and have come to depend upon and to expect are due to the volunteers who step up to the plate to serve tirelessly year after year.

We can hardly ask for volunteers without conveying an enthusiastic and heart-felt "thank you" to all those who served last year and the year before and the year before that in so many varying and meaningful ways. There are those who have served for years and would love to do so this year, but can no longer do so because of age or deteriorating health.

Regrettably I have observed some people proclaim in times past, "This year I am going to have a year off. I'm going to concentrate on myself and on fulfilling my own needs. I am not going to sign up for anything—I am just going to concentrate on me." You

the law of the harvest. We can only reap what we sow. If we don't sow very much, we don't reap very much. It is as simple as that. In 2 Corinthians 9:6 we read, "But this I say, He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." Furthermore, Galatians 6:9-10 adds, "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."

Be on the look out for areas in which to help out. There are some many areas that are always crying out for help year after year. Here is a typical list (although not comprehensive) that a Feast coordinator pleads for help with:

- Audio/video
- Choir
- Ensemble
- Family day
- Family dance
- Festival youth instruction
- Parking
- Preteens
- Security
- Seniors

over-burden any one person. There is a synergy that usually takes place. There is the benefit of harmony and teamwork. Enthusiasm results in the improvement of quality of workmanship and the enjoyment of the task.

What if we knew that Jesus Christ was personally going to attend the Feast site we were going to be at? What if we knew He would need help finding a place to sit? What if we knew that He would need help going to the seniors' luncheon? What if we knew that He was going to be serving at the information table and was requiring some helpers? Wouldn't all of us make every effort to participate somehow, some way, just to be in His company and presence for just a few minutes every single day?

Each and every Feast requires an assortment of volunteers throughout the Feast week to provide for the needs of the brethren. Take the time to carefully read about the site where you are planning to attend. Then please take the time to get in touch with your pastor or the festival coordinator to offer to help out as you are able. The result will be that the Feast you attend will function that much better, and you yourself will be blessed with commensurate spiritual benefits. UN

Continued from "Ukraine," Page 3

larly called others to do His work, and the truth spread through Ukraine despite Soviet persecution that forced Sabbatharians to worship in secret. Today, there are Sabbath keepers all across Ukraine, and the largest congregation has over 200 members.

Shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, Sabbatharians from America traveled to Ukraine to establish contact with the Sabbath-keeping groups there. Today, the relationship continues, and one of the ways LifeNets assists Sabbath-keepers in the region is by coordinating volunteers to help in the Polichkos' camp.

God did not call the Ukrainians through my church, the United Church of God, or our evangelizing efforts. He called them Himself. I learned that God can miraculously call anyone to learn His truth, share

it with others and prepare themselves for service in His Kingdom.

I learned that even though God can do anything Himself, He also chooses to use His people to do His work. On my first Sabbath in Ukraine, a member enthusiastically handed me several copies of literature their church distributes. I looked over the stack he gave me and recognized it as the United Church of God Bible Study Course and two of our booklets translated into Russian. I asked the member if there was anything they learned from UCG's literature. He replied that they learned about the Holy Days and that they now keep them.

His answer made me smile. God called us to the knowledge of His Sabbath independently, and while we might not be directly affiliated, God chose to use us to teach and edify one another from thousands of miles away. God's work truly is amazing, and it was a blessing to witness it. UN



Ivan and Yuri, foster children the Polichkos care for.

Keeping Up With School While Keeping the Feast

■ Keeping the Feast and helping your kids keep up with school work can be a challenge. Here are some tips from a long-time Feast-keeper and teacher.

by Lillie Robinson

How do you feel when the Feast of Tabernacles is approaching and you have to face uncooperative school authorities and teachers because you want to take your children out of school for at least a week or longer? While you do not want to do anything to hinder your child's success at school, you have to obey God, as the Scripture clearly requires. You remember He has commanded you and your family to keep the Feast (Leviticus 23:2, 4), so His will for you must come first!

It is important, prior to talking with school officials, to be sure to pray earnestly, asking God to speak those "apples of gold" words (Proverbs 25:11) to bring you favor and the result you desire.

Many parents receive little or no resistance from the school, director of education or school board. In this age of political correctness, most boards do not want to face bad publicity or a court case due to religious beliefs. Years ago, I knew a young teacher who found herself facing such a litigious situation, but she chose to obey God and left for the Feast. Eventually the board lost its court case, and her job was restored. She obeyed God ahead of men, and her faith was rewarded.

When working with a teacher or principal who shows reluctance to your request for time off for God's Holy Days, remember that the term "Feast of Tabernacles" can be foreign to them. Prior to being

called into God's Church, I remember having Jewish children in my classroom who took off the Holy Days during the year. I had no idea what these days were, and although I said nothing, I felt some concern and resentment that they were missing so many school days. Little did I realize that later my husband and I, along with our own children, would be doing the same thing.

When questioned about why we wanted time off from school for our children, I would explain (with a smile) that we did not make these days up, that they are over 3,500 years old and that our family kept them because they were from the Bible and that, as Christians, we believed the Bible was our life's guide. Usually that ended the discussion, as most people do not want to get into a religious discussion.

When questioned about why we wanted time off from school for our children, I would explain (with a smile) that we did not make these days up; that they are over 3,500 years old.

When your child first enters school (and at the beginning of each year thereafter), it is wise to give the teacher a list of the times during the school year that your child will be away for Holy Days. Express that you would be grateful if you could come a day or two before the absence to pick up the necessary books and assignments needed. Explain that you will do everything you can to ensure that your child will make up any missed assignments. Assure the teacher that you want to work with him/her and

would appreciate a call if any problems occur. When your child enters the upper grades and high school, though it is still incumbent on you to let the school know when the absences will be, the student will likely be able to consult with the teacher regarding which books and assignments are necessary to take to the Feast.

I have found that many teachers appreciated that, not only was the schoolwork completed, but that we also had gone above and beyond what was expected. We had our children create a scrapbook of what they did on the way to the Feast, during the Feast and on the way home. They created and decorated a titled cover for the book and took it to school to share with the class on their return. This daily diary showed how our children's lives were enriched in

daily (along with the homework) stimulates responsibility, a sense of accomplishment and eliminates the panic of trying to get it done at the end of the Feast or after arriving home. Perhaps because of this book, other students and teachers will come to see what a joyous and educational time the Feast creates for a family.

There is usually much to do at the Feast, and we want our children to have as many physical experiences as we can financially afford, but there is one thing we cannot afford to miss while there—the spiritual family time with our heavenly Father.

By example, by discussion and by reading God's Word we emphasize to our children why it is important to appear before our Father each day at the church service. Stimulate a conversation with your family before and while at the Feast about the real reason for why we keep the Feast.

During 41 years of keeping the Feast, I have often seen children doing schoolwork during the service.

Since homework is the regular work of the child, it should not be done on the Sabbath and Holy Days. As children become old enough to read and write, parents should begin to teach them to pay attention to the speaker by looking up the scriptures and taking age-appropriate notes.

Some may think that expecting young children to sit attentively during the services is not realistic. As a teacher who sat through many school assemblies, I have seen how children (even in junior kindergarten) were expected and able to be attentive and to participate in the program—sometimes for over an hour.

Let us obey God, keep the Feast and bring up our children to observe the festivals as well. In so doing, we will teach them vital principles of success that will hold them in good stead for years to come as responsible and capable adults. UN

Treasure DIGEST

God Demands More of Our Words

Do you find it challenging to speak up in a group? To write something in a card? "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver," states Proverbs 25:11. Words that are perfect for the occasion promote stunning impact with lasting value. Is that impact good or bad?

For mean-spirited impact, remember the 1988 vice-presidential debate between Lloyd Bentsen and Dan Quayle. After Quayle stated that he had "as much experience in the Congress as Jack Kennedy did when he sought the presidency," Bentsen pounced on him with, "Senator, I served with Jack Kennedy. I knew Jack Kennedy. Jack Kennedy was a friend of mine. Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy." Bentsen had zinged out the perfect put-down most people dream of scoring, and when Quayle had no response, it sealed his political fate. Truly, "Death and life are in the power of

the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit" (Proverbs 18:21).

Paul taught in Ephesians 4:15: "Speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

Applying Paul's instructions to our words, God demands that all of our words must not only be true, but also must meet His standard of showing love to Him and our fellow man. We are responsible to every member of the body (all mankind eventually). For each and every word, are we building up and promoting love? Or are we tearing down and hindering?

In a fascinating book called *Words That Work—It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear*, Dr. Frank Lunz writes: "You can have the best message in the world, but the person on the receiving end will always understand it through the prism of his or her own emotions, preconceptions, prejudices, and preexisting beliefs. It's not enough to be correct or reasonable or even brilliant. The key to successful communication is to take the imaginative leap of stuffing yourself right into your listener's shoes to know what they are thinking and feeling in the deepest recesses of their mind and heart."



Photo: Photos.com

The first resurrection may not be that far off, when in the twinkling of an eye, we become members of the God family—you and me suddenly expected to have every word we say or write be God-like. God's words are described in Psalm 12:6: "The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." James said in his "tongues chapter" (James 3) that we need "the wisdom that

is from above" which is "first pure" and "willing to yield" (verse 17). James said to ask God for this wisdom (James 1:5).

Rejoice, fellow wordsmiths! We can "speak the truth in love" right now with God's help.

Robert Curry
Colorado Springs, Colorado,
congregation



Romance, Wealth and Power

■ Jesus is looking for candidates to be his bride. Are you serious about wanting to be one?

by John Elliott

As world economies struggle for sustainability, a one-world governmental system is preparing to be launched. Decried by nations who have fought hard for their independence, the

ding. Candidates for the marriage are being solicited from among cultures world-wide. However, due to the unique philosophy driving the new government, few have expressed any genuine interest in pursuing such a relationship.

This rare opportunity for a commoner to be raised from a position of ambiguity to royalty has a twist. The suitor's heritage, lifestyle and governance philosophy are at odds with the ethics and reforms that main-

genuous attempt to try to marry the Prince will be sentenced and burned alive. Such outlandish sounding criteria seem untenable and unreachable, dousing the interest of most for pursuing it. Yet, the prospect of one's rising from ignominy to marry into power and wealth is intriguing to some, while the prospect of the romance has strong appeal with others.

These actual events are underway right now. On the surface, the notion of a one-world

prophetic events in this manner is intended to highlight crucial issues that confront any desirous of becoming successfully betrothed to Jesus, or "Joshua" in English, the coming Prince of Peace and King of Kings (Isaiah 9:6; Revelation 19:16). One only need read His warnings, parables and prophecies to confirm that many are drawn to the opportunities His wedding will afford, but few are chosen to participate (Matthew 22:11-14).

While the mindset of the coming Kingdom of God offers the solution for mankind, our carnal human nature does not identify with it. Any who associate themselves with the true Christ put themselves in jeopardy with their fellow humans (Matthew 10:21-22). He and His followers are well-acquainted with persecution and even martyrdom. It is vital that one realizes that the values of the God family are polar opposites of those in modern civilizations, where carnal minded humans will mass an all-out effort to destroy Christ at His return (Revelation 19:9).

God's way of thinking and acting represents an entirely new construct to our own carnal, human mindset. Christ demands that His bride convert to His loving mindset in order to assist Him in bringing abundant life to humanity (John 10:10).

This article is intended to challenge us to become genuine partners with Joshua the Anointed One, the English equivalent of "Jesus the Christ." Most in this Church's history have not succeeded in an enduring relationship with Him. We need to carefully consider the requirements of entering a valid engagement/betrothal to One whose ways are in stark contrast to the human mindset.

Christ says that He does not think on the same plane as humans and that His principles and His ethics are vastly higher than ours (Isaiah 55:9). His abilities, powers and appearance stagger our imagination (Mark 13:26-27). To presume to have a marital relationship of oneness with someone you don't really share the values of would be presumptuous and hypocritical. Baptism, when entered into properly, is a contractual binding of two committed individuals for an upcoming marriage. Christ desires to forge that covenant with those who are genuinely pursuing intimacy with Him and all that He stands for.

