

OneAccord



September/October 2025

Feast of Tabernacles

Simple Appetizer or
Four-Course Meal?

2025 Summer Camps Recap

Seek First the Kingdom

personal from the president

Summer Camps and the Feast of Tabernacles

Back in July I wrote about the summer and how we should not let down during what is traditionally time off for so many people—with vacations, etc. Now I am writing about the end of summer and the upcoming fall holy days. It is appropriate to ask the question—Where did the summer go?

For the Church, nothing slowed down this summer. We completed three teen camps and four preteen camps, with the teen Winter Camp and the young adult Challenger Camp coming up in December. The theme for this year's camps was based on Matthew 6:33: Seek First the Kingdom of God. This theme was well received by the over 1,000 campers and staff that attended our camps. It was indeed another very successful camp season.

But now our attention turns toward the holy days and specifically the Feast of Tabernacles.

My wife and I have all our physical plans completed—our lodging at two sites (Fort Myers, Florida, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina), a rental car at each site and my four sermons outlined.

The Feast is so significant in our annual planning that we hold a special speakers' meeting prior to the Feast where all the speakers can discuss their topics in advance of the Feast. This year we should have approximately 12,000—members and their families—attending the Feast in person or watching on a webcast.

In preparing for this year's Feast, I did something that I have not done in the past. Rarely do I use the various so-called AI (artificial intelligence) programs that are now available. But our writers at the office now have a new tool—when writing an article, they can now search for past articles we have written on the same subject using a specialized ChatGPT program. This program contains all our literature on Life, Hope & Truth and can research everything we've written on a topic—whatever the subject may be—in less than a couple of seconds. It is an amazing tool.

So, I used our ChatGPT program to search our site for, "What is the purpose in observing the Feast of Tabernacles?" In a matter of seconds, I was presented with an analysis of Scripture and

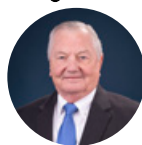
all the articles we have written on the subject. It would have taken me many hours to gather this information. While there were errors in some of the analysis, I did find its three main points to be of value.

Here is what ChatGPT provided me as to the purpose for the Feast based on the Bible and our previously written literature:

1. **Remembrance**—looking back to Israel and the origin of the Feast in Scripture.
2. **Rejoicing**—currently celebrating the large harvest that occurred in the fall of the year in ancient Israel.
3. **Revelation**, or looking forward—the anticipation of the coming Kingdom of God and the reign of Jesus Christ on this earth.

As I said, there were mistakes in some of the analysis and a lack of understanding about the deep spiritual meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles. But this gave me something to reflect on as I prepare my sermons for this year's Feast of Tabernacles. It helped me in my own analysis. I believe from its review of our previous literature that it correctly identified three elements to why we keep the Feast each year: the past (history), the present (the rejoicing) and the future (the coming 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ on this earth).

Over the next few weeks leading up to the Feast, I hope that all of us will do our own review of the purpose for the Feast—why we keep it year after year. It is good to review the origin of the Feast, our need to rejoice at the Feast and the future fulfillment of the Feast. What an amazing celebration it is each year!



Jim Franks
President
Church of God, a Worldwide Association



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CHURCH of GOD

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One Accord is published bimonthly online at members.cogwa.org by the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.

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Simple Appetizer or Four-Course Meal?

Appetizers are great, especially when we get together to fellowship. Yet a four-course meal offers so much more and will leave a person filled. Which type of spiritual food will you take in at this year's Feast?

By Paul Carter



According to encyclopedia.com, an *appetizer* is “a small dish of food or a drink taken before a meal or the main course of a meal to stimulate one’s appetite.”

Is God inviting you to a glorious Feast only to stimulate your appetite?

What God has prepared for us is far more than just a spiritual snack. We are invited to a spiritual meal that our Father is very actively involved in preparing. Yes, it’s true that what we learn at the Feast is a “foretaste” of something yet future. But what we can learn and gain from the messages, the fellowship and the music of the Feast of Tabernacles is a spiritual meal that will fill us and strengthen us.

Exodus 31:13 tells us that God has *sanctified* us (has set us apart) and that His Sabbaths (plural) are a *sign of His people*. By observing and keeping the Feast, we are recognizing the weekly Sabbath and the annual Sabbaths as commanded assemblies. We are to be there to observe them if at all possible.

“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). They are God’s feasts! God has chosen you out of the world and invited you to these special spiritual meals.

First, He lists the weekly Sabbath. Then He goes on to list the annual Sabbaths. But notice the phrases in verse 2. The word translated “feasts” literally means an “appointed time” and a “meeting.”

And notice they are to be “holy convocations.” Some translations refer to them as *assemblies*, when God’s people are *to gather*. So the Sabbath and the feasts are God’s gatherings, or God’s meetings. They are not only *gatherings*, but quite literally *holy gatherings*! They are God’s sacred assemblies, God’s calling together.

Each of God’s feasts is 1) by invitation (calling) and 2) to be a feast that He Himself has prepared.

What is a four-course meal?

Have you ever had the blessing of dining on a four-course meal? Ordinarily, you may not have an appetizer, but it’s something that you can enjoy at the Feast. A four-course meal includes the appetizer (something to whet the appetite for more), but it also includes a soup or salad, a main dish, and then a dessert. It’s a complete dining experience.

Does God call us to feast with Him for only part of a meal?

How does this apply to the spiritual aspects of the Feast of Tabernacles? God does not call us to feast with Him



for only *part* of a meal; He prepares a *full* meal fit for a future king!

The appetizer He prepares can be compared to the opening night message, the initial fellowship when we're gathered together or the excitement of arriving at our temporary dwelling for the next eight days. It should be something that increases our appetite for much more to come.

Then we have the daily fellowship, the sermonettes and the special music we receive each day. These are like the second course of God's special feast.

