

A close-up photograph of two young women smiling warmly at the camera. The woman on the left has long, straight brown hair and is wearing a light green sweater and a blue scarf. The woman on the right has dark hair styled in braids, wears glasses, and a black top with a blue strap over her shoulder. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# One Accord

March/April 2015

## Young Adult Leadership Weekend 2015

Feast of Tabernacles  
**2015 U.S. Site  
Descriptions**

Writer's Block  
**Celebrate the Spring  
Festivals With  
Family Traditions**

# personal from the president

## It Is Never Too Early

January and February have been a blur, and March doesn't look much better! Time is valuable, and it seems to be in such short supply at this time of year as we approach the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. I once read that time management is simply a matter of prioritizing things. When someone says he doesn't have the time to do something, he really means that there is something more important that he is planning to do. You see, we all have the same 24 hours each day, and we all have to make decisions as to how we will use those hours. We have to prioritize! Or, as Paul wrote in two different letters, we must be "redeeming the time" (Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5).

This year the Passover service is on Thursday evening, April 2. I am writing this column at the end of February, which means there are still five weeks until the Passover. Each year I set certain spiritual goals that I want to accomplish in the weeks leading up to the Passover. I have found that one of the best ways to prepare is to set aside time for fasting. We know that fasting should be done regularly throughout the year, but it is an especially effective tool for self-examination as we approach the Passover.

Why is the Passover such an important event? The apostle Paul addresses that question in 1 Corinthians 11:29-30: "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep." He goes so far as to say that "many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep" (are deceased) because of the way they approached the Passover. Their conduct was reprehensible, and their attitude was even worse.

Passover embodies the central principle of Christianity—the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin. It is the first step in God's plan of salvation. Some get confused, thinking that the Days of Unleavened Bread and Passover comprise one eight-day festival. But this is no truer than believing that the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day comprise one eight-day festival. The fact is, they are uniquely different.

Some have wondered why we do not observe Passover day as a part of the Days of Unleavened Bread. The answer is simple: We are not commanded to do so. In Leviticus 23 we are commanded to eat unleavened bread for seven days, not eight days, beginning on the 15th day of the month (Leviticus 23:6).



Leavening is used to represent different things—sin in one example (Galatians 5:9) and the Kingdom of God in another (Matthew 13:33)—and the same is true for unleavened bread. At the Passover it pictures the beaten body of Jesus Christ, who was sacrificed for our sins; but during the Days of Unleavened Bread, it pictures the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Corinthians 5:8). We are to replace sin with righteousness. We must be actively ingesting righteousness, which is symbolized by the unleavened bread we eat for seven days during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

It is never too early to begin preparing for these days. I suggest you begin now with a plan. Don't wait until the day before. As we approach another festival season, I truly wish you a most inspiring Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread.

JIM FRANKS  
President of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association  
@jimfranks

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MARCH-APRIL 2015



## CHURCH of GOD

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**DALLAS**

# Living Stones: Your Part in Strengthening God's House

Around 340 young adults in seven locations across the United States honed their leadership skills at the third annual Young Adult Leadership Weekend.

by JOHNATHAN ARMSTRONG

**A**bout 340 young adults attended the Young Adult Leadership Weekend over President's Day at seven locations across the United States. As part of the effort to maintain its commitment to the education and training of our youth for their future roles, the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, has hosted the YALW for three years in a row.

The YALW took place in Atlanta, Georgia; Branson, Missouri; Columbus, Ohio; Fort Worth, Texas; Los Angeles, California; Portland, Oregon; and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Young adults heard messages surrounding the theme "Living Stones: Your Part in Strengthening God's House," taken from 1 Peter 2:4-5:

"Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

During the weekend we heard presentations built around this theme, such as one on the history of the modern Church of God, given by Jim Franks. He talked about recognizing where we are in the Church right now in light of recent history. We were reminded that this is not just a Church of 2,000 years ago; this is a body for today. Clyde Kilough presented "When Leaders Lead" and spoke of the focus we need when we lead and serve in our local congregations. "What Does It Mean to Be a Living Stone?" and the "Importance of Unity" were also topics that were covered. One young adult said he learned that we are "working to be unified, serving together as a body and serving one another in the body. We are all stones that must fit together to build the Temple!"

"Let No Man Despise Your Youth" was an interactive group discussion. The young adults put their minds together to analyze the traits and example that a young person should exhibit as he or she takes positions of service under those who currently serve. Doug Horchak covered the important principle of "Holding Fast" to the calling and the truths God has given us. The young adults also took part in a brainstorming discussion on potential ways to serve others, both in the United States and in international areas, through Foundation Outreach International.



## ATLANTA



## BRANSON

Many of the areas hosted special social events for the young adults. The YALW in Branson overlapped with the area's annual Family Weekend, and many young adults were able to put principles into practice by serving at the children's carnival. Other social events included special dinners and games and dances across the various venues. One young adult commented, "I really enjoyed the YALW this year in Fort Worth! I loved the fellowship, spiritual food and brainstorming sessions where we are able to work together."

Another wrote, "The Church should be our life. We should be involved and in tune with the Church, the brethren, and the work and always striving to build the Church up and fill in any gaps where needed—not for position—but in order to strengthen the Church."

The Sabbath sermon reminded us that the Church is referred to as a spiritual temple, and we are the "living stones" that compose it. Each stone is important to the integrity of the house and must be prepared for its place.

This weekend was very successful for the young adults in the Church. It helped us to further develop as strong and stable individuals grounded in God's truth and in His way of life, including serving in the Church.

When asked about the most important concept learned from the weekend, one young adult wrote, "I took away that God has prepared a place for each of His called ones in His Kingdom, and that we each have a place in the house He is building with these 'living stones.' I liked the analogy of being molded and sculpted to that intended place and also the parallel to how all the stones in Solomon's temple were carved and fitted at the quarry. Likewise, we are being fitted and shaped now, so that when Christ returns, we will be able to fit exactly where God places us to serve." ☺☺



## COLUMBUS



## LOS ANGELES



## TWIN CITIES



## PORTLAND

For more photos from the Young Adult Leadership Weekend, go to our Facebook page, [Facebook.com/cogwa](https://www.facebook.com/cogwa)

# Will You Be Observing the Feast Or Just Attending?

by JIM FRANKS

**E**ACH YEAR, AS WE PREPARE TO REGISTER for another Feast of Tabernacles, I can't help but reflect on Feasts gone by. My family began *attending* the Feast of Tabernacles in the early 1960s, but we began *observing* the feasts sometime in the 1950s. You might wonder about my words—*attending* versus *observing*. What does it mean to observe the Feast but not attend the Feast?

My story unfolded differently than that of most. You see, my mother became associated with the Radio Church of God about 10 years before my father. And he was unwilling to allow my mother, my sister and me to attend the Feast at that time. After all, it was 375 miles from our home in Arkansas to the nearest Festival site in East Texas.

So, for a number of years, we *observed* the Feast at home. We stayed home from school on the holy days, listened to the radio broadcast, studied the Scriptures and did the best we could to capture the spirit of the Feast.