He is even offering assistance to help them meet all of His criteria (1 John 1:7).

But candidates for the Bride of Christ need to be genuine in their pursuit of the opportunity. Who genuinely wants to be fully at one with Prince Joshua, meeting all the criteria and strict terms? For many it is easier to verbalize admiration for Him than to become like Him (Mark 7:6). Many of His parables speak to that tendency in us including unconverted goats, fruitless vines and virgins resisting spiritual change. After all, our carnal human nature wants little to do with a theocratic government that commands strict obedience and mutual promotion of others. Are there any latent allegiances to carnal humanism remaining unnoticed in us? Many profess their desire to "marry" Christ. However, their motives are often more about self-preservation and self-promotion than about developing His mind (Philippians 2:3-5). Cashing in on the power, wealth and romance has always attracted self-seekers who have no buy-in to the ideology of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:10-11). He recognizes hypocrites (Mark 7:6), but warmly embraces all those who are intent on converting to a godly mindset like His (Psalm 51:10). He does all possible to help insure that your relationship within the God family will succeed (Hebrews 13:5).

The hope for mankind lies in the upcoming marriage of the Lamb and His Bride (Revelation 19:7-8). A statement in Proverbs could refer to Christ's role along with the need for a bride with sterling virtue.

"Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy. Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:9-10).

The rest of the chapter can enlighten us to the importance of diligently preparing to become a fitting bride for Christ. In order to be ready as a helper suitable to serve with the coming King of Kings, we need to be genuinely converted and cleansed (Ephesians 5:25-27). Let Him lead you through each aspect of your growing relationship by responding heartily to His correction (Hebrews 12:4-8). In time, personal deficiencies will be transformed into spiritual strengths as changes are made in each of us. **UN**



Photo: Photos.com

Candidates for the Bride of Christ need to be genuine in their pursuit of the opportunity to pursue intimacy with God. Who genuinely wants to be fully at one with Prince Joshua, meeting all the criteria and strict terms?

tenets of this soon-to-be universal power include the destabilization of democratic ideologies and a required co-sharing of the needs essential to human life and happiness.

The mastermind of the coming movement is reclusive Prince Joshua, described as exceedingly influential, very wealthy and commanding a powerful army of loyalists. He has been described as a handsome, tall and darkly tanned individual seeking a wife in time for a scheduled royal wed-

stream human cultures have long embraced. His requirements include that all candidates must be virgins who are gorgeously adorned. Each must renounce all democratic and individualistic ideals. He is to be regarded as "the Anointed," and deferred to with unquestionable submission at all times. Each romantic candidate must genuinely embrace and promote the new ideology whose aim includes erasing the freedom of contemporary societies. And anyone caught in a disin-

governmental system reigning in the personal independence of the earth's population may seem repugnant. You might well consider it the antithesis of the fundamental societal values that we all embrace. Yet if you examine all this through a slightly different lens, you may recognize one of those virgins as being yourself. You see, the above uses themes of biblical prophecies and allegories from Song of Solomon, Isaiah, the Gospels, the Epistles and the Book of Revelation. Describing



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.



Keith Wilson—Wheeling, West Virginia and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Keith Wilson grew up in southern Illinois and began attending the Belleville congregation in 1967 with his parents. After graduating from high school, he attended Northern Illinois University where he studied computer science and history. While there he was baptized in October 1982 while a member in the Rockford congregation. After graduation, he moved to Chicago for work.

In 1986, he was accepted to Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas. That fall he went to Brighton, England for the Feast of Tabernacles where he met Michele Petty, a graduate of AC who was working for the church in Pasadena. After he transferred to Pasadena, they were married in June 1988. Keith graduated in May of 1989 and they moved to western Pennsylvania to be closer to Michele's parents, Grover and Dolores Petty.

Since 1989, Keith has worked as a software developer and team leader for a variety of software vendors in the Pittsburgh area. He currently works for

a human resources company creating web applications.

Keith served as a Y.O.U. coach while attending the Washington, Pennsylvania, congregation through the early 1990s. He was ordained an elder on Sept. 18, 2001 and served the congregations in Wheeling, West Virginia and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as a local elder until January 2011, when he became the pastor for the two congregations on a volunteer basis.

"It has been a great experience in many ways," Keith says. "The people in the congregations have really stepped up, taken on the challenge and made the job easier than I anticipated, but it can be a real challenge. Juggling a full-time career, family, and church has made me realize how much I have to rely on the promise of Philippians 4:13."

Keith and Michele live in Washington, Pennsylvania with their two daughters: Jaclyn, a sophomore at Robert Morris University and Kristen, a junior at Washington High School.



Johnnie Lambert—Buffalo and Elmira, New York

In 1995, Johnnie Lambert, his wife of 46 years, Hazel, and two of their three children (Bryant and Lori), jointly committed their lives to preaching the gospel (Matthew 24:14) in whatever way God would permit. "Hazel and I had been baptized together in Mr. Ken Swisher's basement (Atlanta, Georgia) in 1968. In 1980, Britt Taylor and Jim Franks ordained me to the position of local elder. I have served in that capacity until the present."

Beginning in 1997, the Lambert family started coming to Estonia and Eastern Europe. Seeing a need to present God's Truth to peoples in their own language, a group of them (too numerous to credit here) began the arduous task of translating and

publishing literature in the Estonian and Russian languages. They have continued that effort until the present. Mr. Lambert's objective is to travel to Estonia four times per year to mail that literature. Future objectives include developing websites with home pages in local languages.

In December, Mr. Lambert was asked to serve as the pastor for western New York (Buffalo and Elmira). "Being gone to Eastern Europe four months per year makes it difficult to be an effective pastor. With the excellent help of Marcus Regoord and Andy Buchholz, it has been possible."

Mr. Lambert reflected, "In these ways, for the last 16 years we have been able to fulfill the commitment we made in 1995. We hope to continue to do that for the foreseeable future."



Don Pirwitz—Springfield, Missouri

Don Paul Pirwitz was born and raised in Rochester, New York.

He left to serve in the U. S. Army between 1959 and 1962. During that time, he spent many nights on duty listening to the radio and hearing *The World Tomorrow* broadcast, sometimes two or three times a night! In 1962, he met with Dennis Luker on a baptizing tour in Boston. Three years later he was baptized by Gary Antion in Buffalo, New York.

He and his wife, Sharon, were high school sweethearts and were married in 1961. They have three children and six grandchildren.

After retiring from a career in radio broadcasting he still does some work as a news contractor for five radio stations and conducts occasional tours at Fantastic Caverns in Springfield, Missouri. He has

been serving as a volunteer pastor in the Springfield, Missouri, congregation since January of 2011. Other interests include gardening and walking.

Mr. Pirwitz commented, "One thing that solidifies my relationship with God is looking back and seeing the times He didn't allow me to do things 'my way.' His guidance has allowed me to avoid numerous hazards and given me confidence in His way."

"Although I haven't had a lot of time to gather experience as a pastor, I appreciate the support I've had from the solid members of the Springfield congregation and from the home office."

Two of his favorite scriptures are Psalms 119:165, showing the great benefits of following God's commandments and Ecclesiastes 9:10, which he says encourages him "to take whatever I do seriously and give it my all."

Serve at the Feast this Year by Making New Relationships

by James Danley

As the Feast of Tabernacles approaches, we look forward to God's Kingdom. We refresh and clarify our vision, refining ourselves and praying to endure until the end that we may be saved. As we look around, we are currently engulfed in a world of chaos and confusion. And yet, we can see *hope*—we can see Bible prophecy being fulfilled before our eyes. That is *exciting*, and we should be looking to Jesus Christ and awaiting His return, ever so diligently refining ourselves and analyzing how we can become like Him!

Jesus Christ was the most powerful and competent man that has ever walked the earth. He was knowledgeable and refined, yet He had a sincerity of heart. This made Him the most effective "people person" who has ever lived. He associated with sinners and publicans. He had compassion on the multitudes who were without a shepherd. He was sincere when He engaged people and people immediately sensed His genuineness. He looked out for the best interests of others (Philippians 2:4-5).

While we don't possess the ability to read peoples' thoughts, motives and hearts,

Jesus Christ's Example

Jesus Christ said to have love one for another and that by *this* would people know that we're God's people (John 13:34-35). How can we love one another if we don't even know one another? You might say, "I know everyone in my congregation!" And you may very well know their names, but do you *really* know them? Have you spoken to them intimately about their lives, family, spiritual battles, studies, current events? Do you know enough about that person to pray for their most intimate struggles and battles? Jesus Christ did. Do we walk in His example?

Are we best friends with our brothers and sisters in Christ? How intimate is your congregation? Do you remember the days when the *Spirit* and *power* of God were the discussions at church on the Sabbath? Are our conversations today superficial?

Jesus Christ had intimate relationships with the apostles. He knew them, their backgrounds, their families. God and Jesus Christ *genuinely care* about our lives, battles and success! If the Spirit of God is within us, should we not yearn to build up and aid our fellow brothers in the great war



Are we best friends with our brothers and sisters in Christ? Do you know enough about them to pray for their struggles and battles? Are our conversations today superficial?

we, walking in Christ's example, ought to also seek to develop the skills necessary to serve our fellow man. That's why God is calling us: We're being trained to work with people both *now* and in the Kingdom!

Question

As members of the family of God, we are to *serve*, love, edify and build one another up. "Therefore comfort each other and edify one another" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Therefore we should ask ourselves: "How many new spiritual relationships will I build this year at the Feast, and will I be there this year for my brothers to pick them up when they've fallen in this spiritual war that rages around us?"

that we fight together against the prince of the power of the air?

Soldiers

As bombs are showering, bullets impacting, dirt spewing into the air day in and day out, how close are soldiers of war? If you were a soldier in war, how close would you be with the guys on your right and on your left? The ones you depend on to save your life. Would they be your brothers? If you spent a few years in the trenches fighting beside them, how close would you be?

Discouragement is one of Satan's greatest weapons. If Jesus Christ promises to not give up on us, then Satan must get us to give up on Jesus Christ! In 1 Thessalonians

Five key subjects that you can keep anyone talking about for hours:

- 1. Home town.** Where they are from? What environment did they grow up in? How did it shape their life and who they are?
- 2. Business.** What do they do for work? Do they love it? Is it fun? How did they get into it and how has it changed since they've been in the business? What lessons have they learned from it?
- 3. Background.** What schools have they attended? Where else have they lived? What other jobs have they worked? Have they learned spiritual lessons from them? Can they see how God shaped their lives?
- 4. Family.** Most people love to talk about family. Wife, husband, kids? How many, how old, what do they do, what are their hobbies?
- 5. Hobbies.** What do they do in their free time? Are they into sports? Skiing, running, going to the gym, movies, art, scotch, wine?

The key here is to have a sincere desire to understand where this person has come from, what's shaped their thoughts and beliefs and why they are who they are. If we as Christians can approach every relationship this way, we will have a better understanding of people and be of better use to God the Father and Jesus Christ!

5:14, Paul wrote, "Now, we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, *encourage the fainthearted*, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all" (ASV, emphasis added). Paul passionately directs the Thessalonians to *encourage* the fainthearted here. Now, at some point in our spiritual war we all will become fainthearted, tired and discouraged. Brothers and sisters in warfare, how can we encourage one another if we don't know each other well enough to know when one is discouraged? We are our brother's keeper!

This year we should make it a goal to refine our people skills, to meet new people, spend time with the elderly, learn about their calling into God's truth, talk about spiritual battles they've overcome and the lessons they've learned in their lives. Let's take this knowledge and build meaningful relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ—to support and aid them in time of need and to pick them up when they've fallen. One of the most powerful acts of service, and one that anyone can do, is to build positive relationships of meaning.

How many new spiritual relationships will you build this year at the Feast, and will you be there this year for your brothers to pick them up when they've fallen in this spiritual war that rages around us?

How To

Growth is only obtained through discomfort. "Make your life uncomfortable" was the motto from one of my first business mentors. He realized that as human beings we can only grow, develop and better ourselves through situations of discomfort. For some of us, going out of our way to talk to others is a great challenge and fear, let alone actually spending the time to get to *know* someone!

