

OneAccord

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Feast of Tabernacles Articles

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- Asking for Time Off From School
- "Let Us Go Up": Our Journey to the Mountain of the Lord

Journeys and Reflections

Larry and Linda Neff

personal from the president

My First Feast

I have often wondered what my life would have been like if it were not for the Church. Growing up in a rural community in Arkansas, I believe it would have been very different. Most of my family and extended family never finished high school in those years. They worked on the farm or a local business and never left the community. But when the Church came into our lives, everything changed. A door was opened that gave a very different perspective on the world and on life.

My first Feast of Tabernacles in Big Sandy, Texas, changed who I was, even though I was very young at the time. That first year, we drove down from northeastern Arkansas with a trailer containing all our clothes, our first tent and our newly purchased camping equipment. We had never had a vacation while I was growing up on the farm, nor had we traveled very much. For the Feast that first year, we drove from Arkansas to Texas mostly on state highways. The Interstate Highway System was opened in Arkansas in the early 1960s, but most of our driving was still on the state and county highways.

Passing through Texarkana, we drove on U.S. Highway 59, then connected to Texas State Highway 155. This took us right into Big Sandy, where we took a left on U.S. Highway 80 for about 2 miles until we saw the glimmer of the metal tabernacle. We had arrived! At the entrance there was a small brick sign that had Radio Church of God on it.

We got behind a large number of cars with trailers—a line stretching several hundred yards down Highway 80—all in the shoulder lane waiting to turn into the church grounds. As we drove in, we were met by two men who checked us in and made sure we had our stickers on the bumper of our car. Then, off we went to the piney woods and our first camp site. We set up our tent and a small kitchen area, both for the first time.

At that Feast we met brethren from different countries. We met Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong; we ate some of our meals in the tabernacle building; and we attended services in the same building. We all slept in the same campground, and we all used

the same bathhouses for showers. Even though I was probably 12 years old at the time, I had never witnessed anything like that first year. I would no longer be satisfied with remaining in the small community where I grew up.

Each year it isn't easy leaving the world behind, but this year it will be even more difficult. In the United States there will be a hotly contested presidential election one month after the beginning of the Feast. The world is recovering from an economic crisis caused by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. In the midst of all this, we will once again observe the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Feast of Tabernacles in the Old Testament was a time of great joy. Here is an example in 2 Chronicles 7:8-10:

“At that time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt. And on the eighth day they held a sacred assembly, for they observed the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days. On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their tents, joyful and glad of heart for the good that the Lord had done for David, for Solomon, and for His people Israel.”

The Israelites left this Feast of Tabernacles joyful and glad of heart. This is the essence of the Feast for all of us—joy and gladness! It is a time for rejoicing!

My first Feast opened a door to a new world, and I have never looked back. I feel very blessed, having attended more than 50 Feasts since we began back in the early 1960s. And in spite of the circumstances this year, I am still looking forward to the best Feast ever!



Jim Franks

President

Church of God, a Worldwide Association



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CHURCH of GOD

A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Dress Rehearsal

By Mark Winner

When I was in the sixth grade, I got my first acting role. It was important to me that I do it well. My parents had taught me Ecclesiastes 9:10—“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might”—and that is exactly what I was determined to do.

The day of the show my parents came to school to watch and support me. It was a day of skits and short acts. I was well prepared and ready to go. When our skit came up, I proudly walked onto the stage prepared to give the acting job of my life—and I did just that. After the show was over, I went to see my parents, who shared with me how real my acting seemed. Ah, yes, my first successful acting.

Now what I didn't share with you is what my role was. I had no lines; all I had to do was stand up there and pass out (acting) when the main character talked to me. You see, it was a skit about bad breath. I know, real highbrow. It was sixth grade, after all.

Here's the point I want to share—I was determined to make my fall as realistic as possible. And, as I remember it, I received approval from my parents afterward that made me feel I was ready for big-time acting.

Now obviously that is a rather silly story about something quite insignificant in the big picture of life. But I took it most seriously at the time. I did not want my role to look fake. I wanted it to be as authentic as possible. If I got hurt falling, it didn't matter. What mattered to me was doing the best job I could possibly do. So, in an effort to make that happen, I practiced and practiced my falls. The day before the show we had one final dress rehearsal in which I gave it my all.

The Oxford definition of dress rehearsal is “the final rehearsal of a live show, in which everything is done as it would be in a real performance.”

Picturing the “real thing”

We are now closing in on the Feast of Tabernacles 2020. As we all know, this year has been extremely challenging

for everyone. It appears we will not be able to keep the Feast in the way we have in the past. Unless there are significant changes between now and the beginning of October, we won't be able to fellowship as we have in the past at services. We will be social distancing and wearing face coverings, perhaps attending in smaller separate groups instead of attending together in one large group. Activities with everyone will be replaced by small gatherings of family and friends.

But no matter what we face this year in terms of physical hurdles, one thing won't change. The Feast of 2020 will serve as a dress rehearsal for the “real thing”—the Millennium.

When we consider the definition of dress rehearsal, it strikes me that we can't replicate everything as it will be after Christ's return. On the other hand, we can and must try our best to do our part—to play “our role”—at the Feast this year.

The annual holy days provide a reminder and rehearsal for us to prepare ourselves for what is coming. In particular, the Feast of Tabernacles provides us with the opportunity to rejoice, to honor and worship God, and to prepare ourselves to teach the truth of God to the world alongside Jesus Christ (Isaiah 30:20-21).

Although we won't be spirit beings at this year's Feast, there are expectations God has of us as we gather together, aren't there? Do you believe that is true? Is there anything you feel God wants to see from us when we come before Him to keep the Feast?

Rehearsing our part

We will hear messages every day pointing us to this future event and how it will reshape the world. We'll be reminded of the vital role we can play in that. We will have the opportunity to put into practice patience, love and mercy at the Feast. It is a dress rehearsal in many ways, and our job is to do it “with our might.”

So what exactly do you see as your job at the Feast this year? Is there anything from Scripture that jumps out at you?

