Ready to Move

Sowing Seeds of Peace in the Middle East

Festival Coordinators Plan for 2012 Feast

Portraits of Faith: From Baptist to Baptized
it seems strange that we are already posting our second issue of One Accord. I hope you are enjoying reading the news of your brethren from around the world. We are working to make it more easily accessible to everyone, and I am very happy that we are up and running.

My goal in writing this short column is to keep you up to date on the work of the Church. So much has happened in one short month, that it is hard to know where to begin. We have secured an office in Allen, Texas, for our headquarters. It has everything we need for the headquarters office of an international work. Allen is a suburb of Dallas located a few miles north of the city along U.S. Highway 75, also known as the Central Expressway.

A few weeks ago we sent pastors copies of a promotional flyer for Foundation Institute that should answer a number of questions from prospective students. Over 25 applications have been requested, giving us encouragement for our first year’s class. We know that we haven’t proven ourselves yet, and there may be some hesitancy on the part of potential students. But we hope those who are in a place in their lives where they can take a year off to study the Bible in a structured environment will take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

The Dallas and Fort Worth congregations will provide outstanding opportunities for fellowship and church attendance for new students. Church attendance in the area (Fort Worth, Dallas and Sherman) is close to 400; but even more important, there is a strong community of young adults. As a result of the many job opportunities in the area, Dallas and Fort Worth have drawn young people from all over the country. Combined, the Dallas and Fort Worth congregations have one of the largest communities of young adults anywhere in the Church. It will be an exciting opportunity for those who can attend—both from a church attendance perspective and from a learning perspective.

One of the most difficult problems that we need to resolve is our lack of a mechanism to provide printed material for those who do not have access to the Internet. Through a recent pastors’ survey, we determined that 17 percent of our membership in the U.S. does not have Internet access. We are working with a local printing company in Austin, Texas, to print copies of One Accord to resolve that need. We need to print around 500 copies and then distribute them to 50 pastors around the country. We are planning a trial run with this issue of One Accord, and afterwards, we will evaluate the effectiveness of this approach compared to its cost.

Thanks so much for your support and encouraging comments. The past six weeks have been the most positive of our short history!
Contents

From the Brethren
Meet the Administration 4
Lessons From the Two Trees 8
Sowing Seeds of Peace in the Middle East 9

Portraits of Faith: From Baptist to Baptized 10

From the Blogs: Can You Hate Religion But Love Jesus? 14

News From the Congregations 16

Announcements 18

Festival Coordinators Plan 2012 Feast of Tabernacles, page 5

Headquarters Office Selected, page 6
Looking over four short pages of my daily journal, the lesson in 2011 was clear to see. Only with God’s steady hand in my life, am I able to weather the storms of change.

May 13 entry: “The world throws so many uncertain, ever-changing events our way. From a flood here, an earthquake there, an endless report of human tragedy. My world does not stay the same. . . . Where do I look? To the only constant thing in my life—God the Father and Jesus Christ. They are unchanging. Their purpose is steadfast. Their promises are sure. They are the power and strength that keep me firm when my feet are shaken by ever-changing human events.”

Carol Froedge, Henderson, Kentucky

The past year was a hard one for my family. Health issues, financial issues, loss of friends, other members facing trials, loss of a pet, job worries. Sometimes you are treated unfairly at work; a friend can say harsh, hurtful words; dealing with feelings of frustration, sadness—and, yes, sometimes hopelessness.

The year 2011 taught me just how true 1 John 2:15 really is. “Do not love the world or the things in the world.” Being a junior in a public school, I have seen an extraordinary amount of this physical world. I have found that there is no lasting good, no permanent joy, only fleeting pleasure.

This school year has been difficult. I’ve realized just how different I am from my friends. I’ve placed more emphasis on God, and it appears to be frowned upon.

But things at school are of little importance in the long run. My life goal is not popularity or academic perfection but to pursue Matthew 6:33.

Danielle Rehor, Louisville, Kentucky

We face them daily. And who can ignore the issues of the world we live in: high crime, many with little or no respect for life, children neglected and abused, whole animal populations disappearing at an alarming rate, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes. And yet I realize that, no matter what, we are still so blessed, and God is always there for us. It reinforces a major life lesson: Always have faith in God. Rely on Him through all things and He will be there. He has proven that over and over this past year, and I am ever so thankful.

Cindy Pryke, Williamsburg, Virginia

We want to feature your answers in the March issue of One Accord. Please send your 50- to 100-word response to your congregation’s reporter or email liz.glasgow@cogwa.org. We look forward to sharing your responses with the brethren around the world!
Register Early for Feast in Australia

by David and Jodie Maczek

Coffs Harbour in New South Wales, Australia, offers a relaxed, family-oriented setting for this year’s Feast of Tabernacles! Coffs Harbour is a coastal city located where the mountains meet the sea, some 540 kilometers (340 miles) north of Sydney and about 440 kilometers (275 miles) south of Brisbane. Coffs Harbour and the surrounding area have a wide range of accommodation options available, including luxury apartments, houses, hotels, resorts, budget motels, bed-and-breakfasts, country retreats and more. As it is school holidays during the Feast time, we recommend booking your accommodations early.

The Coffs Harbour Regional Airport is regularly serviced by Qantas, Virgin Australia and Brindabella Airlines, with multiple flights each day to and from Sydney and Brisbane. Bus and train transportation are also available from both Sydney and Brisbane.

In October the average high temperature is 23.6 degrees Celsius (75 Fahrenheit) and the average low is 13.8 degrees Celsius (57 Fahrenheit). The area offers a range of experiences, from pristine golden beaches, spectacular river valley landscape, the Solitary Islands Marine Park (which is home to over 500 species of fish), rain forests and the Mountain Plateau of Dorrigo, with its incredible skywalk over the rain forest.

We invite you to join us in the Land Down Under! For additional information, email David Maczek at david.maczek@gmail.com.
After an amazing series of events, we now have an office to call home. On Monday afternoon, Feb. 6, 2012, I met with our agent at his office in Dallas to sign the lease documents. A few minutes later the lease was scanned and emailed to the owner/landlord of the building, who lives in Houston. Later in the afternoon he sent back a copy of the lease with his signature. The deal was done!

This was a major step in a long journey that began in December of 2010. As the Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu wrote, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” One author makes the claim that the correct translation of this phrase in Chinese would be: “The journey of a thousand miles begins beneath one’s feet.” When you think about that interpretation, you get a good picture of where we were in December of 2010.

