

# OneAccord

December 2015



## FI Etiquette Dinner

Camp Directors' Meeting Marks  
Two Decades of Regional Camps

Volunteers Make Huge Impact in  
Hilltop's First Year

# personal from the president

## Blessings and Curses



There was a terrible tragedy in Paris, France, on Friday evening, Nov. 13, 2015. We can always learn from any tragedy, but sometimes people are quick to judge and conclude that a tragic event is some sort of curse from God. Humans have the proclivity of wanting to find a reason for what has occurred, wondering whether God did this to punish specific people.

Don't get me wrong. The Bible is clear that there is punishment for sin, especially on the nation of Israel. Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 state clearly that God promises blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. But we also know that there are tragic events that happen because of the evil that exists in the world. Jesus Christ spoke of the people who died at the tower of Siloam in His day as not being cursed or deserving of death any more than others (Luke 13:4). Satan is the author of evil. He is the "god of this age" (2 Corinthians 4:4) and the deceiver of the world (Revelation 12:9).

There is no doubt in my mind that this group of seven or eight who walked the streets of Paris on that Friday night and killed 132 people and wounded 350 more were very evil people. Satan is on the warpath, and he seeks to destroy wherever he can. But Christ said that He would intervene in world affairs and prevent the total destruction of mankind (Matthew 24:21).

As we make plans here at the office for a new fiscal year with budgets, strategic plans and operation plans, we are humbled by the tremendous blessings that have come our way during this current year. We believe these are truly blessings from God, not because we are more righteous than others or that we are in any way deserving. We attribute the blessings to God's mercy and His desire to see the gospel preached and the saints cared for. We are committed to accomplishing both these goals.

But if there was a tragedy that affected the Church or if there was a major trial that involved many of God's people, would that automatically mean that God is angry with us or that He is now cursing us? In all fairness, this is a complicated question. We believe that God will correct us if we stray from His way. But notice Hebrews 12:6 where we are told that He corrects the ones He loves. So, correction isn't a bad thing, depending on how we react to it.

The bottom line is that when we have blessings, we should give God the credit and thank Him, and when we have trials, we need to look for any correction that could be there, but realize there may be other causes.



Mourners lay flowers on the sidewalk by La Belle Equipe, a bar targeted in the Paris attacks on Nov. 13, 2015.

The point is, let's not be too quick to judge when we witness a tragedy or watch others in the midst of a trial. But let us make sure we are doing our part—praying with a sense of urgency, fasting often, studying God's Word and supporting the efforts to preach the gospel. If we are doing these things, then we will be prepared to receive blessings with thanksgiving and endure trials with perseverance.

This life will produce good times (blessings) and difficult times (trials). Neither every trial nor every tragedy is a curse from God. But we are told that all good gifts (blessings) do come from God (James 1:17).

Let's pray for those who are suffering because of the deadly attacks in Paris, but let's do more. Let's put our hearts into preaching the gospel and caring for God's people. Time is short and getting shorter! In Christ's words, we must work while it is day for "the night is coming when no one can work" (John 9:4). The evil that was witnessed in Paris speaks to the night, the darkness that is coming, and, in fact, is already begun!



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



## CHURCH of GOD

A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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# FI ETIQUETTE DINNER

The Foundation Institute students were treated to an evening of elegance and delicious food.

by JENNIFER BOWMAN



**E**tiquette. It sounds a little like *antique*; and in many people’s minds, it is just as outdated.

Etiquette often creates visions of stuffy formal dinners, drinking tea with one’s pinky pointing out, and people creating awkward moments by trying to superficially impress others. But is that what it’s all about?

Ask the students at Foundation Institute.

On Nov. 14 they attended the second annual etiquette dinner at the home of Charles and Gay Oren, who attend the Dallas, Texas, congregation. It was an elegant affair with a five-course, French-inspired meal created by another Dallas member, Dora Jennings. The food was delicious; the conversation, stimulating; and reports are it was anything but superficial, stuffy and boring (though perhaps initially it was a little daunting for some).

Erica Bennett said the evening was less intimidating than she had anticipated, despite the array of glassware on the table and the row of silverware that most college students would probably never encounter during their school years.

“Normally we’re silly and crazy with each other,” she said. “It was neat to see how everyone interacted in a new environment, and to see that everyone is able to be formal.”

A week prior to the dinner, students attended a class by Joel Meeker to learn the rules of etiquette. He said the purpose of Christian etiquette is to show respect to others. It sets the guidelines for how to be polite, serve and put people at ease. Mr. Meeker pointed to Matthew 7:12 as the basis of etiquette.

If you are applying extremely formal rules in a relaxed environment, you are going against the purpose of etiquette, he said. You are then making people feel inferior, which is the opposite of the result etiquette should have.

At the etiquette dinner, however, there were formal rules to follow. When eating soup, spoon it away from you and sip it without slurping. Use your silverware beginning on the outside of the place setting and working your way toward your plate. When you’re finished eating, place your fork and knife in the four o’clock position.

