

OneAccord

September/October 2024



Feast of Tabernacles
Feast Checklist

Annual Audit
Report on 2023 Annual Audit

Teaching Them to Fish
Zambia Ladies' Club

personal from the president

The Rich History of the Feast

This year the Feast falls entirely in the month of October, but because of scheduling deadlines, printing and mailing requirements, I needed to write my column in July. It seems somewhat strange to be writing about the Feast of Tabernacles in July!

But even though the Feast is still weeks away, it is such an exciting time that I have no problem feeling that excitement already. In many ways we view the story of the Church through the Feast of Tabernacles. That is not to take anything away from the other holy days. We certainly don't want to overlook or shortchange the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement, which precede the Feast of Tabernacles each year.

What do I mean when I say we view the story of the Church through the Feast of Tabernacles? I have studied Church history all of my adult life. I have been privileged to walk the trail of the Sabbath-keepers in New England—a trail that had been lost, or at least shrouded in mystery, for many years. I located graves of the early Sabbath-keepers that had been overlooked for decades. The old meeting house in Newport, Rhode Island, opened even more historic treasures.

But there is no clear evidence that the Feast of Tabernacles was observed during this period of time in colonial America.

There are a few references to the Days of Unleavened Bread in the 1800s in Great Britain, but little to nothing about the Feast of Tabernacles. That all changed in the 1920s when Herbert and Loma Armstrong began observing the seven festivals as outlined in Leviticus 23.

“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, ‘The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts’” (Leviticus 23:2).

For approximately seven years Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong were alone in their holy day observance. The Church they attended—the Church of God (Seventh Day) in Eugene, Oregon—only observed the Passover.

But in 1933, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong, along with 19 others, established the Radio Church of God in Eugene. All 21 observed the Feast of Tabernacles that first year. They stayed in their homes and observed the two holy days (first day of the Feast and the Last Great Day) as Sabbaths in their small Church hall

there in Eugene. During the rest of the Feast, they held services in the evenings, but most people continued with school and work during daytime hours.

It wasn't until 1945 that Mr. Armstrong, after studying the Scriptures more thoroughly, focused the group on the importance of leaving their homes and going to a central location where they would keep the full eight days together. And in 1946, Mr. Armstrong made the announcement that he was moving the headquarters of the Church to Southern California. These two decisions, taken together, caused a substantial disruption in the small Radio Church of God congregation in Eugene. Attendance for the Feast that year (1945) dropped by 33 percent. From that low point, it gradually increased each year until the early 1990s, when it reached approximately 150,000.

It seems that our history is easily documented through our observance of the Feast of Tabernacles. Our overall attendance figures each year are based on the Festival attendance. This year the Church of God, a Worldwide Association expects around 12,000 for our total attendance. This number has slowly risen over the past 13 years since we began in December of 2010, and we expect this year to be the same. We will be observing the Feast in more than 40 countries around the world.

It is my earnest prayer that everyone has a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles. It is indeed the highlight of the year in so many ways. We now have a continuous history of observing the full eight days of the festival (Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day) going back to 1945. And we have a continuous history of observing the Feast going back even further to 1933. It is a rich history, and I never tire of uncovering new things and finding new analogies and lessons for each Feast of Tabernacles.



Jim Franks

President

Church of God, a Worldwide Association



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CHURCH of GOD

A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Some of the most exciting times in the lives of members of the Church of God surround the Feast of Tabernacles! I can vividly recall my first Feast in 1970, when I was just a boy. Looking back at the pictures my mother took at that Feast causes me to feel that same excitement all over again!

Through the years, as a teenager growing up in the Church, I also remember some times when trials about my attending the Feast bubbled to the surface. One year my school principal told me that if I went to the Feast, I would automatically fail every class for the entire semester. It took only one meeting with my mother and a threatened lawsuit to change his mind, but it terrified me nonetheless.

Times have changed since the 1970s, when I was a teenager in the Church, so I wanted to ask some teens today about their thoughts and memories of their Feasts. I asked each of them several questions. Let me summarize what they told me. I believe it will inspire all of you—young and old—to anticipate this year’s happy memories of keeping God’s Feast of Tabernacles.



Teens' Perspective of the Feast

By Phil Sandilands

What does keeping the Feast of Tabernacles mean to you spiritually? Do you find value in keeping God’s Feast?

- I guess it’s educating—showing us what the world will be like after Christ returns. Since I am young, I am still learning.
- Keeping the Feast of Tabernacles is God’s way of showing us what is to come—to keep our spiritual hopes up for the future so we don’t get completely weighed down by the sins and disgust for what goes on in the world today. I find great value in keeping God’s Feast because it’s a simple reminder to me to keep pushing forward past all of the world’s difficulties because there’s light at the end of the tunnel.
- To me, it evokes a feeling that is entirely unique. The meaning of the Feast is certainly important and has many pragmatic aspects, but I feel like the spirit of the Feast is far more emotionally tied to its spiritual meaning. The value of it is indispensable. Without the

Feast (or any of the holy days really), there would be no glue to hold the Church together.

How important is the Feast to you in making and keeping new friends?

- It is so important to have close friends in the faith to keep us motivated and moving forward. The Feast is a wonderful opportunity to meet new friends and reconnect with old friends of like mind. I’m still close with friends I made as a child at the Feast!

What is your most memorable Feast experience as a teen?

- My most memorable Feast experience isn’t really one thing, it’s collective. It’s just coming to wherever we’re staying, making that first grocery trip right after we arrive where we get to run around and pick out whatever we want, and then coming back and relaxing. Specifically, whenever we go to Orange Beach, it’s watching the sunset on the balcony every night.



- The most memorable part of the Feast for me has got to be seeing the mass numbers of people at church every year. Especially in sites like Greenville or Orange Beach, going from 30 to 40 congregation members to multiple hundreds is always surreal.
- My most memorable Feast experience is participating in the choir each year. It's such an amazing opportunity to come together as a team to work with our voices in harmony to serve our Lord.

Have you found that keeping the Feast puts you behind at school?

- I have found that it puts me a little behind, but since I'm just starting high school, I haven't had a Feast yet where I've been in high school actively. I'm assuming it will probably be harder then. In lower grades, it's still been hard, as I end up temporarily with lower grades. However, I almost always make it up. Teachers can be a pain, too, since a lot of them don't agree with the religion thing and think it's a stupid excuse, but we get around it.

- No, I've always been good about keeping up with that stuff, especially since I switched to online school.
- With being homeschooled, personally I have not. My parents never allowed us to bring schoolwork to the Feast. They wanted us to fully to celebrate God's Feast with no distractions!

What value can you share with other teens on the importance of keeping the Feast?

