

UNITED NEWS



NEWS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, AN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION • P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027 (513) 576-9796

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Council of Elders Convenes for Quarterly Meeting, Approves New *Beyond Today* Television Studio

■ Existing studio to be converted to additional personnel space, half the cost already pledged.

by Mitchell Moss

In an impromptu ballot during their December quarterly meeting, the Council of Elders approved a plan to build a larger television studio and repurpose the current studio and other media production space at the home office. Media and Communication Services operations manager Peter Eddington brought the proposal to build a structure dedicated to studio space and media production adjacent to the current home office building before the Council for discussion, with the expectation for a ballot on the measure to be taken at their February meeting. But after discussion indicated strong Council support for the idea, which would repurpose the current studio space for additional personnel workspaces, president Victor Kubik suggested they take a ballot that

same day. The estimated cost of the project is between \$500,000 and \$600,000, and one donor has already pledged to pay half the bill. The rest will come from donations and not from operating funds.

At the beginning of the four days of meetings, the administration gave short updates to the Council. Below are short summaries of the operations managers' updates. The rest of the Council discussions—including reports from the Council committees, financial reviews, and other meetings—can be found on the Council of Elders website (with videos available for select meetings) at <http://coe.ucg.org>.

President's Report

Ambassador Bible College (ABC) started its academic year Aug. 29 with 23



Photo by Victor Kubik

students. There will be three or four more students joining for the second semester.

The Ministerial Education Program is for identifying future leaders and training them. It coordinates the various educational courses we offer for the ministry. The team is Darris McNeely, Steve Myers, Chris Rowland and Victor Kubik.

The Labor Day Leadership Workshop was held on Sept. 2-5, 2016, with 31 attending from all over the U.S., and one couple from Canada.

Regional conferences are to begin in Atlanta, Georgia, on Jan. 15-17, 2017.

Please see page 6

2016 Winter Family Weekend Brings Church Together

by Frank Dunkle

The Cincinnati congregations again hosted the Winter Family Weekend, in what has become an annual tradition for many families in the Church of God. The weekend began on a strong note with a Bible study by Dr. Philip Aust. In the Great Wolf Lodge, the Sabbath was filled with opportunities for fellowship and learning, with youth instruction and seminars for various age groups, capped by services that featured six special music pieces performed by young members of the Church and a sermon by elder Scott McKeon from Phoenix, Arizona. More than 1,100 people filled the room to overflow capacity, with many Internet connections carrying the service around the world.

After the Sabbath, there were dances and games, and a brand new game show with Jelly and Mr. Jonathan. At nearby sports facilities 115 basketball players, including men, ladies and teens, played a series of

games, and additionally, 70 preteens participated in basketball and flag football. At the same time, volleyball teams consisting of over 240 individuals played a total of 146 volleyball games.

We owe thanks to more people than space permits to mention for working long hours to make this event possible. I do want to thank Kathy de Campos and Troy Phelps for making it all come together and go smoothly, and Mike Cook and Duane Phelps for accomplishing the monumental task of organizing hundreds of games in a very busy gym.

We have already contracted with the Great Wolf Lodge for next winter and will soon also sign with the sports facilities. Please look forward to joining us next year for another Winter Family Weekend! **UN**

See more photos here:

<https://flic.kr/s/aHskPqUmlF>



Photo by Martine Gingerich

On Saturday evening at the Winter Family Weekend, Jelly and Mr. Jonathan held a fun game show for all the kids and families in attendance. Games, Bible trivia questions, songs and dancing were enjoyed by everyone who came to the show!



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BY THE NUMBERS

303,340

Beyond Today Magazine
worldwide print run.

New Pastoral Development Program Trainees

by Linda Merrick

After the Feast of Tabernacles several came from various areas for the Pastoral Development Program. They spent 10 days, Nov. 7-16, 2016, going through training and spending time in the Cincinnati area. Everyone who came for the training were pastors, assistant pastors, home office employees and ministerial trainees.

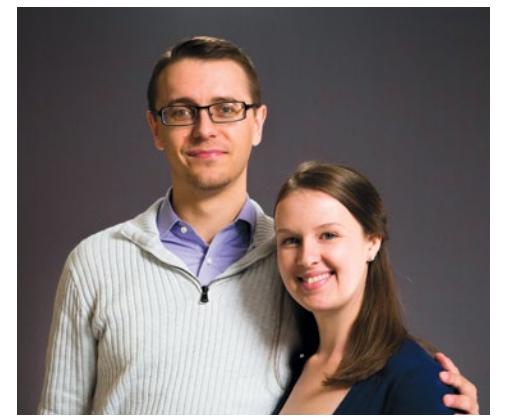
Those who attended include Fred Crow, pastor in Eureka and San Jose,

California; Roy Demont, pastor in South Africa; Paul and Darla Moody, assistant pastor in Spokane, Kettle falls and Kennewick, Washington, and Lewiston, Idaho; Tim and Maryse Pebworth, pastor in Oakland and Santa Rosa, California; Rudy and Judy Rangel, production supervisor at the home office; Jeff and Lisa Richards, pastor of Bend and Medford, Oregon; and Nawa and Felicia Talama, pastor of Lusaka, Zambia.

The five ministerial trainee couples

were Doug and Dianne Collison of Lansing, Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo, Michigan; Jim and Almeda Lucas of Ontario; Mike and Laura Phelps of Cincinnati East and Cincinnati North, Ohio; Devin and Tiffany Schulz of Springfield, Missouri; and Dave and Carrie Wells of Troy, Illinois, and St. Louis, Missouri.

Below you can get to know those who are part of the ministerial training program by reading introductions for each couple. **UN**



Devin and Tiffany Schulz are members of the Springfield, Missouri, congregation. Mr. Schulz was recently a regional sales manager for the Paul Mueller Company. He and his wife Tiffany are both graduates of Ambassador Bible College.



Doug and Dianne Collison attend the Lansing, Michigan, congregation, where Doug serves as a deacon. Doug has worked in the information technology field for most of his adult life. Doug studied business administration at Baker College. Doug, Dianne and their family own and operate two businesses located in Grand Haven, Michigan, and South Bend, Indiana.



Jim and Almeda Lucas currently attend the Toronto, Ontario, Canada congregation. Jim graduated from Ambassador College in 1990 and is self-employed as an architectural draftsman. Almeda graduated from Ambassador College in 1996 and spent one year in Sri Lanka with the Ambassador Foundation. She currently works for a large insurance company as a litigation specialist in the claims department.



Mike and Laura Phelps are members of the Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation. Mr. Phelps was most recently an application development consultant for Magellan Health. He holds a bachelor of business administration degree in management information systems from Ohio University. He and his wife Laura are both graduates of Ambassador University.



Dave and Carrie Wells are members of the Troy, Illinois, congregation. Mr. Wells works as a budget analyst in St. Louis, and he holds a master of business administration degree from Webster University and a bachelor of business administration degree in finance from James Madison University. His wife, Carrie, is a graduate of Ambassador Bible College, and she holds a bachelor of science degree in applied math from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

ABC Class Leaders Appointed



Back row and left to right: Stephanie Tomes, Jason Lovrien, Noah Boyd, Aaron Jennings, Alex Love and Chris Sylvester.

Front row, left to right: Sonia Carlson, Joanie Nessa, Julia Weaner, Caleb Greene, Gabriel Lagos, Sarah Lucassen and Jennifer Iiams.

by Frank Dunkle

Shortly after the Feast of Tabernacles break, the Ambassador Bible College administration named class officers for the current academic school year.

Alexander Love will serve as class president, Caleb Greene as treasurer, Stephanie Tomes as secretary and Chris Sylvester as class monitor.

Joanie Nessa will organize the class

message boards, Jennifer Iiams will direct technical support, and Julia Weaner will edit *ABC Times* and the ABC website. The service committee will be led by Sarah Lucassen and Noah Boyd, and the social committee will be led by Sonia Carlson and Aaron Jennings. The music coordinator will be Jason Lovrien, assisted by Gabriel Lagos and Jennifer Iiams. **UN**

First-ever *Beyond Today* TV Program With a German-speaking Presenter

by Peter Eddington & Jesmina Allaoua

The media team at the Cincinnati home office graciously offered its services to the United Church of God-Germany to make two test recordings of the *Beyond Today* television program in the German language. Scripts from two already existing English programs were chosen, and those scripts were translated into German by our UCG-Germany office. The condition was that UCG-Germany would be responsible for all the editing and cutting of the raw video material.

Paul Kieffer, coordinator of the German and Dutch speaking areas for the United Church of God, recorded two programs at the home office on June 21, 2016. They were *Is God a Trinity?* and *Who Are the Two Witnesses?*

The office staff of UCG-Germany has now completed editing its first-ever *Beyond Today* program in its native language: *Ist Gott eine Dreieinigkeit?* The program can be viewed on its YouTube channel, GuteNachrichtenVideo, at <https://youtu.be/2rTcgPr9Ij0> and on the local website at www.gutenachrichten.org. UCG-Germany had worked earlier on



Paul Kieffer during recording of the *Beyond Today* episode *Ist Gott eine Dreieinigkeit?*

publishing the English-language *BT* programs with a German voiceover. But this is the first time using a German-speaking presenter. The work has mainly been done by voluntary workers. **UN**

Watch the video here:

<https://youtu.be/2rTcgPr9Ij0>



RICK SHABI
Treasurer and
Financial Services
Operation Manager

The winter months are here in the northern hemisphere. Snow is falling, temperatures have dropped, the sun sets early, and it's dark when we get home from work or school. During these cold, dark months, many tend to "hunker down," just waiting for spring to arrive.

Recognizing the harshness of winter, the apostle Paul curtailed his frequent travels to the churches and was prepared to do something different during the winter. "Now I will come to you . . . and it may be that I will remain or even spend the winter with you, that you may send me on my journey, wherever I go" (1 Corinthians 16:5-6, emphasis added throughout).

Winter is a unique time of the year. Plants go dormant, bears hibernate, the growing season is past, and the harvest is in. Even the festival year is over.

What do we do with these winter months? Did God create winter just for us to endure? Or is there "work" we can be doing during this time?



Photo by Victor Kern/Unsplash

Solomon wisely says, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1, King James Version). God, who created the seasons (Genesis 8:22), didn't create time to just be endured. Let's look at a few areas where "winter work" is necessary.

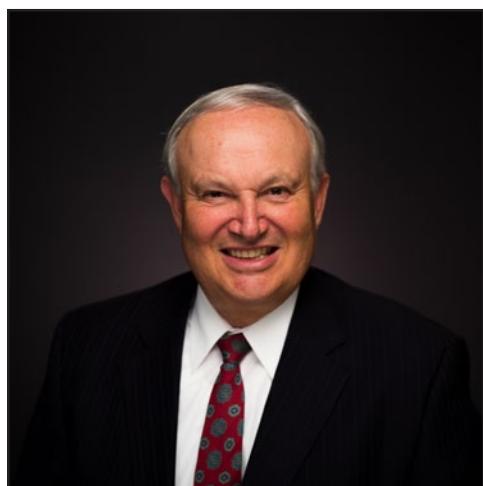
Israel was an agrarian society. Farmers then and today work hard during the spring, summer and autumn. Before the

"Without the winter months, the farmer would grow weary, and the job would become stale and less profitable."

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From The COUNCIL

Koinonia—the Beautiful Relationship



by Mario Seiglie

As the apostles and other disciples searched for words to express new concepts and relationships they were experiencing through God's Spirit in them, they came across the Greek term *koinonia*.