Although the book of James is not a large one, it certainly is full of valuable information and reminders of what God expects of those He has called—His firstfruits.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, *that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures*. So then, my beloved brethren, let every man *be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath*; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God” (James 1:17-20, emphasis added throughout). Then verse 22 shares, “But be *doers* of the word, and not hearers only.”

We can see from this that we are to be rehearsing now for what lies ahead. Not only that, we are given specific instruction on what it is we are to be rehearsing. When we do this, we ultimately will be rewarded by becoming

like God (1 John 3:2; 2 Peter 1:4).

Thus far in 2020 I believe we would all agree that we are living in a very angry world. In fact, it can be quite challenging for us not to become angry with what we see and hear.

The Feast of Tabernacles reminds us of what is coming—a time of peace, harmony and true unity. With the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of His rule on this earth, coupled with the removal of Satan’s influence, will come what we see described in Isaiah 11; 30; 61; Ezekiel 45; Hosea 2; Micah 4; Zechariah 14; Revelation 20; and many other scriptures. What is mentioned in these places is what you and I are craving. It will be a time of tremendous joy.

In the meantime, our job is to make ourselves ready. Let’s take full advantage of our dress rehearsal this Feast. ☺☺

Asking for Time Off From School

By Jon Pinelli

My heart raced. My palms were sweating, and I felt a little dizzy. Was I experiencing some health crisis? Nope. For the first time in my life, I was having to let my teachers at school know that I was leaving for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Prior to this, my parents had always taken care of letting my teachers know I would need time off for the Feast. But when my sister and I reached junior high school (grade 8), my parents felt we should take ownership of this responsibility.

I have to admit, that first time I talked to my teachers was a challenge. It was a challenge simply because I had never done it before. However, over the years, I learned a lot about how to ask for time off. Let me share three principles that helped me.

- 1. Keep it simple.** You do not need to—nor should you—go into a long, drawn-out explanation of the plan of God pictured by the holy days. Stay on point. That point is simply that you are going to your church’s fall festival, and you will be gone from school during this time. As such, you would like to be able to have the necessary assignments from that class, so you can do the work while you’re gone. If your teachers want to know more about this “fall festival,” then you can explain it in a little more detail. But remember, you are not trying to convert

anyone here, you just need to get time off and assignments so you can go to the Feast.

- 2. Use familiar terminology.** As you can see in my first point, I referred to the Feast as “my church’s fall festival.” That is what it is. I learned to use terminology that was simple and easy for the listener to follow. We all know the time we keep as the Feast of Tabernacles. We understand that terminology. However, the overwhelming majority of human beings do not. Therefore, we need to simplify the terms so they can more readily understand. If they want to know more about it, they will ask more probing questions.
- 3. Be polite.** From time to time, I got resistance from teachers. I would always be polite and tell them that I was a member of my church, and as a member, I was required to keep this “fall festival.” I was also armed with a letter from the pastor detailing this same requirement. It would be good for you to have such a letter from your pastor before you speak with your teacher(s). Remember, if you get resistance, maintain politeness.

I still remember the first year I had to ask for time off to go to the Feast. I felt a little uneasy. However, as the years rolled by, it got easier and easier. It will for you as well.

"Let Us Go Up"

Our Journey to the Mountain of the Lord

Whether we journey far to this year's Feast of Tabernacles or are unable to travel at all, we will be following in the footsteps of many faithful saints who set their sights on reaching the mountain of the Lord. What can we learn from their journey?

By Peter Hawkins



It was one of the most moving events in our trip to Israel. Sunset was approaching as the coach traveled uphill from Jericho. We reached the brow of the hill, and to our left we saw the city of Jerusalem stretched out below us, with the gleaming golden Dome of the Rock shining on its sturdy platform.

As a recording of "The Holy City" played, all 40 members of our group sang along with each chorus. There weren't many dry eyes on the bus!

In a more modern way, we had been following

in the steps of hundreds of thousands before us, making a pilgrim journey to Jerusalem for a holy day (Deuteronomy 16:16).

Where God placed His name

Even before Israel entered the Promised Land, God instructed that they gather to worship Him in the place He identified at three festival seasons. Until the temple was built 480 years after the Exodus (1 Kings 6:1), the tabernacle was the center for worship.

“When we come to the Feast of Tabernacles this year, we come before our Father, to heavenly Jerusalem, as living sacrifices.”

Nearly 1,000 years later, we find Joseph and Mary’s family keeping these festivals. The family made the round-trip journey (about 200 miles) every year (Luke 2:41-42). The route from Nazareth to Jerusalem was fraught with potential hazards, as illustrated by the parable of the good Samaritan. Robbers were always looking for easy prey. The family would have been safer traveling in a group.

What does all this mean for us in the 21st century?

Is there a temple we should go to each year on the holy days, acting out the meaning of the pilgrim feasts? Well, yes!

Pilgrim festivals for Christians?

The apostle Peter says we are “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people,” and he describes us as “sojourners and *pilgrims*,” called to be examples to those around us (1 Peter 2:9-12). But we do not need to travel up to Jerusalem, as the Israelite pilgrims would have done.

Notice what the author of Hebrews says:

“For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire [Mount Sinai], and to blackness and darkness and tempest. ... But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the *heavenly* Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel” (Hebrews 12:18, 22-24).

Zion is a name used for the city of David (1 Kings 8:1) and is the mountain on which the temple was built. So we have indeed come to Mount Zion, where God dwells, because He works through His Spirit in us and in the Church. The Church is the temple that will be glorified at Jesus’ second coming (2 Corinthians 6:16). So we keep the feast days in the place God has guided His ministry to select.

Our pilgrim attitude leads others tomorrow

Micah 4 is a chapter that shows us people’s complete change of approach to God’s way of life in the Millennium. There will be a desire to learn what we members have been taught today. We are in training to reign with Jesus Christ and set the example for tomorrow. Let’s review and learn from this prophecy:

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Micah 4:1-2).