The formal dinner, spearheaded by Ralph Levy, was added to the program last year to introduce students to a different kind of culture and to teach them how to appropriately conduct themselves in a formal setting.

“I feel very strongly that what God wants of His people is education of the whole person,” Dr. Levy said. “That includes culture, health, exercise, diet. There are many more aspects of God’s way of life than sitting down and learning.”

The formal evening brought great enjoyment to the students and left them with a long list of etiquette rules as well as a few basic rules to follow if they can’t remember the specifics: Think about how you can show respect to those around you, and watch to see which fork your neighbor is using. ☺☺





**Evening Highlights**

*Opposite page* FI students and faculty; the table is set for the multicourse meal; dinner attendees applaud Dora Jennings and the Orens for the evening's success.

*This page* Jim Franks fellowships with Kathy Cochran; Alexia Rickard and Brittany Woodall; the place setting and menu; endive salad boat with avocado vinaigrette dressing; a sign welcomes the guests; Gay and Charles Oren; Becky and David Johnson; Kathy Cochran and Rachel Luecke; Ralph Levy, Erik Jones, Doug Horchak and David Johnson serve as the wait staff; Harrison Jones, Jeff Caudle and Kashawn Willis; Emily Burt, Brittany Woodall, Jennifer Bowman, Erica Bennett and Alexia Rickard; outtakes from the students' formal photo.



The current Ministerial Board of Directors includes Arnold Hampton, Larry Salyer, Leon Walker, Richard Pinelli, David Baker, Joel Meeker and Richard Thompson.

## THREE BOARD MEMBERS RESELECTED IN RECENT ELECTION FOR MINISTERIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Church of God, a Worldwide Association, is set up differently from what we were used to in the past. As a nonprofit in the United States, we have a board that provides overall direction for the organization. The board does not involve itself in the administration and is required only to meet annually.

There are seven members of the Ministerial Board of Directors, as outlined in our governing documents. Currently, those individuals are Richard Thompson, Joel Meeker (chairman), Richard Pinelli, Leon Walker, David Baker, Larry Salyer and Arnold Hampton. This is still the original board that began its term in January of 2012.

Our documents call for eight-year terms for each MBOD member. But the original board had four individuals selected for eight years and three individuals selected for four years. In December 2015, we will complete four years of operation since we organized under this model. Shortly after the Feast this year, we began the process of nominating, followed by the final selection of three board members to replace the three positions that received four-year terms, which end on Dec. 31. The three individuals who will complete four-year terms were Joel Meeker, David Baker and Leon Walker.

All credentialed elders in COGWA, a total of 207, were eligible to ballot. The deadline for casting a ballot was Monday, Nov. 16. On Tuesday, Nov. 17, the results of that ballot were posted by the MBOD secretary, David Johnson. In this election Joel Meeker, Leon Walker and David Baker were reselected for an eight-year term.

That means that the MBOD will remain the same for at least the next four years before the next election, in which the four original members of the board who began their eight-year terms back in 2012 will be up for election. Therefore, our next election will take place in November of 2019.

This election process was conducted in accordance with our bylaws, which you can read on the members' website. An official notice of the results was sent to all elders the week of Nov. 16.

**Jim Franks**

## DOUG JOHNSON APPOINTED CANADA SENIOR PASTOR



Doug Johnson

We are happy to announce that Doug Johnson has been appointed senior pastor for Canada. Mr. Johnson once served in the Canadian ministry for a number of years in the Worldwide Church of God. He currently serves as the pastor in Cleveland, Ohio, and Meadville, Pennsylvania. He will continue with his U.S. pastoral duties, while assuming the additional responsibility of senior pastor for COGWA, Canada.

The Canadian board has given its unanimous support for this appointment. Our group in Canada is still quite small, currently consisting of one congregation in the Toronto area, another in Newfoundland and two congregations in western Canada. But even though they are small, the work in Canada has already become financially self-sufficient and does not require a subsidy from the United States. In fact, last year Canada was able to send funds to assist the brethren in the Philippines.

Earlier this year, COGWA, Canada, experienced the tragic death of Graemme Marshall, who was overseeing the church office in Toronto. After Mr. Marshall's death, Scott Lord took on his responsibilities in the Canadian office after already becoming the pastor of the Toronto congregation due to Mr. Marshall's health problems.

Mr. Johnson will now be the administrator for Canada on behalf of COGWA, with the responsibility of developing the work there. Scott Lord and Jon Pinelli will continue to pastor our congregations in eastern and western Canada from the U.S., and Mr. Lord will continue to work in the Church office, which has been relocated to the city of Fort Erie, Ontario, just across the border from Buffalo, New York.

**Jim Franks**

FEAST OF  
TABERNACLES  
2015 REPORTS

MUGINA,  
BURUNDI

We were very thankful to be able to keep the Feast of Tabernacles 2015 in Mugina, Burundi, despite the security situation in the country, which is deteriorating day after day.