The word *koinonia* comes from the Greek root *koinos* or "common" and has to do with sharing and having affections or things in common. As the biblical commentator William Barclay points out, "*Koinonia* is the spirit of generous sharing as contrasted with the spirit of selfish getting . . . it is used to express a close and intimate relationship into which people enter" (New Testament Words, 1972, Kindle edition). The word could be used to describe a business partnership, a



Photo by Nathan Anderson/Unsplash

Koinonia is a close relationship like a father and son might have. Do we have this kind of relationship with our Heavenly Father?

marriage covenant where spouses shared everything, the fellowship among brethren or a relationship with God.

In that first flush of spiritual love after the first Pentecost, the Church would gather together and have *koinonia*. Luke relates: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship [*koinonia*], in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

The Mystery of Koinonia

Paul realized the value of this term when he used it to describe "*the fellowship [koinonia] of the mystery*, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ . . . according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, *in whom we have boldness*

Please see page 12

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Honoring Retiring Ministry Frank & Sonja McCrady

Frank McCrady has been in the ministry for about 47 years. He served as pastor in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Florida, Texas, Oklahoma and Ohio.

He grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, and went to Ambassador College in 1965. He graduated in June 1969. While at Ambassador College he met his wife Sonja, and they were married on June 9, 1969. They have three sons: Rick, Scott and Michael. They also have two grandchildren, MacKenzie and Collin.

One prominent area of service for Mr. McCrady is serving in youth summer camps. He has served in various roles at camps starting in his sophomore year at Ambassador College of 1966, continuing through 2016. He also was the regional pastor of the Northeast region, coordinated Feast sites (2010-2016) and taught harmony of the Gospels at Ambassador Bible College (2010-2016). Mr. McCrady also developed and coordinated the United Church of God marriage workshop program. Through this program he conducted workshops throughout the U.S. and internationally.

Since both Frank and Sonja studied leadership with focusing on subjects that deal with helping others to attain their God-given potential, Mr. McCrady hopes to develop a leadership program to use to help others in and out of the Church.

Longtime Friends and Coworkers Shared These Thoughts:

Ron Barker: "Frank McCrady has a way of seeing a positive side of everything. He can see the silver lining in the darkest of clouds. He teaches that everything God asks us to do is for our own benefit. He really wants us to focus on the fact that God is a loving Father. He always would tell us that when he left Dayton, one thing for sure is that we would all know that living God's way of life was for our good, both now and in the Kingdom. We were blessed to have him and Sonja in the Dayton area, and they will be missed by us all."

Bart Bornhorst: "There are many good things about Mr. Frank McCrady's pastorate in the Dayton, Ohio, congregation. There is one that stands in the forefront of in my memory, and that is his endless smile and positive attitude. I found this attribute of Mr. McCrady to be very important and beneficial as many people deal with serious things in life, and a simple smile can make anyone from a child to widow feel more at ease.

"His positive focus even extended into his sermons. During his sermons we would regularly turn to a couple verses in particular that would help us all keep a positive focus towards God and His ways. It was Deuteronomy 10:12-13 and Deuteronomy 6:24-25. Deuteronomy 10:12-

13: 'And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good?'

"He would often teach that everything that God does is for our good. We serve a positive God, and Mr. McCrady understood that and passed it on to us. I appreciated his service to God's people very much."

Gerald Seelig: "Frank McCrady is a wonderful example of one who cares deeply for people. He enjoys friendly give-and-take done in fun and always loves a good laugh, even at his own expense.

"He and Sonja nurtured the Cincinnati North congregation through some very rough times. He always focused us on the fact that 'what was in us and Who was for us' was far more powerful than the spiritual foe fighting against us. And as it has been said, he always wanted us to remember that whatever happens is intended by God to be for our benefit—always.

"There are two specific traits that I really appreciate about Mr. McCrady. The first one is that of being flexible. If something did not go according to the planned schedule at services, he would just roll with it and never made a big deal out of it. That was much appreciated by the congregation. The second thing: He was not controlling at all. He did not have to be involved in the nitty-gritty details. He gave it to others to do and said, 'Just keep me informed.' He wanted those in the congregation to feel like it was their congregation as well. He and Sonja made us feel like a family.

"Sonja McCrady is a good listener and enjoys a good laugh as well. While in our congregation, she took special time with each person, one at a time, to listen to them and offer advice when asked.

"My wife Connie and I will miss them both."

Peter and Terri Eddington: "It has been a great pleasure to know the McCradys for so many years. Frank and Sonja have become a joyful part of our lives with their infectious enthusiasm and happiness, and their love for the brethren in the Cincinnati and Dayton, Ohio, areas has been wonderful to see.

"Mr. McCrady has such a positive outlook on life, and brings encouragement to all with whom he interacts. His sermons have brought depth of understanding to those who have received them. We have also appreciated Sonja's friendship and behind the scenes loving care and support she has shown to our family, as well as to so many others.



"As Frank and Sonja move into retirement and a new chapter in their lives, we pray for their success and continuing good health. We will miss them here in Ohio."

Mr. and Mrs. McCrady share their reflections:

Frank McCrady: "My most memorable experiences center around the many members I have met and friends I have made in the Church over my years of service. Relationships truly are what last in life; things come and go! One theme I have tried to live, and would give as words of advice, center on Deuteronomy 10:12-13 and Deuteronomy 6:24. My paraphrase is, 'Everything God asks us to do is for our good/benefit' (Deuteronomy 6:24 says 'always'). This helps me keep a positive outlook on life, which God intends to be good."

Sonja McCrady: "I don't have a great deal to add. What Frank said reflects my sentiments as well. My best memories will always be of our wonderful brethren. They are some of the most gracious, generous and sincere human beings I have ever met anywhere. Our members are by far the

best part of the Church, and my most valued accomplishments were those occasions when I was able to add to their wellbeing by passing on information and processes I had learned.

As for words of advice, I have one sentence: "Be who you are without apology." As Oscar Wilde famously pointed out, "Be yourself; everyone else is already taken." I say this to women in particular. Allow God to shine through you with the talents that He Himself gave you. God made you unique so He could use the gifts that you alone possess. Don't thwart His design by becoming an imitation of someone else."

Plans After Retirement

The McCradys plan to live in Texas to be close to their sons. They bought a lot near Dallas and plan to build a house once their home sells in Ohio. And they hope to do more traveling and investing in real estate. Mr. McCrady says he enjoys golf and plays about three rounds a summer. He hopes to increase those numbers after retirement.

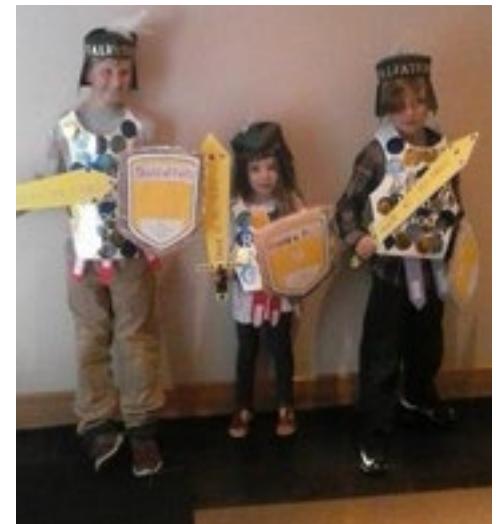
Linda Merrick

Sabbath School Children Put on the Armor of God

Children in the Spokane, Washington, congregation recently finished a series of lessons on the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18). Each lesson involved studying one piece of the armor and then making a replica of that piece.

Each section that was created was the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the sandals of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. After completing each part the children put on their whole armor and shared it with the congregation.

Joyce Iiams



Honoring Retiring Ministry

Larry & Karen Walker



Larry and Karen Walker retired from the full-time ministry having served 46 years in the employment of the Church of God. They were honored during a special ceremony during the Feast of Tabernacles in Bend, Oregon (see additional articles on page 11).

Larry Walker graduated from Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas and was sent immediately into the field ministry, serving the Fort Worth, Texas, congregation. He was ordained on Oct. 19, 1967, and has pastored congregations coast to coast from Texas, Colorado, North Carolina, Oregon, New Mexico, Minnesota, and most recently in Bend and Medford, Oregon.

Additional contributions and responsibilities included festival coordinator, chairman to the doctrinal advisory committee, United Youth Camp staff, doctrinal review team, contributing to the *Ministerial Journal*, pastoral training classes, focused education, and answering letters on the personal correspondence team.

Longtime Friends and Coworkers Shared These Thoughts:

Steve Nutzman: "Larry and Karen both have the hearts of true servants. I admire their individual and team efforts, and I have seen their loving service at Northwest Camp for some years. Karen was the unofficial "camp mother" who always had the care and comfort of the campers and staff in mind in her many duties. Larry was always in the mix at camp as well, serving in the ropes course as program director and Christian living instructor. Larry and Karen were instrumental in establishing the Bend-Redmond Feast of Tabernacles site and faithfully served there for 17 years. That has to be some kind of record. Larry is also a skilled researcher and writer. As pastor and wife, they are well loved and respected in the entire Northwest. Thank you friends for your faithful and dedicated

service all these years and all the best in your retirement!"

Melania Nutzman: "We became closely acquainted with Larry and Karen when we served together for several years at Northwest Camp. We were very impressed with their desire to serve and support others and how much fun they were to be with! We have appreciated their friendship and kindness through the years. I worked in the office with Karen and saw firsthand her ability to organize and her attention to detail. Karen told me often that she just loved camp! Truly, this showed through in all she did. Well done, Larry and Karen!"

Ken Martin: "As a fellow pastor and elder serving in the United Church of God, Larry Walker and his dear wife Karen have been a wonderful example of a caring pastor and wife devoted to serving the membership of the churches they have pastored. Larry and Karen have devoted their lives to serving the one true God and Jesus Christ. Larry and I have some wonderful memories reflecting on our days at Ambassador College both in Pasadena, California, and Big Sandy, Texas. Although no longer with the full-time responsibilities of the ministry, Larry and Karen will continue to be of help and assistance in their ministerial service to God and His people where needed."

LeeAnn Luker: "As a freshman at Ambassador College, Larry Walker got to know Denny. In January 1981, he asked Denny to perform his wedding to Karen Cole. That began a closer friendship that continues to this day. In the 80s, Denny had begun to develop a focused education program for helping those with addiction problems. Larry was serving as a chaplain at a recovery center in Eugene at that same time. Later, after being transferred to Bend, Larry gave lectures at an outpatient center. Their mutual concern for brethren with this struggle strengthened Larry and Denny's relationship. They worked

together in further developing this program for United Church of God.

"The Women's Enrichment Weekends in the Portland, Oregon, area have also benefited from Karen's presentations and poetry. Her warmth, humor and wisdom have made a great contribution for all the ladies."

When Reflecting Back on Their Years Together in the Ministry the Walkers Shared:

Larry Walker: "One of the things I have learned in my 50 years of ministerial service is the need to be patient with people and give them time to change because human beings are too complex to figure out, and I have seen many examples of members who have surprised me for better or for worse. So I say, 'With human beings, you never know.'"

"However, I have to say that the main thing I learned is the importance of being myself. Early in my ministry, someone advised me to 'put distance between' myself and congregation members in order for them to respect me. Thankfully, I didn't follow that advice, because being genuine is a key to being approachable.

"Today's world is much different than it was during the early years of my ministry. Dealing with doctrinal differences is a major challenge. Emphasizing that Church is a family is important, because

successful families love each other despite problems and differences."