The parallel between mountains and governments is clear from the start of this passage. By the time we are in the Kingdom and a qualified part of that compassionate government, we will have learned many lessons to help mankind. Consider how mankind will respond:

1. **“Come”**—a community encourages each other to go to the Feast. Egypt, it seems, may have to learn this the hard way (Zechariah 14:18-19).
2. **“Let us”**—God’s way is, indeed, voluntary. Where a problem like illness prevents this, we still plan to keep the Feast as best we can. Webcasts are a major boost.
3. **“Go up”**—we recognize that God’s ways are much better than ours. Our attitude is one of humility.
4. **“To the mountain of the LORD”**—the governments of this world do not have the answers to poverty, sickness and immorality. Christ’s rule will be with righteousness and bring meaning to everyone’s life.
5. **“To the house of the God of Jacob”**—the 12 tribes will be an attractive example of God’s rulership. Other nations will want to be like them. As God’s people, we can attract people today.
6. **“He will teach us His ways”**—we attend His feasts to learn how to live. We attend to have much more than “a good time.” We want to be perfected by God.
7. **“And we shall walk in His paths”**—we take action. We review the messages and put what we learn into practice.

When we come to the Feast of Tabernacles this year, we come before our Father, to heavenly Jerusalem, as living sacrifices. We come before Him bringing both a monetary offering and a personal offering—ourselves, our time lived in His service.

Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord this year with joy and confidence that we are being prepared to help mankind follow in our footsteps in the very near future. ☺☺

Larry and Linda Neff



In August of 2020, Larry and Linda Neff transitioned to a new phase of their lives—that of retired pastor and wife. It is a new chapter in what has been a long and fruitful story. Here is a little bit of that story.

In 1951 Larry was 7 when he began attending services with his parents, Leroy and Maxine Neff, and siblings, Carol and Donald. They attended the small Portland, Oregon, congregation. In 1955, Leroy Neff was accepted to Ambassador College in Pasadena, California. The family relocated, and Larry attended Imperial Schools for the next seven years.

The future Mrs. Neff (Linda Sloan) came into the Church in Akron, Ohio, in the early '60s with her parents. Linda's dad, William Sloan, was Canadian and had served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. During his time in the service, he met her mom, Vera, who was from London. The family had moved to Ohio to find work.

Decades of service

Both Larry and Linda attended Ambassador College—he, 1962 through 1966, and she, 1964 through 1966. The summer following his junior year, Larry worked as a ministerial trainee in the San Francisco Bay area in California. The two were married the day after graduation by Mr. Neff's father and honeymooned on their way to San Antonio, Texas, to serve under Tony Hammer.

Mr. Neff was ordained by Herbert Armstrong at the Feast in Big Sandy in 1967. In 1968 Mr. Neff began

serving as an associate pastor in Corpus Christi, Texas. This also included taking care of outlying Bible studies in Victoria and Weslaco (Rio Grande Valley), Texas. The Neffs' first full pastorate was Austin, Texas, in 1971, where they also started a congregation in Waco.

In 1975 the family enjoyed a sabbatical in Pasadena. This involved taking about nine hours of classes a day and enjoying a little time to relax.

Then it was on to Arizona to pastor Tucson and Sierra Vista. This eight-year assignment included the time Mr. Armstrong lived there, and Mr. Neff had a number of opportunities to visit with him.

It was while serving in Tucson that Mr. Neff first became a Festival coordinator. He has been a coordinator for many Feasts in the years since—always with the help of his wife. The 2019 Feast was his 27th to coordinate while being present at the site.

In 1984 they were assigned to Sacramento, California. Between the AM and PM congregations, there were about 700 in attendance. In 1991 it was off to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for five years, and then to various congregations in the Colorado Front Range for the last 24 years. When Mr. Neff was transferred to the Front Range, he also served as the regional pastor for the Mountain Region.

Seeing growth and overcoming

An experience they really enjoyed was the opportunity to work at camp. They both worked at the Teton Challenger Camp for a number of years. One of their favorite parts was "seeing young people respond to God's

way of life and then ... become responsible, dedicated members of the Church.”

One of the most inspiring things about serving in the ministry has been “seeing members struggle with personal problems and sins, then overcome and remain solid in the truth to this day. We have certainly worked with individuals in this situation and are inspired at the changes made and longtime faithfulness that followed.”

Blessings of family

The Neffs have three children: Larry, born in San Antonio; Debbie, born in Corpus Christi; and Melissa, born in Tucson. Being a part of a ministerial family was a positive experience for their children.

“Our three children made friends in all the areas where we served and maintain contact with many of them to this day. And they have had travel opportunities that



otherwise would not have been available ... especially during the Feast.”

Mr. Neff also related, “In one area a local member had an electrical business and hired our son part-time when he was a senior in high school. This man mentored our son and taught him the trade, which he is still very successfully involved in today, 35 years later.”

Lessons learned

What has been the biggest lesson learned? “We have learned to emphasize service to and loving interest in the lives of the brethren far above becoming an ‘authority’ on everything and having all the answers. The latter is impossible anyway. Like sheep, the brethren appreciate being cared for, and they respond better to that than just about anything. This is not to minimize the importance of true doctrine, wise counsel, etc., but without the service and concern, teaching the truth does not make a good pastor and wife.”

The Neffs plan to continue to live in Colorado, slow down a bit, enjoy their four grandchildren and write a few more chapters in their story. ☺☺



On the Road Again

The following are the congregations that the Neffs served between 1965 and 2020:

1965-1966	Ministerial assistant, San Francisco Bay, California	1975-1976	Sabbatical in Pasadena, California
1966-1968	Ministerial assistant, San Antonio, Texas	1976-1984	Pastor, Tucson and Sierra Vista, Arizona
1968-1971	Associate pastor, Corpus Christi, Victoria and Weslaco, Texas	1984-1991	Pastor, Sacramento, California
1971-1975	Pastor, Austin and Waco, Texas	1991-1996	Pastor, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
		1996-2020	Pastor, various congregations in the Front Range of Colorado

Additional duties: Over the years, Mr. Neff has also served as a Festival coordinator, regional pastor, member of the Doctrine Committee, and member of the Moral and Ethics Assessment Committee.

Making an Estate Donation to the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.

