The Great Winter Camp Migration

International Report: From Moradabad to Sri Lanka

Sharpening Iron: The Measure of Our Days

Winter Family Weekend Buzzes With Fellowship
God is working out a wonderful long-term plan that involves all of mankind. He has revealed that plan to His Church—in large measure through His holy days. Not only does the Church look forward with great anticipation to each of these holy days, but they also become a yearly guide for living.

For almost 35 years (1972-2006) I served in the field ministry of the Church of God. For most of that time, I was a church pastor, serving congregations in Georgia, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Texas. As a pastor, I took seriously the admonition to provide meat in due season. I realized that to accomplish that goal I needed to plan an annual calendar of sermon topics for the local congregation. It probably won’t surprise you to know that most of my scheduling was done around the annual holy days.

When you read this letter, it will be less than eight weeks until the Passover. The Passover is observed during the first month of the year according to the Hebrew calendar, which corresponds with spring in the northern hemisphere. I took the time each year prior to Passover to plan my messages for the spring festivals. In addition to preparing sermons, I knew that I needed to prepare myself spiritually. The reality is that you can’t inspire others unless you are inspired yourself.

My personal preparation for the spring holy days normally began with the self-examination that is referenced by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 13:5. He writes: “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.” While it may seem a little strange after all these years to even ask this question, it is a very important one as we approach the spring holy days.

Each year about this time, I would plan topics that were relevant to the season. I almost always gave a sermon on repentance, to point out that this is an ongoing attitude and approach to God and not a one-time event. In Acts 2:38 we have this admonition from Peter: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” I would also plan a sermon on the subject of forgiveness; another one on discouragement; a historical message on the life of Christ and what He faced as He approached the Passover; another sermon on the events that took place on that final Passover before Christ died; a sermon or two on the need to remove sin from our lives; another on the meaning of leavening and unleavened bread.

My goal each year was to inspire brethren to make the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread exciting events, full of meaning and focused on God and His plan of salvation. I always felt that my job as a pastor was to help everyone prepare for these days. Although the subjects were similar from year to year, my goal was to make sure that each sermon was fresh, containing new material along with enthusiasm for God’s festivals.

I believe that God gave us the festivals for important reasons, and one is to serve as a marker of time or a timetable, if you will. I want to encourage everyone to begin making plans now for the upcoming Passover and spring holy days. Don’t let them sneak up on you. They are part of God’s timetable, given to make sure we are always working on our spiritual lives. It is a challenge to be prepared physically and spiritually, but the reward will be an inspiring and uplifting Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread season!
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and the warmth of hugs filled the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky, during the Winter Family Weekend, Dec. 21 to 25. The weekend began Friday evening with Clyde Kilough’s Bible study on Psalm 1 and the depth of meaning hidden in those few verses. On Sabbath morning the attendees were faced with choosing two seminars from among the many interesting topics that beckoned. In the afternoon 715 people (plus 305 web connections, many representing entire congregations) gathered to worship God. In his sermon Doug Horchak asked whether we would like specific instruction from Christ to help us make it through unseen events. He then showed us the instruction is available through the Sermon on the Mount.

Sunday through Tuesday were filled with games for the children, sports for teens and adults, and go-karts for those who love speed. Continuing education seminars on such varied topics as “How Was the Bible Formed?” “Three Postmodern Virtues: Diversity, Tolerance and Coexistence,” “What Is a Covenant?” “The Culture of Criticism,” among others.

While the days were busy, the evenings were filled with social activities, such as dances, novelty Olympics, the Family Fun Fair, karaoke and much more. With each activity, the fellowship continued. Whether catching up with old friends or making new ones, the buzz of voices and laughter was constant throughout the weekend. As one attendee said, “We find a wonderfully warm and welcoming atmosphere. … [It’s been] a truly joyful time to renew, build anew and strengthen Church friendships.” One couple said, “We truly did enjoy ourselves. … There’s an environment of such value to so many of us at different places in our lives. Young or old, it is such a good thing.” If you come once, you’ll find that you want to return each year. —Carolyn Winner

Pursuing Righteousness

This page: Kenny Griswold and children cut a rug at the family dance; Amy and Steven Duncan perform at the open jam session; Chris and Isaac Leyden take it all in

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Richard Pinelli and Ron Degagne engage in one of many animated conversations; Karen Deaton dons her funky hat at the funky hat family dance; Liz and Asher Pennington take a break in the action; Amy Duncan serves up at a volleyball game; Anderson Waddle and David Babcock compete at the children’s games; A.J. Bradley and Nathaniel Martin share a laugh in the Galt House lobby (photos by Karen Deaton)
The 2013 Feast coordinators’ meetings were held at the Church headquarters in Allen, Texas, on Jan. 8 and 9. Ten coordinators (nine U.S. coordinators and Arnold Hampton, representing the Caribbean) heard and shared material covering a number of topics, including an overview of last year’s Feast, budgeting, our registration process, liability and safety issues, and technical services. A lengthy discussion was also conducted on our site selection policy.