- The importance of God's Feast is magnificent. It is a commanded holy convocation (Leviticus 23:33-44). We are called to observe these days that picture the millennial reign of Jesus Christ on earth. Nothing should be more important to us than keeping God's Feast!
- Don't view the Feast as a vacation, but as a reminder of what life will be like in the future. When you get depressed about the Feast coming to an end, just know it's a small "free trial" of so much more to come.
- List points in the sermons that you don't quite understand or feel contradictory towards, and on


your own time, research those points and try to find what they mean for you. As much as the church is a congregation, everyone is unique and forms different views on everything. Instead of just listening blindly, read through certain passages, could be four or five times over, and find your own value in it. That's the fascinating thing about the Bible—everyone can find inspiration in the Scriptures, and those inspirations will often be vastly differing. It could even be different depending on what mood you're in, and as a teenager you most certainly feel a lot of moods.

While I didn't list all of their responses, you can see that our teens do take the Feast of Tabernacles very seriously. Take the time this Feast to meet teens at your site and ask them about how their Feast is going and what things they are looking forward to the most. They are the future leaders of the Church of God, and I am proud of how they are shaping their lives to fulfill their future roles! @@

Feast Checklist

Lists are important. They help us remember things in an orderly manner. The 10 Commandments and seven annual festivals, for example, are itemized lists from God. How about the Feast of Tabernacles? Could a checklist enhance our Feast experience?

By Kevin T. Epps



I'll begin with a confession: I like grocery shopping. (Sorry, guys.) Some grocery store apps generate detailed lists with prices and aisle numbers, which enhances the experience. My wife and I have benefited from such detailed lists. Nevertheless, I still forget things!

A checklist can also provide helpful Festival reminders, ranging from practical items to spiritual concepts. Here are some pre-Feast reminders that I have shared with brethren over the years.

Be on guard

This is a crucial matter for anyone's list: Be on guard, "lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11). Do not be ignorant of Satan's devices.

The Greek word translated "devices" means "thought; design, purpose, intention; mind, understanding" (*Bauer Lexicon*). These things are not inherently wrong. But Satan is the source of this activity here. A number of versions translate this as Satan's "schemes."

Satan hates God's festivals, especially the Feast of Tabernacles, which portrays Satan bound "for a thousand years... so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:2-3). Then, after being released for a little while, he will be thrown into the lake of fire just before the Last Great Day is fulfilled.

Interestingly, Paul mentioned Satan's devices while addressing an area of *forgiveness*. "Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:10).

Satan constantly *schemes* to destroy relationships in God's Church.

Of course, we must be on guard year-round. But it is interesting to note that the writing of 2 Corinthians is typically dated to the fall. So, the reminder about Satan's devices is especially applicable during the Feast of Tabernacles season.

Here are a few more items to consider putting on your Feast checklist.

Etiquette

Our church service experience is a major key for having a good Feast. Proper etiquette helps all participants (speakers, special music performers, A/V crew, ushers, etc.) and other Feastgoers. Here are a few items for consideration:

- Arrive early enough to be ready for the first hymn.
- Be attentive during church services.
- Turn to the scriptures or take good notes.
- Respect ushers' seating instructions.
- Do not talk during services. (If you need to communicate, try to whisper quietly.)
- Silence cell phones and any devices that might make noise during services.
- Don't begin closing your Bible and packing up before the sermon ends.

This is the only festival for which Ministerial Services approves *every* speaker and message. Each Festival coordinator holds a speakers' meeting to compare messages for redundancy and to give input.

Notice the role of those who assisted Ezra during the fall festivals. They "helped the people to *understand* the Law... So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and *they gave the sense*, and helped them to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:7-8). The Hebrew

word translated “sense” means “prudence, insight, understanding” (*Brown-Driver-Briggs’ Lexicon*). Likewise, today, speakers strive to deliver *insightful* messages rather than just reading scriptures.

Avoid outside distractions

Focus on the Feast and its meaning. Don’t allow yourself to become preoccupied with work, school and other issues you left behind.

Similarly, avoid conflicts with others.

Remember the words of Matthew 6:34: “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

Practice temperance in all things

Follow good health principles. Get enough sleep so you can be focused.

“You may eat within your gates as much as your heart desires” (Deuteronomy 12:21). But don’t make yourself sick.

“You shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires” (Deuteronomy 14:26). But not for anything unclean or ungodly.

Make it more *Feast* than *vacation*

Remember God’s criteria for a good Feast:

- Remember to pray.
- Remember to praise God.
- Remember to think of others. “You shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter . . . and the fatherless and the widow” (Deuteronomy 16:14).
- Remember to have a right attitude.
- Remember to share.

It’s possible to keep the festivals in hypocritical, dishonest and meaningless ways, as God warned ancient Israel in Amos 5:21-24: “I hate, I despise your feast days, and I do not savor your sacred assemblies . . . Take away from Me the noise of your songs, for I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments. But let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”

Packing

I’ll never forget the Feast of 1995 in Colorado—I forgot my suits! I packed them, but somehow, in the rush to get to the airport, I didn’t load them in the taxi. I felt so foolish and embarrassed as a minister walking about in very casual clothing. Thankfully, they were delivered eventually. Nevertheless, I certainly could have used a checklist.

Make sure you pack appropriate attire. For services, make sure it shows respect for God and fellow members. Keep the need for modesty in mind.

Try to pack more wisely and efficiently each year. If you’re flying, be sure to check baggage weight limits.

Summary

Everyone’s checklist will be a little different. Some personal or spiritual reminders you might want to keep confidential. The important thing is to take time to think about Feast preparation—don’t let the Feast just happen to you.

What if you forget something very important—your Bible, suits, dresses, wallet, passport, etc.? Don’t be ignorant of Satan’s schemes. Don’t have a meltdown. God understands. However, having a list of helpful reminders could go a long way toward helping us have a successful Feast. An empty list is below to get you started. ©A

Feast Checklist

Spiritual reminders, goals

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-

Clothes

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-
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-

Toiletries

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-
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Media/Electronics

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-
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Other

-
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-

FOI

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

By Rhonda Waddle



Foundation Outreach International has come a long way since its inception. But it continues to be dedicated to a world of good.

Foundation Outreach International (FOI) is a humanitarian organization dedicated to creating positive change through various outreach and development initiatives. Over the years, FOI has grown from its humble beginnings into an organization that provides services and support for community development and for individuals, with programs that focus on health, education and vocational training. This article delves into the past, present and future of FOI, highlighting its achievements, current efforts and future aspirations.

Past: the origins of FOI

In 2010, a group of dedicated individuals founded Ambassador Outreach International (AIO) to provide for the needs of Latin American congregations. In 2012, the AIO board voted to change the name to Foundation Outreach International (FOI). The new organization added board members and changed its focus and mission to doing “a world of good.” Through grassroots efforts and collaborations, FOI grew in its number of volunteers and in its impact and commitment to serving communities through a variety of programs.

In its early years, FOI concentrated primarily on supporting the Jordan service project, international youth camps and English education programs.

