Caring for the Brethren

From the President: Ghana, Asia and Foundation Institute

Personal Contact: Should I Tithe on My Social Security?

Portraits of Faith: Kingsley Mather
As we get deeper into the summer, it seems that there is no slowdown in activities. As I write this brief article, there are three major events being planned—our first ever all-African ministerial conference in Ghana, an upcoming trip to Asia and the first class of Foundation Institute. By the time you read this article, the ministerial conference in Ghana will be history. We are planning this conference for the last week of July. My trip to Asia will be from Aug. 20 through Sept. 3. And Foundation Institute begins classes on Aug. 13.

Joel Meeker, Clyde Kilough and Tom Clark will conduct the African conference. To my knowledge, this will be the first conference for the ministry in Africa in more than 20 years. Most of our ministers in Africa are unable to attend any U.S. conferences. At times it has been the cost; but at other times, the inability to get a visa to visit the U.S. (especially after 9/11). Most of the ministers in Africa (with a few exceptions) will be in attendance for a three-day meeting in Accra, Ghana. Ministers will be attending from Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Ghana.

In August I am planning a trip to Asia, an area that I have not visited in a few years. I am able to use the free tickets on South African Airways that were graciously given to the Church by a member earlier this year. This brings the cost of my air travel down by more than 90 percent. I am planning to visit Australia, Singapore and the Philippines on this trip. Dave Baker, the senior pastor for this region, and I will meet in Australia and travel together for the remainder of the trip. We are planning a ministerial conference while we’re in the Philippines. We currently have five elders and pastors there, but only two of them were able to attend the June conference. I have made several trips to the Philippines, but it has been more than 15 years since I was last in Australia, and this will be my first visit to Singapore.

Personal contact at every level within the Church is very important. Some believe that we can simply email one another and participate in teleconferences or video conferences and be able to do the work. But that is simply not true. The Scriptures refer to turning the hearts of fathers to children and hearts of children to fathers (Malachi 4:6) and people being emotionally “cut to the heart” upon hearing Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37). I am convinced that this type of emotional connection can only be made by face-to-face contact with the ministry and the brethren. To do this sometimes requires traveling to remote areas of the world. All of us who are involved in such travel sincerely request your prayers for safety and success.

In a few days, Foundation Institute will open its doors. With 19 students accepted and a few more being considered, we expect a lot of enthusiasm and excitement! Our biggest challenge will be assimilating everyone into our small office space.

Please continue to pray for the work. It is humbling to see how God has blessed our efforts. As one man put it recently, we have been blessed beyond our hopes and dreams.

Joan Franko
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Editor: Larry Salyer; Managing editor: Elizabeth Cannon Glasgow;
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Caring for the Brethren

The example of Jesus stands the test of time: He loved and took care of His flock, the people of God. His continuing care for us is as real and absolute today as it was in His earthly ministry.

by Richard Thompson, member of the Ministerial Board of Directors

THE GOSPEL OF MARK EMPHASIZES THE UNTIRING efforts of Christ to see, understand and then take action in caring for people from all walks of life.

One of the initial accounts in Mark helps us to understand the unending actions of Christ to reach out to those in need. According to Strong’s Concordance, a word which Mark used often in his Gospel is eutheos.

This word is used over 40 times in the Gospel of Mark. It means “directly,” that is, “at once” or “soon.” Strong’s Concordance also defines eutheos as “forthwith, immediately, shortly, straightway.” It is oftentimes used to show how Jesus would speak, comfort, heal, correct or perform a deed and immediately move on to another task at hand.

Jesus was God in the flesh. He grew tired, and there were times when He had to take time to rest; but as soon as possible, He was about the tasks at hand: preaching the gospel and caring for people.

Caring for God’s people in today’s world

Many of us are very busy with many personal responsibilities. Some are job-related, and others are “free time”-related. We may spend valuable time with family and friends. Recreation or hobbies may take some of our time. Use of the Internet, including Facebook, Twitter or other activities, may take up a great deal of our time.

An important question we need to ask ourselves is, “How much time do I spend in caring for God’s people, our brethren?”

What we do not want to happen is for someone in our congregation to slip through the cracks and not receive support and help in a time of need.

Practical actions to care for God’s people

It does not go without notice and some concern that there are many in God’s Church who are suffering from problems of all kinds: unemployment, family problems, health issues, discouragement, depression or addictions. Each of us does have a responsibility to God and His people to become aware of the needs of our brethren and do what we can to let them know that they are not alone.

For example, many if not most local churches have someone designated as a card maker. The cards are produced and usually are placed on the information table for us to sign. For those who are able to attend services on a regular basis, it is an added blessing to be able to stop by the information table, read to whom the card is addressed and simply sign the card. Letting someone know that there are brethren who care about him or her is most encouraging.

It seems like a week does not go by that a recipient of these congregation-produced cards does not comment on how much encouragement he or she received. Young people can help with this too. One simple action each of us can take is to make the effort each Sabbath to stop by the table and sign the cards.

In addition, many will either e-mail or send cards of a more personal nature to a person who needs help and encouragement. That only adds to the support that God gives to us through each other’s personal efforts.

Special prayer

In the past there have been individuals who wanted prayer but were hesitant to have their name mentioned publicly. That is entirely a personal matter. If a person desires to remain anonymous in a prayer request, it does not mean God cannot hear prayers for them.

Several years ago in a local congregation I asked a member and his wife to recruit some of the brethren to offer special prayer for brethren who needed help but wished to remain anonymous. The husband and wife team readily agreed to do so.
As specific individuals brought their problems to me, I would call the team leaders and give them the information regarding the member of God’s Church. They would then contact the other team members, and special prayer was offered for the person.