Karen Walker: "Always be yourself with people. It doesn't matter what another person's position is, whether they're at the top of the ladder or just starting out, they deserve your respect, love and attention. Truly care for them as God cares for us.

I was a Special Olympics track coach some years ago, and the joy of watching another blossom physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually is one of the most heartwarming things to behold! People can feel it in the air when we are just being ourselves! Laugh often. There is no place in a healthy life to take ourselves too seriously! Love always. It shoves fear out the door! Live like tomorrow is your last."

Plans After Retirement

Larry and Karen Walker are looking forward to more free time to travel, camp, spend time with family and building their hobby business. One of the philosophies of life they live by is that "busy is a better b-word than bored." They do not expect to be bored, because they have many interests to keep them busy.

The Walkers have been married for 35 years, and they have four children and 11 grandchildren.

Lisa Fenchel

Attention All Teens

Those who are aspiring artists, poets and writers!

Attention all aspiring artists, poets and writers—we need you! While the Feast is still fresh in your mind—we need your help creating articles, photos, drawings and poetry for the teen instruction booklet for the Feast next year. If you have any questions or would like to use your creative talents, please submit your material to suedunkle@yahoo.com.

Sue Dunkle



Drawing by Brooklynn Booth

Poem by Marissa Foeshe

What does the feast
Mean to me?
It's a time of rejoicing
And harmony.

It pictures the years
There'll be no pain,
For this is the time
That Christ shall reign.

This is the time
That brethren unite,
We're shown God's love,
And his glorious light.

We eagerly await
The day Christ comes,
His rewards are waiting
For his daughters and sons.

Honoring Retiring Ministry Chuck & Joy Zimmerman

Chuck and Joy Zimmerman have served in the ministry for 46 years. In 1972 he married Joy Brinkman and gave her a wedding ring that had three diamonds. Later they had three children: Clint III, Courtney and Chelsea. All children have successful lives and happy marriages. The Zimmermans also have four grandchildren.

Chuck started his ministry in 1970 as a ministerial trainee in Manchester, England, and Glasgow, Scotland. He went on to be a senior writer for the Personal Correspondence Department from 1971-1974. In 1974 he became associate pastor in Washington, D.C., and went into his first role as a pastor in 1975 in Altoona and Indiana, Pennsylvania. Between 1977 and 2010 Chuck Zimmerman was pastor of Fort Collins, Colorado; Wheatland, Wyoming; Scottsbluff, Nevada; Fayetteville and Fort Smith, Arkansas; Northwest Phoenix; and Scottsdale, Arizona. From 2011 to his current retirement he served in Florida in Tampa, St. Pete, Vero Beach, and Fort Myers.

Chuck's current interests are hunting, fishing, faceting gems and reading. Chuck says his plans for after retirement are to "fish, read, facet gems and love the wife God gave me."

Chuck and Joy Shares His Reflections:

Chuck Zimmerman: "Develop a motto

that you can use all the years of your service to God and His people through Jesus Christ. Live that motto, your model of service, each day."

Joy Zimmerman: As a child and student at AC I was admonished to "seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you." Over my life time being married to a servant of God and His people I have experienced the blessings that come from putting God and others first. As the commercial goes (paraphrased by me), the reward of serving is "priceless."

Longtime Friends and Work Colleagues Shared Their Thoughts:

Robin Webber: "How time goes by! I remember Chuck and his family from my early high school years. He was a couple of years ahead of me in high school at the Church school in Pasadena.

"Chuck was always kind, witty, very practical, and right in the middle of school activities. Not much has changed. We were all young once, and I remember Chuck involved in school sports. Running and track too! I was close to his family (his younger sister was in my class), and his father, Dr. Clint Zimmerman, ordained me in 1975. As was the case with Ambassador College in those days, we all went our separate ways in service to God and brethren. I do specifically remember the challenging years of 1993-1995, and

Chuck was a stand-up guy for the truths of God that had been revealed and we had come to love and appreciate. He and other pastors in Arizona at that time were all very involved in the formation of the United Church of God in 1995. Chuck and his wife Joy, a wonderful lady and companion in all that has

come their way, have since served as a pastoral couple and then a non-salaried ministerial couple and then again a pastoral couple. They have served the Church near and far as with recent years in the Caribbean. The size of the job, whenever and whatever the call, was never nearly as important as the size of their hearts. And now retiring. Imagine! I look forward to their ongoing contributions in life's new chapter for them—as a Christian couple, a ministerial couple, and friends."

Steve Buchanan: "Terri and I first met Chuck and Joy when, as church pastors, our Rapid City, South Dakota, and their Loveland, Colorado, church areas made us 'neighbors' in 1979. For the next decade we saw the dedication and service



of the Zimmermans in their three-church circuit, at Y.O.U. activities and especially at the Feast of Tabernacles. In the 90s we were once again united as neighbors in Arizona. Chuck and Joy have always brought a certain class and high standards to the membership of the Church of God. Their ministry has been creative, supportive, giving and loving. We have always appreciated the Zimmerman family for their pioneering spirit in the Church of God, beginning with the calling of Dr. Clint Zimmerman in the early 1950s and their continuance in the faith. Through the difficult times and the good times, Chuck and Joy and their family have been examples of faithfulness and loyalty to God and His people."

Linda Merrick

Council of Elders

Continued from page 1

There will be a leadership workshop on Sunday, Jan. 15, with the ministerial regional conference to follow.

Church of God, International: Accepting CGI's invitation, Victor Kubik gave the sermon at their services in Cleveland, Ohio, on Nov. 19.

Young Adult Leadership Initiative (YALI) will produce a video directed to and about young adults this year. At the Winter Family Weekend YALI conducted a professional networking event. Our churches in Minnesota will host a young adult weekend on Jan. 14-16, 2017.

Ministerial and Member Services Report

Chris Rowland summarized manpower changes since the last meeting in August, including transfers, retirements, new hires, deaths and new ordinations. He then gave the following statistics:

There are 382 elders in the United Church of God (UCG); 94 are outside the U.S.; 288 are in the U.S.

77 are church pastors; 10 are associate or assistant pastors

There are seven ministerial trainees.

There are 195 congregations and Bible study groups in the U.S. (there is a new Bible Study group in Portsmouth, Virginia).

There have been 144 baptisms so far in 2016, which is 49 more than at the August meetings.

The average U.S. Sabbath attendance for October 2016 was 7,271 (October is a low month due to travel for the Holy Days). Our average attendance is still fluctuating each month between 7,200 to 7,600. There still doesn't appear to be a significant trend either upward or downward.

Financial Services

Rick Shabi updated the Council on significant financial activities and results of operations since the August Council meetings.

The annual audit report has been issued by our independent accounting firm. Again they offered an "unqualified" opinion on our financial statements, meaning that as a result of their review, their opinion is that our financial reports present fairly the financial position of the Church

(see the full report published on page 13).

Next, details of the offerings from the four fall Holy Days and financial results of the first five months of the fiscal year (July through November) were presented and discussed.

Overall, Holy Day offerings are about \$150,000 over budget and are above last year's totals.

For the fiscal year to date, general income and overall income is running slightly higher than last year.

Cash balances at the end of November are healthy and are significantly higher than last year at this time. "Cash" includes certificates of deposit, as are disclosed in the audited financial statements.

Since the August Council meetings, the purchase of the Portsmouth, Ohio, church building has been completed, as well as the donation of land in London, Kentucky, which land is used for the benefit of the local church. UCGIA now owns a total of eight local church buildings, not including the home office building.

Media and Communications Services

Peter Eddington updated the Council

on the following*:

Mr. Eddington noted that the *Beyond Today* streaming apps on major television streaming platforms are all finished, with the United Church of God app (which will host sermons and webcasts) being in development and nearing completion. He also highlighted the results so far of ads the Church is running on the Roku streaming box platform for the *Beyond Today* app. If a TV user clicks the ad and does not have the *Beyond Today* app installed, it will link to the Channel Store for installation. After one and a half weeks of advertising we are seeing the following results:

Our cost-per-click on the Roku advertising campaign is about \$.006. These are people who respond to a Roku ad, which opens right into a program.

We reached over 26,684 people, who watched 39,527 videos.

In the first 5 weeks of our Roku advertising campaign we've had over 18,598 new *Beyond Today* channel installs.

The average time spent on our channel is 24.73 minutes, so our users are watching at least an entire episode, on average. **UN**

*statistics listed are as of press date

Announcements



Ken & Barbara Martin

50th Wedding Anniversary



Ken & Loretta Swart

60th Wedding Anniversary



Geraldine Joan Hart

June 6, 1929 - Oct. 13, 2016



Joseph Sheperd

1933 - Oct. 5, 2016

Anniversaries

Ken and Barbara Martin

Ken Martin and Barbara Lading moved to Pasadena, California, to attend Ambassador College in 1962. There they learned and practiced the truth of God as revealed in the Holy Bible, the Word of God. After four years of college instruction, they were married in 1966.

Upon ordination they began their journey in the active ministry, starting in Dallas, Texas. There their two sons, Michael and Russell, were born. Some years later, in South Bend/Fort Wayne, Indiana, their daughter Julie was born. This was followed by a short stint in Toledo/Finlay, Ohio. It was then onto Pasadena, California, where their twins, Daniel and Jana, were born. Their journey continued and brought them to Birmingham, Alabama, where their son Jeffrey was born.

As the years moved on, so did the Martins. They moved again, this time to Atlanta, Georgia. Their present location of service for the United Church of God is Macon/Columbus, Georgia.

The Martins are presently blessed with 14 grandchildren.

Along with Ken's pastoral responsibilities, he serves as a regional pastor, assisting elders and members in the Southeast region. He also enjoys serving as chairman of the prophecy advisory committee for UCG.

The Martins are a unified husband-wife team, whose goal is to serve the living God and His people. There can be no greater honor in this life than to be Ambassadors for Christ.

Ken and Loretta Swart

Ken and Loretta Swart, of Lowell, Indiana, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Nov. 10, 2016. The Munster, Indiana, congregation joined in their celebration with cake and sparkling grape juice. Pictures of the couple and their wedding party decorated the table.

Ken and Loretta were baptized together in 1967. They have eight children, 18 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. They enjoy family get-togethers, working and traveling. May they continue to enjoy life together!

Obituaries

Geraldine Joan Hart

Geraldine (Geri) Joan Hart, a loving and God-fearing member of the Yuma, Arizona, congregation since the early 1980s, passed away on Oct. 13, 2016, at the age of 87. She was surrounded by family members who loved her dearly.

Geraldine will be missed. Her infectious smile gave warmth to us all. Everyone who encountered her over the years gave us all pause to reflect on her generos-

ity and fellowship. Geri always had kind words spoken from her heart to build up her Christian family continually.

Geri worked as a contract specialist for the federal government. She carried out her job with distinction and honor for over 20 years. She retired many years ago and enjoyed her blessed labor until her passing.

Geri leaves behind her sister Pat, her daughters Dorothy Hart, Linda Schilla-beer and son Harry Hart.

She was a grandmother to 11 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Geraldine was preceded in death by her brother Roger, her husband Harry T. Hart, son Robert Hart and son Thomas Hart.

Geri will be missed, but she rests and awaits her call from her Elder Brother Jesus Christ, Lord of Lords and King of Kings, to rise and serve alongside Him.

Joseph Sheperd

Joseph Sheperd, longtime elder in God's Church, died on Oct. 5 at the age of 83.