Present: expanding horizons and impact

Today, FOI operates in multiple countries, engaging in a variety of projects designed to promote development and to improve the quality of life for individuals and families. The organization has expanded its focus to encompass a range of areas, including:

1. **Education:** FOI believes that education is a crucial element for breaking the cycle of poverty and therefore provides scholarships to over 80 youth and young adults in the developing world. By promoting access to quality education, FOI aims to empower the next generation. FOI also sponsors English language programs to help participants improve their English-speaking skills, since English is used in business settings.



2. **Health:** FOI works to provide dental assistance, health education and other resources for communities in need. FOI offers programs that address dental health, since it reflects and supports overall health, which is an important component of FOI’s mission.

3. **Economic development:** To foster self-sufficiency, FOI implements vocational training programs. By equipping individuals with skills and resources, the organization helps individuals (and communities) build sustainable livelihoods and become economically independent.
4. **Support for local communities:** FOI also supports projects that help people in need and that raise awareness about the issues they face. Through FOI's Hilltop Outreach Program, volunteers support these populations with tangible activities.
5. **Clean water:** FOI is providing community wells to give residents greater access to clean water. Many communities in Africa do not have safe drinking water sources that are nearby. FOI selects central sites for wells so community residents can have easier access to this vital resource.

3. **Embracing technology:** FOI is exploring innovative approaches to enhance its program delivery. By leveraging technology, FOI seeks to improve its communication with volunteers and communities. For example, both the Service Leadership Academy (an interactive service training program) and the Embark program utilize virtual training methods.
4. **Strengthening volunteer engagement:** FOI plans to deepen its engagement with local congregations so that members will know they can participate in the mission of FOI in a variety of ways. The Service Leadership Academy is building a network of volunteers who can help spread the opportunities for service even as they learn valuable lessons in service leadership.

Dedicated to a world of good

Foundation Outreach International is funded through a combination of individual donations and corporate sponsorships. Individual donors contribute through one-time gifts and recurring donations, allowing FOI to sustain its ongoing programs and initiatives. Corporate sponsorships often provide funding for specific projects. Additionally, the Scholarship Coin Drive plays a crucial role in raising awareness and in generating funds. Using these generous donations, Foundation Outreach International strives to effectively carry out its mission and expand its outreach initiatives.

Foundation Outreach International has come a long way since its inception. It has grown into an organization that supports a wide range of programs. With a strong foundation built on compassion and collaboration, FOI remains dedicated to its mission of creating positive change. As it navigates the complexities of the present and anticipates the challenges of the future, Foundation Outreach International is poised to continue its transformative work for years to come:

Foundation Outreach International... dedicated to a world of good.

If you have questions or would like to learn more, please visit the FOI website at foundationoutreachintl.org or email support@foundationoutreachintl.org. @A



Future: vision for continued impact

Looking ahead, Foundation Outreach International envisions a future where all individuals will have access to the resources and opportunities necessary to live dignified and fulfilling lives. While this future will not be fully realized until Jesus Christ returns and establishes the Kingdom of God on earth, FOI is committed to working toward it even now with these goals:

1. **Scaling up programs:** FOI aims to expand successful programs to reach even more communities, to develop the next generation of volunteers and to improve our training efforts. FOI also hopes to expand successful programs in other areas. For instance, last year, some volunteers worked at a youth camp in Guatemala while others staffed a dental clinic for members of the Guatemala church.
2. **Economic development:** FOI will continue to foster self-sufficiency through its vocational training programs. For example, FOI purchased sewing machines enabling a member in Ghana to teach young ladies how to sew, thus giving them a marketable skill.

Report on 2023 Annual Audit

Every year the Church of God has an independent firm conduct an audit of our finances, and once complete, we share the results with our Church members and donors. The audit for 2023 again gave a positive review of the Church's financial position. We give thanks to God and our supporters for our many financial blessings.

By Britton M. Taylor

Our 2023 independent audit was completed in July 2024. (The timing of the audit for 2022, reported on in the March/April 2024 *One Accord*, was later than most years, but this latest audit returns us to the more usual timing.)

We are pleased to provide the results of this annual audit with our Church members and donors who generously support the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.

The income received for 2023 was just over \$15.5 million. This is down about \$530,000 compared to 2022, representing a 3.3 percent decrease.

In 2023 our income exceeded expenses by \$232,000. This continued a trend we saw in both 2022 and 2021, when income exceeded expenses by \$2.1 million and \$4.1 million respectively! This ongoing trend has put the Church in a very positive and stable financial position, allowing the Church to add to cash reserves for future expenses.

As always, we recognize God the Father and Jesus Christ as the ultimate source of all our blessings. Especially considering the turbulent times in which we live, we

are grateful for God's grace, mercy and blessing, which makes our healthy financial state possible.

We also thank you, our faithful members and donors, who give your tithes and generous offerings to support

CHURCH OF GOD, A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.			
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES			
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023			
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
REVENUES AND SUPPORT			
Tithes and offerings, individuals	\$ 11,298,374	\$ -	\$ 11,298,374
Local congregation contributions	6,523	-	6,523
Holy Day/Festival Fund offerings	3,434,674	-	3,434,674
Restricted contributions	-	698,779	698,779
Interest and investment gain	668	-	668
Other income	100,479	-	100,479
Net assets released from restrictions:			
Satisfaction of program restrictions	698,779	(698,779)	-
Total revenues and support	<u>15,539,497</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,539,497</u>
EXPENSES			
Program services:			
Public proclamation	2,154,999	-	2,154,999
Congregational care	6,289,127	-	6,289,127
Education	429,481	-	429,481
Festivals	637,403	-	637,403
International	2,642,126	-	2,642,126
Total program services	<u>12,153,136</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,153,136</u>
General and administrative:			
Headquarters office, management and administrative	1,057,886	-	1,057,886
Board of directors	19,813	-	19,813
Insurance and related services	2,076,489	-	2,076,489
Total general and administrative	<u>3,154,188</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,154,188</u>
Total expenses	<u>15,307,324</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,307,324</u>
Change in net assets	232,173	-	232,173
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>14,301,193</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,301,193</u>
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 14,533,366</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 14,533,366</u>

the Church. We appreciate your continued prayers for wisdom, discretion and guidance as we strive to be good stewards of the resources God provides.

This year's audited financial statement is for the years ending Dec. 31, 2023, and Dec. 31, 2022. In a confirmation letter dated July 3, 2024, our independent auditing firm, Henry & Peters, P.C., of Tyler, Texas, gave us a favorable "unqualified" opinion that the financial statements accurately present the Church's financial position and results of operations for 2023 and, by comparison, for 2022.

The unqualified opinion reflects our independent auditor's judgment that, without any identified exceptions, our financial records and statements are fairly and appropriately presented and are in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

These results positively reflect not only the performance of the financial operations of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc., but the entire organization's approach to its fiscal responsibilities. The Ministerial Board of Directors and administration are committed to continuously improving the Church's operations and responsibly managing the financial resources God provides us in order to do His work. An unqualified opinion is just one indication of that commitment.