After several months of attempting to resolve serious issues within our previous organization (these were not administrative or personality-driven as some have claimed), a new organization was formed officially on Dec. 23, 2010, in Orlando, Florida. The journey ahead appeared to be every bit of a “thousand miles.” We knew that each step must be measured, and we must be patient and not expect too much too soon.

**Beginning a new journey**

We fasted and prayed. We held our first ministerial conference in Louisville, Kentucky, in January 2011. We were able to begin employing personnel in February of 2011. This in itself was an act of faith. We had no consistent stream of income, and we weren’t sure what the future held. We stepped out on faith, establishing congregations and hiring pastors. Over the next few months, we established a structure of governance, approved our governing documents and selected our first Ministerial Board of Directors (MBOD).

Late last summer the MBOD selected me as president, followed by Doug Horchak as operation manager for Ministerial Services, Clyde Kilough as operation manager for Media and Jason Lovelady as treasurer and operation manager for finances. After more than eight months of operation, we had a leadership team in place that was no longer interim.

But where would we settle for an office? That was the next big question. For months we had labored through teleconferences, Skype calls, GoToMeeting conferences, etc. Not having the key decision makers in one location was taking its toll on our work.

Toward the end of 2011, it became obvious that we needed to locate an office and establish a headquarters for doing the work soon. It sounded great to say we were all working from our homes over the Internet and saving money by not having a physical office. Unfortunately, our lack of efficiency may have cost us more than we actually saved. The decision-making process was slow and cumbersome, and we often missed major issues that simply didn’t materialize during the remote meetings. We had no location for training or any sort of education program. All those involved at that time agreed that we needed to locate a permanent office, but where?

**The search began**

To begin the process, in September I appointed a task force consisting of Clyde Kilough (chairman), Dave Evans, Dave Johnson and Jason Lovelady. Their job was to put forward a list of cities that could be considered for the office location. We are all well aware that critics were predicting that we would end up in Texas and specifically the Dallas/Fort Worth area. We had a decision to make from the beginning—do we honestly look at a group of cities and ignore the Dallas/Fort Worth area, or do we make what we believe is the best choice for the organization?

It seemed that if our decision making was going to be hampered by certain events from the past or what some might feel about a decision today, then we were already in serious trouble. If we ever get into a position where we feel compelled to make a decision based on opinions or feelings without considering the facts of the matter,
then we will have failed in one of the most fundamental principles of leadership.

The task force came back last November with a list of six cities: Atlanta, Georgia; Austin, Texas; Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas; Houston, Texas; Orlando, Florida; and Raleigh, North Carolina. It is interesting that every study we have done in the past 15 years included the Dallas/Fort Worth area as either the best place or one of the best places for an office. This was also confirmed by our most recent task force.

At that point, we asked a member in the Austin congregation who is a vice president for a major real estate company in San Antonio to do an objective study of the final six cities. When the study was complete, Dallas/Fort Worth was again ranked No. 1 among the six cities from a statistical perspective.

Narrowing down a choice
When the MBOD met in December of 2011, the administration presented more than 50 pages of material, accompanied by a recommendation that we accept the results of the independent study and select Dallas/Fort Worth for our office location. This was agreed to unanimously during the December MBOD meeting. This whole process took approximately three months.

With the city decided, we spent another two months searching the Dallas/Fort Worth area, tracking down leads for office space. We also secured the services of a real estate broker to prepare a list of properties that met our criteria. The broker presented us with more than 100 properties, stretching from Fort Worth north and east through Farmers Branch, Flower Mound, Lewisville, Las Colinas, Keller, Southlake, Irving, Dallas, Richardson, Plano and Allen.

From this list, we narrowed the possibilities down to six prime properties. I invited members of the MBOD to the area to assist me in making the final decision. The group consisted of Leon Walker, Larry Salyer, Joel Meeker, Dave Baker and Britton Taylor (pastor of the Fort Worth congregation). Previous to this visit, Doug Horchak, Jason Lovelady and Clyde Kilough had also toured the six properties. After everyone toured the final six sites, we were all in agreement that the best property based on our criteria was the Office Campus at Allen. The address for this property is 1301 Central Expressway South, Allen, TX.

Allen is a vibrant and growing suburb of Dallas, located just north along the U.S. 75 corridor. This whole area is booming with high-tech firms, and we were very excited to get a quality property in such a growing area. The suite we leased offers everything we need to set up our headquarters office.

That brings us back to Monday, Feb. 6, for the signing of our first lease almost 14 months from the time we began. The price was less than we had budgeted for the annual cost of an office space. The landlord is remodeling the office to meet our needs, but only a few modifications will be needed. We have established March 1 as the date for occupancy, pending the landlord’s renovations. Our next step is purchasing furniture, installing a phone system and obtaining Internet service before that date.

Thank you so much for your patience and support during this entire project. We have not rushed through any of this, but we have been measured in all our steps.

Many miles to go
As we prepare to open the office, we are already making plans for our second-ever ministerial conference in June of this year. Between these two events, we will be celebrating the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. I believe the statement Paul gave about the Feast is excellent advice for us in this long journey: “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:8). What can be more important for any organization than to be sincere and have the truth? If we have this approach in each step that we take, we will be successful.

We have many miles to go before we reach our destination! We have learned over the past year that our progress will be one step at a time. If we do our part and have faith that God will do His, we can be assured good things will happen! It has been a most remarkable 14 months! ☘️
Meet the Administration

Clyde Kilough
Media Operation Manager

David Johnson
Corporate Secretary

Doug Horchak
Ministerial Services Operation Manager

Jim Franks
President

Not pictured: Jason Lovelady, treasurer
Lessons From the Two Trees

by Doug Horchak, Ministerial Services operation manager

When I walk out of the front door of my home, I am reminded of a vital spiritual lesson.

You see, we have two trees in our front yard. One is very large, and the other—well, the other one still looks like a sapling. Almost 11 years ago two trees were planted on the same day in our front yard by the contractor who built the house. Yet these two trees have met very different fates. One tree has stood tall and strong, grown large and full, and stands sturdy to this day. The other tree has been replaced three times! Almost seven years ago both trees had grown well, and I removed the tie-downs that helped support them as they grew strong enough to support themselves. Later that spring we had one of the early season thunderstorms for which North Texas is famous. With the storm came heavy rain and hail and some very high winds. The weather service even suggested that a couple of small tornadoes touched down that evening in our part of the county. Since our corner lot is exposed to the west, the tree closest to the corner was constantly buffeted by the high winds.

The importance of strong roots

On this occasion, the wind was simply too strong, and our corner tree toppled over under the pressure. The next morning after the bad storm, our tree lay at our front door—totally uprooted! Its root system was too weak and too shallow to give it the strength to stand during this storm. It all came down to the roots.