For the third course we have the sermons, which have been prayed about, studied and strategically prepared—like fine aged beef.

And then comes the final course of the meal. The dessert.

God completes His Feast of Tabernacles meal with the Eighth Day, also called the Last Great Day. It represents the completion of this special meal that He has personally overseen and prepared.

Stay for the entire meal!

For some, the Eighth Day may not seem as important or impactful as the rest. Some decide not to stay for the whole day or for the second service. Some don't stay for any of it, but rather begin their trip back home.

The Eighth Day is also a commanded assembly, a sacred calling together and gathering. It's the opportunity to enjoy one final part of the meal that God has prepared.

If you have ever hosted a meal that you have put your heart into, then you know it is exciting to present it to your guests. Often there is a special dessert. If you prepared a special conclusion to the meal but one of your guests *slipped out* and headed back home before you could serve it, you would be disappointed, to say the least. You had something special you wanted to present to them to enjoy, yet they didn't stay for you to give it to them!

All of God's feasts are commanded and are important to keep. *All* of them are to be received with thanksgiving and enjoyed to the fullest—from the opening night service, to the daily services, the Bible studies, the fellowship, meals together and the final course of God's plan, the Last Great Day.

This year at the Feast, take in of the appetizers God has given us—those things that excite us to attend the Feast and want more. But also be sure to partake of the full four-course meal that God has prepared, and dine with Him from the first to the last day.

Bon appétit! ©[®]

2025 Summer Camps Recap

By Ken Treybig

Summer is over now, and perhaps you've had a chance to talk with some of the campers or staff members that attended this year. If so, odds are quite high they shared with you that it was another wonderful summer for our camps! God's hand was obvious even with the weather. Despite having a "heat dome" over much of the country this summer, God blessed our camps with some cloud cover and in some cases some light rain in the evenings to help cool things down.

Several camps reported having their best staff crews ever, and overall, campers were positive and happy to participate fully in camp! Additionally, there were no reports of serious injuries to campers or staff members that required a run to an emergency room or hospital. God truly blessed us this summer, and we deeply appreciate all the prayers that parents and Church members across the country offered up for the program.

This year's Christian Living theme was "Seek First the Kingdom." Aspects of that directive given by Jesus Christ were taught in Compass Checks and Christian Living classes and were incorporated into the activities by staff whenever possible. It is always amazing to see how many different topics can branch out from one of God's statements and touch on so many varied aspects of our lives. We deeply appreciate all the speakers who bring those aspects to life for our campers.

As was recently announced, there are several changes in the works for next year. This was the 30th (and last) year for Camp Heritage. Our dates have been pushed so far into August that it has negatively impacted the number of campers able to attend due to conflicts with schools and school events. We will be moving to a camp in Ohio with a starting date in late June. We'll be using the name Northeast Camp for now.

Camp Lone Star will also be moving next year due to our outgrowing the current facility near College Station. A Seventh-day Adventist camp on Lake Whitney, north of Waco, Texas, has opened up for us to use, starting in mid-July. While it still has items being built, it is far enough along for us to use and get our foot in the door at a location that offers space for future growth.

God has richly blessed us, and we look forward to being able to even better serve the needs of our youth with these changes. We ask for your continued prayers for God's blessings on the program and the camp team.



Seek First the Kingdom



East Texas Member Achieves White Coat

Kate Trotter, a member of the East Texas congregation, celebrated her white coat ceremony at Texas A&M University's College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences on March 29. The white professional coat is presented by faculty to third-year students and is a milestone, marking their transition from preclinical classroom study to the clinical practice phase of veterinary education.

Kate was joined on this special occasion by her parents, extended family and friends. Following the ceremony, Kate hosted a reception to honor those who have provided support and encouragement in her pursuit of her veterinary degree.

Kate began her clinical rotations in May 2025 and will complete her doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM) degree in May 2026.

Dee Trotter



Houston North Hosts Costume Dance

On March 8 the Houston North, Texas, congregation hosted a lively costume dance, drawing 180 attendees for an evening of fun, food and creativity. Guests enjoyed a delicious Italian pasta meal before taking to the dance floor in an array of imaginative costumes.

Among the many standout outfits, the Bob Ross costume group took the spotlight, earning the title of overall favorite. It was a memorable night of fellowship and festivity.

Tyanne Hewitt



Atlanta and Gainesville Teens Climb Mountain

The teens in the Atlanta and Gainesville, Georgia, congregations have an annual activity with their pastor and wife, Mark and Colleen Winner.

This year's activity took place on April 27 and involved climbing Stone Mountain and then coming back down to have a picnic lunch together.

After lunch the teens were divided into teams of two for a round of trivia. After trivia everyone participated in a volleyball match. On top of it all, the weather was perfect.

Mark Winner



Houston North Teens Give Seniors Unleavened Treats



On April 13, the first holy day of Unleavened Bread, Houston teens gathered to assemble treat bags for senior citizens in the Houston North, Texas, congregation. Each bag consisted of homemade goodies, store-bought treats, coffee packets, tea bags and a greeting card signed by all of the teens. The teens hand-delivered the treat bags to the seniors before services.

This annual tradition, which has run for several years, is much anticipated by dozens of Houston North seniors. "We are so thankful to have such a great group of teens. This is always such a treat, and we want them all to know how much we appreciate them and their faithfulness!" commented Ronna Britton, one of the recipients.

Thank you, teens and moms, who spent hours planning and baking. And a special thank-you to those who coordinated the project: Erinn Webber, Mary Ann Hegvold and Rachael Perry.

Tyenne Hewitt

Cleveland Congregation Enjoys Hawaiian Social

After Sabbath services on March 22, the Cleveland, Ohio, congregation enjoyed a Hawaiian potluck and social. A variety of delicious dishes were enjoyed, including pineapple chicken, coconut rice and turkey ham sliders.

