

# OneAccord

January 2013



## MBOD Sets Positive

# Tone for the Next Year

*Personal Contact:*  
What Does the  
Church Teach  
About Birthdays?

*Portrait  
of Faith:*  
A Heart  
to Serve

*International  
Report:* From  
Hyderabad  
to Chennai

# from the president

two years later

Even though this article is for the January edition of *One Accord*, I am writing in the middle of December. There are many things on my mind that I wish to share with all of you. We are just finishing an extraordinary year for the Church of God, a Worldwide Association. God has blessed us beyond what we expected just one short year ago. Our official beginning was on Dec. 23, 2010, but we did not appoint an administration until August of 2011, and we did not move into our current office in Allen, Texas, until March 6, 2012. Our first edition of *One Accord* was in January of 2012. We have now completed two years since our inception.

We currently have 13 employees here in the office, and work is being completed at an extraordinary pace, especially in the area of media. And we expect all activity to accelerate as we begin our next fiscal year on Jan. 1, 2013. Our budget for media has been increased by 70 percent above that of 2012. It is still quite modest; but to be able to increase this vital area of the work so early on in our history, and by such a large percentage, is another great blessing.

We have many things to rejoice over when it comes to the work of the Church, but events in the world continue to bring great sadness. A few days prior to this writing, we heard of the shooting deaths of 20 children and six school personnel at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut. We now know that the gunman also shot his mother in their home and later took his own life.

In the 1980s, my family and I lived in Massachusetts. We enjoyed our years in New England and considered it an area that was built around the village model, with everyone involved in the local community. While the shooting of 20 children would be news anywhere in the world, to have it happen in one of these quaint New England villages is even more shocking. One must ask, "What is the world coming to?" Of course, we know the answer to that question!

When I first heard of the mass shooting, I thought back to a trip I made to Rwanda this past spring. Joel Meeker and I were visiting the area during the anniversary of the genocide that took place in 1994, when close to 1 million people were murdered in a matter of 100 days. Many of them were children, and a number of the "kill-



ing" locations were schools and churches. Today, some of these buildings have become memorials where you can see shelves filled with human skulls on display. When I returned from this trip, I compared my visit to the memorials to pulling back the cover on a bed and seeing the horror of the real, but sometimes hidden, world.

It seems that when these events happen we get a brief glimpse of a harsh reality that lies just underneath the veneer of life as we prefer to think of it today. The view is shockingly ugly, and for a short while we have to acknowledge the frightful evil that exists. But it seems normal life quickly resumes as though nothing ever happened. I am sure that will be the case here as well, with the exception of the New England families whose lives will never be the same.

One of the steps in God's plan of salvation is rehearsed each year on the Day of Atonement. The goat representing Jesus Christ is killed while the other one, representing Satan, is released into the wilderness. Without the removal of Satan after the return of Jesus Christ, evil would continue. For the good of all mankind, one day we will see the fulfillment of this very special holy day, leading to a time when evil events such as school shootings will be distant memories. We should all pray that God will hasten that day!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Franks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Tha Sein (far left) and his family pose for a picture before their first Sabbath service in Raleigh, North Carolina, in February of 2008 after emigrating from a refugee camp on the Thai-Burma border  
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**CHURCH of GOD**  
A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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The Ministerial Board of Directors approved the strategic and operation plans and budget at its annual face-to-face meeting in Texas.

**by Mike Bennett**  
**Photographs by Chantelle West**



The Ministerial Board of Directors met at the Church’s office in Allen, Texas, Dec. 3 to 6, 2012, for a set of productive and positive meetings.

The plans and budget for 2013 were presented by President Jim Franks and the administration. “We heard exciting news about plans for next year,” said Mr. Franks in his Dec. 6 member letter. “We also heard a most encouraging report from our treasurer, Jason Lovelady, along with a proposed budget for 2013. After three days of discussions, the board unanimously approved the strategic plan, the operations plans and the budget.”

Board member Arnold Hampton was impressed by “the respect that the board and administration had for each other. To me, this was at the core of the unity displayed from the first day to the last.”

**Highlights of plans**

Here are a few of the highlights of the plans:

- The 2013 Media budget will be 70 percent more than the 2012 budget.
- A larger and more versatile video studio/media center in the office will give the Media staff the “capacity to produce much better video,” Mr. Franks said. In addition to the current video projects, video will be an important part of the Life, Hope & Truth website, and the board also discussed a proposal to develop a television program for the Internet.
- Approximately 200 more articles are planned for Life-HopeandTruth.com in 2013.
- Downloadable e-booklets (e-books) are planned to help engage with website visitors. Mr. Franks said, “We may

also be able to use printed versions to engage those who demonstrate a more serious interest in understanding God’s truth.”