The spirit and tone of the meetings quickly got off to an encouraging start with positive news about the work of the Church, followed by a reminder of what is the most important focus for us to have in coordinating the various Feast sites. President Jim Franks, in his opening message, shared how important it is for us to continually stay focused on the spiritual aspect of the Feast. Everything we do at the Feast must be driven with this spiritual focus and priority in mind. He also shared suggestions he received from members for the coordinators to consider and discuss with regard to future Feast site planning.

In 2013 we will have the following U.S. Feast site locations (from east to west): St. Augustine, Florida; Lake Harmony, Pennsylvania; Pigeon Forge, Tennessee; Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Branson, Missouri; Kerrville, Texas; Park City, Utah; Rocklin, California; and Hapuna Beach, Hawaii. Write-ups for each of these sites, as well as many international sites, will be made available to all members before registration begins.

During the meetings, there was discussion on contract terms and how to negotiate a favorable contract. Legal language is continually changing, and it is important we recognize what specific terms mean for the Church and the rental facility.

Manpower was another topic of discussion. As Ministerial Services is responsible for staffing at the Feast sites, Doug Horchak led a discussion addressing the staffing needs at each U.S. site, as well as international areas, in an effort to ensure that all Feast sites have the manpower needed to effectively handle the speaking assignments and other responsibilities.

The question of how we can best use technology to help the greatest number of members was also considered. As more people become unable to drive long distances to attend the Feast, the need for the Church to provide live services into specific small sites or homes via computer continues to increase. Jerry Rehor led a discussion on technical goals we have or need to consider for future years. For example—could we have a live video link between many or most sites if desired? What would it take to make this happen? What specific equipment would be needed to enable us to consider such a live video link? What technical skills would be needed at each site for this to occur? We had a short discussion on QR tags and whether or not we need to begin using those. And we discussed the importance of video recording services at all U.S. sites.

On the second day Dave Myers joined the Feast coordinators’ meeting remotely, from his home, by online video to discuss all aspects of special music at the Feast sites. He also led a short discussion on youth education at the Feast.

The biggest single item on the meeting agenda and the most energizing conversation took place around the topic of why we keep the Feast as we do. What are the scriptural objectives for the Church to provide locations or sites for observing the Feast? This led us to a scriptural discussion citing information and examples from Deuteronomy, Leviticus, John 4, as well as Hebrews 3 and 4. Everyone attending appreciated the opportunity to reexamine just exactly why we do what we do and the biblical principles we consider when planning to provide Feast sites for God’s people to worship Him.

Jim Franks then closed the meetings by reiterating that there are always things we can do better, and it is important we think about how to improve the impact and effectiveness of any and all areas of the Feast. He stated, “The membership deserves our absolute best.”

With that, the coordinators who did not have to fly home right after the meetings ended enjoyed one final meal together before they, too, headed home. —Mark Winner
Encouraging the Brethren

by Ralph Levy

For the second time since the inception of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, I visited the Dominican Republic, a Spanish-speaking nation on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. I have been visiting the small group there since 2004.

The last time I was there was in the spring of 2012, when we held a Passover service for two of the baptized members of the Church and myself. Since then, one member, Australia Cunillera, has moved to Florida with her husband, reducing the number of members by one.

I arrived in Santo Domingo late on Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013, and stayed for four days. During that time I spoke with member Juan Núñez, who lives with his family in Mao, Valverde, on the western side of the nation. I was not able to visit with Juan on this occasion, but was glad to hear his family is doing well and that they listen to Church services from Santiago, Chile, on a regular basis.

On Friday, Jan. 4, I was invited to dinner with Zoraya Díaz and two prospective members, Damaris Salomón and Milagros Núñez, along with Milagros’ two children, Angélica and Ángel. We discussed news of the Church and their situation as members and prospective members in the Dominican Republic.

On the Sabbath of Jan. 5 we had a Bible study in Zoraya’s home, attended by Zoraya; another member, Altagracia Melenciano; Damaris; Milagros; and a visitor. We discussed the importance of organization in the lives of individual Christians and in the Church and explored possibilities for the group of ladies to attend the Feast of Tabernacles at a Spanish-speaking site this year. The members and prospective members present all expressed their desire to keep the Feast in person (rather than via electronic connection) this year, and we will be praying that will be possible.

