

# OneAccord

January 2012

A photograph of three young women standing outdoors at night, illuminated by the warm glow of a campfire in the foreground. The woman on the left is wearing a light-colored parka with a fur-lined hood and red boots, holding a long stick. The woman in the middle is wearing a dark jacket with a graphic and light-colored pants. The woman on the right is wearing a dark jacket and dark pants. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is dark, suggesting a nighttime setting.

## Winter Camp Impacts Youth

Winter Family  
Weekend

Meet the  
MBOD

## from the president

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I was very excited to hear about the beginning of our Church newsletter *One Accord*. And I am delighted to be writing a letter for the very first issue. Everything we have done this past year has been the first of something. We are still in that start-up phase where everything we do is fresh and new.

The name we have chosen for this publication comes from the book of Acts. When it comes to the subject of Church history, most of us think of the book of Acts as the one book in the Bible that is devoted to the topic. This book documents the beginning of the New Testament Church and the events that took place during its first 35 years or so. The stories are told through two primary apostles—Peter and Paul. I have found it interesting over the years that the title of this book is *The Acts of the Apostles*. What we believe is extremely important, but our history is really told through events and actions. The old saying “actions speak louder than words” is very true when studying the history of the Church.

I learned this principle when researching the Sabbatar-ians of Rhode Island. The most important items that I studied were the old church minutes and other written documents from that era. Samuel Hubbard, who was among the original Sabbath-keepers in Rhode Island, wrote a journal that has become one of the most famous historical documents from the American colonial period. It is considered one of the best documents to read for an understanding of everyday life in America in the 1600s. Also, the church minutes provide intimate details about the activities of the



Sabbath-keepers—who was sick, who was ordained, who was not at church services, when someone was baptized, when someone was born and so on. It is a treasure trove for historians.

Consider that the Greek word for “acts” is *praxis*. We would loosely translate it as “practices” or “actions” or “acts.” We don’t generally go to Acts to resolve a doctrinal issue, since it mostly discusses events and people—it is history. The phrase “one accord” occurs 11 times in this book alone. Not all of them are positive expressions (you can be of one accord for a negative purpose). But the idea of being united and doing things with “one accord” forms a major theme of the Church during the time of the apostles.

The New Testament Church began on the Day of Pentecost with those present being of “one accord” (Acts 2:1). These are our roots. Today our desire is to tell the stories of God’s people in this newsletter. It is always difficult coming up with the right name, but in the case of a Church paper it seemed most appropriate to call it *One Accord*. I am sure you will enjoy reading the stories, or the “acts,” of God’s people. We plan to make them interesting and informative, but we need your help in gathering the material. With your participation we can make this a true Church newspaper, written by and for Church members!

*Jim Franks*

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# New Education Program to Start August 2012

**F**oundation Institute (FI), Center for Biblical Education, is slated to open its doors this August at COGWA's new office in the greater Dallas/Fort Worth area.

The announcement made on Dec. 24, 2011, at the Winter Family Weekend in Louisville, Kentucky, was the culmination of weeks and months of planning and discussions. The new educational program will be a dynamic, nine-month program devoted to study of the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation, in-depth study of the 20 Fundamental Beliefs of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, as well as Christian living subjects tailored specifically to 21st-century challenges to our faith.

Foundation Institute will run from August 2012 to May 2013 in its first year. Students will be expected to arrive in the Dallas/Fort Worth area by Friday, Aug. 10, in time for the orientation and get-acquainted picnic on Sunday, Aug. 12. Classes will begin on Monday, Aug. 13, and will continue for nine busy months, till graduation on Sunday, May 5, 2013. There will be breaks for the fall holy days, the winter break, and the spring holy days.

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**Cost:** \$1,500 (excluding living expenses)

**Age requirements:** Must be 20 years old by Dec. 31, 2012. There is no maximum age limit.

**Degree:** High school diploma or equivalent and above.

**To request an application or ask questions, email us:**

[foundation.institute@cogwa.org](mailto:foundation.institute@cogwa.org)

Instructors for the new FI center will include Church president Jim Franks, David Johnson, Clyde Kilough, Ralph Levy, Joel Meeker, Richard Thompson and others. Church pastors and elders will also contribute to the teaching roster in specialized fields. In addition to systematic study of both the Old Testament and the New Testament, taught mainly by resident full-time faculty Mr. Johnson and Dr. Levy, classes will include Fundamental Beliefs of the Church (taught by Mr. Franks), Survey of the Gospels (taught by Mr. Thompson), and Daniel/Revelation (taught by Mr. Meeker).

The cost of tuition will be \$1,500 per student. In addition, prospective students should budget for nine months of room and board (not covered in the \$1,500), as well as expenses for travel, entertainment and incidentals.

From previous experience, we advise students to save as much as possible for tuition and living expenses prior to August. Part-time work in the evenings and on Sundays should be available, but young people have advised us that the greatest benefit is derived when students aren't obligated to long work hours.

We expect most students will opt to share apartment accommodations, and we will provide suggestions from members and elders in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, to make it easier to locate good accommodations. Some may opt to live with family or friends in the area. The Church will not provide housing for students, but may recommend one or more apartment complexes appropriately located for easy access to the Church office and in safe and quiet areas.

Are you ready for a year of intense and in-depth study of the Bible and to form wonderful new friendships? If so, we invite you to apply! It's going to be a rewarding year of study and fun. ☺☺