- The member website is being redesigned to better serve the members, and cogwa.org will provide deeper information for Web visitors who want to know who is behind Life, Hope & Truth.
- Ministerial Services will be training new ministers to replace those who will be retiring in the next few years. Under the new Focused Mentoring Program, six couples will work with their local pastors over the next year and will also take more than 150 hours of Foundation Institute classes over the Internet.
- “We will be investing more time and funds in the Young Adult Leadership Weekends (YALW) to provide younger and better prepared leaders for each and every congregation,” Mr. Franks wrote.
- “We will invest more in the international areas. ...
- “Foundation Institute will continue its development.”
- Foundation Institute Online will offer more online classes next year. “We hope to someday develop a full on-line course of instruction for those who will never be able to come to Dallas for nine months of Foundation Institute classes,” Mr. Franks said.

**Good news from near and far**

Much of the meeting time was used to hear reports from the administration and the international areas about the progress of the Church over the last year, as well as future plans.

The board heard reports from a number of people, including operation managers Clyde Kilough, Doug Horchak and

Jason Lovelady; international liaison Leon Walker; legal counsel Jason Ranew (who reported that the Church is involved in no litigation currently); chairman of the Compensation Taskforce, Steve McNeely; chairman of the Doctrine Committee, Don Henson; and chairman of the Moral and Ethics Assessment Committee, Larry Neff (who reported they have received no allegations since they began).

The board also heard updates on Foundation Institute, Foundation Institute Online and a new charitable outreach program, Foundation International Outreach, that will work hand in hand with the Church.

Joel Meeker said, "On Wednesday morning we listened with great interest to updates on the work of the Church outside the United States. We heard reports on 10 different regions, covering six continents. These included reports from Leon Walker for the Spanish-language region; Arnold Hampton for the English-speaking Caribbean; David Baker for the Philippines, Asia and Australia; and me for the French-language region."

Mr. Franks then presented reports from those not present at the meeting:

- Jeff Caudle for New Zealand, the South Pacific Islands and Singapore.
- Graemme Marshall for Canada.
- Peter Hawkins for the U.K.
- Tom Clark for Ghana.
- Morgen Kriedemann for southern Africa.
- Tim Waddle for East Africa.

"These were encouraging and interesting, as we learned not only about our progress in these areas, but also about the many challenges faced by our brethren there," Mr. Meeker said.

The board shared several meals with the office staff and had a lunch with the Foundation Institute students.

Mr. Hampton said, "I really appreci-

ated interacting with the students at Foundation Institute. They are an important cog in the future of the Church. The knowledge, understanding and wisdom they receive from the instructors are invaluable for shining a light on their future individually and, hopefully, the Church collectively."

### Going forward

"I cannot emphasize enough how pleasant and uplifting it was to have everyone together," Mr. Franks wrote to the ministry Dec. 7.

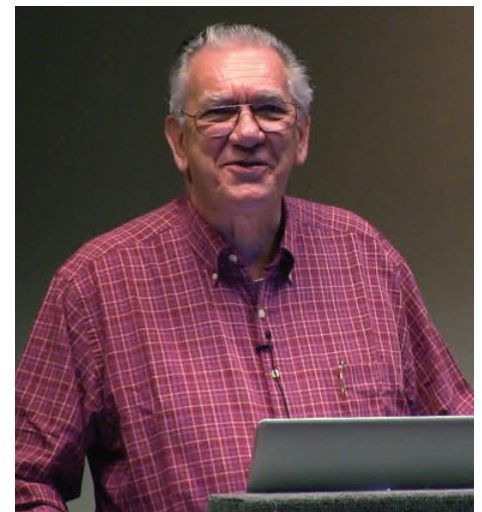
"We know that many prayers have gone up asking for God's direction. I believe God answered our prayers, and now we can move forward with confidence. If we please God, we will continue to see new milestones passed. We are moving forward and gaining some momentum.

Please continue to pray that our actions will be pleasing to God and that we will receive His blessings in abundance."

Chairman Joel Meeker addressed Church members in the *In Accord* video update recorded the week of the meetings. He said, "On behalf of the Ministerial Board of Directors, thank you very much for your prayers for wisdom and vision in our decisions. We believe they made and make a vital difference in the quality of our work." ©©

### Planning for the Future

**Opposite page:** The Ministerial Board of Directors heard a number of reports, including an update on Ministerial Services by Doug Horchak **This page (clockwise from the top left):** MBOD chairman Joel Meeker addresses the board; Leon Walker gives a report on the Spanish-speaking regions; the board holds a discussion in the conference room of the Allen office



# A Heart to Serve

by Jack AungMin

**W**HEN I FIRST MET THA SEIN, WE WERE in the Karen National Liberation Army in Burma. When the 20th battalion headquarters sent new reinforcements to my fourth company, Tha Sein was one of four new soldiers. When he saw me, he approached me and said, “Uncle, may I stay with you in your headquarters?” When I saw him, I felt like his face looked very honorable and sincere. I answered yes, that I would accept him. From that day in June of 1981, he served as quartermaster in my company. His duties included assisting the general needs of the radio communication staff, medical staff, office staff, arms ammunition store, heavy weapon staff, intelligence staff, mine detector staff, food supplies ration services and transportation staff. He was very loyal, honorable and brave; and he endured in his duty. I came to trust him and love him as my son.