Mr. Sheperd, along with his wife Bobbi, served the United Church of God congregations on Vancouver Island. He was being treated for cancer, and it was a blessing that God took him quickly, sparing him from suffering.

The Sheperds were called into God's Church while Joe was in the Royal Cana-

dian Air Force. He was due to be promoted into the diplomatic corps with a possible posting to Russia since Joe spoke Polish and understood the Russian language. Instead, they made the decision that he would leave the RCAF after being called into God's Church. They were baptized in 1964. Mr. Sheperd then spent many years as a manager in the British Columbia medical system in Victoria.

Joe reached a 40-year milestone on Pentecost 2016. First ordained a deacon, he was ordained an elder on Pentecost 1976. In addition to his service as an elder on Vancouver Island, Joe also served a three-year term on the UCG-Canada National Council.

Mr. Sheperd is survived by his wife Bobbi, his son David and his daughter Shirley.

A memorial service in his honor was held in Victoria on Oct. 29, 2016.

Announcements: Send us announcements from your local congregation! Have your pastor review what you write, and send it in to UN@ucg.org. We're looking for 100- to 300-word articles and photos with captions. Please double-check the spelling of names, and include the author's and photographer's names. **E-mail is preferred**, but we will also take physical mail as well! Please include a self-addressed envelope if you'd like photos returned.



Up and Coming

Upcoming Women's Enrichment Weekends

Once again, ladies from around the country have been busy planning to host a Women's Enrichment Weekend in their area. These events help ladies actively grow to greater spiritual maturity through presentations, seminars, roundtable discussions and workshops. As ladies share their life stories, renew old friendships and make new ones, they help encourage one another and grow stronger in the faith.

Make plans now to attend one of our upcoming Women's Enrichment Weekends. Additional information regarding the theme and what you can expect when you attend can be found on the Women of Valor website.

Lisa Fenchel

Women of Valor Website:

<http://women.ucg.org/>

Region	Theme	Weekend Date	Deadline
Garden Grove, California	The Power of Encouragement	Jan. 27-29, 2017	Dec. 15, 2016
SW Missouri	Adventures in Prayer	Feb. 17-19, 2017	Feb. 1, 2017
Portland, Oregon	Blessing in the Fabric of Our Lives	Feb. 23-26, 2017	Jan. 15, 2017
Puget Sound, Washington	Building a Network	March 3-5, 2017	Feb. 1, 2017
Spokane, Washington	Looking Back . . . Moving Forward	May 19-21, 2017	TBA
Baltimore, Maryland	Your Inner Adornment	June 9-11, 2017	April 15, 2017



Lewiston hosts Luau, Idaho style

Photo by Darla Moody



Left to right: Diane Oliver, Berenice Emehiser and Becky Oliver enjoy a game of Headbanz at the Luau.

The Big Island came to the mainland Nov. 19 as the Lewiston, Idaho, congregation hosted a Luau. Guests came from north and south to enjoy an afternoon and evening of spiritual edification, uplifting fellowship and fantastic food.

Afternoon services were attended by 51 people, including a telephone hookup. All aspects of the service were conducted by guests from the Spokane, Washington, congregation, including a rousing song service led by Steve Oliver and special music titled "God of Israel" performed by an ensemble of 14 vocalists. The sermonette was given by elder Mike Iams, who reminded us that our outer package should match the inner package. Using the analogy of a fig tree, we are to be fruit-bearers, not just leaf-bearers. Assistant pastor Paul Moody gave the sermon. He encouraged us to remain faithful and steadfast until the end, continuing to shine as lights in the dark world around us, and that we are to be examples of the true Light (Jesus Christ) that all mankind

will one day come to know personally.

Following services, a delicious Hawaiian themed potluck was enjoyed by all. If anyone walked away hungry, it was by their own choosing, as the options were too numerous to name. A dessert buffet and large display of sweets served as centerpiece in the dining area, which was sure to give kids of all ages a sugar rush. A bevy of games were played after sunset, including Pass the Pigs, Scrabble, Headbanz, Jenga, numerous card games and more. Throughout the evening 12-year-old Anne Jorgensen played the role of MC, announcing various door prizes as well as the winners of best dressed islanders.

Guests were treated to plenty of eye candy as the hall was decorated from floor to ceiling in bright colors, garlands, flowers, palm trees, tiki torches, and even a large waterfall. We thank everyone who came and hope to see you at the next Luau!

Gina Jorgensen

McCradys' Retirement Celebration at the Dayton, Ohio, Congregation

On the Sabbath of Nov. 5, 2016, the Dayton, Ohio, congregation honored retiring pastor Frank McCradys and his wife Sonja. Newly-appointed assistant pastor Ron Barker spoke warmly of the McCradys' more than 16 years of service to the Dayton church.

He and local elder Dave Hemsley then presented them with several gifts: a card expressing the congregation's love, a scarf for Mrs. McCradys, imprinted with Jeremiah 31:3: "He loves you with an everlasting love;" an art work of crystal mounted on a base bearing the statement, "Thank you for being helpers of our joy and teaching us that obeying God is for our good—Deuteronomy 10:12 and 13" and a wall plaque engraved with, "Be strong and courageous. The Lord is with you, wher-

ever you go—Joshua 1:9."

After the presentation, Mr. McCradys took a few moments to express his love and appreciation for the congregation. Afterwards, the congregation and guests enjoyed a Texas-style barbecue.

Reviewing their over-46 years of doing God's work: The McCradys have served congregations in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Florida, Indiana, Texas, and Ohio. As certified marriage counselors they have conducted marriage seminars at congregations throughout the United States. Mr. McCradys was festival coordinator at the Gatlinburg, Tennessee, Feast site. And last year he was chosen to be regional pastor for states in the Northeast region.

As the McCradys prepare to move

Second Annual Singles Event: South Dakota



Photo by Angela Helseth

Join us for a weekend full of fellowship and activities while taking in God's beautiful creation. This weekend is open to all singles throughout the Churches of God. The weekend will be held on Memorial Day weekend, May 25-29, 2017.

Please visit the website listed in the box below the article to see what is planned for your fellowship and enjoyment, and to register for this weekend.

"The Single Adults of the Churches of God (SACOG) Weekend was an awesome time in an awesome place. For someone who was not interested in going, and had to be talked into going, once it was over, I was one of the first to say, 'let's do it again!' I highly recommend it! The best singles activity I have ever been to."—Daniel Helseth, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Registration:

· To register to attend and/or have questions, please call Irene Hoffman at (605) 360-5410

· Send Registration fee to Irene Hoffman at 3201 N Aurora Ave, Sioux Falls, SD 57107

· The fee covers the cost of the conference room used for meetings and Sabbath services, vans and tours, etc.

· Registration fee is \$175 per person (non-refundable if you cancel within two weeks of the start date)

· Payment must be received by May 1, 2017

Accommodations:

· Grand Gateway Hotel
· \$147/night (10 king rooms and 40 rooms with two queens have been reserved in the block)

· Book rooms by calling (605) 342-8843 and using the code "CHURCH"

· Rooms must be booked by May 1, 2017
· Please let Irene Hoffman know when you have booked your room and if you need help finding a roommate.

To start a conversation, ask questions or find out more information about this weekend, please visit the following Facebook groups:

- UCG Singles 20-35yrs
- UCG Singles 35+yrs
- SACOG 2.0

For more informaton visit:

<http://sandersoffice.wixsite.com/sacog-rapid-city>



The McCradys (on the left) with Ron Barker and Dave Hemsley (on the right) who presented the gifts to the McCradys.

to Texas to be near family, even though they will be missed by Dayton and sister church Cincinnati North, the congrega-

tions share in their joy of beginning an exciting new chapter in their life!

Nicolas Nick

More Than 300 Enjoy Fellowship, Sports at Northwest Family Weekend

Over 330 people gathered to attend activities at the 51st annual Northwest Family Weekend in Portland, Oregon, Dec. 23-26, 2016.

The weekend began with three seminars on Friday. Carrie Lippencott, an occupational therapist from the Portland congregation, spoke on "Finding Equilibrium." Her presentation included finding ways to calm down when we are too "up" and perk up when we are too "down." She spoke about how God designed us to sync with others to help each other coregulate. When we are well regulated, we are able to better bond with others. Paul Moody, an elder from the Spokane congregation, described "10 Key Characteristics of Valuable Employees." He showed how God is also looking for these characteristics in us. Portland congregation pastor Rex Sexton rounded out the seminars with a chronological account of the background, messages, and results of prophets of the Old Testament from Elijah to Malachi. All three messages encouraged the listeners to reach for balance, good character and knowledge.

Friday evening of the Sabbath there was a Bible study by Salem pastor John Cafourek. His study focused on "Keys to Remembering the Scriptures," followed by a hymn sing.

On Sabbath morning, Ben Light, an elder from the Salem congregation, led the teen and young adult Bible study on the topic of discipleship and commitment. Mr. Sexton and Mr. Cafourek led a speaker's workshop for men interested in fine-tuning their speaking skills. Mr. Sexton took an agricultural analogy by comparing the spiritual food of messages to different types of chicken feed with

varying amounts of protein. Mr. Cafourek encouraged speakers to keep a file for messages and to save detailed notes to inspire future speaking. Then the group outlined sermonette messages based on notable scriptures from Proverbs.

Sabbath service messages were split-sermons by Olympia and Tacoma pastor Roc Corbett and Mr. Sexton. Mr. Corbett visually walked attendees through a chart, showing our need to make continual spiritual progress rather than just stay above the steadily declining morality of the world. Special music was a moving rendition of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," sung by the Portland youth a cappella choir led by Jack Scruggs. Mr. Sexton spoke about "A Life With No Regrets," encouraging the audience to strive for spiritual growth so that we don't regret that we could have done better.

That evening teens from five different states danced the night away at a star-themed "Celestial Ball." They enjoyed the sparkling lights and twinkling star decorations, all set amongst a 10-foot projected slide show of 100 images of our amazing universe. The family dance had a "Dancing by the Sea" theme, with nautical and treasure chest decorations, along with an arts and crafts table for children.

Sunday was the sports day with competitive games in volleyball and basketball. Afterwards we enjoyed an evening of bowling, chatting and playing games. The staff at the bowling alley was impressed with the group. They invited us to come back anytime.

Monday was a day of skiing and tubing at Mount Hood Meadows. Attendees enjoyed the 120 inches of snow on a cold



Above: Ben Light, an elder from the Salem congregation, speaking at the teen and young adult Bible study on the Sabbath.

Right: Young adults enjoying an afternoon of skiing at Mount Hood Meadows.

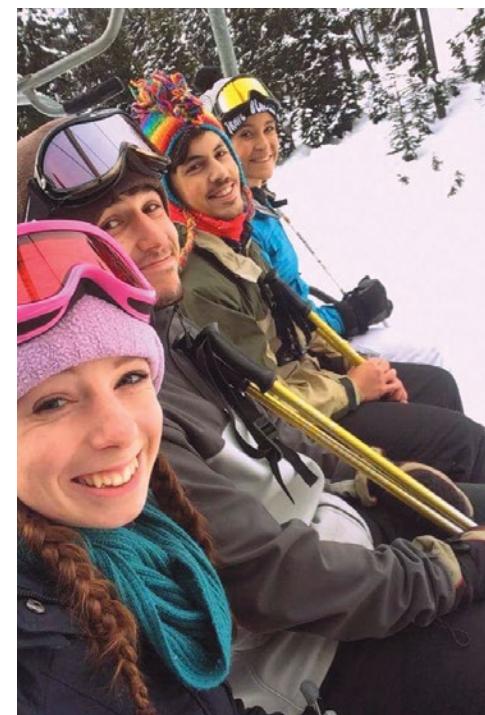
See more photos here:

<https://flic.kr/s/aHskPqUmLF>

but clear day. At the top of the resort, the wind created some thick ice that made things interesting.