It was a very spiritually rich time. We spent the week in a warm and enjoyable fraternal atmosphere. What a joy to concentrate on this great treasure God is preparing for us: His Kingdom. High attendance was on the first day when 295 people were present, including visitors who came to learn about these biblical truths for themselves and to have the chance to ask questions regarding the teachings of our association, especially about God's holy days.

In addition to services every day—which were held in the local language, Kirundi—we enjoyed meals eaten together, which included meat or fish every day. There were games for the children, and Bible studies for people of all ages.

We are grateful to our brethren in the United States for the financial assistance that allowed us to enjoy the physical part of the Feast and to further the completion of our church hall.

**Moïse Ntagirinzigo**

KINSHASA,  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF  
THE CONGO

High attendance for the Feast of Tabernacles in Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was 130. The Feast was held in the house the Church rents as a church hall and office space. A number of members camped in the compound during the Feast.

We listened to prerecorded sermons in French given to us by regional director Joel Meeker when he visited us before the Feast. After the sermons, commentary and explanations were given in Lingala to help everyone understand. During the after-



noons, we held additional Bible studies and Bible question games.

Meals, which consisted of breakfast and one big meal in the afternoon, were prepared and shared on-site.

We organized two outings. The first was to the Lukaya waterfall on the Lukaya River, south of Kinshasa. The second outing was to the N'sele farms, which provide much of the chicken produced in Kinshasa. Both children and adults found these visits very interesting.

We're thankful to our American brethren for their support to allow us to keep the whole Feast, and thankful most of all to the Eternal who protected us from accidents and anything that would have marred our Feast. God blessed us all in every way.

**Victor Amsini Mapoli**

KPALIMÉ,  
TOGO

The Feast in Togo took place in Kpalimé, a town in the plateau region, 120 kilometers from the capital, Lomé. We were 17 people at the Feast of Tabernacles held at the Tové National Institute for Agricultural Training.

The services were on time every day, and the sermons were again very edifying. After each service, a translation was given in the national language, Ewe. We were encouraged to remember we need to abound in love, overcome sin and not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the world. We must continue our commitment unabated to strive for perfection and be prepared as a priesthood for God.

As a special activity, we organized Bible-based games drawn from Bible



courses for young people that date from the time of Herbert Armstrong. These include coloring games, hidden word searches, puzzles, question and answer, etc. We also organized outdoor activities like basketball and jogging.

We have individually and collectively received blessings. The offerings of the first day and the Last Great Day were generous, showing the measure of harvested blessings. Members were blessed in their festival tithe, which allowed us to pay for the service of the institute's restaurant for our meals. Our ladies were then able to devote more time to personal Bible study and meditation.

Four students of the institute visited us during the Feast. These young people were then able to hear about the Feast of Tabernacles and the divine plan of salvation for the first time. At the end of the meeting, they asked for clarification. We gave them the website address [VieEspoireEtVerite.org](http://VieEspoireEtVerite.org) to help them learn more.

It was a blessed Feast that allowed us to have new perspectives on the Millennium and the world tomorrow.

**Pierre and Odette Kloutsé**



# CAMP DIRECTORS' MEETING

## TWO DECADES OF REGIONAL CAMPS

by KEN TREYBIG

**T**wenty years ago we lost our centrally owned and operated teen camp location in Orr, Minnesota. Recognizing the benefit of a summer camp program, we immediately started running regional camps. After a few years, we became aware that each camp had the potential to promote very different philosophies and approaches and also were managing the risks involved in outdoor activities differently. As a result, 17 years ago under the direction of Larry Greider, the teen camp directors began having an annual meeting to collaborate and establish the same approach to safety and spiritual instruction, though each camp retained its own unique blend of activities and traditions.

We quickly recognized there was a great benefit to having regional camps because it meant campers could come back every year to make and strengthen friendships with other young people in the Church as well as get to know the adult and ministerial staff members. Preteen camps also began to be common—sponsored and run by local congregations. By the time we started

COGWA Youth Camps, the number of preteen campers across the country was almost the same as our teen camps, and we began also having the preteen camp directors come to our annual meetings. This year, for the first time, the number of preteen campers actually surpassed the number of campers at our teen camps, indicating we will likely see an increase in the attendance at our teen camps in a few more years.

Including the preteen directors in the meetings has resulted in creating a uniform approach to safety and spiritual instruction for all our camps and has greatly contributed to a more seamless transition of campers moving from the preteen to the teen camp program. Our surveys show a continuing rise in the number of years that campers have attended a Church camp; many now begin attending at the age of 6 and continue to come to camp up to the age of 18.

What do we cover in 2½ days of meetings? Each year the agenda takes a full 2½ pages and keeps us busy the entire time, as we discuss policies, procedures, safety concerns, trends identified by our survey results, how camps integrated this year's

theme in an age-appropriate way, future themes for Christian Living classes, finances, careful vetting of staff members to serve at camp, review of staff training recordings, etc. Each year we end up with many pages of notes from the meetings, describing our deliberations and planning decisions on various topics. In addition, a list of one or more pages of “action items” is developed for various members of the camp team to work on before we begin the application process for next year's camp season.