Over the next few weeks the team leaders would ask me how the person was doing, and I would update them. The person for whom they were praying were most thankful for the fact that brethren in the Church would take their own time and pray for them despite not having a name attached to it. What mattered most was praying for someone who had a need.

**Brethren who are unable to attend Sabbath services regularly**

Another group of brethren who need our special attention are those who are unable to attend Sabbath services, Bible studies, social activities and other programs of the Church.

Some of our elderly brethren are confined to nursing homes or assisted living facilities. In other cases they may be living with family members who are not a part of the Church. Jesus would never intend that they be overlooked or neglected in any way. Jesus was always active in His ministry to seek out those who needed special care, including those from whom others may shy away or simply ignore.

In Mark 1:40-45 we read the following: “Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, ‘If You are willing, You can make me clean.’ Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and **touched him**, and said to him, ‘I am willing; be cleansed.’ As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. And He strictly warned him and sent him away at once, and said to him, ‘See that you say nothing to anyone; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing those things which Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.’ However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction” (emphasis added).

This example stands out as exemplary in the ministry of Christ. He went to the physically unclean as well as the spiritually unclean. (Note that the first miracle in Mark’s Gospel is the casting out of a demon in the synagogue.) Mark’s account says that Jesus actually did what most people would never do: He touched a leper. This act of love and compassion showed the leper there was Someone who deeply cared about his condition enough to do the unspeakable by actually touching him.

Regardless of the type of difficulty or where the person was, Jesus acted when He knew there was a need. His example in taking action towards our brethren today is no less important. But He wants and intends that we, too, take action toward our brethren, who would be most encouraged and uplifted by knowing that we are praying on their behalf to our Father and Christ. When the apostle Paul spoke of our becoming a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2), this is one way he envisioned it. We give up our time and energy for the sake of someone other than ourselves.

**CARING HAND**

*Regardless of the type of difficulty or where the person was, Jesus acted when He knew there was a need. His example in taking action towards our brethren today is no less important.*

**God’s help in serving others is essential for good fruit to be produced**

In Mark 1:35 we read that after spending time healing and helping others, Jesus found time to pray to His and our Father. Jesus knew that, despite the needs of others, our time going to God and asking Him for His blessing, intervention, strength and personal help is absolutely necessary. We should never become so busy that we neglect so important a responsibility of keeping in contact with God and our Savior Jesus Christ. They, through the Holy Spirit, grant us the spiritual strength to be Their servants.
Feast of Tabernacles Site in Pacific Harbour, Fiji, Announced

We are organizing a small South Pacific Feast site in Pacific Harbour, Fiji, about two hours' drive by taxi from Nadi International Airport. Air Pacific, Air New Zealand, Qantas and other airlines offer regular flights to Fiji.

Twelve COGWA members (adults and children) reside in Fiji. We expect an overall attendance of about 50 people. This will be the first time since the mid-1990s that international visitors will be attending the Feast with the Fijian brethren.

Services will be in English, and we have already some confirmed attendees from Australia, New Zealand, Tonga and the U.S. The weather in October is normally about 80 degrees Fahrenheit (27 Celsius).

The location of the Feast site is The Pearl South Pacific resort (http://thepearlsouthpacific.com).

Due to limited capacity in our meeting facility, all attendees must apply and receive approval to attend this site from the Feast coordinator, Jeff Caudle. Hotel bookings at The Pearl South Pacific must also be made through the Feast coordinator.

A special nine-night room rate package (Sept. 30 to Oct. 9) has been negotiated at The Pearl South Pacific. The garden-view room rate is NZ$1,050 (approximately US$860) per adult for nine nights and includes a full buffet breakfast. The ocean-view room rate is NZ$1,300 (approximately US$1,070) per adult for nine nights, including full buffet breakfast. These rates are based upon double occupancy. Special provisions are available upon request for families with children under 14.

More information about tourism in Fiji may be found on www.tourismfiji.com and www.lonelyplanet.com/fiji.

The first service will be Sunday, Sept. 30, 2012, at 7 p.m.

For more information and to apply to attend the Fiji site, please contact Jeff Caudle by email at jeff.caudle@cogwa.org or call +64-9-8175855 (New Zealand). ☎️

U.S. Festival Special Music Coordinators’ Information

There is still time to provide enjoyable and inspiring music at the Feast of Tabernacles by volunteering to serve on the special music team. If you would like to help (choir, solos, instrumentals), please contact the special music coordinators listed below:

**Blue Harbor (Sheboygan)**
Scott Lord 585-544-5577
scott.lord@cogwa.org

**Branson**
Dave Myers 330-686-5881
dave.myers@cogwa.org

**Kerrville**
David Evans 513-254-7790
david.evans@cogwa.org

**Lake Harmony**
King Finlay 215-538-2115
king.finlay@cogwa.org

**Park City**
Dan Anderson 480-893-1999
dan.anderson@cogwa.org

**Pigeon Forge**
Ken Treybig 903-844-9246
ken.treybig@cogwa.org

**Santa Rosa**
Eric Evans 865-686-8627
eric.evans@cogwa.org

**St. Augustine**
Ivor Mitchell 281-705-2072
ivor@wunnah.net

Therefore, it is necessary that we do as Christ did and find the balance in how we spend our lives.