I returned to Dallas on Sunday, Jan. 6, the day before the start of second-semester classes at Foundation Institute. I hope to return to the Dominican Republic at least once a year, as the budget permits, and according to the needs of the group there.
From Moradabad to Sri Lanka
by Dave Baker

On Tuesday, Oct. 30, I traveled to Moradabad in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, which is just over 100 miles from New Delhi. The five-hour drive required to cover those 100 miles is basically an obstacle course of movable and immobile objects (some moving and some overturned along the side of the road)—cars, vans, buses, lorries, bicycles, motorcycles, tractors, oxcarts, three-wheel scooters, goats, cattle, an occasional camel and a few monkeys. The city is nicknamed Pital Nagri (“City of Brass”) for its famous brass handicrafts industry. The city itself is a densely populated area with a very high percentage of Muslims. A trip to visit our members in Moradabad involves traveling down narrow streets with just enough room for one vehicle. There is often not even enough room for a motorcycle and car to pass—one will have to stop for the other.

I had planned to visit the members in Moradabad earlier in the trip, but they advised against it, concerned that I would not be able to reach their house due to the festival of Eid al-Adha, sometimes referred to as the “Festival of Sacrifice.” (Muslims around the world believe that on this festival date Allah—God—commanded Ibrahim—Abraham—to sacrifice his son Ishmael. Ibrahim followed God’s orders, but his son was replaced by a sheep at the last moment.) During this festival, the Muslims of Moradabad and all the neighbors of our members sacrificed goats in the streets leading to their home. One neighbor actually sacrificed a camel.

So I rearranged my schedule to have my visit to Moradabad at the end of my trip to India in order to safely reach their home. I arrived at the home of Robinson Yusuf and his family late in the afternoon and enjoyed several hours of wonderful fellowship. We discussed events of our lives since my last visit in May as well as news of the Church. I also conducted a Bible study in the evening. One thing that Mr. Yusuf’s family emphasized was the wonderful blessings they have received from God for many years. They related how they came to Moradabad from a nearby village with very few material goods. Mr. Yusuf had lost his job at a hospital, and his family started giving private tutoring, which led to the formation of their school. God has continued to provide them with classes full of students, including Muslim students and several Muslim teachers; and yet the name of their school is St. Peter Junior High School. After the Bible study, we enjoyed a wonderfully delicious meal prepared by the Yusufs, and then I returned to my hotel for a good night’s sleep before my return back to New Delhi.

Thursday, Nov. 1, I flew to Colombo, Sri Lanka. I was a bit concerned about the weather because a typhoon had hit southern India and parts of Sri Lanka. The landing was a bit rough, but the roads from the airport to Colombo were not flooded and traffic was normal. Of course, “normal” would be considered chaotic by many in the West—swerving, horns blaring, accelerating and slamming on the brakes, near misses of pedestrians and bicyclists, and being forced off the road by merging buses and lorries.

Friday morning I traveled to Mt. Lavinia, a suburb of Colombo, and visited with our members and enjoyed a wonderful lunch with them. We caught up on events of the past few months, and they updated me on the Feast of Tabernacles.
We also discussed plans for the Feast in 2013. Our members face the challenge of increasing rates of inflation and stagnant wages and salaries. The country experiences corruption on various levels. This allows a few families to live lavish lifestyles, while the majority struggle to survive. Our members are very thankful that God continually provides for their needs.

Saturday morning I awoke several hours before daylight and conducted the Skype service with our brethren in Australia at 5:30 a.m. Sri Lanka time. After the service and fellowship, I was able to enjoy a leisurely breakfast and then travel back to Mt. Lavinia for my second morning service of the day. (Over the past 49 years of attending church, I believe this was the first time I’ve attended two morning services on the same Sabbath!) I always enjoy visiting our Sri Lankan brethren. I attended my first Sabbath service in Sri Lanka 27 years ago and once lived and worked a few blocks away from where our members now live.

After enjoying lunch and more fellowship, my early morning began to catch up with me, and I returned to my hotel to prepare for an early morning departure. Sunday morning I departed for the airport at 3:30 a.m. to catch a flight to Bangkok, Thailand, my final stop before returning to the U.S.

Visiting our members in India and Sri Lanka is always inspiring. They are scattered among more than a billion people and face some unique challenges and difficulties. For most of the year their only opportunity to spend time with other members of the Church outside their family is during the Feast of Tabernacles or when I have an opportunity to visit. Thankfully, through modern technology, we are able to communicate on a regular basis throughout the year. I hope some of our members from outside the area of South Asia will consider attending the Feast in either India or Sri Lanka. It would be a memorable Feast, and it would be a great service to our members in India and Sri Lanka.