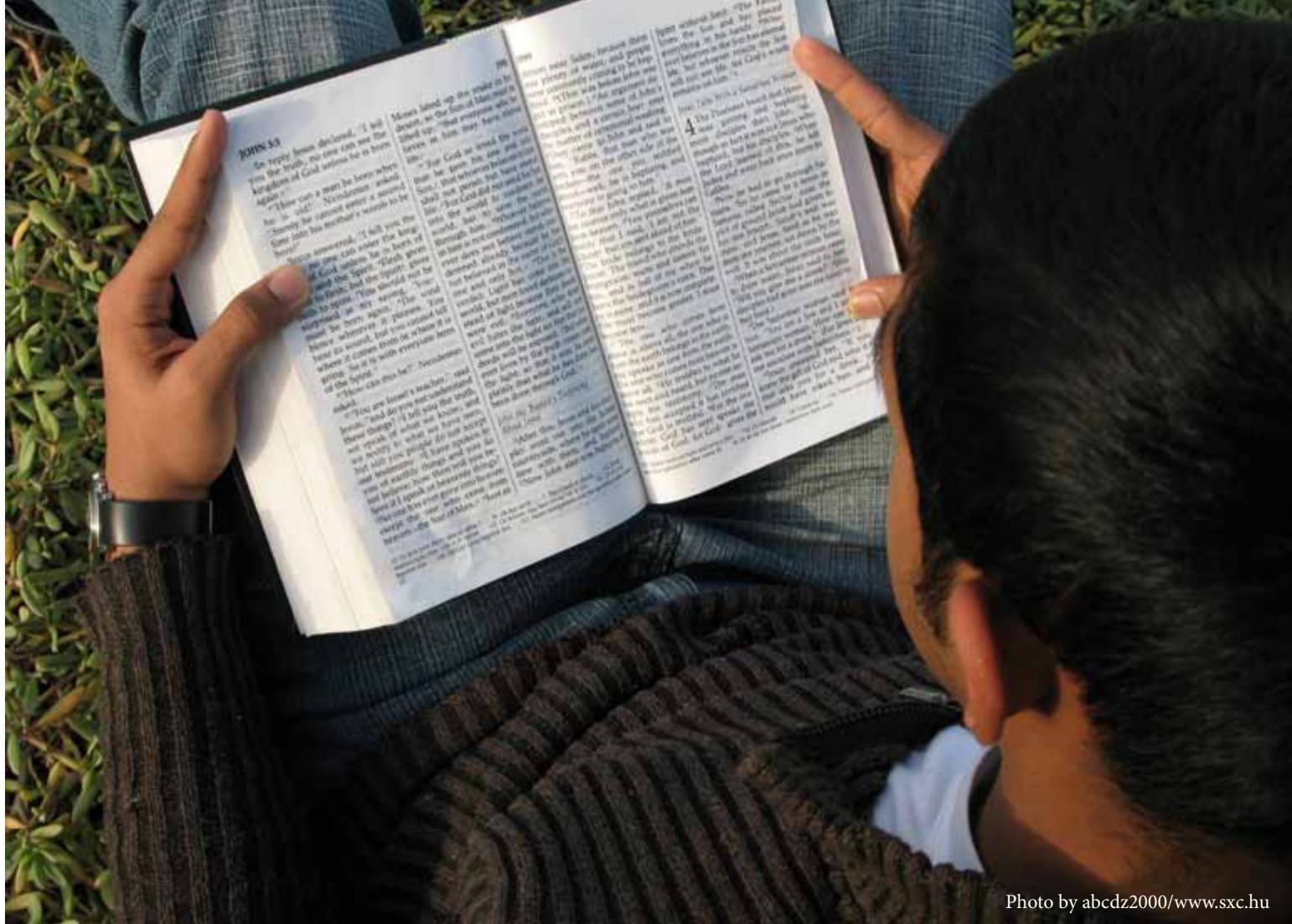


Photo by abcdz2000/www.sxc.hu

## From the Brethren

# What major life lesson did you learn in 2011?

We want to feature your answers in the February issue of *One Accord*. Please send your 50- to 100-word response to your congregation's reporter or email [liz.glasgow@cogwa.org](mailto:liz.glasgow@cogwa.org). We look forward to sharing your responses with the brethren around the world!





# Meet the MBOD



Arnold Hampton



Leon Walker



Dave Baker



Larry Salyer



Richard Pinelli



Richard Thompson

# Q & A

## With the Chairman

**One Accord:** What are you most excited about for COGWA in 2012?

**Joel Meeker:** I'm excited about many things for our association in 2012. I'm excited that we have a tried-and-true, capable and committed administration that will be implementing new programs in all



As the world follows its confused and increasingly sinful ways, ...our collective and personal examples will become even more important.

our areas of operations. I'm excited about the new office that will soon open in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. It is a necessary step in effectively doing God's work.

I'm excited about the plans that are already moving forward to preach the gospel in new and more effective ways, using media specifically written and formatted for the Internet. This will create a huge increase in the magnitude of our collective punch.

I'm excited that we will soon be opening the Foundation Institute, a Center for Biblical Education, so that we can help young Christians develop godly character by teaching in a systematic way the spiritual truths handed down to us by those who went before, linking us all the way back to the apostles and prophets.

I'm excited that we have so many capable and committed pastors, elders and brethren who just came through a fiery trial and took a courageous stand for proper Christian behavior and ethics.

I'm also excited by the desire I see at all levels to humbly seek and submit to God's will and not our own.

As long as we keep that orientation, we can have great expectations!

**OA:** This has been quite a year. What was the biggest lesson we have had to learn as a church?

**JM:** I'm sure we've all learned a number of lessons. One of the most important in my opinion is that we must always do the right thing—what God would have us do—as God gives us to see it, regardless of what others may do or of how we may be pressured to compromise. Another way of saying that is that we were given the opportunity to learn more deeply the importance of applying Matthew 6:33.

**OA:** In your own words, how would you describe what “the work” is?

**JM:** “The work” is fulfilling God's will: living our individual lives as He would have us, nurturing loving and supportive families and congregations and (in the collective, international arena), preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God to all we can reach and who will hear and teaching those God calls to observe all the things He has commanded us to do.

**OA: How can we better involve every Church member in doing the work?**

**JM:** We have had a number of discussions among the MBOD and with and among the administration on this important subject. We intend to communicate broadly and as well as we can so that all brethren can be aware of needs and ways they can help. This will allow members to be able to pray for the needs of the work of the Church and our brethren around the world, to know how our tithes and offerings are being used to fulfill the mission God has given us and to offer help in specific activities when and where we are able.

We especially want to help our younger members get involved in their congregations and in programs where their youth is a definite advantage: in camp programs, for example, and in projects where expertise or experience in new media and technology can make us more effective.

**OA: You grew up in the Church. When was it that you knew God had called you into the Church? What occurred that prompted your response to that calling?**

**JM:** My thoughts about life started changing when I was in my last year of high school, when I realized my dreams of becoming a Shakespearean actor probably weren't going to pan out. I figured no one from Springfield, Missouri, could make it big in Hollywood (later it turned out Brad Pitt, who was a year or two behind me in a neighboring high school—oh, well ...).

In my uncertainty, I asked my father for some advice, and he suggested I apply to Ambassador College, where I could start sorting out my future. During my freshman year I had the chance to begin, as an adult, to learn God's way of life in theory in the Bible, but also to see it in action all around me. It was extremely motivating. God showed me that year that the Christian life, even with its trials, is the most exciting and rewarding one that exists.