Breaking the ice is the most difficult part of striking up conversation and building a relationship. When you get that insecure feeling in your gut that tries to keep you from going and talking to someone, take a deep breath and say to yourself "make your life uncomfortable." Walk over to the person, make eye contact (sincere eye contact) and introduce yourself. "I'm _____ from _____. We haven't met yet. Where are you from?"

Principles of Meaningful Conversation

1. Give that person your utmost attention; make them feel like they're the only person in the world. Complete focus, thought and concern on what they're saying is key! We need to listen more intently and with more focus than ever before! Listen as Jesus Christ did to all that he came into contact with, Jews and Gentiles alike.
2. Ask questions regarding what they're talking about. This lets them know that you're listening, shows that you genuinely care and lets them know they're not talking to a wall.
3. Don't look around, constantly looking for someone else to go and say "hello" to. This body language tells people that you're busy, rushed and don't have time or interest in real conversation. This is a sure way to keep conversations and relationships superficial and meaningless. **UN**

Topics of Conversation in the Church:

1. How they found the Truth
2. Recent study topics
3. Current events and Bible prophecy
4. Favorite Feast sites
5. Struggles in life

SIX WAYS TO MAKE PEOPLE LIKE YOU—Dale Carnegie, "How to Win Friends & Influence People"

1. Become genuinely interested in other people
2. Smile
3. Remember that a person's name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language
4. Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves
5. Talk in terms of the other person's interests
6. Make the other person feel important—and do it sincerely

United Youth Camps 2011

Hye Sierra Fresno, California

by Ed Dowd

Set amidst the beautiful pines and reflective lakes in the mountain tops of central California, Camp Hye Sierra 2011 offered 82 teen campers, 21 preteen campers and 88 staff a week-long adventure full of Zone-focused activities, friends, fun and spiritual discussions. From the morning flag-raising ceremony, daily compass checks and exciting activities—both fast and slow—to the evening Christian living classes and campfires, the Hye Sierra camp experience this summer has been fantastic! We were each given the opportunity to individually reflect on where we are and where we want to be, as we continue to practice God's Way in action.

This year's theme, "A world away from the world," opened the door to exploring many facets of building godly character. Our daily sub-themes built on each other, step by step, giving everyone direction in

personal application. We began by explaining the important foundation that God gave us through His Word. His inspired Word should be the foundation of our lives. With that as our base, we encouraged using God's Word in order to set the right goals. Personal goals are important, and each one of our goals in this life should point us toward our entrance into God's beautiful eternal family. From there, we stressed that our goals can only fully be realized through implementing education and preparation. Campers and staff were encouraged to strengthen their relationship with God through prayer and by following His laws, Bible study and serving one another. With these foundational principles in place, we will grow in wisdom and start making the right choices. Much instruction and support was given to all of the campers and staff to practice and apply each of these four growth areas in their daily lives—ulti-

mately experiencing the blessings and benefits from living a life of godly character.

This year we placed strong emphasis on "the Zone," which defines the environment of our camp. But it's more than what our staffers and campers do and say, it extends to how we interact with—and even think about—each other. Working together in great concert, all participants strive to create an environment that, as much as possible, is a foretaste of the Kingdom of God today. In other words, we want to have everyone experience something fantastically unique, a small picture of what it will be like when everyone on earth is living God's way of life! Living in the Zone helps us look forward to a world that is much different than the world we live in.

This year we offered a wide variety of activities during the day, including kayaking, fishing, dance, volleyball, archery, challenge course, basketball, speedaway,

capture the flag and hiking. Amidst the majestic giant sequoias, we had journalism, Bible classes and a life skills class. The evenings were filled with free time, evening Christian living classes for each brother/sister dorm with their dorm parents followed by an intimate question and answer session, novelty olympics and nightly campfire with dorm skits and variety show. Camp ended on a high with a Sabbath evening banquet, camper speeches on biblical topics, an awards ceremony and, after sunset, a dance under the stars.

From ministers and elders, activity staff to the kitchen crew, all were given opportunities throughout the week to interact with the campers, in word and example, showing that God's Way is fun, works perfectly and is a blessing!

Photos: Page 11, top half

Northwest Rockaway Beach, Oregon

by Rex Sexton

We had 100 campers and 56 staff who enjoyed a wonderful week together at Camp Magruder near Rockaway Beach on the Oregon coast! The weather this year was mostly sunny and warm, letting campers really enjoy the beach and outdoor activities. Our camp theme this year of "A World Away From the World" came alive in the daily Christian living lessons and themes for the day. Those lessons and memory scriptures were the core around which all activities took place.

The lesson for each day was introduced with a talk by the dorm counselors, who placed a placard with that day's theme in each dorm for visual reinforcement. The Christian living classes taught the lessons to each dorm every morning after breakfast, and then the lessons were worked into every activity during the day. Even the

campfire story to end the day tied into the theme.

The daily lessons were:

Monday: God's Words to Us

Tuesday: Setting the Right Goals

Wednesday: The Importance of Education and Preparation

Thursday: Making the Right Decisions

Friday: Blessings and Benefits of a Life of Character

Campers came up with songs each day to help with remembering the day's key scripture. These lessons will be long remembered as campers and staff head home. Since this was our second year at Camp Magruder on the Oregon Coast, our staff was able to settle in and get ready for camp quickly, once we arrived on location.

The Magruder staff hosts many different groups here during the year. They commented often how much they enjoyed

having us here and noted the organization of the camp and the mature behavior of our campers. They especially appreciated the lack of litter during our week. When things are done "decently and in order," people notice and appreciate what they see.

One of the highlights of the camp was the beach campfire and barbecue on Monday. The "all camp" tug-of-war may have been the largest ever at a United camp. I was just thankful that the rope did not break! Experiencing the campfire on the beach as the sun sets over the ocean is a memorable experience.

Our camp staff clearly wants to pass on important life lessons to the next generation of leaders in God's Church. In 1 Corinthians 12, we are told that God sets members in the body to benefit everyone, and camp this year was an outstanding example of this in action. We are so blessed to have

professional and qualified volunteers to fill every need that we have. Northwest Camp could not operate without them.

No doubt campers and staff will hold on to what we have learned and experienced here and keep a part of this special "world away from the world" during the coming year.

Two comments from the camper survey illustrate the result of camp: "God is where our hearts should lie, and we need to strive for character to be able to be the person God needs us to be in His Kingdom" (camper, age 16). "I learned about making good choices and learning to live my life as God wants me to" (camper, age 18).

Photos: Page 11, bottom half

Pinecrest Fredericktown, Missouri

by Gary Smith

The 2011 United Youth Camp theme is "A World Away from the World." Although this year's theme is expressed with unique wording, it has been fundamental to Camp Pinecrest for 15 years. Yet in certain respects, 2011 is a year of firsts.

United began using Camp Pinecrest as a youth camp beginning in 1996. From that time forward thousands of volunteers and campers have been part of the traditions established at this location. The camp transformed over the years to include challenging experiences such as a canoe trip down the Black River and rock climbing, to mainstay activities such as swimming, riflery, softball, speedaway, archery, ropes course, journalism and leadership classes.

For 15 years, volunteers have come together to pool their talents and abilities

to create "A World Away from the World." Amazingly over that span of time, the goal of creating a "zone" that is peaceful, safe, edifying and yet challenging has been consistently achieved. How has that goal been accomplished? It is through the application of Christ-like service. As men and women come together in humility, dedication and service, a wonderful atmosphere is created in which campers can thrive.

As 2011 began, there was great uncertainty. Would we have use of Camp Pinecrest? Would we have enough staff? Who would be the director? Would we have campers? As time progressed, the facility was secured, a great staff applied to serve, a new director was appointed and 65 campers came to camp.

As Camp Pinecrest unfolded, "A World Away from the World" has once again been

produced. Men and women have filled the gaps in the program and have joined together with dedication for the 15th time to produce an atmosphere that is edifying to all.

Did we achieve our goal of creating "A World Away from the World"? An outside observer's comments will answer that question.

As camp began on July 31, a volunteer worker for Camp Pinecrest was drilling a hole in a large rock near the dining hall. The work continued throughout the week with the digging of a hole, putting in a plastic pool, running a water line and then setting everything in place for the water to bubble up through the rock. As this worker and his companion worked all week, they watched our campers go about their activities.

As camp was coming to a close, the man came up to me and said, "I have to tell you something that I have observed this week. Your program is well-organized, and your young people are a most courteous and respectful group. These qualities are not found in all groups who come to Pinecrest." Being a light to the world is a goal we want to achieve with the UYC program, and we attained that level of excellence again this year.

This was the 15th year for Camp Pinecrest, but in a lot of ways, it was also a kind of first year. The cultivation of "A World Away from the World" was most decidedly a success.

Photos: Page 12, top half



HYE SIERRA



Photos: Dan Dowd

Clockwise from top left: Kaitlon Knudson helps a camper as she's checking in at camp; dorm G4; dorm B2 at compass check; dorm B3 on the hike; dorm G2 and kayaking staff; Erin Murphy and Sierra Gomperts during the kayaking activity.



NORTHWEST



Photos: Michelle Pate

Clockwise from top left: Monica Velazquez, Kathleen Kelly, Amy Bates, Daniella Babb, Jamie Miller and Whitney Pennington; Lauren Kelly and Ingrid Hockwald; Lauren Pate and Glen White at the archery course; Jennifer Pate, Bridget Wood and Jessica Hendrickson on the beach; Stephanie Lippincott and Monica Velazquez kayaking; Arthur Hockwald wakeboarding.

PINECREST



Photos: Many different campers

Clockwise from top left: dorm 3B; campers during their morning compass check; Kaylee and Lindsey Randle; dorm 3B during a cooperation activity; dorm 3B members Erika Timmons, Michala Lockwood and Mikaela Gannon building a fire during the "Amazing Race" activity; dorm 2G members Amallia Anderson, Allison Harris, Julie Waterhouse and Ellen Cain at the archery activity.

WOODMEN



Photos: Regina Horvath & Cheyenne Kellers

Clockwise from top left: Campers playing soccer; Megan on the high ropes; Nicholas, Logan and Frank show off their riflery target; campers enjoying fellowship time; Carly and Julia at novelty olympics; Jarrod, David, Daniel and Mariah at church services.