After two decades of running regional camps, it seemed appropriate to reflect a little on the history of our program to see how we got here. The fruit of the program has been very good, as we see more and more young people wanting to stay with the program and give back to the next generation of youth coming along behind them. The success of the program is God's doing, but there are many human instruments who have played a part in the process. It is truly a blessing to be a part of this team of dedicated, enthusiastic men and women, who have a zeal for serving and teaching the youth of the Church. ©



# VOLUNTEERS MAKE A HUGE IMPACT IN HILLTOP'S FIRST YEAR

by RHONDA WADDLE

**F**oundation Outreach International was excited to launch our first domestic program in July of 2014! Since then over 200 volunteers have completed 18 projects across the United States, serving countless hours.

Hilltop Outreach Program is a different kind of community service program that is designed to ignite a passion for service and volunteerism in the local community (as well as our local congregations), bringing brethren together through teamwork to accomplish a project and enhance the lives of both volunteers and those being served.

Volunteering truly knows no age limit, and the Hilltop participants this past year ranged in age from 5 to 85 years old. The participants noted the blessing of fellowship and the closeness they felt to each other while they were giving to others.

The guiding principle for this program is found in Matthew 5:16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." The goal of Hilltop is to shine direction, hope and comfort to others by providing the funds needed for brethren to organize service projects in their local communities.

Get a group of brethren together and brainstorm some possible projects that could really fill a need in your local community. Then apply for a Hilltop grant (maximum \$500) to help make your outreach idea become a reality.

We look forward to many members heading up new Hilltop Outreach projects. Each participant will receive an FOI T-shirt to be worn at the project events. If you would like to participate, please ask your local minister for an application or email [hilltopoutreach@foundationoutreachintl.org](mailto:hilltopoutreach@foundationoutreachintl.org) and request information.

You can also stop by the information desk at the Winter Family Weekend to pick up an idea sheet along with an application. We will also have a list of all of the projects that Hilltop has sponsored so far!

Helen Keller once stated, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Hilltop projects might not change the world, but they will make a difference in your lives and the lives of the people you serve. Let your light shine from the hilltop! ©A



Volunteers spruce up Sequoia Campgrounds, thanks to a Hilltop Outreach Program grant.

## What type of projects can I do?

What kind of local outreach projects can you do with a Hilltop grant?

Here are just a few project ideas:

1. Host a clothing drive.
2. Gather a few friends to knit dishcloths for Meals on Wheels.
3. Organize a crew to help widows with yard cleanup and house maintenance.
4. Host a food drive for a local homeless shelter or food bank.
5. Teach computer skills to the elderly.
6. Create a flower garden at a nursing home.
7. Make pillows or chemo care packages for cancer patients.
8. Host a book collection for a homeless shelter.
9. Cook a meal for families with sick children at a Ronald McDonald House.
10. Put together back-to-school backpacks for needy children.

These are just a few suggestions, but truly the possibilities are endless. Find a need in your community and create a solution.

## Where do I begin?

1. Go to [foundationoutreachintl.org](http://foundationoutreachintl.org) and click on "Hilltop Outreach" in the banner.
2. Gather a group of five or more participants.
3. Pick a service project that will help those in your local community or congregation.
4. Complete an application.
5. Send it to [hilltopoutreach@foundationoutreachintl.org](mailto:hilltopoutreach@foundationoutreachintl.org) or mail to:

**Foundation Outreach International**  
P.O. Box 2152  
Allen, TX 75013  
**Attention: Hilltop Outreach Program**

6. Wait for your project to be reviewed and a check to be issued by the Hilltop advisory committee.

# FEATURED HILLTOP PROJECTS



## RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

Young adults from Dallas and Virginia congregations served at their local Ronald McDonald House. The Virginia group, headed by Brianna Wine, purchased items to create snack bags to give to the residents and family members. The Dallas young adult group, led by Maci Chapman, made and served a delicious breakfast meal on a Sunday morning to those staying at the RMH. The patients and families are going through an extremely difficult time, and having a prepared meal and snack brightens their day. Ronald McDonald Houses are located throughout the United States and are a great way for our Church members to serve in the community.

## ADVENTURE BAGS

Judi Mann received a Hilltop grant to help displaced children—from infants to 18-year-olds—in shelters. Jefferson, Georgia, Sabbath school children helped to create the adventure bags, which were filled with essential daily items like a blanket, toothbrush and toothpaste, hairbrush, comb, shampoo, soap, crayons and coloring books. These bags offer displaced children something to call their own.

## GROCERIES FOR THE HOMELESS

Six Parkersburg, West Virginia, ladies worked as a team on Sunday, Nov. 30, 2014. The ladies included Anna Waggoner, Cheryl Jahns, Lynn Alleman, Rosalee Smith, Ali Harper and Vicki Cline. The project included sending 25 bags of groceries and a restaurant certificate to those who are homeless. Each bag included items like soup, crackers and a small restaurant certificate. The packages were delivered to the Salvation Army, which has a program for helping the homeless. When a family or individual is leaving the facility, they are given these items to help them get started in a new location. Bill and Cheryl Jahns purchased the items using funds from the Hilltop Outreach Program.

