2019 is officially half over! And what a six months it has been! We ended 2018 with a number of difficult decisions. The new building was scheduled to be completed by the end of last year, but no later than the end of January. Our lease was to end Jan. 31, and we would have no place to go if the building were not finished by then. Our emergency plan, if we needed more time, was having everyone work from home. But in December our landlord, Greg Nelson, who lives in Houston, was in Dallas for the annual end-of-the-year breakfast his company hosts for all the tenants. I explained our situation, and he assured me we had nothing to worry about. He would extend our lease on a month-by-month basis for as long as we needed.

We finally moved into the new building on March 1 of this year, just in time for the spring holy days and our biennial International Ministerial Conference. The first six months of this year have been quite eventful.

But now summer is here, and that means youth camps. This year we will once again host 11 camps with more than 1,000 people involved—preteens, teens and staff members. These types of camps have been part of the Church’s history since the early 1960s, almost six full decades ago.

From our perspective, youth camps are among our most successful activities year in and year out. Each year at the conclusion of the camp season, we ask, “Why was our camp program so successful?” With thousands of youth going through the program, it is clear that there is no single answer. But let me give you the reasons I think our camp program is so successful.

First of all, we have a dedicated team of adults who have been organizing camps year after year for decades. Some of the people on this team have been working with youth camps for more than 40 years. Their experience is a big reason we expect success each year.

Second, we have parents who are willing to get involved in the lives of their children. They aren’t turning their children over to others. Many of them work at the camps and the others are supportive, encouraging their children to give it a try.

Third, we have staff members who sacrifice time and money to serve at camp, some serving at more than one camp each year. It isn’t an overstatement to say that without this army of volunteers, the Church would be severely limited in the number and quality of camps that we could conduct on an annual basis.

With a dedicated camp team, caring parents and a few hundred staff members willing to volunteer, I believe we are assured of another successful season. All but one of our camps will take place over the next two months. The one exception is our teen winter camp, which is scheduled for the end of December.

I did leave out one item that must be included when considering the success of our youth camps. God’s involvement. I pray regularly for our youth, and I know that many of you do as well. Everything we do should include God and be done to His glory. Peter wrote about this in 1 Peter 4:11—“that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” If we approach our youth camps from this perspective—seeking God’s involvement and doing it to His glory—we will be successful.

In summary, why are our youth camps so successful?
• We have a dedicated and experienced camp team.
• We have caring parents.
• We have staff members who are willing to give their time to serve our youth.
• We seek God’s involvement.

Within the next two months (July and August) 10 camps will take place. We consider these camps an investment in the future of our young people and critical to the future of the Church. I hope you will consider getting involved if you have the opportunity to do so. I am confident you won’t regret it!
Journeys and Reflections
Bruce and Phyllis Gore

Budgeting for the Feast of Tabernacles
We have an amazing opportunity to attend God’s Feast each year. Just as amazing is that we are commanded to enjoy ourselves! How can we fulfill that command from God?

2019 High School Graduates

Church Potluck

Announcements
After the Gore family in west-central Alabama acquired electricity and a radio, the life of young Bruce Gore became set on a course of undreamed-of experiences. It began when the family listened to Herbert W. Armstrong, a powerful radio preacher whose messages would have a direct bearing on the years that followed, especially for Bruce.

Bruce was good at math in high school, and he began considering a career in civil engineering. He became aware of Ambassador College through Mr. Armstrong’s broadcasts, so he decided to apply there. However, Ambassador offered no engineering degrees. So, for the next several years Bruce worked at various jobs, attended what was then the Radio Church of God and was baptized before long. Eventually, he decided to reapply to Ambassador, with no expectation of an engineering degree. This time he was accepted.

Marriage and ordination

Bruce Gore married fellow student Phyllis Davey in the fall of 1966 after serving several weeks in Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, Indiana—his first assignment as a ministerial trainee. Mr. Armstrong ordained him the following year in Jekyll Island, Georgia, during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Three years later the Gores were transferred to Macon, Georgia, and after serving there for a year, he was made pastor. In the years that followed, the Gores faithfully served wherever they were assigned.

Ensuing years brought broadened experiences. Mr. Gore worked with teen camps in Alabama and Georgia; served several years as regional pastor of the Southeast Region; and served as Feast coordinator for Pigeon Forge, Tennessee (2014 and 2016). The Gores traveled several times to international Feast sites, including three times to Africa.

Three big lessons

With experiences came valuable lessons. Mr. Gore reflected, “Certainly, I learned early on that you must believe and live what you preach. I learned the value of friendships with both the brethren and one’s peers and the powerful part our wives play in our ministry. But, certainly for me, I learned the importance of stepping out on faith. Sometimes, the tasks we are asked to perform may seem quite daunting or even intimidating. Ironically, I began serving in the ministry with a real fear of public speaking; but with God’s help, I forced myself to do what was asked or expected and God was always there to supply the help. Truly our God is an awesome God!”
Unexpected reward

“Some of the most enjoyable opportunities,” Mr. Gore continued, “have opened up to share the truth with so many incredible people of all ages and backgrounds. I never would have guessed how rewarding it would be to be given God’s help to learn and teach His marvelous truths to those God calls. That and the deep friendships we have been allowed to develop among the members and our peers are priceless, to say the least.”