BRITISH ISLES



Photos: Barbara Fenney

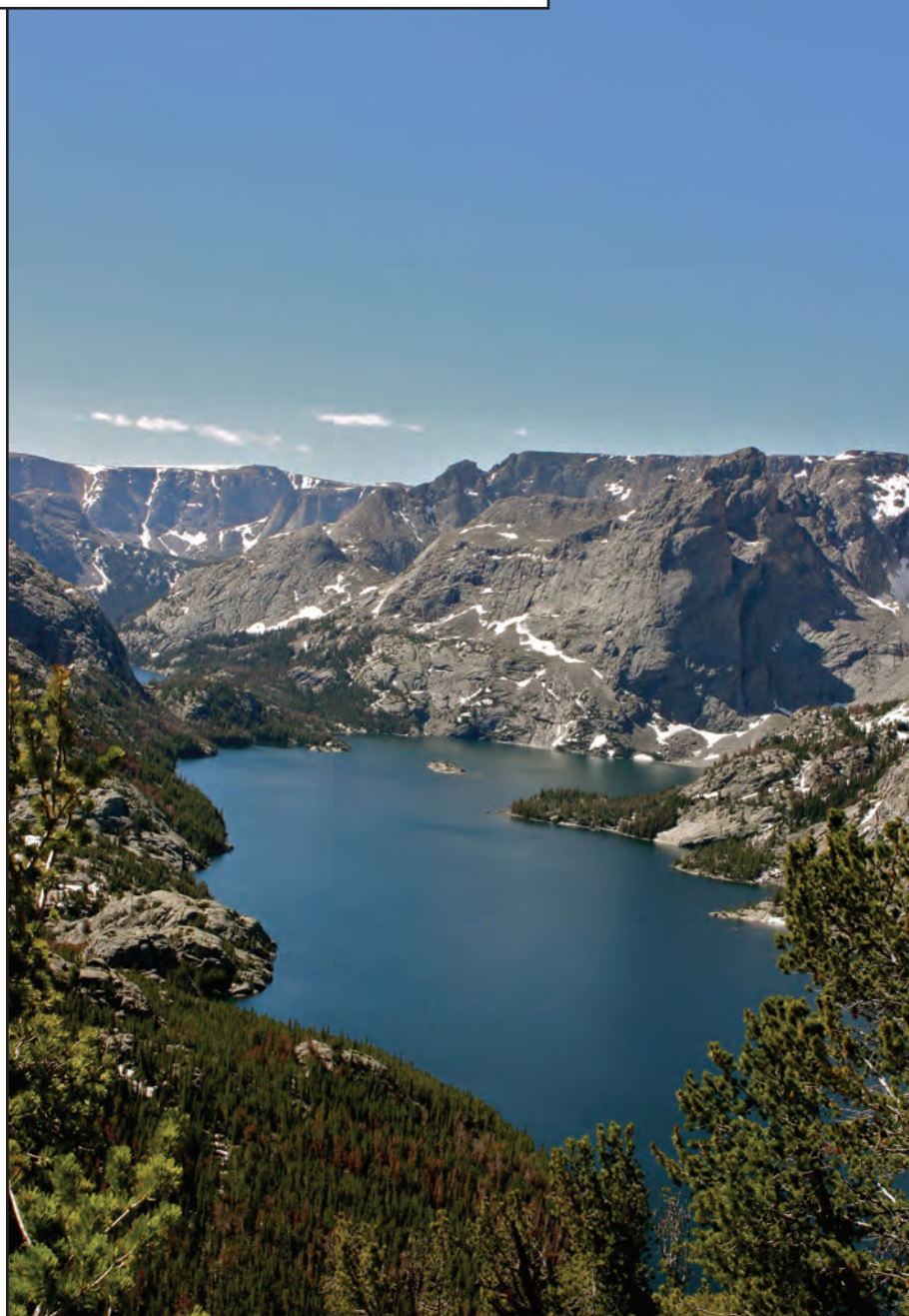
Clockwise from top left: Sarah on the Segway Safari; Andrea, Sarah and Josh with the warden of the Peak Centre at the archery course; a group photo of the campers and staff; all the female campers and two male campers playing a parachute game; Gbemi, Michelle and several others playing Jenga; several campers at the top of a ridge on the hike up Kinder Scout.

CAMEROON



Photos: Moise Mabout

Clockwise from top left: Bisai Mabout Rita on the obstacle rope course; Mabout Moise Elisée, Jr., Belmbok Mica and Bassoli Colbert; Bisai Mabout Rita, Laurette Balla and Lyliane Ngo Ndjawo; all campers and staff gathered for a group photo.



Photos: Matthew Fenchel

Clockwise from top left: Picturesque Ross Lake is surrounded by rugged cliffs, offering many spectacular views; Garrett Fenchel attempts to catch “the big one” at the southern end of Ross Lake; Mark Mickelson free climbs a rock face in setting up a belay system; Lynette Fenchel scales a rock face with a beautiful July sky as her backdrop.

Challenger 2012 Wind River Wilderness, Wyoming

by Matthew Fenchel

Backpacking in rugged, beautiful mountains. Crossing rushing streams on makeshift log dams. Camping above 10,000 feet in altitude. Climbing challenging rock cliffs. Catching beautiful (and large!) rainbow trout. Having a bear watch your campsite.

These were just a few of the adventures that some of the Challenger staff experienced during a week-long scouting and training trip to the Wind Rivers Wilderness (Wyoming) in mid-July. These are also some of the events that young adults can look forward to when the Challenger program is again offered in the summer of 2012 (well, maybe the bear will be gone—maybe).

Led by Mark Mickelson (pastor in Washington state, senior pastor for West Africa and Challenger climbing director since its inception), the group was comprised of Mark Welch (pastor in Oklahoma), Matthew and Lisa Fenchel (elder and wife from Cincinnati, Ohio) and the Fenchels’ two children, Lynette and Garrett. Mr. Fenchel will serve as

the Challenger program director beginning in 2012, after directing various United Youth Camps for nine seasons. The group was warmly and generously hosted before and after their trip by Wil and Sue Berg, pastor and wife in Dubois, Wyoming.

The purpose of the trip was twofold: to scout out additional possible sites for camping, rock-climbing and fishing and to provide additional training to Mr. Welch and Mr. and Mrs. Fenchel in wilderness living and belaying. Lynette and Garrett also participated in every aspect of the trip and were willing climbers as the others perfected their belaying techniques.

The trip was a success in every way. In past years, the main campsite had always been up from, but never actually on, Ross Lake, a large mountain lake with majestic scenery. The group did identify some very good camp locations directly on Ross Lake that would still be in proximity to rock-climbing areas, including some that have not been used by the Challenger program in the past. Ross Lake also proved to be a fantastic

place for trout-fishing. In a short time, numerous 18 to 24-inch rainbow trout were caught (and they made for a delicious dinner!).

The trip was not without its “unplanned” adventures. Yes, we actually had a couple of bears visit camp one day (while we were away rock-climbing), and one of them was spotted a couple of mornings later just watching the camp. Due to a 200 percent snowpack, the rivers were much higher than normal, making crossing them a challenge, even after we built up a log dam across one outlet. One night we had a windstorm with up to 50 mile-per-hour gusts. This continued the next day, which caused us to change our route going out and gave us an unexpected opportunity to rappel down a small cliff.

However, conquering such obstacles is frankly why the Challenger program exists. This program is not for those who are content with their own “status quo.” Growth in any endeavor requires putting your current skills to the test—and learning new ones. That is what the Challenger program is all about.

Through wilderness living, backpacking, rock-climbing, fishing and camping, participants will have opportunities for physical, mental, emotional, relational and spiritual growth that are not offered as a package in any other UCG venue. Each day will begin with a compass check and will end with an interactive Bible study. Here we will see what the Bible teaches about “moving on to perfection [completeness]” (Hebrews 6:1) and “letting patience [perseverance] have its perfect work” (James 1:4). During the day, we will have the opportunity to practice those principles while enjoying some of the most beautiful—and challenging—wilderness areas in the lower 48 states. The challenges will be many, but the rewards will be more.

This scouting and training trip was certainly an unforgettable experience in which we learned much. Challenger 2012 will be a rewarding adventure for anyone who participates. Be watching for more announcements in the coming months, and be getting your packs, boots, fishing poles—and yourselves—ready.

UYC 2011

Woodmen Blountsville, Alabama

by Beth Cortelyou

Camp Woodmen ended its 14th year as a UYC camp on July 10, 2011. Many campers and staff reported that it was their best camp experience yet!

With standard sports such as basketball, sand volleyball, softball and speedway being the staples, Woodmen facilities also feature a high ropes course, riflery range, swimming pool and water slide. Each morning after breakfast, campers and staff joined together for Christian living class, which emphasized the camp theme of “A World Away From the World.” Campers were given daily memory verses, starting with Matthew 6:33: “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

Dorm inspections were conducted each

morning, and starting from the first day, all three girls’ dorms were awarded a perfect score. As a prize, all campers in those dorms were given popsicles later in the day as a treat. By the third day, the boys’ dorms began making perfect scores on their inspections as well, so we gave out a lot of popsicles the last half of camp!

Camp Woodmen provided their own staff to run the high ropes course, which included a 35-foot high climbing wall, zip line, tightrope, high swing and trapeze, which could be reached only by jumping off the top of a pole. Many campers were scared, but most still tried the activities. It was amazing to see a camper who was obviously scared listen intently to instructions from their counselor and follow every step, even though the instructions seemed impossible.

Though the weather was hot and humid, a couple storms passed through during the week to cool things off, and all the facilities were air-conditioned. There were no serious health problems or accidents during the week.

On the first and last nights of camp, we had a dance. One evening, we held novelty Olympics, which was a great chance to mix up the dorms and staff into different teams. Games included team races, a water balloon toss and a watermelon eating contest.

We were happy to have Mr. and Mrs. Jerold Aust as our guests one evening. Mr. Aust gave a presentation about Ambassador Bible Center, which was followed by a fun show. All the dorms, and some staff, created and performed very entertaining skits.

Every evening before camper curfew,

everyone gathered in the meeting hall to sing “Seek Ye First,” accompanied by various campers on keyboard. It was a wonderful hymn to focus our attention on God’s Word right before bedtime.

Each dorm took turns cleaning the facilities, which were left better than when we arrived. The manager of Woodmen always schedules our group for the fourth of July, because that’s when he takes his yearly vacation—he knows that he can trust our group while he’s gone.

We had a wonderful group of teens this year and an exceptional staff who worked hard to make Camp Woodmen 2011 the best camp yet!

Photos: Page 12, bottom half

British Isles Edale, Derbyshire, England

by David & Barbara Fenney

The British Isles United Youth Camp was again held at the Peak Centre in Edale, Derbyshire, England. This year 24 campers came from Ireland, Holland, Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (and not all from the UK were native English speakers). With staff from as far away as Australia, Malawi and Hong Kong, there was a great variety of different languages and cultures.

For several this was their first taste of a United Youth Camp, and reactions were mostly positive, although one or two of the younger campers were not so keen on some of the less familiar or spicier foods.

The highlight of the week was arguably the *Segway Safari*, where campers and staff tried out the two-wheeled

machines around a slalom course, an obstacle course, including steps and a seesaw and finally raced off at top speed (12 miles per hour) across a large field before negotiating a series of small cross-country courses. The day finished with a barbecue and sing-along around a campfire.

Another popular activity was the visit to Ponds Forge swimming pool in Sheffield, which boasts a wave machine and water slides.

In addition to the Segway, many campers experienced at least one activity they had not done before: a more energetic group, including some novice hill-walkers, climbed Kinder Scout, a peak near the Centre; others tried the indoor climbing wall and many succeeded in reaching the top. There was a chance to

try archery, and Gbemi, who had never previously held a bow, managed both to score a bullseye and to burst a target balloon.

Other activities included sports and games, sewing a scented cushion, learning circus skills and visiting the spa town of Buxton for its history, but mostly for its shopping!

Almost every day there was a forum, beginning with topics such as the Golden Rule and the Ten Commandments. In breakout sessions small groups covered one of the Commandments and later presented their findings to the whole group. Later in the week the campers or members of staff selected other topics to discuss. Lancy Kachali from Malawi spoke about her upbringing in Africa and how it’s so different from that of the majority

of European children. Hannah Ellams spoke about street children and being grateful for the things we have.

On the first Sabbath, the service was linked to Carlow in the Republic of Ireland. On the final Sabbath a choir made up of staff and campers sang “You are Worthy,” and Lancy Kachali sang a Malawian song about repentance.

On the last afternoon, before they began to tidy up for the Sabbath, the campers indulged themselves in a water fight. Shrieks filled the warm air of the valley. It had been a great summer camp, and everyone was sad when the time came to leave.

Photos: Page 13, top half

Cameroon

by Moïse Mabout

From July 10 to July 17, 2011, the United Church of God held a United Youth Camp in Cameroon. It was the second time for such a youth camp to take place in French-speaking Africa. The activities started on Sunday with a Bible study on constructive criticism in connection with Matthew 18. The next day we had a study on time management and another one on the importance of recognizing merit in working with each other.

Other activities included Frisbee, foot-

ball, volleyball, marathon and indoor activities such as a Bible quiz and various cultural dances of Cameroon.

The rest of the time, each day began and ended with a Bible study. During the day, several sports and educational activities took place at the Parcours Vita—a center for sport and physical activities built by the Cameroonian Ministry of Physical Education and Sports under the supervision of the Cameroon army.

This track consists of a 2,700 meter course of 20 hurdles and various obstacles, giving everyone the ability to do things

according their level.