## Attending Our First Feast

It was a very different experience when we actually traveled to Big Sandy and attended our first Feast. In fact, to this day, one of my most memorable moments was walking into the metal tabernacle building in Big Sandy, Texas, on the opening night of that first year. It was electrifying! I believe we had close to 8,000 people in attendance. The building was full of people, and the sound of fellowshiping reverberated throughout. Nothing can replace the memory of that first service at our first Feast.

Notice the scriptures about observing the Feast of Tabernacles and the Sabbath. Deuteronomy 16:13: "You *shall observe* the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from

your threshing floor and from your winepress" (emphasis added throughout). And Deuteronomy 5:12: "*Observe* the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you."

Wherever we are and whatever our circumstances, we are commanded to observe the Sabbath and the festivals, even if we are unable to attend a service. It isn't ideal, but when one is unable to attend the Feast or Sabbath services during times of sickness or other hardship, one can still observe them at home.

Leviticus 23:41 admonishes us: "You shall *keep it* as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You *shall celebrate* it in the seventh month."

Keeping the Feast meant traveling to where God placed His name. "And you shall eat before the LORD your God, *in the place where He chooses* to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or if the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the LORD your God has blessed you, then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and *go to the place* which the LORD your God chooses" (Deuteronomy 14:23-25).

## Attending Without Observing

God intends that we experience the Feast of Tabernacles in a place that He has chosen. He expects us to attend the Feast, but it *is* possible to attend the Feast and not properly observe the Feast. I am afraid that at times some have treated the Feast as a vacation, simply time away from home and the normal schedule. Having observed the Feast at home, I can tell you what a difference

Orange Beach, Alabama



Solvang-Buellton, California



it is to actually attend a Festival site. When you are alone with your family, you are forced to consider the spiritual meaning of the Feast in a different way. I am not advocating that you do this, but I am happy that I learned to *observe* the Feast before I ever *attended* the Feast. I believe it made a difference.

Check out the new U.S. Feast sites this year. We have a total of six that are new—Redmond, Oregon; Solvang, California; Estes Park, Colorado; New Braunfels, Texas; Hapuna Beach in Hawaii (returning—we were there in 2013); and Kalahari Resort in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. This year in the middle of the negotiations for the site in Sheboygan, new management informed us they were not interested in signing another contract. At that late date we were unable to locate another site in the Wisconsin area. Because of the distance, this will make it more difficult for some; but we hope that the number of new Festival sites will lessen the difficulty of not having one in Wisconsin this year.

I sincerely encourage you to both *observe* the Feast and *attend* the Feast. It should be the spiritual highlight of your year. Remember, it's not a vacation, but a commanded assembly. Make your plans to register either online or in your local congregation between April 19 and May 6, 2015. This will help us greatly in our Festival planning.

Above all, I pray that this Feast will be spiritually and physically rewarding—indeed, the best ever! Don't just *attend* the Feast this year, but make sure you also *observe* it as God commanded! ©<sup>Ⓐ</sup>

## Orange Beach Alabama

To serve the southeastern area of the United States, we will be returning to beautiful Orange Beach, Alabama, for the Feast in 2015. Orange Beach is relatively new to tourism and therefore not as commercial as other sites on the Florida and Alabama coast. It is a family-friendly location with beautiful, white sand beaches if you want to stay on the coast—or a quaint marina with sailboats in a secluded harbor if you prefer staying a bit inland.

The housing is varied, ranging from magnificent condos on the beach to hotels and houses inland. No matter where you stay in the area, you are never more than a few minutes from the beach.

Services will be held in the Orange Beach Event Center, located in the Wharf district. The Wharf has many fine restaurants, shopping, a marina and lots of outdoor activities for the whole family.

There are multiple beach locations—stretching across several miles—that allow for parasailing, diving, deep-sea fishing, glass-bottom boats, dolphin tours, beach volleyball and a host of other Gulf-related activities. But if your interest isn't beautiful white sand, then just minutes from the beach are kayaking, canoeing, golf, sailing, a high ropes course and several theme parks for the young at heart.

If your plans call for a beach venue for this year's Feast of Tabernacles, we welcome you to Orange Beach, Alabama!

**Phillip Sandilands**

## Solvang-Buellton California

Nestled in the beautiful coastal Santa Ynez Valley of California, in the middle of almost 40 vineyards, sit the sister cities of Solvang and Buellton. Solvang is a popular vacation getaway location for Southern California. The area was settled by Danish immigrants in the early 1900s and was built in traditional Scandinavian style—a charm it retains today. The cities sit only a dozen miles from the closest California state beach and are within 30 miles of Santa Barbara with its whale-watching cruises and tours of Channel Islands National Park.

The area has many beautiful hiking trails, bike paths (with all types of bikes for rent) and a large lake close by for those who like boating. There are about 30 vineyards that offer tours (and wine tasting) along with a large variety of restaurants. For the children, there is OstrichLand USA, a miniature horse farm and various other attractions.

The Santa Ynez Valley Marriott will be our host hotel for the Feast, but there is a variety of housing available. You may look at the area by going to the following websites:

- [www.solvangusa.com](http://www.solvangusa.com)
- [www.visitsyv.com](http://www.visitsyv.com)
- [www.visitbuellton.com](http://www.visitbuellton.com)

Solvang and Buellton are only about two hours northwest of the Los Angeles International Airport, yet you are in a small-town, country area and out of all the Southern California traffic. It is truly an almost millennial setting for the



Estes Park, Colorado



Hapuna Beach, Hawaii



Branson, Missouri

great deal for the 2014 Feast of Tabernacles! We look forward to seeing you!

**Larry Neff**

## Hapuna Beach Hawaii

We will be returning to the Big Island of Hawaii for the Feast this year, meeting at the Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel, about a half-hour north of the city of Kona. This area is called the Kohala Coast of the Big Island of Hawaii.

The world-famous Kohala Coast is on the west side of the largest of the Hawaiian Islands, and Hapuna Beach was included in *Travel + Leisure's* 2013 "Best Beaches on Earth" list.

The resort is located next to its sister property, the five-star Mauna Kea Resort, developed by the Rockefeller family on over 1,800 acres of lush, tropical, oceanfront grounds that include not only the two resorts with seven restaurants, but also two championship golf courses, gardens and coastal hiking trails.

We are expecting between 300 and 400 people to be in attendance at the Feast on the Big Island this year. All of our services and meetings will be held in the ballroom at the Hapuna Beach Prince Resort, where we have reserved a large block of rooms at deeply discounted rates.

There is plenty to do and see on the Big Island. Of course, sightseeing, shopping, fine dining, ocean water sports and beaches abound. Organized activities will include Family Day on the beach, a teen pool party, a young adults' sailing and snorkeling adventure, and a traditional Hawaiian luau.

You will find plenty of helpful information and pictures on our Facebook page. We look forward to seeing you on the Big Island! Aloha!

**Dave Register**

Feast of Tabernacles and one that you will long remember.

**Mike Blackwell**

## Estes Park Colorado

Since the major flooding in September of 2013, Estes Park has bounced back and is doing well. You will see some evidence of the flooding, but the area has essentially returned to normal. One feature of the area especially gives Estes Park a millennial atmosphere, and that is the large number of elk that may be sighted even in much of the town.