By Britton Taylor

The Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc. (“Church”) regularly receives requests for information from members or supporters who wish to remember the Church in their wills, estate plans, gift plans, life insurance policies, or other estate planning devices. Often we are asked, “What is the process for giving estate gifts to the Church?” As the Church depends on multiple categories of donations in order to fund its work, we sincerely appreciate those who consider supporting the Church in this way. We hope the information included in this brief article will be helpful in your planning.

This article provides a perspective from the Church on planned giving and includes general and practical considerations for donors. It should not be understood as legal or accounting advice. The Church strongly encourages potential donors to obtain independent legal and accounting advice (as applicable) relative to their personal financial objectives and estate plan goals.

Freely give

Mathew 10:8 tells us, “Freely you have received, freely give.” Therefore, the Church’s historical practice is to proclaim the gospel message of the soon-coming Kingdom of God at no charge. We do not make any public request for money or donations, and we never ask our subscribers to pay for booklets, magazine subscriptions or any materials from our website.

These and other important services provided by the Church are made possible through the tithes, offerings

and planned giving of members of the Church and by others who have chosen to become coworkers in the work of proclaiming the true gospel message to the world. These donations are gratefully accepted and much appreciated.

Seeking professional advice

An estate donation to the Church enables you to leave a lasting legacy of sharing the gospel message with others after your death. Charitable donations are often included in a person’s estate plan and can take a variety of forms.

One way to make an estate donation is by designating it through a will (more formally known as a “last will and testament”). Generally, in a will you declare how your property will be distributed to your beneficiaries upon your death. There are other estate planning documents, such as various trusts, that you may wish to discuss with your lawyer. You can obtain a great deal of information on preparing a will from your lawyer (who may work with other professionals, such as your financial adviser), and the Church strongly recommends that you take advantage of that expertise. If you retain a competent lawyer to help with your will, you may feel more assured that your final wishes will indeed be honored. Depending on your situation, you may also wish to consider consulting with an accountant or a certified financial planner.

Each will is unique and must be structured to fit the needs and estate plans of the donor, while complying with the laws of the state, province or nation relevant to

the donor's estate plan. These are some of the reasons why you should consult with a legal professional for assistance in drafting your will and estate plan.

Points to keep in mind

After considering the needs of your family and loved ones, if you choose to include the Church as a beneficiary in your will, please use the Church's legal, proper name: "Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc." For purposes of the Church receiving your gift without unnecessary complications, please do not use an abbreviation, such as "COGWA" or "Church of God, aWA."

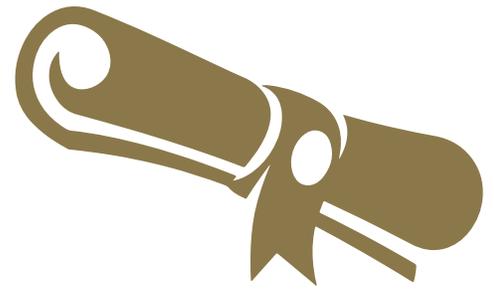
Here are a few considerations you may find helpful for your estate planning in the event that you wish to leave a portion of your estate to the Church:

- It is important that you independently make your own estate planning decisions. We encourage you to do so in consultation with a competent lawyer of your own choosing. For ethical reasons and to avoid even the appearance of impropriety, the Church generally cannot become involved in the details of a donor's estate planning. While there are several reasons for this, one important reason is that the Church wants to see your genuine wishes honored in regard to your estate plan. One of the most helpful things the Church can do concerning your estate planning is refrain from becoming involved in the details.
- While the way in which you choose to make a gift is an independent decision that you should make, designating it as an "unrestricted" gift or bequest provides important advantages to the Church in administering it. Making it "unrestricted" permits the Church to use your gift where the need is greatest. This flexibility allows the Church to respond to changing needs as they arise. On the other hand, the wishes of the donor are important to the Church, and we will do our utmost to honor and properly act upon the donor's wishes if the gift is designated for a specific purpose.
- In the history of the Church of God, individuals have made planned gifts in a variety of manners. Not all gifts to the Church come by way of a last will and testament; some gifts can be effectively made outside of what is known as "probate." ("Probate" generally refers to the process by which a court formally administers the instructions contained within a will.) We encourage donors to discuss probate and nonprobate alternatives with their lawyer. For example, subject to applicable law in your state or country, another way to give a gift to the Church may be to set up a "payable on death" (POD) account for money in a bank account or a "transfer on death" (TOD) account if funds are in a brokerage account. These options may or may not be best for your situation, and the Church strongly recommends that you get proper and independent guidance.
- A comprehensive outline of estate planning mechanisms is beyond the scope of this article, and there are many options that our donors have utilized. For example, another alternative is to make a gift to the Church by designating the Church as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy. Still another method is to designate the Church as a beneficiary of a trust.
- If you choose to donate a house or other real estate to the Church, it is particularly important that you consult with a competent lawyer, as these transactions tend to involve special considerations.
- The correct information for identifying the Church as a beneficiary is as follows:

Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.
3701 Medical Center Drive
McKinney, TX 75069

Thank you for supporting the sharing of the gospel message now and, if you so choose, after your death through planned giving. 🙏📄

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES



Anna Babcock



Patrick Vicente

2020

ANNA BABCOCK

Parents' names: Brendan and Sharon Babcock

Congregation: Nashville, Tennessee

High school accomplishments: During high school, Anna won many art show awards, played three years of volleyball and traveled to Italy. In her senior year at Agathos Classical School, she led as a house captain and the editor of her school's literary journal.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Anna is a talented artist who favors pencil sketching and watercolors. She's a good listener, empathetic and forgiving. Anna loves beautiful things, travel, adventure and iced coffee.

Anna attended preteen and teen camps nearly every summer growing up and has served several years as an assistant counselor at Camp Chattahoochee.

Plans after graduation: Anna was grateful to be one of the very few May 2020 graduates who were able to participate in a commencement ceremony (albeit outdoors and with limited guests). Anna plans to attend Columbia State next fall and is considering degrees in health care or graphic design.