On the other hand, our larger tree met a different fate. A few years later, one of the storms that took out our replacement corner tree also ripped a large portion off the trunk of the big tree! It seemed that half of the tree lay in our neighbor’s yard, and I was concerned whether it would even survive. Later that morning, a friend in the landscape business came by and looked at our big, damaged tree. He smiled and simply told me, “Don’t worry—that tree will survive just fine.” Since the tree’s root system was strong and in place, it would eventually grow back and fill in the lost trunk and branches. Encouraging words indeed. But again, it all came down to those important roots.

The core of our spiritual roots

What about your spiritual roots? As Christians, we all have a foundation in our lives that is our reason for being. It is the most important thing to us and our Christian journey. Like the trees in my front yard, our spiritual roots are not fully known until they are tested. The Bible speaks about the vital importance of our roots—our foundations as Christians—being sure, strong and secure. “A man is not established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous cannot be moved” (Proverbs 12:3).

In teaching His disciples, in Matthew 13 Christ warned of those whose connection to the Church and their calling is without the firm foundation and convictions of Jesus Christ. “Yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles” (Matthew 13:21).

As with the tree that had a good, strong system of roots, so the Christian with a firm and solid foundation will withstand the wind, rain and tempest that would crumble those with a weaker root system (Matthew 7:26-27).

The core of our root system must be Jesus Christ. “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving” (Colossians 2: 6-7). His sacrifice for our sins, His example of sacrifice and service, His message of the coming Kingdom and future—all of this comprises the firm foundation, the sure root system of a strong disciple of Jesus Christ. ☺️
“Without trust, there can be no peace.” The fragmented relationships between countries and cultures in our world have proven axioms such as this one to be true. But four young people are volunteering in the Middle East with the goal of fostering that needed trust by building meaningful relationships while gaining a working appreciation for the needs of people in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

One of the most important goals of the Jordan Project is having a better understanding of the culture in that part of the world. We currently have four Church of God young adults serving and teaching for an entire year in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan—Stella Helterbrand, Josh and Eva Messerly and Jessica Schultz. These young people volunteer at two different schools in this Arab nation.

But why?
While they gain personal experience that will broaden their appreciation for the world we live in, the primary purpose has to do with serving—serving a people, appreciating a culture, building sincere relationships and creating trust, which are the very things that God’s Word shows are necessary for true, lasting peace. It is also a virtue that Christ extolled in His instruction about the fundamentals of God’s way of life: “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9, King James Version).

A legacy of service and friendship
At present, our volunteers are serving in two different institutions, the Amman Baccalaureate School (ABS) and the Young Muslim Women’s Association (YMWA) Centre for Special Education.

The Church’s presence in Jordan goes back to the early 1980s when a number of select Ambassador College students were chosen to serve at either the YMWA Centre for Special Education, Jordan Sports Federation for the Handicapped, Al Hussein Society Centre for the Physically Challenged or the Amman Baccalaureate School.

For 16 years the many volunteers of the Ambassador Foundation demonstrated a commitment to assisting the Jordanian people in serving their own handicapped population—coupled with student teaching at their foremost baccalaureate school.

This example of committed service resulted in building some wonderful personal relationships—relationships that have lasted for years. But it also established a reputation of trust, honesty and integrity with members of the Jordanian royal family—in particular, Princess Sarvath El Hassan (wife of His Royal Highness Prince Hassan of Jordan).

Current project in Jordan
At the invitation of Jordan’s royal family five years ago, in 2007, the Church began to again sponsor volunteers at two of the Jordanian institutions previously served. This occurred after David Register and Cory Erickson, who was a former project leader in Jordan and currently serves as an elder in COGWA, were invited to lunch with HRH Princess Sarvath where she expressed an interest in securing volunteers that would exemplify that same “spirit” that previous volunteers had demonstrated years ago. She and her board members felt both of these organizations could benefit from this infusion of volunteers from our Church.

In the early 1980s, Princess Sarvath began the YMWA Centre for Special Education in an effort to reach the needs of people with special needs and to assist in providing education services. The Church, which originally sponsored the students who were chosen to serve at this location, has continued to support this ministry over the years. Furthermore, the AMHS, which offers a physiotherapy program for the physically handicapped in the Amman area, has also benefited from the Church’s involvement.

Sowing Seeds of Peace in the Middle East
Why four Americans chose to live in Jordan for a year.
by Doug Horchak
the many handicapped and challenged children of Jordan. Since that time, the Centre has been staffed with personnel that have the training to assist and teach the mentally challenged. Our volunteers are able to assist these teachers in select classes, working with the children and the staff. Needless to say, their presence and service is greatly appreciated.

The volunteers also serve at the Amman Baccalaureate School where they contribute as staff and student teachers. In addition to teaching and working with the students, these volunteers gain insight into the cultural variations of teaching in this Middle Eastern country. Most important, Christians from the West are spending the better part of a year helping, serving, learning and building friendships. In essence, they are developing relationships.

Recent visit
During this past month of January, my wife, Tanya, and I had the privilege of visiting our current volunteers, the schools at which they volunteer and the sponsors and principals of each of these schools.

On Thursday, Jan. 19, my wife and I visited the YMWA Centre for Special Education, hosted by the principal, Rasha Nasrallah, and board member Khadijeh Siraj al Tall, who also serves as personal assistant to Princess Sarvath. We were joined by our two volunteers at the school, Josh and Eva Messerly. Josh works with the older students in the vocational section, while Eva assists in the primary grades as a teacher’s assistant. As we toured the school, we reviewed Josh and Eva’s work together. Again, we were reminded that the service of our volunteers is greatly appreciated.

We were able to spend two full days with the volunteers on their weekend (Friday and Saturday in Muslim countries) and had the chance to tour the ancient ruins of the Decapolis city of Pella in the North Jordan Valley and the Citadel in Amman on Friday. On Sabbath afternoon we drove to the city of Madaba and watched the sun set at the top of Mount Nebo, which was the location of Moses’ last view of the Promised Land before he died.

On Sunday, Jan. 22, we were privileged to have an audience with Princess Sarvath and Princess Rahma at the Royal Palace grounds in Amman. Princess Sarvath was a most gracious hostess as we were able to discuss our current volunteers and their experience and current opportunities. As always, such discussions were held in the context of the legacy of Herbert Armstrong and the Ambassador volunteers in past years. A reputation of sincerity and trust has lasted for three decades.