**OA: Where do you see the Church in five years?**

**JM:** I hope and trust we'll be right where Christ wants us to be: doing the work of God. There are quite a number of plausible scenarios for the next five years. Several trends in world events could lead to a world in total chaos and war within that time. But if we have more time than that, then I believe in five years we will be very effectively preaching the gospel to the world through

cutting-edge Internet and other media and that the Father will draw people to Christ through those efforts. I believe we'll have a growing base of younger Church members with a deep understanding of God's Word and a personal commitment to Him. I believe we'll have advanced the education and preparation of younger couples called to receive the baton of service from retiring pastors and wives.

As the world follows its confused and increasingly sinful ways, I believe members of the Body of Christ will stand out more and more clearly as lights and beacons of hope in spiritual shadows. Our collective and personal examples will become even more important.

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*My thoughts about life started changing when I was in my last year of high school, when I realized my dreams of becoming a Shakespearean actor probably weren't going to pan out.*

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**OA: What can we do to create a greater bond among the brethren?**

**JM:** I believe our administrators and pastors will make sharing news of brethren in need an important priority, so that we can be aware of and pray for one another. Each one of us can strive to be a positive influence in our congregation through encouraging fellowship. Our conversations should be spiritually oriented, so that we build each other up in our collective faith. We can strive to treat each other as respected and loved family members, which the Bible tells us we are.

**OA: You have had the opportunity to travel to many places—from Belgium to Côte d'Ivoire to the Democratic Republic of Congo to Mauritius—as the pastor for the French-speaking brethren, many of whom are very isolated. What do you think those of us in more populated congregations can learn from them?**

**JM:** One lesson to learn is the crucial importance of a strong personal relationship with God. When we can't rely on the immediate support of brethren, we have to rely even more strongly on God. We do that by daily Bible study and thinking deeply about what we read



and learn in His Word. We do that by talking to God in prayer and taking time to thank Him in detail for our blessings as we also make our needs known. We do that by involving Him in the situations we face and the decisions we must make—by doing our best to walk with Him each waking moment.

**OA: What challenges do you think you will face as chairman of the Ministerial Board of Directors?**

**JM:** Being a member of the MBOD and chairing our first meeting of the permanent (as opposed to interim) board has been a very positive and encouraging experience. During the recent meetings, I asked Clyde Kilough, who had been a chairman of the old Council of Elders, to give me any advice he might have on the responsibilities. He responded by quipping with a smile, “What I’m feeling right now is jealousy!” I knew exactly what he meant.

We have the most harmonious board and administration relationships that have existed perhaps since the very earliest days of our previous association, and that sadly didn’t last too long. There is now present a notable spirit of unity, humility, respect and seeking to fulfill

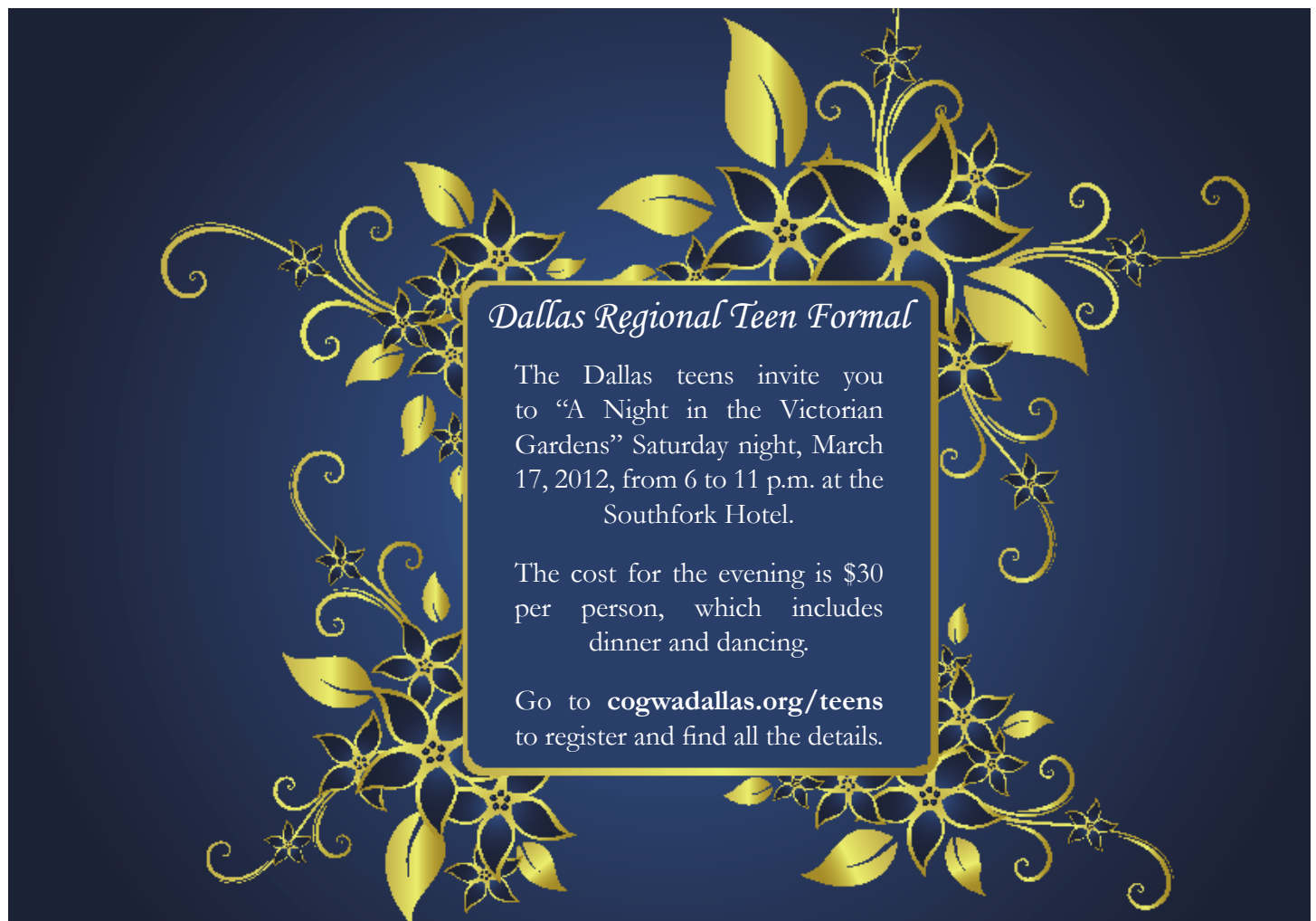
God’s will that I wish all our brethren could experience personally. So I don’t believe there will be many challenges along those lines.

Our challenges will likely be keeping the board current in its responsibilities, making sure board members are alerted and prepared in a timely manner so they can fulfill their responsibilities. There will be the additional challenge for all of us to juggle board responsibilities and their time constraints with our “real jobs.”