Twelve young people were able to participate in this camp. Mr. Mabout, Mr. Andang, Mr. Barthelemy, Mr. Gouet and three coaches of the Cameroonian army served extensively during the camp. Mrs. Mabout and Mrs. Bikoé took care of the kitchen responsibilities.

During the Sabbath, Mr. Ndjok gave a sermonette and Mr. Mabout the sermon. The evening after, we played games using the biblical Word of God. We had a general assessment of all the activities that we held; three youths were honored for their

behavior during the camp: Miss Laurette Ball, Mabout Elisha Moses Jr. and Moses Mabout Yvon.

The church in Cameroon would like to express its gratitude to the home office and to all the brothers and sisters near and far who made this camp possible by their help and guidance.

Photos: Page 13, bottom half



Spring Holy Days in Jamaica

by Courtney Lattery

The congregation in Ocho Rios was started by Eustace Ellis in the home of another member, Lloyd Davis (now deceased), with about half a dozen members, including children. Some time later the group acquired a meeting hall at the Village Hotel in the heart of Ocho Rios, where it stayed for many years. They grew in numbers until Sabbath services were averaging 30 people.

Late 2010 was traumatic for us, as we got wind that trouble was brewing in the organization. Information was hard to come by, and when it did it was mostly unclear, resulting in uncomfortable uncertainties. Over time, it seemed inevitable that there would be a split. Early in 2011 it happened—our minister resigned, and we were left without a leader, out in the cold and on our own. The uncertainty heightened. There we were, leaderless. We had to vacate the hall in which we met for years, we had no audio/video equipment, and we were low on cash. To make matters worse, the home office had also abandoned us—or so we thought. We learned later that the home office might have thought that the whole congregation had followed the minister out of the United Church of God. In fact, only three members actually did. The good news is, one member, Mr. Erol Thomas, was working behind the scenes and succeeded in alerting home office to the fact that, for the most part, we were very much unmoved.

Having met at the Village Hotel for what we thought would be the

last time on Sabbath, February 5, 2011, the home office informed us that they would send a representative to talk to us. That person was Chuck Smith. There were 27 of us who met for Sabbath services at the Jamaica Grand Sunset Resort on February 12, 2011. We were assisted with audio/video equipment, materials to start a library and finances. We were able to go back to the Village and rent a hall of our own.

Mr. Smith made another visit in March, and with this help from the home office, new life was injected into the congregation. The group is led by two local deacons—Courtney Lattery and Carlton Sterling, riding on what was later to be known as “the Chuck Smith momentum.” And so, the spring Holy Day season was looking very bright for everyone.

The home office lined up a minister to lead us through the Holy Days. Mr. Smith was doing duties elsewhere in the Caribbean, so in his place another Chuck—Zimmerman—and his wife Joy arrived for services with us on Sabbath, April 16, 2011, with Mr. Zimmerman filling the sermon slot.

At 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 17, 2011, eight of us (four men, four ladies) gathered at the Village for the Passover service led by Mr. Zimmerman and assisted by the deacons. During the service, we were plunged into total darkness, which we learned later was caused by a power outage that affected the whole town. This did not deter us, however, as we were able to use emergency lighting

See “Jamaica,” page 23



The youth eating lunch together on the Holy Day.

Youth Corps Zambia Reaches Out to Serve

by Lena VanAusdle

We knew we were a part of something much bigger than ourselves as we stepped onto the jet that would soon be carrying us over the Atlantic Ocean to the African continent. The United Youth Corps has lofty goals that we were blessed to try to accomplish this past August. From the United Youth

Corps website: “Our mission is to help our young adults envision and prepare for the coming Kingdom of God. This would be accomplished by helping them to identify with the international nature of the Body of Christ, and with their role in the work of the Church.” After the recent events in the United Church of God, we had another goal as well; to reach out to the brethren

that we would be serving and let them know that they are loved, cared for and a necessary part of the Church. Marc Eddington, Lewis VanAusdle, myself and Jim Tuck made up the group endeavoring to accomplish these goals.

As the plane jetted over the ocean, over Europe, over the Middle East and finally over northern Africa as we made our way to Zambia, the thought that continually came to me was, “How on earth are we going to do this?” Of course we couldn’t accomplish this without the help of God’s Holy Spirit guiding us, but what physical steps could we take on our own to do this?

When we arrived, the “how” became apparent. We were there to travel—and travel we did. We tried to meet as many of our brethren as we could in the two short weeks we had in the country. The week began with English lessons for 17 adult members and one adolescent and leadership training for 21 members. At the conclusion of the week we kept the Sabbath with 69 members made up of individuals from the classes earlier in the week and some of our members from the Lusaka congregation.

The next day we set out to meet more of our brethren. A dusty nine-hour bus ride led us to three local congregations, two of which we stopped at long enough to have a Bible study, with 37 and 47 members present for those Bible studies, respectively. The next day brought us back to our original location just outside of Lusaka and the start of the youth camp. There were 42 campers who were able to participate in sporting activities, public speaking, first aid classes, career guidance and Christian living for four full days before the Sabbath began.

That Friday we climbed into a van and made the trek from southern Zambia to the north to spend the Sabbath in the Copperbelt. We met with 39 brethren for the Sabbath and immediately headed back to Lusaka, as we would be leaving for the United States the next day.

Our whirlwind tour of this beautiful country led us to unexpected places, but the generosity, love and concern shown to us throughout our trip was a constant, and it is a testament to the wonderful brethren we have in Zambia. **UN**



Lena and Lewis VanAusdle with Sydney Talama, a young adult from Lusaka who helped organize the camp in Zambia this year.



Marc Eddington and Lena VanAusdle with Major Frank Talama, who was ordained as a deacon in August.



Four members from the leadership class.

Photos: Lena and Lewis VanAusdle

Photo: Joy Zimmerman



Local Church UPDATES



Sheila Wagoner, Linda Spurlock, Janet Hines, Julie Zutz and Faye James at the Colorado Ladies Retreat in July.

Colorado Ladies Host Women's Retreat

The Denver, Loveland and Colorado Springs, Colorado, ladies hosted the 2011 Colorado Women's Retreat in the Rocky Mountains near Allenspark, Colorado, on the weekend of July 29-31. The theme for the retreat was "Becoming God's Precious Jewels." A total of 32 women (and 6-week-old Wyatt Hines) met together for a wonderful and inspiring weekend in one of most beautiful settings imaginable.

Presentations included "You'll Never Walk Alone" by Vikki Wilke; "Peace During Trials," an interactive discussion led by Julie Zutz; "Becoming God's Precious Jewels" table topics led by Sheila Wagoner; "Jewel of God—Works in Progress" by Pam Beckett; "What Will We See When Our Eyes Are Opened" by Heather Curry and "How Brilliant Are You?" by Carol Szymkowiak.

Arthur and Marsha Suckling joined us for Sabbath services. The service included three special music selections: "As the Deer," a solo by Pam McMaster; "A Medley of My Shepherd's Love," an instrumental piece by Heather Curry, Mary Curry and Sandy Korthuis; and "We Will Glorify," by the Front Range Ladies' Choir. Mr. Suckling gave a thought-provoking sermon on emotional maturity.

On Saturday night the ladies gathered around an outdoor campfire where Sandy Korthuis led a panel discussion titled "Generational Gems." The panel was made up of six ladies representing six decades. The youngest on the panel was Heather Curry, age 20. At the other end we had Marilyn Magoon representing the golden years. As the youngest member, Heather was open and shared valuable insight from her age perspective.

On Sunday morning, Julie Zutz presented a special session titled "Resolving Conflict as Christian Women." Julie covered biblical principles of being a peacemaker and shared a specific tool developed to help effectively deal with conflict. Ladies broke up into groups and practiced using the tool. They had a great deal of enthusiasm about learning to use the tool and developing

peacemaking skills.

The most remarkable aspect of the whole weekend was the amount of group participation, sharing and bonding the women enjoyed in an atmosphere and setting of peace. We feel that God truly blessed our time together.

Those of us from Colorado would like to extend a special thanks to our sisters from Lubbock, Texas, who once again made the trip to join us. Ladies from four states attended. We would also like to thank and acknowledge Beth Bradford for coordinating the planning and putting so much time and love into making this such a joyous event.

Connie Ashley



Three ladies working on fleece blankets for Project Linus at the Portland Women's Retreat.

Portland Women's Retreat a Success

Around 60 overnight and 20 day-only attendees gathered at the Aldersgate retreat facility in Turner, Oregon, to enjoy a relaxing atmosphere with friends on February 24-27. Early arrivals trickled in on Thursday and enjoyed an extra day to shop, visit or explore the surrounding area until the bulk of the attendees arrived on Friday. Fri-

day afternoon offered ample time for visiting on the many comfortable chairs next to a huge stone fireplace in the main lodge common room. As the closing time for two of the silent auction tables approached, activity became more flurried as each of several women good-naturedly tried to outbid her neighbor to take home beautiful homemade crafts or gift baskets. Dinner and sunset coincided, so it was nice to relax into the Sabbath with friends over a meal that we did not have to prepare or clean up after. Following dinner, we trooped over to the adjacent meeting hall to view a slide show of the ministerial trip to Israel last year as humorously narrated by Patti Sexton, Sandy Cafourek and Becky Hornor. The presentation highlighted the beauty, history, politics and tension found in that region of the world. The evening schedule concluded with a quartet singing "A Sabbath Prayer." Then it was off to visit some more or to head for bed.

Saturday began with breakfast followed by church in the meeting hall. John Cafourek gave the first message on being anchored in the truth and urged us to learn about truth, love the truth and live it to avoid spiritual shipwreck. The ladies' retreat choir sang "Let All Creation Sing" and "A Celtic Thanksgiving." Bob Dick gave an interactive sermon that included a worksheet, allowing for group discussion on the practical side of love as described in 1 Corinthians 13. After lunch we gathered in the meeting hall again for more instruction. Carmella Weiss opened with the song "How Beautiful," and then Mrs. Hornor discussed the importance of setting healthy boundaries. She showed that setting boundaries and showing love go hand in hand. Lonna Cole sang "Your Hands," and then Mrs. Cafourek talked about what love is and what it is not and how to channel

Good Works program.

On Sunday, we met again for Dyanne Dick to give a wrap-up talk focused on learning to love and forgive others. She also led a lively discussion on ideas for the retreat next year. Many hard workers were acknowledged for their contributions to the sound system, the beautiful decorations, the music and the various organizational aspects of the retreat. After brunch, we all headed home with stronger friendships and much food for thought as we entered the pre-Passover season. It was truly a weekend of learning from each other in the spirit of Titus 2:3-5 and Proverbs 27:17. We hope to see you with us next year!

Debbie Werner

Flint, Michigan, Congregation Supports Community Addiction Fundraiser

The Flint, Michigan, congregation was able to participate in a community project to assist those with addiction problems. The project, called "Soberfest," is a community project supported by many caring individuals and by non-profit recovery shelters to assist those who may need intervention with various types of addictions.

The Soberfest project is a grass roots measure to help friends, neighbors and coworkers who may have drug/alcohol or abuse related dependencies. It receives no government funding. It has been running for 17 years in the Flint community. There are activities for children like trout fishing in a transported tank built so children can see the fish as well as catch them. Undertakings also include softball, euchre, volleyball, horseshoes and a recovery walk. The fees to participate are small, but each penny made goes to assist those who are in recovery or need information to find recovery agencies and information. All the activities are efforts to allow the community to participate in good, worthwhile events.

One of our members, John Prevost of the Flint congregation, has been involved for many years. John's sister, Lynn Burton, also became involved a few years ago to work with some of the fundraising opportunities. John, Lynn and a few other members set such a wonderful example of service that some realized they were part of a church group. They did not know our church name, but they knew the members were part of a church in the area. After a few years of serving in those areas, one of the group organizers asked one of our members if they would like to distribute our church literature. We happily said yes.

We had the opportunity to set up our own tent area this year to display many pieces of literature for those who seek to know who we are and what we teach. This allowed us the room to display 12 of our booklets and two of our magazines. We had two of the most current issues of *The Good News* as well as *Vertical Thought*. We opened up our *Good News* magazines to display the Kingdom of God Bible Seminars that will begin on September 10th.