The downtown of Estes Park is rather quaint and enjoyable to walk and shop. The area

features a number of good restaurants in various price ranges.

Estes Park is the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park. Trail Ridge Road tops out at over 12,000 feet and offers spectacular views. It is the highest paved through road in the country. As an exciting alternative, try the unpaved Old Fall River Road, bottom to top. Passenger cars are fine.

The town itself is only 7,500 feet in elevation, just 800 feet higher than Steamboat Springs. This is modest compared to most Colorado resorts.

Our host hotel is the Rocky Mountain Park Inn, formerly the Holiday Inn. Meeting space will be more than adequate for the approximately 300 to

400 people we are expecting. More than likely, many of you will end up staying in one of the abundant vacation rentals in the area. We will provide contact information for property management companies that handle this in the Festival housing guide.

From the Denver International Airport, you can expect a driving time of about two hours or even a little less. The town of Loveland is about 45 minutes away via Highway 34 down the rugged Big Thompson Canyon, which is another very pretty drive.

The usual activities are planned—Family Day, teen activity, senior luncheon, family dance, young adult activity, etc.

All in all, Estes Park offers a

## Branson Missouri

Branson will host God's Feast of Tabernacles for the 20th time in 2015. Located in the heart of the Missouri Ozarks, this beautiful site provides an almost millennial setting with its fall colors, two beautiful lakes (providing good bass fishing as well as some of the best trout fishing in the Midwest) and miles of hiking trails crisscrossing clear, flowing streams. An afternoon drive through the spectacular scenery brings you into close contact with God's beautiful creation.

Besides the natural beauty of the Ozarks, Branson offers an almost endless variety of recreation and entertainment options for those of all ages. From championship golf courses to adventure zip lines, from shopping at outlet malls to upscale shopping at Branson Landing, there is sure to be something to appeal to individuals and families alike. People come from across the country to enjoy Silver Dollar City, which hosts a festival of crafts during the Feast. Kids will love the go-kart tracks and the miniature golf courses. Music enthusiasts can choose from more than 90 live music shows. Branson is a mecca for family entertainment.

The White House Theatre has proven to be very popular for serving our families over the years. Spacious seating with over 1,200 seats allows for relaxing fellowship. There is a seating area for families and a convenient mothers' room where moms can feed their babies and get them to sleep. The theater has a large, spacious lobby and an adjacent room for seminars, a senior citizens' luncheon and teen hospitalities.

The site will again provide extra educational opportunities at afternoon or evening seminars, which have proven very

popular and beneficial to brethren wanting added instruction while at the Feast.

Branson has a wide variety of housing options to fit any family need and price range. Accommodations range from first-class hotels to kitchenettes and cabins. For those who want or need more space, you can enjoy the spacious beauty of one of many, reasonably priced condominiums overlooking the hills or lakes.

Average high and low temperatures for October are 72 and 49.

**Greg Sargent**

## Redmond Oregon

The town of Redmond, located in central Oregon, will be host to the Feast of Tabernacles in 2015. Redmond is referred to as the "hub of central Oregon." It sits in the shadows of the Cascade Mountains and offers a variety of sightseeing venues and outdoor activity opportunities. Feastgoers to the area can expect warm, sunny days in the 60s and crisp, cool evenings in the 30s.

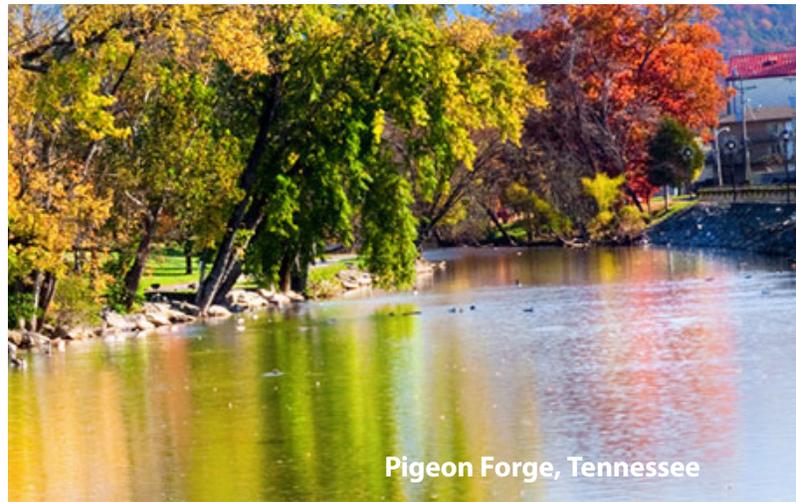
Located 140 miles from the Portland airport, the area is home to a wide range of family-oriented activities for all ages. Whether it is hiking the trails of Smith Rock or enjoying the quaint shops in the town of Redmond, the area has much to offer. Venues for sightseeing include Crater Lake, Mt. Hood and Newberry National Volcanic Monument, which allows you the opportunity to explore a lava cave on foot.

Within a short drive from Redmond, you can explore the towns of Bend, Sisters and Sunriver. Each area is uniquely different, with opportunities for shopping, eating and exploring rich Oregon history and beauty.

Services will be held at the very spacious Eagle Crest Resort, located 10 minutes



Pocono Mountains, Pennsylvania



Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

from downtown Redmond. The spacious ballroom will allow plenty of comfortable seating for everyone.

There will be a variety of housing located at the resort for those who wish to stay on-site for the Feast or in the town of Redmond. We will have a variety of housing for everyone. Ranging from the economical motel to townhomes and chalets, there is something for everyone's budget.

**Jon Pinelli**

## Pocono Mountains Pennsylvania

Kalahari Resorts' newest location opens this summer in the Pocono Mountains. Church services will be held here in a spacious ballroom with comfortable, ergonomic chairs.

Kalahari offers three types of guest rooms: Desert Room (two queen beds, queen sofa sleeper), Two-Room Family

Suite (king bed, two queens, queen sofa sleeper, fireplace) and African Queen Suite (king, two queens, queen sofa sleeper, fireplace, family room). All rooms include microwaves and refrigerators (medium-sized). For other housing off-site, see the Festival housing information.

For dining, the resort offers three full-service restaurants, a candy and ice cream shop, coffee shop and more. Shopping is available at multiple resort retail shops and at the Crossings Premium Outlet (100 stores), only seven miles away.

Kalahari room reservations include free passes for Pennsylvania's largest indoor waterpark—that's 100,000 square feet under a retractable roof, on-site! The waterpark rides include Flowrider, Anaconda water roller coaster, Swahili Swirl, Lazy River, Splashdown Safari (for kids), Tiko's Watering Hole (for toddlers) and an outdoor pool.