**OA: What is your personal goal(s) during your term as chairman?**

**JM:** It is my goal to serve God and the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, by serving my fellow board members to the best of my ability. I want our meetings and other work to be as organized and productive as possible, conducted with the most efficient possible use of our time.

It is also my goal to work closely with the president and administration as we conduct our board work so that we can maintain the mutual support, trust and Christian love that we are excited and thankful to have now. ☺☺



# Winter Camp

Camp has a huge impact on our youth, and that impact was felt again in central Wisconsin during Winter Camp Dec. 27, 2011, to Jan. 1, 2012.

Campers enjoyed activities like broomball, volleyball, team challenge, dance, ice skating, ultimate Frisbee, flag football, capture the flag, amazing race and other activities. Thirteen campers braved the winter cold by taking the winter camping challenge—learning cold weather camping and sleeping outside for a night.

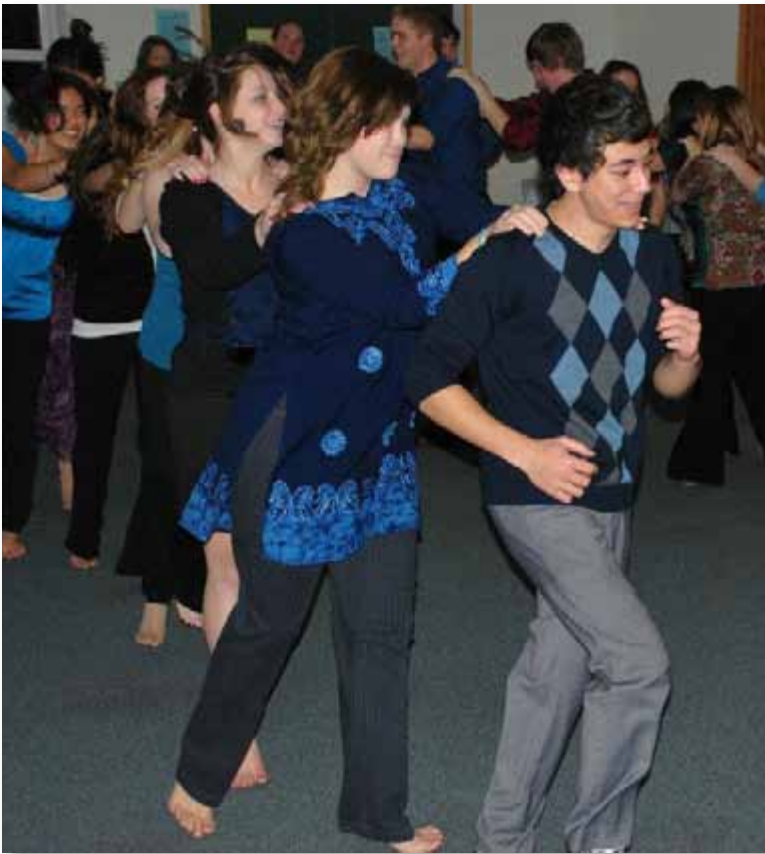
The entire camp enjoyed the evening activities together with bunco night, the variety show, a “Be Ready to Give An Answer” Bible study, Sabbath games and the ever popular camp dance.

This year the Christian living theme was “A Compass to the Future.” Campers learned that the Bible is our guide, and our destination is the Kingdom of God.

We also added to the program “First Things”—a time in the morning for the campers to read their Bibles and pray before heading out for the day’s activities, encouraging the practice of putting God first.

We appreciate all the dedicated staff who volunteered to serve, teach and exemplify God’s way at camp this year. Camp truly makes a difference in the lives of the upcoming generation of members and leaders in the Church.

*Gary Black*



Activities like the ever popular camp dance provide opportunities for campers to have fun while they learn and develop relationships with each other, the adult staff and ministers.



Above, Amanda Henderson, Jeremy Lallier, Allen Holl, Ashley Holl and Mary Earles. Right, Crystal Buchanan tries to get a pass to Hannah Kroska, with Stephanie Adolphi and Benjamin York on defense.







Join us in the mountains over the July 4th holiday for 10 days in the wilderness. We'll spend one day gaining wilderness training and two days rock climbing while camping in a campground by the Poudre River.

From there, we'll move west to spend the next several days in the spectacular mountains spanning the Continental Divide. Our days will be spent in the backcountry of the Arapahoe National Forest backpacking, orienteering, team-building, camping and

trout fishing. We'll spend the Sabbath in the beauty of the Rocky Mountain high country.

The Challenger program is open to young adults, from high school graduates through "30-something," married or single, baptized or unbaptized. Applicants must meet health and fitness requirements for the program, be committed to thorough preparation in advance and have ministerial recommendations. The cost for this program is \$300 per person.

# Challenger II: Rocky Mountains

## July 1-10, 2012

<http://camps.cogwa.org>



# Building Righteous Relationships at WFW

by Carolyn Winner



Benjamin Bradley reaches for Gordon Pennington as he shoots (photo by Karen Deaton)

So what do you do when the weather is bleak and cold and the world around you is running to and fro in the celebration of Christmas? How about spending time in fun, fellowship and learning with several hundred friends and family members? That's what almost a thousand brethren did at the Winter Family Weekend in Louisville, Kentucky, Dec. 23 to 27. Brethren came from Barbados, Canada, Mexico and even as far away as Australia, as well as from all over the United States to attend the long weekend.

The theme this year was "The Godly Family: Relationships Built on Righteousness," which was carried

through from David Myers' opening Bible study Friday evening through the seminars and Jim Franks' sermon Sabbath and throughout the continuing education classes that were taught Sunday through Tuesday.

But even before the Bible study began, people were practicing the theme as the hall filled with excited people hugging, talking and laughing as they greeted friends they hadn't seen for awhile and made plans for the time they would spend together in the next few days.

The days and evenings were packed with activities and learning opportunities—something for everyone from 4-year-olds to 100-year-olds! Everyone had so much fun and packed so much into the 4½ days that, like the Feast and summer camp, it was hard to think of not sharing time with one's friends and family again in the following days.

One attendee commented, "If possible, we don't want to miss the weekend because it is such a positive time for people of all ages, fellowshiping and enjoying being together. There is such an atmosphere of joy and happiness that it makes us want to come back year after year. It is a great way to recharge our batteries during the winter months."

The weekend is so important to God's people that some plan for it all year. As one lady said, "It is such a great experience whether you are young or old. It is both spiritually and physically rewarding. Some might not have the money to go and that could be a problem. I save a little each week so we can attend. It is amazing how it adds up. Also I save up points on my Discover credit card to get a restaurant gift card to use at the weekend."