Everyone was given a Hawaiian lei to wear, and many used the opportunity to dig out a Hawaiian shirt from the back of their closet or don a floral dress and sandals for the occasion.

A favorite of the evening was the smoothie bar, where one of the members blended fresh smoothies. Everyone was allowed to place his or her order, specifying which kind of milk, frozen fruit and even ice cream, if desired. It was certainly a hit all around!

After the meal, it was time for an interactive game of "Name That Hymn," where teams guessed which hymn was played, based on only a few intro notes. All teams did very well, but the winning team correctly identified all 25 hymn selections!

Overall, the atmosphere of the evening was fun and festive and provided a lovely opportunity for additional fellowship within the congregation. Everyone had a great time!

Erica Pavlik



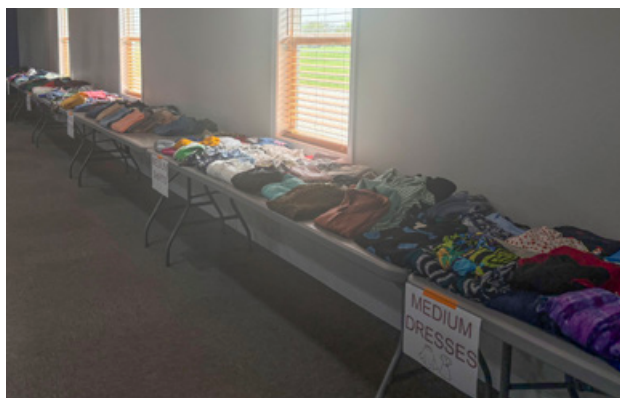
Sherman Women's Clothing Swap

On March 30, around 20 people came together for a women's "clothing swap." Women brought gently used clothes that they exchanged with other attendees. Everyone was able to enjoy fellowship and snacks and a leisurely stroll through the tables of clothing.

After everyone was done "shopping," we filled 15 bags and two boxes with items to be donated to a local women's shelter! The Ramblin' Closet and Women's Shelter in Van Alstyne, Texas, was extremely grateful and excited to receive the large donation. The owner kept saying, "God bless you and your church!"

Thank you to all who participated and donated!

Cassandra Ebersole



Passover and Unleavened Bread in Kuala Lumpur

Ten members gathered to observe the Passover in an “upper room” on the 28th floor of the Intercontinental Hotel in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Included were our pastor and his wife (David and Dorrie Baker), three members from Indonesia, one from Singapore and four from Malaysia.

Sabbath services the next day, April 12, added to the solemnity of the occasion. Services were conducted live with two Zoom connections—to members in Thailand and Australia.

Mr. Baker delivered a timely message, titled “The Seven Last Statements of Jesus Christ.” One of Christ’s statements was “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34). Mr. Baker emphasized how Jesus Christ endured physical pain to make forgiveness of sin possible.

We had a wonderful Night to Be Much Observed in the hotel’s buffet restaurant. Because it was a public venue, Mr. Baker had all of us first gather in his hotel room for a reminder of the evening’s meaning and for a thankful prayer. We enjoyed a variety of food, from roasted lamb to chicken satay with peanut sauce. Brethren enjoyed eating and talking!

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, we had an uplifting message. Mr. Baker expounded scriptures from Exodus to give seven lessons of the Days of Unleavened Bread, showing parallels between the ancient Israelites and Christians today.

One of the lessons is that there’s no turning back. After looking at the bad example of the Israelites, who wanted to turn back to Egypt (Exodus 13:11-12), Mr. Baker showed how Christians—called and delivered out of this sinful world—are not to turn back (Luke 9:59-62).

Edward Simanjuntak



Raleigh Ladies Enjoy Outing

On March 23, some of the ladies from the Raleigh, North Carolina, congregation enjoyed abundant sunshine on a wonderful day trip to the JC Raulston Arboretum, a 10-acre botanical garden and arboretum administered by NC State University. The ladies had the opportunity to receive a private guided tour through the property’s acclaimed gardens, including the Japanese Garden and the Great Lawn, which is surrounded by myrtle and maple trees.

Following the informative tour on gardening and tending to various types of plants and trees, the ladies enjoyed a delicious lunch and more fellowship before heading home.

Tori Martin



Ocala Holds Spring Picnic



The Ocala, Florida, congregation held its annual spring picnic Sunday, March 16, at Silver Springs State Park. The picnic was attended by members of the Ocala and Orlando congregations. Hot dogs and hamburgers, fresh off the grill, as well as tasty side dishes and tempting desserts added to the joy of fellowship.

Live music was provided by a member, and the children were a joy to watch as they used the playground equipment by the pavilion. Board games added to the fun, and attendees remarked that they are already looking forward to our next picnic in the fall.

Mike Ciampaglia

Houston North Ladies Hold Interactive Workshop

On Sabbath morning, March 29, ladies in the Houston North, Texas, congregation met for a workshop to study the different aspects of the fruit of the Spirit. The event was coordinated by Sandy Lawler and Tammie Smith.

Following an appetizing potluck-style brunch, the 28 women in attendance broke out into discussion groups. Each table was given one aspect of the fruit of the Spirit to study and discuss. Using reference material from the Life, Hope & Truth Journey on the subject, each group made a poster with various details, including biblical definitions, scripture references and practical, real-world applications. Participants presented their posters at the conclusion of the activity.

All in attendance thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship and spiritual discussion. The subject matter was useful and timely with Passover and the spring holy days approaching.

Plans are in the works to hold future women's workshops and a regional women's enrichment weekend over Jan. 17-18, 2026. For more information on the women's weekend, contact Gale Black at galeblack@comcast.net.