That afternoon, we were guests at a luncheon hosted by Stuart Bryan, the principal of the Amman Baccalaureate School. Our two volunteers at the school, Stella Helterbrand and Jessica Schultz, were also guests at the luncheon. After a wonderful meal and discussion about the school and our volunteers, we toured the school. Jessica is a teaching as-
The Church of God, a Worldwide Association, is pleased to offer its brethren around the world a 2012 Feast site in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This Feast site supports the Church’s presence in Jordan where our young adult volunteers are currently serving under the patronage of the Jordanian royal family and demonstrating a fine example of living Christ’s message.

The Jordan Feast site offers the opportunity to visit the Holy Land while at the same time providing adventure in both the desert and the beautiful Red Sea resort city of Aqaba. Adventure opportunities will include scuba diving or snorkeling in the world-renowned Red Sea, a four-wheel tour and bedouin lunch in the Wadi Rum desert romanticized through Lawrence of Arabia fame. In addition, the site provides a daylong planned tour in the ancient Nabataean city of Petra, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. We will also conduct a hillside church service in the ancient Christian refuge city of Pella, which includes a beautiful view of the Jordan Valley. The 2012 Feast will move between two locations: Amman and Aqaba.

Other tours in Jordan will include:

- Jerash, a beautiful Roman city of the Decapolis.
- Mount Nebo, where Moses viewed the Holy Land.
- The Dead Sea.
- Bethany-on-the-Jordan, the area where Jesus was believed to be baptized.

For those who wish to participate, an exciting post-Feast extension trip led by a COGWA minister will take members through Jerusalem and the Sea of Galilee areas.

Please visit www.jordanfot.org for more details. You can also contact Colene and Cory Erickson at ericksoncc@comcast.net or by phone at 952-818-6261 with additional questions. Initial registration is due May 1, 2012.

Cory Erickson
50th Anniversary
Birmingham, Alabama

Feb. 25, 2012

Come celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Church of God in Birmingham, Alabama! Services will be held at 2:30 p.m. in the VFW hall in Springville, Alabama. Bruce Gore, who attended the first service in Birmingham in February 1962, will be our guest speaker.

For more information concerning this event, please contact:

Tom Kirkpatrick • 205-665-9799

Challenger
Rocky Mountains
July 1-10, 2012

http://camps.cogwa.org

Join us in the mountains over the Fourth of July 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 Arapaho 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.
FOR MORE THAN FIVE DECADES, HAYNES AND Ethel Baker have been dedicated members of God’s
Church. But in the little mountain farming communities
where they grew up (and just a few miles from where they
live now), the “Church of God” was nowhere to be found.

Ethel grew up in a Baptist family. She remembers that when
she was a young teen she would walk with her girlfriends
on Sunday to several of the different Baptist churches that
could be found in the surrounding hollows. “That is what
you did back then,” Ethel recalls, “go to church and visit
people.” Ethel grew up reading the Bible—the Baptist
church encouraged it. She remembers on Sunday nights
they would have a “Sword Drill” at the church where some-
one would give out a scripture and the first person who
found it would read it.

Haynes’ family was not as religious as Ethel’s. He recalls
reading his Bible but never saw his parents read the fam-
ily Bible much. When Haynes was a boy, his mother would
take him with her to the local Baptist church revival, which
was usually held in August, to see a visiting minister. Nor-
mally, though, their family did not attend church.

Haynes first started searching for the truth in the late ’50s.
While studying the Bible, he read “Church of God” in sev-
eral different places—specifically that the Church would be
called by God’s name. But he could not find the names of
the numerous denominations in the pages of the Bible. He
did, however, find a Church of God—the Holiness Church
of God—in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

“It was quite different from the Baptist church,” Ethel re-
members. “But it was not as wild as people normally think
of a Holiness church being. They did believe in speaking in
tongues, though. But they were teaching tithing.” Haynes
and Ethel were in the Holiness church for about three years.
In fact, they lived right across the street from the church.

While attending the Holiness church, a friend of Haynes’
would constantly talk about odd subjects in the Sunday
school class. “He kept bringing up strange terms like pa-
ganism,” Haynes said. “I asked him, ‘Where are you getting
all this crazy stuff from?’”

“My friend answered, ‘I’ve been listening to this man on
the radio, and he is the only man I’ve ever heard who really
preaches from the Bible.’” He said he had some literature and
asked Haynes if he would like to read it. Haynes was not ques-
tioning the church he was attending, but he readily accepted
the literature. He wanted to prove his friend was wrong.

One of the booklets was The United States and British Com-
monwealth in Prophecy. For six months Haynes studied
simply to prove his friend wrong, but it actually worked
the opposite way. The pastor of the Holiness church, who
had become a good friend of the Bakers, would come over
for breakfast and try to convince Haynes that what he was
studying was wrong.

“But he couldn’t convince me,” said Haynes. “I knew that
everything was true, and I saw, as well, that the church
producing the material was called ‘Church of God.’”
Ethel was exposed to the truth through Haynes as he was studying and receiving booklets. During Haynes’ breakfast conversations with the Holiness church pastor, Ethel would, of course, be there listening. As time passed, she recollects how she began to pick up on things in the Sunday service that were wrong.

In 1960, for the Fourth of July, the Bakers went up into the mountains to spend some time with Haynes’ parents. When they got back to Fayetteville, Haynes found a letter in his mailbox from the Radio Church of God saying a minister would be in town to meet him and his friend from Sunday school the next day. Haynes took the day off from work and went with his friend to meet Burk McNair and Ron Kelly. They met by a little post office in town above a river.

Since it was a hot summer afternoon the men walked down to the shade of a bridge to talk. Most of the afternoon, Mr. Kelly was in town searching for a lady who was also supposed to meet with the ministers but had not shown up. Meanwhile, Mr. McNair conversed with Haynes and the other gentleman.

Haynes recalls that pivotal afternoon. “When Mr. Kelly got back, Mr. McNair said, ‘These two guys are ready to be baptized.’ ‘Well,’ said Mr. Kelly, ‘what’s to keep them from being baptized right now? We’re above a river.’” The two men were baptized then and there.

By the time the Bakers moved to their mountain farm in 1961, Ethel also stopped attending the Holiness church, but she and Haynes weren’t able to attend services of the Radio Church of God. At the time, the closest congregation was in Atlanta, Georgia. She and Haynes were busy remodeling the old farmhouse and raising two young boys, and it took Ethel a little while before she began to study seriously. In 1962 she began reading her husband’s Bible Correspondence Course; and then the following year, she, too, was baptized.

In November 1963 Haynes and his two boys attended the first Radio Church of God service near them, in Greensboro, North Carolina. Ethel soon began to attend in January of 1964 after their third son was born. That year was the first time the entire family was able to attend the Feast together, and the whole family traveled to Jekyll Island, Georgia. Those were the years when most people camped out in tents and shared shower facilities that were in the campground, and brethren met in the large tent that seated thousands of people.