None of our brethren should ever come to a point where they feel abandoned or left alone. God intended that each of us do our part in serving God and His people. By serving God’s people, we are serving God (Matthew 25:31-46). It is helpful to check with your pastor regarding an individual you are concerned about since there may be special or extenuating circumstances he can help you with.

Jesus Himself is very much aware of the difficulties each of us faces daily. He is continually working to help all of us with His own personal intervention through His Spirit. But He wants us to be with Him as He serves the needs of others. He is the only perfect servant, but as we strive to be like Him, our efforts will bear fruit.

Perhaps there is someone in your congregation whom you have not seen lately or you know has been going through some rough times. A phone call, a note in the mail, an email or asking if you could come by and see them may be exactly what they need. And God, through you, can give a special blessing to them. ☎️
Personal Contact

Question: Should I tithe on my Social Security benefits?

by Cecil Maranville, manager of the Personal Correspondence Department

Answer: This is one of the most commonly asked questions that come through our office! We receive it once or more every month from someone.

Social Security benefits might come as a retirement or a disability pension. Neither is tithable income. In order to explain why it isn’t, let’s look at the framework the Bible gives us about the tithe.

Determining tithable income can be confusing, especially since the Bible first introduced it in terms of spoils of war—not a way we receive income! Abram (his name had not yet been changed to Abraham) met Melchizedek (the Word who later became Jesus Christ, John 1:1, 14) and gave Him a tithe of the spoils Abram won when rescuing his nephew Lot (Genesis 14:18-20).

“Tithe” is a little confusing itself, not being a commonly used word today. In the early 17th century, when the King James Version of the Bible was translated, the word meant simply a 10th.

Tithing was later explained to Israel in agricultural terms, since Israel’s was an agricultural economy for the most part. But because most of us are not in agriculture, the biblical explanation can be confusing. The tithe came out of what the land produced, “whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s. It is holy to the Lord. … And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the Lord” (Leviticus 27:30-32).

The tithing principle is further defined in Deuteronomy: “You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year” (Deuteronomy 14:22, emphasis added). The tithe was not simply the 10th of everything produced. It was a 10th of “the increase” in production. Increase is not the same as income. In one year, the crop yield may be so poor that it only returns the seed that was planted and the seed needed for next year’s crop. There is actually no increase that year, even though there was some harvest.

In a more typical year, there would be many bushels above and beyond the investment and the reserve held back to plant next year’s crop. One out of every 10 bushels of increase would be the tithe for God.

The above language about “under the rod” refers to counting the offspring of livestock. Animals were counted by driving them through a narrow passageway under a rod or staff.

In modern phrasing, increase generally means earnings or profit. The most obvious source of income today is the salary or wage an employee receives in return for his labor. Gross income is total earnings before deductions are taken out; net income is a closer representation of the increase or the tithable income. Yet not all deductions from one’s paycheck may be excluded from the tithing base. For example, voluntary deductions, such as savings, retirement accounts, charitable set-asides like United Way and others, are part of what we have control of and are part of our increase. These amounts have simply been diverted before we receive the check. They should be tithed on.

Not everyone receives his income as a wage. Some are business owners; some work on commissions; some are ranchers or farmers! But the biblical principles give us enough for each individual to make godly judgments about tithing. If you have questions about what is increase, please don’t hesitate to ask your pastor.

Today there are several broad categories of income that are not truly “increase,” just as in Israel when God governed it. In addition to Social Security benefits, some examples are pensions (including disability), unemployment insurance, veteran’s benefits, gifts, inheritances and loans. Most of these types of income are benefits that are given to people who are no longer part of the workforce and who are therefore not generating an “increase.”

However, some people receiving the nontithable types of income mentioned in the above paragraph might have other types of income that are tithable. For example, they might still be working at a job. Some might have money invested on which they earn interest (the interest earned is increase, because their money is “working” for them).

Someone receiving nontithable income might give a gift to the Church from it, but that would be an offering, not a tithe.
I've often read Isaiah 66:2 and wondered if I'm such a person, or what it even means to be “poor and of a contrite spirit.” Would we recognize when one such person walks into our life and the powerful impact he would have on us? Howard Wills was such a person.

Mr. Wills was born on Jan. 13, 1942, in Altavista, Virginia. He grew up in Virginia, graduating from Huddleston High School in Huddleston, Virginia, in June of 1960. The next year he voluntarily entered the U.S. Air Force and was honorably discharged on Feb. 12, 1964. It was during this time that he and his first wife, Diane, began listening to Herbert Armstrong on the radio whenever they would visit her family in Homestead, Florida. On Aug. 11, 1964, Mr. Wills attended the newly formed Miami congregation. Two years later he and his wife were baptized.

Thus began Mr. Wills’ dedication to God and God’s people. However, things were not always easy for him. There were many events in his life that would challenge even the strongest of God’s people. Just two short years after baptism, Diane died of cancer, and he was left to care for two small children. He did not fall under this trial, but he continued on in his quiet, unassuming way, taking care of his family. God blessed him in due time with Melba, his second wife, to help him care for his family and in his service to God and the Church.

Howard and Melba Wills served the Church in so many quiet ways, and in 1981 he was ordained a deacon. On April 12, 1993, Mr. Wills was ordained an elder. He became a pillar in the Miami congregation, attending every Sabbath service and every holy day that he could, realizing he had to remain close to God and the Church. He always knew who needed help, who needed a kind word, who needed an encouraging pat on the shoulder. He enjoyed the opportunity to travel to different areas of the United States and other countries to attend the Feast of Tabernacles and to meet with other brethren. But in everything he did, his focus was on serving the brethren and the Church.