Tyenne Hewitt



Hamptons Honored for Service in the Caribbean

After services on Sabbath, March 22, the Barbados congregation honored Arnold and Ann Hampton for over 40 years of service to the Caribbean region in various ministerial capacities.

Mr. Hampton serves on the Ministerial Board of Directors of COGWA and is the regional director of the English-speaking Caribbean. Honors, gratitude, accolades and congratulations were expressed to the Hamptons on behalf of the congregations of the English-speaking Caribbean islands. These include Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Croix, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana.

Clyde Skeete, an elder in the Barbados congregation, opened with remarks summarizing the Hamptons' service and introduced Clyde Kilough from headquarters. Mr. Kilough presented a gift to Mr. and Mrs. Hampton on behalf of headquarters and the Caribbean congregations. Mr. Kilough was in Barbados to conduct the third phase of the International Leadership Program.

Mr. Hampton, with his wife and their son Mark and daughter Rene, first came to serve as pastor in Barbados in 1981. In his 3½ years here, Mr. Hampton was responsible for congregations in Barbados, St. Vincent, Grenada, St. Lucia, Dominica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana. The Hamptons were, and still are, beloved by the brethren in the Caribbean region.

After the separation from the Worldwide Church of God in the mid-1990s, Mr. Hampton returned to serve the congregations of the English-speaking Caribbean along with Kingsley Mather.

A notable milestone during Mr. Hampton's tenure was the 2018 celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Barbados congregation by Herbert Armstrong in 1968. The Barbados congregation was the first to be established in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Jasmin Johnson summed up the Hamptons' servanthood leadership: "We give God thanks for your godly example, labor, sacrifice and love whereby being a source of strength and spiritual blessing to us all."

Osmonde Douglas and Tyrone Yarde



Fort Worth Campers Enjoy the Great Outdoors



Over the weekend of March 21-23, members of the Fort Worth, Texas, congregation, ranging in age from tiny tots to seniors in their 80s, gathered at Lake Mineral Wells State Park, pitched their tents and enjoyed all the rustic delights of the annual Fort Worth spring campout.

Even though severe weather struck in the days following the weekend, the campers appreciated clear, mildly warm days and cool nights.

After a relaxing night by the campfires and a hearty Sabbath breakfast the next morning, Fort Worth pastor Ken Giese delivered a Bible study emphasizing the unquestionable superiority of God's mind and His creation of the human brain over man's creation of artificial intelligence.

Saturday evening featured a fireside dinner of hot dogs and hamburgers with all the trimmings, followed by an enthusiastic and lightheartedly competitive round of board games.

After another restful sleep under the starry sky, the campers folded their tents, packed up their cars and headed home, already anticipating the annual fall campout to come.

John Payne

Sherman Celebrates 99-Year-Old Elder

On the Sabbath of April 26, the Sherman, Texas, congregation and many guests from the Dallas, Texas, congregation celebrated elder Merle Cunningham as he turned 99 years old.

There was cake and much fellowship after services, and later quite a few members went to a local restaurant for a birthday lunch with Mr. Cunningham. The owner generously closed the restaurant for the birthday celebration, and Mr. Cunningham was even highlighted in the local news.

We are so thankful for Mr. Cunningham's many years of service and for always letting his upbeat attitude shine.

Elena Salyer



Louisville Ladies Enjoy Tea

Sunday, June 8, the ladies of the Louisville, Kentucky, congregation enjoyed a tea with an international flavor. As we arrived, our pictures were taken, and we were issued passports in order to visit the displays from different countries.

Tables were set with foods and memorabilia from countries around the world. To receive passport stamps from the countries represented, we had to answer a couple of questions about each country. The lady who correctly answered the most questions received a gift.

We enjoyed delicious teatime delicacies and wonderful fellowship.

Carolyn Winner



Manila Church Outing

On Feb. 15, the brethren from Manila, Philippines, held their Sabbath service at the Nauvoo Farm Resort in Pampanga. It's a beautiful resort nestled at the foot of Mount Arayat and about two- to three-hour drive from Manila.

Brethren from Tarlac City, about an hour away, also joined the service. Inspiring split messages were given by local deacon Gil Ellamil and pastor Andrei Siopan. There was also special music, in addition to the group hymn singing.

Sumptuous foods were prepared by the ladies, and the dinner was delightful with pleasant conversation at every table.

Accommodations at the resort were very nice and cozy, and everyone got a good night's rest. On Sunday morning, Feb. 16, Frederick Bongat was baptized by Mr. Siopan in one of the swimming pools with the brethren present to witness this wonderful event. Afterward, attendees enjoyed a hearty breakfast, more fellowship and picture-taking before going back to their respective homes, thankful for the opportunity to be inspired and fellowship in this beautiful place.

Thess Mabitad



Mobile Members Tour Bellingrath Gardens

On March 16, over 20 members of the Mobile, Alabama, congregation took a tour through beautiful Bellingrath Gardens in Theodore, Alabama.

It was a beautiful day for strolling through the 65 acres of gardens. We also took a guided tour through the mansion owned by Walter and Bessie Bellingrath. Mr. Bellingrath opened the home for tours in 1932. Mrs. Bellingrath had purchased many beautiful flowers during the Great Depression to help the local area during that hard and difficult time. She also bought antique furniture and filled their beautiful home with them.

We all had a wonderful tour of the home and grounds and enjoyed a nice lunch in the cafeteria before leaving.

Debbie Daugherty



Fort Worth Honors Roy Dove



On Sabbath, April 26, the Fort Worth, Texas, congregation honored longtime elder Roy Dove at a farewell reception following services.