Inspiring miracles

The Gores witnessed God’s influence in the lives of those He calls. Mr. Gore commented that “it has been inspiring to my wife and me to see many miracles of healing and protection for God’s people over the years. But some of the most inspiring miracles have been the changes that take place when God enters the lives of individuals—even those who are hostile.”

He shared the example of a woman who had to slip out of her house with her three children and drive over a hundred miles to attend services and then face her husband’s angry outbursts upon her return home. Then the couple’s youngest son almost died from an accident. She had requested prayer and anointing for him, but the father would not allow it. She used an anointed cloth, the local church prayed for God’s intervention as well, and the little boy recovered.

“A few months later, the husband showed up at church with her and sat during services—face impassive and with his arms folded across his chest. Surprisingly, he was back the next Sabbath, and the next. I began to notice him glancing over at his wife’s Bible, and weeks later he brought his own Bible. I almost cried one Sabbath when he walked up and said, ‘Mr. Gore, I would like to talk to you about baptism.’ I had the great pleasure of baptizing him a few weeks later.”

Family life

“God gave us four wonderful children. The transfers were the hardest on them. We could at times hear them crying at night prior to a move for having to leave friends they had made. But before long in the new church areas, they had made new friendships. The experience of moving and having to meet and develop relationships with new people was a great learning experience for all of us. And our children came to see that in time as well. We later asked them if they felt all those experiences had handicapped them in any way or not. They all stated that they felt they had gained much more than they had lost.”

In August 2018 Bruce and Phyllis Gore were honored on their retirement from the full-time ministry. Jim Franks commented that the Gores have been loved and respected in all their church assignments, and that they made major contributions to the well-being of the Church.

Retirement has not altered the dedication that the Gores have for God and His Church—which all began with a boy, electricity, a radio and God.

On the Road Again

The following are the areas served by Bruce and Phyllis Gore from 1966 to 2018:

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<th>Period</th>
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<tr>
<td>1970-1976</td>
<td>Macon, Valdosta and Columbus, Georgia</td>
<td>1996-2005</td>
<td>Birmingham and Gadsden, Alabama; and Columbus and Rome, Georgia</td>
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<tr>
<td>1977-1979</td>
<td>Raleigh and Fayetteville, North Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979-1988</td>
<td>Kansas City South and North and Topeka, Kansas</td>
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<td>1988-1994</td>
<td>New Orleans and Raceland, Louisiana</td>
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God established a way of providing enough financial resources for most members. It is self-funded and set aside for Festival use. Take a moment before continuing and read Deuteronomy 14:22-27. To summarize:

- Verse 22 instructs us to set aside a tenth of our increase each year in an account specifically designated for God’s festivals.
- Verse 23 tells us to take this tithe and go to where God places His name—one of His chosen Festival sites.
- Verses 24-25 relate how to use that tithe. Today we generally take our tithe as money and spend it according to our budget.
- Verse 26 is a favorite: “You shall rejoice, you and your household.”
- Verse 27 reminds us that this tithe isn’t to be used selfishly and lavishly. Rather, we must ensure that everyone gets to enjoy the Feast! That includes those whose Festival tithe might not cover all their expenses.

Budgeting our Festival tithe will ensure that there is enough to finish the Feast strong. Doing without a budget and relying on a credit card to cover everything can lead to a large debt after the Feast—and a lot of unneeded stress.

Using a budgeting tool

Here is a simple, yet effective budgeting tool. Use this as a way to predict how much money you will have and then apportion it wisely.

Income: This is a total of the funds you will have available for the Feast. Include all of your second tithe, any extra money that you may save during the year to supplement your tithe, etc. Add all of these figures up in your budget worksheet.

Expenses: This is a projection of all the expenses associated with the Feast—travel to the Festival, the Festival itself and the trip home.

- Tithe of the tithe. This is a practice established long ago of giving a tenth of our second tithe to the Church to help pay for the many expenses it incurs in providing so much of what we enjoy at the Feast.
- Transportation to and from the Festival. This includes airfare or bus fare if you’ll be traveling commercially. If you’re driving, you should include proper preparation for your vehicle, such as a tune-up or general inspection of its safety readiness. Estimate the cost for fuel by figuring the distance to and from the site, how many miles your vehicle gets per gallon of gas, and the price of fuel along the route. Fuel prices at resort areas are often higher.
• **Festival housing.** Knowing in advance how much money you will have makes it easier to plan where you can afford to stay. Remember to include fees and taxes.

• **Meals.** Plan a certain amount of money to spend on meals for each day. Estimate an approximate amount for breakfast, lunch and dinner for everyone you are supporting. Add these expenses together and multiply that by the number of days in your trip. Food costs can be significant, so plan accordingly.

• **Transportation during the Festival.** If you are traveling commercially, you may need to rent a vehicle or use public transportation. If you’ll be driving, be sure to plan for fuel costs during your stay. If you’re riding with others, include some money in your budget to help the driver.

• **Entertainment.** See what is left before planning your entertainment. Many areas offer a lot of extra activities, so you will need to consider what you can afford. If you are able, include money to take a needy member or family to dinner, or to pay for them to have a special activity.

Once you have your projected expenses, add them up and compare them to the funds you have available. Do you have more than you need? You may be able to increase a budget item. Do you have less than you need? Look for ways you can spend less or increase your Festival fund.

Once you have a budget, be sure to stick to it during the Feast. Keep track of what you spend to ensure you stay within your budget. Doing so can make your Feast less stressful and more enjoyable.