Many thanks go to the countless volunteer hours, preparation and creative energy put into making the weekend an enjoyable event by all who attended. We hope you join us next year!

Members of the Portland congregation



Retirement Celebration in Medford and Surprise Retirement Celebration at the Feast



Larry and Karen Walker at their celebration at the Feast of Tabernacles in Bend, Oregon.

Following Sabbath services on Oct. 8, 2016, the brethren in Medford, Oregon, presented Larry Walker and his wife Karen with a basket of produce and a card to thank them for their many years of dedicated service. Additionally the congregation purchased a farm share for them, and they will receive a box of produce every week during the 2017 growing season. After the presentation a potluck followed with much lively fellowship.

The Walkers faithfully served the Medford congregation while residing about 150 miles away. This meant trips through the mountains in adverse conditions and a lot of late night driving to return to their home in La Pine. We are so grateful for the sacrifices they made to make sure that the Medford congregation was being spiritually nourished and cared for. We were happy to hear that they plan to visit regularly!

Also, on Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2016, during the Feast of Tabernacles the Bend, Oregon, congregation, along with over 500 of our brothers and sisters, surprised Larry and Karen Walker by acknowledging their retirement from pastoring the Bend and Medford, Oregon, congregations.

At the close of services our Northwest regional pastor Steve Nutzman called them to the stage and presented them with some special gifts the brethren purchased. Mr. Walker received a very nice watch, and Mrs. Walker received a gift card for a local jewelry store.

Afterwards we moved to a room where the decorations, cake, a beautiful globe from home office and a festive, family day atmosphere all helped us celebrate their nearly 50 years of ministerial service to God's people. We are thankful for their dedication and pray they are truly blessed in their retirement years.

Lisa Richards



Faithful Member Sets Ongoing Record for *Beyond Today* Distribution

by Ailsa Braun

Betty Bost, aged 73 and a longtime member of the Church of God in Charlotte, North Carolina, doesn't let trials and setbacks hinder her from following God and serving His people. Her number one passion after prayer, study and worship is helping to proclaim the gospel message by personally stocking and maintaining several newsstands in high-traffic businesses in the Concord/Kannapolis area.

Since the program began in UCG, Betty has set a continuous national record for the number of *Beyond Today* and formerly *Good News* magazines to be distributed in this manner. According to John LaBissoniere, newsstand distribution manager for UCG, "Betty is one of the most enthusiastic, capable, and diligent members involved in the *Beyond Today* magazine newsstand distribution." For two decades, she has driven her 1976 Buick Skylark, lovingly restored and maintained by her late husband Jim (who died in May 2013), to personally open and maintain newsstands in local restaurants such as Golden Corral (her biggest outlet), the Mayflower, El Amigo and Los Arcos.

Over time, Betty has built an efficient routine, strategically choosing Mondays

and Fridays as her main restocking days. This schedule ensures full racks over the weekends, when highest customer volume occurs. One year, noting to the assistant manager of the Golden Corral that she wouldn't be back for over a week, he responded, "I think I know where you're going—you're going to Jekyll Island, aren't you?" He grew up in the Church of God, so he quickly made the connection! Indeed, Jekyll Island is one of Betty's favorite Feast sites.

But just two years ago, she missed keeping God's Feast there due to a terrible and near-fatal accident. While loading brush from her property into a trailer, she lost her balance, slipped off her tractor and fell underneath it. She was run over about six times as the tractor continued, in gear, to go in circles. Finally, she managed to extricate herself and crawl over to the toolshed, where, with sheer grit and great presence of mind, she used the wall phone to call for help. Her injuries included a fractured pelvis and multiple cuts and bruises.

Only God's intervention, coupled with Betty's characteristic determination, enabled her to recover from what looked to be a permanent setback at best. In the hospital and rehab, what kept this indom-

itable widow going, along with many prayers and visits, was her strong determination to get back out and restock her newsstands. From her bed, she instructed a couple of willing brethren who filled in for her as substitutes. But she couldn't relax until she was back in the saddle herself! Day after day, to accelerate recovery, she would go way beyond her prescribed therapy. And after just a few months, she was back at her beloved job!

It is partly due to Betty's faithful work that the Charlotte congregation acquired a new member about 10 years ago. Back in about 2006, Betty had just gained an outlet for *The Good News* in her local Big Lots store. A few weeks later, she checked back and was informed she couldn't have it any longer. Yet within that short time, a young woman, Terry McCullough, had picked up the magazine for the first time and followed up by attending church services. Some months later, Terry was baptized, and she has been a faithful and active part of the congregation ever since.

The lesson? Never underestimate the value of a single magazine; a few minutes' work; one short-lived opportunity! Perhaps the door was open just long enough to call someone, and once it closed, God



Betty Bost pictured with President Victor Kubik at church services.

would open new doors elsewhere.

Betty also hasn't limited her service to the newsstand program. At church, she faithfully sets up chairs each week, and often assembles the information table, serves as greeter, and helps to clean the refreshments table. During the week, she also serves as a prayer warrior and encourager to others.

Mrs. Bost's powerful example shows that if we look, we can always find opportunities to use our talents and abilities to serve and to make a difference in the lives of others. **UN**

Local Member Advertises *Beyond Today* Live Events

by Mitchell Moss

In Raleigh, North Carolina, local elder Tom Adams distributes about 300 *Beyond Today* magazines on standalone magazine racks at four local area businesses. And in September, he promoted the *Beyond Today* Live event *America: The Time Is Now!* on the racks by adding an additional holder to the racks to display the trifold brochure that the Church produced for members to promote the event.

Mr. Adams has been distributing *Beyond Today* magazines on the racks for several years. Only one began as a result of a personal relationship he had with the owner of the store; he established the other three by approaching local businesses and asking if he could set up a display. "I would take two or three issues of the magazine in with me and discuss it briefly with the manager," Mr. Adams said. If they agreed to allow the display, he said, "I would make a point to talk with the manager once a month to see if there were any problems with the magazine, and what the comments were from readers, and I always thanked them for allowing me to place the magazine in their store. Not every store manager that I approached was agreeable to placing the magazine in their store."

Placement of the rack makes a difference. At one location, he said: "The first couple of years, due to the location of the rack, there was not a lot of movement of the magazines. I talked to the owner about a better location, and he picked up the rack and placed it right in front of the cash register at the front door." After that, the magazines started being taken much more. The businesses are all located in rural areas several miles out from the city of Raleigh, and three are convenience stores. The fourth is a general and antique store.

He added the trifold brochures in advance of the three live events held in September 2016 in North Carolina. People did indeed take the brochures, and he encourages people who live in the areas where there are upcoming *Beyond Today* Live events scheduled to try something similar. He says: "I think the brochures would probably move better without the *BT* magazine beside it; the attention would be more focused on the campaign and not getting a free magazine. Concentrate on high traffic areas, and if a team of participants could saturate an area or shopping center within a 20-mile radius of the campaign" that would be best. The key, he says, "would be to locate them

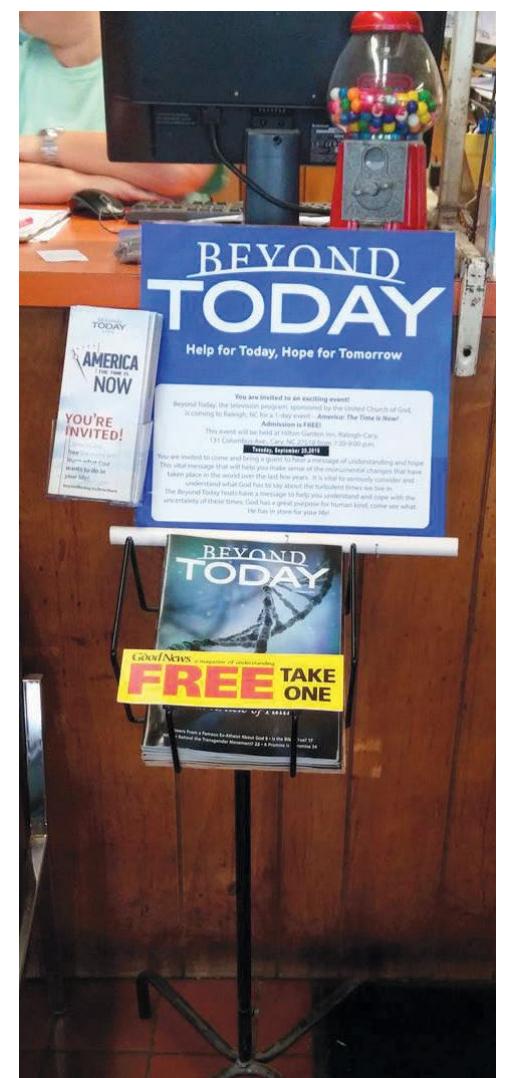


Above: A sample of the *America: The Time Is Now!* trifolds that were displayed with the *Beyond Today* magazines.

Right: A sample of the displays Tom Adams filled each week with the trifolds and the *Beyond Today* magazines.

near a cash register where people are passing by and could see it easily."

If you would like to try distributing additional *Beyond Today* magazines in your area, contact John LaBissoniere via e-mail at john_labissoniere@ucg.org. **UN**



“One of Us”

by Tony Kuczynski

Perhaps you've heard the Indian challenge to “walk a mile in another man's moccasins.” Maybe you have done so in some way and it has led you to a deeper place where compassion is concerned in a relationship. If God is about anything in this undertaking with mankind He is about offering a relationship. All of the details about His plan find their meaning and application in this reality.

What does it mean to you that God, in the person of Jesus Christ, was human like you for a while? In other words can He now relate to the “moccasin” thing? Hebrews 5:8 tells us that “though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.” So God can learn! That alone is worthy of deep contemplation. What application is there for us personally and as His Body, the Church?

The Bible is laden from cover to cover with the decision these two Beings made to become intimately involved with their creation. It demonstrates Their willingness to “get Their hands dirty” with us in order for us to know the depth of Their active love for us. For true godly love is an act of the will, lived out, not just a feeling. In describing the One, Jesus Christ, who is “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8), the apostle John writes in John 1:14, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” He became one of us for a while.

Even one of His names, Immanuel, mentioned in Isaiah's prophecy, means “with us is God” (Isaiah 7:15). The reality and power of the nativity of Christ's very humble beginnings as a baby should not be under-appreciated.

So let's ponder some ways in which all this can change lives. Let's ask a few questions along the way.

During and after last year's Passover, I chose to think about these things more. It has led to a deeper gratefulness and affection for God the Father and His Son. It has also led to more power in the overcoming process knowing that I am not condemned for having the struggles of human nature that my Savior also had.

In 1 Peter 2:5 it says: “You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

We all can relate in some personal way the struggles of human nature and need the help of God and a loving, caring support group of brethren in order to become

those “living stones” in the spiritual house of God as we see in 1 Peter 2:5.

Let's ask and let Scripture answer the question: What qualifies Jesus Christ as a perfect High Priest?