Those hundreds of people who were in Louisville for the Winter Family Weekend the end of December are now home, but many are already looking forward to next year. As one family said, "This has been wonderful. We're putting it on the calendar for next year, and it's going to be an annual event." ©A



Many took part in the various sports tournaments for basketball, volleyball and speedway. Other family activities included the family fun fair, novelty Olympics and a Western-themed family dance.

Counterclockwise from top right: Jim Franks gives the sermon "And Now It Begins," and Todd Carey teaches the teen seminar (photos by Joel Meeker). Dave Pennington and Roger Deaton pick and grin at the jam session; Shanna Hees and Jon Johnson smile for the camera at the teen dance; and pre-teens try to stomp each other's balloons.







# Campers Learn Important Life Lessons in Lican Ray, Chile

by Brigitte Parada

Chile hosted its annual 2011 summer Youth Camp this year in beautiful Lican Ray, around 500 miles south of the capital of Santiago. Most of the campers traveled by bus from Santiago and arrived at the campsite, Prado Verde, early on the morning of Dec. 26. For seven days, campers from all over Chile, Argentina and Peru enjoyed this well-equipped camping facility, which had direct access to Lake Calafquen. Campers were able to appreciate the view of the lake and surrounding mountains and volcanoes from the lush green campgrounds.

For almost the whole week, the entire 24 acres of expansive lawn and beautiful gardens were solely available for the 77 campers and 11 staff. The boys stayed in tents on the property, while the girls stayed in cabins. Older campers served as monitors for the younger campers, to guide and direct them and also help them if they had any problems.

Campers from Chile were excited to welcome six campers from Peru and three from Argentina. Together, they participated in many different activities each day, starting at 9 in the morning and ending at 12 in the evening. A spacious and centrally located meeting hall overlooking the lake served as the location for Sabbath services, Bible studies, mini-conferences, nightly activities and all meals. A staff of seven women from the Santiago congregation prepared healthy and delicious food for breakfast, lunch, snack time and dinner every day.

## **“Truth Shall Make You Free”**

Campers arrived knowing the theme of camp this year, “Truth Shall Make You Free,” and with the expectation to learn more about it and put it into practice during the week. This theme was the basis for the Bible studies given by the pastor, Saul Langarica.



Mr. Langarica and his wife, Carmen, plan and run the camp every year with the focus of teaching the youth responsibility to God, the church community and each other.

The campers learned that at a young age it is possible to stand up for God's law—especially in a world that does not—and were given practical tools to help them achieve this. Campers were also encouraged to prepare themselves for leadership, to learn to control their emotions and to focus on the things of God on a daily basis.

The mornings were reserved for group Bible study and a time to meditate called “Remember Your Creator.” There were also special conferences focusing on more specific topics given by Saul and Carmen Langarica, Daniel Sepulveda, Pablo and Patricia Carvajal and Elisa Chavez at specific times during the week.

## Camp activities

Each day for an hour, mini-conferences took place to help the campers develop speaking skills. Five campers each day would give short speeches on a topic of interest to them and the other campers. In the early afternoon they had time to go to the lake, play games and spend time with each other. Each day included a formal sports activity where campers formed four different teams for group sports.

Campers competed in volleyball and soccer matches all week with a final match at the end of the week to decide the winner. In the early Friday morning the campers started their day with an intense four-hour (both ways) mountain trail hike.

At the top of the mountain, campers listened to speeches while enjoying a beautiful view of Lake Calafquen and a distant snow-covered volcano.

Each night a different activity took place in which all the campers participated. On the first night, all the new campers introduced themselves and ended the evening



singing songs together around a campfire. Other evening activities included a dance night, movie night and karaoke night.

On Friday night there was a special formal dinner to welcome the Sabbath and take a pause from the busy week. After the Sabbath was over, the campers had a barbecue to look forward to, followed by a talent show that they had been preparing for all week.

Just before the end of camp, Fanny Cisterna, from Chile, was named the best overall camper for the girls. Manuel Sanchez, from Arequipa, Peru, was named the best overall camper for the boys.

## Importance of camp

As camp came to an end this year, campers reflected on how much fun they had but also on how much growth and learning had taken place. They were given projects and goals to put into practice this upcoming year and were encouraged to keep in touch with each other to form stronger friendships. They were taught that this life isn't a movie, it's real, and their actions now will determine their future. They were also taught that their true freedom comes from putting God first in all areas of their life.

This camp is so important for these youth because it is a time for them to not only be separate from the world and its activities but also to be united with other youths who are striving to be different from the world. Thankful for God's protection, guidance and blessing throughout the time at camp, everyone is now looking forward to a productive and meaningful year ahead and the opportunity to return again next year. ☺☺



# Facing My Husband's Death: “Walk by Faith Not by Sight”

How this scripture is being driven home  
through tremendous loss. *by Lori Bryant*

**WALKING BY FAITH** and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7) became very real to our family at the Feast of Tabernacles this year. We were excited to learn more about God's Kingdom and strengthen bonds with our spiritual family.

Everything was going well as we attended the first holy day together. My husband John and I sang in the choir. What a blessing to be part of the Festival choir, to sing praises to God and inspire and uplift the congregation! The messages set the tone, and we anticipated our best Feast.

## **Emergency!**

The situation that would follow changed our lives forever. We were enjoying each other that Sabbath evening, grateful to be where God places His name. But within 15 minutes, our happy little world was abruptly interrupted. My husband's face turned ashen, and his lips turned blue. We knew we had a true emergency on our hands. The sudden change was hard to comprehend.

I will not describe the specific events to follow, except that two hours later we got the most unexpected news. My beloved husband of almost 25 years, my children's loving father, was dead. No warning. Just

gone. My thoughts raced as I tried to process the words from the doctor.

What? This is the happiest time of the year, I thought.

Yet, in that short time, we immediately joined the category of the “fatherless and widow.”

## **Immediate decisions, long-term commitments**

Our minister and his wife were with us that night, which was such a comfort and blessing. They stayed with us as we tried to wrap our minds around what just happened.

Immediately there were decisions to be made. Do we want to go home or stay at the Feast? We chose to stay where God and His people were. It was not a difficult decision for any of us. We knew this was where God wanted us, and I know John will ask us, when we are reunited again after the resurrection, if we continued to keep God's Feast.

That night the children and I made a pact that, no matter what, we would not let this make us bitter and turn away from God. We were determined even more that we would be in God's Kingdom.



The Feast was somewhat of a blur, but together the children and I locked arms and walked into services every day. I felt lost and was only capable of taking one moment at a time.