Our congregation had about 20 volunteers who spent much of the day answering questions or just allowing passersby to take whatever literature caught their eye. We knew this was going to be the hottest day of the summer to date and were not sure if the turnout for the day would go well with Michiganders looking for a cool place to hide. But we were surprised. We were able to hand out 176 booklets and magazines. We even had some ask where we are located, and we supplied our church location for them.

We want to thank the home office for sending us the booklets to help us serve the community. It was a time for the Flint congregation members to get a feel of what it is like to help “preach the truth” we cherish so dearly. Sometimes you do not need to preach by standing on a soapbox; you can preach by standing behind a table, and God will do His part.

We had some booklets and magazines left at the end of the day. With the connection we now have with the Soberfest activity, one of our members will be able to take the rest of our booklets and use them for distribution in several local recovery houses. We hope that each may become an avenue to help someone looking for God’s answers to their questions about life.

Thanks to Lynn Burton and John Prevost—they helped us set a wonderful example of how to serve in the community around us and to help those who need help.

Malcolm Murray

Picking and Grinning in Cadiz, Ohio

Church of God members from five states enjoyed a weekend of music, fellowship and spiritual food at the ninth annual Wheeling bluegrass family camp out. Official events began on Friday, with afternoon fellowship at the campground as campers arrived.

The Sabbath was relaxing and enjoyable—campers arose to spend the morning sharing fellowship and breakfast on-site. Approximately 50 people were on hand for Sabbath services to hear inspiring messages and beautiful special music—a bluegrass rendition of “The Lord Is My Shepherd.” After a potluck lunch, brethren gathered for a Bible study on the life of Aaron, the first Levitical high priest.

After Sabbath several attendees gathered around for an impromptu sing-along, followed by a bluegrass jam session. The seven musicians played traditional American songs with joyful energy and skill. The evening was memorable, with a beautiful view of lightning in the distance as the band played on.

The festivities continued Sunday morning, with a full-fledged concert in the campground barn. The pickers played a combination of full-band songs and small group numbers, trading off vocalists and instrumentation. Around noon the musicians took a break, and everyone enjoyed a delicious picnic lunch before resuming and finishing the concert and the weekend.

Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make this year’s bluegrass weekend so great! Next year is the 10th anniversary of the event, so hopefully it will be the biggest and best yet. If you’re interested in bluegrass or simply want to fellowship with your brothers and sisters in a fun, family-centered atmosphere, make plans to attend in 2012!

Milan Bizic



Austin, Minnesota, graduates Amanda Boyer, Katlyn Whynaucht and Derek Riess.

Austin, Minnesota, Congregation Honors its Graduates

The Austin, Minnesota, congregation honored its high school graduates with a special recognition at Sabbath services on Saturday, June 25th.

Dave Schreiber read from Dr. Seuss’s book *Oh, The Places You Will Go!* and then presented a gift and a book to each graduate, which their Austin church family signed. The grads were also honored with a reception of cake and punch after services. Gayle Baylor made and decorated her specialty carrot cake, which was delicious!

The three graduates—Amanda Boyer, Katlyn Whynaucht and Derek Riess—have made many contributions during their high school years and have been active in United Church of God services and activities. All have been volunteers at United’s annual Ironwood Springs pre-teen camp, and all three have participated in summer and winter teen camps. It’s exciting to watch them grow from small children into such fine young men and women.

The congregation wished them much success in their future endeavors. Katlyn and Derek plan to pursue secondary education opportunities this fall, and Amanda will be attending ABC. The teens in the Austin church congratulated them as well and spent a little extra time with each of the graduates.

Jolinda Schreiber

Tampa, Florida, Congregations Honors its “Most Senior” Member

On the Sabbath of June 11, 2011, the Tampa, Florida, congregation honored its “most senior” member, Charles Oldroyd, who turned 100 on June 10th.

In addition to reaching the age of 100

on June 10, Charles and his wife Betty celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary on June 7th, and the 52nd anniversary of their baptism on July 16th. They have been a wonderful example for our congregation.

Following services, cakes making up the numbers “1-0-0” and special refreshments were enjoyed by the entire congregation.

Jo Hattaway

Five Ordinations on Cincinnati Super Sabbath

A “super” Sabbath in Cincinnati usually means a combined service either followed or preceded by a luncheon with a congregation-wide Bible study and fellowship at the conclusion of the day. The super Sabbath of

August 6 was especially super.

After combined services in the morning, interim pastor Gary Antion asked all of the members to remain seated as there was a special event to take place. He announced that after taking recommendations from the brethren, meetings with the deacons/deaconesses and elders and with the approval of the incoming pastor Steve Myers, there would be five ordinations.

He called out the names of the individuals who had been serving for a number of years in various aspects of the congregation. They were: Fred and Judy Fenner, Troy Phelps, Dan Preston and Eileen Sharkey. All of the elders came forward to lay hands on the individuals. After a general prayer for God’s blessing on the ordinations, Ed Smith led in the ordinations of Fred and Judy Fenner. He was followed by Matthew Fenchel praying for the ordination of Troy Phelps and finally Gary Antion led in the ordinations of Dan Preston and Eileen Sharkey.

We are grateful to God for the many servants that we have in Cincinnati. Many cried tears of joy because those who were ordained have been serving the brethren faithfully.

It was indeed a super Sabbath!

Gary Antion

Chattanooga, Tennessee, Hosts Successful Ocoee Rafting Weekend

During the weekend of August 5, the Chattanooga congregation sponsored its annual Ocoee River White Water Rafting outing. The Ocoee River was the site of the 1996 Olympic kayaking competition and has class IV and V rapids. Many families, coming from as far as Illinois and Florida, camped for the entire weekend at the Chilhowee Recreation area of the Cherokee National Forest.

On Sabbath morning, Roy Holladay conducted a Bible study in the campground on the topic of the return of Jesus Christ and the events that will take place just prior to his coming. There were approximately 80 campers in attendance, including a large



Tampa member Charles Oldroyd, who was honored on June 11 by the Tampa congregation.



The Ocoee rafting weekend.

contingent of teenagers and young adults. On Sunday morning everyone packed up their tents, and a full slate of 72 individuals braved the exciting and exhilarating cool rapids of the Ocoee. The trip lasted approximately two hours, and to the relief of the event coordinator, all 72 returned safely with smiles on their faces. The annual event is held each year on the first weekend in August.

Allen Dance

Congratulations College Class of 2011



Stephanie Zajac

Parents: Oleh and Renee Zajac
Congregation: Los Angeles, California
College Accomplishments: Graduated Cum Laude from the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, with a bachelor's of science degree in physics. For the duration of her time at Cal Poly, Stephanie was a member of the university's Honors program and regularly participated in community service events coordinated by the Honors program student club. Stephanie was awarded three scholarships by the physics department at Cal Poly and presented the results of original research in astronomy at a conference of the American Astronomical Society earlier this year. At the meeting, Stephanie was selected as

one of the winners of the undergraduate poster competition, for which she received a medal. During summer breaks from school, Stephanie participated in internships at the University of California, San Diego, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, and at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Since 1998, Stephanie has been an active participant in the UCG camp program, both as a camper and staff member. She has attended UCG camps Oakhurst, Hye Sierra and Pinecrest and participated in the Challenger II program in Tucson, Arizona, in 2006. For the past three years, Stephanie has helped to coordinate social activities for the young adults in her congregation. In the summer of 2011, Stephanie participated in a LifeNets program in Vinohradiv, Ukraine, where she served with four other volunteers as an English teacher at a day camp for disadvantaged youth. Outside of school, Stephanie enjoys spending time with friends and family, reading, running and traveling.

Plans After Graduation: Stephanie will pursue a master's degree in physics at the State University of New York, Stony Brook. *Favorite Quote:* "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts." -Winston Churchill

Joseph Horton

Parents: Joe and Sue Horton
Family: Tina (Wife), Marissa (Daughter) and Jacob (Son)

Congregation: Cleveland, Ohio
College Accomplishments: He graduated Summa Cum Laude with a degree in social work from Cleveland State University.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests, etc.: He serves on the sound crew, and since January has been able to serve God and the brethren by fiving sermonettes and by leading songs. He has a love for always learning something new, history, movies, reading, sports and spending time with family and God's people.

Plans After Graduation: He will attend graduate school next year in social work, and his possible areas of interest are children and families, hospital or hospice and prison or parole. He is also considering a law degree in the future.

Favorite Quote: "Be the change you want



Joseph Horton

to see in the world" - Mohandas Gandhi
Favorite Scripture: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).
Motto: If you stop learning, then your life has already ended.
Advice: We can show the world what the Kingdom of God will be like by the way we live today.

St. Petersburg, Florida, Congregation Honors Long-Time Member

On July 2, 2011, Gene Cook, a member of the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation was presented a plaque after Sabbath services by pastor Chuck Zimmerman, commemorating her 50th anniversary of baptism.

Mrs. Cook first heard of Mr. Armstrong through her mother, who had been listening to the radio program since the late 1940s. She requested literature and started the Bible Correspondence Course. After six months of intensive study, she contacted Pasadena for information about baptism.

With no local congregation in Florida, Gene, her husband and their son drove to Lake Okeechobee to meet Hal Baird and David Mills, who were conducting a baptizing tour. After three hours of counseling and learning more about the Church's doctrines (including its then-teaching on

makeup, which brought her to tears), Gene made the commitment and was baptized. She was asked to be a radio monitor for the *World Tomorrow* broadcast, where she was instructed to listen to the first five words and report to headquarters so as to insure that the local radio station was playing the intended program.

In 1964, two congregations were started in Florida: Miami and Lakeland. Gene and her family drove over 60 miles from St. Petersburg to Lakeland to attend the first service. Despite two flat tires along the way, they made it (albeit a bit late). They became charter members of the Lakeland congregation, which they continued to attend until the St. Petersburg congregation started in 1971.

Over the years Gene has enjoyed many Feast of Tabernacles sites, including nine in Europe and one in Israel. This year she is looking forward to her 51st Feast, which she'll celebrate in Branson, Missouri.

Mrs. Cook still lives in the St. Petersburg area with her son, Bill, who is also a member of God's Church.

Bill Cook

Local Church Updates: If your congregation's news and events are rarely covered in *United News*, why not check with your pastor and write something for him to send in? We're looking for 100- to 300-word articles and photographs with captions. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Include the author's and photographer's names and your phone number. Please double-check the spelling of names. Please e-mail (preferred) or give the material to your local pastor to forward to *United News*.



Long-time member Gene Cook at the celebration of her 50th anniversary of baptism in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Announcements



Grant Arthur Porter

Births

Clint and Joy Porter of the Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation are thrilled to announce the birth of their third child, Grant Arthur. He was born August 8, 2011, weighed 7 lbs. 8 oz. and was 20.5 inches long. Older siblings Melody (4) and David (2) are excited to have a new addition to the family!

Anniversaries

Dael and Alice Baughman were honored with a 50th wedding reception by the East Texas brethren after Sabbath services on May 21, 2011. Family and friends enjoyed an anniversary cake and punch, along with a wide variety of finger foods.

Dael and Alice both hail from Mississippi. They met in 1959 in Laurel, Mississippi, through mutual friends. Alice was a high school senior, and Dael was a graduate from Mississippi State University with a degree in mechanical engineering.

Dael moved to Texas to work for Eastman Chemical in 1959, but he traveled back and forth to Mississippi for two years to court Alice, during which time she attended junior college. They were married on May 27, 1961.

Dael first heard the *World Tomorrow* radio program back in 1944 toward the end of World War II. Dael was seven years old and listened to the program with his father. He tuned in to the program on and off through high school and college and received one copy of the *Plain Truth* back in 1957.

After he moved to Texas, Dael saw a small article in the newspaper about the Feast. It included a picture of Herbert W. Armstrong. Dael still has this clipping, which advertised meals at the Feast for 75 cents.

Dael and Alice attended their first Feast

in 1962. Alice remembers the Feast that year, as she was eight months pregnant with their first child. They slept on cots in a tent and were exposed to *lots* of dust.