When I married my wife, Elizabeth, in 1984, Tha Sein began to work for my family. Every project he took on to help my family always showed improvement and development. His natural inclination to help and serve led my wife and me to trust him with everything. He married his wife, Mu Mu, in July 1989, and they had two children, Isabella and Eh Mo Dah, while they stayed with my family. Unfortunately, as a result of the Karen National Army conflicts in January of 1995, he and his family were forced back to Buddhist Army territory. From then on, we were separated and were unable to meet with one another. While they lived in Buddhist territory, they had two new sons, Doh Htoo and Doh Say.

In 2001 Tha Sein contacted me because someone pretending to be me used my name to get access to him and tortured and robbed him. It was no longer safe for his family to live in the Karen State area, so I advised him to move to the Thai-Burma border to live at a refugee camp called the Mae La Camp.

At that time my family and I were in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and were in the process of receiving UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) status in Bangkok for resettlement in the United States. My brother- and sister-in-law, Thomas and Esther Ko, sponsored my family, and we arrived in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, on June 4, 2004.



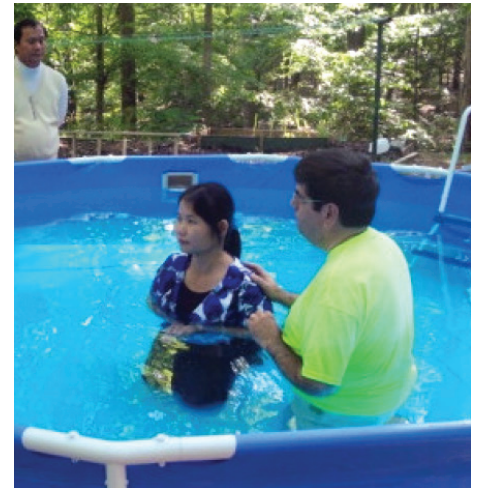
## THE SEIN FAMILY

*Doh Htoo Sein, Eh Mo Dah Sein, Doh Say Sein, Tha Sein, Mu Mu Sein and Isabella Sein currently attend the Raleigh, North Carolina, congregation of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association.*

When my family arrived in the United States, I tried to contact Tha Sein and Mu Mu, but we weren't successful until June of 2007. When he and his family arrived in the refugee camp, I asked Tha Sein to apply for the resettlement program, and I was able to sponsor them. Tha Sein, Mu Mu and their family passed all the UNHCR and U.S. Embassy interview requirements for resettlement

in the United States. Tha Sein's family then departed from Thailand and arrived in North Carolina on Jan. 30, 2008.

**W**HEN THEY ARRIVED here, I asked them about their religion. Growing up, Tha Sein's religious background was Karen traditional animist worship. But Tha Sein and Mu Mu said they now wanted to be Christian just like my family. Mu Mu told me about her daughter, Isabella, who had been studying at the Baptist



Christian High School in the Mae La Camp. Her friends were Seventh-day Adventists, and they invited her to be baptized into their church. When she asked her mother, Mu Mu answered that she should not get baptized yet until they saw her grandpa “Jack.”

In February of 2008 we started a Bible study every Friday evening, starting from Genesis and going through one chapter each week. Their family began attending the Raleigh, North Carolina, congregation with my family, and they began learning in earnest God’s laws, the holy days, the Sabbath, the Ten Commandments, the food laws and the tree of life and tree of the knowledge of good and evil. After two years, they began studying the Church’s fundamental beliefs with our minister, with my brother in-law Thomas Ko acting as interpreter. They finished studying this booklet and became very interested and very obedient in keeping God laws. They likewise began to tithe and have attended the Feast of Tabernacles every year since their arrival.

One day Mu Mu talked to her children and said that she was thinking about the time in her life when she would worship an image that had been carved by a man. She remarked how all of her worshipping was in vain. Tha Sein said that for almost five years now he was trying with all his heart to obey God’s laws, trusting that God saw his heart. He began talking about wanting to be baptized.

I thought to myself that I needed to talk to our minister about their intentions; if I didn’t bring it up, the sin would have been on my head! So I talked to our pastor Ron Kelley and devised a plan to help them in their baptism counseling because they could not speak English. By the blessing of God, Tha Sein and Mu Mu were able to be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit on April 26, 2012.