Ken Giese, pastor of the Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Fort Worth congregations, presented Mr. Dove with a handsome leather-bound journal before the members enjoyed some cake and visited with Mr. Dove to say their goodbyes. They look forward to occasionally seeing him at functions that will be held at the soon-to-be-built education center and auditorium at the COGWA headquarters in McKinney, Texas.

Mr. Dove (pictured standing between Mr. and Mrs. Giese) has moved to be with his grandson Jacob Golden and his wife, Erica. He now attends the Sherman, Texas, congregation with them.

John Payne

Families Glorifying God Weekend



The Twin Cities, Minnesota, congregation hosted the annual Families Glorifying God Weekend over the 2025 Memorial Day weekend.

From the Friday evening Bible study and teen social through Sunday's picnic, sports and yard games, regional members and out-of-state guests rejoiced to be together.

The joyful presence of guest speaker Britton Taylor and his wife Donna added to the weekend, as did beautiful music and the messages and seminars focusing on this year's theme, "Safeguarding the Family Unit."

The weekend was coordinated by a large team of servants led by Rick and Jasmine Swanson.

Larry Solomon

Williamsburg Hosts Mother's Day Tea

On the Sabbath of May 10, the Williamsburg, Virginia, congregation enjoyed treating its mothers to a Mother's Day tea. The ladies gathered in the hall and were asked questions that the young men had prepared, with some of the questions producing some emotional moments.

In the gathering hall where the meal was to take place, the young ladies, along with the men, prepared the food for the mothers to enjoy. The young ladies came up with the menu and helped the men set up for the tea. It was a day that brought back emotional memories and laughter. All those serving did a fantastic job, and everyone had a great time.

Mary Jordan and Tom Burrows



Louisville Gathers for Picnic



On May 18, the Louisville, Kentucky, congregation gathered at a local park for its annual family picnic. It was a beautiful day of fellowship, with potluck sides to accompany the hot dogs and hamburgers. God blessed the day with perfect weather, and attendees of all ages enjoyed the day.

Charlene Beilstein

Asheville Holds Hot Dog Roast

Last year the Asheville, North Carolina, congregation's hot dog roast had to be canceled due to rain. However, this year we were blessed with great weather. The event took place on May 17, 2025, and all 21 attendees enjoyed not only beef hot dogs, but hamburgers and all the fixings.

It was fun watching the little children running around in the yard, while the adults had a chance to fellowship.

Judy Ferrenchiak



Morgantown Men Honor the Ladies

To show their appreciation to all the women in the congregation for everything they do on a daily basis, the men of the Morgantown, West Virginia, congregation hosted their yearly ladies' breakfast on May 10.

Each man was assigned a station by the head chef, ensuring the kitchen ran smoothly and efficiently. While preparations in the kitchen were in full swing, the young men of the congregation went around serving coffee and juice to the waiting ladies. Once the food was ready, the men put it on plates and served it hot to each of the ladies. The menu offered something for everyone: from buttermilk and buckwheat pancakes, waffles, eggs, sausage, fresh fruit and even berry tarts.

The men were a tad overzealous in their cooking—there were enough leftovers to have a second breakfast the next day! If anyone left hungry, it was only because they didn't eat!



To all the women in our lives, thanks again for everything that you do.

Zach Beilstein

Cincinnati-Dayton Ties Blankets for Children

On Feb. 22, members of the Cincinnati-Dayton, Ohio, congregation had its annual social to work on an FOI Hilltop project—tying no-sew fleece blankets to be given to area foster children. Thanks to the Hilltop funds, we were able to complete 55 blankets while playing “musical chairs” and fellowshiping.

The project started in November 2024 with the collection of personal items, stuffed animals (many provided by women in other COGWA congregations), books, crafts and puzzles to be donated to Warm Welcomes Foster Care Outreach.

Warm Welcomes is a local community outreach that provides backpacks filled with donated items for social service agencies to have on hand when a child goes into foster care.

Two weeks after our social, teens in the congregation took the donated items to the Warm Welcomes warehouse to be organized and placed in backpacks. Warm Welcomes explained their mission and purpose to our teens and expressed their deep gratitude for our congregation's donations and for our teens volunteering their time.

Our congregation has been honored and humbled to help Warm Welcomes serve children in very difficult circumstances for several years.

Anna Zimmerman

Photos by Anna Zimmerman and Nate Zimmerman



Roanoke Congregation Recognizes Graduates

After services on the Sabbath of May 10, the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation recognized our high school graduates for 2025. After our pastor, Tom Burrows, gave a brief speech acknowledging their hard work and accomplishments, they were each presented with a gift.

After services, the entire congregation joined our graduates in a celebration with cake, punch and other delicious edibles.

Pictured (from left to right) are Mr. Burrows and our graduates, Maxwell Witcher, Olivia Arnold and Levi Spitzer. Not pictured but also a graduate is Madison Meadows.

Please join us in giving all our recent graduates our best wishes along with prayers for success and our loving Father's guidance and protection in all their future endeavors.

Robert Worsham



Twin Cities and Eau Claire Youth Perform Musical



Youth from the Twin Cities, Minnesota, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin, congregations performed a special musical about the life of Elijah after Sabbath services on May 10. It was narrated by elder Dustin Ellison and accompanied on piano by Darla Boden.

The musical was directed by Candice Bacchus, who fondly recalled the musical from her days participating in the Worldwide Church of God's Youth Education Services (YES).

The catchy lyrics and memorable storyline are sure to stick with this new generation of singers as well. Families are grateful that Candice brought this musical production to life.

The ladies of the sewing club generously made detailed costumes, and one of the stage props was a "stone" altar that appeared to ignite when Elijah called on God.

The congregation enjoyed the 20-minute performance so much they requested an encore during the regional Families Glorifying God Weekend.