Additionally, the Family

# International Feast Sites

## Africa

Mugina, Burundi  
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire  
Man, Côte d'Ivoire  
Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
Abrem-Agona, Ghana  
Elmina, Ghana  
Migori, Kenya  
Salima, Malawi  
Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius  
Benin City, Nigeria  
Giti, Rwanda  
Uvongo, South Africa  
Kpalimé, Togo  
Lusaka, Zambia  
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

## Asia/Pacific

Coffs Harbour, Australia  
Pacific Harbour, Fiji  
Kolkata, India  
Taupo, New Zealand  
Iloilo City, Philippines

## Caribbean

Jamaica  
Frigate Bay, St. Kitts and Nevis

## Europe

La Bussière, France  
Ashbourne, Ireland

## Latin America

Carlos Paz, Argentina  
Bolivia  
Lican Ray, Chile  
El Rodadero, Santa Marta, Colombia  
Antigua, Guatemala  
Mazatlán, Mexico  
Huanchaco, Peru

Entertainment Center has black light mini-golf, mini-bowling, XD Dark Ride, spa and salon, Kamp Kalahari (contests, coloring, games, crafts) and more. For other recreation, there's horseback riding, an 18-hole golf course and more. And assorted sightseeing attractions can be taken in throughout the tristate area of Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey.

We're also pleased to announce that seats are reserved for COGWA for the Sight & Sound Millennium Theatre's showing of *Joseph* on Thursday, Oct. 1, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

**Kevin Epps**

## Pigeon Forge Tennessee

Nestled in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, is known as one of the top family vacation destinations in the country. If you enjoy the outdoors, there is much for you. The Feast of Tabernacles takes place during the time when fall colors are in full array, and the area's natural beauty brings out the outdoorsman in everyone. If you enjoy quality family time, good family entertainment, a wide selection of restaurants and plenty of shopping, you will love Pigeon Forge.

Although the area is known for its many crafts stores, its wonderful musicians and its countless go-kart tracks and miniature golf courses, it also boasts one of the most active, well-represented outlet malls in the entire country. Additionally, in neighboring Gatlinburg you and your family can take in the beautiful Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies. We are planning to put together a well-balanced activity schedule sure to interest all tastes.

Housing consists of a variety of motel rooms with many offering a full breakfast in the rate. And, of course, there are also beautiful 1- to 4-bedroom

condos or—for those with extended families wanting to share—there are large chalets and cabins that sleep up to 30! Housing prices begin at \$52.75 per night and go up from there. This is also an area with several campgrounds for those who might enjoy camping during the Feast.

Pigeon Forge is easily traveled. There is a divided highway through the middle of the town. The Smoky Mountain Conference Center has free parking and has no steps, so it is also easily accessible for everyone. I look forward to seeing you in Pigeon Forge.

**Mark Winner**

of additional rooms, including one where we will be able to offer coffee prior to services. Anticipated attendance is 350.

Many recreational opportunities in New Braunfels include water. Whether it is enjoying the famous Schlitterbahn Water Park and Resort, or wakeboarding without a boat at the Texas Ski Ranch, floating one of the two rivers in the area, or swimming in the largest spring-fed pool in Texas—there are plenty of ways to get wet!

For those interested in history, there are seven museums to visit and the historic district of Gruene (a district within the city of New Braunfels) to ex-



**New Braunfels, Texas**

## New Braunfels Texas

New Braunfels is a small town of 60,000 people located in the hill country of Texas, just 30 miles northeast of downtown San Antonio. Its German heritage is evident in the city's history, culture and cuisine.

Services will be held in the New Braunfels Convention Center. Throughout the Feast, we will have exclusive use of this facility, which offers plenty

of additional rooms, including one where we will be able to offer coffee prior to services. Anticipated attendance is 350.

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**David Treybig**

Registration  
begins  
April 19  
feast  
.cogwa  
.org

# CELEBRATE THE SPRING FESTIVALS WITH FAMILY TRADITIONS

God gives us special days to celebrate and learn from each year. Our own family traditions can enhance those celebrations and deepen the lessons.

by SHELBY FAITH

**E**ach year as we celebrate the Spring Festival season, we're reminded about God's plan for us. As we look back and remember how God delivered His people Israel from slavery and brought them to freedom, we also look forward to the time when we'll be completely free from the slavery of this world.

As we put leavening out of our homes for seven days, representing putting sin out of our lives, we look forward to the time when we'll be sin-free as children of God in the Kingdom of God.

This is a wonderful time, and our children should be included in this celebration.

## Family traditions

A good way to help our children become familiar with and look forward to this season is to establish traditions that the family can share together and look forward to each year.

You may already have traditions that your family shares together. Following are some additional ideas that you may want to try:

- Allow your children to take part in preparing your home for the spring festivals. Even the youngest child can help hunt for those cookie crumbs under the cushions.
- A week or more before the festivals, help the children make cards appropriate for the season to send to someone special. Older children may want to use the computer to come up with just the right card.
- Take your children on a shopping trip and encourage them to learn to read labels and look for leavening in food products.
- Set aside a special day or night and have the whole family get involved in making unleavened cookies, cakes and breads, etc.



- Sometime during this season read the story of the Passover in Exodus 12. Everyone in the family can take part in reading verses, or you can select one person to read one year and then another one to read the story the next year.
- You can also let the children perform a play and dress for the parts. Use your imagination to come up with interesting props, such as Ping-Pong balls for hail, plastic insects and frogs, white round stickers for boils and red markers for cardboard doorways.
- Play the game of "Four Questions." The Jewish people do this at their seder meal. (The seder is based upon Jewish tradition. Not all of its customs are based on Scripture, but these questions are thought-provoking and can be a useful tool for parents.) Choose an adult or child to ask questions, such as:
  1. Why is this night different from other nights?
  2. What does it mean to be free?

3. Who in the family is a firstborn?

4. What animal was killed on the Passover?

You may want to choose other questions or use more than four. Be sure that the questions are answered in a way that the children understand.

## Creating traditions

One definition of *tradition* is: "The handing down of information, beliefs and customs by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another."

As you continue to repeat an activity at a particular time on a regular basis, it becomes a tradition. Once a tradition is established, everyone begins to look forward to keeping it going; and when it is shared within a family or with friends, it becomes something they all look forward to and enjoy together each year.

If you haven't already established Spring Festival traditions, this may be the year to start. Here's to good, meaningful and fun traditions! ☺

# MAKE THE SPRING FESTIVALS A FAMILY AFFAIR

Soon the annual cycle of God’s festivals will begin again. Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are some of my favorites, especially for families.

by KAREN MEEKER

**G**od does not leave parents without instructions when it comes to parenting. This includes His clear expectations for parents as they are instructed to memorialize the events surrounding Passover in the minds of their children.

## Holy syllabus

“So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What is this?’ that you shall say to him, ‘By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’

“It shall be as a sign on your hand and as frontlets between your eyes, for by strength

of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt” (Exodus 13:14-16).

## Lesson plan

**Required reading.** First of all, God has provided a dramatic account in the book of Exodus of events surrounding the deliverance of Israel from hundreds of years of bondage—a real page-turner, regardless of how many times it’s been read.

Whose imagination is not captured by the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart, the 10 plagues, the death angel passing over the homes of the Israelites and, finally, the Exodus itself?

Many families enjoy the yearly airing of the movie *The Ten Commandments*, using it as a visual teaching tool, especially when coupled with a careful reading of the Scriptures themselves.

The New Testament accounts of Jesus’ betrayal, false conviction and eventual scourging and crucifixion have so many

teaching points imbedded in them as well—things like the fruits of lying and injustice, and the wonderful gift of forgiveness through Christ’s sacrifice for the good of others.