Currently, Tha Sein and Mu Mu are working at the same jobs as when they first arrived in the United States. They were different from those who usually come here and who work on the Sabbath. They avoided this situation as God was with them. They are now satisfied with their regular income;



**BAPTIZED INTO GOD’S FAMILY**

*From top left, Ron Kelley baptizes Tha Sein at Jack AungMin’s house; Tha Sein, Mu Mu and Mr. Kelley; Mr. Kelley baptizes Mu Mu; Jack AungMin and Tha Sein celebrate Mr. AungMin’s 3-year-old son Julius’ birthday in Thailand at the Karen state–Burma border*

and they have a boss who loves, respects and pities them very much. Tha Sein has developed skills as a carpenter, mason and painter, learning how to do trim, crown molding, baseboards and gardening. His supervisor continues to teach him more skills in carpentry. As for Mu Mu, she works as a housekeeper, increasing her skills in cleaning and in the English language. Thankfully, their boss understands them well and gives permission when they need to attend God’s annual holy days and also the weekly Sabbath.

It is clear that they are receiving God’s true Holy Spirit and His blessings, and their spiritual maturity grows increasingly. They are satisfied with their current life, and they are very glad to be baptized and to be members in God’s Church. ©©

# From Hyderabad to Chennai

by Dave Baker

During the last part of October and the first part of November 2012, I had the opportunity to visit our members in India and Sri Lanka. During the last week of July our longtime member Dr. D.S. Ali died, and her daughters asked if I could visit them after the Feast to conduct a short memorial service for their mother. I arrived in Hyderabad on Wednesday, Oct. 24.

Thursday I visited with Arjumand and Nargis Ali, and we discussed their lives and challenges since the death of their mother. They mentioned the melancholy sense of loss that they experience, especially on the Sabbath. They lived with their mother for decades, and it has been a big adjustment for them since her death.

After our initial discussion, we enjoyed a nice lunch together and then drove through the congested streets of Hyderabad to the cemetery in which Dr. Ali is buried. Living in the United States, I am accustomed to cemeteries that spread over several acres covered with lush green grass. Most cemeteries in India are quite crowded. The cemetery we visited in Hyderabad is very congested, and it was impossible to navigate through the cemetery without walking on graves and headstones. During the visit to the cemetery, I conducted a short memorial service at the grave of Dr. Ali.

Afterward, I dropped off Arjumand and Nargis at their home, and we said our good-byes. Arjumand and Nargis are both highly educated in their fields of study but for many years have chosen to give private tutoring or teach on a temporary basis in order to not compromise the Sabbath. With no retirement or medical insurance, they face the future knowing that God has provided for them in the past and will continue to do so. I know that Arjumand and Nargis appreciate the continued prayers of all our brethren on their behalf.

On Friday, Oct. 26, I traveled to Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu, which is located on the Coromandel Coast off the Bay of Bengal. It is a major commercial, cultural, economic and educational center of South India. On the Sabbath I traveled by car to Vellore, about a two-hour drive from Chennai, to spend the Sabbath with Tarun, Seema and Priscilla Ghosh. Some may recall that Seema experienced a stroke on March 6. While treating the aftereffects of the stroke, her doctors discovered a large



## Mourning a Great Loss

**Nargis and Arjumand Ali stand before the grave of their mother where Dave Baker performed a memorial service**

tumor in her abdomen. On April 2 Seema had to undergo a seven-hour operation in which the doctors removed the tumor. Unfortunately, the tumor was malignant, and she also had to undergo chemotherapy.

Seema and her family were in Vellore for her final checkup at Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital. I met Tarun, Seema and Priscilla in their hotel room near the hospital.

After chatting for a while and catching up on their lives for the past few months, we held a Sabbath service in their room. Tarun had his laptop with the hymnal music, so we sang a few hymns and I gave a sermon on Numbers chapters 13 and 14. After the Sabbath service, we enjoyed a nice lunch together and then drove to the Vellore Fort (a 16th-century fort built by the Vijayanagara kings), where we had an opportunity to walk for a bit along the walls of the fort. At the end of the day, I traveled back to Chennai. Tarun promised to send me news of the medical report once they received the





**Our Brethren  
Clockwise  
from top left:  
Arjumand and  
Nargis Ali in front  
of their home;  
G.P. Samuel's  
congregation in  
Chirala in 2008;  
Priscilla, Tarun  
and Seema Ghosh;  
Dave Baker  
(second from  
the right) eats lunch  
with G.P. Samuel  
(far right) and  
members from his  
congregation**

news. A few days later, I received the following message from Tarun:

*“Thanks so much for your prayers; God has been kind and merciful by providing His healing touch for Seema’s complete healing. The doctors at Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital said yesterday after the CT scan and other routine checkups that it was a miracle and that God was helping us through these difficult times. My wife is completely healed, and she must now go for regular checkups for some time.*

*“Words are not enough to express my thankfulness and gratitude to God Almighty and Jesus and to all our brethren who have been continuously praying for Seema’s recovery and for their wonderful words of encouragement through emails and cards. May God shower His blessings abundantly upon each of them and provide His protection for all the faithful. May He also provide us the strength to stay faithful to God in every spiritual and physical way. We shall continue to pray for each other in these testing times of tri-*

*als and persecution of the end times. Our deepest love and regards to all of you.”*

**O**n Sunday, Oct. 28, I met with G.P. Samuel and a couple of members from his congregation. Mr. Samuel is from Chirala, located in Prakasam district in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India. He had planned to meet with me early that morning but unfortunately missed a train connection along the way and spent several hours during the night on the station platform. Thankfully we were able to meet by mid-afternoon.