Reread Deuteronomy 14:22-27. Take these instructions as God’s advice in planning your Festival. Then go to the Feast with gladness and joy as you reap the blessings of following His ways! ☀️

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**Planning an International Feast? Consider Travel Insurance**

**Our experience illustrates the value of having travel insurance when going to an international Feast site.**

It’s that time of year again when Feast planning is already beginning!

There are many things to consider as we plan: budgeting, making travel and accommodation arrangements are just a few. And if you are contemplating attending an international site, planning rises to a whole new level!

When thinking about international travel, how many of us add “travel insurance” to our planning list? When my husband and I left in September 2017 for a European adventure that was to culminate with keeping the Feast in Calais, France, we had no idea how grateful we would be to have purchased travel insurance.

While enjoying pre-Feast travel through England and Europe, my husband became ill. By the time we arrived in Calais, he was confined to bed with a high fever. Over the next few days, his condition did not improve, so we sought medical advice. An ambulance trip to the emergency room led to five nights in the Calais hospital. He was not discharged from the hospital until the Last Great Day.

Are you seeing dollar signs here? Yes, they did exist. But, thankfully, due to our travel insurance coverage, we were not required to pay any of these expenses. What a blessing!

I share our Feast experience with you as an encouragement for you to consider including travel insurance in your international Feast plans. Taking care of medical expenses is just one of its many potential benefits.

—Tracy Archer
Ronan Adkins

Parents’ names: Justin and Deba Adkins

Congregation: Memphis, Tennessee; and Sedgwick and Little Rock, Arkansas

High school accomplishments: Ronan graduated with honors and special distinction from Olive Branch High School in Olive Branch, Mississippi. He maintained a 4.3 GPA. He played football his freshman year and was a member of DECA for three years. Ronan also had dual enrollment during his junior and senior years. He took his classes from Northwest Mississippi Community College, accumulating nine credit hours. Ronan was awarded the A-State Excellence Scholarship from Arkansas State University.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Ronan has enjoyed participating in the COGWA Youth Camps program, as staff in preteen camps Bob White and Cherokee, as well as being a camper in teen camps Carter and Fort Bluff. He attends as many of the regional church events as he can. He assists with opening and closing prayers and song leading in his local congregations. He also assists with webcasting on the Sabbath. Ronan enjoys many things, especially spending time with family and friends.

Plans after graduation: Ronan will be attending Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Arkansas, on scholarship as part of the honors program. He will be majoring in business finance.

Layne Austin

Parents’ names: Roger and Joanna Austin

Congregation: Wichita, Kansas

High school accomplishments: Layne graduated from Wichita South High School. While in high school, he played the bass in the school orchestra, and he was part of Chamber Strings for the last two years. He received the student Automotive Service Excellence certification for automobile maintenance and light repair. He also participated in track and field, competing in the shot put and discus events for three years.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Layne is a hard-working but fun-loving individual. He loves problem solving and repairing automobiles.

Plans after graduation: Layne plans to attend Wichita State University Tech to pursue a career as an automotive technician.

Ethan Averett

Parents’ names: Rich and Rachel Averett

Congregation: Dallas, Texas

High school accomplishments: Despite having to switch schools between his sophomore and junior years, Ethan has excelled in his studies and is graduating from high school with a two-year degree from Collin College. In addition, Ethan earned numerous awards for excellence in art and math.
Church activities/hobbies/interests: Ethan enjoys playing basketball and volleyball with the Church teens, as well as serving at the Silver Ambassadors’ luncheon. Ethan’s hobbies include creating custom guitars from unique materials, fabricating woodworking projects, and spending time with family and friends. Ethan is also interested in fitness and weight lifting.

Plans after graduation: For the fall of 2019, Ethan is very excited to attend Foundation Institute and learn more about the Bible. After graduating from Foundation Institute, Ethan plans to earn a degree as an HVAC technician and start his own business.

NINA AVILES
Parents’ names: Armando and Jennifer Aviles
Congregation: Dallas, Texas

High school accomplishments: Nina graduated from Richland Collegiate High School this semester with both her high school diploma and an associate degree in science.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Nina enjoys baking, reading, playing sports and serving as a volunteer at the Dallas Texas Horse Park when time allows. You can often find Nina laughing and joking with her friends and family, or tucked away in her room reading.

Plans after graduation: This fall, Nina will attend Texas Tech University, where she plans to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in business administration with a concentration in information technology.

JOHN (JEB) BARNARD
Parents’ names: Rick and Kate Barnard
Congregation: Homer, Alaska

High school accomplishments: John (Jeb) Barnard completed his homeschooling and graduated May 21.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Jeb enjoys playing the guitar and flying.

Plans after graduation: Now that school is finished, Jeb will leave for his commercial salmon fishing job. He’ll be a skiffman on a seiner, working off Kodiak Island for the summer. After returning from fishing this summer, he will finish his pilot’s license in the fall, working to become a bush pilot. Jeb hopes to attend Foundation Institute in the future.

BRADY BOYD
Parents’ names: Barry and Vickie Boyd
Congregation: Louisville, Kentucky

High school accomplishments: Brady is a 2019 high school graduate of Ballard High School in Louisville, Kentucky.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Brady enjoys swimming, learning more about technology, and playing piano. He also enjoys hanging out with friends as much as he can. At church he enjoys helping others, such as setting up for potlucks and working on sound crew.