Below we have provided several financial statements that relate to the Church's operations for the year ending Dec. 31, 2023.

You can view the audited financial statements and related unqualified opinion online at members.cogwa.org/uploads/Church_of_God_a_Worldwide_Association_2023_Audit.pdf.

CHURCH OF GOD, A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.									
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES									
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023									
	Program Services					General and Administrative			Total
	Public Proclamation	Congregational Care	Education	Festivals	International	Headquarters Office, Management and Administrative	Board of Directors	Insurance and Related services	
EXPENSES									
Bank services and fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 93,778	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 93,778
Building and equipment fees	-	6,765	65,881	45,131	-	-	-	-	117,777
Contracted services and fees	394,106	-	-	4,132	-	222,481	-	-	620,719
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	188,404	-	-	188,404
Domestic support:									
Advertising	173,073	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	173,073
Discretionary assistance	-	169,467	-	143,176	59,325	-	-	48,128	420,096
Discretionary retirement pay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	837,043	837,043
Insurance and health care	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,191,318	1,191,318
Internet and related services	182,747	-	-	-	-	6,000	-	-	188,747
Other	14,131	51,626	9,606	433	27,422	54,665	-	-	157,883
Postage and shipping	100,146	4,660	-	574	8,429	12,730	-	-	126,539
Printing	147,445	3,032	-	-	-	423	-	-	150,900
Salaries and related expenses	1,007,203	3,662,546	144,708	372,748	742,864	371,334	-	-	6,301,403
Supplies	117,988	4,244	9,924	27,284	3,881	19,774	-	-	183,095
Telephone and utilities	1,096	9,955	-	-	1,295	41,737	-	-	54,083
Travel, mileage, meals and lodging	17,064	2,375,597	50,894	41,821	433,165	24,848	19,813	-	2,963,202
Youth camp and activities	-	-	148,468	2,104	30,800	-	-	-	181,372
Equipment and facilities	-	1,235	-	-	-	21,712	-	-	22,947
International subsidies	-	-	-	-	1,334,945	-	-	-	1,334,945
Total expenses	<u>\$ 2,154,999</u>	<u>\$ 6,289,127</u>	<u>\$ 429,481</u>	<u>\$ 637,403</u>	<u>\$ 2,642,126</u>	<u>\$ 1,057,886</u>	<u>\$ 19,813</u>	<u>\$ 2,076,489</u>	<u>\$ 15,307,324</u>

A Letter to the FI Class of 2025

By Monica Ebersole, FI graduate

Welcome, Foundation Institute Class of 2025! As the new academic year gets underway and the students are settling into their classes, the class of 2024 would like to share some advice for this year's class, as well as anyone interested in attending FI in the future.

Set yourself up for success

Take some time at the beginning of the year to think about what you'd like to gain from FI. Maybe there's a specific question that you'd like to have answered or a list of topics you'd like to understand better. Maybe there are scriptures or books of the Bible that you'd like to learn more about.

You can also make a list of experiences you want to have or relationships that you'd like to build during your time at FI. Going in with a tangible list like this can help you in accomplishing everything you hope to during your FI experience.

Stay active

Get your steps in and stay active! There will be days when you are tired, but there is something about keeping the rest of your body awake that keeps your mind alert. This will be one of the most formative years of your life, and you don't want to experience it only halfway.

Maintain the proper mindset

To be a successful FI student, keep your focus and excitement on learning more of God's Word. Don't get stuck in the mindset of it just being school and assignments you have to do to pass. It can lead to burnout very quickly.

Appreciate the content

Let the content become personal to you, and it will become so much more meaningful as you go along. As we explored the life of the prophets and their teachings, it felt like we had a personal relationship with them, and they became our friends. It really helped us remember all of the information and lessons.

Take advantage of the year

The nine months at FI will go by quickly, so make sure you get to know as many people as you can. Participate in activities that you don't have at home, and expand your social horizons. But make sure that you relax and recharge too. It's important to have fun, but your body and brain can only take so much at a time.

Make time for the important things

If there's one thing you'll find yourself lacking at Foundation Institute, it's time. Running between classes, work, social events and everything else that you have going on for these nine months is going to be a balancing act like you've never had before. While you're here at FI, you'll need to make sure that you make the time to pray every morning, prepare for class, get adequate sleep, fast occasionally and maintain your health. If you make the time to do the important things, the rest will fall into place.

We wish you—the class of 2025—all the best as you begin one of the best and most educational years of your lives!

Sincerely,
Monica Ebersole and the FI class of 2024





Zambia Ladies' Club

Teaching Them to Fish

By Taylor Hansen

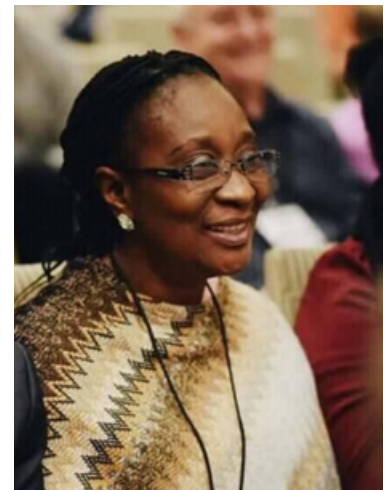
“Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach him how to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.” This old saying highlights how we can help others gain access to essential materials, such as food. We can provide supplies to those in need, but it’s not sustainable for the long term. Materials run out, and attempting to provide a continuous supply of necessities is not a practical solution.

Women around the world have established a way of living and surviving. Bringing in materials may provide short-term assistance, but may not be beneficial in the long run. For example, with support from Foundation Outreach International, ladies in several U.S. congregations provided feminine hygiene products for the women in Zambia (see “A Collective Effort” in the January 2016 *One Accord*). The project was helpful, but it was quickly realized that something more could be done—something that could leave a lasting impact on the

lives of these women and their families. This realization gave birth to an idea, an idea that would improve the lives of women in the Church in Zambia.

In 2017 Tanya Horchak and Shirley Banda (the wife of Zambian pastor Kambani Banda) developed the idea of a ladies’ club. With the approval of the senior pastor of the region, the idea went forward. It was an exciting opportunity for the women to build a community, but it also had to be funded. It was decided that each member would be required to pay dues, and the total dues collected would be matched by a U.S. donor, thereby doubling the total. This sum would then be distributed to the members of the ladies’ club so that once per year, every woman would have the opportunity to receive money—with the requirement that it be used to improve life for their households.

The lives of most people around the world revolve around the kitchen. From social events to family gatherings, the center of culture begins with food. It is an essential part of our existence, but for women in developing countries, it can also be a daily difficulty. So it is not surprising that the kitchen was the first area that many of these women chose to improve. They purchased items such as pots and pans, plates, cups and even a gas stove.