Liz Boyle

Joplin Member Becomes U.S. Citizen

On Wednesday, May 28, Tatyana Jones of the Joplin, Missouri, congregation officially became a U.S. citizen, with her husband Mark, her family and Mark's parents by her side. Tatyana was born in Russia and moved to Argentina with her family at age 15. She then moved to Missouri in the summer of 2019 and shortly after was joined by her grown children. The Joplin congregation is delighted for Tatyana and Mark to achieve this significant milestone.

Lyndi Fultz





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.

Births

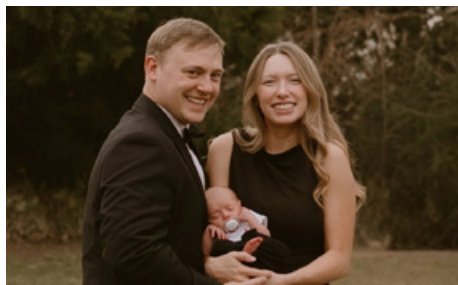


Ezra Quentin Zais

Martin and Leanne Zais welcomed Ezra Quentin Zais on May 13, 2025. Ezra weighed 8 pounds, 13 ounces and was 21 inches long.

Ezra joins his older sister Angel and his big brother Martin Jr. and is following in their footsteps in keeping Mom and Dad on their toes! The Zais family attends in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Liz Boyle



Malachi Brooks Evans

Ethan and Morgan (Abernathy) Evans of the Springfield, Missouri, congregation welcomed their firstborn baby boy on Feb. 20, 2025. Malachi Brooks Evans weighed 6 pounds, 7 ounces and measured 20½ inches long.

Malachi's grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins are excited to have a new addition to the Evans and Abernathy families. Members of the Springfield congregation are also thrilled to welcome baby Malachi into our church family.

Lyndi Fultz

Weddings



Aaron and Elisabeth Ash

With great joy, we announce the marriage of Elisabeth Vaughn and Aaron Ash, who were united in holy matrimony on Aug. 11, 2024, at the Aristide wedding venue in McKinney, Texas.

Elisabeth is the daughter of Gregory and Dara Vaughn of the Dallas, Texas, congregation, where Gregory serves as a deacon. Aaron is the son of Chris and Debbie Ash of the Houston North, Texas, congregation.

The bride looked radiant in a custom, one-of-a-kind, lace-overlay, off-the-shoulder wedding gown, while the groom was dashing in classic formal attire. They exchanged vows in the presence of 150 of their closest friends and family.

The wedding party was composed of cherished loved ones: Todd Roe, the groom's brother-in-law, served as best man, and Jodi Vaughn, the bride's sister-in-law, was matron of honor. Groomsmen included Jacob Whitley, Harrison Jones and Ben Hoaglun. Bridesmaids were Meghan Ross, Jadea Blencowe and Brittany Roe, the groom's sister. Veronica Vaughn, the bride's niece, and Ezeryla Rodriguez were flower girls.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Ash and pray for God's continued blessings as they begin their journey together in faith and love. The couple attends the Houston North congregation.

Dara Vaughn



Patrick and Katy Evans

On March 12, 2025, Katy Abernathy married Patrick Evans at an outdoor venue in the beautiful Ozark Mountains near Branson, Missouri. Katy and Patrick met in their teens when her family briefly lived in the Springfield, Missouri, area before moving back to their family homestead in Kentucky.

Several years later, the Abernathys moved back to the Springfield area, and Katy and Patrick became inseparable. As young adults, their friendship blossomed into love, and they happily got engaged and then married in the presence of their family and friends.

Patrick and Katy attend the Springfield, Missouri, congregation along with their parents, grandparents, siblings and cousins.

Lyndi Fultz

Anniversaries



Jim and Lois Haeffele

The Fort Myers, Florida, congregation honored Jim and Lois

Haeffele's 55th wedding anniversary after services on June 7, 2025.

The Haeffeles were presented with a card from the brethren, and cake and refreshments were served.

Mike McTiernan



Wayne and JoAnn Eisman

On March 22, 2025, the Gainesville, Georgia, congregation celebrated Wayne and JoAnn Eisman on their 60th wedding anniversary.

Wayne and JoAnn met in high school, where they were in band and several other classes together. Their journey began when Wayne graduated high school early and joined the Air Force, and JoAnn graduated a few months later to pursue beauty school. Wayne was facing deployment to Germany and proposed.

They married on March 20, 1965, in Terre Haute, Indiana, embarking on a 20-year Air Force career, three of which were spent in Germany.

Their family grew during the years. The Eismans have three children: Lisa, David and Laura. They have lived in multiple states, including Indiana, Michigan, Florida, Mississippi, Texas and Colorado. Finally, after Wayne retired, they decided to settle in Georgia in 1989.

A pivotal moment in their lives came in 1974 while they were living in Colorado. That was when JoAnn was called into the truth. Wayne followed suit in 1982, and together they built a strong foundation of

faith that further strengthened their marital bond.

Six decades of marriage have brought adventures, challenges and invaluable lessons. Today Wayne and JoAnn's legacy of love extends to six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, a testament to their enduring commitment and the beautiful life they've built together.

Ava Sanders



Leon and Reba Walker

On the Sabbath of June 7, 2025, Leon and Reba Walker celebrated their "blue sapphire" wedding anniversary, having reached the milestone of 65 years of marriage.

Prior to the monthly potluck, the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation honored the Walkers with a special cake and card signed by the members.

Mike McTiernan

Baptisms



Genevieve Lianne Phillip

On Sabbath, March 1, 2025, Genevieve Lianne Phillip was

welcomed as a new member into the Body of Christ. She was baptized by Arnold Hampton, the regional director of the Caribbean area.

The small group of members in the interior of Guyana truly welcomed the addition to the family. Genevieve's mother especially was overjoyed at her daughter's decision.