**Reinforcement.** Second, God instructed memorable things to be done, like the killing of the Passover lamb and using its blood for protection from the last plague of killing the firstborn; the preparation and eating of unleavened bread; and eventually, the New Testament activity of washing feet and the instituting of new Passover symbols.

While children do not participate in these new activities, they can be taught about the significance that they can and will have in their own lives.

For more ideas on how to help your children get ready for the spring holy days, read [“Preparing for God’s Holy Days With a Joyful Heart”](#) on the Christian Parenting Blog. ©🕊

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# A VERY MEMORABLE NIGHT TO BE MUCH OBSERVED

One member shares how important it is to remember those who may be spending the Night to Be Much Observed on their own.

by GERRY LYND

**T**he Night to Be Much Observed is always a special time for God’s people. It is an evening when we solemnly celebrate the blessing of our calling. For many years I hosted this special evening in my home; and since I had children,

I would usually invite families with other children. We tried to make the evening very special for them and to help them build positive memories of the observance. I would send flowers home with the women guests and boxes of goodies for the men.

Last year was different. My friend Jean and I were visiting another member, Mike, in a nursing home shortly before the Days of Unleavened Bread. We were talking about previous NTBMOs and how enjoyable they were. Suddenly Jean and I looked at each other. Both of us realized that Mike would be all alone during this special eve-

ning. We both felt the loneliness that Mike would be experiencing. I looked at Mike and asked if he would like to share the night with Jean and me here in his room. The look of happiness and relief was apparent in his face. We then asked him what his favorite foods were. Among other foods, we learned he loved banana pudding.

Jean and I set about preparing a meal that we could keep warm in plastic containers. We included the banana pudding and Mike’s favorite drink. We arrived close to sunset with the meal. Though we didn’t have fine china, special crystal or a lovely tablecloth; we both agreed this was one of the best NTBMOs we ever kept.

We enjoyed the food and shared the stories of our calling. We discovered we had never heard Mike’s story. It was quite funny. Mike had met a member in a restaurant reading *The Plain Truth*. He subscribed to

the magazine and they would meet weekly to discuss the magazine. Mike tricked the member into telling him where services were and showed up the following Sabbath uninvited. Mike was allowed to continue attending and was a faithful member of God’s Church the rest of his life.

Our friend Mike died last fall. Many in the Dallas, Texas, congregation miss his humor and stories. We will always cherish the memory of that last Night to Be Much Observed with him.

It is easy to forget about our brethren who are shut-ins or in nursing homes or hospitals on this evening. We hope that our story will inspire others to consider doing something to make this evening special for members who would otherwise be alone.

It will create special memories and the night will truly be remembered. ©🕊



Q

What happens when a person has already been baptized for maybe four or five years and then backslides through slackness and temptation and falls back into a sin for a while? What if it takes an “aha” moment before that person understands how sorry he or she was before repenting? Will those sins be covered? I can’t believe that I backslid. I love God very much, and for two years I’ve been sorry and have changed. But I am worried my sins are not cleansed. Please tell me the answer—quickly, because this is hurting me.

A

I strongly suspect that you already know the answer intellectually. God is always ready and willing to forgive a person who truly repents. The apostle John wrote this *to converted people*: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us” (1 John 1:8-10).

This inspired promise of forgiveness (upon repentance) is proof that God knew that converted people would still sin. Notice that He did not put a time limit upon how soon one has to repent or upon how much sin He would forgive. That does not make light of the fact that every sin caused the sacrifice of Christ. Nor does it suggest we should delay repentance after we realize we have sinned. But it confirms God’s unconditional love, as well as the power of Jesus Christ’s sacrifice.

The process of repentance that we go through as we prepare for baptism is the same pathway we need to take to repent of any sin. We need to understand why what we did was a sin in God’s eyes, that the sin caused the death of Jesus Christ to pay the automatic penalty God’s law imposes. Repentance requires Bible study, meditation and prayer. Repentance is a commitment from the heart to stop sinning—a change of heart that is committed to overcoming the cause of our sin. Then we can ask for forgiveness with confidence that our merciful

Father is ready to grant it.

However, I wonder if you might have an additional issue that troubles you. That is, I wonder if you are having difficulty forgiving yourself. That can be both good and bad. It can be good, because it shows that you realize the seriousness of your sin and that you are genuinely sorry for it. But it can be bad if you allow it to paralyze you from going forward spiritually.

I would like you to read the article “[Forgiving Yourself?](#)” on our website. Here is an excerpt to give you an idea of what to expect: “Hanging on to feelings of guilt (whether the offenses are real or imagined) can prevent you from forgiving yourself and moving on with living a productive life.”

You might also want to review “[When Emotions Become Dangerous: Working Through Guilt and Shame](#)” and “[Unpardonable Sin: What Is It?](#)” Being knowledgeable about the Bible, you are probably familiar with the information in these articles, but reviewing it should help to encourage you.

Do not allow yourself to be paralyzed either by guilt or by the fear of how others might judge you. Christ’s judgment is the only opinion with which you need to concern yourself. After repentance, you need to move on with your life of spiritual growth, setting an example for others, as the Proverb says: “For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again” (Proverbs 24:16). Getting on with living God’s way shows your confidence in God’s love and in His forgiveness. ☺☺

# CHURCH POTLUCK

News and events from your local congregation



Aaron West (holding his son Noah), Allie and Chris Rochelle

## CHRIS ROCHELLE WINS 2015 HOUSTON SOUTH CHILI COOK-OFF

On Feb. 7, the Houston South, Texas, congregation enjoyed a special treat after services—our annual chili cook-off! Even though the fellowship hall is at the far end of our meeting hall, we could smell the wonderful aromas waiting for us as we attended Sabbath services.

Immediately after services, the three judges sampled the seven entries and rated them according to appearance, taste and seasonings. As always, it was a tough task, but someone had to do it! Two entries were initially tied for first place, but the judges quickly resolved the issue.

Our congregation was not only able to sample all seven entries for this year but also enjoyed some from past winners. First-place winners are added to our Hall of Fame and are encouraged to bring their prize-winning recipes back each year for all to enjoy.

Chris Rochelle won first place. His daughter, Allie Rochelle, took second; and Aaron West claimed third place. Each of the winners received a medal and ribbon, and the first-place winner received an embroidered apron.

There was no shortage of delicious food, including all the sides for the chili and beverages and desserts. We now look forward to next year!

**Susan Scott Smith**



Clockwise from left Organized chaos at the children's carnival; attendees line up for the brisket and chicken buffet meal; family and friends take advantage of the many opportunities to fellowship

## YOUNG AND OLD REJOICE TOGETHER AT 20TH BRANSON FAMILY WEEKEND

About 350 enthusiastic members from across the Midwest met in Branson, Missouri, on the weekend of Feb. 13 to 15 for the 20th Branson Family Weekend. Members from 12 states gathered to enjoy a mid-winter weekend of education, fellowship and fun for the whole family. For some, it was their first time to attend the weekend, while others were returning for another year at this event.

The weekend began with a Friday evening fellowship night where almost 200 visited with old friends and got acquainted with new ones. The Sabbath featured seminars by area pastors on the weekend's theme ("Let This Mind Be in You," taken from Philippians 2:5) and the

sermon given by Jim Franks.