PATRICK VICENTE

Parents' names: Jason and Deborah Vicente

Congregation: Leicester, Massachusetts

High school accomplishments: Patrick was awarded John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth High Honors and was an AP Scholar. He was on the honors list 14 out of 16 quarters, received a JV letter in baseball, and was awarded the Congressional Award silver and bronze medals (as well as gold, silver and bronze certificates). He recently qualified for the highest honor Congress bestows on American youth (the gold medal) for performing over 400 hours of volunteer work, 200 hours of personal development and 200 hours of physical activity and for planning and participating in a five-day/four-night expedition.

Church activities/hobbies/interests: Patrick

attended Camp Heritage for six years. He plays baseball, chess and other board games and enjoys volunteering with special needs and underprivileged children.

Plans after graduation: Patrick has been admitted to the College of Engineering at the University of Cincinnati, where he plans to study aerospace engineering.



CHURCH POTLUCK

What's cooking in your congregation?

HAEFFELES CELEBRATE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

On the Sabbath of June 6, 2020, the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation presented their pastor and his wife with a cake to help mark their golden anniversary.

Jim first met Lois Clutter when they were working in the evenings on the custodial crew at Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas. During his senior year, he was sent to Birmingham, Alabama, to serve as a trainee for a year. It was during that time that they began to write and have Saturday night dates by long-distance phone calls.

The following year Jim returned to Big Sandy to finish his senior year. Jim and Lois became engaged and were married after graduation on June 10, 1970, in Wichita, Kansas. They honeymooned in Colorado en route to their first assignment in Salt Lake City, Utah.

In 50 years they have served congregations in Utah, Idaho, Oregon, Ohio, North Carolina and (currently) St. Petersburg and Fort Myers, Florida. Jim says, "Every church area we have served in over these 50 years has been a



wonderful adventure and pleasure for us. It has been a privilege for which we are very thankful."

When asked for his thoughts about marriage, Jim responded, "I believe that as we keep God and Jesus Christ first in our marriage, it will be blessed and be wonderful."

They have three children: a daughter, Sharon (Fort Myers), and two sons, Bryan (Charlotte, North Carolina) and David (Winston-Salem, North Carolina).

Charlie Haughee



KNOXVILLE HELPS A FAMILY MOVE

A nice portion of members of the Knoxville, Tennessee, congregation were able to participate in a work party on July 12. Peter Holmes worked in getting the Tennessee Work Unified Crew (TWUC) together! The crew met at the home of Margaret and Susan Forehand to help them move.

It was enjoyable to be able to be together and fellowship while getting something accomplished.

In pastor Eric Evans' words, "God certainly blessed us with a nice breeze and cooler temperatures due to the cloud cover and no rain!" He also quoted the old maxim, "Many hands make light work."

Most everyone knows how stressful a move can be, and the work crew was grateful and honored that they could help a family bear a burden.

Judy Swanson

KAYE AND CHARLES HAUGHEE CELEBRATE 65 YEARS

Early in the spring of 1954, Charles Haughee was introduced to (Evelyn) Kaye Robertson by his mother at the A&P Grocery in Chesterton, Indiana. That meeting blossomed into love, and on Jan. 1, 1955, Charles and Kaye were married at the Brunswick United Presbyterian Church in Gary, Indiana.

Their marriage produced four children: Joan Mason of Mabank, Texas; Gordon of Anna, Texas; Beth Garrett of Irving, Texas; and Richard of Cypress, Texas. They have nine grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

They were both baptized on June 15, 1968, by Roger Foster, while attending the Worldwide Church of God in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Charles was ordained an elder by John Ogwyn of the Global Church of God on Feb. 5, 1994. They served in various congregations, literally from coast to coast, until settling in the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation, currently pastored by Jim Haeffele.

On the Sabbath of Jan. 4, they were joined in the



celebration of their 65th wedding anniversary by the St. Petersburg congregation with a special cake to top off the monthly potluck. Mr. and Mrs. Haughee have served in St. Pete for many years, and the congregation truly rejoiced in honoring two of their beloved members.

During the weekend of Jan. 11, Joan and Beth (along with their spouses) and Richard were able to enjoy a delayed celebration with their parents.

Mike McTiernan

VALERIE AND JEAN LE PONT CELEBRATE 50 YEARS

Jean and Valerie Le Pont celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 2, 2020. On the Sabbath of July 11, members of the Wichita, Kansas, congregation honored the couple with an anniversary party at the home of Cary and Christine Anderson. Their granddaughter and two great-grandchildren flew in from out of state to surprise them. The church presented Jean and Valerie with a lovely gift basket.

Valerie met her future husband in 1968, when she was still in high school. Upon her graduation, she flew to join him in Washington state, and they eloped and were married on July 2, 1970. The best years of their marriage have been the most recent ones, since Jean's retirement from Boeing.

Jean began to learn the truth in the summer of 1973, on the way home from visiting parents in Southern California, when he was stationed at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Arizona. Driving across the desert late at night, he stumbled upon "a unique radio program" that explained



Bible truths he had never heard before. Although raised a Catholic, Jean knew he was hearing the truth for the first time. He sent for the literature and subscribed to *The Plain Truth* magazine. In 1986 Jean and Valerie started attending services.

This year may have marked their golden wedding anniversary, but their real fortune can be found in their faith.

Lynda Wasser



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.

Weddings



Justin and Amberly Groves

Ken and Jeanne Walton are delighted to announce the marriage of their daughter Amberly to Justin Groves, son of Tim and Teresa Groves. Surrounded by family and friends, the couple exchanged vows at the beautiful Ashton Cole Place in Thomson, Georgia, on the afternoon of June 14, 2020.

The ceremony was performed by elder Steve Ferenchiak of the Asheville, North Carolina,

congregation. A reception immediately followed.

After returning from their honeymoon, the newlyweds are making their home in Knoxville, Tennessee, where Justin is pursuing a Ph.D. in mathematics and Amberly is pursuing a master's in English at the University of Tennessee.

Justin and Amberly have known each other since they were children and were baptized on the same day. They attend the Knoxville congregation and are excited to begin the next chapter of their lives together as husband and wife.