Gary Atkinson



Maria Cardoso

The Orlando, Florida, congregation is delighted to welcome Maria Cardoso into the Body of Christ. Maria was baptized on April 6, 2025, by Tim Rickard, pastor of the Orlando and Ocala, Florida, congregations. He was assisted by retired pastor Roy Demarest. Members Edgar and Gladys Hernandez hosted the event at their home with refreshments afterward.

Tim Rickard



Sue Klimek

Sue Klimek of the Ocala, Florida, congregation was welcomed into the Body of Christ on April 8, 2025, exactly three years to the day after her husband John was baptized. Several members gathered at the home of Matthew and Lynn Gus

to witness this joyous event. Tim Rickard, pastor of the Ocala and Orlando, Florida, congregations, performed the baptism with assistance from local elders JF Koontz and Jim McTiernan.

Tim Rickard



Reagan Yost

On the evening of March 22, 2025, Reagan Yost, along with her parents and sisters, celebrated her baptism, which was performed by Mark Winner, pastor of the Atlanta, Georgia, congregation. Reagan is cherished by the Atlanta congregation and was warmly welcomed into the family of God.

Chant'a Collier



Emma Kroska

On Saturday evening, April 5, 2025, Emma Kroska, a member of the St. Cloud, Minnesota, congregation, was baptized by Brit Railston.

Emma is the youngest daughter of Al and Sheri Kroska, who also attend in St. Cloud. Her parents and her two sisters were there to witness this joyous occasion.

Larry Solomon



Criss and Joanna Nunez

We are happy to announce the baptism of Criss and Joanna Nunez. They were baptized into the Body of Christ on March 23, 2025. The baptism itself was performed by Wes Cohron. The laying on of hands was done by Mr. Cohron and Randal Rapp.

They were baptized at the home of Loree Rhodes on a beautiful spring day. There was a celebration luncheon held afterward—attended by a few of their brothers and sisters in Christ—to welcome them into the family of God.

Debbie Daugherty



Bethel Peck

On April 11, 2025, Bethel Peck was baptized into the Body of Christ. Bethel is a member of the Charleston, West Virginia, congregation. Her pastor, Tom Burrows, performed the baptism and laying on of hands. Julie Burrows and Bethel's fiancé, Craig Harper, were present for the ceremony.

Tom Burrows



Brady Grimm

The Columbia, Missouri, congregation is excited to announce that Brady Grimm was baptized into the Body of Christ on June 22, 2025. Brady's wife Andrea was able to witness the baptism along with most of the Columbia congregation. The baptism took place in a country pond at Delvin and Carrie Mellerup's place. The baptism was performed by Brady's pastor, Mark Whynaucht.

Mark Whynaucht



Jacob Graham and Rhianna Hissam

Jacob Graham and Rhianna Hissam were baptized on March 22, 2025! Jacob and Rhianna attend the Redding, California, congregation and are engaged to be married.

Pictured from left to right are Michael Lindenberg, Jacob Graham,

Rhianna Hissam, Tom Provine and David Register.

David Register



Sophia Schwartzrock

On the Sabbath morning of April 5, 2025, Sophia Schwartzrock was baptized in the pool of Church members by Paul Carter of the Los Angeles, California, congregation. Friends and Church family were there to enjoy witnessing her commitment and to welcome her into the Church family.

Paul Carter



Gabriella Carlo

Gabriella Carlo of the Queens, New York, congregation was baptized on March 29, 2025. Her husband and two children (ages 4 and 2) were in attendance. The water was warm in the 3-foot Jacuzzi next to an indoor pool in a hotel.

Gabriella had no previous experience with a Sabbath-keeping church before she began attending the Queens congregation in the fall

of 2022. She learned about COGWA through LifeHopeandTruth.com after a two-year search for "a church with its foundation built on the truth and without unbiblical traditions that didn't make sense to me."

Gabriella loves to study God's Word and serve whenever possible, despite having to keep up with a full-time job, two toddlers and general family life. Congratulations, Gabriella!

Kevin Epps



Delfina Cooksey

Delfina Cooksey was baptized April 6, 2025, by her pastor, Ken Giese.

Delfina attends the Fort Worth, Texas, congregation. Welcome to the Body of Christ, Delfina!

Rebekah Stolley

Ordinations



Archie and Joan Reynolds

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, April 13, 2025, when the Van

Buren and Bentonville, Arkansas, congregations had combined services, Archie and Joan Reynolds were ordained as deacon and deaconess, serving in the Bentonville congregation.

Vicki Willoughby

Obituaries



Albert (Buddy) Brooks

Albert (Buddy) Sumner Brooks Jr., 94, of Westford, Massachusetts, died on April 24, 2025, surrounded by his loving family. He was born in Lincoln, Massachusetts, on Sept. 9, 1930, one of five children born to the late Albert Brooks Sr. and Maude Watson.

For 63 years Albert was the husband of Arline Seeley Brooks. They kept the Sabbath with other members of the Church of God for 45 years. He was a faithful member who took great pleasure in helping others and was known and loved by many from Massachusetts to Florida.

Jim Franks, Albert's pastor from 1980 to 1987, conducted the graveside service on April 29 in Lincoln.

At a young age Albert discovered he was an animal whisperer and spent his time exploring the woods around his family's farmhouse. That was the start of his unlimited knowledge of every tree, plant and bird.

Throughout his years, he created beautiful landscaping, built major highways and could operate any

piece of heavy equipment. He shared this knowledge with his eight children: Stephen Brooks, Cherie Price, Phyllis McLean, Rose Schifferdecker, Mark Brooks, Kelly Coggeshall, Robin Osborne and Gary Brooks. He is survived by Arline and 72 descendants who all admired and looked up to him.