They did not know there was a local church, but they heard an announcement at the Feast about weekly services in the Redwood Building. They started attending services, and Dael soon began attending spokesman's club. Dael was baptized in the spring of 1963, and Alice was baptized in the fall of 1963.

Dael was ordained in 1974 as a local elder. He worked for 40+ years for Eastman Chemical, before retiring in 1999. Alice has primarily been a homemaker, but she worked full time for an insurance company for six years.

They have five children: Rebekah, Jonathan, Elizabeth, Philip and Julie. The Baughmans are blessed with 13 grandchildren—nine girls and four boys.

To celebrate this special occasion Dael and Alice took their first cruise to Cozumel for five days.

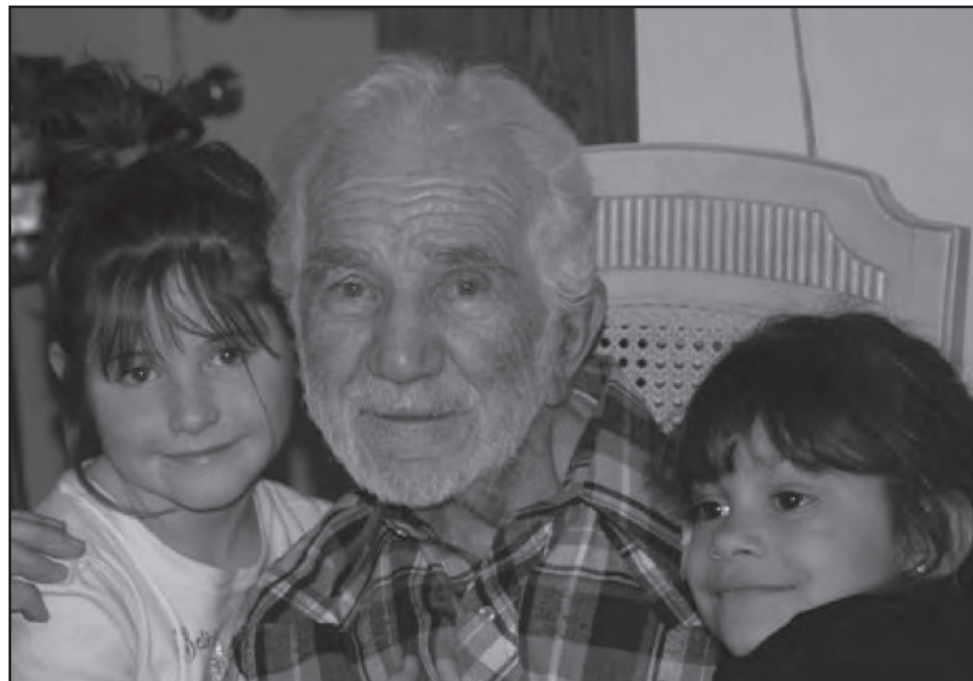


Dael and Alice Baughman

Obituaries

Dr. Abraham Abraham ("Doc") of Las Cruces, New Mexico, died peacefully on Friday, June 17, 2011. Doc was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Before attending Temple University, he worked as a master welder at the Navy shipyards during World War II on the east coast. He married Beatrice Mae Evans in 1950, who preceded him in death in 2008. At the age of 43 and four children later, he graduated from Temple University with his doctorate in dentistry.

Doc was a long-time, devoted member of the Church of God. He first attended



Abraham Abraham

the Radio/Worldwide Church of God in 1967 in Mt. Pocono, Pennsylvania, and later in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. In 1975 he and his family moved to Las Cruces, New Mexico, where he continued his dental practice. He retired from dentistry in 1990 at the age of 82, but stayed very active in other ventures. During the last decade of his career he devoted much of his time in service to senior citizens. His presence was loved and will be missed by all who knew him.

Doc is survived by four sons: Nassam Abraham and his wife Dalia of Las Cruces, New Mexico, Brian Abraham and his wife Debbie of Las Cruces, New Mexico, Wakeen (Wayne) Abraham and his wife Jill of Belen, New Mexico, and Mike Abraham and his wife Susan of Rogers, Arkansas. His grandchildren are: Cristina, Brian, Abraham, David, Sherian, Jennifer, Michael and Jordan. His great-grandchildren are: Kira, Brooklynn, Jaydlynn, Chloe, Damien, Jesse, Brian Jr., and Brandon.

Dr. Abraham was buried in Hillsboro, New Mexico, next to his wife, Bea Abraham.

Russell E. Rowe died on June 3, 2011, after a brief illness. He was 92 years old. Remaining survivors are his wife, Belle, of Tucson, Arizona; two remaining children, Lynne and Scarlett and their spouses of Florida and Georgia, respectively. He was preceded in death by a son, Dan, in 1996. The surviving grandchildren and their spouses are: Trina and Trista in Michigan; Trent in Ohio; Scot, Bill, Chad and Wendy and a daughter-in-law in Tennessee; Troy in Colorado; Trevor, Todd, Robin and Robert in Florida; and Roxanne in North Carolina. He is also survived by 32 great-grandchildren.

Russ served in the Navy during World War II in the South Pacific. He loved dancing. Every Saturday night he cut the rug at the V.F.W. hall. He managed the Forestry Service campgrounds in Colorado for three years. He loved to travel in his R.V.—he toured the northern states and

the Pacific coastline. When he moved to Tucson and was baptized in 1976, he was married to Nellie Marie. He was previously married to Veronica Spencer and later to Norma Jones. He managed several mobile home parks around the Tucson area. Nellie died Nov. 3, 1992. He met Belle Twigg again after knowing her in Michigan during the 1970s. Their wedding on June 6, 1993, will always be remembered, as Mr. Jim Tuck, who officiated at their wedding, skipped down the aisle, waving his Bible in the air following the bridal party, who were also skipping. But his first love was always following God and loving the brethren. He stayed true to God's way keeping his eye on the Kingdom.



Russell Rowe

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*.

Continued from Page 1

up that have not been completed, and we plan to work on them as well. Marriage seminars, women's retreats, special seminars at the Feasts, Feast Bible studies and General Conference of Elders poster sessions were also briefly mentioned.

We want to be actively moving educational issues forward.

In all, it was a refreshing new beginning for the education task force with product to follow.

We are thankful for those on the task force for taking the time out of their schedules to meet and plan to serve the church through education programs.

We would encourage parents to download material from our website at <http://members.ucg.org/content/festival-work-booklets> to help their children focus on the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles this year.

Gary Antion



Portuguese Hymnal and New Booklets in Portuguese

We are pleased to announce that we have completed and published UCG's hymnal in Portuguese. Although only 74 hymns were able to be translated, the hymn numbers match the numbers in the English and Spanish hymnals, making it easier for the brethren to turn to the correct hymn when it is announced from the podium in a mixed-language congregation, such as at the Feast. This is the result of many years of labor from Wanderson



Esquerdo, a Portuguese-speaking member in Bolivia.

It is also encouraging to report that we have published two more booklets in Portuguese: *Are We Living in the Time of the End?* and *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*. We are also in the final stages of producing a few more booklets in Portuguese. For more information about the Portuguese language work, visit www.revistaboanova.org.

These events are very exciting new steps forward in the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the whole world, particularly to the Portuguese-speaking world. We thank God for all the tithes faithfully given by the brethren, which make it possible to preach the gospel in various languages, and we thank the continued support from the Council and the administration for us all to be able to do God's work around the world.

Jorge de Campos

Phoenix Plans 50th Anniversary Celebration

You are invited to the 50th anniversary celebration of the Church of God in Phoenix on November 12, 2011. Fifty years ago the Church of God (Radio Church of God at the time), under the direction of Herbert W. Armstrong, established a congregation in Phoenix, Arizona. Throughout that half-century, many members and ministers have attended the Phoenix congregations and have developed life-long relationships. The United Church of God is hosting a Sabbath service and evening social to all wishing to meet and fellowship in peace. We invite anyone who has information about the history of the Phoenix congregations to contact us. We are

especially interested in having any charter members to contact Mike Miller at memill_az@yahoo.com.

Further information will be forthcoming.

Randy Schreiber

Spread the News

You know how in each *Good News* magazine there are these little postcard inserts advertising additional church publications? If you're like me, they never really leave the magazine and never achieve the purpose they were designed for.

With the Feast of Tabernacles approaching, we'll soon be packing up and travelling to different locations around the world. Sometimes we stop and stay a night or two in different places along the way before reaching our final destination. But what does this have to do with the flimsy little inserts in our church publications?

If we all went through our old *Good News* magazines and pulled out a handful of those inserts offering free booklets and free magazine subscriptions, we could leave one everywhere we went in our Feast travels. Put one in your hotel room when you leave, the pocket in front of you on the airplane, in your rental car, etc. We could each play a part in potentially connecting someone with God's truth. An added bonus is that it doesn't cost the church any extra money—the ads are already printed!

Sometimes we may feel powerless to help preach the gospel, and that we don't know what more we can do as individuals except to be a light in the world and send in our tithes. So why not try something new this festival season? One of those small postcards may potentially make a big difference in someone's life.

Sabrina Koester

ABC Alumni Raise Money for Ronald McDonald House

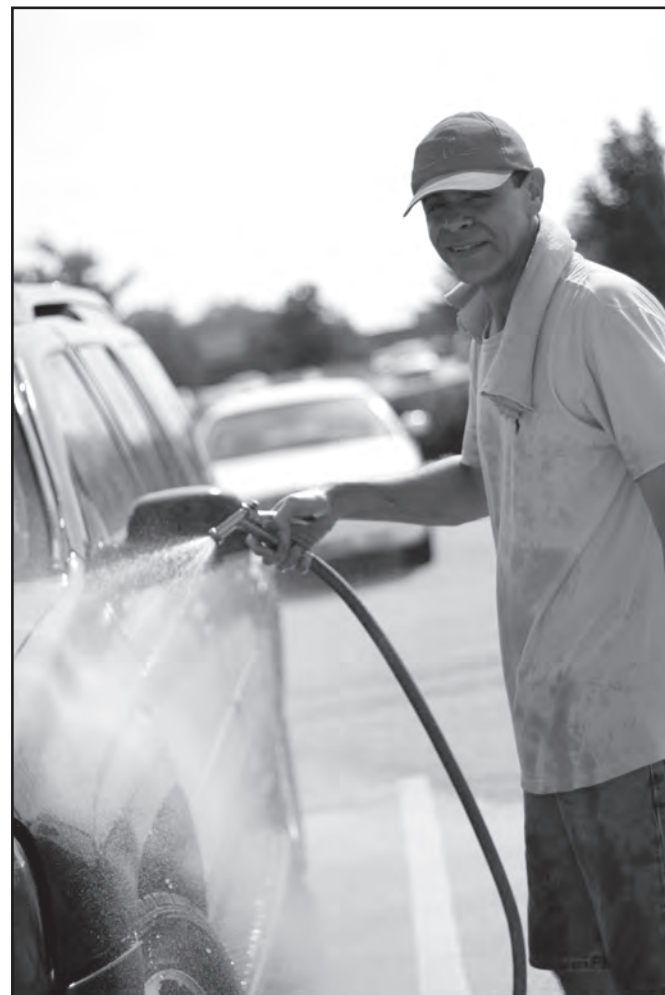
On a calm and balmy day, Sunday, August 21, Ambassador Bible Center alumni and current students came together to hold a car wash in the parking lot of a local CVS in Cincinnati to support the Ronald McDonald House.

Ronald McDonald Houses were created to provide a "home away from home" for families to stay, regardless of their ability to pay, while their children receive medical care in an area hospital.

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10) could not have been more true during the four-hour car wash. While some students and alumni stood (or jumped) with large signs exclaiming the charity car wash on a busy street corner, others worked diligently to remove all traces of dirt on any car that came their way. Whether the donation was large or small, equal care was given to each vehicle. Amazingly, five different people gave additional donations after they saw the thorough job the students and alumni did! Passersby gave money without even stopping to have their cars washed! By the time it was finished, the volunteers had washed 33 cars and received a total donation of \$420.53.