Plans after graduation: After graduating, Brady plans to attend a community college before transferring to a state college to get a degree in computer science.

LAUREN BURTON
Parents’ names: Eric and Sara Burton
Congregation: Wichita, Kansas

High school accomplishments: Lauren was the March 2019 business student of the month. She has been following a business career pathway, studying accounting, business economics, keyboarding and Photoshop. She was a student council member for two years and a member of the KAY (Kansas Association for Youth) Club, a volunteer service organization.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Lauren has attended Bob White, Cherokee, Lone Star and Winter Camps. She has served as a counselor at Lone Star and Cherokee and will again be a counselor at Cherokee this year. She is currently employed as nurse’s aide at a rehabilitation center.

Plans after graduation: Lauren plans to complete her associate degree in health sciences at Butler Community College and then pursue a bachelor of science degree in a health-related field at Wichita State University.

MORGAN COBB
Parents’ names: Darren and Renee Cobb
Congregation: Castle Rock, Colorado

High school accomplishments: Morgan graduated from Legend High School with
high honors and lettered in academics all four years. She swam her freshman and sophomore years and golfed all four years, playing varsity her junior and senior year. She also lettered in DECA twice, making it as a state finalist in hospitality and tourism.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Morgan enjoys spending time with her church family at weekly services and campouts. She also enjoys golf, painting, scuba diving and travel.

Plans after graduation: Morgan will be attending the Shidler College of Business at the University of Hawaii in the fall.

Joshua Cox

Parents’ names: Joel and Jodi Cox

Congregation: Nashville, Tennessee

High school accomplishments:
Joshua played trombone in the jazz band his freshman year in Arizona. After moving to Tennessee, Josh was able to be on the golf team both his junior and his senior years.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Josh participates regularly in setting up and running the sound system for services. When he isn’t on the sound crew, he enjoys greeting everyone at the door with a smile and firm handshake. He also sings in the local choir. He loves attending camp, both summer and winter, and being with all of his friends. In his spare time Josh likes to see movies with the teens and young adults in the Nashville area, as well as play games on the computer or Xbox.

Plans after graduation: This summer Josh will be attending both Sequoia and Texas teen camps. In the fall he will be attending Volunteer State Community College.

Matthew Davidson

Parents’ names: Tracy and Valerie Davidson

Congregation: Birmingham, Alabama

High school accomplishments:
Matthew was a member of Skills USA for three years in high school. He was a member of the National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta (math honor society). Matthew received his high school diploma with an advanced academic endorsement.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Matthew enjoys helping with the sound system at church and helping with service projects. He enjoys outdoor activities like being in the woods, hunting and fishing.

Plans after graduation: Matthew plans to attend North Georgia Technical College in the fall to pursue a degree in welding technology with an associate degree in applied science.

Brittany Ebersole

Parents’ names: Brent and Sonja Ebersole

Congregation: Bedford, Pennsylvania

High school accomplishments:
Brittany graduated first in her class from Northern Bedford High School. She was president of the National Honor Society, class secretary and a member of choir and band. She lettered in academics and softball, was on the Bedford county softball all-star team and was inducted into the Bedford County Scholastic Hall of Fame for Academics. She received the Presidential Award (top 10 percent of her class); the Physical Fitness Award (first in senior class and for all high school girls); awards for mathematics, English and social studies; Rotary student for September 2018; and the Northern Bedford County Education Association scholarship. She was a 2018 and 2019 math exam winner.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Brittany sings in the church choir and helps with setup and takedown for services and potlucks. She’s been a camper at Heritage and on staff for Camp Arrowhead. She actively participated in Winter Family Weekend activities and loves practically any sport. She enjoys cooking and baking and is talented at drawing, design and general art studies.

Plans after graduation: Brittany accepted the Frostburg State University Regional Excellence Scholarship and Leadership Scholarship. She plans to pursue an education degree.

Emira Erickson

Parents’ names: Colene and Cory Erickson

Congregation: Twin Cities, Minnesota

High school accomplishments:
Emmy was salutatorian, NHS vice president and president, and a member of student council. She received the
President’s Award (for grades) and the Leadership Award in Fine Arts, and was history student of the year her senior year. She was an MMEA All-State Choir participant and the choir student of the year (for two years). She received the National Choral Student Award her senior year. She played varsity basketball, was on the all-conference teams for basketball and softball, and received the Eagle Leadership Award twice for basketball.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Emmy serves as a hymn and choir accompanist and performs special music. She takes music lessons (both voice and piano) and has been teaching piano (her junior and senior year). She has participated in chapel band and select choir (Morningstar). She was active in NHS, tutoring and organizing service activities.

Plans after graduation: Emmy plans to attend St. Olaf College and earn a degree in vocal music education.

KATIE FUHRMAN
Parents’ names: Dan and Linda Fuhrman
Congregation: Greensboro, North Carolina

High school accomplishments: Katie was homeschooled and will receive a high school diploma. She will also graduate from Alamance Community College (ACC) in July with an associate of arts degree. She is on the dean’s list and the president’s list and is graduating with honors. She was invited to be a marshal at the ACC graduation.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Katie plays piano for special music and offertory. She likes do-it-yourself projects, crafts, sewing, painting, drawing, sketching, reading, playing piano and learning languages. She enjoys hanging out with friends and family and is an adored cousin of four little girls. She has been blessed to attend the Church’s youth camps since age 7 and has gone to many Winter Family Weekends. She also works in the family business.