Mr. Samuel has a congregation of approximately 40 to 50 people, and I visited his congregation in January 2008. Mr. Samuel learned of the Sabbath through the teaching of Herbert Armstrong and other Sabbatarian ministers. We share the same basic doctrinal beliefs. During our meeting, we discussed how COGWA may be able to assist him in spreading the gospel in his area. I sent him PDF versions of the trifolds that we have developed and hope to visit with him again during my next trip to India. ©

**Question:** Your article on Easter says, “God does not want His people to follow or seek after pagan customs.” Also, “Therefore anything used in the worship of God that has pagan origins must be avoided by Christ’s disciples no matter what the intent or long-standing tradition.” What is the teaching of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, in regard to birthday celebrations?

**Answer:** The Bible comments on birthdays in only a few places. The first reference is Genesis 40:20-22, which tells of an Egyptian pharaoh executing his chief baker on the king’s birthday. At the same event, the pharaoh restored and publicly honored a previously demoted chief butler. So both good and bad happened. Without any more details, it would be reading into the account to declare that this example forbids birthday observance.

The only other clear reference is Mark 6:21-29. There we read of King Herod giving a feast for his government officials on his birthday. It was on this occasion that the shameful execution of John the Baptist was ordered by the king at the request of his step-daughter. Again, something terrible happened at a birthday celebration. But the Bible does not attribute the evil to the fact that it was a birthday celebration. Rather, the Bible identifies the long-standing hatred Herod’s “wife” had for John as the motivation for the murder. Nothing in this reference says or implies that celebrating a birthday is sinful.

Some also cite a less obvious reference, Job 1:4, interpreting “each on his appointed day” as a reference to Job’s sons celebrating their birthdays. *The NKJV Study Bible* comments: “The term could refer to a birthday celebration. However, the context of v. 5 may indicate a regular, perhaps weekly or seasonal, cycle of celebration and feasting” (2007, comments on Job 1:4). So it might or might not be a reference to birthday celebrations. More importantly, the Bible says nothing that indicates they were doing something inappropriate, whatever their reason was for getting together.

A nonbiblical argument put forth is that some secular records show godly people refusing to observe birthdays at some points in history. While it is interesting to read such accounts, they are not the basis for doctrine.

After examining what the Bible says on the subject, we conclude that it neither condones nor forbids observing birthdays. Moreover, the references in Genesis and Mark dealt with situations much different from how a private

individual observes a birthday in today’s culture. Because God gives us no “doctrine” on the matter, it would be inappropriate for the Church to teach that the practice is “sinful.” Only God has that authority. It is therefore an individual decision whether to observe a birthday.

The Bible has much to say, however, about what type of behavior is godly or ungodly. Clearly, God would want us to avoid covetousness, which is so often a part of birthday celebrations. Also, a Christian should avoid a birthday “party” where people are behaving immorally, just as a Christian would avoid any sinful activity. On the other hand, many families and friends observe birthdays as expressions of love, friendship or appreciation. Certainly, a Christian

could participate in such celebrations without compromising any biblical teachings.

*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.*



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### Beloit Congregation Extends a Hand to the Needy in the Community in the 11th Annual Great Clothing Giveaway



Just after the sun set on Saturday evening, Nov. 17, members of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, in Beloit, Wisconsin, teamed up with Rockton Sabbath Fellowship, Outreach of the Churches of God, and the Rock-Walworth County Head Start program to move, sort and fold the mountain of used clothing that God had so generously supplied through the donations of the Beloit community and area churches. This was the 11th time the Beloit congregation has organized a clothing giveaway, which has traditionally taken place on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

In two hours the mountain of plastic bags and boxes was neatly arranged into stacks of clothing on 46 tables staged throughout the Beloit Head Start cafeteria and sections of hallways. This was a task made easy by many hands working together.

On Sunday morning, Nov. 18, beginning at 9 a.m., more help arrived from additional church congregations who joined the aforementioned volunteers at the Head Start building for a waffle breakfast to “feed the troops.” The volunteers then completed the final arranging of the stacks of clothing, organizing them into clothing for men,



women, boys, girls and infants.

Outside the Head Start building, needy individuals from the community began lining up before 9 a.m., and by noon at least 200 people were waiting to claim clothing when the doors opened. At noon those who were waiting outside came in and were given plastic bags to use for collecting clothing. By 1 p.m.—just one hour after the giveaway began—300 people had come through the doors. By closing time at 3 p.m., almost 400 people had been served.