Letting Their Light Shine
Clockwise from top left: The sign of the Yusufs’ junior high school in Moradabad; Robinson Yusuf’s family gathers for a Bible study in their home; a peek into daily life on a busy street in Moradabad.
ON WEDNESDAY, DEC. 26, 2012, 83 CAMPERS AND 14 staff members from Chile, Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico and the United States initiated a very inspiring week of camp at the foot of the Andes Mountains near the gorgeous, tranquil mountainside town of San Fabian de Alico, Chile. The Cordillera de los Andes boasted a spectacular view of the Ñuble River amidst the green mountainous landscape.

This year’s camp theme was appropriately titled, “I’m on My Way.” Campers were challenged to better themselves as young Christians on a spiritual journey toward their true home: the Kingdom of God. Camp focused on various biblical principles having to do with leaving this world and its evil behind and focusing on our inheritance in heaven. Campers were given advice on how to improve their relationship with God and how to achieve victory in their own personal battles against sin.

The campers were split into four groups, which were led by two older male and female campers who served as counselors and supervisors for their specific groups and as captains for the different sports and activities. Each day began with breakfast, followed by a Bible study given by Saul Langarica, Daniel Sepúlveda or Pablo Carvajal. An hour-long session followed, called “Remember Your Creator,” which allowed campers to have spiritual conversation and meditation within each group. It also provided an opportunity for campers to have their own personal questions answered with respect to the various biblical topics discussed. Every day, five brave young boys and girls gave a short speech about a biblical principle that they personally found to be important.

Besides the classic volleyball games and soccer matches, this year featured three new competitive activities: archery, riflery and darts. Each group composed and performed a play picturing a specific scene from the book of Revelation and the events leading up to the return of Jesus Christ. The four groups also wrote and sang a song about the week of camp during the mini talent show night.

Campers were given a few hours each day to go to the Ñuble River after lunch, which allowed time for everyone to fellowship while sunbathing on the sand or swimming in the water. The youth also had the opportunity to hike up one of the mountains surrounding the campsite. After reaching the summit, campers participated in a Bible study given by Mr. Langarica and listened to mini-conferences given by some of their peers, all amidst the beautiful natural surroundings of the mountains.

By the end of such an amazing week, many new friendships had been formed and many old friendships had been strengthened. This year’s awards went to Bastian Bustos, a first-year camper from the south of Chile, and a young lady from the Santiago congregation, Javiera Gálvez.

The campers learned that the Christian journey is one of sacrifice and commitment and that our march as sons and daughters of God is a daily one. As the future leaders of God’s Church, young people have a very special and vital role in the plan that God has for his people. Every year, camp provides a unique opportunity for them to be reminded of that role and of the marvelous plan that God wants for them.

—Corbin Jackson
ONCE A YEAR, IN THE TINY WISCONSIN TOWN OF Montello, a curious migratory event occurs. The patient and dedicated observer will first notice the arrival of one or two out-of-state vehicles, followed by several more, until entire waves of travelers from all across the country reach their destination: Montello’s own Sky Lodge Christian Camp.

And that’s when the first sighting traditionally occurs. As car and van doors swing open, out wander what the casual watcher might mistake for bundles of winter clothes walking of their own accord—piles of animated boots, coats, gloves and hats trundling across the Wisconsin tundra. However, the experienced observer knows better: This herd of self-propelled winter gear is actually filled with none other than the COGWA Youth Camps Winter Camper. While easy to spot across the country in the summer months, the winter variety of the CYC camper can only be found for one short December week in this little Wisconsin town.

This past year, 50 such campers migrated their way to CYC’s Winter Camp where, with the help of activity and counseling staff, they enjoyed five days of activities centered around the camp program’s theme of “Raising the Bar.” Every day began with a Christian Living class before that day’s activities. Roughly a foot of snow this year allowed for some unique activities like cross-country skiing, broomball, ice-skating and even Winter Camp’s own version of the Amazing Race.

Each of Winter Camp’s four dorms took its name from a character of the Bible, learning lessons throughout the week from the lives of its character. This year, campers learned lessons from the lives of Jabez, Daniel, Hannah and Abigail, respectively. Each dorm also put on a skit about their character for a variety show. The reinventions of classic biblical stories included Abigail averting a slumber party disaster and Nebuchadnezzar’s eye-opening trip to the psychiatrist.

Camp culminated with the end-of-camp dance and a slide show featuring pictures and videos taken throughout the week by both staff and campers (and, of course, the obligatory blooper reel).

As camp reached its conclusion, campers performed their customary farewells as car doors shut once again, marking their return. Once settled safely back into their various homes, they would flood Facebook’s servers with friend requests and messages to dozens of friends, new and old. And while Winter Camp 2012 may be over, there’s little doubt that, come next December, the patient and dedicated observer will once again witness the great CYC Winter Camper migration to a little Wisconsin town.