## **“I don’t know how to do this”**

One of the things that kept going through my mind was, “I don’t know how to do this.” I don’t know how to deal with the incredible grief and loss of my best friend! I don’t know how to raise a 13-year-old boy without his father! I don’t know how to comfort a teenage daughter who adored her beloved Papa. I cried out to God like never before and began really learning what it meant to walk by faith and not by sight.

God immediately put others in our path who were able to relate to us. People who had experienced their own losses encouraged us. God was answering and giving us what we needed to walk our new road. We were surrounded by family. People we had never met before began fulfilling the scripture, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2).

*That night the children and I made a pact that, no matter what, we would not let this make us bitter and turn away from God. We were determined even more that we would be in*  
**God’s Kingdom.**

## **“All things work together for good”**

Romans 8:28 has always been my favorite scripture: “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” If ever there was a time when I needed to believe it, it was now.

How could something so horrible be God’s will? Yet, that scripture has carried me through so many trials. We needed to believe that God would work everything out.

A friend sent me this inspiring quote by Washington Irving: “There is a sacredness in tears. They are not a sign the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief ... and of unspeakable love.”

## **“Your kingdom come”**

My husband will be dearly missed. He was a strong Christian man who yearned for God’s Kingdom. He set a right and proper foundation for our family. He leaves a legacy of love to everyone he touched. He awaits the resurrection like so many who have gone before him.

So those of us here must continue to walk by faith, and not by sight, fulfilling the mission and work God has for us to do. We pray fervently “Your kingdom come” as we await the time we will see my husband again! ☺☺

*Lori Bryant is a member of the Joplin, Missouri, congregation.*



Kayla, Lori, John and  
Andrew Bryant





From the Blogs

# a woman to remember

by Karen Meeker

Posted on the “Godly Women Blog”

April 8, 2011

**i**t was just days before the Passover, and the enemies of Jesus were busily plotting their treachery to bring about His death. Their concern was timing. Not during the approaching feast, they agreed, as it would cause an uproar among the people.

Jesus, knowing full well that His days were numbered, was in Bethany sharing a meal with His disciples in the home of Simon the leper. A woman approached him at the table, an alabaster flask in her hand. She broke open the thin neck of the vial and poured out its contents, a very expensive fragrant oil, anointing his head.

Her actions were met with harsh rebuke from the disciples. What a waste, they cried! Among some there was a tradition to give gifts to the poor on the eve of Passover. The sale of this ointment, possibly made from the rare nard plant from India, would have amounted to an impressive donation. Christ chided them for their angry indignation. It was obvious His disciples had missed the real import of this simple gesture.

Mark does not say who this woman was, but the account in the book of John shows that she was Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. Jesus praised her deed as worthy for a memorial for generations to come.

What were the real lessons here? What did the disciples fail to see? Perhaps filling in some details will bring further understanding to this account.

## **An act of hospitality**

It was a custom of the day to pour a few drops of perfume on a guest when he arrived or when he sat down at a meal, according to William Barclay's commentary on the book of Mark. This woman was showing Jesus great honor, not with a few drops of ordinary perfume, but with

**When the disciples witnessed her act of adoration, their response was surprising. Instead of being touched or even humbled by her actions, they were angry!**

the entire contents of a flask of precious ointment. The vial had been broken and nothing could be saved back. In this sense she gave her all unconditionally.

## **A foreshadowing**

When a criminal was crucified, his body was tossed on a refuse pile for wild animals to devour. There would be no honor paid to the deceased—no professional mourners and no burial ministrations. Since Jesus was unjustly branded a criminal, it looked like His would be an ignominious end.

Barclay comments: "It was a custom in the East, first to bathe, then to anoint the bodies of the dead. After the body had been anointed, the flask in which the perfume had been contained was broken, and the fragments were laid

with the dead body in the tomb." This woman was foreshadowing events to come, namely His death and resurrection. He Himself affirmed, "For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial" (Matthew 26:12).

## **The eye of the beholder**

When the disciples witnessed her act of adoration, their response was surprising. Instead of being touched or even humbled by her actions, they were angry! Ironically, they themselves failed to fully recognize the Man who sat before them and the sacrifice He was about to make. Did the woman herself comprehend the implications of her actions? Were Jesus' words puzzling even to her? No one knows for sure, but in Jesus' eyes, that deed was worthy to be preserved forever in the pages of the Bible.

## **The end of the story**

Within days, the nefarious plot was brought to completion. Jesus conducted His last Passover and was betrayed by a chosen disciple,

convicted by false testimony, scourged, crucified and buried in a tomb (by the intervention of Joseph of Arimathea, to fulfill prophecy).

When a few of His women disciples finally arrived with spices to anoint His dead body, He had already risen! But they needn't have worried—a woman had already taken care of the anointing. And, as a result, in Jesus' own words, "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her" (Matthew 26:13). ©A

*Karen Meeker lives in Missouri. She and her husband, George, of 50 years have a wonderful family, including five delightful grandchildren. She enjoys reading, writing and serving in her local church congregation. Read more inspiring posts by visiting the [Godly Women Blog](#).*

# News From the Congregations



## Family Picnic in Mexico City

Members of the Mexico City, Mexico, congregation participated in a family picnic Dec. 25, 2011, at a beautiful site nestled in a pine forest called “La Escondida” (“The Hidden Place”), about 40 minutes south of Mexico City.

While the men set up a camping tent and prepared a brazier for hot coffee, some of the women went for a stroll around the site. At noon, the men organized and prepared dinner: beef tacos, quesadillas, hot small onions, beans and hot coffee.

As they enjoyed the meal, they all fellowshiped, sharing with each other their personal experiences and anecdotes. Also, some of the men and children played ball.

Before sunset, in order to avoid the heavy traffic, the 14 participants of this family picnic, started their drive back home. Some of them were a little tired, but all felt content and happy after a wonderful day of Christian fellowship.

They plan to have more of these kinds of outings, which provide physical relaxation as well as spiritual unity among the brethren.

*Jorge Iván Garduño (translated by Pablo Dimakis)*

## Kempton Park, South Africa, Church Social

On Sunday, Dec. 11, 2011, 42 members from the Kempton Park, South Africa, congregation met at the home of Jimmy and Pam Nicolau for a day of fun and fellowship.

As each family arrived, they were welcomed by the delicious aroma of freshly cooked *vetkoek* (pronounced FET-cook, a traditional Afrikaner pastry dough deep-fried in oil and either filled with cooked mince or chicken liver or spread with syrup, honey or jam).