Shirley Banda



From left, Tanya and Doug Horchak with Kambani and Shirley Banda



From left, Tine Banda's kitchen and house supplies; Karen Mafohla with the kitchen supplies she purchased; Brenda Ngwenya's light bulb; and Brenda Ngwenya with the kitchen supplies she purchased.

Eventually improvements began being made in other areas of their lives. One of the members, Brenda Ngwenya, purchased solar-powered light bulbs that lit up her home. This purchase allowed her children to continue their studies at night.

A sewing machine was also purchased and made available to the ladies. Mrs. Banda's goal for this purchase was to teach the ladies to be productive and good stewards. At one of their meetings members learned how to sew. With their new skill and the sewing machine, they made items for themselves and their families and items they could sell in local markets.

Unfortunately, with the death of Shirley Banda in December of 2020, the club underwent a great trial. Her death had a great impact—felt across oceans. The women in the Zambia ladies' club felt her loss especially. Shirley Banda had led this group of women strongly, and with her death, the club slowed its work. These women had lost a leader, a mother, a friend, a role model, a counselor, a nurturer, a confidant and a sister.

The club felt lost without her. Who would take on Shirley Banda's role? Who would lead this group going forward? Who could help this group of women grow stronger? In July 2023 Tine Banda, Mrs. Banda's daughter, was given the responsibility of coordinating the ladies' club with the input of the pastor and club members. At the same time, goals for the ladies' club in the coming years were established. They determined to keep the members involved and have a schedule, allowing each woman to shine her light and promoting a bond among members of the club.

Since then, the first meeting of 2024 has been planned to cover the topics of diet, exercise and the importance of family planning. Connie Namukolo Kwaleyela, a member in Zambia who has a Ph.D. in health studies and is a professor at the University of Zambia, will lead this meeting. A topic such as this is invaluable for these women. In countries such as

Zambia, this type of information is not as readily available as it is to those in the United States and other Western countries.

The ladies' club provides opportunities to learn about important topics, learn valuable skills, practice money management and grow in accountability.

Proverbs 31 describes the virtuous wife as one who builds a home for her family, ensures a strong foundation and is a wise presence in the home. Verse 17 states, "She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms."

The Zambia ladies' club has allowed this remarkable group of women to grow and strengthen each other, as iron sharpens iron (Proverbs 27:17). In order to fully understand the impact it has had on these women, you must hear it from a few of the women themselves:

"Being in the club has helped build up our small community of women through fellowship opportunities and has helped me develop an outdoor recreation area."
—Tine Banda

"I would like to thank the COGWA ladies' club for the contribution it has made to my life. On my own, I would not have managed to buy the items I have in my home now. I have learned that if you put your heads together and have the love of God, nothing is impossible."
—Karen Mafohla

"To us it's a lot. These things we purchase would be impossible on our own. It may look small, but it is big for us, it has changed a lot."
—Isabel Njovu

"With this money I bought a TV because we can't go to Lusaka every weekend for church, so we can watch sermons and Bible studies."
—Brenda Ngwenya

High School Graduate Anderson Waddle

Anderson Charles Waddle, son of Bryan and Rhonda Waddle, graduated from high school this spring. Anderson earned the Calvin Coolidge Senator Scholarship, AP Scholar with Distinction Award, and magna cum laude on the National Latin Exam. He also placed in various speech competitions.

Anderson enjoys serving at Camp Lone Star and attending teen camp. Within the Houston North congregation, he participates in teen speech club and teen choir and is a Sabbath school aid. At school, Anderson engaged in many activities and clubs, including the yearbook club and A/V Club, also serving as an intern and editor for his school. Anderson enjoys reading, playing volleyball and visiting restaurants or cafés so that he can write reviews. He enjoys traveling and trying as many new foods as possible.

Anderson will be attending the University of Texas at Austin, planning to earn degrees in finance and psychology.

Anderson Waddle



High School Graduate Cheyenne Creed

Cheyenne Creed, daughter of Dan and Jan Creed, from the Twin Cities Minnesota, congregation, graduated from high school this spring. Cheyenne participated in choir from sixth through 12th grade. She was a B honor roll student. She's also certified in equestrian riding.

Cheyenne came into this world as a fighter and survivor. She was born premature at 24 weeks, weighing only 1 pound and 7 ounces, and remained in the hospital for four months before being sent home.

She has had multiple health issues, including liver cancer at 14 months, double pneumonia (twice), open heart surgery and cataracts, to name only a few. Several times, doctors warned she would not make it through the night.

In spite all the challenges, Cheyenne finished high school and has developed a love of music and art. She loves writing and illustrating stories and books that she writes. She's taken piano lessons and enjoys music and singing.

Cheyenne participated in Sabbath school and in church fun shows. She sang in Feast youth choirs and attended preteen camps.

Cheyenne will continue a special Compass program for the next three years.

Jan Creed



High School Graduate Zipporah Nedlock



Zipporah Sarah Anna Nedlock, daughter of Barry and Silen Nedlock, attends the Williamsburg, Virginia, congregation and graduated from high school this spring.

Zipporah graduated with honors and was voted prom queen. She also took college classes at RUC and J. Sargeant leading to her freshman year in college this fall. Zipporah received full scholarship offers to

Regent University, VMI, Stanford and JMU.

Zipporah has participated in FOI Hilltop projects, local church projects and her local church teen club. She has served at the Feed More food bank and at Families of Inmates. She's attended COGWA Youth Camps and enjoys reading, fencing, softball, soccer, hiking, camping and Irish dancing. She plays piano and violin, and she participated in Civil Air Patrol for three years.

Zipporah plans to attend Liberty University's nursing program. She aims to become a nurse practitioner.

Silen Nedlock

High School Graduate Seth Alexander Strnad



Seth Strnad, son of Tracy Strnad and the late Jeffrey Strnad, attends the Witchita, Kansas, congregation and graduated from high school this spring. Seth was homeschooled from kindergarten to 12th grade. Overall, he achieved a 3.7 GPA. He is a gifted writer.

Seth has attended numerous camps, completed the apprenticeship program and has volunteered at the Midwest preteen camp. In the summer, he helps out the family farming operations. In his free time, Seth enjoys hunting, target shooting, online gaming with friends and delving into European and Asian history. He has recently been certified to scuba dive, and he loves to travel.

This fall, Seth plans to attend college and study cybersecurity with a focus on digital forensics.

Tracy Strnad

College Graduate Austin Berg

Austin Berg graduated from Texas Christian University (TCU) in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 18, 2024. He earned a bachelor of science in fashion merchandising with a minor in general business. He completed a summer internship and earned this degree via academic scholarship. He was a member of the honor society and different clubs at TCU.

Austin is searching for a job with Nike in Oregon or other athletic brands located on the West Coast. Future entrepreneurial aspirations may lead him to create his own athletic or outdoor brand line. His other work interests are in sales and business areas.