Haynes and Ethel remember that it rained—and rained a lot. The tent got wet. The water soaked up into the suitcases and got all the clothes wet. But at least the cots were above the floor. What they remember most about that Feast, though, is that despite the conditions it was really wonderful.

Hannah Baker is the granddaughter of Haynes and Ethel Baker and lives only a few miles away from them. She attends the Hickory, North Carolina, congregation. At 19, she is in her senior year at Thomas Edison State College, where she has been able to indulge her love of reading literature and writing as she works towards her bachelor’s degree in English.
A viral video explains why the composer has come to “hate religion but love Jesus.” It has deeply resonated with millions of young people. Why is that? And is it really possible, or right, to believe you can hate the one and love the other? What does the Bible say?

One of the latest YouTube videos to go viral is called “Why I Hate Religion but Love Jesus,” a poem written and recorded by 22-year-old Jefferson Bethke. It has received more than 17 million hits and kindled quite a controversy.

Jefferson’s point
This section sums up the point of the poem:

“Now back to the topic, one thing I think is vital to mention, How Jesus and religion are on opposite spectrums, One is the work of God, one is a man-made invention, One is the cure and one is the infection.

Because Religion says do, Jesus says done.
Religion says slave, Jesus says son,
Religion puts you in shackles but Jesus sets you free.
Religion makes you blind, but Jesus lets you see.”

Is all that really true?

What is religion?
In the poem religion is synonymous with systematic hypocrisy, merciless condemnation and self-righteousness, and it is clear from the huge reaction to the poem that many young people believe that is an accurate description of much of organized Christianity today.

The word religion is used only a handful of times in the Bible and only in the New Testament. It comes from a Greek word that can mean “pious; careful of the outward aspects of divine service.”

In one passage where the word is used, James clearly warns against hypocrisy in one’s religion. James 1:26 states, “If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless.”

If we don’t practice what we preach, our religion is truly vain.

Hypocrisy
Let’s be honest, there is a lot of pretty visible hypocrisy in Christianity today.

We’ve all heard news stories of pedophile priests and adulterous televangelists, of people who preach one thing to others while practicing something far different. And if we go to church, we’ve probably witnessed people, even leaders, who have behaved pretty badly at times.

Of course, all of us have behaved pretty badly at times, something we should remember before we contemplate casting any stones. No human being is going to get life totally right and never make a mistake.

Religious confusion
The Bible shows a crucial key to understanding the confused state of Christianity today: Not all who preach Christ truly represent Him.

The apostle Paul warned Christians about false teachers preaching a twisted gospel about Jesus: “For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well
If we don’t practice what we preach, our religion is truly vain.

transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15, emphasis added).

This state of affairs represents most of modern, deceived “Christianity.”

In contrast, Jesus called His true disciples a “little flock” (Luke 12:32). The Church Jesus founded has always been small, and it will be so until His return to establish the Kingdom of God on the earth. And someone can only come to Jesus, and that little flock, when the Father miraculously draws him (John 6:44).

Jesus founded the Church

Jesus promised: “I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). That little church will never die out from a lack of members, and Jesus will always be its head and guide its work.

Today, most Christians have fallen for the lie that Jesus did everything and that Christians have nothing to do but believe (“religion says ‘do,’ Jesus says ‘done’”). Ironically, this lie has actually played a part in much of the hypocrisy in modern Christianity.

In reality, Jesus requires obedience from those who would follow Him. He said, “If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments” (Matthew 19:17). He chastised people for abandoning God’s commandments and replacing them with traditions (Mark 7:9). And He asked in Luke 6:46, “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” No one is saved by obedience, but it is absolutely required of Christians.

No human is perfect; all fall short even in the Church Jesus built. But it is through submitting to His will and guidance that people can arrive at true religion: love toward God and love toward others shown by living, with God’s help, a new way of life that rejects sin (Matthew 22:36-40).

As James wrote, “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). We can’t love Jesus without loving that religion.

Joel Meeker is chairman of the MBOD and regional director for the francophone areas on behalf of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association.

Families Glorifying God Weekend

Twin Cities

March 16-18, 2012

Join us in Minnesota for our annual family weekend in the Twin Cities with activities for the entire family. Clyde Kilough will be the guest speaker. Activities include:

• Bible study by Mr. Kilough on Friday evening
• Sabbath services
• Educational seminars and special Sabbath activities for kids
• Teen and young adult formal dance
• Kids carnival, “Minute to Win It” games and more

A block of rooms has been set aside at the Country Inn and Suites (651-483-1625) with a special rate of $82 per night (includes breakfast). The special rate will only be available until Feb. 27, 2012. When making reservations, request to receive the rate for the block set aside for the “Church of God Family Weekend.”

Brethren may also opt to stay at local brethren’s homes. Please contact Jerry Reynolds at Jerome.Reynolds@gmail.com if you would like to stay in a local Church member’s home.

To register and get more information, visit our website: www.FamiliesGlorifyingGod.org. Call Colene or Cory Erickson at 952-818-6261 if you have questions.

put up with it!” (2 Corinthians 11:4).

Paul states that such false teachers, usually deceived themselves (Revelation 12:9), actually function as deceiving ministers of Satan: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers,
Uplifting Weekend in Virginia Beach

The Williamsburg, Virginia, and Delaware, congregations held the annual Virginia Beach, Virginia, weekend Jan. 13 through 15. Members from Virginia, Delaware, Maryland and North Carolina all joined together at the Holiday Inn, North Beach, to fellowship, learn and worship our Creator. What better place than beside the ocean—creation at its finest! Despite the chill—it was winter after all—the temperature inside was warm and inviting.

Weekend activities for everyone included two general Bible studies, a teen Bible study, silent auction, art contest, catered dinner and a costume contest and dance.

Early Sabbath morning, Tim Waddle, pastor of the Baltimore, Maryland, congregation, gave an interactive Bible study on where our true citizenship lies.

Sabbath services featured a men’s choir, and our guest speaker was Clyde Kilough. His message on knowledge—the right kind of knowledge and what we must do to gain this knowledge—was inspiring.

Mr. Kilough was also the guest deejay for the costume dance. This year’s costume theme was historical figures.

“Pink Ladies” Take on 5K


The EP 5K supports many charities, including the Susan G. Komen Foundation. They donned the name “Pink Ladies” as they dressed for their support for breast cancer.

Vinka Sarin is a breast cancer survivor after being diagnosed in 2005.