Plans after graduation: After graduating, Katie plans to take a year off to travel and gain life experience before returning to college to earn a degree in the business field.

AVERIE HOYER
Parents’ names: Craig and Rashele Hoyer

High school accomplishments: Beginning in her freshman year in Arizona, Averie was able to take college classes as part of a dual-enrollment program. Now in Texas, Averie has been active in school sports, including basketball, volleyball, powerlifting, track and field, and powder-puff football. Throwing discus is her favorite, and she has done well, advancing in postseason meets. Averie also has a strong artistic side and earned the Printing and Imaging Technology award.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Averie has attended Church camps since 2009, and they have been a big part of her life, helping her form lasting friendships within God’s Church. She looks forward to camp each year and has transitioned into serving as camp staff in counseling, riflery and archery. Averie’s love for animals led her to study at Arizona Agribusiness and Equine Centers, where she joined the FFA and competed in horse evaluations. She has used her artistic skills to take portraits and pictures for a home staging company. Since her junior year, she has managed to balance her extracurricular activities with working as a server at a restaurant.

Plans after graduation: Averie has been accepted to Texas A&M University, but first will study at Foundation Institute beginning this fall.

EMMA KROSKA
Parents’ names: Allen and Sheri Kroska
Congregation: St. Cloud and Twin Cities, Minnesota

High school accomplishments: During high school, Emma was involved in Peer Helping, serving as cochair for the past three years. She has been a member of the varsity track team since seventh grade, specializing in long jump, sprints and relays. She was cocaptain of the team her senior year. During her junior and senior years, she attended classes full-time at St. Cloud Technical and Community College through Postsecondary Enrollment Options and graduated with an associate degree.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Emma attended the Church’s summer and winter camps for many years. She enjoys sports and outdoor activities.

Plans after graduation: Emma will be attending Bryan
College of Health Sciences in Lincoln, Nebraska. She will be pursuing a degree in diagnostic medical sonography.

**ERIKA-LEIGH MAHE**  
*Parents’ names: Menden-Hal Mahe and Julia Ting*  
*Congregation: Auckland, New Zealand*

**High school accomplishments:** Erika (photo, previous page) took second place in her school’s public speaking contest. She assisted in managing a community fund-raising event that promoted awareness for muscular dystrophy. She took a business course that led her to be part of New Zealand’s Young Enterprise Scheme. Her team had the opportunity to build, present and pitch their prototype health-box, targeting healthier options for consumers and was awarded a certificate in excellent management skills.

**Church activities/hobbies/interests:** Erika sings in the youth and church choir. She enjoys listening to music, playing guitar, singing and reading. She also enjoys camp activities and uplifting messages. She volunteered as a teacher’s aide at Onehero Junior School, setting a good example and encouraging positive behavior.

**Plans after graduation:** Erika is currently studying at the University of Auckland, majoring in physiology and exercise sciences.

**SYDNEY MCGHEE**  
*Parents’ names: Steven and Christina McGhee*  
*Congregation: Louisville, Kentucky*

**High school accomplishments:** Sydney graduated from Rock Creek Community Academy with an Academic Honors Diploma. She was a member of the National Honors Society at her school. Through dual credit work throughout her high school career, she graduated from Ivy Tech Community College with a technical certificate under general studies. A technical certificate holds the weight of 30-plus college credit hours (an equivalent to a full year of college).

**Church activities/hobbies/interests:** Sydney assists with Sabbath school for grades K-2. She enjoys volleyball and swimming and is a lifeguard at a local family pool and water park.

**Plans after graduation:** In the fall Sydney will enter college as a sophomore at Indiana University Southeast. She plans to major in elementary education.

**DILLON MCGOWEN**  
*Parents’ names: John and Rachelle McGowen*  
*Congregation: Bentonville, Arkansas*

**High school accomplishments:** Dillon graduated from Westville High School in Westville, Oklahoma, on May 17. He was a member of FFA throughout his high school career and received awards in mechanics and dairy production each year. He also participated in speech and drama and 4-H.

**Church activities/hobbies/interests:** Dillon has been active in his local congregation and its youth program for many years. He regularly assists with hall setup and takedown, door greeting and the sound system. He has also been a volunteer for the local preteen camp for the past several years. Dillon has attended teen summer camps and made many friends from all over the place! When he isn’t working, he enjoys hanging out with friends, as well as hunting, fishing and tinkering on the guitar.

**Plans after graduation:** Dillon plans to attend Indian Capital Technology Center in August to further his education in the automotive field and welding. He hopes to work as a diesel and auto mechanic, carrying on the incredible knowledge he’s gained from his dad over the years.

**SKYE MCKEE**  
*Parents’ names: Margaret and Douglas McKee*  
*Congregation: Clarksville, Maryland*

**High school accomplishments:** Skye graduated with honors.

**Church activities/hobbies/interests:** Skye plays special music and has sung in the church choir at the Feast. She likes drawing, art and music. She also likes swimming.

**Plans after graduation:** Skye will be going to Blue Ridge Community and Technical College for two years and then to Shepherd University for two years. She plans on becoming an art teacher.

**EMMA MURPHY**  
*Parent’s name: James Murphy*  
*Congregation: Greensboro, North Carolina*
Emma is a 2019 graduate of Eastern Alamance High School in Mebane, North Carolina.

Emma's hobbies are photography and writing.