In prior years, we've used money we've raised to prepare an Italian meal for the residents at the local Ronald McDonald House. Our plan is to use this year's donations to prepare and serve a similar dinner in November, which involves creating the menu, bringing all the ingredients and providing the labor to prepare and serve the meal to the families.

This was the third annual alumni car wash for the Ronald McDonald House. The ABC Alumni Association plans to continue holding a car wash every summer so we can provide at least one yearly meal there. If you happen to be in Cincinnati next year



Current ABC student Jaime Salek helps at the alumni car wash.

when we hold our fourth car wash, stop by—we'll happily make your car gleam!

Laurel Krenz

Cincinnati Members Host Council of Elders and Home Office Employees

Local Cincinnati members Floyd and Doris Phelps opened their home to all home office employees, Council of Elders members and their families for this year's annual grill-out on Tuesday, August 23. Most

attendees brought their own side dish and drinks to share and enjoy with the delicious food provided. The Phelps' backyard served as the setting for the meal and fellowship, which were amplified by beautiful, low-humidity weather (a welcome change from years past). Video production staff member Rudy Rangel brought a Frisbee, which several people tossed around afterwards. Two dachshund puppies could be found dodging ankles, and children were chasing them, holding them, playing games with each other and enjoying the evening. The picnic was a welcome time for everybody to get to know each other, strengthen old bonds and form new ones.

Mitchell Moss



Council member Darris McNeely and home office employee Whitney Creech at the Cincinnati Council and employee picnic.



Home office employee Chris Stewart and his son Carson at the Council and employee picnic.



Brooklyn Booth, daughter of home office employee Aaron Booth, at the Cincinnati Council and employee picnic in August.

"Many Gifts, One Spirit" 2011 Twin Cities Women's Conference

The Twin Cities congregation of Minneapolis-St. Paul is excited to once again host the bi-annual women's conference event for UCG women around the world who wish to come fellowship, learn and grow together to the glory of our God.

The dates for this year's conference are November 11-13, 2011.

Our theme this year is "Many Gifts, One Spirit," based in 1 Corinthians 12:4. We women of United are from every race and creed, culture and background. We all bring a variety of gifts to the Church, according to but one Spirit, "...which apportion to each one individually as it wills" (verse 11). And we know that these gifts are to be put to work, "for the common good" (verse 7). We will have the pleasure this year of an expert presentation by the author of our featured book selection, which will help each woman clearly identify her dominant biblically-based gift(s) from the Spirit—and some practical help in examining how to use those gifts to build up the Church and lead a more harmonious personal life.

In addition to this, there will be a session for young women, ages 16-21, a session on "how we treat one another" and a symposium/round table conversation about roles and balance in our stages of life.

Please visit www.ucgwomen.com and "follow" the blog and information pages for details. Please feel free to post your own comments and questions on the blog, as well. You may also contact us at ucgwomen@gmail.com.

Manya Kalamaha

Council of Elders Gathers for Quarterly August Meeting

Most of the Council members made the journey after preaching in their own congregations on the Sabbath of August 20, arriving in Cincinnati on Sunday the 21st. All day Monday they broke into various committees to finish their homework prior to the full Council meetings on Tuesday.

As church president Dennis Luker's assistant, this reporter sat in on the Doctrine Committee's meeting for most of two hours. All the doctrinal papers and issues that they had been discussing on the phone and via e-mail were reviewed and prepared for committee chairman Bob Berendt's presentation to the full Council for their discussion. Commit-

tee meetings serve the vital processes of the Council's efforts in overseeing the church. However, they are not any kind of high-handed deliberations in some vaunted halls of power! They are mental grunt work that helps streamline the full Council's meetings and service to Christ.

Tuesday through Thursday, the full Council met all day, each day. Sitting on the Council of Elders really is a lot of just that—sitting and considering. The first day consisted mainly of the regular reports from Mr. Luker and the other operations managers in the administration. They brought the Council up to speed on the day-to-day operations of the home office and reported what progress they've made in preaching the gospel, caring for the congregations and on how God is financially blessing our efforts to serve Him and do His work. The rest of the day involved hearing the basic reports from the various committee chairmen, planning dates for the next several quarterly meetings and approving the proposed dates for the General Conference of Elders annual meeting next May.

Wednesday consisted of executive sessions all day. As reporter, that was my day off to get back to my several other duties. Council chairman Melvin Rhodes strives to minimize the amount of time spent in executive session. However, whenever someone must be discussed by name, out of respect for that person's privacy, the Council must enter executive session. For the quarterly meeting report, church secretary Gerald Seelig provided the Council reporter with a concise summary of the topics of the session.

Thursday wrapped up the meetings with committee discussions where needed. Each committee chairman would chair the Council for a time to lead the discussion on strategic planning, doctrine or other Council business. The last part of the day provided time for several additional discussion items ranging from the need for a larger video studio for *Beyond Today*, Council and GCE self-reviews and the nature and purpose of special music.

With the Council meeting's end, over a dozen tired men (counting administration personnel) gathered their Bibles and brief cases and emptied out of the conference room. May we all remember to do our part by prayerfully supporting those who labor long and hard on our behalf in the United Church of God.

Randy Stiver

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 12-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 is tailored for young adults 18 to 30 years of age, although other ages may participate.

In order to make these unique places and artifacts come to life in light of our scriptural understanding, we have asked students of history John Karlik and David Dobson 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 or obtained by mail by calling 1-626-577-9717.

John Karlik

Continued from "Jamaica," Page 16

and proceed with the service to the end.

During the announcements at services on the Sabbath, details of the Night to Be Much Observed were outlined. When the minister jumped ship earlier, a remnant of the Kingston congregation had remained firmly on board. They were a group of five led by Anthony Coore, who planned and kept its own "Night" in Kingston. The brethren in the neighboring parish of St. Mary to the east and the brethren in Trelawney to the west did the same. The larger group in Ocho Rios met at the Lattery home. The plan was a pot luck setting. We invited our guests the Zimmermans and instructed them not to bring anything, but only to come hungry and empty-handed. They kept silent, never indicating whether they understood and/or agreed.

Their answer did not come until the evening of the event when they showed up at about 7:00 and asked for a hand to take the stuff they brought from the car into the house. They graciously offered an apology, which was not necessary, but was accepted. Surprisingly, the stuff they brought included native Jamaican food—jerk chicken, some of which remained to be savored by the appreciative residents of the house long after the Night to Be Much Observed was over.

Separate and apart from enjoying a variety of foods and drinks, we had a lit-

eral feast of hearty conversations ranging from how individuals ended up in God's Church, to origin and meaning of names, to experiences of interactions with people inside and outside the Church, to international travel. The net result of all of this was a bonding of God's people. Old acquaintances seemed refreshed, and new ones seemed to have existed for years. It's amazing what spiritual benefits can be derived from the gathering of God's people. Iron really sharpens iron (Proverbs 27:17). No wonder we have been admonished not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:23-25). And should this assembling of people of like mind be restricted to Sabbaths? Most certainly not.

We said our goodbyes and prepared to rest and refresh ourselves in order to take in the spiritual food that was expected the following day, the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

The Kingston group joined us for the Holy Day. At 10 a.m., 31 of us were back at the Village, where we heard a sermonette by Mr. Coore and sermon by Mr. Zimmerman. During the lunch break we ate leftovers from the previous night, plus the goodies that the brethren brought in from Kingston, St. Mary and Trelawney. We managed to stay awake and alert and were able to participate in the afternoon Bible study led by Mr. Zimmerman.

From the second to the fourth days of the festival (April 20-22) we individu-

ally went back to our normal ways of life, except for eating unleavened bread each day. That is, at least for most of us, for during those days Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Joyce Stewart were busy helping the Zimmermans plan aspects of the Feast of Tabernacles and, where possible, giving them a little more exposure to Jamaican culture.

On the last day of Unleavened Bread, we were back at the Village where the deacons—regular sermonette speakers—were asked give split-sermons in the morning, while Mr. Coore and Mr. Zimmerman did the sermonette and sermon in the afternoon. This format was repeated at Pentecost, Sunday, June 12, except for the fact that the sermon was done by the other Chuck.

God's people in Jamaica had a physical and spiritual feast over the spring Holy Days of 2011 with the assistance from the home office. The spiritual benefits were awesome, and hopefully this will continue to drive the momentum generated by multiple visits of the two Chucks and Mrs. Zimmerman. A survey has not been done, but it is almost a certainty that the membership would emphatically conclude that the split was by no means a bad thing for us. We moved into our new hall in Ocho Rios on June 18, 2011. We look forward eagerly to keeping the spring Holy Days of 2012 in our new and improved meeting hall, with visitors like we had this year. **UN**

Children's Corner

ORDER OF EVENTS

The Old Testament

Put the pictures in order based on what happened first in the Bible! You can cut the pictures out and paste them on a piece of paper or number them in order from the event that happened first to the event that happened last.



The golden calf



God parts the sea



Moses receives 10 Commandments



Battle of Jericho



The burning bush



Baby Moses found



Waters of Meribah



Garden of Eden



"Let my people go"



What's New In MEDIA?

■ UCG Web Presence Expands

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

- 38,082 total Facebook fans.
- 17,167 total Twitter followers.
- 643 videos posted on YouTube.
- 1,765,222 video views on YouTube.
- 206 Bible FAQs posted.
- 124,453 Bible FAQs views.
- 447 e-mail campaigns (This Is the Way, UCG Weekly Update, GN Newsletter, WNP E-news) sent.
- 620,349 clicks to our websites generated by e-mail campaigns.
- 95,957 booklet downloads from Apple's iBook Store.

■ Beyond Today Airing Schedule

- September 4-10** "Angels Among Us" with presenter Steve Myers.
- September 11-17** "America: On the Hinge of History" with presenter Darris McNeely.
- September 18-24** "The Coming King of the South" with presenter Darris McNeely.
- September 24-October 1** "Who is the Antichrist" 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. Thank you for helping make the new website a success!

Featured Links



■ Rest

<http://tinyurl.com/ucg-rest>
There's more to life than the never-ending stress cycle we put ourselves through. God's Sabbath is both a command and also a gift.



■ Moving Beyond Tragedy

<http://tinyurl.com/ucg-tragedy>
Personal calamity can challenge faith and belief. When you face loss and grief what can you do and to whom should you turn?



Rest



Beyond Today: Moving Beyond Tragedy

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- September 10, 17 or 24:** Kingdom of God Bible Seminars
- September 29:** Feast of Trumpets
- October 8:** Day of Atonement
- October 13-19:** Feast of Tabernacles
- October 20:** Last Great Day
- November 11-13:** Women's conference, Twin Cities, Minnesota
- December 23-27:** Winter Family Weekend, Cincinnati, Ohio
- December 27, 2011-January 6, 2012:** Young Adults Travel Education Program

Personal Correspondence Request

Our personal correspondence team is receiving an increasing number of biblical and other questions from our own members. With our limited staff, we do not have the resources to follow up on these questions. Please be aware that our personal correspondence department is primarily for answering questions from those who are our subscribers and viewers, who do not have a UCG pastor. We encourage our own members to seek out the counsel of their own UCG minister whenever possible.

Also, our UCG website at www.ucg.org has a wealth of information available and our members can use the search function to find answers on hundreds of topics. Thank you.

Twin Cities Women's Conference—Nov. 11-13

Our theme this year is "Many Gifts, One Spirit," based in 1 Corinthians 12:4. We women of United all bring a variety of gifts to the church, according to but one Spirit, "...which apportions to each one individually as it wills" (verse 11). And we know that these gifts are to be put to work, "for the common good" (verse 7). We will have the pleasure this year of an expert presentation by the author of our featured book selection, which will help each woman clearly identify her dominant Biblically-based gift(s) from the Spirit.

Please visit www.ucgwomen.com and "follow" the blog and information pages for details. Please feel free to post your own comments and questions on the blog, as well. You may also contact us at ucgwomen@gmail.com. See page 22 for more detail.

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