Tonbridge Fellowship Evening

On Jan. 28, 2012, the 18 members of the Tonbridge, Kent, United Kingdom, congregation got together after Sabbath services for an evening of fellowship and fun.

The tables were aligned with various salads and an assortment of tasty fillings to add to our traditional steaming hot potatoes. The buzz of conversation could be heard as we sat around the tables to enjoy the meal. The highlight of the evening was watching the children and young adults taking part in various games as the older adults supervised.

The children squealed with delight as they competed in table tennis and balloon stomping.

Toward the end of the evening, we played indoor bowling. One of the youngest attendees tried desperately to intercept the balls as they rolled down the floor toward the pegs and was only stopped by Grandpa whisking him into his arms. This little toddler had a hard time understanding why he couldn’t play too.

We plan to have at least one of these potluck and activity evenings each month. Such get-togethers are spiritually uplifting and physically relaxing. Plus, they enable us to form that special unity and bond with our brethren.

Liz Serfontein
Portland Hosts Northwest Winter Weekend

Sunny skies and spectacular sunrises marked the beginning of the Northwest Winter Weekend, hosted by the Portland, Oregon, congregation on Dec. 24-25, 2011. The event has been a tradition in the Pacific Northwest going back to the 1960s. With the theme of “Building Godly Relationships,” the weekend featured a series of educational seminars on various aspects of right relationships. Doug Horchak, Ministerial Services operation manager, attended as a guest presenter with his wife Tanya.

Combined Sabbath services included the Seattle, Washington, congregation and guests from surrounding areas. Mr. Horchak gave a sermon titled “What Is Love?” which set the unifying theme for the weekend.

On Sunday, the seminars were given by Dave Register, pastor of the Portland and Seattle congregations, and Mr. Horchak. In addition to the seminars, there were also two presentations for the youth. The first was a preteen Bible class on King Josiah, emphasizing the need to emulate Josiah in daily life, facilitated by Kathy Foster. The second was a teen Bible study, “Is God Calling You?” on the divine calling to children in the Church, with a lively interactive discussion on baptism and the Holy Spirit led by Mr. Register.

Attendees enjoyed a variety of other activities: a chili dinner, swimming, basketball, wallyball and a variety of interactive games.

In addition to the uplifting messages and activities, there was also a baptism after Sabbath services, adding to the inspiration felt during the weekend. Full advantage was taken of the facility’s Jacuzzi for the baptism (lucky lady). Many felt uplifted and strengthened by the atmosphere of the weekend.

Jason Boise

Star-Studded Costume Party Rocks Queens, New York

Members from the Queens, New York, and Central New Jersey congregations participated in a costume party and dance on Saturday night, Jan. 28, 2012, at the hall in Queens. After church services, a delicious potluck meal was enjoyed into the evening. Eventually, children and adults began to disappear to get dressed; and the deejay, a local Church member, proceeded to get his equipment set up.

The excitement accelerated as the participants returned to the room, in the midst of flashing cameras reminiscent of a star-studded walkway entrance to the Oscars. It wasn’t long before the kids got the dance off to a good start with a hearty game of musical chairs.

Then, before one could look twice, the dance floor was filled with none other than: Queen Victoria, Tinkerbell, Belle (from Beauty and the Beast), the Mad Hatter, a clown, runaway bride, bumblebee, Mr. and Mrs. Spock (Star Trek), King Solomon and his (only) wife, Mama (from Mama’s Family), Jasmine (from Aladdin) and a ’70s disco queen, among many others.

Thanks to the kids in the New Jersey congregation for suggesting a costume/dress-up party!

R. Norrod
Atlanta Bowling Night Success

Over 40 bowlers and spectators spent the evening of Jan. 21 laughing, cheering, exchanging high fives and engaging in fellowship in Atlanta, Georgia. This truly was a family event, as ages ranged from 2 to 70.

While fierce (yet friendly) competition raged, brethren cheered and encouraged while throwing gutter balls. The atmosphere was filled with electricity as each bowler took aim to take down the pins, similar to the way David took down Goliath. Some did achieve this feat more than once.

The next day arrived with some minor aches and pains, but nevertheless, it was a wonderful time spent with family. Everyone appreciated the efforts of Howard West in putting this activity together.

Chant’a Collier

Howard and Janet West (photo by Chant’a Collier)

Three Baptized in Kansas City

Kansas City is very pleased to announce three baptisms in the last year. One is a second-generation member of the Church of God, and the other two are third-generation members. Aaron Hilgen and Chad and Lora Mortier each have counted the cost and put their hand to the plow, determined not to look back. We all rejoice with them as our new brothers and sister in Christ and are very excited to witness their commitment and dedication to God’s way of life.

Aaron Hilgen, 26, was baptized June 17, 2011. Aaron grew up in the Church in California and is a third-generation Church of God member. His parents are Greg and Randi Hilgen of Garden Grove, California. Aaron moved from California in 2008 to attend school at Kansas University. He has since met and married his beautiful wife, Ashley, and they have recently bought a home.

Chad and Lora Mortier, 26 and 24, were baptized Dec. 24, 2011. Chad and Lora both grew up in Wisconsin as third- and second-generation members of God’s Church. Their parents are Donn and Alice Mortier of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and Leonard and Kathryn Hatter of Brodhead, Wisconsin.

In 2006 Chad and Lora moved to Kansas City, where they started their business and family. They are the proud parents of Kelvin and Ava, aged 3 and 4, and are expecting one more bundle of joy in late June. Because Lora was pregnant when she was baptized, we like to tease that this child will bear much fruit at an early age.

We all look forward to the day we can measure our growth in our children and are able to announce the future baptisms of third- and fourth-generation followers of God.

Katrina Froedge

It’s farewell but not good-bye to longtime members of God’s Church here in South Florida. Richard and Jeanne Scribner will be moving to Gainesville, Florida, to be closer to their family. They will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary this year.

Mr. Scribner is a deacon and a servant in every way. He is always cheerful, with something interesting and helpful to pass on to us on the Sabbath. Mrs. Scribner is a very loving and patient person. The brethren are naturally drawn to her in fellowship each Sabbath.

They were married on Nov. 8, 1962. In 1977 they were both baptized on the same day.

We in the West Palm Beach congregation will miss them very much but are happy that they will be closer to family and in a new home up in Gainesville.

Jim Cannon

Richard and Jeanne Scribner (photo by Jim Cannon)

Farewell But Not Good-Bye to Longtime West Palm Brethren
Colorado Kids Come Home Champions From National Poultry Competition

In January, two Colorado Church youngsters submitted poultry entries in the 106th annual National Western Stock Show in Denver. This is a major livestock show with over 600,000 visitors.