In 1995 when the Church collapsed around us, I was left wondering who would remain among our brethren in the faith. The first service of the newly separated Miami congregation had 12 in attendance, among them Mr. and Mrs. Wills. He rapidly became a source of quiet strength and stability for our small and struggling congregation. Those years were not easy, with lots of tears for those we left behind and uncertainty about what lay ahead; but every Sabbath as I walked into services, Mr. Wills was always there with a smile and warm greeting. With his infectious belief that God would see us through those dark days, he rapidly became a pillar for all of us to grasp and hold. As our congregation faced many pressures from others to deviate from the truth, it was often difficult to know which way to go. The small congregation would discuss the issues, and it was Mr. Wills who would ask, “What would God want us to do?” and help us find the answer.

So, in January 2012 it was a shock when one Sabbath Mr. Wills was not there. He never missed services. He was always there. Then, the awful word came that he was in the hospital, and it didn’t look good. The leukemia took him so quickly and so cruelly that we never had a chance to say good-bye or tell him how much his faith and his example had meant to us over the years.

It is still hard to believe he is gone, and tears still come when we see his empty seat at Church. Slowly, we in Miami are beginning to understand the hundreds of little things that Mr. Wills did for us—his constant service to the Church in ensuring that services would run smoothly, that we would have a place to meet, that the janitor would be there, that the doors would be open, and that those in need were taken care of. But the depth of our loss is the understanding that we have lost a truly humble servant of God.

We now understand that in our midst was such a man that the Lord describes: “But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word” (Isaiah 66:2). We look forward to the day when we will see Mr. Wills again!
“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints,” (Psalm 116:15). These words were quoted by Arnold Hampton as he eulogized his friend and colaborer in the faith Kingsley Mather.

Kingsley Mather died after a short illness at the age of 72 on June 2, 2012. Those of us here in the Bahamas and across the wider Caribbean Islands continue to mourn his death.

For many of us, Mr. Mather’s death marks the end of an era—an era that spans almost 40 years of dedication and loyalty that he and his wife, Janice, gave to God’s work and to the brethren in the Bahamas and the Caribbean.

Unfortunately, it is mostly in death that we take note of the true worth of a man.

Over the past 40 years there have been many changes within the Church of God in this region. Today we are small and scattered, but we know that despite this we were truly blessed to have a pastor whose love and dedication to God’s way and God’s work was unmovable and unshakable.

His reputation as a man of integrity and godliness is well-known, and no one can deny his desire to serve and share his knowledge of God’s way of life with others. To those who worked with him, he was a workaholic; and although he was not a perfect human, he was a perfectionist. Everything he did was done decently and in order. There were many along

the way who may have criticized Mr. Mather for his way of doing things, but we dare to say that there is hardly anyone who could sincerely criticize him as a man of God.

Mr. Mather’s position as head of the Caribbean region and his desire to care for and feed the flock called for him to spend much of his time traveling. These travels included visiting brethren on the islands of the Bahamas—Grand Bahama, Long Island and Abaco—as well as the islands of Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Trinidad and other Caribbean islands, and into the interior of Guyana. Whether it was traveling to visit one member or 10, a two-hour journey or a two-day journey, travel by plane or the back of a pickup truck, Mr. Mather found his way to the flock for which he was called to care.

In an effort to better serve the brethren, Mr. Mather introduced the MegaMeeting program to Sabbath services. As many of the congregations in the Caribbean did not have a local minister, the MegaMeeting was created to enable the scattered brethren in these islands to come together as one group for Sabbath services. It was also used as a training tool for the men in the different islands to develop the skills necessary to serve and, in Mr. Mather’s words, “to take over when I am gone.”

Through the use of this technology, brethren on the islands of St. Kitts, Trinidad and St. Lucia; in Nassau and Freeport, Bahamas; and sometimes in Guyana come together each Sabbath as one family, all receiving the same spiritual food. On any given Sabbath, song services would be conducted from one island, while opening and closing prayers came from another. The sermonette came from yet another, and the sermon was usually given by Mr. Mather in Nassau or by Mr. Hampton on his visits to Barbados.

Mr. Mather was overjoyed to address multiple congregations in the Caribbean each week and relieved that so many brethren no longer had to rely on videotaped sermons. He was even more overjoyed as he watched the men through the region develop their leadership and speaking skills.

Our time shared and spent with Mr. Mather in this life is over, and all that is left now is our memories. Despite our loss, we take consolation in the fact that those of us across the Caribbean, united by the Spirit of God and drawn closer together by the use of technology, can now move forward building on the foundation and example set for us by our late pastor as we continue to “press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).
Teens Dance in the Streets of Paris at Pittsburgh Prom

Fifty teens spent an “evening in Paris” on Saturday night, April 21. The Pittsburgh Airport DoubleTree Hotel was transformed into a scene from the streets of France, decked out with a replica of the Eiffel Tower set against a lavender sky.

Graduating seniors were recognized for both their service to the congregations and for their achievements in school and community. Each attendee was given a miniature chocolate Eiffel Tower, along with a wrapped box of chocolates. Various additional prizes were given out throughout the evening.

After the Sabbath, the dancing went on for hours until the clock struck midnight and the parents were past ready for bed.

The after-prom picnic on Sunday at nearby Moon Park was the coldest on record, but thankfully the forecasted rain held off. A taco bar buffet was provided for the teens and families; and as always, there were basketball and football games to keep the teens warm. A cool spring “weekend in Paris” will be remembered for years to come.