Ann Hewston



Gabe and Victoria Ellis

On May 24, 2020, Victoria Haangana Maynard (daughter of Dave Maynard and Litia Mafi) of the Minneapolis, Minnesota, congregation and Paul Gabriel Ellis (son of Roger and Sandy Ellis) of the Akron-Canton, Ohio, congregation were married.

Due to the coronavirus, the couple moved their wedding date up, from August to the week after they both graduated from Foundation Institute. It was held on a lovely patio in Texas with nine people in attendance, but there were 88 Internet connections of friends and family watching from home.

The happy couple moved back to Akron, where Gabe works, and attend with the Akron-Canton congregation. Until restrictions are eased, the reception is still pending.

Mary Peyton

Births



Ryley Santiago Moore

Russell and Lorena Moore from Johannesburg, South Africa, are happy to announce the birth of their first child, Ryley Santiago Moore. Ryley was born on June 30, 2020, weighing 3.12 kilograms (6 pounds 14 ounces).

Ryley is a fifth-generation member of God's Church, being blessed to have four late great-great-grandparents who were in the Church before him. He is the first grandchild for Russell's parents, and also a first great-grandchild to Russell's grandparents.

He is blessed to have family both in South Africa and in Chile. The entire family is eagerly waiting for the end of the lockdown to get together and celebrate a new addition to the family.

Leanne Helfrich



Abigail Everly Smith

Abigail Everly Smith was born on May 26, 2020, to Tyler and Beth-Erin Springer Smith. Big sister Hannah and Auntie Kerianne are excited to welcome the new addition to the family.

Maternal grandparents, Mark and Marti Springer, attend the Cincinnati-Dayton, Ohio, congregation. Paternal grandparents are Julie Smith of Seabeck, Washington, and Don Smith of Henderson, Texas.

Jennifer Foster

Baptisms



Rochelle Cassells

The Salt Lake City, Utah, congregation welcomes Rochelle Cassells to the family of God. Rochelle was baptized by Mark Whynaucht, who also pastors congregations in Grand Junction, Colorado, and Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta. The ceremony took place on Thursday, March 12, 2020, at the home of local elder Neil Hart and his wife, Beth. It was a very joyous occasion for all involved.

Rochelle was introduced to the truth through a friend she met in graduate school in 2014 and soon began subscribing to *Discern* magazine. In December 2018 she was able to visit her friend in Lusaka, Zambia, and attended services with the brethren there. From that moment on, Rochelle was convicted of the truth. She began attending with the Queens, New York, congregation in January 2019. After a move to Utah in July 2019, she immediately found the Salt Lake City congregation and has met with us each Sabbath since that time. Rochelle has been an absolute joy to all!

Brigitte Werts



Luceta Maria Hope
(Second from left)

On the balmy morning of May 17, 2020, a new member was added to the Body of Christ. Luceta Maria Hope of the Barbados

congregation was baptized by local elder Osmonde Douglas with the assistance of Leroi Moore.

This joyous event was witnessed by a few Church members. It took place at the home of Peter and Debra Griffith.

Luceta began attending services with her daughter Hannah in January 2020. The local congregation and the wider COGWA membership welcome Luceta into God's family. May she have a rich, spiritual journey and share in God's bountiful blessings.

Derek Olalehe



Brenden Moore

Brenden Moore was baptized Jan. 18, 2020, by David Jackson, pastor of the West Palm Beach, Florida, congregation. He is the third generation to be baptized in his family.

Brenden attended Camp Carter each year since he was 12 years old and also attended Foundation Institute in 2016-17. Congratulations, Brenden!

Kathy Cochran



John Sauvola and Jimmy Rogers

On Sunday, April 5, 2020, Eric Evans—pastor of congregations in Asheville, North Carolina;

London, Kentucky; and Knoxville, Tennessee—baptized Jimmy Rogers of Belton, South Carolina, and John Sauvola of Inman, South Carolina.

Jimmy said he was searching for answers, and God led him to the Life, Hope & Truth website, where he found answers that aligned with God's Word. Hearing several sermons by pastor Bruce Gore also helped him, and he was amazed by what he heard. Finding congregation sites through the member section of the website, he contacted Mr. Evans, who invited him to church.

John Sauvola said he came to know the truth around July 2013, when God revealed the Sabbath to him through his older brother Nels. He and his brother attended another Church of God for two years before coming to the Asheville COGWA congregation.

Jeff Baker and Steve Ferenchiak assisted Mr. Evans with the baptism and laying on of hands. Also in attendance was Judy Ferenchiak.

Judy Swanson



Colton Petty

On the Sabbath of April 4, 2020, Colton John Wayne Petty was baptized in Springdale, Arkansas, by his pastor Thomas Clark. Dennis Fultz assisted Mr. Clark with the laying on of hands.

Colton is 19 years old and a fifth-generation Christian. He is the son of Corwin and Rachel Petty. His parents, along with all of the Bentonville brethren, are pleased to welcome him as a new family member to the Body of Christ.

Vicki Willoughby

Obituaries



Duane Frank Spitale

Duane Frank Spitale, 58, died at 3 p.m. on June 29, 2020. He was born in Benton Harbor, Michigan, on Jan. 5, 1962. Although his cause of death was cancer, he died quickly, pain-free, and surrounded by loved ones at his home in Wellington, Colorado.

Duane is survived by his three children, Stephen, Daniel and Sarah; his mother, Elmina (Sherman) West; his brother, Timothy Spitale; and his sister, Deborah Spitale. He was preceded in death by his father, Frank Spitale.

Always a cheerful and uplifting person, Duane will be missed.

Sera Grabowski



William N. Hudson

William (Bill) N. Hudson was born on March 11, 1929, in Barberton, Ohio, and died on May 13, 2020, in Tomball, Texas. He met his wife, Joanne, while attending North High School in Akron, Ohio. Upon graduation in 1948, he served for eight years in the U.S. Marine Corps, attaining the rank of staff sergeant. Bill and Joanne then moved to Rochester, New York, where Bill obtained a bachelor's degree in printing management from Rochester Institute of Technology in 1959.

The Hudsons headed south, and Bill worked 34 years for the Gulf Printing Company in Houston, Texas. He served as vice president, overseeing printing operations of multiple cities' phone directories and yellow pages.