Brooke Hahn, age 10, of the Grand Junction, Colorado, congregation, won blue ribbons for her two bantam white call ducks and won third and fourth place for her two bantam white leghorn hens.

The showmanship part of the competition focuses on what the young participant knows about their bird, as well as other breeds, and showcases skills in public speaking, poise and the ability to communicate knowledge in a clear, concise manner. By scoring 97 percent, Brooke was awarded “Grand Champion” in the Junior Division. This is a fantastic achievement for a young lady participating in her first national competition!

Dylan Magruder, from the Castle Rock congregation, also competed at the show. Dylan, who is 8, is brand-new to poultry, and this was his very first competition. He showed a golden phoenix cockerel, which takes a lot of care. Dylan worked very hard and did an amazing job, learning as much as he could about his bird—how to handle, feed and groom him. The phoenix is a long-tail breed whose tail feathers can grow up to 5 feet long. Dylan earned “Best of Variety,” “Best of Breed” and “Reserve Champion” for the breed. This is a terrific accomplishment, especially for a first-timer!

Congratulations and best wishes to Brooke and Dylan and also to their parents for their help and guidance!

Ann Hahn

“How I Met Your Mother” in Columbia, Missouri

“How I Met Your Mother” was the unlikely theme of the Columbia, Missouri, congregation’s family club held on Dec. 17, 2011. But this was nothing like the TV show.

During this family club, speakers shared how they had come to learn the truth and had become part of the Church of God.

Greg Swartz, club director, gave opening remarks about the Church being our mother. He quoted Galatians 4:26: “The Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.” He also explained that we are like conceived children and are nourished and protected until we are born into the family of God at the resurrection.

Topics were given by Matt and Janet Caple. Speeches were given by people ranging from teenagers to senior citizens and included Audrey Goodrich, Brent Martin, Flavia Everman, Dylan Sullivan, Pat Freeman and Elaine Kime. Each story was unique and helped us learn more about each other.

Pat Freeman

“How I Met Your Mother” in Columbia, Missouri (photos by Linda Morgan)

Dylan Sullivan delivers his speech

The Columbia Missouri Family Club (photos by Linda Morgan)

Dylan Magruder and Brooke Hahn with their prize poultry (photo by Ann Hahn)

February 2012
Announcements

Births

George Tarter Allen IV was born on Aug. 16, 2011, at 8:52 p.m. He weighed 8 pounds and 7 ounces and was 21 inches long. His proud parents are George and Drea Allen of the Birmingham, Alabama, congregation. His proud grandparents are George and Rhonda Allen of the Birmingham congregation and Toby and Jean Shipman of the East Texas congregation.

Tracy Cody, a member in Fort Worth, Texas, is thrilled to announce the birth of her ninth grandchild, Rylann Chelsea Cody. Rylann was born Nov. 23, 2011, at 10:24 p.m. Parents Amber and Lonnie Cody Jr. of Azle, Texas, are doing well after the C-section. Rylann was 8 pounds 2 ounces and measured 19 inches long.

Logan Mark Rivers

Justin and Kimberly Rivers of the West Palm Beach, Florida, congregation, are pleased to announce the birth of their second child. Logan Mark Rivers was born on Jan. 11, 2012, weighing 7 pounds 8 ounces and measuring 20 inches in length. Big brother Cole, now age 2, loves his little brother and showers him with kisses and joy. Grandparents, Tony and Edie Carreiro, are thrilled to welcome their sixth grandchild into their arms.

Weddings & Engagements

Brian and Diana White of Indianapolis, Indiana, are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Kayla White, to David Dance, the son of Allen and Pam Dance of Chattanooga, Tennessee. An early May wedding will be held in Indiana. The couple plans to reside in Tennessee.

Jim and RoseAnn Cannon are pleased to announce the marriage of their youngest daughter, Elizabeth, to Justin Glasgow, son of Richard and Teeka Glasgow of Garland, Texas, on Oct. 2, 2011. The outdoor wedding took place on a beautiful cattle ranch owned by Fort Worth member Michelle Quant. The couple currently resides in the Dallas area, where Justin works as an engineer for Dell Engineering Solutions and Liz works as office manager for Win Financial Group and as managing editor for One Accord.
Tom and Joy Kosharek marked their 40th wedding anniversary on Jan. 15, 2012. When they met, both were teenagers, and Joy was working as a waitress in a restaurant managed by Tom’s mother. Recalling their first date, Tom remembered riding his 10-speed bicycle “about 20 miles” to her house. They continued on their date with Joy driving her Studebaker Lark. They were married three years later in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They have three children—Jennifer, Joseph and Jamie—and nine grandchildren.

Tom and Joy began attending services in 1980 and serve as deacon and deaconess in the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation.

Don and Annie Shaw were honored by the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation with a reception for their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 3, 2011. Cake, punch, flowers and a gift were presented to the couple as Roanoke pastor John Foster recognized their accomplishments, service and commitment to each other.

Don and Annie were married on Sept. 2, 1961, in Keystone, West Virginia. Both were baptized in 1969. Don was later ordained a local elder in January 1982. Both have served the congregations faithfully over the years.

Don worked full-time at Virginia Tech University as a research lab technician and still currently works there part-time. Annie also worked at Virginia Tech as a lead lab medical technician for 29 years before retiring. The Shaws have five children, Mark, Alan, Karen, Dian and David. They also have seven grandchildren.

Don and Annie keep very busy serving in the Roanoke, Princeton and Charleston, West Virginia, congregations. Don’s hobbies include fishing and working as a volunteer for the Blacksburg Fire Department, which he has done for 44 years. Annie’s hobbies include baking, playing cards and doing puzzles. Both are much loved and respected by the brethren.

The Wheeling, West Virginia, congregation enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate the marriage of Scott and Charlene Kreitzer. Scott and Charlene united in marriage on Dec. 3, 2011, and on Dec. 17, the Wheeling congregation hosted a reception for the happy couple.

Everyone worked together to make the night a memorable one. Family and friends celebrated the special occasion with dinner and desserts, wedding cake and punch, and some fun music. The children in the congregation enjoyed the opportunity to move and groove.

The whole congregation loved having such a joyous occasion to celebrate, and all are excited for the happy new couple.

The Wheeling, West Virginia, congregation enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate the marriage of Scott and Charlene Kreitzer. Scott and Charlene united in marriage on Dec. 3, 2011, and on Dec. 17, the Wheeling congregation hosted a reception for the happy couple.