Lisa Kifer

Southeastern Prom Honors 2012 High School Graduates

Families representing seven states enjoyed a weekend of fun and fellowship on May 5 and 6, 2012.

Morning services in Jefferson and afternoon services in Atlanta were buzzing with excitement as teens and their families were reunited with friends they last saw at the Feast or Winter Family Weekend. Several special music selections were performed by the teens; and Mark Winner gave the sermon, emphasizing the importance of honoring God’s name by not taking it in vain and maintaining a good name by the example we set for ourselves, God and the Church.

The evening was spent at the Crowne Plaza with dinner and dancing. A special tribute acknowledged the graduating class of 2012, with speeches from graduates Kelley Cohron, Rachel Mez and Rebekah Mez, who shared their high school experiences and encouraged the teens to stay close to God and to stand up for their convictions.

After the Sabbath, the teens danced the night away to the sounds of our guest deejay Mark Winner. An assortment of music was enjoyed by all as parents fellowshipped and the teens filled the floor, especially for line dancing. Souvenir T-shirts were provided at the end of the evening.

Breakfast in the Park took place the next morning at Terrell Mill Park, giving the teens another opportunity to spend time together before heading home. Homemade pancakes, turkey bacon, fruit and beverages were provided for everyone’s enjoyment. Fond farewells started around 11 a.m., and wishes of safe travels were given to all as our distant and local families headed home.

Chant’a Collier

cogwa.org
Celebration Party Held to Honor Graduating Cousin Duo

On June 2, 2012, the Hickory congregation held a surprise celebration for two lovely young ladies who just happen to be cousins: Hannah Baker and Brittany Baker. Nineteen-year-old Hannah, the daughter of Dave and Dorrie Baker, earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from Thomas Edison State College.

Her 16-year-old cousin, Brittany, the daughter of Mark and Stephanie Baker, earned her high school diploma from Penn Foster High School. Very dedicated families taught both girls at home.

After the conclusion of Sabbath services, local elder Larry Lambert presented the graduates with small gifts and a cake. Then the congregation enjoyed special refreshments and fellowship with one another.

### Jazmine Aviles

**Parents’ names:** Jennifer and Armando Aviles  
**Congregation:** Dallas, Texas  
**High school accomplishments:** Jazmine graduated from Berkner High School. She was a member of National Art Honor Society, Berkner Girls Service Society, Key Club, Impact (leadership skills), Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and choir.  
**Church activities/hobbies/interests:** Jazmine enjoys making people laugh as well as singing and spending time with family and friends. She also likes spending time with her horse Spirit.  
**Plans after graduation:** Jazmine plans to attend Richland Community College for two years to get her associate degree, and then she will transfer to a university to study either forensic science or psychology.

### Elizabeth Robles

**Parents’ names:** Adan and Martina Robles  
**Congregation:** Dallas, Texas  
**Church activities/hobbies/interests:** Elizabeth is fluent in English and Spanish and enjoys cooking Mexican food, music and traveling. She also enjoys watching television, sleeping and shopping.

**Plans after graduation:** Elizabeth completed her high school education while attending Richardson Community College. There she earned an associate degree in science upon graduation.

### Danielle Smith

**Parents’ names:** James and Cathy Smith  
**Congregation:** Dallas, Texas  
**Church activities/hobbies/interests:** When she’s not studying or babysitting, Danielle enjoys reading, listening to music, going for walks with her best friend, as well as painting. And if that doesn’t keep her busy enough, she also sings and plays three instruments (and counting). Within the Church, she has enjoyed helping plan the annual Dallas teen formal as well as occasionally singing in the choir.

**Plans after graduation:** Danielle can’t wait to start building her future. She hopes to one day be able to travel the world! At the top of her list of dream destinations are Germany and Switzerland. But for now, her plans are to attend Collin College to get her basics out of the way and discover what the future holds for her.
News From the Congregations

Colorado Brethren Steel Their Stomachs at Roadkill Potluck

On March 17, 2012, the combined congregations of Berthoud and Castle Rock, Colorado, hosted an evening to remember! Services were followed by a Bible study on the General Epistles, focusing primarily on the book of James. After the Bible study, however, things began to get a little strange!

The congregations were treated—or subjected—to a “Roadkill Potluck.” Tables were transformed into roads and decorated with animal candy. Crossing signs decorated the walls. “Antifreeze” and “windshield wiper fluid” punches were served from a punch bowl inside a giant truck tire, but the real fun was the food!

Members were encouraged to come up with titles for their potluck entries in the style of the Roadkill Cafe menu. Those more ambitious went a step further and decorated their food “appropriately.” Submissions titled “chili con carnage,” “coon kabobs,” “the chicken that tried to cross the road” and “Irish roadkill” (smashed potatoes) whetted everyone’s appetite for the visual presentations of “rattlesnake sushi” and “bugs on a windshield!” (Note: No raccoons, rattlesnakes, bugs or other roadkill were actually served.)

Later in the evening, hand-decorated certificates were given out for Best Presentation and Best Title in three categories: entree, side dish and dessert.

The good humor continued as the sun went down, games and karaoke were set up, and people got into their costumes. Two stations were set up with a Nintendo Wii, where a large group danced the night away, while others took advantage of the karaoke to serenade the bystanders.

Morgantown Men Treat Ladies to Mother’s Day Breakfast

May 12, 2012, was a special day for all the ladies in the Morgantown, West Virginia, congregation. It was the annual day the men treat the ladies to breakfast in honor of Mother’s Day.