Shortly following Sabbath services, we ate a delicious brisket and chicken buffet meal. Saturday evening was full of fun with a children's carnival, where many adults and teens helped to man the booths. The evening was topped off with a family dance where young and old danced to a variety of music. The weekend is set up so people of all ages can participate in all the activities—young and old alike rejoice together.

After a delicious breakfast on Sunday morning, we had additional opportunities to learn from more seminars (with a total of eight different seminars given by area pastors). There was also a family activity at Branson Wild, a wildlife attraction where

visitors can see and interact with many different animals and fish. You can hold snakes and lizards, feed sharks and rays, play games and also play miniature golf. A pizza party and game night scheduled for Sunday evening had to be canceled due to an impending winter storm; but nevertheless, everyone returned home feeling refreshed and rejuvenated by the events of the weekend.

Even though the weekend had to be cut short this year, many commented about how the weekend served as a real boost between the fall feasts and the spring holy days. Others said they could hardly wait until the weekend comes around again next Presidents' Day Weekend!

**Mike Blackwell**



Jim Franks answers a number of questions in an informal Q&A session



Sharron and Jim Franks (center) with Nashielli and Jorge Garduño

## THE FRANKS VISIT MEXICO CITY

On Jan. 16 Jim Franks and his wife, Sharron, came to Mexico City, Mexico, to spend Sabbath services with the congregation.

During the Sabbath day, our joy and fellowship was increased as we also had the opportunity to share the weekly rest with the Bracamontes and Ramirez families, who traveled from Guerrero, Mexico, to the capital for the Franks' visit.

The sermon was given by Mr. Franks and broadcast via the Internet to many other areas in Mexico and Latin America and even some members in the States. The main subject of the sermon was one of the most relevant verses in the Bible, Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, ... who are the called according to His purpose." The verse carries a transcendent message for each person who is being called by God today to be part of His family as a firstfruit. It gives spiritual meaning to what our Creator tells us through the apostle Paul: We must understand that we will face hard

times on our Christian journey, but that those experiences will help us reach spiritual perfection.

After services, we shared some delicious food, which the ladies of the congregation prepared for this special occasion. The hall was full of smiling faces, conversation and good food. We also had an informal session of questions and answers with Mr. Franks, who kindly answered each and every one of them.

After praying for God's blessing on our social activities when the Sabbath day ended, a group of talented men and women presented some Mexican folk dances, very similar to those performed at the talent show during the Feast of Tabernacles.

We all had a wonderful time together, and Mr. and Mrs. Franks seemed to really enjoy the show and were thankful for all the members' efforts.

We would love for them to come back soon to Mexico, where all visitors are always very welcome.

**Jorge Iván Garduño**  
Translated by Gad Zainos

## HEAVY RAINS DAMAGE MEMBERS' HOUSES IN MALAWI

After a long drought, heavy rains fell in Malawi Jan. 8-13, wreaking havoc on 15 of the 28 districts in the country.

During this period houses collapsed, and those in the valleys were swept away. Roads and bridges were declared impassable or swept away entirely. Gardens and livestock were washed away. We had no power for a period of three days. Clean water systems were disrupted.

The situation was just pathetic. Victims of the floods sought shelter in the surviving school and church buildings. On Tuesday, Jan. 13, the president declared Malawi a state of national disaster, asking local and international communities to assist.

Some Church members suffered property damage. McBrams and Manes Chirwa, Tielmans and Grace Chirwa, Lawlence Chipendo and Elifazi Salawila all experienced severe damage to their houses.

A close analysis of the main causes of the walls collapsing, apart from the unusually heavy rains, pointed to the building materials. Most of our houses, whether built with burned bricks or green bricks, lack cement for external wall plastering. Since mud is used

for bonding and plastering, the walls easily get soaked when the rains hit them at an angle.

Cement in Malawi is too expensive for the average person. We can only afford enough cement for the floor. The present government, during its election campaign last year, promised to subsidize the cost of cement and iron sheets by 50 percent for everyone so that they could afford a decent house. Now that they are in government, they have changed their tune. They say they will only assist the poorest of the poor, and we have been left wondering what criteria they were using to identify the poorest.

The Church was informed of the six member families whose homes were partially destroyed. COGWA wired funds to pay for building supplies to rebuild members' homes. We have not received any reports of members being injured by the disaster.

As we are still in the rainy season, we just pray that the disaster we had will not happen again, otherwise the consequences will be worse than before. We are seeking members' prayers that Almighty God will continue to protect us from such disasters.

**Tielmans Chirwa**



Tielmans and Grace Chirwa



Steve Young and Haynes and Ethel Baker comment at the teen study

## “SEASONED” MEMBERS SHARE WISDOM AT SPECIAL TEEN BIBLE STUDY

On Jan. 3 in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Jan. 10 in Hickory and Greensboro, the teens enjoyed a very special Bible study that centered around the concept of Titus 2. The special guests were some of our “seasoned citizens” who participated in a panel discussion of how God’s way has impacted their lives. They provided the teens with words of advice and shared their wisdom as the teens begin to take their place as the next generation of the Church of God. Topics discussed included what God’s Church has meant to them over the years, stories of what things were like in the Church 50 years ago and quite a bit of life and relationship advice for the teens.

**Ron Kelley**  
Photo by Tim Horne

## MEMBERS IN GREENSBORO KICK UP THEIR HEELS AT SQUARE DANCE

On Saturday evening, Jan. 31, the Greensboro, North Carolina, congregation gathered for a night of food, fellowship and square dancing! We enjoyed a Western meal of hot dogs, chili, chicken, corn bread and a variety of delicious desserts and drinks. We were instructed by a professional caller who did an outstanding job helping us learn three square dances and two line dances. As usual, the night ended all too quickly, and all too soon we had to clean up and bid farewell to our dancing partners.

**Bev McKnight**

## MEMBERS IN MINNESOTA ARE TRANSPORTED TO THE MEDITERRANEAN WITH ELEGANT FUND-RAISING DINNER



Teens and young adults stand ready to serve the six-course dinner

On Feb. 21, 2015, after the Sabbath, the Twin Cities and St. Cloud, Minnesota, congregations were invited to a six-course dinner, “A Taste of the Mediterranean.” Our church hall was transformed into an elegant dining room, complete with an attentive group of teen and

young adult servers. The six courses were from France, Italy, Greece and Spain. While we enjoyed the food, we listened to recorded background music from each of the areas.

The purpose of the evening was to provide an enjoyable experience to our congregations, while highlighting the teens and young adults. We also were able to raise funds for the Adventure Leadership Program. During dessert, our pastor, Gary Black, showed slides of past summer trips and spoke about the purpose and the future plans of the program. The program has included canoe trips to the Boundary Waters and Voyageurs National Park, as well as rock climbing trips. There are also tentative plans for a backpacking trip in the future.

About 80 brethren enjoyed the evening and the enthusiasm of our young people!