The children were able to enjoy playing in the spacious garden and swimming, while the adults lazed around on the lawn or sat on the patio strengthening friendships with much laughter and good, clean fellowship.

Lunch was cooked by the men—once again a traditional *braai* (pronounced br-eye, which is shortened from the Afrikaans word *braaivleis*, which means “roasted meat.” A *braai* is what is called having a barbecue in the United States. Some cooked chicken in a Cobb, a portable charcoal grill, which is the latest fad for outdoor cooking.

We were blessed with excellent weather, as the two previous days had been very overcast with heavy winds and more rain forecast for the Sunday. It turned out sunny and warm, perfect picnic weather.

All left Jimmy and Pam’s home very grateful for their hospitality, hard work and serving attitude and for the opportunity to fellowship with God’s people.

*Tony and Brenda Levy*





Jeanine Burt  
Jason Cook, Lisa  
Ryan-Powell and  
Charles Smith



## Houston North Young Adults Race for the Cure

While most Houston North, Texas, brethren were participating in the annual Livingston campout on Nov. 13, 2011, four members and their supporters were in San Antonio. Jason Cook, Charles Smith, Lisa Ryan-Powell and Jeanine Burt participated in the 2011 Rock 'n' Roll San Antonio Half-Marathon benefiting Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. They all finished the 13.1 miles ranking in the top third of the 19,534 participants. The season wasn't over yet! Jason, Charles and Lisa participated in their first full marathon—26.2 miles—in Houston on Jan. 15.

*Jeanine Burt*

## Cincinnati/Dayton Bids Farewell to Pinellis

The Cincinnati/Dayton congregation bid farewell to two well-loved members in December—Richard and Mary Pinelli. Over the last year the Pinellis have helped Lyle Welty bear the load of a three-congregation circuit in addition to serving the Church by visiting over 20 other areas! They were asked to pastor the St. Louis, Missouri, congregation beginning in January 2012 and say they look forward to settling down and getting to know the members there.

We will miss hearing Mr. Pinelli's thought-provoking sermons in person and seeing Mrs. Pinelli's friendly face and warm smile.

*Jennifer Foster*



Mary and Richard Pinelli

## Akron Hosts Chili Social

As the cold winter weather began to set in during the month of December, the Akron, Ohio, congregation's thoughts turned chilly—or should we say our thoughts turned to chili. On Dec. 10, the Akron congregation held "The Great Chili Cook-Off Competition," an event that encouraged each family to concoct their favorite Crock-Pot of chili from their secret family recipes to share with the congregation.

On the evening of the event, over 20 steaming slow

cookers of chili appeared, each hoping to be voted the most tasty of the group. The spiciness ranged from "tame" on the mild side to "rip-roaring" on the hot side. Ingredients varied from chicken to beef to venison.

Each member of the congregation placed their vote for the dish they thought deserved the title of "Best Chili." When all of the pots of chili were tasted, the winners were proclaimed. Third prize went to Sandy Ellis for her outstanding traditional chili recipe, second prize to Kim Samic for her unique pumpkin chili, and "top chef" award went to Terry Pavlik for her delectable white chicken chili. The evening concluded with a rousing game of bunco—and Tums!

*Dave Myers*



Terry Pavlik, Kim Samic  
and Sandy Ellis show  
off their awards



View of the Tonto National Forest  
(photo by Craig Hoyer)

## Sunny Winter Barbecue in Phoenix, Arizona

On a sunny Dec. 25, 2011, the Phoenix congregation gathered at a home perched on a hill next to the Tonto National Forest for a good old Western-style barbecue with its unobstructed views of the Sonoran Desert and surrounding hills and peaks. Over the course of the day, they enjoyed playing horseshoes, target shooting, marshmallow roasting and going on nature hikes. The highlight of the evening was the musical entertainment provided by various Church members. Attendees were treated to the melodic tones of country recording artist Kevin Carson Bennett, a member from Georgia visiting with his family.

*Craig Hoyer*



Tommy Johnson, Lon Kennebeck and  
Denny Windsor

## Five Ordained in Georgia

Bruce Gore ordained four men at Sabbath services on Dec. 24, 2011.

Tom Schultz was ordained an elder, and Wes Cohron was ordained a deacon. Both men attend the Jefferson, Georgia, congregation.

Tommy Johnson, Lon Kennebeck and Denny Windsor were ordained deacons in the Atlanta congregation on the same day.

*Chant'a Collier*



Two Family Feud contestants  
face off (photo by Peter  
Gabriel)

## Houston Post-Feast Social Draws 200

Over 200 brethren gathered for the annual Houston North, Texas, post-Feast social on Oct. 29. This year, the brethren enjoyed a catered Tex-Mex dinner and a few local traditions.

One of those traditions was the Feast photo contest where local members submitted their best Feast photos, competing in categories such as "Best Feast Stage Picture" and "Best Plate of Food." The members' Feast pictures captured a spiritually uplifting 2011 Feast of Tabernacles.

The dinner and photo contest were followed by our annual "Family Feud" game pitting attendees of various Feast sites against attendees of another site in a "Feud" style showdown. Eric Powell graciously served as our local Richard Dawson, hosting the game.

*Jeff Herrick*



Tom Schultz and Wes Cohron



# Announcements

## Weddings



Amanda and  
Benjamin Tibbs

Stephen and Delores Haley of Corydon, Indiana, announce the marriage of their daughter Amanda to Benjamin Tibbs, son of John and April Tibbs of Gig Harbor, Washington. The wedding took place Dec. 17, 2011, in Fort Worden, Washington. The couple resides in Spokane, Washington.



Gary and Jennifer  
Monks

Gary Monks and Jennifer Dongpewen were married on March 7, 2011. The service was held at the Baguio Country Club in the Philippines and was conducted by the pastor for the area, Eriz Dizon. The couple now resides in the United Kingdom and is delighted to be attending with the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, in London.

## Births



Elizabeth Alaina  
Davis

Kyle, Amy and big brother Matthew Davis of the Twin Cities, Minnesota, congregation are proud to announce the birth of Elizabeth Alaina Davis. She was born Jan. 5, 2012, at 5:56 a.m., after a three-hour labor. She was 6 pounds 2 ounces and measured 19 ½ inches long. She is a healthy, growing and happy newborn.



Julius Trey  
Jeremiah

Ross and Jennifer Jeremiah of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, are pleased to announce the birth of their third child. Julius Trey Jeremiah was born on Dec. 8, 2011, at 1 p.m. He was 6 pounds 13 ounces and measured 20 inches long. Big brother Jaiden and sister Jordyn are very excited to have a little brother.