Everyone worked together to make the night a memorable one. Family and friends celebrated the special occasion with dinner and desserts, wedding cake and punch, and some fun music. The children in the congregation enjoyed the opportunity to move and groove.

The whole congregation loved having such a joyous occasion to celebrate, and all are excited for the happy new couple.

Tom and Joy Kosharek marked their 40th wedding anniversary on Jan. 15, 2012. When they met, both were teenagers, and Joy was working as a waitress in a restaurant managed by Tom’s mother.

Recalling their first date, Tom remembered riding his 10-speed bicycle “about 20 miles” to her house. They continued on their date with Joy driving her Studebaker Lark. They were married three years later in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

They have three children—Jennifer, Joseph and Jamie—and nine grandchildren.

Tom and Joy began attending services in 1980 and serve as deacon and deaconess in the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation.

Don and Annie Shaw were honored by the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation with a reception for their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 3, 2011. Cake, punch, flowers and a gift were presented to the couple as Roanoke pastor John Foster recognized their accomplishments, service and commitment to each other.

Don and Annie were married on Sept. 2, 1961, in Keystone, West Virginia. Both were baptized in 1969. Don was later ordained a local elder in January 1982. Both have served the congregations faithfully over the years.

Don worked full-time at Virginia Tech University as a research lab technician and still currently works there part-time. Annie also worked at Virginia Tech as a lead lab medical technician for 29 years before retiring. The Shaws have five children, Mark, Alan, Karen, Dian and David. They also have seven grandchildren.

Don and Annie keep very busy serving in the Roanoke, Princeton and Charleston, West Virginia, congregations. Don’s hobbies include fishing and working as a volunteer for the Blacksburg Fire Department, which he has done for 44 years. Annie’s hobbies include baking, playing cards and doing puzzles. Both are much loved and respected by the brethren.

The Wheeling, West Virginia, congregation enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate the marriage of Scott and Charlene Kreitzer. Scott and Charlene united in marriage on Dec. 3, 2011, and on Dec. 17, the Wheeling congregation hosted a reception for the happy couple.

Everyone worked together to make the night a memorable one. Family and friends celebrated the special occasion with dinner and desserts, wedding cake and punch, and some fun music. The children in the congregation enjoyed the opportunity to move and groove.

The whole congregation loved having such a joyous occasion to celebrate, and all are excited for the happy new couple.

Tom and Joy Kosharek marked their 40th wedding anniversary on Jan. 15, 2012. When they met, both were teenagers, and Joy was working as a waitress in a restaurant managed by Tom’s mother.

Recalling their first date, Tom remembered riding his 10-speed bicycle “about 20 miles” to her house. They continued on their date with Joy driving her Studebaker Lark. They were married three years later in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

They have three children—Jennifer, Joseph and Jamie—and nine grandchildren.

Tom and Joy began attending services in 1980 and serve as deacon and deaconess in the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation.

Don and Annie Shaw were honored by the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation with a reception for their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 3, 2011. Cake, punch, flowers and a gift were presented to the couple as Roanoke pastor John Foster recognized their accomplishments, service and commitment to each other.

Don and Annie were married on Sept. 2, 1961, in Keystone, West Virginia. Both were baptized in 1969. Don was later ordained a local elder in January 1982. Both have served the congregations faithfully over the years.

Don worked full-time at Virginia Tech University as a research lab technician and still currently works there part-time. Annie also worked at Virginia Tech as a lead lab medical technician for 29 years before retiring. The Shaws have five children, Mark, Alan, Karen, Dian and David. They also have seven grandchildren.

Don and Annie keep very busy serving in the Roanoke, Princeton and Charleston, West Virginia, congregations. Don’s hobbies include fishing and working as a volunteer for the Blacksburg Fire Department, which he has done for 44 years. Annie’s hobbies include baking, playing cards and doing puzzles. Both are much loved and respected by the brethren.
Lawrence “Larry” Eugene Stoner of the Cincinnati/Dayton, Ohio, congregation died April 20, 2011, after 71 years of life and nearly 45 years as a member of God’s Church.

He was born Oct. 1, 1939, to Arthur and Florence Stoner in Dayton, Ohio, and was one of six children. Larry married his wife, Joyce Lewis, on Dec. 1, 1961. The death of their infant son, Donny, in 1964 led them to question their beliefs.

The World Tomorrow radio program inspired them to order literature from the Radio Church of God. They started attending the Church together in 1966 with their two young children, Kenny and Jim.

Larry and Joyce went on to have two more boys, Tom in 1968 and Ron in 1970. They planned to stop there, but no one was more surprised than they were when their family continued to grow in 1981 with Jonathan and 1983 with Jennifer, their only girl.

Larry worked for over 40 years at PepsiCo as a repairman, using skills gained while he was in the Navy and a natural ability to fix things. He served as an usher at church services and as a parking attendant at the Feast of Tabernacles. He could fish for hours, was a great softball player, loved to golf and got great enjoyment out of practical jokes—but hated snakes!

Later in life Larry suffered from many health problems associated with diabetes and heart disease, and it was the combined effects of these illnesses that weakened his body to the point of death. Through these health trials, his character and faith were strengthened so that his example shone among his congregation and family.

He took great joy in attending services every week and also in family gatherings where he could spend time with his four granddaughters and seven grandsons. Larry built his life and family on God’s ways. It will be a great joy to be reunited with him in the big family reunion to come, when he will have a perfect spiritual body.

Verline Jantzen led a very long life in which she faithfully served God, the people of His Church and her family until her death on Dec. 19, 2011.

She was born Aug. 31, 1921, and married Alvin Ray Jantzen on May 10, 1946. The two were baptized by Herbert Armstrong in Big Sandy, Texas, during the summer of 1952.

Ray Jantzen was ordained a minister in 1960, and he and Verline spent time in Kansas, California and Colorado, serving the congregations in each state over 40 years together.

After Ray’s death in 1987, Verline ran the family cattle ranch and farm in Springfield, Colorado, where she had lived until her stroke just before the Feast in 2011.

Verline is survived by her three children, Kay, married to Randy Schreiber in Phoenix, Arizona; Loma, married to Jeffery Fowler in Parker, Colorado; and Larry in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

She is also survived by her grandchildren, Brandy (Ross) Klobuchar, Jennifer (Kurt) Lorhammer, Ida Amanda (Cleve) Seiferd, Benjamin Jantzen and Ariel Jantzen. Her brother Gary Hass from New Mexico and her great-grandchildren, Kyle, Blake and Marlea, also mourn her loss.

Verline had many friends and made a difference in many people’s lives. We await the soon-coming resurrection when we will see Verline and Ray again!

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 they 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.