Emma will be working this summer and attending University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) in the fall of 2020.

Sarah Nelson
Parents' names: Debra and Bryan Nelson
Congregation: Springfield, Missouri

Sarah was valedictorian, class president in 2015 and class secretary in 2018. She scored 32 on the ACT, was on the honor roll all four years and took first place in the Science Olympiad her freshman and junior years. She was in her school's gifted and talented program all 12 years and was on the chancellor's list for academic excellence in her dual-credit courses.

Activities/hobbies/interests: Sarah volunteered at her local hospital for three summers in a row. She job shadowed at a pharmacy once a week and earned her pharmacy technician license. She was in art club all four years of high school, and her work was featured in the local art gallery and national poster contests. Her hobbies are drawing, cooking, writing, hiking and travel; and she has regularly been in the Feast choir. She is interested in public speaking and leadership.

Sarah received scholarships to attend the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri, and has been admitted to its honors programs. Her major is clinical laboratory science with an emphasis in premed. She hopes to go on to medical school and become a surgeon.

Chase was a member of the track team and competed in the discus and shot put field events. He qualified to compete at state for discus.

Chase Petty
Parents' names: Charles and Valerie Petty
Congregation: Sedgwick, Arkansas

Chase graduated from Walnut Ridge High School on May 27. He graduated with honors and ranked fifth in his class. He was active in student council as class president and in Key Club. He competed in district- and state-level competition with FBLA. Chase was also an active member of our local church area and has attended camp annually since 2013. He enjoys sports, cattle, fishing, hunting and reading.

Chase was part of the yearbook staff, graphic design team and head designer for the senior class T-shirts. Colton participated in DECA and was a state finalist in the Integrated Marketing Division. He and his team created a nonprofit organization to feed food-insecure students in his school district. The team also created a food pantry at his school for students in need. Colton was recognized as a "Rising Scholar" for taking college-concurrent courses while maintaining a high GPA.

Colton Petty
Parents' names: Corwin and Rachel Petty
Congregation: Bentonville, Arkansas

Colton graduated from the Don Tyson School of Innovation in Springdale, Arkansas, as part of the inaugural class. Colton swam the 100-meter breaststroke and 200-meter freestyle and was part of the relay team. Colton graduated from the Don Tyson School of Innovation in Springdale, Arkansas, as part of the inaugural class. Colton swam the 100-meter breaststroke and 200-meter freestyle and was part of the relay team. Colton was part of the yearbook staff, graphic design team and head designer for the senior class T-shirts. Colton participated in DECA and was a state finalist in the Integrated Marketing Division. He and his team created a nonprofit organization to feed food-insecure students in his school district. The team also created a food pantry at his school for students in need. Colton was recognized as a “Rising Scholar” for taking college-concurrent courses while maintaining a high GPA.

Olivia Pierce
Parents' names: David Pierce and Hae-Young Wagner
Congregation: Houston South, Texas

Colton was awarded an academic scholarship from the University of Arkansas, where he will attend this fall majoring in business management.

Olivia Pierce
Parents' names: David Pierce and Hae-Young Wagner
Congregation: Houston South, Texas
High school accomplishments: Olivia graduated from Cinco Ranch High School with an award for outstanding academic achievement and as a member of the National Honor Society. She received gold and silver national medals in the 2018 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. She won consecutive blue ribbons in art for three years at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and sold a rodeo piece for $1,300 in a charity auction. She also received an award of excellence in fine arts, won $500 for a first-place ceramic patriotic art contest, and earned a blue ribbon and a judge's choice ribbon in the spring art show for a ceramic piece and a painting. In addition, Olivia played volleyball, ran track and was captain of the varsity basketball team.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Olivia volunteers at the teen and preteen camp as a recreation instructor. In her free time, she is creating artwork, climbing at the local gym, slacklining, shooting film photography and experimenting in ceramics.

Plans after graduation: Olivia will attend a year of community college before transferring to the University of Texas at Austin to pursue a bachelor of fine arts degree in studio arts or sculpting.

**Jarek Samic**

Parents’ names: David and Kimberly Samic

Congregation: Akron-Canton, Ohio

High school accomplishments: Jarek was homeschooled throughout the duration of his academic career and graduated high school with a GPA of 4.3. He was able to complete 70 credits of college classes at the University of Akron during his high school years, making both the dean’s list and the president’s list in the process.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Jarek has produced a short video at Camp Arrowhead for the past five years and also serves on his local congregation’s sound crew. Outside church, Jarek enjoys programming, photography, basketball, Rocket League and spending time with his friends.

Plans after graduation: Jarek plans to finish his B.S. in computer science at the University of Akron.

**Kristen Schweitzer**

Parents’ names: Raymond and Edwina Schweitzer

Congregation: Orlando, Florida

High school accomplishments: Kristen was captain of her varsity basketball, volleyball, cheerleading, and track and field teams. She was inducted into the first Hall of Fame for athletics at Parkhurst Academy. Kristen was a member of the National Honor Society, was president of student government and received the Outstanding Senior Award.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Kristen attended seven years of COGWA Youth Camps and volunteered two years as staff for preteen camp.

Plans after graduation: Kristen plans to attend the University of North Florida, working toward a master’s degree in athletic training. With this degree, she plans to eventually work as a high school athletic director.