All the men met together weeks in advance to decide the menu, decide who would bring what and determine who would do the cooking and serving. The menu this year consisted of pancakes, eggs, sausage, fruit cup, cheese danish and, of course, juice and coffee. The men not only cooked the meal but served it by the plate.

It was a change to see the men in aprons with spatulas. One even wore a chef’s hat. Each lady was presented with a rose. Everyone enjoyed the day—from the servers to the served.

Sera Grabowski

Sherry Beilstein
Closing the Final Chapter of the Canton Congregation

The Sabbath of May 26, 2012, marked the final gathering for the Canton, Ohio, congregation, which was started 33 years ago. The day was filled with tribute to the beloved final pastor and wife, Chris and Angela Moen, who have selflessly served and cared for the members of the close-knit congregation since transferring into the area in 2006.

The Canton congregation began in 1979 with John Foster. In the mid-1980s Vincent Panella was transferred in, followed by Don Henson, Doug Johnson and finally Chris Moen.

The final service included several special music pieces. Mr. Moen’s final message focused on finding our spiritual gifts and, as always, left everyone encouraged as they looked forward to a new chapter. Following an emotional closing prayer, a poem written by a dear member, Shirley Topovski, was read and presented to Mr. and Mrs. Moen.

Gifts from the congregation were presented as well. The Sabbath school class along with their instructors presented a framed collage of their handprints and a message of gratitude. A beautiful serving platter complete with a personalized, engraved message was presented, as well as a wooden wall hanging. Ed Troyer, who is known for his word search puzzles, handed out a custom word search of “Moen Family” words, which had everyone smiling.

The final meal together was a beautiful Thanksgiving-themed dinner, including all the trimmings and tasty desserts to follow.

The Moens will truly be missed for their hugs, smiles and for the love they showed to each member during their time serving the area. As the Moens commence their new congregational duties in the Indianapolis, Indiana, and Newark and Cincinnati, Ohio, circuit, we wish them all the best.

The Beginning of a New Congregation in Northeastern Ohio

Just over 90 people from the former Akron and Canton, Ohio, congregations met together for the first Sabbath as one congregation on June 2. Brethren gathered in a brand-new hall with all the amenities that will make it a perfect place to keep God’s Sabbath. We were delighted to hear special music, “On Eagle’s Wings,” performed by Judy Troyer and Linda Hawk. Our minister, Dave Myers, spoke to us on building bridges among people.

After services we enjoyed a large, delicious potluck meal and a “get to know you” game. It was exciting to fellowship with old and new friends. We look forward to many years of happy memories as a new congregation.

Toronto Welcomes Back Student

The Toronto, Ontario, Canada, congregation was excited to welcome Kristina Archer back after a year at Angers University in central France. Nine-year-old Lillian Bowman presented her with a rose bouquet after services on June 16, 2012. A “welcome home” carrot cake was also presented to her by the congregation.
The St. Louis, Missouri, congregation held a graduation ceremony for its Sabbath school participants on May 26, 2012. There were two classes, consisting of pre-K through second grade and third grade through fifth grade. The younger class covered topics that included God’s days of creation, Cain and Abel, Noah’s ark, the Tower of Babel and Abraham’s faith in God. The older class covered the 10 Commandments in depth. Both classes had festival lessons taught in their due seasons. The year was quite productive and fun for all.

Tammy Holman

The St. Louis Sabbath school students present their certificates

Austin Gathers for Picnic and Amazing Race

On April 22, 2012, the Austin, Texas, congregation gathered at Katherine Fleischer Park in Wells Branch (settled in 1855). Approximately 70 people enjoyed the fun, fellowship and especially the food—consisting of steak, fresh fish, fresh salads and many desserts. The featured fun event was the “Amazing Race,” consisting of multiple events such as bubble gum blowing and hula hooping, which made for great entertainment.

Carl Cooper

Dallas Cheers the Texas Rangers to Baseball Victory

Over 50 members from the Dallas, Sherman and Fort Worth, Texas, congregations enjoyed an evening at the ballpark in Arlington on Mother’s Day. With a sellout crowd and temperatures in the 80s, the atmosphere was primed for a great baseball game. Everyone enjoyed watching the Texas Rangers beat the Los Angeles Angels—especially when Nelson Cruz hit a tie-breaking grand slam in the third inning. The final score was a 13-6 victory for the Rangers.

Nonetheless, the highlight of the evening seemed to be the granddaddy of hot dogs named the “Boomstick,” a one-pound, all-beef hot dog that comes with two feet of exotic bread flown in from France and is topped with chili, sautéed onions and shredded cheese. Tanya Horchak gave it the all-American try, but had to have a little assistance from her daughter and son-in-law, Becky and Mike Gutierrez.

Although Yu Darvish did not pitch this game, the Texas Rangers didn’t disappoint, and there is talk of a future 2012 game for those die-hard fans who want another shot at the Boomstick!

Melanie Bynum
Amber Clark recently became a baptized member of the Austin, Texas, congregation. Her baptism took place after services at the hall on May 26, 2012. She was warmly welcomed to the family by all those who attended.

Cara Mills, who attends the Austin congregation, was also recently baptized. Her baptism took place after services at the hall on June 23, 2012. Since we have a facility at the hall, those of the congregation who wanted to attend her baptism could do so; and afterward, she was warmly welcomed by all.

Ruthe Swisher first heard about God’s truth 10 years ago. Like many people, she heard about the Church from an acquaintance who received *The Good News* magazine and soon requested the *Bible Study Course*, which she studied for several years.

Eventually, she learned that a friend’s son attended the Church, and he put in a call to the local pastor, Tom Clark, who immediately helped her arrange to attend services for the first time in late 2010.