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR CHILDREN

Nancy Case works as a school librarian and saw a need at her elementary school, so she applied for a Hilltop grant. The grant provided funds to purchase school supplies to help many economically disadvantaged students in her area. The Big Sandy, Texas, Church members created backpacks full of school supplies for the various elementary grade levels. Nancy Case stated, "Anytime you help children get an education, you are making a difference!"



# HOW YOUR COMPANY CAN HELP FOI

One of the main sources of Foundation Outreach International funding is corporate matching programs.

Many companies—especially large ones—encourage the philanthropic efforts of their employees and support their giving by matching a set amount of the donations their employees give to approved charities. Donations such as these are especially attractive, as they multiply the generous support of donors.

As an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit, FOI has been designed to obtain and receive corporate matching funds. As examples, FOI currently has been approved to receive funds from firms like Bank of America, Exxon, Chevron, US Bank, Wells Fargo, Neuberger Berman and others.

Some firms, like Bank of America, match their employees' contributions of up to \$5,000 annually. Typically an employee reviews his or her company's corporate matching program details, then donates to FOI. Next the employee submits proof of his or her giving, and FOI's contact information, through the company's internal website. The company then typically requests FOI to submit information on its structure, purpose and programs. We are pleased that we have been vetted and approved by every matching corporation to date, including some of the largest firms in the world.

Other firms, such as Exxon, will even match their employees' "hours of service" to nonprofits by giving a set amount of funding per hour of service performed.

Finally, giving aggregators like United Way are very popular in the corporate world. Employees are many times encouraged to support United Way, and your donations may be directed to Foundation Outreach International at your request.

Does your employer offer a corporate matching program? We would appreciate your support to fund our numerous global good works projects. Thanks for your support!

If you have any questions, please contact FOI board member Cliff Demarest at [info@foundationoutreachintl.org](mailto:info@foundationoutreachintl.org).

Learn more about how you can get involved at  
[FoundationOutreachIntl.org](http://FoundationOutreachIntl.org)



Q

As a Christian I don't find the idea of the Flood comforting. I am troubled that God killed everyone—the unborn included—when He could have just killed the few who were beyond redemption. A friend told me to test scenarios by asking: "What would Jesus have done?" Would He have killed innocents?

A

True Christians don't think of the Flood as "comforting," but rather as a terrible time in human history. And we don't need to ask what Jesus would do, because He *was* the God who interacted with people in the Old Testament. The One who was later born as Jesus was the God who sent the Flood. Read Jesus' teaching directly in the article "[Jesus Christ Was the God of the Old Testament](#)."

Why did Jesus choose to destroy nearly every human being? Notice what the Bible says about the people then, as well as how God felt about them:

"Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart" (Genesis 6:5-8).

There is more information here than meets the eye.

"God's words concerning the human race are *filled with pathos*. People's wickedness was great, and every inclination ... of their hearts was only evil continually (cf. 8:21, 'every indication of his heart is *evil from childhood*'). [God made man with the capacity to choose good or evil] but man had taken that capacity given to him and produced evil alone. ... In addition man was 'corrupt' and 'full of violence' (Gen. 6:11, 13). ...

"Even though swift judgment would fall because God's Spirit would not always shield ... mankind, the judgment would be delayed 120 years (v. 3). During this time Noah was

'a preacher of righteousness' (2 Peter 2:5)" (David C. Cook, *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2004, notes on Genesis 6:5-8, emphasis added).

You see that God's decision to send the Flood wasn't made hastily or thoughtlessly. He had Noah call on people to change *for 120 years* before the Flood! In colloquial English, it broke the Creator's heart to have to send the Flood.

What happened to the unborn or tiny babies? God didn't send them to a place of torment! He allowed them to go to sleep, instead of growing up in a world in which they, too, would perpetuate *unrelenting evil*.

Therefore, we have to respectfully disagree with your premise that we could or should condemn God's actions at the time of the Flood. The God of the Flood *is* love. He gave us life. Then, He emptied Himself of the right to remain above humankind and became one of us, as Jesus. He allowed men to condemn and torture Him to death. "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13).

No Christian takes comfort in what God had to do to the evil world at the time of the Flood. Neither do we judge our Maker. Rather, we have complete confidence in His judgment and His ability to save, then, now and in the future. Read the biblical explanation of how God will give everyone an opportunity for salvation in [The Last Enemy: What Really Happens After Death?](#) ©

## WAITING ON GOD

A member relates her emotional experience serving as a caretaker for her mother-in-law with dementia.

By PENNY GOODCHILD

**H**AVE YOU EVER THOUGHT of what a special lady Naomi must have been for Ruth to have loved her so much?

I imagine that Naomi might have been much like my mother-in-law, always ready to help in any way she could, understanding, encouraging, a great listener—someone who really knows how to be a friend. A woman of godly wisdom.