Austin enjoys working out, traveling, reading and participating in events and gatherings related to church activities and work. He enjoys spending time outdoors with family, friends and colleagues.

Austin's parents are Nate and Cherine Berg, and his brothers are Christopher Berg and Nathan Berg (Columbus, Ohio). Austin attends the Fort Worth congregation.

Cherine Berg



Janel and Doug Johnson Celebrate 50th Anniversary

On June 3, 2023, Doug and Janel Johnson of the Cleveland and Youngstown, Ohio, congregations celebrated 50 years of marriage.

Doug and Janel both came into the Church at a young age. He was the son of a fly-fishing accountant from Missouri; she was a musically talented girl from Ohio. They met at Ambassador College in Pasadena, California.

Just prior to his senior year, Doug began his ministerial training. His first assignment was in Manila, Philippines. After his graduation in 1973, the Johnsons married in a lovely outdoor ceremony on the Pasadena campus.

Their first assignment as a couple was in Canada. Over the next 16 years, they lived in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario and were blessed with three children: Pamela (Miler), Richard and Deborah (Pennington). A transfer in the late '80s brought them back to Ohio, where they have lived since.

Education and service are hallmark traits of the Johnsons. Both have a thirst for knowledge that they feed through reading and travel. And service is their way of life. In addition to pastoring congregations in Cleveland and Youngstown, Doug currently serves as senior pastor for Canada and teaches Modern Church History at Foundation Institute. He is also a member of the Doctrine Committee and served at Camp Heritage for over 20 years, 11 as camp director.

Janel tirelessly assists her husband in his work and has served the Church for over 20 years as a Festival choir director and special music coordinator. Her talented fingers produced the piano accompaniment recordings of the hymns, a service much appreciated by congregations around the world.

Doug and Janel have three children, seven grandchildren, one step-grandson and one great-granddaughter on the way!

Debbie Pennington



Southwest Florida Congregations Hold Winter Beach Picnic



On Sunday, March 3, the Fort Myers and St. Petersburg, Florida, congregations hosted their Fifth Annual Winter Beach Picnic at the picturesque Fort De Soto Park. Early morning showers moved out just as the setup crew arrived. Nothing but blue skies, sunshine and fair breezes off the Gulf of Mexico were to follow. Temperatures held steady in the upper 70s.

Brethren enjoyed table games, strolls on the beach, cornhole and much fellowship. The highlight was a smorgasbord of grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, with all the trimmings, plenty of side dishes, and a wide array of delicious desserts.

The smiling faces, laughter and lively conversation made for a most wonderful day.

Mike McTiernan



Austin Congregation Has a Spring “Picnic”

One normally thinks of a picnic as going to a park, sitting on a blanket and eating picnic fare. But the Austin, Texas, congregation had a church potluck as a picnic!

It was a beautiful spring day on Sabbath, March 30. After services about 80 members enjoyed a delicious potluck of barbecue brisket, smoked chicken, sides and dessert.

It all began with Wayne Solum, Jordan Word and Dave and Teddi Treybig smoking the meat at home. After a long process during the week, the meat was brought to church to be enjoyed by the congregation. Teens and young adults pitched in to set up tables and chairs both outside on the porches and inside in the Fellowship Hall. Several ladies brought fresh flowers, which were used to decorate the tables.

The food table was laden with delicious fare ranging from salads to creamed corn and everything in between. The dessert table was crowded with cookies, cakes and pies.

Needless to say, no one left hungry. The seating areas were buzzing with good conversation.

Ardith Weiss

Asheville Honors the Ferenchiaks for 30 Years of Service

On March 23, the Asheville, North Carolina, congregation had a Greek-themed meal after church. There were plenty of homemade gyros, salads, etc., to feast on!

Steve and Judy Ferenchiak were honored with a bottle of rum (she is famous for her rum cakes), a plant and a cake for their 30 years of service in the ministry. He was ordained an elder on March 27, 1994.

Jeannie Evans



Bentonville Dances Through the Decades

A costume dance was hosted in Bentonville, Arkansas, March 9. Members from the Van Buren, Arkansas, congregation; the Joplin and Springfield, Missouri, congregations; and Texas; joined in the evening’s fun.

Prior to the dance, a festive taco bar was enjoyed by all, and the desserts that followed were enough to satisfy any sweet tooth.

Colorful, creative decade decorations decorated the tables, with a history lesson of music technology through the decades, from vinyl 45s and 33s to eight-track and cassette tapes, bringing to mind the times when there was more than streaming from your favorite electronic devices of this decade.

A VW bus photo booth was available for pictures. There were plenty of tunes to tap your toes to (or stomp your boots to, depending on the decade).

Vicki Willoughby



Congregations Enjoy Another Junebug Jamboree

On May 19 brethren from the Birmingham, Alabama, and Trenton, Georgia, congregations gathered at the home of Tim and Lisa Dickey to enjoy our annual Junebug Jamboree. (We've kept the name, but now have it in May before the weather gets too hot.)

Activities began in the morning with games of cornhole. Pickleball was added as a new activity this year—proving to be a big hit. Once again, the guessing game of “Country Song or It Ain't,” was entertaining. Our local church band, The Adventures, then played several songs.

Lunch consisted of beef brisket, smoked chicken, hot dogs and a variety of sides and desserts. After lunch, children rode horses, and many brethren took

their chances to win cookies, cupcakes, pies or cakes in a cakewalk. Karaoke, with a number of participants, closed out the day.

The brethren were grateful to be able to spend time together on a beautiful day and are already looking forward to next year's Junebug Jamboree!

Chuck Nichols



Ocala Members Visit Gardens



On March 24 members of the Ocala, Florida, congregation met at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens in Gainesville, Florida.

The gardens have 24 major collections that are visually accessible from a 1 ½-mile paved walkway. The bamboo garden offers Florida's largest public display of bamboo. The herb garden is the largest in the Southeast.

Members enjoyed having lunch together by Lake Kanapaha and spent the afternoon exploring the different gardens, which display the diversity of flowers, grasses, trees and herbs. The visit to the gardens was inspiring and educational.

Mike Ciampaglia

130 Enjoy Families Glorifying God Weekend

About 130 brethren gathered in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, for the Families Glorifying God weekend, which took place over the Sabbath of April 27 and the last day of Unleavened Bread. Members came from Iowa, Wisconsin and as far away as Ohio and Texas to enjoy this special time together.

This year's theme for the weekend was “Generations of Influence,” and the messages, seminars and even special music had this focus. The weekend was full of fellowship, as members enjoyed a delicious catered meal, a Sabbath variety show and a late-night game show.

The brethren were very appreciative that guest speaker Dave Myers and his sweet wife, Pam, endured a red-eye flight so they could be a big part of the weekend.