And this time, maybe you’ll be part of it! —Jeremy Lallier

“Raising the Bar” Campers trek through the forest by cross-country skiing, a CYC activity exclusive to Winter Camp; members of the camp staff pose for a photo at Sabbath services; campers take a break after a long day of team building.
Young adults: Step out of your comfort zone and sign up for an entirely different kind of Church activity. Grow spiritually and be mentored in service and leadership while experiencing teamwork, danger, personal growth and adventure on this year’s Challenger Program: The Grand Canyon, Rim-to-Rim Trek. Do something awesome this summer. Learn more and apply online at http://camps.cogwa.org.
A FEW WEEKS AGO IN SWITZERLAND, I officiated at the funeral of an old friend, Mireille Giauque, who died of cancer. I can still clearly remember how she and her husband, Jean-Samuel, first welcomed me and other college students into their stone farmhouse 30 years ago when we were trying to improve our rudimentary French. My wife and family and countless others have been guests in their home many times since. Mireille set a beautiful example of kindness, gentleness, generosity (she loved to give Swiss chocolate) and most of all devotion to God. She is sorely missed. Mr. Giauque is facing this ordeal with great courage and faith.

God is merciful. The forecast for the day of the funeral was snow and freezing rain, but instead there was a bright blue sky. As we said a final prayer in the snowy cemetery, sunshine lit the backdrop of pristine, white mountains, where she enjoyed walking. There was peace and reassurance in the pain of loss. Mireille has faithfully run her course and sleeps now, awaiting the resurrection of the saints.

Such times of loss should also be times of reflection. The Bible encourages us to meditate on our mortality and the brevity of life as ways of attaining wisdom about how we should live. In Psalm 90 Moses reflected on the difference between eternal God and mortal humans. He asked God, “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (verse 12). It is indeed wise to remember that we have a limited time in our sojourn. We are truly just passing through.

King David asked God something similar in Psalm 39:4-5: “LORD, make me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am. Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing before You; certainly every man at his best state is but vapor.” David’s conclusion: “And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You” (verse 7).

It is easy to be carried along by the currents of life, with its joys, trials and various distractions, and forget that we live this life for particular reasons, to accomplish particular goals. Most important of all is the development of our relationship with our Creator, and the future He is preparing for us. These should never be far from our minds.

Wise Solomon recorded in Ecclesiastes his conclusions on the nature of life. He found that many people waste their lives in what amounts to a “vanity of vanities.” Today we have more distractions (often time wasters) available to us than ever in history: computers, smartphones, tablets, ubiquitous Internet, social media, hyperrealistic games, movies and music on demand—and more is available every day. What would Solomon say if he could see how people spent so much time today? He’d probably throw in a few more “vanities.”

What is truly worthwhile, Solomon found in the end, is this: “Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Jesus instructed His disciples to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). He explained that if we do so, the other issues of life will sort themselves out. It is good for us to pause and reflect on what is truly important in life and to confirm that we are, in fact, concentrating on such things before all others. A time check is helpful. On an average day how many minutes do we spend on the things of God and how many on entertainment? It is sobering to reflect on the measure of our days, but also encouraging because of God’s promises for the future. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18: “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

We should enjoy the good things God gives us in this life—and there are many—but we should also remember that our days are numbered and we don’t know what the number is. We have important things to accomplish and should concentrate on those important tasks first, using to the full every day God grants us.
**Question:** Can you please explain what the apostle Paul meant concerning women in 1 Timothy 2:15?

**Answer:** The verse reads as follows: “Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.”

Taken by itself, the verse is difficult to understand and generates much debate among commentators and scholars. The opening word, “nevertheless,” shows that we must look at the verse in light of the verses that come before it (always a good rule to follow with a difficult-to-understand verse).

The section begins in verse 8 with instruction for men to be holy—without slow, boiling anger or doubting (The NKJV Study Bible, 1997)—when they pray. Following, in verses 9 and 10, are instructions for women about modest dress and grooming. Women are to place more emphasis upon their inner character than on their outward appearance.

The next two verses, 11 and 12, separate the roles of men from women in church services. Women should not speak or teach in church services; those roles are to be filled by men.

In the final three verses, Paul broadens the subject to the different ways that God designed a man and a woman. God designed the man for the role of overall leader and protector of the household; Paul cites biblical history as authority for this (verses 13-14).

Verse 15 is a continuation of this theme, an obvious contrast to the role of a man, for only a woman can bear children. But not all Christian women have children. Paul used different words elsewhere to describe a woman’s role, saying that women should “love their husbands … love their children … be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good [and] obedient to [‘in subjection,’ (voluntarily cooperate with) Vincent’s Word Studies] their own husbands” (Titus 2:4-5).