**Barbara Lee**  
Photo by Olivia Witt

## 15TH VIRGINIA BEACH WEEKEND FOCUSES ON THE ROLE OF COURAGE IN A CHRISTIAN’S LIFE

The 15th Annual Virginia Beach Weekend, hosted by the Delmar, Delaware, and Williamsburg, Virginia, congregations, was held on the weekend before Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Jan. 16 to 18. The theme this year was “Stand and Deliver: The Role Courage Plays in the Life of a Christian.”

The activities, held at the Holiday Inn North Beach, began Friday evening with a preteen activity and a Bible study by Todd Carey titled “Enemies of Fear: Conviction, Commitment and Courage.” The Sabbath began with both preteen and adult Bible studies. Dempsey Bruton led the adult study, in which groups presented how they would answer questions about our beliefs. There was also a teen Bible study focusing on “Having the Courage to Give an Answer.”

After a lunch break,

guest speaker Larry Lambert, pastor of the Roanoke, Virginia, and the Charleston and Princeton, West Virginia, congregations gave the sermon about how we can face our “Goliaths” with faith and courage from God by putting on the armor of God.

After Sabbath services, the congregation was invited to the Lazy River to witness the baptism of Jennifer Pryke. Miss Pryke attends the Williamsburg, Virginia, congregation with her family.

On Saturday evening we had a delicious buffet dinner. After sunset, there was a silent auction, art contest and costume dance featuring “Kool Lids,” everyone’s favorite, unusual or custom-made hat. Prizes were given for the most original and most attractive hats.

The Virginia Beach Weekend ended Sunday morning with an indoor swim and



Rainey Jordan and Mayme Satterwhite show off their “kool lids”; Todd Carey baptizes Jennifer Pryke

fellowship time at the Lazy River before checking out. The weekend was a major success, and you’re all invited back here next year!

**Tim Walsh**

# 2015 BOOT SCOOT RAISES \$13,000 FOR COGWA YOUTH CAMPS PROGRAM



The Ninth Annual Boot Scoot Barbecue was held on Jan. 31, 2015, in Grapevine, Texas. Once again, this fund-raiser was organized and hosted by a North Texas family to raise money for the COGWA Youth Camp Scholarship and Activity Fund. Over 300 guests dined on beef ribs and homemade desserts before kicking off an evening of fun with dancing, a bake sale, raffle, silent auction and photo booth. "Boot Scoot is such a fun event for such a great cause! I look forward to it every year," said Katrina Winant, a member from Dallas.

Volunteers from the Dallas, East Texas, Fort Worth and Houston congregations worked for several months to gather items for the raffle and silent auction. Volunteers also helped with the elaborate set up and decorations, including a custom-painted backdrop for the photo booth and a chuck wagon tabletop cover for the drinks station. Live music was provided by the Union House Branch Band.

After expenses, the event raised over \$13,000 for the camp program. "We are so thankful for everyone who volunteered, donated both cash and items, sponsored and helped with setup and takedown. Our family loves to work with all of the congregations to raise money for a fund that we believe makes a tremendous impact on the youth in God's Church," said Boot Scoot chair Brenda Hogg.

Save the date for next year! The 10th Annual Boot Scoot will be on Feb. 6, 2016, again in Grapevine, Texas.

**Kelli Hogg**



From the top The extended Robles-Avila family; the Union House Branch Band provides dancing music; Karissa Carter and Forrest Dohrmann; the Gomez family



One of the preteen girls basketball teams

## EAST TEXAS WINTER ACTIVITIES BRING THE CONGREGATION TOGETHER

Since the Feast of Tabernacles in 2014, the East Texas congregation has held several social events, all of which were great opportunities for wonderful fellowship.

On the evening of Nov. 2, we held our "Be Our Guest" dinner, which has become an annual event that alternates with our "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" In the "Be Our Guest" dinner, guests are matched up with hosts but only learn where they will be dining when they receive a map after services. In the second model, the roles are reversed, and the hosts do not know who their guests are going to be! In both instances a coordinator guarantees that guests do not show up empty-handed but contribute various dishes to the meal.

We appreciate the hard work Scarlet Ellis puts into these projects every year, and this November was a special challenge due to last-minute changes in the guest list. As always, it was a wonderful way to share an evening with members with whom we do not usually get to spend quality time.

On Saturday evening, Jan. 10, the congregation held a Mexican-themed potluck and board game night. The evening was enhanced with special games for the young children, including a piñata that was busted open by 7-year-old T.J. Shipman to everyone's delight!

On Jan. 24 to 25 East Texas hosted the regional basketball tournament. On Saturday night we held a teen activity with pizza and a number of activities, including blacklight dodgeball in the covered back warehouse area, which provided several hours of unstoppable fun for many. On Sunday men's, women's, teen and preteen teams from all over Texas participated in the basketball tournament.

**Nancy Diraison**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

## WEDDINGS



Jesús and Martha Gabriela Carrera

Surrounded by 50 excited friends and family members, Jesús Carrera and Martha Gabriela Morán joined their lives on Jan. 11, 2015.

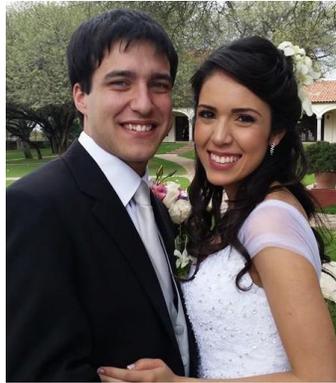
The wedding took place in the gardens of the Posada San Javier Hotel, nestled in the magical village of Taxco, Guerrero, Mexico.

Adán Langarica conducted the ceremony; and after he laid hands upon them and declared them husband and wife, Jesús and Gabriela made their way among their cheerful guests under a shower of white rose petals.

After sharing a champagne toast and an excellent meal, they bade their guests farewell to depart for their honeymoon in the beautiful Mexican beach of Puerto Vallarta. Since Jesús lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the couple is settling arrangements to move Martha from her home in Taxco to join him.

Congratulations, Jesús and Martha Gabriela! May God always fill you with joy, peace and harmony in the bond of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Jorge Iván Garduño,  
Roxanne Cásares, Gustavo  
Elizondo**



Ariel and Karen Rosales

Karen Elizondo, from Mexico, wed Ariel Rosales, from Argentina, in the city of Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico, on Dec. 28, 2014. The radiant bride was escorted by her father, Don Guilebaldo Elizondo. Adán Langarica officiated the wedding ceremony as nearly 200 guests witnessed the event.

The reception was held under a white tent in the center of the Hacienda del Conde garden. The place was beautifully decorated, framed with lovely trees and colorful flowers. The delightful atmosphere was complemented by delicious food and wonderful music. Ariel sang a beautiful song to his new wife, and in the evening a group of mariachis serenaded the audience with their magnificent voices.

It was a wonderful wedding, but beyond that, it was the union of two young, God-fearing people. With His blessing, they have the potential of creating a beautiful marriage. May God bless them both!

Karen and Ariel traveled to Argentina for their honeymoon, where they will also be residing.