During the giveaway, volunteers from the Church of God assisted by holding children so their mothers could freely look for the family’s needs. Others helped carry out what had been gathered to whatever means of transportation was available, sometimes just a shopping cart.

The annual Great Clothing Giveaway has made an impact on both the needy and on those who have volunteered to help. It has provided an opportunity to practice “loving your neighbor,” as we are reminded in James 2:8: “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you do well.”

**Bonnie Strass**

### East Texas Brethren Mix and Mingle at Annual “Be Our Guest” Event

On Saturday night, Nov. 3, the East Texas congregation hosted its third annual “Be Our Guest” social event. This is a wonderful occasion (involving some surprises) where the brethren in the congregation spend quality time with one another outside of services.

Several weeks in advance of the event, members choose to be either hosts or guests. Guests are assigned by a designated team to hosts’ homes for the dinner. The guests do not learn where they are going until the Sabbath when they receive maps and directions. All guests contribute preassigned side dishes to the meal, and the host provides the main course.

As with the past two years, the event was filled with warm memories and delicious food for all, and we look forward to doing this again!

**Nancy Diraison**



# Women's Club Inspires and Educates in Buffalo, New York

About once a month all of the women in the Buffalo, New York, congregation meet in the back room of our church hall for Women's Club. Women's Club seeks to provide opportunities for women to learn and serve in God's Church through sharing ideas and learning to support the work in their actions, thoughts and conduct. During these meetings, they talk about the Bible from a woman's point of view, and they also discuss how women in the past have supported God's work.

These women have covered a lot since they started in 2011, beginning with a study on the Proverbs 31 "Virtuous Woman." They open their hearts about the topics, and enjoy speaking about the Bible together in their own forum. All of the Women's Club members have learned a lot from each other and about the roles that God intends for them. Most of all, the club has helped refine our understanding of women's roles in the Church, in the family and in the future



of God's plan. We all look forward to the next meeting so we can continue to share and fellowship with the women in the congregation.

**Anne Koenig**

## North Carolina Brethren Share Feast Stories Over Crock-Pots of Chili



wife, Nancy, open their home with warm hospitality for this event. It has become a tradition in our local area to have this social, which gives brethren the opportunity to share the joys of their Feast experiences and reunite with their extended Church family.

We had approximately 12 Crock-Pots full of different varieties of chili, along with sandwiches and other finger foods, and an array of delicious desserts. Every year there is always a group of people who are eager to see who can make the hottest and spiciest chili.

The teens gathered with some of our daring parents in a game of tag football, while others enjoyed fellowship and sharing Feast photos.

Participation continues to grow, with attendance this year at 74.

**Martha Roark**



The Greensboro, Hickory and Raleigh, North Carolina, congregations celebrated their Fourth Annual Chili Social on Oct. 28, 2012.

Every year pastor Ron Kelley and his

## Florida Attorney Wins Second Pro Bono Award



Monica Taibl, an attorney who attends the Tallahassee, Florida, congregation, has been selected as the recipient of the Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Service Award for 2013 for the Third Judicial Circuit. This award is given to attorneys who contribute time to make legal representation available to those who are otherwise unable to afford it. A ceremony will be held Thursday, Jan. 31, 2013, at the Florida Supreme Court building. This is Monica's second time to receive this award.

**Richard Thompson**

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## Bridgetown, Barbados, Celebrates 46th Year of Independence



Members enjoy a favorite pastime, dominoes

On Dec. 1, 2012, members of the Barbados congregation met after Sabbath services to celebrate the country's 46th anniversary of independence. We were one day late, as our nation became independent on Nov. 30, 1966.

A potluck was provided after services. After sunset, chefs David Forde, Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Holland and Jennifer Sealy teamed up to fry some savory fish cakes, one of our unofficial national finger foods. Another favorite of the brethren that was provided was made from sweet potato with pickled cucumber.

After dinner, we participated in a variety of activities, including video games, which attracted the technologically savvy ones, especially our youth. Those older were engaged in a movie, which was followed by martial arts. For those older than the country's anniversary, playing dominoes, a favorite game, was the main attraction.

It was a night of fun, laughter, excitement and strengthening meaningful relationships. Young and old alike gave thanks for God's continual blessing of peace and protection as we embrace tomorrow's uncertainties.

**Michael Lowe**

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## Panel of Judges Take on Daunting Task of Picking a Winner at Maryland Chili Cook-Off



Several families gather for the annual cook-off



The chili cook-off contestants

On Sunday, Nov. 11, 2012, the Clarksville, Maryland, congregation was joined by several families from Bedford, Pennsylvania, for the annual Chili Cook-Off in a quiet rural setting. The weather completely cooperated for this event, with clear, sunny skies.

The cooks of our eight chili entries were Debbie Bulgher, Phil Castro, Chad Demarest, David LeMarr, Ken Reed, Tim Waddle and Rod Williams

(two entries). The chili pots were arranged on a table, with every cook doing his or her last-minute tasting and adding a dash of this and a pinch of that to complete the flavors in his or her chili.