The use of the word “childbearing” in 1 Timothy 2:15, then, is symbolic of the overall physical role of a woman.

The word “saved” comes from the Greek verb σωζó, which is “used in the New Testament for both physical healing (mostly in the Epistles)” (Expositor’s Bible Commentary, 1978, Vol. 11, p. 362, comments on 1 Timothy 2:15). The intended meaning cannot be physical salvation, for not every Christian woman has survived childbirth. Therefore, “saved” here refers to spiritual salvation.

Paul concludes by saying that the way to salvation for a woman is not only by fulfilling the physical role God designed for her, but also by daily pursuing the spiritual character of faith, love and holiness with self-control.


It is important to note that the difference in physical roles of the sexes does not indicate a difference in their spiritual worth. “There is neither … male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:28-29). Men and women are “heirs together of the grace of life” (1 Peter 3:7).

In conclusion, 1 Timothy 2:15 should not be taken in isolation, but rather in context. The background shows that God’s way of life includes unique physical roles for men and for women, as well as common spiritual objectives.

*The Personal Correspondence Department responds to questions from people who contact the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, about the Bible and Christian living issues, as well as general inquiries about COGWA.*
Foundation Institute, Center for Biblical Education, is accepting applications for the 2013-2014 academic year!

We look forward to our second year of operation in Allen, Texas, at the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, headquarters, and we encourage those with a high school diploma or equivalent and who are currently 20 years of age or older to consider applying. (Applicants must be 20 years of age by Dec. 31, 2013.)

Tuition for the program is $1,500 per student or married couple; and this covers all classes, textbooks and handouts.

The academic year begins with orientation on Aug. 18, 2013, and concludes with graduation on May 18, 2014. The Foundation Institute website provides information on our mission, purpose, list of classes, faculty, location and a copy of the 2013-2014 FI calendar.

Along with Foundation Institute’s focus on the knowledge and application of God’s Word in today’s world, students will have the opportunity to build friendships that will last a lifetime with classmates who are of like mind. Students will participate in various service projects and will be able to interact with the administration and staff who are serving at the headquarters of the Church.

Class size is limited, so it is important to apply as soon as possible. The deadline for applications is May 31, though applications may be considered after that date if space permits.

Applications may be downloaded from the Foundation Institute website and emailed to admissions@foundationinstitute.org or mailed to:

Foundation Institute
Center for Biblical Education
P.O. Box 1009
Allen, TX 75013

The administration and faculty of Foundation Institute are looking forward to another very successful year at FI, and we’d like you to be a part of it!

FoundationInstitute.org

“Atlanta Teen Prom”
April 27, 2013

“A Bitter-Sweet Symphony” Saturday, April 27, 2013.
The Atlanta teens cordially invite you to an evening of dinner and dancing in a musical candy land with a special presentation honoring this year’s graduating seniors. Sabbath services will be located at 403 Powers Ferry Road SE, Marietta, Georgia, at 2:30 p.m.
The dinner and dance, which will cost $30 per person, will take place at the Marriott Northwest Atlanta at the Galleria, 200 Interstate North Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30339. A breakfast in the park will take place the following morning at Terrell Mill Park—Picnic Pavilion No. 1, 480 Terrell Mill Road, Marietta, GA 30067—to provide some extra time together before everyone heads back home.

A block of rooms at the hotel have been reserved for our group at a reduced cost of $59 per night plus taxes at checkout. The direct phone numbers for making reservations are 800-228-9290 (toll free) or 770-952-7900. Use Reference No. M-S9XOX3. Please make your reservations by noon on Monday, April 22, 2013.

Further information will be coming soon. In the meantime, you can email us at cogwa_atlanta_prom@hotmail.com. We look forward to seeing you in April!

I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts
Hebrews 8:10
Guyana Spends Sabbath With Visiting Elder

It was raining heavily in Georgetown, Guyana, on Dec. 14, but the arrival of our dear elder, Osmonde Douglas, warmed our atmosphere. His visits are always most appreciated and very inspiring to us.

Six people, including the Atkinson family and Mr. Archer, met with Mr. Douglas for a delicious meal and warm fellowship. We could not help wishing that the time would not pass by so quickly. After the meal, we assembled at Signature Inn and tuned in to the Sabbath service webcast to the Caribbean region from Trinidad. Although we were experiencing some difficulties in hearing clearly, we were able to listen to the messages: a sermonette titled “Listen and Heed” by Steve Basant, a deacon in Trinidad, and a sermon titled “Going Forward With the Eternal Even in Depression” by our regional director, Arnold Hampton, who was visiting the brethren in Trinidad.