The entire second chapter of Hebrews is worth reading slowly through in this regard. However we will just look at verses 17-18: “Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” Also let's bring verse 11 into this to remind us of what you and I battle and how God feels about us. It reads: “For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them [us] brethren.” Is it possible that as is stated in the aforementioned Hebrews 5:8, that He learned more about mercy by way of His fully human experience? These are beautiful things to meditate upon.

Hebrews 4:15-16 deepens this connection even further with tremendous implications: “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” So not only can we know we are not experiencing anything “new” as flesh and blood, but we can also be bold in those dark moments of temptation or trial with cries for help, which God loves to hear I'm sure. To me the pivotal word here is “all” in verse 15. The Greek word for this is *pas*, meaning “all, any, every, the whole.” I checked for loopholes, so maybe I could remind God that He couldn't help me with something because His Son could not relate to it. That's what unbiblical shame looks like.

However on the contrary, the truth is that there is nothing we can take to God that Jesus cannot (with familiarity) advocate for us before the Father. What is it worth to you that you would not hear the words: “Sorry, I can't help you with that. I don't know about that aspect of being human,” uttered by Christ when you come boldly before that throne of grace? This introduces perhaps even a deeper question.

In the book of Romans, chapter 7, the later verses are especially about the struggle with sin. It is fascinating to read that this apostle of God of some 25 years is



Photo by Sergee Bee/Unsplash

living life like you and I do. Yet Romans 8:1 reads: “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” This is a very positive statement in the face of our walking out this life of overcoming. God is not in the condemnation business, but is all for us in the growing process. We have to ask ourselves why we are self-condemning, if indeed we are. That may be a part of a personal belief system that needs healing. See 1 John 3:18-21.

That same chapter 8 of Romans contains the seed for our next probing question. Romans 8:7-8 reads: “Because the carnal mind is enmity, for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” I think the question begs asking. Did our perfect High Priest know what it is like to be enmity? Did He learn how it felt to be at “odds” with the divine nature because He was a participant in the flesh with all its aspects? We read he was tempted in *all* points! Yet what tremendous respect and awe He is owed because He never sinned on any point. That is why He is spoken of as the “captain of our salvation” in Hebrews 2:10!

Pondering the answer one can then begin to ask further to help in overcoming. Will Jesus sympathize with us and advocate for us if our particular struggle with this flesh includes alcoholism, unbiblical expression of anger, various crippling fears, homosexuality, pornography or other addictions, feelings of shame and guilt, etc.? If God would turn a deaf ear to helping with the most basic problem of enmity, with all that can emanate from it, then the question is what do we do and where do we go?

But I think we know better, and so it

does not matter what the sin or habit or challenge is, we can, like the prodigal son, run back to God, and He'll run to meet us and celebrate His son or daughter's homecoming. We should run to Him boldly, not away in ungodly guilt or shame. As we individually do so we are becoming ready to be a helper with Christ when He returns.

How can we as the Body of Christ help each other do more to thrive in “working out our salvation”? Each of us can do our part to open our hearts and hands to one another no matter what the issue, while standing with God's standards of blessed behaviors. We are all made of clay, for now, in need of the hands of the Creator. John 13:35 tells us that “by this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” That would be an active supportive love, the how-to of which are found in the study of biblical principles. There may well be someone in your congregation who is battling some temptation all alone. Ask God to teach you how to help create significant relationships. Don't underestimate the “power of one” to positively affect a life now and perhaps for all time. Visiting <http://breakingfree.ucg.org> may help you in understanding these real battles that some of our brethren face and how to help them be victorious.

Let's be a people, the people of the Great God, who don't run away for any reason. Let's not cause others to do so by our less-than-Christ-like acceptance of their weaknesses, but come together in His love for all.

What does it mean to you that God became one of us for a while? **UN**

Tony Kuczynski is from the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, congregation, and is on the Focused Education Task Force.

Winter Work

Continued from page 3

winter winds blow, crops are gathered, and preparations for winter have been made.

But what do farmers do during the winter? Do they just rest and wait for the months to pass?

No, they still work. Their winter work is necessary, although different from the rest of the year. For instance, during the winter, necessary activities like accounting for the prior growing season and tax filings are completed. An analysis of what was profitable and what is not is undertaken, and decisions are made—such as what crops to sow, what fertilizers to use—as plans for next year's growing season are developed.

Also, during the winter, research and information gathering on new farming products, equipment, and techniques are done. There's not much time for that during a busy growing season, but the winter allows time for more in-depth study, so that any needed changes can be made for next year.

A farmer is dependent on his equipment working well. During the winter, equipment

and fencerows are repaired and maintained. Everything needs to be in good shape when the growing season starts.

Finally, the winter is a time for rest and renewal, to spend time with family and friends, enjoying their company and nurturing those relationships.

Without the winter months, the farmer would grow weary, and the job would become stale and less profitable.

Businesses, too, use the winter for focused work. At the home office, for example, accounting and financial reporting is a year-round process. But in the winter months we focus on budget and strategic planning for the upcoming fiscal year. Time is taken for in-depth review and examination of programs, strategies and statistics. We identify needs that will better serve the Church and enable us to fulfill our God-given mission. We assess strengths and weaknesses and seek God's will and direction that we may make the best use of what He provides His work.

"Winter work" is a necessary part of farm and business life.

Perhaps we as individuals can use the winter months to do some "work" and analysis on our personal and spiritual lives.

"Let us search and examine our ways," we read in Lamentations 3:40. "Con-

sider your ways," God commands in Haggai 1:5. "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith," Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 13:5.

Perhaps during the winter, before the springtime and Passover arrive, we can do an "accounting" of our lives and honestly assess ourselves in comparison to standards set in the Bible. Are we where we should be spiritually? Do we feel close to God? What changes and spiritual "repairs" might need to be made in our lives?

"Take advantage of earlier sunsets and more indoor time to spend time with family, have meals together, and cultivate and deepen your relationships."

Is our Bible study rich and rewarding and even corrective at times? Are there books and portions of the Bible we haven't looked at in a while? Is there a topic you have wanted to look into and examine and research thoroughly? Perhaps the next few months would be a good time to

do that. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). We need to know the Bible and live by every word.

Consider, too, your relationships at home. Do you have the relationship with your spouse and children you should have? Perhaps these winter months are a good time to begin fixing and repairing those relationships. Take advantage of earlier sunsets and more indoor time to spend time with family, have meals together, and cultivate and deepen your relationships.

Don't forget our Church relationships. Those are important to God, too. Do we love our brethren? Have we been sowing the seeds of friendship, concern and *agape* love? Are we hospitable, as God would have us be? (1 Peter 4:7). The winter is a great time to be building those ties that bind us to one another.

Use the winter wisely. Don't just look at it as a cold, dark, bleak time of year that we wish away. See it and use it as a valuable season where necessary "winter work" is done. If we use the winter wisely, we will be ready and committed for the work of springtime and the seasons to follow. **UN**

Koinonia

Continued from page 3

and access with confidence through faith in Him" (Ephesians 3:9-12, emphasis added throughout). It was a "mystery" or a revelation previously veiled about this *koinonia* relationship God the Father and Jesus Christ wanted to have with us.

In fact, this word has helped me pray more effectively when I realized we have *koinonia* when we go before God the Father and our intercessor, Jesus Christ. The apostle John emphasized its importance when he said, "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have *fellowship [koinonia]* with us; and truly *our fellowship [koinonia]* is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3).

Communion Primarily Means a Spiritual Partnership

We often hear the word "communion" in regard to religion, but unfortunately it has mainly been taken to mean partaking of the Eucharist ceremony. For instance, as a Catholic, I had the sacrament of "Communion" for the first time at 7 years old. Of course, at that age I was just going through a ritual that had little meaning to me. Yet "communion" is actually the Latin term for *koinonia* and primarily means in the biblical context the sharing of a spiritual partnership. God the Father and Jesus Christ consider us as "partners" in Their

work and Church, and They want us to have a spiritually intimate relationship with Them.

This is why we can call God the Father *Abba*, an endearing word which today would roughly translate as "Daddy." As Paul states, "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'" (Galatians 4:6).

We can also call Christ our Elder Brother, another affectionate family term. He was willing to give up His life to establish this loving bond with us and was not embarrassed to call us brethren—or His brothers and sisters. As Hebrews 2:11-12 says, "For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason *He is not ashamed to call them brethren*, saying: 'I will declare your name [God the Father's name] to *my brethren*; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to you.'"

This revelation about the type of fellowship God the Father and Jesus Christ want to have with us is truly mind-boggling. It means They want to live forever with us in a state of *koinonia*—a concept best described in this context as an intimate family relationship.

Joint Heirs With Christ

Another amazing aspect of *koinonia* is the sharing of the partners' possessions. We truly don't have much to offer, but God the Father and Jesus Christ own it all. Yet They want to share what They have with

us. Paul expressed it in this way: "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit [itself] bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—*heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ*, if indeed we suffer with Him, *that we may also be glorified together*. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are *not worthy* to be compared with *the glory* which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of *the creation* eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God" (Romans 8:15-17).

There you have it—our goal is the sharing of creation with God the Father and Jesus Christ!

Spiritual Unity

Finally, when we partake of the Passover (which is not too far away), we are expressing the *koinonia* relationship with the rest of the brethren. As Paul explained: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [*koinonia*] of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion [*koinonia*] of the body of Christ? *For we, though many, are one bread and one body*; for we all *partake* of that one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).

This was Jesus Christ's desire, that we have the unity of mind and spirit so "they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You

sent Me" (John 17:21).

Of course, this marvelous relationship with God the Father, Jesus Christ and the brethren is based on us remaining faithful to the end. Paul wrote about this spiritual partnership when he said, "After all, *we will remain Christ's partners only if we continue to hold on to our original confidence until the end*" (Hebrews 3:14, God's Word Version).

"...our goal is the sharing of creation with God the Father and Jesus Christ!"

It is interesting that our Church Vision Statement, based on Ephesians 4:16 and Hebrews 2:10, sums up well the spiritual goal of *koinonia*. It states: "A Church led by God's Holy Spirit, *joined and knit together by what every member supplies, with all doing their share and growing in love to fulfill God's great purpose for humanity to bring many children to glory*." Notice how many times spiritual partnering, working together and sharing are stressed as we look to the glorious future God the Father and Jesus Christ are preparing for all of us.

Consequently *koinonia* is a key biblical concept which defines the relationship God the Father and Jesus Christ want to have with us—and with one another—now and for eternity. So let's diligently work at it! **UN**

Audited Financial Statements for 2015-1016

by Rick Shabi, Treasurer

Included on the next few pages are the audited financial statements of the United Church of God, an *International Association*, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016, along with the auditors' report.

The Cincinnati-based audit firm of Clark, Schaefer, Hackett and Co. once again performed the audit, and once again issued an "unqualified" opinion, noting that the financial statements "present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of [the Church] as of June 30, 2016 and 2015, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

These statements reflect another year of operations in which God has blessed the Church with strong income and a continually increasing base of coworkers and other donors.

Below are some of the highlights of the financial statements:

- Due to the continued generosity and faith of Church members, coworkers, and other donors, cash and certificate of deposit balances of the Church increased by almost \$500,000 over the prior year end.
- Supporting the Church's mission to "make disciples in all nations and care for those disciples," 53 percent of total Church expenditures this year were in the areas of congregational care, international subsidies, and hosting the Feast of Tabernacles.
- Supporting the corollary mission of the Church to "preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God in all the world," about 30 percent of total expenditures this year were in the areas of public proclamation.

We are grateful to God the Father and the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, giver of all good gifts, for providing the needs of His Church. We continue to look to Him for guidance and direction that "His will be done" and that all we do will bring glory to His name.