Liz Boyle

Photo by Ivor Michell



Passover 2024 in Indonesia



Brethren traveled by ferry to Batam, Indonesia, to be together for the Passover, Night to Be Much Observed and first day of Unleavened Bread. Batam is just about one hour from Singapore and two hours from Johor Bahru, Malaysia.

On the evening of April 21, our pastor, David Baker, conducted the Lord's Passover service at Harris Resort in Bareleng, Batam. Eight members were present, including

Dorrie Baker, two members from Bahau in Malaysia, one from Singapore and three from Indonesia.

A wonderful Night to Be Much Observed took place in the Best Western Premier Hotel, a four-star hotel not far from where the Passover service was held. Everyone feasted on some wonderful dishes of local Indonesian food, including fruit sesame salad followed by delicious asparagus soup, steamed rice, crispy fried chicken and wok-fried Szechuan beef.

Services on the first day of Unleavened Bread, April 23, were conducted via an unlisted YouTube live stream. Members connected from British Columbia, Canada; Mae Sot, Thailand; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Singapore; and Melbourne, Australia.

We had inspiring messages—a sermonette and a sermon. In his sermon, David Baker expounded the scriptures taken from various places in the Bible, including Ephesians 4:22-32, to focus on delevaning our spiritual lives, daily renewing the “new man” and imitating Christ’s sinless life through His words and actions.

Edward Simanjuntak

Houston South Bids Morgans Farewell

On the Sabbath of May 11, the Houston South, Texas, congregation bid Royden and Julie Morgan and their son Spencer a fond farewell as they move from Houston after living here 17 years.

James Ellis, the associate pastor of the Houston South congregation, thanked Royden for his many years of faithful service as an elder in the area. He referenced 1 Corinthians 15:58 and Hebrews 6:10 in describing the Morgans’ faithful, steadfast care for and service to God’s people and His Church.

On the congregation’s behalf, Mr. Ellis presented the Morgan family with a memory book with photos of members and various church activities, a Costco gift card, and three railroad maps for Spencer. Following the presentation of gifts, everyone was invited to the

fellowship hall for cake, snacks and time to visit with the Morgans and say goodbye.

Monica Koerner and Kathy Welch



Orlando Holds Children’s Carnival

On March 9, the Orlando, Florida, congregation resumed its annual children’s carnival—its first since the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizers Beverly and Scott Smith, along with several volunteers, put on a rootin’ good time.

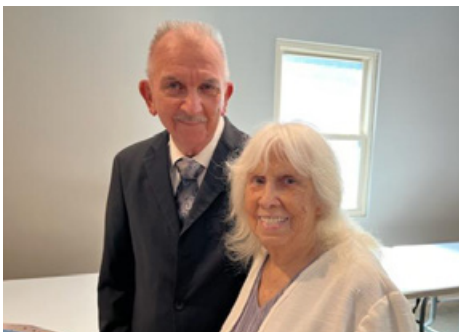
This year’s Western theme featured creative decorations, a chili cook-off, a best costume award, a cakewalk, and trivia and carnival games! Both our older and younger folk enjoyed a great evening of great food, fun and fellowship.

Theresa Evans



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.

Anniversaries



Clayton and Inez Burrow

On July 6, 2024, the Greensboro, North Carolina, congregation gathered after services to celebrate the 65th wedding anniversary of Clayton and Inez Burrow. The

Greensboro family enjoyed cake and toasted Mr. and Mrs. Burrow.

Several members shared the impact the Burrows have had on their lives. The Burrows have been an integral part of the Greensboro congregation for decades. Their devotion to their five children, 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren is a source of inspiration!

The Burrows began attending the Church in August 1967, and they were baptized a few months later, in October of that year. They have served faithfully as deacon and deaconess since they were ordained in May 1991. Anyone who has had the opportunity to attend in Greensboro within the last 42 years will remember the beautiful way Mrs. Burrow always played the piano for services. Their example of service, love and a godly marriage have been an example to countless members through the years.

Jessica Schultz

Baptisms



Tyler Kratz

Tyler Kratz of the Quakertown, Pennsylvania, congregation was baptized on Sabbath, June 1, 2024, at the home of Richard and Lolita Nogan. About 30 members from the local congregation were present, since the baptism coincided with the annual "campout" church service and Bible study, which were also held at the Nogans' place.

The weather was perfect—sunny, with temperatures in the mid-70s. The baptism followed a hearty barbecue dinner and preceded the Bible study. Tyler's grandfather, John Kratz, assisted in the baptism.

Tyler, 21, grew up in the Church and recently graduated from Foundation Institute. Congratulations, Tyler!

Kevin Epps



Glory Aghimien

On Monday, May 14, 2024, Glory Aghimien was baptized into the Body of Christ by Paul Carter, who was assisted by Tom Clark and Doug Horchak.

The congregation in Benin City, Nigeria, is growing, and all are excited for the Aghimien family!

Paul Carter



Naomi Harvey

Naomi Harvey, was baptized on the Sabbath of April 6, 2024, in the presence of her happy family. She was baptized by her pastor, Gary Black, with elders Jim Servidio, Kevin

Burt and John Perry joining in the laying on of hands. Naomi and her family attend the Houston North, Texas, congregation.

Gary Black



Nathan Smith

Charles and Tammie Smith of the Houston North, Texas, congregation are pleased to announce the baptism of their son, Nathaniel Carl Smith, on Saturday, April 13, 2024.

It was a beautiful day, and Nathan was surrounded by family and friends. The ceremony was performed by his pastor, Gary Black, at his parents' home.

Charles Smith



Andrew and Courtney Kountz

Andrew and Courtney Kountz of the Cincinnati-Dayton, Ohio, congregation were baptized April 19, 2024.

Ron Kelley, pastor, performed the baptism with the assistance of Taylor Tootle, an elder in the congregation.

Members of the family celebrated the happy occasion with a special dinner at the historic Golden Lamb Restaurant in Lebanon, Ohio.

Ron Kelley



Terry Miles

On April 11, 2024, a new member was added to the Body of Christ. Terry Miles was baptized by his pastor, Nathan Willoughby.

Baptism is always an occasion of great joy, and Terry's baptism was an especially joyful event for his wife, Becky, who has been a member for years. Now they can experience the joy of living God's way together.

Carolyn Winner



Sydney Witcher

On the Sabbath of May 4, 2024, the entire Roanoke, Virginia, congregation assembled together for the baptism of Sydney Witcher.

She was baptized by Larry Lambert, her pastor. Van Hanson and Johnathon Arnold, elders in the congregation, joined in the laying on of hands ceremony.

After the baptism, we all returned to our church hall across the street for a nice reception in celebration of this wonderful event. Welcome, Sydney, to the Body of Christ.

Larry Lambert



Kermit and Kahle Fielder

On April 14, 2024, Kermit and Kahle Fielder were baptized, surrounded by family. Their pastor, Caleb Froedge, conducted the ceremony at a scenic lake. The millennial atmosphere was emphasized by the presence of a white-tailed deer that skipped across the shallow cove waters shortly before the ceremony.