After services in Guyana, we were also fortunate to have a Bible study by Mr. Douglas. He dealt with the topic “Steps Toward Possessing Stronger Faith,” based on the story of the nobleman in John 4:46-54.

The brethren in Guyana wish to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the Barbadian brethren who contributed toward sending a projector for our use.

We also at this time would like to extend warm greetings to the brethren across the Caribbean and continued prayers as we anticipate that wonderful and glorious coming of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Claudine Atkinson

Georgia Brethren Take a Food Tour Around the World

The drizzling rain and cool temperatures of Jan. 1, 2013, did not dampen the spirits of approximately 25 brethren from the Augusta, Georgia, and the Columbia and Florence, South Carolina, congregations who gathered for an afternoon of fun, fellowship and fabulous food at the Around the World Open House hosted by our pastor, Don Waterhouse, and his wife, Donna.

After warming up with a mug of hot cider, guests were treated to a delicious meal of choice venison dishes, including Swedish meatballs, venison bourguignonne and roast. Roman-style chicken was also on the menu for those who weren’t game for venison. Appetizing side dishes as well as delectable desserts were also served, complementing the around-the-world experience.

The fellowship continued following the wonderful meal, as some brought out their favorite board games, while many others simply enjoyed one another’s company through relaxing conversation.

As we departed, the gray skies seemed much less noticeable after spending such a pleasant afternoon with brethren.

Ann Hewston

Louisville, Kentucky, Raises Nearly $1,000 to Support English Classes for African Brethren

For months, members of the Louisville, Kentucky, congregation had been saving their change in preparation for a coin roll on Dec. 8. After services that day, everyone enjoyed a potluck meal followed by great conversation and lots of laughter as hands flew, sorting and wrapping coins. A total of $985 was raised to help send one of our young adults to Africa to help other brethren learn English. It was a fun and profitable evening, concluded by a game of bunco.

Carolyn Winner
Houston South Declares Chili Cook-Off Winners

On a beautiful Texas Sabbath afternoon, Dec. 1, 66 brethren converged on the Houston South Church for our annual Chili Cook-Off.

Before services, delicious smells wound their way through our meeting hall into the dining area as six contestants took their culinary creations to the judging area. One white chili and five beef chili entries competed for first, second and third place.

After a meaty sermon, the judges began their daunting task. After tasting, savoring and retasting, they made their decisions. Julie Morgan, Mary Horn and Nelda Pierce emerged as first-, second- and third-place winners, respectively, with their delicious, traditional chili concoctions.

Everyone chowed down on the fruits of their efforts with toppings of onions, jalapeños, cheese, sour cream, chips and much more. Sides included green salads, beef hotdogs, queso, tea and lemonade. Desserts included apple pie, coconut cake, white chocolate-covered cookies and more.

Conversations between bites included comments about the weekly FI Online classes, anticipation for the sermon series that our pastor Larry Salyer had begun, recent online sermons heard, updates on health concerns, compliments to the chefs and exchanging of recipes.

Jason Boise

February 2013
Baptisms

On Saturday night, Jan. 12, 2013, members of the East Texas congregation joyfully witnessed the baptism of two new members into the Body of Christ. Our pastor, Ken Treybig, performed the baptisms.

Stephen (20) and Jacob Smith (19), youngest sons of Roxanna Smith, were baptized at the home of Fred and Linda Patton. The evening will be remembered partly for the sudden weather change that took place just as the baptisms were concluding. Temperatures fell drastically from a balmy 70-plus to a stormy 45!

There was a unique challenge to this occasion in that Jacob has been wheelchair-bound since his car accident last October. With both of Jacob’s feet broken and in braces, it took a brotherly team effort of three helpers—Wesley and Jon Johnson and Wynn Worthen—to assist Jacob in and out of the hot tub, but all was accomplished safely.

We extend a big welcome to Stephen and Jacob!

Nancy Diraison

Births

Vince and Melissa Winner of the Louisville, Kentucky, congregation are delighted to announce the arrival of their first child, Claire Alice Winner. Claire was born on Nov. 16, 2012, at 6:47 a.m., weighing 7 pounds 4.8 ounces and measuring 20.5 inches long. Vince and Melissa prayed that God would bless them with a healthy and happy baby, and He gave them just that. Proud grandparents are Dave and Karen Fergen of Wichita, Kansas, and Mark and Colleen Winner of Louisville, Kentucky, and Debra Rogers of Louisville, Kentucky.

Claire Alice Winner

Weddings

Joel Bosserman and Leslie Schwartz are excited to announce their wedding, which took place on Dec. 30, 2012. Surrounded by family and friends at a historic mansion in Walnut Grove, California, these two best friends exchanged vows, danced up a storm and celebrated with those they love.