Our gratitude and appreciation, of course, also extends to the faithful members of the Church and others who support the Work through their generous tithes and offerings. We solicit the prayers of all who support the Church, that God would give wisdom in the management of its financial and other affairs. **UN**

**UNITED CHURCH OF GOD,
an INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

Financial Statements and
Additional Financial Information
June 30, 2016 and 2015
With Independent Auditors' Report



CLARK SCHAEFER HACKETT
CPAs & BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

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CLARK SCHAEFER HACKETT
CPAs & BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Council of Elders
United Church of God, an *International Association*:

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of United Church of God, an International Association (a not-for-profit organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as of June 30, 2016 and 2015, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

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Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of United Church of God, an International Association as of June 30, 2016 and 2015, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 9 to the financial statements, the 2015 financial statements have been restated to correct a misstatement. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Other Matter

Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The Schedules of Functional Expenses on pages 12 and 13 are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the Schedules of Functional Expenses are fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co.

Cincinnati, Ohio
November 22, 2016

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association
Statements of Financial Position
June 30, 2016 and 2015

	2016	2015
Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 5,330,131	6,881,720
Certificates of deposit	2,005,645	-
Prepaid expenses	285,362	375,774
Property and equipment, net	<u>3,879,385</u>	<u>3,996,742</u>
Total assets	\$ 11,500,523	11,254,236
Liabilities and net assets:		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 163,071	161,353
Accrued payroll and vacation pay	478,286	410,433
Accrued insurance obligations	156,966	57,194
Accrued other	8,675	7,475
Mortgage payable	439,055	494,899
Total liabilities	<u>1,246,053</u>	<u>1,131,354</u>
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	10,144,728	10,017,638
Temporarily restricted	109,742	105,244
Total net assets	<u>10,254,470</u>	<u>10,122,882</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 11,500,523	11,254,236

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

3

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association
Statements of Activities
Years Ended June 30, 2016 and 2015

	2016	2015
Unrestricted net assets:		
Revenues, gains and other support:		
Contributions - individuals	\$ 12,440,256	12,698,964
Contributions - local congregations	455,030	538,128
Holy day offerings and festival fund contributions	4,824,556	4,689,286
Estate/personal property donations	45,931	388,179
Dividend and interest income	31,191	15,936
Other income	155,607	159,398
Net assets released from restrictions:		
Satisfaction of restrictions	<u>79,664</u>	<u>77,223</u>
Total revenues, gains and other support	<u>18,032,235</u>	<u>18,567,114</u>
Expenses:		
Program services:		
Field Ministry / Local Congregations	7,576,279	7,342,109
Festivals	391,881	369,763
International	1,525,870	1,580,183
Public Proclamation	5,318,026	4,561,976
Total program services	<u>14,812,056</u>	<u>13,854,031</u>
Management and general:		
Council of Elders / Home Office / Insurance & Benefit Plans	2,895,212	2,520,936
General Conference	30,166	33,120
Executive Reserve	167,711	346,995
Total management and general	<u>3,093,089</u>	<u>2,901,051</u>
Total expenses	<u>17,905,145</u>	<u>16,755,082</u>
Loss on sale of land	-	(620,486)
Increase in unrestricted net assets	<u>127,090</u>	<u>1,191,546</u>
Temporarily restricted net assets:		
Contributions	84,162	105,244
Net assets released from restrictions:		
Satisfaction of restrictions	<u>(79,664)</u>	<u>(77,223)</u>
Increase in temporarily restricted net assets	<u>4,498</u>	<u>28,021</u>
Change in net assets	131,588	1,219,567
Net assets at the beginning of period, restated	10,122,882	8,903,315
Net assets at the end of period	<u>\$ 10,254,470</u>	<u>10,122,882</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

4

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association
Statements of Cash Flows
Years Ended June 30, 2016 and 2015

	2016	2015
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Change in net assets	\$ 131,588	1,219,567
Adjustment to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	188,407	168,356
Loss on sale of land	-	620,486
Effect of change in operating assets and liabilities:		
Prepaid expenses	90,412	(65,898)
Accounts payable	1,718	8,458
Accrued payroll and vacation pay	67,853	31,716
Accrued insurance obligations	99,772	(6,333)
Accrued other	1,200	(6,825)
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>580,950</u>	<u>1,969,527</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Proceeds from sale of land	-	979,971
Purchase of certificates of deposit	(2,005,645)	-
Purchases of property and equipment	(71,050)	(235,763)
Net cash provided (used) by investing activities	<u>(2,076,695)</u>	<u>744,208</u>
Cash flows from financing activities:		
Proceeds from mortgage payable	-	100,000
Principal payments on mortgage payable	(55,844)	(51,024)
Net cash provided (used) by financing activities	<u>(55,844)</u>	<u>48,976</u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(1,551,589)	2,762,711
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	6,881,720	4,119,009
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	<u>\$ 5,330,131</u>	<u>6,881,720</u>
Supplemental Cash Flow Disclosures:		
Interest paid	\$ 8,326	8,541

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

5

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association
Notes to the Financial Statements
June 30, 2016 and 2015

1. CHURCH AND ACTIVITIES:

The United Church of God, an International Association, (herein referred as the "Church") is a worldwide religious association. In the United States of America, the Church is a California Nonprofit Religious Corporation (Incorporated on May 10, 1995). Affairs of the Church are coordinated through the Home Office located in Milford, Ohio, where the state of Ohio has the Church officially registered.

The Church is not affiliated with other religious churches, nor does it publicly appeal for funds or involve itself in politics. The mission of the United Church of God, an International Association, is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God in all the world, make disciples in all nations and care for those disciples.

The Church is overseen by a General Conference of Elders, which, in turn, appoints a 12-member Council of Elders to function as a board of directors that establishes operations policies for the Church. The officers and employees of the Church are responsible for operation of the Church in conformance with Council policies.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

Basis of presentation

The accompanying financial statements include only the activity of the Home Office for the Church.

The Church has associated organizations, operating in other countries, which have resources that are principally derived and expended locally. The Church provides grants-in-aid and other services to some of these organizations. The accounts of these organizations are not included in the accompanying financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis in accordance with the AICPA Audit and Accounting Guide, "Not-for-Profit Organizations." The significant accounting policies followed are described below.

Revenue recognition

Unrestricted net assets represent those resources of the Church that are not subject to donor-imposed stipulations. Unrestricted net assets may be designated for specific purposes by actions of the Council of Elders or may otherwise be limited by contractual agreements with outside parties.

Temporarily restricted net assets represent contributions that are subject to donor-imposed restrictions that can be fulfilled by actions of the Church pursuant to those stipulations or that expire by the passage of time. Temporarily restricted contributions received and expended in the same fiscal year are recorded as unrestricted revenues.

6

Church support

Members of the Church practice tithing (which is the donation of ten percent of one's "net" income for the Church's unrestricted use). The majority of Church support and revenue consist of such unrestricted donations, whether from individuals directly to the Home Office or from monies received by local congregations and subsequently given to the Home Office.

Members also save an additional ten percent of their annual "net" income for personal use in attending biblically mandated festivals or holy days. This is commonly referred to as the second tithe. Members also contribute to the Church a portion of the second tithe that they save for use at the annual festivals. These contributions, known as the "Festival Fund," are used to pay for expenses involved in festival operations and to assist needy members and their families so they can attend the Feast of Tabernacles. Funds are also sent internationally to assist members.

Those members who are financially able contribute to the "Assistance Fund." Monies contributed to the fund are used to assist the needy.

Members may designate that their contributions be used to support the Church internationally. This fund is known as the "International Fund."

Use of estimates

The financial statements are prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles which require management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent liabilities as of the financial statement date, and the amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Income taxes

The Church is exempt from Federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donations to the Church are tax-deductible under IRC Section 170(b)(1)(A). However, income from certain activities not directly related to the Church's tax-exempt purpose would be subject to taxation as unrelated business income. The Church has been granted tax-exempt status in the states in which it operates that provide exemptions from taxes.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents consist of cash and investments with initial maturities of three months or less.

Certificates of deposit

As of June 30, 2016, the Church owned two certificates of deposit at a financial institution with one with an initial maturity of one year and the other with an initial maturity of nine months and values of \$1,003,290 and \$1,002,355, respectively.

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Concentration of credit risk

The Church maintains its cash and certificates of deposit at several commercial and savings banks which, at times, exceed federally insured limits. The Church has not experienced any losses in such accounts and believes it is not exposed to any significant credit risk.

Property and equipment

Purchased property and equipment are recorded at cost. Donations of property and equipment are recorded as support at their estimated fair value on the date of donation. Such donations are reported as unrestricted support unless the donor has restricted the donated asset to be used for a specific purpose. Major improvements to real property are capitalized and normal repair and maintenance costs are expensed as incurred.

Property and equipment owned by the Church are depreciated using the straight-line method over their estimated useful life as follows:

Computer/Information Systems	3 years
Office Equipment	5 years
Office Furniture and Fixtures	7 years
Land Improvements	10 years
Buildings	40 years

Components of programs and supporting services

Field Ministry/Local Congregations: This function includes expenses pertaining to the field ministry, local congregations and youth camps.

International: This function includes expenses pertaining to the support of international congregations and offices.

Public Proclamation: This area contains all media related expenses.

Festivals: This function includes costs that are directly involved in the fall Festival of Tabernacles and the other annual festivals.

Home Office: This function includes administrative and other expenses for the Home Office.

Council of Elders: The expenses in this function are those that pertain to the Council of Elders, including phone and face-to-face conferences.

General Conference: Expenses in this function include any expenses relating to the Cincinnati, Ohio, General Conference held in May.

Executive Reserve: This function includes funds set aside for special projects, capital expenditures, employee benefits, or other expenditures that may occur during the year.

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The Church evaluates events and transactions occurring subsequent to the date of the financial statements for matters requiring recognition or disclosure in the financial statements. The accompanying financial statements consider events through November 22, 2016, the date on which the financial statements were available to be issued.

3. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT:

Property and equipment consisted of the following at June 30:

	2016	2015
Buildings	\$ 4,658,086	4,647,895
Land	402,952	402,952
Land improvements	396,551	396,551
Furniture and fixtures	35,827	16,125
Office equipment	607,757	587,880
Vehicles	63,114	58,973
Total property and equipment	6,164,287	5,910,176
Less: accumulated depreciation	2,284,902	2,113,434
	\$ 3,879,385	3,996,742

During the year, the Church recorded a building that was received as part of a contribution in December 2010. The building was recorded at \$200,000, which approximated the fair value at the time of the gift. Property and equipment and accumulated depreciation have been adjusted from amounts previously reported to reflect the net book value of the building as of June 30, 2015.

4. OBLIGATIONS UNDER OPERATING LEASES:

The Church leases automobiles pursuant to operating lease agreements. The Church's future minimum lease payments for all non-cancelable operating leases are as follows:

Years Ending June 30,	
2017	\$ 165,184
2018	132,351
2019	82,737
2020	34,163
Total future minimum lease payments	\$ 414,435

Rent and lease expenses for the years ended June 30, 2016 and 2015 were \$195,957 and \$171,752, respectively.

5. DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PENSION PLAN:

Effective April 1, 1999 the Church established a 403(b) thrift plan for all full time employees. In February 2011, the Church elected to suspend contributions to the plan for the year ended June 30, 2012. The matching contribution was then reinstated during fiscal year 2015 and a matching contribution was made also for the year ended June 30, 2016. The matching expense was \$98,374 and \$41,284 for the years ended June 30, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

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matching contribution was made also for the year ended June 30, 2016. The matching expense was \$98,374 and \$41,284 for the years ended June 30, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

6. MORTGAGE PAYABLE:

In November 2008, the Church signed a \$350,000 mortgage with Prosperity Bank, secured by a church building. The mortgage was to be repaid in monthly installments over fifteen years, with an interest rate at 6.526%. In June 2014, the note with Prosperity Bank was refinanced and a new mortgage was issued through a member of the church. The new note has a principal amount of \$260,000 and will be repaid in monthly installments over 8 years, with an interest rate of 3.00%. The balance at June 30, 2016 and 2015 was \$200,721 and \$230,805, respectively.

In June 2014, the Church signed a \$65,000 mortgage with Church of Christ, secured by a church building. The mortgage will be repaid in monthly installments over 8 years, with an interest rate of 0.00%. The balance at June 30, 2016 and 2015 was \$48,073 and \$56,198, respectively. No interest has been imputed on the mortgage, as the amount was deemed immaterial.

In December 2014, the Church signed a \$25,000 mortgage with United Church of God, Fort Wayne, secured by a church building. The mortgage will be repaid in monthly installments over 10 years, with an interest rate of 0.50%. The balance at June 30, 2016 and 2015 was \$21,125 and \$23,576, respectively.

In December 2014, the Church signed a \$75,000 mortgage with United Church of God, Indianapolis, secured by a church building. The mortgage will be repaid in monthly installments over 10 years, with an interest rate of 2.50%. The balance at June 30, 2016 and 2015 was \$64,336 and \$71,120, respectively.

During the year, the Church determined it had received a building as part of a contribution received in 2010 that included an assumed mortgage with a balance of \$151,000 at the time of contribution. The mortgage is secured by the church building. The mortgage will be repaid in 215 monthly installments of \$700 and 1 payment of \$500 maturing in December, 2029, with an interest rate of 0.00%. The balance at June 30, 2016 and 2015 was \$104,800 and \$113,200, respectively. Mortgage payable has been adjusted from amounts previously reported to reflect the outstanding mortgage balance as of June 30, 2015.

The future minimum payments on the mortgage payables are as follows:

Years Ending June 30,	
2017	\$ 55,473
2018	58,057
2019	59,221
2020	60,419
2021	61,653
Thereafter	144,232
Total	\$ 439,065

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7. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES:

The Church is currently making discretionary payments to certain individuals. The payments totaled approximately \$950,000 and \$749,000 for the years ended June 30, 2016 and 2015, respectively. These discretionary payments are provided, in part, based upon the individual's needs and, accordingly, could be discontinued in the future. No amounts have been accrued in the accompanying financial statements for future payments relating to these arrangements. The Church is self-insured for medical and dental insurance and maintains a stop-loss coverage policy covering individual claims in excess of predetermined amounts. Aggregate annual claims are also capped at a fixed rate. Self-insurance costs are accrued based upon the aggregate of the liability for reported claims and an estimated liability for claims incurred but not reported.

8. TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS:

Temporarily restricted net assets are available for the following purposes at June 30:

	2016	2015
Good Works Program	\$ 68,217	80,744
Building Fund	41,525	24,500
	\$ 109,742	105,244

Net assets of \$79,664 and \$77,223 were released during 2016 and 2015, respectively, from donor restrictions by incurring expenses satisfying the restricted purposes specified by the donors within the Good Works Program.

9. RESTATEMENT:

It was determined during the year that a church building had been contributed in December of 2010. The building and the assumed mortgage had values of \$200,000 and \$151,000, respectively at the date of the contribution. Unrestricted net assets have been adjusted from amounts previously reported to reflect the net book value of the church building and the outstanding mortgage balance as of June 30, 2014.

Unrestricted net assets previously reported June 30, 2014	\$ 8,842,415
Correction	60,900
Unrestricted net assets restated at June 30, 2014	\$ 8,903,315

The following amounts have been adjusted from amounts previously reported to reflect the net book value and depreciation of the church building and the outstanding mortgage balance and principal payments as of and for the year ended June 30, 2015:

	Property and Equipment, net	Mortgage Payable	Total Expenses
Previously reported June 30, 2015	\$ 3,819,242	381,699	16,758,482
Correction	177,500	113,200	(3,400)
Restated at June 30, 2015	\$ 3,996,742	494,899	16,755,082

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UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association
Schedule of Functional Expenses
Year Ended June 30, 2016

	Program Services				Management and General			Totals
	Ministerial Services/Field Ministry/Local Congregations	Festivals	International	Public Proclamation	Council of Elders/Home Office/Insurance & Benefit Plans	Executive Reserve	General Conference	
Salaries and related benefits	\$ 4,343,318	3,850	-	1,538,187	798,412	146,100	-	6,829,867
Contracted services and fees	28,711	6,442	-	279,351	186,611	-	5,680	506,795
Broadcast media and advertising	-	-	-	1,150,255	-	-	-	1,150,255
Print media and advertising	5,664	13,447	-	1,071,248	15,271	-	4,700	1,110,330
Postage and shipping	12,232	7,410	-	902,219	58,102	-	3,799	983,762
Building and equipment lease/rental	25,926	161,570	-	4,891	3,570	-	-	195,957
Telephone and utilities	38,262	285	1,317	1,907	100,292	-	-	142,063
Supplies	34,157	11,610	-	16,871	43,152	10,384	1,098	117,272
Travel, mileage, meals, and lodging	793,478	28,371	130,740	13,412	109,953	1,227	14,889	1,092,070
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	188,407	-	-	188,407
Grants and charitable support:								
International support	-	1,439	1,393,813	334,103	580	10,000	-	1,739,935
Domestic support:								
Assistance to the needy	743,568	157,457	-	-	49,323	-	-	950,348
Allocations to local congregations	1,521,339	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,521,339
Insurance and health care	-	-	-	-	1,193,082	-	-	1,193,082
Other	29,624	-	-	5,582	148,457	-	-	183,663
Total expenses	\$ 7,576,279	391,881	1,525,870	5,318,026	2,895,212	167,711	30,166	17,905,145

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UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association
Schedule of Functional Expenses
Year Ended June 30, 2015

	Program Services				Management and General			Totals
	Ministerial Services/Field Ministry/Local Congregations	Festivals	International	Public Proclamation	Council of Elders/Home Office/Insurance & Benefit Plans	Executive Reserve	General Conference	
Salaries and related benefits	\$ 4,368,265	-	-	1,377,821	746,847	244,600	-	6,737,533
Contracted services and fees	43,051	1,579	-	250,143	150,781	31,000	6,803	483,357
Broadcast media and advertising	-	-	-	1,155,188	-	-	-	1,155,188
Print media and advertising	10,567	15,503	-	610,398	15,177	-	2,514	654,159
Postage and shipping	16,116	11,285	-	749,836	42,348	47	3,428	823,060
Building and equipment lease/rental	11,400	154,831	-	758	4,263	-	-	171,252
Telephone and utilities	35,434	884	1,427	2,415	93,631	-	-	133,791
Supplies	44,961	11,131	-	21,707	48,675	7,772	3,841	138,087
Travel, mileage, meals, and lodging	777,278	24,149	129,590	7,061	91,493	18,276	16,534	1,084,381
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	168,356	-	-	168,356
Grants and charitable support:								
International support	-	3,480	1,447,693	383,291	559	-	-	1,835,023
Domestic support:								
Assistance to the needy	566,685	146,246	-	-	35,737	-	-	748,668
Allocations to local congregations	1,442,859	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,442,859
Insurance and health care	-	-	-	-	1,077,743	-	-	1,077,743
Other	25,493	675	1,473	3,358	45,326	45,300	-	121,625
Total expenses	\$ 7,342,109	369,763	1,580,183	4,561,976	2,520,936	346,995	33,120	16,755,082

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What's New In MEDIA?

BEYOND TODAY

Television Airing Schedule

Title	Host	Literature	Airing Period
<i>Christ Our Passover</i>	Gary Petty	<i>God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind</i>	Jan. 15-21
<i>The End of Atheism</i>	Darris McNeely	<i>Who Is the Antichrist?</i>	Jan. 22-28
<i>Benefits of the Sabbath</i>	Steve Myers	<i>Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest</i>	Jan. 29-Feb. 4
<i>Hard Questions: Are Christians Guilty of Idolatry?</i>	Gary Petty	<i>The Ten Commandments</i>	Feb. 5-11
<i>The Four Horsemen of Revelation</i>	Darris McNeely	<i>The Horsemen of Revelation</i>	Feb. 12-18
<i>Who Are the Two Witnesses?</i>	Steve Myers	<i>The Book of Revelation Unveiled</i>	Feb. 19-25
<i>Will America Be Great Again?</i>	Darris McNeely	<i>The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy</i>	Feb. 26-Mar. 4

POSITION POSTED: FRENCH COMMUNICATIONS ANALYST/ASSISTANT WEBMASTER

The United Church of God has announced an opening for a full-time French communications analyst/assistant webmaster. The candidate will report to the senior pastor for French-speaking Europe and Africa and coordinate projects with Media and Communications Services.

The candidate will be responsible for developing, analyzing and processing communications for the United Church of God in the French language. In consultation with Media and Communications Services, the successful candidate will recommend and implement key outgoing communications on the French language website and on social media, as well as review incoming communications (addressing where appropriate) and routing to the right individual if he/she cannot answer directly.

Specific job duties will include:

- Driving creation of an upgraded L'Eglise de Dieu Unie (EDU) French language website in coordination with home office website personnel.
- Converting existing French publications and PDF documents into HTML format for increased searchability and user accessibility within the established framework of the main United Church of God website.
- Promoting increased traffic flow through new and repurposed Web content.
- Engaging and interacting with readers

and viewers through social media.

- Assisting with the translation of *Beyond Today* television scripts for the creation of French subtitles, with the end goal of having *Beyond Today* with French subtitles posted on the French website.

- Receiving, translating and processing all French UCG.org personal correspondence, booklet requests and first contact requests.

- Providing administrative support to the senior pastor of the French-speaking regions.
- Fulfilling other duties as assigned.

A bachelor's degree in communications or a related field is required. Spoken and written French language competency is required. Previous experience in a communications capacity is helpful, and leadership certifications are a plus. Strong language, math, logic, reasoning and communication skills are required. Vision abilities required by this job include close vision and the ability to adjust focus.

Potential employees must be baptized members (in good standing) of the United Church of God. Applicants must be biblically literate and possess a thorough working knowledge of the doctrines, beliefs and practices of the United Church of God. This position requires the candidate to work at the Church's Cincinnati office.

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

UNITED NEWS



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan. 13-16: Young adult weekend, Stewartville, Minnesota

Jan. 14-16: Salt Lake City ski weekend, Utah

Jan. 27-29: Women's Enrichment Weekend, Garden Grove, California

Feb. 17-19: Women's Enrichment Weekend, SW Missouri

Feb. 17-19: Chicago young adult weekend, Illinois

Feb. 18-19: *America: The Time Is Now!* Orlando and Tampa, Florida

Feb. 27-Mar. 2: Council of Elders meetings, Cincinnati, Ohio

Mar. 10-12: Cincinnati young adult weekend, Ohio

Mar. 19: *America: The Time Is Now!* Kansas City, Kansas

Mar. 21: *America: The Time Is Now!* St. Louis, Missouri/Troy, Illinois



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