The chili entries were very flavorful and varied in taste from sweet to peppery hot. The judges had their work cut out for them; and after much deliberation and tasting, they finally

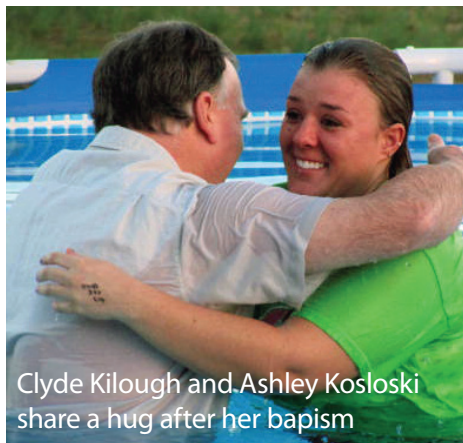
announced David LeMarr as the winner.

Groups of youth jammed together with their guitars while others sat in the shade of the trees and just enjoyed trading stories. Some of the younger people played football, while others ran and played tag games. The day ended with everyone feeling full of food, fun and fellowship.

**Kayte LeMarr**

## Announcements

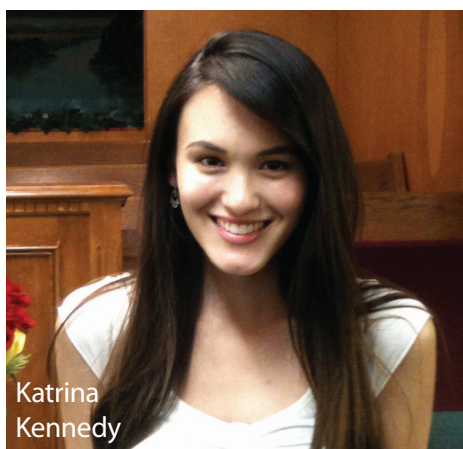
### Baptisms



Clyde Kilough and Ashley Kosloski share a hug after her baptism

Although the weather and water were cold, the hearts were warm as most of the members in the Memphis, Tennessee, congregation joyfully witnessed Ashley Kosloski's baptism as the sun set on the Sabbath of Nov. 24, 2012. Ashley, the daughter of Joey and Cindy Kosloski, is a third-generation Christian and is now attending Foundation Institute.

**Clyde Kilough**



Katrina Kennedy

What a joy it was to see Katrina Kennedy baptized on Sabbath, Dec. 1, 2012, after church services in Austin, Texas. This was the fifth baptism in our congregation since February of this year. Congratulations, and welcome to the family, Katrina!

**David Treybig**

### Births

Ewan and Hailee Fidock from Tullamore, New South Wales, welcomed their second daughter, Jessinta Fidock, into the world on Oct. 11, 2012. Zoey is tickled pink with her little sister Jess. Ewan and Hailee feel so incredibly blessed and thank God for giving them such a healthy and settled baby.



Jessinta Fidock



Carter Mortier

Chad and Lora Mortier of the Kansas City, Kansas, congregation are happy to announce the birth of their third child, Carter Aaron. He was born on July 2, 2012, and was 10 pounds 11 ounces and 22 inches long. After a brief stay in NICU for an infection, he was welcomed home by his big sister Ava (5) and his big brother Kelvin (4). Carter is the 13th grandchild for Donn and Alice Mortier of the Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation and the fifth grandchild for Leonard and Kathryn Hatter, of Brodhead, Wisconsin.



Abigail Wood with her parents Felicia and Wesley

Wesley and Felicia Wood are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Abigail Autumn Wood. She was born on Sept. 14, 2012, at 12:02 a.m., just in time for the family to attend Abigail's very first Feast of Tabernacles. She weighed 7 pounds 1 ounce and was 19.5 inches long. She is the first grandchild to grandparents Daniel and Jeanette Rich, Steve and Margaret Villaescusa, and Wendell and Cassy Wood. Wesley and Felicia thank God daily for the incredible gift and opportunity to raise one of His children.

### Weddings

Evan Daniels and Bridgitt Jones were united in marriage Saturday evening, Dec. 22, 2012, after Sabbath services, with Greg Sargent officiating. Family and friends joined the Wichita brethren in celebrating their special day. As the ceremony began, John Maskrid sang Alabama's hit single, "Forever's as Far as I'll Go," written by Mike Reid. The bride wore a lovely, ice-blue, two-piece suit with double-ruffled sleeves and a white blouse with lace trim. The bride was given away by her son Zack Otter. A potluck and cake reception for the couple followed



Bridgitt and Evan Daniels

the ceremony. Evan is the son of Wava McIntyre, and Bridgitt is the daughter of George Jones. Mr. and Mrs. Daniels reside in Cheney, Kansas.