After leaving the wedding in a classic car, they hopped on a plane and traveled to Indonesia for their honeymoon. When they returned to the United States, they also hosted a local reception in Portland, Oregon, where they make their home. The couple met at the Church’s youth camp; and after knowing each other for nearly two decades, Joel and Leslie are excited to begin this next chapter of life as partners!

The Bossermans just moved into a new home together and attend the Portland congregation.

Joel and Leslie Bosserman

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.
Margie Youngblood, 91, died peacefully surrounded by her loving family on Jan. 5, 2013.

Margie was born on Dec. 13, 1921, in Clarkesville, Georgia. She is survived by her daughter, Vickey Sitton, and her husband, Don; her son, Doug Shytle, and his wife Maryann; her granddaughter, Lori Brown; her grandson, R. Doug Shytle; and six great-grandchildren.

Her parents both died when she was 8 years old, and she was raised by her aunt and uncle. After finishing high school, her brother brought her to Hendersonville, North Carolina, to live.

She got married and raised two children, and in the late ’50s she went to Blanton’s Business College and got a secretarial degree. She started working around 1960 and continued in various jobs until age 75 when she “retired.”

In the early 1960s, her father-in-law began listening to The World Tomorrow and ordered just about every booklet the Church had available. He then began to share these with Margie, and she began an almost day-and-night study into the truths that God was revealing.

She and her father-in-law talked constantly about what was being revealed to them until he died suddenly in 1963. Shortly thereafter, she began attending Church and was baptized sometime in 1964. Her first Feast was in Jekyll Island in 1965. Margie served the brethren in any way she could. When she was in her nursing home, those who came to visit would feel better after visiting than when they arrived. Everyone was greeted by her with a smile and a warm heart. Margie believed in the faith and lived by that belief. By her example, her daughter came into the Church in 1975.

Betty Bentley of the Houston North, Texas, congregation died on the evening of Aug. 25, 2012. Her husband, Carlton, is suffering a great loss but understands that his wife is resting now and is no longer dealing with the physical challenges she was facing. We are also feeling the loss of a longtime, faithful member of God’s Church and a wonderful lady.

Betty was born Feb. 16, 1942. She was baptized into God’s Church many decades ago by Larry Salyer. She had a strong, spiritual relationship with God. She was married for 54 years and was able to raise her three children. She was not only there for the births of her five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, but she was also able to watch them grow and help guide them. Betty was a dedicated member who, until recent months, attended services even while battling long-term illnesses.

Betty had a forgiving heart, a sense of humor and a nurturing side; and she never wavered in her faith in God, His plan or what He expects from us. She was loved by all and is greatly missed.

Peter Gabriel

Thelma Gabriel of Houston, Texas, was born on Aug. 6, 1934, and died on Nov. 19, 2012, at the age of 78.

Thelma spent the majority of her young life in Milan, Georgia, and then joined the U.S. Army in her early adulthood. During her service to her country, she met her late husband, Berwick Gabriel (who preceded her in death). Their union produced five children—three girls and two boys—and several grandchildren. Thelma left military service to begin raising a family.

She had heard the Radio Church of God program when she was a girl and came in contact with the Worldwide Church of God in the mid-1960s. She was soon afterward baptized into God’s Church and began attending services, first in Macon, Georgia; later in Atlanta, Georgia; and lastly in Houston, Texas.

Thelma worked as an R.N. early in her career and later in life as a preschool teacher and as a reading teacher for adults. She had been affected in recent years with dementia and other ailments that prevented her from attending services, but she enjoyed Church literature and watching services via webcast.

Her funeral service was officiated by her longtime pastor Jim Franks on Thursday Nov. 29, 2012. God’s faithful servant leaves behind her children, many other family members and friends. She will be sorely missed, but we look forward to the day of God’s great family reunion!

Peter Gabriel

Betty Bentley

Thelma Gabriel

Margie Youngblood

Jane Dean

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Jane Dean
Once Upon a Snowy Evening
Dallas Teen Formal

The Dallas, Texas, teens cordially invite you to a formal evening of dinner and dancing in a snow-covered forest. We will honor this year’s graduating seniors with a special presentation.

Southfork Hotel
1600 North Central Expressway
Plano, TX 75074

Double occupancy rate is $72
To make reservations, go to www.southforkhotel.com.

Register at www.cogwadallas.org/teens

Dallas, Texas
March 16, 2013
6 to 11 p.m.

Early Registration $35
Late Registration $38 (After March 8)
Families of two or more $30 per person

All attendees will be required to read and adhere to the event dress code.

For more information, contact Dora Jennings by phone at 214-695-7484 or by email at thejenningsfour@gmail.com.