Bill heard *The World Tomorrow* broadcast in the 1960s, and he and Joanne were baptized in 1968. Bill was ordained a deacon in the 1970s. He will be remembered for his service to God's people—including leading the Boy Scout troop, being instrumental in the construction of the local church building and organizing the annual golf tournament. Many will recall going to the Hudsons' home for Bible studies and Bill's generosity with his time and many talents.

Bill is survived by his wife of more than 68 years, Joanne Hudson; his son James Hudson (an elder) and wife Debbie of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; his son Kenneth Hudson and wife Lora of Fairfield, California; his daughter Jeanine Burt and husband Kevin (a deacon) of Cypress, Texas; and his son John Hudson and wife Rochelle of Allen, Texas. He is also survived by nine grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Jeanine Burt



Frank Law

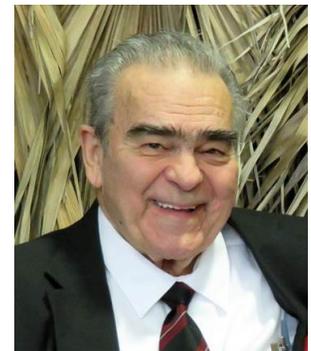
Frank Law, a longtime member of the Church of God in St. Petersburg, Florida, passed away quietly in his sleep on Feb. 9, 2020; he was in his 99th year of life. Preceded in death by a son, he is survived by his wife, Marie E. Law, and his stepchildren Michael and Sandy Wille and Charles Pease.

Born in Glocester, Rhode Island, on Sept. 1, 1921, he was one of 16 siblings. He served honorably with the U.S. Navy in the Pacific theater during World War II.

Frank and Marie were married March 22, 1969, and were baptized into the Church on June 12, 1973. Frank remained faithful to the truth until his race was finished.

While the family understands that it is given to all men once to die and they celebrate Frank's full life of nearly 100 years, they will miss him and his humor, insight and wisdom. We look forward to seeing him again at the resurrection.

Charles Haughee



Lawrence Dickey

Lawrence Robert Dickey, 85, of Carnesville, Georgia, died peacefully at home on Feb. 4, 2020. He was born June 29, 1934, to Lawrence Junius and Helen Linnele Mincey Dickey in Egypt, Georgia. He spent his young years in South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia, where he met his wife of 59 years, Mary Catherine Ard. They were married on April 22, 1960.

Lawrence and Catherine were blessed with a son, Lawrence Robert Dickey, Jr.; four grandchildren, Trey, Justin, Kimberly and Kyle; and two great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Lawrence and Helen Dickey; a brother, Percy Howard Dickey; and two sisters, Patricia Marie Scott and Hellen Frances Lutzewitz. He is survived by a brother, Charles Dickey.

Lawrence proudly served in the U.S. Army and the National

Guard from 1956-1962. Lawrence and Catherine owned and operated Malsby Fluid and Supply Co., Inc. for over 40 years. He was baptized Oct. 8, 1963, and the Dickeys were active members of the Church of God for 58 years. He was ordained an elder in 1980.

A funeral service honoring the life of Lawrence was held on Sunday, Feb. 9, in Lawrenceville, Georgia, with Wes Cohron, associate pastor of the Atlanta, Jefferson and Macon, Georgia, congregations, officiating. Interment followed at East Shadowlawn Memorial Gardens.

Donna Quintana



Roger Francis Wapner

It is with great sadness that we announce the loss of Roger Wapner, 79, of Springfield, Massachusetts, who died June 17, 2020, after a long illness with lymphedema. His optimism, determination and persistence drove him to live his life to the fullest, overcoming his circumstances.

He was born in Springfield on Jan. 16, 1941, and was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Frances Wapner, and two sisters, Irene Moraczewski and Wanda Deline. He leaves behind his beloved wife of 57½ years, Doris Wapner; daughters Lorraine (Raymond) Daudelin and Christina (Jay) Wheeler; two grandchildren and their spouses, Amanda and Thomas Mason and Pamela and Jason Scott; great-grandchildren Aliza and Drake Mason; niece Diane (Don) Faits; and other relatives and friends.

Over the years, Roger worked as an architect and a machinist. He was a guitar teacher and also played in bands and performed at weddings. He played the guitar, banjo, bass guitar, organ and drums, and performed music for many nursing homes in the 1980s. He had a special talent for music and shared it with everyone.

He loved animals and nature and had a close relationship with his pet cat Sweetie. He enjoyed reading and learning about everything, including the Bible.

Roger was a devoted member of God's Church for 45 years. He was an inspiration to his family, friends and relatives and will be remembered always for his love of God's way, as well as his love for family and the brethren.

Lorraine Daudelin



Stanley James

Stanley James was born on Nov. 10, 1937, in the then small town of Worcester in the Western Cape, South Africa.

His family moved to Ceres, where Stanley attended primary and high school. Stanley met his wife, Kathy, during his primary school years. Stanley graduated from high school in 1955 and obtained a diploma in agriculture in 1958.

Stanley and Kathy were united in marriage in Ceres on Dec. 10, 1960. They have five children: Nerine Davis, Peter James, Sanel van Taak, Michael James and Karen van Belkum. They have eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Stanley and Kathy retired from the ministry late in 2019 due to Stanley's ill health. They moved into a retirement complex, where Stanley passed away in the frail care ward on June 30, 2020.

Michael James



T.J. Brand

Benjamin "T.J." Brand of the Little Rock, Arkansas, congregation passed away at his home on May 3, 2020. He is survived by his wife, LaVonda; his daughter, Kathie Brown; two granddaughters, Rebekah Poyner and Megan Vanderberge; seven great-grandchildren; two brothers; four sisters; and many nieces and nephews.

T.J. was born Sept. 22, 1929, and lived his entire life in Arkansas. He served in the Navy as an airplane mechanic from 1947-1951. He also served in the National Guard for 15 years. T.J. held several jobs over the years, including logging, working at a sawmill, driving a dump truck, and working as a ranch hand. Perhaps his most cherished occupation was raising cattle and growing hay on his own farm. He was a true jack-of-all-trades and could do almost anything. He was an avid hunter.