**Amber Taylor**

Parents’ names: Joel and Melanie Taylor

Congregation: Central New Jersey

High school accomplishments: Amber was a member of the National Honor Society and ranked fifth in her graduating class. She won a department award for English and was consistently on the honor roll.
Church activities/hobbies/interests: Amber regularly attended Camp Heritage. She enjoys setting up the tea and coffee table before services and fellowshipping with friends and brethren.

Plans after graduation: Amber plans to get her associate degree in business administration from the community college where she had already started attending.

ALEXIS TURNQUEST

Parents’ names: Kevera and Janace Turnquest

Congregation: Freeport, Bahamas

High school accomplishments: Alexis was an honor student with a cumulative GPA of 3.51. She received awards in special subjects, a writer-of-the-month award, and an award for best discipline, good citizenship and a Christian attitude.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Alexis’ hobbies include gardening and fishing. Her interests include reading, sewing and “tinkering.” She is also an accomplished violinist.

Plans after graduation: Alexis plans to obtain a degree in wildlife biology and conservation science.

ELISABETH “ISA” VAUGHN

Parents’ names: Gregory and Dara Vaughn

Congregation: Dallas, Texas

High school accomplishments: Isa graduated from Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, from the Visual Arts Conservatory. She has had her art featured in several shows, including One Arts Plaza DADA, and has won several awards, including Best in Show in Fair Park for a 2-D art design piece, Outstanding Achievement for Excellence in Senior Studio, and Excellence in the Arts.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Isa serves as a Sabbath school aide and by playing violin in the ensemble for holy days. She is an active Ambassador Girl Scout.

Plans after graduation: Isa has received multiple scholarships to several art and design schools. She plans to pursue a fine arts degree in illustration or a related field.

COLE WICKHAM

Parents’ names: Eric and Sarah Wickham

Congregation: Beloit, Wisconsin

High school accomplishments: Cole graduated with high honors, which required a GPA over 4.0 and being within the top 10 percent of his class. He received an academic letter all four years and varsity letters for both golf and football. He also participated in track, basketball and swimming. He served on student council and was selected for the National Youth Leadership Conference and for National Honor Society. He qualified for a silver cord upon graduation by exceeding a set number of volunteer hours throughout his high school career. He received an Excellence in Science award.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Cole has attended camp almost every year since he was 5, starting with preteen camp and then moving into teen summer and winter camp. He enjoys playing sports, working out, and hanging out with friends and family.

Plans after graduation: Cole plans to attend college in the fall, pursuing an undergrad degree within the realm of premedicine. His long-term goal is to attend Baylor College of Medicine for a doctoral program specializing in radiology.

HANNAH ZENIAUSKAS

Parents’ names: Ken and Lesa Zenauskas

Congregation: Columbia, South Carolina

High school accomplishments: Hannah attended a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) school and was able to graduate a year early.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Hannah is the third generation of her family in the Church. She has attended Church camps as a camper and staff member for several years. Hannah is successfully serving her second year on the Zoo Teen Conservation Team, a three-year program at her local zoo. She loves caring for all her animals and also enjoys art and cooking.

Plans after graduation: Hannah has been accepted and is enrolled in the Veterinary Technician Baccalaureate program and will have an internship with Banfield Animal Hospital. Hannah is considering a career as a veterinarian. She dreams of one day owning her own animal rescue shelter and clinic.
FORT MYERS MEMBERS ENJOY CRUISE

On Sunday, Feb. 24, the Fort Myers, Florida, congregation took a cruise down the smooth waters of the Gordon River out to where it meets the Gulf of Mexico in beautiful Naples.

There were 24 of us enjoying the morning together aboard the Double Sunshine. We had a guided tour through the Port Royal area and learned the stories behind many of the magnificent homes on Millionaires’ Row. We were dumbfounded to learn that over 90 percent of these opulent mansions are only inhabited a couple of weeks each year—many of them being the owner’s third or fourth home. We were happy to spot a few dolphins that were enjoying the sunny, 80-degree weather as much as we were.

After our cruise, we kept the fun going by having lunch at a local fish restaurant. Next on the agenda was window-shopping on the world-renowned Fifth Avenue in downtown Naples. Some also chose to browse at the Art Fest that afternoon.

It was a magnificent day with fun, food and fellowship.

Camille Ballo

2019 HOUSTON SOUTH CHILI COOK-OFF

On a wintry February Sabbath, the Houston South church enjoyed its annual chili cook-off.

After a very informative sermon by Jim Franks about the history of the true Church, the judges went to work. A half dozen contestants presented their best chili, and the judges had a difficult time determining the winners. The final results were first place, Nelda Pierce; second place, Tony Davis; and third place, Lizzie West.

We all then enjoyed the fruits of their culinary skills and great fellowship with all the members. Chili was topped with chopped onions, grated cheese, chips, jalapeños, salsa and more. As well, hot dogs were smothered with chili. We topped off our meal with great salads (green and fruit), tea, lemonade, and then homemade desserts and ice cream sundaes.

Now our congregation looks forward to our next annual cook-off, anticipating new participants and flavors.

Susan Scott Smith
MEDITERRANEAN, WHITE ELEPHANTS AND BUNCO

On the evening of March 9, the Atlanta, Georgia, congregation held a Mediterranean-themed potluck and enjoyed a spirited game of bunco hosted by our pastor, Mark Winner. The potluck was held after services on the Sabbath. Once the sun set, the various wrapped gifts were set up on a table for all to see, and Mr. Winner started the evening by explaining the rules. This was an evening filled with laughter, and we were regularly changing partners as we tallied our team and individual scores.