Every conversion story is unique and exciting. What makes this one so inspiring is that unlike so many others in the Church of God, Mrs. Swisher was 80 years old when she first attended Sabbath services in the Church of God.

Ruthe Swisher was born in northern Wisconsin in 1930. Always ambitious and tenacious, she worked as a real estate broker until transitioning into home health care in the 1970s when the real estate market fell apart. She has six children—three boys and three girls—who have given her 14 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren (so far). She considers herself tremendously blessed to have much of her family close by.

After attending services for just over a year, Mrs. Swisher commemorated her commitment to God’s way of life by being baptized into the Church of God on March 17, 2012, during the Twin Cities Families Glorifying God weekend. She was baptized by her local pastor, Mr. Clark, as well as Clyde Kilough, who was visiting for the weekend, and Gary Black. It was noted that Mrs. Swisher, at 82, is the oldest person any of these ministers had ever baptized.

If there’s one lesson that Mrs. Swisher has taught her newly minted spiritual family in the Twin Cities congregation, it’s that it truly is never too late to follow God.

Aimee Lemen
Jim Price and Kitty Mooney met while working at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland in 1961. They were married on April 14, 1962. Kitty began studying literature from the Worldwide Church of God in 1964 without knowing that the Church had local congregations across the U.S., but in 1966 she learned of a congregation in Baltimore. It was here that she and Jim’s mother, Effie Price, first started attending. They were both baptized on the same day in August 1966. Jim was quickly convinced of the truth and was baptized in 1969.

While Jim traveled for his job, traveling most of the lower 48 states and throughout Canada, Kitty “held down the fort” as five children were added to the family. Jim and Kitty later moved to North Carolina, Kitty’s native state, and remained there until retiring to east Tennessee. Their 50 years together have posed many challenges and trials, including the accidental death of their youngest son in 2000, but have also evidenced that God never leaves us and fills our lives with innumerable blessings.

Jim and Kitty’s 50th anniversary was honored with a champagne brunch at their home, hosted by their children, Jim Jr., Lorna Cushman, Laura Miller and Lisa Wright. They also took a trip to historic Williamsburg, Jamestown and Yorktowne, Virginia.

Jim and Kitty attend the Asheville, North Carolina, congregation.

Jane Dean
cogwa.org
William “Bill” E. Anderson was born on April 24, 1931, and died on March 11, 2012.

Mr. Anderson first heard the truth by listening to Herbert Armstrong on the radio in his car. Bill was baptized on Aug. 23, 1966, and was later ordained as a deacon on March 20, 1970. He attended church as a member of the Kansas City, Kansas, congregation along with his wife, Barbara, as well as his son and daughter-in-law, Brad and Katherine Anderson. His grandson and his wife, Sam and Brittany Anderson, attend the Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation. He is survived by three children, Donna, Brad and David; and two step-children, Laura Hayden and Paul Briscoe. He had 12 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Anderson served God’s people in many ways. Back in the days of the Worldwide Church of God when the request was made for volunteers to help build the large metal tabernacle building in the Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri, Bill volunteered. He drove three hours, from Topeka to the Lake of the Ozarks, each evening after a full day’s work. He served as the Festival coordinator for the Topeka, Kansas, congregation, oversaw the setup of the sound system, recorded services and distributed the recordings to the shut-in brethren, and also served as a song leader and gave sermonettes.

Bill was a mentor to many of us in his family and in God’s Church. He was always willing to help out when there was a need. One of his favorite things to do was to spend time with his family, playing games, teaching guitar, having a sing-along, and playing ball and cars with the young ones.

Katherine Anderson

Eldora Waldroop, a beloved member of the Raleigh, North Carolina, congregation, died April 5, 2012.

She is survived by her son, Ben Proctor, and his wife, Debbie, as well as her daughter, Karen Stewart. At 91 years old, she enjoyed her 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Eldora was remembered fondly during a memorial service in Raleigh, which was officiated by Clyde Kilough.

Born on Feb. 12, 1921, in Struthers, Ohio, Eldora moved with her family to the Sacramento, California, area where she lived much of her life. Growing up as a child of the Depression, she still always gave generously. She was also a loving and faithful family member who, for many years, honorably took care of her own mother and her brother, Virgil.

Eldora deeply touched the lives of many. Fellow Church members knew her as a great example of a godly woman of strength and conviction through some challenging times in her life.

Eldora was widely regarded as a woman of impeccable taste. This style was demonstrated in how she kept her home and also reflected in her clothing—and especially those lovely hats.

In her later years of life she was able to move to North Carolina to be closer to her son, Ben, where he and his wife took care of her for the last 4½ years of her life. Perhaps she will be most remembered for “enduring to the end,” as she was so often saying to fellow Church members to encourage them to do the same.

Anthony Reisdorff
Frank Jewell was born Sept. 26, 1939, in Sanford, North Carolina, and died March 27, 2012.

He has two younger brothers, James and Ed, who live in Raleigh, North Carolina. He graduated from high school in 1957 and enlisted in the Air Force right after graduating. He worked in new construction, mainly in power and chemical plants; but when he had a near fatal accident at the Phillips Petroleum plant in Pasadena, Texas, in 1985, he then began a courier service position until his retirement.

When Frank met his wife, Alice, she was working as a waitress in Richmond, Texas. They dated for a couple of months, and Alice realized she had met a good man. When he proposed, she said yes, with no doubts whatsoever. Alice and Frank were married in March 1977. Both were 37 years old. Frank helped raise Alice’s four children, Alton, Terry, Michael and Sherry. A year after they were married, they welcomed their own baby girl, Tina.