## Anniversaries



Vernon and Vicky  
Phillips

Vernon and Vicky Phillips were honored by the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation with a surprise reception honoring their 50th wedding anniversary. Cake and punch were served, and Roanoke pastor John Foster hon-

ored the couple by recognizing their accomplishments and their commitment to each other. Vernon and Vicky met in high school and dated three years before they wed. They have been longtime members and were baptized together in 1970. Vernon worked as an electrician for 48 years until retirement, and Vicky worked various part-time jobs along with being an office manager. They currently reside in Montebello, Virginia, where they keep busy working in their garden, serving others and enjoying various hobbies. The couple faithfully serves in the Roanoke congregation and are much loved by the brethren.



The Sutherland  
Family

Dennis and Helen Sutherland of Deputy, Indiana, celebrated their 40th anniversary on Aug. 14, 2011. They enjoyed a lunch at Clifty Inn in Clifty Falls State Park, Madison, Indiana, with their family in attendance, including their three sons, two daughters, two daughters-in law, two grandchildren and Mrs. Sutherland's mother. Earlier this summer they attended the wedding of their son Roy and his wife, Michele (Wolfe). Dennis began listening to Herbert Armstrong while he and Helen were dating. They began receiving booklets in early 1972 and then started attending in Columbus, Indiana, in the spring of 1975. Both were baptized in March of 1980. Presently they attend the Louisville, Kentucky, congregation.



Robert and Jeanne  
Good

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Good recently celebrated 60 years of marriage. Robert and Jeanne were married Dec. 27, 1951, in Chicago, Illinois. They moved to Arkansas in 1975 where they later began attending God's Church in 1984. The Springdale, Arkansas, congregation honored Robert and Jeanne with a special cake on the Sabbath of Dec. 31, 2011. Mr. and Mrs. Good have five children, 17 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.



Ruth Ann and  
Charles May

Charles and Ruth Ann May celebrated 50 years of marriage on Dec. 16, 2011. The Springdale, Arkansas, congregation enjoyed helping them celebrate this event by sharing a special cake in their honor following services on Dec. 17. The Mays began attending church in the late 1960s. Charles serves as an elder in COGWA. Their son Tom and his wife, Molly, as well as their daughter Diana and her husband, Randy, planned a family celebration on Dec. 18. The Mays have four very special granddaughters, Monica, Allison, Maranda and Meredith.





Thomas Ko

After waging a battle with prostate cancer, Thomas Ko, 59, died on June 5, 2011.

Thaw Thi Ko was born on June 8, 1951, in Kyone Kyaung, Burma. Also known as “Thomas,” he was the sixth of eight children. Just one year from receiving his degree in dentistry, he left home in Burma to resist the oppressive government by joining the Karen National Union in 1973. He received the Union’s Gold Medal and Silver Medal while serving as a medic.

On Jan. 1, 1979, Thomas married Esther Htoo. After he married, God began to work with him, and he began to study his Bible day and night. He lost interest in going to church on Sundays and began to hunger for the truth about the Sabbath. In 1980 he began to receive *The Plain Truth*, *Good News* and booklets from one of his friends, Moo Lah. On Jan. 12, 1981, Mr. and Mrs. Ko and another friend met with Herman Hoeh in Chiang Mai, Thailand. After talking from morning to evening, the three were baptized.

Thomas was discharged and exiled from the army due to his beliefs. As the situation along the Burmese and Thai border worsened, he had to seek refuge for his family under the UN’s refugee agency in 1996. After three years, in 1999 they arrived in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Together, Thomas and Esther had five children—Josiah, Magnolia, Michelle, Melissa and Eric. Thomas Ko dedicated his life to God and his family.

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Reba Mae Burdette of Poca, West Virginia, 88, died Nov. 11, 2011. Reba was born on Jan. 5, 1923, and was a longtime member of God’s Church. She was baptized in August of 1971 and attended the Charleston, West Virginia, congregation.

Reba was preceded in death by her husband, Elmer Burdette; daughter, Marcia White; and two very special Church friends, Louise Dorsey and Nellie Rollyson.

Reba was a published poet and a wonderful storyteller. She loved the outdoors. She enjoyed adding to her rare rock collection and collecting, drying and framing wildflowers.

Reba is survived by her three sons, Terry, Chris and Andrew Burdette; two brothers; five sisters; nine grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Reba will be missed by all who knew her, including the many friends she made throughout the years

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**We encourage members to send announcements to be featured in *One Accord*. We plan to feature events in members’ lives, including births, engagements, weddings, significant anniversaries (25, 40, 50, 60, etc.), graduations and obituaries. Typically these items run between 50 and 100 words; however, we ask that all submissions stay under 250 words. Please submit a high-resolution color photo along with the written copy to your congregation’s reporter.**

# The Cure for the Midwinter Blahs...

## Presidents' Day Weekend Feb. 17-20

Do you get the winter blahs?  
How about a midwinter pick-me-up where you can recharge your batteries and enjoy visiting with lots of brethren?

Come join us in Branson, Missouri, for Presidents' Day Family Weekend Feb. 17 to 20! This family-oriented weekend offers something for everyone, including a sermon given by Jim Franks, president of COGWA.

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**Where:** Quality Inn on the Strip, 2834 W. Highway 76, Branson, Missouri

**Cost:** Rooms are just \$37 per night (1-4 persons per room), which includes breakfast for everyone in the room.

**Make Reservations by calling the Quality Inn at 417-334-1194. Tell them you are part of the Church of God Presidents' Weekend group.**

### Friday

Fellowship reception at Quality Inn  
**6:30 - 9:30 p.m.**

### Sabbath

Breakfast at Quality Inn  
**7 - 9:30 a.m.**

Seminars  
**10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

Sabbath Services at White House Theatre West Wing  
**2:30 - 4:30 p.m.**

Dinner (\$5 adults, \$3 aged 4 to 11)  
**5:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

Family Carnival  
**6:45 - 8 p.m.**

Family Dance  
**8:15 - 10:45 p.m.**

### Sunday

Breakfast at Quality Inn  
**7 - 9:15 a.m.**

Seminars  
**10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

Roller Skating (\$2.50)  
**12:15 - 2 p.m.**

Seminar  
**1:30 - 3 p.m.**

Mini-Golf at Grand Country Mall  
**3 - 5:30 p.m.**

Dinner  
**6 - 7 p.m.**

Table Games and Fellowship  
**7 - 10:30 p.m.**

### Monday

Breakfast at Quality Inn  
**8:15 - 10:45 p.m.**

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**For more information, contact**  
**[mike.blackwell@cogwa.org](mailto:mike.blackwell@cogwa.org)**