Deciding which wrapped prize to take home was a highlight for both young and old—until the instruction was given to exchange gifts with someone else! The end of the evening was just as exciting as the beginning, as we unwrapped our gifts to see what we were finally taking home.

There were two special prizes from the University of Georgia (Georgia bulldogs) for the player with the highest score, Tommy Johnson, and the player with the most wins, Chant’a Collier.

Chant’a Collier
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.

**Ocala Hosts Picnic**

On March 31 the Ocala, Florida, congregation hosted a picnic at Silver Springs Park. Designated as a National Natural Landmark in 1971, Silver Springs State Park and the surrounding areas offer a wealth of cultural and historical significance.

We had 27 people from various church areas in attendance. People came from as far away as St. Petersburg and Tallahassee, Florida. The brethren gathered in a casual setting, on a beautiful day, among God’s inspired surroundings. All families enjoyed the great food, wonderful fellowship and games. It was a great day for all.

_Amanda LaMagna_

**Beloit Holds Unleavened Bread Reception**

The Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation began the Days of Unleavened Bread this year with a finger food and dessert reception. The meeting hall was beautifully decorated and included a display of flags from the 12 tribes of Israel. There were a large variety of delicious unleavened desserts and fruit. It was a delightful start to the spring holy days, filled with great fellowship and inspiring messages!

_Kristen Mazza_

**Births**

Kinsley has been getting lots of love and kisses, especially from her big brother, Brayden!

_Kristen Mazza_

**Baptisms**

Robert and Kristen Mazza from the Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation are happy to announce the birth of Kinsley Elizabeth Mazza. Kinsley was born on April 21, 2019. She weighed 7 pounds 12 ounces.

Kinsley is Robert and Kristen’s second child, Gary and Gale Black’s second grandchild, and Robert and Trisha Mazza’s eighth grandchild.

_Graham Henderson_

The Buffalo, New York, congregation is pleased to welcome Graham Henderson (second from right in photo).
into the Body of Christ on May 29, when he was baptized into God’s Church.

Graham, 29 years old, has been a part of the Church all his life and attends with his parents, John and Melanie Henderson, as well as his brother Aaron and Aaron’s wife, Mary, and their four children. Graham serves his congregation by performing special music and serving wherever he can.

Stephan M. Koenig

Chad Smith

Chad Smith, now a member of the Columbia, Missouri, congregation, was baptized Oct. 24, 2018.

Chad was raised in the Church of God. He is married to Felicia, and they are blessed with three children, Catrina, Dominick and Naomi. Chad is a third-generation Christian. His father, Elgin Smith, was a second-generation Christian. His father was fighting cancer at the time of Chad’s baptism and died just over six weeks later, but he did get to witness his son’s baptism.

Chad knew how important it was for his father to see him baptized. So he borrowed a stock tank, placed it outside in front of his house in the dark of twilight and filled it with cold water. Elgin was carried to his car and driven right next to the stock tank. And so, on this chilly and windy October evening, windows down in his vehicle, dogs barking in the background, Elgin Smith, accompanied by his wife, Donna, and their other two boys, witnessed his son’s baptism into the family of God.

Elaine Kime

Schuyler White and Audrey Schmutz

After services on the Sabbath of April 13, Schuyler White and Audrey Schmutz were baptized. The ceremony was conducted by Tom Clark, and he was assisted with the laying on of hands by local elders Dennis Fultz and Jack Willoughby.

The Bentonville, Arkansas, congregation was excited to welcome two more to the family. Audrey and Schuyler are engaged to be married in August.

Vicki Willoughby

Anne Elizabeth Koenig

The COGWA Buffalo, New York, congregation was pleased to add another baptized member to the body. Anne Elizabeth Koenig was baptized March 3. Daughter of Stephan and Rachel Koenig, Anne was born into God’s Church Sept. 18, 1999.

Over the years she has been involved in many activities and projects with and for the Church. Anne is a very passionate Christian and serves the Buffalo congregation by coordinating the church food drive, helping coordinate the young Christians’ club, and singing in the local choir.

She currently attends Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Stephan M. Koenig

Floyd Elgin Smith II

Floyd Elgin Smith II died at his home on Sunday, Dec. 9, 2018. He was a lifelong member of the Church of God, attending with his family in the Columbia, Missouri, area. Elgin was born in 1937, the son of Minnie and Floyd Elgin Smith, also a member of God’s Church. In 1977 he married Donna Jokisch, with whom he had three sons, Gregory, Kevin and Chad.

Elgin was a self-employed businessman and owner of Elgin Smith Salvage and a logging business. He enjoyed hunting and was musically inclined, playing drums and guitar. He loved spending time with his family, especially his three grandchildren.

Elgin was a shining light to his community. His funeral was attended by hundreds. The funeral director commented that Elgin’s funeral was one of the three largest in the history of the funeral home’s decades of operation. After his death, stories were told about how he would quietly pay for poor townspeople who couldn’t afford to pay their fuel bills in the cold of winter. Only God knows the extent of his inconspicuous service.

God’s people prayed for the healing of Elgin’s cancer, from which he suffered for years. God intervened to keep Elgin alive on several occasions. Only weeks before his death, Elgin was blessed to witness the baptism of his son Chad. He is survived by his parents, wife, children, grandchildren, brothers and sister.

Greg Sargent

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