How can I express on paper the love I have for her? She has shown me such a wonderful example.

This is why it breaks my heart to see her changing before my eyes. Dementia is something I never had to deal with before. This experience has opened my eyes in many ways.

I remember thinking how difficult it was when my children were newborns, and they'd wake up every few hours to nurse; but that was easy compared to putting an adult on a bedside commode, and cleaning them up several times a night. I was never that exhausted with my newborns.

One of my friends told me it was probably a good thing Mom was losing her memory because it would be too embarrassing for her to remember everything she is going through now.

Years ago I gave my mother-in-law my word that as long as I was physically able I would take care of her. I never realized what that would entail. Yet, I don't regret it.

She still retains her sense of humor, and takes great interest in people. She was always so gifted at remembering names, but no more.

*What have I learned? Mostly that I'm greatly lacking character. Patience, especially.*

*For almost five years I haven't been able to get out of the house to go shopping, etc., unless I have someone who can stay with Mom. When you have a baby, you can take the child with you; but when you're caring for an elderly adult, it's not so easy. Sometimes the person is too weak to come with you; and if she is strong enough to go, she might need a wheelchair, which can be difficult to transport.*

*Finding someone to sit with your elderly parent can also be a challenge, especially if your parent needs help getting on and off the toilet. Not everyone has the strength to lift up a person, and cleaning an adult is not something you can ask very many people to do. So when I go shopping, I can't go for long.*

*At times I feel like a prisoner in my home. Yet I know this won't last forever. I feel guilty for wanting out of this trial, because the only way out is the death of one of my dearest and closest friends.*

*It's difficult watching someone slowly die. Mom doesn't have much physical pain, but the emotional pain she has from the confusion of losing her memory is intense. Sometimes she's angry with me and doesn't know why. She thinks I haven't spent any time with her when, in fact, I've spent most of my day with her.*

*Mom used to be such a take-charge lady. Now she is totally dependent on me. She can't remember how to fry an egg. In times past she made such wonderful meals and hosted so many potlucks in her home.*

*I long for the day when I'll see her in full glory—healthy, vibrant, strong, without any health trials. She has been through so much! Then there will be no more tears.*

### Reflecting on my trial

I found the above entry in a notebook of mine about one month after my mother-in-law's funeral. I wrote it approximately two months before her death. It brings back the agony of the trial we were going through at the time.

Looking back, I remember feeling at times like God wasn't hearing my prayers. I wanted Him to answer sooner than He was answering. I kept trying to figure out *what I was supposed to learn*. I felt like if I'd just learn whatever God was trying to teach me, Mom wouldn't have to suffer anymore.

Somehow it doesn't seem as bad now when I look back at that trial as it did when we were going through it. Looking back, I can see God's hand in so many things. He

was merciful to us in many ways.

I'm sure there were many lessons from this trial, but the biggest lesson I learned was *to wait on God*. He has a purpose in everything, and part of believing is *waiting*.

A week before she died, Mom had a surge of energy. She wanted my husband Mark and me to pray with her. She started thanking God for everything she could think of and then turned to us and said, "We ask and ask God, but we don't thank God enough."

This was spoken by a woman who was totally bedridden with colon cancer, who was no longer able to eat. Even with dementia she was a light to us. She was an example right up to the end.

Mom fought a good fight. Her battle is won. Her suffering is over. And someday this world's suffering will be over also.

We have been waiting for Christ's return. It can feel like that day will never come. But some day Christ really will return, and our waiting will be over. ☺☺

## ADVICE FOR CARETAKERS

I learned many things while helping my mother-in-law. Taking a class about dementia is a great idea to help your loved one. The following are several important tips on dealing with dementia that I gathered from the University of Minnesota's publication "The Savvy Caregiver's Manual."

- Try to avoid language that relies on memory, such as "Remember when we ..." or "Don't you remember?"
- Don't point out memory loss. This can make the person feel like a failure and may be embarrassing.
- Watch your tone of voice. The person may not comprehend what you are saying, but he or she may quickly react to your tone of voice.
- Don't lecture! It will just upset the person and he or she probably won't remember what you said tomorrow.

# CHURCH POTLUCK

News and events from your local congregation



Landon Clark (top) and Catherine Reyes (bottom) are blessed at the Blessing of Little Children ceremony in Fort Worth.

## TWO LITTLE CHILDREN BLESSED IN FORT WORTH

The Fort Worth, Texas, congregation observed the blessing of little children on Oct. 17 with two new arrivals.

Landon Thomas Clark, was blessed by his great-grandpa Roger West, his grandpa Dave West and local pastor Ken Giese. His parents, Adam and Ashley Clark, were thrilled to have three generations take part in his blessing. "Our little sunshine is a joy to raise, and we are so grateful to be able to live in peace knowing that God is always watching over him." They were also thrilled that Landon didn't try to eat the microphone, cry or pinch anyone.