When Alice was making plans to attend her first Feast of Tabernacles in Big Sandy, Texas, Frank asked her if he could come too. Frank started attending the Church of God in 1985 and was baptized in 1987. Alice didn’t know that he would be called into God’s Church; but when he was, their lives were changed forever.

Frank loved to open his home to people, having dinners and offering his backyard pool when new members were being baptized. He never really knew a stranger, and he was friendly to everyone, from a lady walking her dog to a policeman patrolling the neighborhood.

Frank was upbeat and cheerful, even with his ordeal with cancer. Frank had a boisterous laugh and a jovial personality; and his sincerity for God’s truth made him a true friend, a caring father and grandfather, and a cherished companion. He loved the Church and God’s people and remained faithful to the end.

He will be deeply missed by all his friends and family and will always be remembered. I can clearly hear him say to us all: “Don’t worry about me. You hold on together; I will see you later.”

Yes, dear friend, we will see you later.

Robert and Carol Zamora

Alfred William Camp, age 83, of Toccoa, Georgia, died, Wednesday, May 9, 2012, at the Tranquility Hospice in Austell, Georgia.

He was born Aug. 31, 1928, in Toccoa to John Earl and Florence Thomas Camp. He was a self-employed piano technician and worked for Lovell Piano Company for several years.

Mr. Camp was a former president of the Stephens County Chapter of the Georgia Council for the Blind for many years. He also had a band, Al Camp and the Night Owls, which played for seven nursing homes for over 40 years.

Mr. Camp was a U.S. Army Korean War veteran, where he lost his sight during the conflict. He received the Silver Star and the Purple Heart.

He is survived by his wife, Cora Bryson Camp; daughters and sons-in-law, Dolores and David Rutenber and Debra and Jeffery Williams; and five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Mr. Camp also has three living brothers and three sisters.

Mr. Camp was a longtime member of God’s Church and attended services in Jefferson, Georgia. Bruce Gore, pastor of the Jefferson congregation, officiated at his funeral on May 12, 2012.

Donna Quintana
We encourage members to send announcements to be featured in One Accord. We feature events in members' lives, including baptisms, 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.

Violet Stroud of the Van Buren, Arkansas, congregation died on Sabbath, May 12, 2012, at the age of 89. She was a faithful member of the Church of God for nearly 50 years.

Mrs. Stroud was born Jan. 17, 1923, near Mansfield, Arkansas. She was baptized in September of 1961 in Southern California and observed the Feast of Tabernacles for the first time that year in Squaw Valley. She was a member of the Church of God in Southern California until she and her husband moved back to Arkansas in 2002. For the last 10 years of her life she attended church in Van Buren, where she became a valued member of the congregation.

Mrs. Stroud was preceded in death by her husband, Charles. Although her husband was not a member of the Church, he cherished his wife and respected her faith. He devotedly drove her to services every week.

Mrs. Stroud is survived by her three daughters, Lillie Barnes and Angela Stroud, of Mansfield, Arkansas, and Gail Stroud of San Diego, California. At the time of her death, she had nine grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and five great-great-grandchildren. She is also survived by a sister, Irene Gann, also of Mansfield; a niece, Betty Cline; and a nephew, Paul Thomas.

Mrs. Stroud was a delight to have around and a wonderful Christian example for her congregation. She identified herself by her service and caring for others and was saddened when she became too ill to help her family and friends. She did not judge but looked for the good in everyone. Kind and gentle, yet able to speak her mind, Violet was regarded by the brethren as a source of strength and wisdom.

A great friend to many, Violet will be sorely missed.

Lori Hull

Forest Paul Brannon Sr. was born Nov. 10, 1926. He married Magilee Belue on April 2, 1963, in Chappells, South Carolina. At the time of his death, they were only one year from their 50th wedding anniversary.

Forest and Magilee started attending the Church of God in 1972 and continued attending until 1993, when they were no longer able to attend. Mr. Brannon died from heart failure and is survived by his wife, Magilee, and his three children, Paul Brannon, Cindy Frick and Renee Leitzsey. Both Cindy and Renee attend the Columbia, South Carolina, congregation of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association.

Graveside services were held on June 20, 2012, and officiated by Columbia pastor Don Waterhouse. Mr. Brannon will be deeply missed by all his family.

Nancy Lochner

Dorothy Louis (Youmann) Franklin was born on Jan. 12, 1924, in Henry, South Carolina. As a young woman, she worked at Fort Screven military base in Georgia where she met Joseph Lee Franklin Jr. while he was serving in the army. They married on May 22, 1943, in Georgia. After World War II ended, Mr. and Mrs. Franklin moved to Vancouver, Washington, where Joseph was originally from.

While living in Vancouver, they started listening to The World Tomorrow broadcast and, after several years, began attending the Radio Church of God in the late 1950s. Mr. Franklin had promised her they would move back to South Carolina, which they did in the '80s. The Franklins attended God's Church for many years in the Columbia congregation.

Mrs. Franklin was preceded in death by her husband in 1997. She died from a blood infection on March 27 after a stroke and heart attack at the age of 88. She is survived by their four children, Francis Sell, Brian Franklin, Calvin Franklin and Teresa Franklin.

Graveside services were conducted by Don Waterhouse, pastor of the Columbia congregation of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association. She will be missed by all her immediate and Church family.

Nancy Lochner

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Go to www.LifeHopeandTruth.com, and explore our new flagship website for preaching the gospel!