In 1965 T.J. and his family began attending the Radio Church of God, which later became the Worldwide Church of God. He was very dedicated to his church and his beliefs and served in many different capacities over his 55 years in the Church of God.

Due to restrictions from the pandemic, his viewing was held at his home on May 7. He was buried at a local cemetery on May 14, with

a small family gathering and a brief memorial service.

T.J. was an old-timer in the local church area and had many stories and lessons to share. He was blessed with a healthy, long life and will be sorely missed by family and friends alike.

Justin Adkins



Robert Otis "Bob" Smith

Robert Otis "Bob" Smith, aged 61, a faithful member of the COGWA congregation in Birmingham, Alabama, passed away unexpectedly on March 4, 2020, at his residence in Ashland, Alabama.

Bob was born in Columbus, Mississippi. While his father was serving in the Air Force, he lived in Japan and several states, including Alaska, Florida and Alabama. He was a 1977 graduate of Clay County High School and attained a B.S. in accounting at Jacksonville State University. He served on the Talladega and Clay County Board of Education and was the director of the child nutrition program. He was an avid runner, often running 5Ks, 10Ks and marathons.

He is survived by his wife, Linda, of Ashland; two sons, Brandon Smith (Bonnie) of Trussville, Alabama, and Nathan Smith (Katelyn) of Auburn, Alabama; one grandson, Riley Smith, of Auburn; his father, L.J. Smith of Ashland; and one brother, Wes Smith (Joy) of Trussville. His brother Joe Smith died shortly after Bob died. Bob was preceded in death by his mother, Arline Crapse Smith.

Ruth Dickey



Arden "Frank" Bates

Frank Bates was born prematurely (3 pounds 3 ounces) on Jan. 4, 1939, the first of six children (three boys and three girls).

Frank grew up in Houston, Texas. He attended Sam Houston University in Huntsville, Texas, for two years. After his father died, Frank returned to Houston to begin a 40-year journey with NASA.

In 1967 Frank was introduced to the Church and was baptized in August. His passion for the truth spilled over into his daily conversations with everyday people.

Frank's second passion was sports. At the mention of any team, his face would light up. If our pastor mentioned sports in a sermon, he'd also mention Frank.

In 1972 Frank met Rose Mary Boehler. She and Frank married on May 9, 1973. Their only son, Glenn Eric, was born prematurely and died in June of 1974.

Frank lived with cerebral palsy and developed other challenging health issues. In 2017 Frank was moved to a nearby nursing home because of the level of care he required. Rose Mary was able to visit almost every day until COVID-19 arrived. The phone became their lifeline from that time until shortly before his death on April 22, 2020.

He and his brother Larry, who resided in the same home, contracted COVID-19 and died eight days apart. Their other brother, James, had preceded them in death in the fall of 2019.

Frank is survived by his wife, Rose Mary; three sisters, Becky Myers, Billie Dawn Petty, and Lera Higginbotham; and numerous nieces and nephews.

The Houston South church misses Frank's big smile and enthusiastic emails. We look forward to our reunion.

Susan Scott Smith



Sylvia Johnson

Sylvia Johnson, 87, of the Birmingham, Alabama, congregation, died on June 2, 2020, after suffering a stroke. Mrs. Johnson was a well-loved member of the congregation even though she was unable to attend services the past couple of years due to health problems.

Mrs. Johnson was baptized into the Church of God in March of 1986. She was a quiet and elegant lady who was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was an excellent homemaker, seamstress and cook and was an avid gardener.

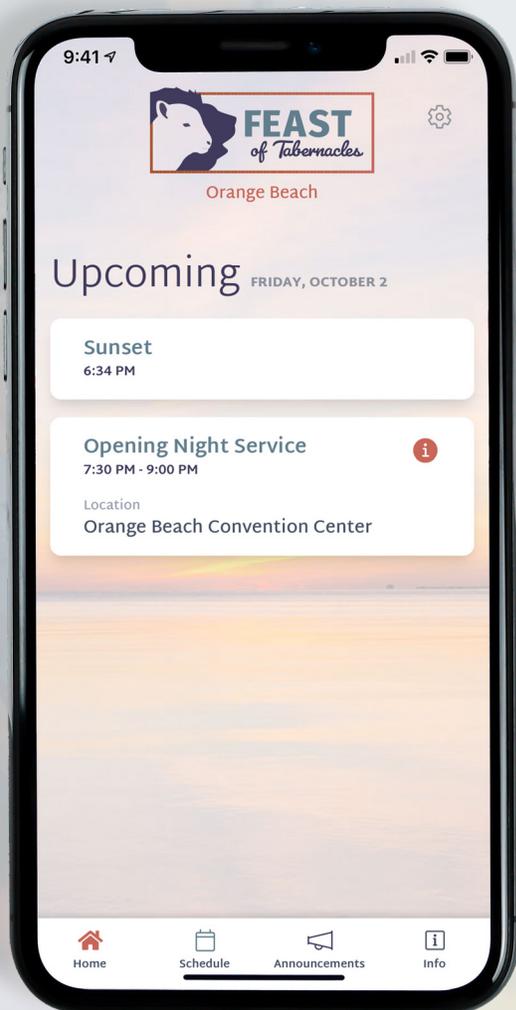
Mrs. Johnson was preceded in death by her husband of 51 years, James D. Johnson; son Alan Johnson; and son-in-law Raymond Epperson. She is survived by two daughters, Elaine (Doug) McKinney and Annette Epperson; four grandchildren, Amanda (Gary) Wall, Joshua (Tiffany) McKinney, Amber Epperson and Emily Epperson; and three great-grandchildren, Braden, Pressley and Ava Wall.

A funeral service was conducted by pastor Paul Luecke on June 5.

Annette Epperson and Ruth Bailey

NEW for 2020!

COGWA Feast of Tabernacles App



Now you can get the most up-to-date information about your Feast site's activities, announcements and webcasts on your phone.

Available for download on Sept. 10.

App name: **COGWA Feast**