Catherine Arielle Reyes was also blessed, surrounded by her father and mother, Daniel and Virginia Reyes, and big brother Garrett on stage for the blessing. Even though she was 9½ months old, she was quite calm. We learned about the innocence of children in the sermon and how important it is to preserve it in our little ones. It is always such an inspiring service!

## MINNESOTA CONGREGATIONS HOST POST-FEAST SOCIAL

On Oct. 31, after Sabbath services, the Twin Cities and St. Cloud, Minnesota, congregations held their annual combined post-Feast social. In addition to our local congregations, we welcomed several visitors who came to enjoy the social with us.

The evening began with a potluck dinner, during which Feast pictures from the members were displayed on a large screen in front of the church hall. Once the meal was complete, our emcee for the evening, Dan Creed, began the program. After he introduced the purpose of the evening—talking about our physical and spiritual Feast highlights—we began passing the microphone around to those who had experiences to share.

The two most attended Feast sites from among our local membership were Orange Beach, Alabama, and Ashbourne, Ireland. We heard experiences from those sites, as well as Branson, Missouri; New Braunfels, Texas; and the satellite Feast site in War-



rens, Wisconsin. Those who shared experiences ranged from adults to young adults—and even children were excited to talk about swimming in the ocean!

All agreed that it was a memorable Feast, and we are already looking forward to next year!

**Barbara Lee**  
Photo by Olivia Witt

## ST. LOUIS HONORS COUPLE CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

The month of October was a busy one for the St. Louis, Missouri, congregation. Members returned from various Feast of Tabernacles locations anticipating the next highlight of the year, the blessing of little children ceremony. On Sabbath, Oct. 17, parents and grandparents presented five children before God for His blessing in St. Louis and one in Rolla, Missouri. That same evening, the Holman and Morgan families hosted their annual wiener roast and hayride for the St. Louis brethren. It was a thoroughly enjoyable and memorable day for the congregation.

The following Sabbath marked the first regular service for the St. Louis congregation in a new, spacious meeting hall that was immediately put to good use, beginning with Sabbath school classes before services and the regular teen Bible study afterward.

Immediately following services, Dennis and Linda Hoppe were honored with cake and punch to mark their 50th wedding anniversary. St. Louis is blessed to have the examples of at least four couples married 50 or more years, and two for more than 60. Certainly, reaching such milestones is increasingly uncommon in today's world,



Linda and Dennis Hoppe

and it is a pleasure to take note of such occasions.

The last Sabbath was one of beginnings. Pastor John Foster explained a new format for the Sabbath school program based on the parenting manual, *Encourage, Equip & Inspire*, and introduced the topic of gratitude for the November class. He also presented an idea for a church outreach program that has some exciting potential and opportunities for member involvement. Finally he announced the formation of a men's speaking and leadership training class.

**Karen Meeker**

## ROANOKE, VIRGINIA, CELEBRATES A SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF SABBATH SCHOOL



Sabbath school students receive their certificates of achievement for the 2014-2015 school year.

The Roanoke, Virginia, congregation was very pleased to welcome some special visitors for the Sabbath of Oct. 24. Doug and Tanya Horchak braved a long flight delay out of Dallas on Friday due to storms and then very heavy traffic upon landing in North Carolina to attend services with us Sabbath afternoon. Members from our sister congregations in Princeton and Charleston, West Virginia, were able to attend with us via live webcast.

Before the sermon, seven of our younger family members were each presented with a certificate of achievement by our pastor Larry Lambert for successfully completing all of their Sabbath school lessons for the 2014-2015 school year. Those receiving certificates were Breanna Meadows (Pre-K), Katelyn Meadows (Level 1), Olivia Arnold (Level 1), Madison Meadows (Level 1), Levi Spitzer (Level 1), Luke Tranquada (Pre-K) and Mark Arnold (Pre-K). Congratulations to all of our graduates, and keep up the great work!

Afterward, Chancy Arnold provided some very special music. Mr. Horchak then gave a thought-provoking and inspiring sermon on how we, as members of God's Church and firstfruits, can—and must—make a difference in the world now and especially in the future at Christ's return. After services, we all shared wonderful fellowship and some delicious food at a special potluck prepared by our ladies.

Everyone in our three congregations wishes to thank the Horchaks for taking time out of their busy schedule to visit us and share the Sabbath with us. It was a real treat to have them visit with us, and we sincerely hope that they will be able to do so again. We would also like to extend an invitation to any others who may wish to visit us. Who knows? We may even have a potluck when you visit.

**Robert Worsham**

## PHIL CASTRO WINS FIFTH ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF IN MARYLAND



Rod Williams, Phil Castro and Tim Waddle won top prizes.

The Bedford and York, Pennsylvania, and Clarksville, Maryland, congregations held their fifth annual chili cook-off on Sunday, Oct. 25, and it was fantastic in every way. It was held at a member's home in Maryland and was attended by over 30 brethren. It was a gorgeous fall day with great fellowship and some really good chili. Everyone who attended the cook-off was a winner, but the judges awarded first prize chili to Phil Castro, second place to Rod Williams and third place to Tim Waddle.