**Jorge Iván Garduño,  
Roxanne Cásares, Gustavo  
Elizondo**

## OBITUARIES



Scot Dane

Nathan Scot Beshoner Dane, a member of the Dallas, Texas, congregation, was born Dec. 21, 1981, in Kansas City, Missouri. He was 32 years of age when he died. He was preceded in death by his adopted dad, Charles Fish, whom he adored and admired greatly, and both paternal and maternal grandparents. He is survived by his father, Paul Beshoner; his mother, Judy Dane, who also attends the Dallas congregation; Paul's sister Patricia (Rick) Marshall and their children; Judy's six siblings, Shera (John) Williamson, John (Connie) Muehlman, Mark (Marsha) Muehlman, Kathleen (Robert) Labeledz, Steven (Becky) Muehlman, and Cynthia (Joe) Myers, and their children and grandchildren; and numerous cousins.

Scot was born after a prenatal stroke, which severely damaged his bilateral occipital lobes, making him legally blind and giving him cerebral palsy, sensory integration deficit, autism, developmental retardation and a seizure disorder. Despite all of these handicaps, Scot was de-

termined to live as normal a life as possible. He enjoyed many activities including volleyball, cross-country skiing, water skiing, rappelling and canoeing. He also loved card games, in particular, samba and canasta, and television shows about space exploration (i.e. *Star Trek* and *Stargate SG-1*).

Scot attended the New Mexico School for the Blind for several years, made many friends and was involved in student council, track, Cub Scouts and other student organizations. He attended Church from birth and was baptized in 2000. He attended in Tucson, Arizona; Columbia, Missouri; and Dallas, Texas; and for various years he served on the sound crews at Sabbath services.

In April 2014 Scot was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancers of the colon and liver (most likely a result of his long-term bout with Crohn's disease) and cancer in his lungs. He died Oct. 19, 2014. Throughout his battles, his focus remained fixed on the return of Jesus Christ, the establishment of His reign, and a world and universe changed for the better. Scot's two favorite scriptural passages were Philippians 1:23 and Romans 8:18

His example of hope, endurance and vision strengthened all who knew him. Scot's memorial service was held Nov. 22 after the Sabbath service. Andy Burnett, pastor of the Dallas and Sherman, Texas, congregations, officiated. Following the service, the Dallas congregation served a meal for the family and all who attended.

**Judy Dane and Andy Burnett**



Jane McConnell

Cora Jane McConnell, resident of McKinney, Texas, and member of the Dallas, Texas, congregation, died at the age of 82 on Aug. 22, 2014. "Corky," as she was called as a child (she was "Jane" as an adult), was born to Custer Monroe and Cora Elizabeth O'Neal in Wewoka, Oklahoma, on Aug. 28, 1931. Jane loved basketball and played on the girls' team in high school. Her mother died when Jane was 18, so Jane cared for her father and younger brother in subsequent years.

In the 1950s, Jane worked at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City and then later in various secretarial positions upon moving to the Dallas area. In the late 1950s, she joined the Worldwide Church of God, being one of the early members of the fledgling congregation in the area. Her only son, Victor Hawkins, was born in 1952 and died in 2006. Her daughter Audrey was born in 1958. In 1965 she married Clayton McConnell, and they had a daughter, Theresa, in 1965. Her only grandchild, Ashley, was born to David and Audrey Andrews in 1996. Jane is survived by her daughters and granddaughter, as well as her younger brother, Jon David O'Neal, and many nieces and nephews.

Jane enjoyed many experiences during her 50-plus years in the Church. She loved traveling at Feast time and especially treasured Feast time in the Smoky Mountains. She loved reading the Bible and the daily Dallas newspaper,

hosting family and fixing them food. In later years, her health deteriorated to the point that she became homebound. She moved in with her daughter, Theresa, who took on the responsibility of caring for her; and they both looked after their new dog, Emma. Jane remained faithful to God's way of life and finished the race. The Dallas congregation hosted Jane's memorial service on the Sabbath of Nov. 3, 2014, after Sabbath services concluded. John Lusk, an elder in Dallas and friend of the family, conducted the service.

**Andy Burnett**



Stella Burns

Stella Dowless Burns, age 89, a longtime member of the Florence, South Carolina, congregation, died on Nov. 11, 2014, after a long illness. She was born May 19, 1925, to Harry and Myrtle Hester Dowless. She was preceded in death by her parents; five brothers; four sisters; a daughter, Elsie Faye Burns; and her husband, Alfred Clinton Burns.

Stella is survived by five children, Alfred and Arnold Burns, Juanita Clark, Josephine Davis, and Shirley Hester; one sister; 14 grandchildren; and 17 great-grandchildren.

Stella and Clinton were married April 13, 1941 in Dillon, South Carolina. Beginning with the second Sabbath after the establishment of the Greensboro, North Carolina, congregation in November of 1963, they made the three-hour trip with their children every

week for many years to attend services.

Stella and her husband were baptized just before Passover, March 26, 1964. The Church and faith in God were always a big part of their lives. She deeply believed the truth about life after death. She was a delight to be around and always had a big smile. She was loved by everyone. She set a godly example and will be missed by all of us.

**Faye Campbell**



Marie Boles

The Redding, California, congregation sadly said goodbye to our beloved Marie Boles. She was born Feb. 4, 1922, and died on Oct. 28, 2014, at the age of 92. Her parents were of Romanian descent, immigrating to the United States in 1906, and settling in Illinois, where Marie was born, the third youngest of 10 children.

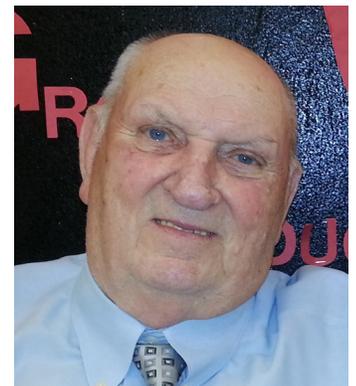
She met her husband, Frank Watkins, while working at her first job at a restaurant in Detroit, Michigan. They were married in 1940 and moved to Salinas, California, where their two children were born—a son, David, and a daughter, Linda. In addition to her children, she is survived by a grandson and two great-grandchildren.

A few years after Frank's death in 1963, Marie married Leland Boles, and they moved to Trinity Pines, California. Sometime after Leland died, she moved to Redding, California, where she began attending the Worldwide Church of God

and was baptized in February of 1990. Marie remained faithful as she lived her life seeking God's Kingdom. She lived in her own home, enjoying the company of her two cats and her independence.

As we think of Marie and remember the special times we were able to share with her, there are many wonderful qualities we appreciated and loved about her. She was a beautiful lady with a meek and quiet spirit. Her quick wit and delightful sense of humor will be deeply missed. She loved God and her Church family. And we, too, feel blessed and thankful to have had her as our sister and look forward to seeing her in the resurrection, a promise which she so firmly believed in and looked to God in faith to fulfill.

**Dave Register**



Fred Williams

Fred Williams of Dallas, Georgia, died on the morning of Jan. 14, 2015. Mr. Williams was a longtime, dedicated member of the Church of God in Atlanta, Georgia, where he served the congregation by providing coffee on the Sabbath. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Faye Williams; his two sons, Jeff (Debbie) Williams and Jonathan (Bridgett) Williams; his brother, Ed (Mary) Williams; many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews; and a host of friends.

**Chant'a Collier**

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