Please join the Wichita, Kansas, congregation in joyously welcoming Kermit and Kahle into the Body of Christ.

Caleb Froedge



Doughbert Gargar

On Friday, April 19, 2024, Doughbert Gargar was baptized by Isaac Khalil, an elder from the Auckland, New Zealand, congregation. Doughbert is one of a handful of scattered brethren that live on the South Island of New Zealand. Some of them were able to be present and welcome Doughbert into the family of God.

Since New Zealand is a secular country and the South Island is more of a rural area, it was a little difficult to secure a location. However, with the help of one of the brethren in

Timaru, New Zealand, we managed to secure a private spa pool in a retirement village.

Doughbert grew up in the Church and is the son of Elbert and Flora Gargar, who recently moved to the Philippines to minister to the brethren in the Davao region. With his parents' relocation, Doughbert now manages the family business, specializing in hoof care for cattle to prevent lameness. Doughbert holds a bachelor of agricultural science degree and has a diploma in bovine hoof care.

Doughbert was able to keep his first Passover this year, just two days later. It is truly a joyous occasion when a person commits his life to following God. Congratulations, Doughbert.

Isaac Khalil



Florence Kalipinde, White Kalipinde and Alfred Gama

All the congregations in Malawi were very much excited to hear news of the baptisms of White Kalipinde, Florence Kalipinde and Alfred Gama, all of whom attend the Lilongwe congregation.

All three were baptized on Monday, May 20, 2024, by Elifazi Salawila, who was assisted by Tielmans Chirwa. They were baptized in Lake Malawi at Senga Bay in Salima at the same time that we made the final confirmation of our booking at the Feast site.

We thank the Almighty God for allowing us to have these baptisms successfully. Soon after they were baptized, the lake became very rough.

Elifazi Salawila

Obituaries



Oliver Metzner

Oliver Metzner, a member of the West Michigan congregation, died peacefully in his sleep on April 28, 2024, at age 99. Oliver served as a deacon in God's Church for many years.

Born Jan. 7, 1925 (part of what is often called "The Greatest Generation"), Oliver served in the U.S. Navy for close to four years during World War II. After the war ended, Oliver served on a ship that was part of Operation Magic Carpet, which ferried 8 million U.S. service members back to the U.S.

In 1945 Oliver came home to the States and worked mainly in the steel industry and then the railroad in Pennsylvania and Michigan. In 1948 Oliver married his wife, Gwen. They kept their wedding vows for 72 years!

Oliver had a knack for teasing and making lighthearted conversation with brethren. He made every effort to attend church services every week up until the last few months of his life. He enjoyed gardening and fixing things around the house up until his final year.

Oliver is survived by his daughters Melanie (Dale) Bynum and Naomi (Terry) Arp and his sons Carl (Nancy) and Scott (Renee). He was preceded in death by his wife, Gwen, and his oldest daughter, Rebecca Hammond.

A funeral for Oliver was held on May 2, and his burial with full military honors was on May 3 at the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies in Bridgeville, Pennsylvania. Blaney Sproul officiated.

Family and friends lost one of God's precious saints and look forward to the resurrection to eternal life.

Chris Moen



Don Lambert

Donald M. Lambert, 89, died on May 3, 2024, following a short illness. His wife of nearly 68 years, Faye, was by his side.

Don was born Dec. 10, 1934, in Benezette, Pennsylvania. He and Faye were married on June 9, 1956. Don and Faye (with their children, Craig, Roger and Debra) began attending services with the Worldwide Church of God in 1970 and were baptized later that same year.

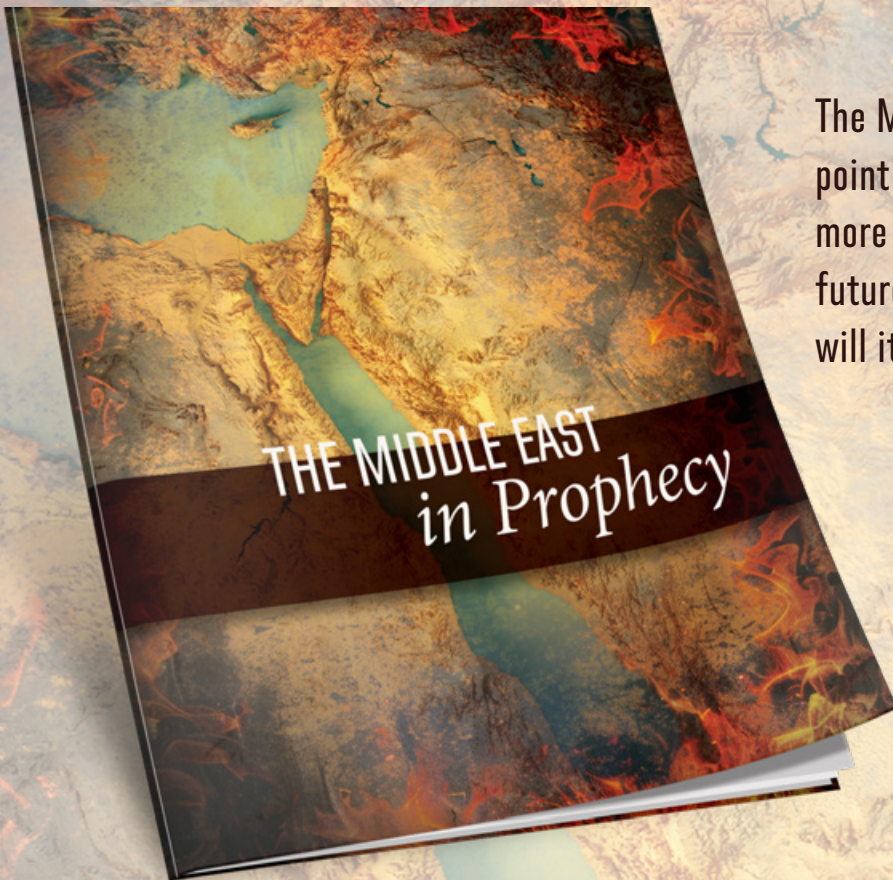
Don's work life was varied, including working for *The Sharon Herald* in Sharon, Pennsylvania; Reznor Heating in Mercer, Pennsylvania; and Adesa Auto Auction. He had many interests, including all-around inventiveness, as well as home and vehicle maintenance. He was active in reading and studying his whole life. His quiet example of faithfulness and dedication spanned more than 50 years of conversion and service.

Don is survived by his wife, Faye; his sons, Craig (Jenny) and Roger; one sister; four grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by one brother, one sister and his daughter Debra Madison.

A memorial service was conducted by Doug Johnson on May 19 in Stoneboro, Pennsylvania.

Doug Johnson

What does the Bible say about the future of the Middle East?



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