**David LeMarr**

## HICKORY BROTHERS LEARN ABOUT FOI PROJECTS AT INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK



The Hickory, North Carolina, congregation hosted its first international potluck on Nov. 7.

The tables were set, clad with crisp tablecloths and national flag toppers. The room was ignited with the wonderful aroma of meals placed together like a jigsaw puzzle. The long table with a blue cloth bore a variety of national flags ranging from the Union Jack to Canada's maple leaf to Spain's lion. With such entrees as Jamaican jerk chicken, Ukrainian pierogi, Irish lamb stew, German potato salad and Indian tandoori chicken, there was no room for hunger.

Following the delicious meal, Jessica Schultz shared her fascinating experience of visiting Zambia and Malawi with Foundation Outreach International. The environment was similar to camp, but this time she was teaching English, witnessing free-range chickens running across the road and lions prowling in the landscape. Five years strong, this project demonstrates how powerful serving is and why we need the experience of learning about different cultures.

**Haven Swanson**

# 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.), 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.

## BAPTISMS



Vivian and Steve Moody and Buel and Peggy Dame

On July 25, 2015, the Sedgwick, Arkansas, congregation welcomed Buel Dame as a new member. He was baptized by Steve Moody with family and Church members present. His granddaughter, Makenzie Kapales, sang a song at the baptism. Buel is a third-generation member of the Church of God. A reception was held later at the Sedgwick church hall.

**Peggy Dame**



Joe Upton and Steve Moody

On May 18, 2015, Joe Upton was baptized in Sedgwick, Arkansas, by Steve Moody.

Several members attended the baptism and the reception that was held afterwards, hosted by John and Betty Petty. Joe and Brenda Upton are members in the Sedgwick, Arkansas, congregation.

**Peggy Dame**

## OBITUARIES



Katherine Goodchild

Katherine Harriet Goodchild, a resident of Gladewater, Texas, since 1973, died on Sept. 12, 2015, at the age of 93. She was the only child of the late George and Rena Sievers. Ken



Treybig officiated at the memorial service, which was held at Croley Funeral Home on Sept. 17, 2015, with a reception held at the East Texas church hall afterwards.



Braelyn Caple

Braelyn Caple was baptized July 29, 2015. Present at the ceremony were her parents, Matt and Janet Caple, and her two sisters.

Braelyn has attended the Church of God all her life. She is currently a student at the University of Central Missouri, where she is studying languages.

She also is one of the pianists for her local congregation in Columbia, Missouri. We are happy to welcome her to the Body of Christ.

**Pat Freeman**

## ENGAGEMENTS



David Stump and Jacqueline Luy

David Stump and Jacqueline Luy of the Fort Worth, Texas, congregation are very happy to announce their engagement.

The two were engaged on Sept. 6 at the Quant Ranch with the help of Michelle Quant, Angela Weinbrenner and David's mother and sister, Melissa and Susan, who set the scene for the special occasion. A wedding is being planned for some time in the spring of 2016 in the Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, area.

**Laura Anderson**

Katherine was born on April 17, 1922, in Detroit, Michigan, and married Edward Goodchild on Nov. 2, 1940. They were married 57 years. He preceded her in death on June 1, 1998.

Edward Goodchild was baptized into the Church of God in 1961, and Katherine followed a year later. They first attended services in Southbend, Indiana, and later in Toledo and Detroit, before moving to Gladewater, Texas. Katherine drove a school bus for 15 years (five years in Detroit and 10 years for Gladewater ISD). She also worked as a custodian for Gladewater ISD.

Katherine had a beautiful soprano voice and was a gifted pianist. She performed on many occasions for church services and weddings. She is remembered for her great sense

of humor, love for people and a knack for remembering names.

Katherine and Edward had five children: Joan (Arvil) Elliot, George (Carolyn), Paul (Kathy), Cindy (George) Koory and Mark (Penny). They also had eight grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren. They were preceded in death by their son Paul. Mark and Penny Goodchild are members of the East Texas congregation. They have two sons, Tim and Carl.

Katherine will be fondly remembered and missed for her uplifting smile, warmth and positive attitude. She continued as an extraordinary example through the many difficult health trials and sufferings that marked her final years.

**Nancy Diraison**



# Will He Really Find Faith?

STANDING STRONG IN A FAITHLESS WORLD

ATLANTA · BRANSON · COLUMBUS · FORT WORTH  
LOS ANGELES · PORTLAND · TWIN CITIES

Christian leadership stands on the foundation of faith. We are not surprised, therefore, to see many enemies at the gate working to undermine our confidence and conviction. Those who know how to stand strong against that tide have always had a great influence on God's people.

The Church continues to need this type of leadership.

How can I remain immovable in a constantly shifting world? How can I, as a leader, bear the kind of fruit befitting a representative of God's Kingdom? How can I defeat the enemies of faith? What little things must I be faithful in today to be entrusted with the really big things tomorrow?

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