**Lynda Wasser**

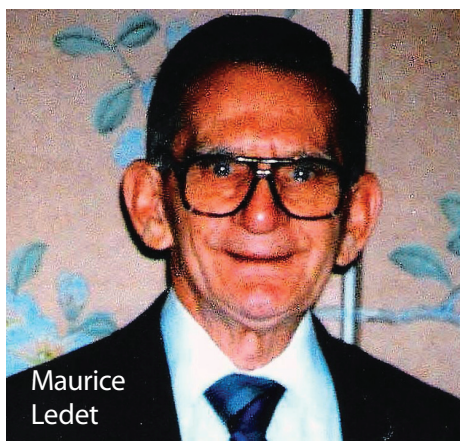
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## Obituaries

Maurice J. Ledet, 88, an elder in the New Orleans, Louisiana, congregation, died Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2012. A resident of Houma, Louisiana, his entire life, Mr. Ledet began attending God's Church in 1965 and was ordained an elder in 1986. His wife, Pearl, and he were married for 62 years until her death in July 2011. Mr. Ledet served in the U.S. Navy, maintaining the guns on military ships and assisting in various construction projects in the Mediterranean Sea and Asian waters during World War II. After the war, he worked as a welder/fabricator in the shipyards.

Mr. Ledet served God and His people faithfully. His love of God's truth, coupled with his gentle, patient demeanor, was a stabilizing force in the congregations he served. A Cajun through and through, he developed a love of language over the years and became fluent in French. He spoke fondly of the Feast in which he and his wife traveled to France, and he was given the opportunity to give his first sermonette in French. Mr. Ledet also enjoyed writing poetry. In 1981, he published *Treasure in Proverbs*, a collection of 23 poems he had written. He wrote other poems as well.

The memorial service was held on Nov. 10 prior to the Sabbath service. Rick Avent, who is the elder in the congregation, and deacons Roger McKinney and Daniel Cunningham spoke of Mr. Ledet's impact on their lives. The service was officiated by Andy Burnett, former pastor of the New Orleans con-



gregation. The congregation provided a finger foods potluck for family, friends and brethren following the memorial service.

He is survived by one son, Kenneth Ledet; and one daughter, Delores (Linda) Presgrove (a member in the New Orleans congregation); three brothers, Aubrey, Ray and Wilfred Ledet; two sisters, Rita Dye and Mable Griffin; 11 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren; 10 great-great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces and nephews.

Mr. Ledet was preceded in death by his wife, Pearl Verdin Ledet; father, Abbie Ledet; mother, Lucille Chavin Ledet; one brother, Alex Ledet; one grandson, David Ledet; three nieces, Kathrine, Sandra and Belinda Ledet; two nephews, Randy and Terry Ledet; two sisters-in-law, Laurita and Jeanette Ledet; and one brother-in-law, Carol Babin.

It is appropriate to end Mr. Ledet's obituary with his poem about the coming resurrection, the resurrection he now awaits as he "sleeps."

**Andy Burnett**

### At the Sound of the Trump

At the sound of a trump, there's applauding for joy,

A shouting and cheering and praising the Lord,

Not a day for mourning or grieving with tears,

But remembering the day Jesus Christ appears.

At the sound of a trump, the saints to be changed,

Arising from graves, as God had arranged,

Arising to meet their Christ in the air,

Meeting with brothers who will all be there.

At the sound of a trump, God's Israel is freed,

From bondage severe, as Christ had decreed,

To go to a land that's abundant with life,

No longer to suffer in sorrow and strife.

At the sound of a trump, the earth to be spared,

From ruin and destruction, as God had declared,

To reap all the blessing from God's Holy Hand,

As He heals and brings beauty to embellish the land.

At the sound of a trump, with a sword in His Hand,

Coming to reap the fruit of the land,

Determined to put an end to sin,

King Jesus will conquer and His Kingdom begin.

**Written by Maurice Ledet**

(February 17, 1924 – October 23, 2012)

**(printed with permission)**

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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.

## Correction

Carson and Rachel Fultz came into the Radio Church of God in June of 1966, 46 years ago—not in 1996 as was reported in their anniversary announcement in the December 2012 issue of *One Accord*. They were baptized in December of 1966. We apologize for the error.

# Young Adult Leadership Weekend

## Four New Locations

### Feb. 16-17, 2013

Preparations are in full swing for the second round of the Young Adult Leadership Weekend to take place over the Presidents' Day Weekend, Feb. 16-17, 2013.

Due to the outstanding feedback received from the November event, the original Dallas location has added three satellite sites in Branson, Missouri; Los Angeles, California; and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. All young adults (high school graduates through their 30s) are encouraged to attend.

Seminars such as "The Importance of Integrity," "The Heart of Leadership," "Serving in the Local Church," and "Humility: Key to Godly Leadership" will be presented to inspire and encourage participants to grow in service to the Body of Christ. Be sure to register soon!

Information and registration can be found at <http://members.cogwa.org/yalw>.