Albert loved gardening. If you went to his house, you had to tour his garden (while singing his favorite silly songs and hearing his famous papa jokes). Friends and family proclaimed it "The Most Beautiful Garden in America." As part of his legacy, many of his children and grandchildren also love gardening.

Rose Schifferdecker



Barbara J. Clark

Barbara J. Clark, 85, of Penacook, New Hampshire, died peacefully at home on Wednesday, April 30, 2025. Born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on Feb. 24, 1940, Barbara was the daughter of the late Reginald and Gretchen Amazeen. She was the loving wife of the late David L. Clark until his death in 2023 and greatly loved her family.

Barbara was a longtime member of the Church of God. Her pastor, David Rand, conducted the funeral on May 16.

Growing up in Portsmouth and Durham, Barbara enjoyed dancing and archery, regularly placing in meets. After high school, she enrolled

in the Exeter School of Practical Nursing, graduating in 1963.

Barbara married David in 1967, and together they raised three sons. With the birth of their first child, Barbara retired from nursing. After her youngest started school, she began working in the high school cafeteria. She worked there for the next 38 years.

Barbara was active in the Church of God's youth program, mentoring and participating in sports. She was also a breast cancer survivor for 48 years and participated in annual walks for breast cancer awareness. She and David spent many years traveling and enjoying the seacoast where they grew up.

Barbara is survived by her children, Jonathan (Susan) Clark of Northfield, New Hampshire; Nathaniel (Jennifer) Clark of Henderson, Nevada; and Charles (Elica) Clark of Milford, New Hampshire. She is also survived by her grandchildren, David, Ryan, Abigail, Marcus, Brandon, Kylie and Hannah; and two great-grandsons, Abel and Cameron. Barbara was predeceased by her husband, parents and brothers Reginald, Raymond and Phillip.

David Rand



Colleen Ryan Erickson

Colleen Erickson, 88, of the Twin Cities, Minnesota, congregation died on Nov. 16, 2024, after a short battle with cancer. Her husband, Donald Glen Erickson, preceded her in death by two years. They were happily married for 66 years and were devoted to their church congregation and family.

Colleen made her spiritual family one of her highest priorities in life. For many decades, she humbly and quietly served the widows in her congregation, doing whatever was needed.

She generously opened her home to all, hosting hundreds of members, young and old, heading up to camp each summer or visiting the local area. Everyone was welcome at the Ericksons' home, and their summer barbecues were the talk of the town.

Family was very important to Colleen, and she was very close to her three children, Tim, Lynn (Soya) and Cory. At her funeral, her nine grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren regaled everyone with stories of camping trips, baking bread, tea parties, bike trips and lunch buffets. She planned special times with each grandchild, and it was clear she had an impact on all of them.

Colleen was always active. While raising her children, she also managed the finances of Erickson Construction, the family business. She golfed, skied, hiked and enjoyed water aerobics with her friends. She and Don loved to travel the world, and for many years they wintered in Tucson, Arizona.

Her Church family knew her for her sincere love and her positive, encouraging demeanor. She will be greatly missed by all.

Colene Erickson



Florence Moore

Florence Angelin Hamilton Moore died peacefully April 11, 2025,

at the age of 96. Florence was a Christian woman who loved God and was a mother to many, offering support, wisdom and love in abundance. She was a pioneer in the Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation and was loved throughout the United States and Caribbean.

Florence was born on Jan. 15, 1929, in Franklin, Tennessee, the second of nine children. She graduated from Franklin Training School in 1947, having served as class president. Florence married William (Bill) Moore (who preceded her in death) on Jan. 6, 1949. They moved to Indianapolis in 1952 to raise their family, and Florence lived there until her death.

Florence began attending the Church of God in 1966 and was baptized in 1967. Most would have lost hope raising six children without an abundance of resources, but Florence trusted in God and He provided.

Florence was blessed with a beautiful soprano voice and sang in the church choir. She was a Proverbs 31 woman of noble character, more precious than jewels.

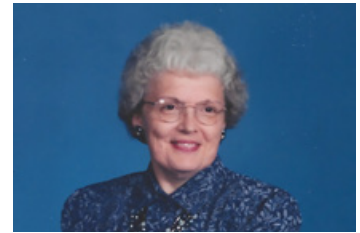
Florence was also a servant-leader in her community. On her 95th birthday she was declared an honorary state representative by the state assembly.

Florence leaves behind three daughters, two sons and many other family members and friends. She will be greatly missed.

Florence was blessed to know God and believed Jesus Christ was her Lord and Savior. She knew that when Jesus Christ returns, she will rise to meet Him in the air.

Funeral services were held for Florence on April 30 in Nashville, Tennessee, and she was buried in Columbia, Tennessee, near her parents, brothers and sister who preceded her in death.

Ann Hampton



Kay Hadley

Kay A. Hadley died April 15, 2025, in a care facility after battling dementia for several years.

Born July 2, 1938, Kay grew up in Clarion, Pennsylvania. While attending Robert Morris Business School, she met William Hadley. Bill proposed three months later, but it was another two years before they married in 1959.

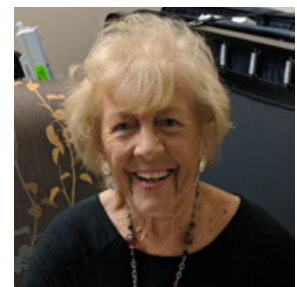
Bill and Kay were called into God's Church in 1963 and were baptized on Aug. 24 of that year. They served together in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the Wheeling, West Virginia, congregations. Kay was ordained a deaconess May 22, 1977.

Kay was a devoted wife, mother to two boys and homemaker. When the boys were older teens, she began working at Columbia Gas of Ohio and continued there until she retired.

Bill and Kay moved to Heath, Ohio, near Columbus in 2006 to be closer to their sons.

Kay is survived by her son Paul (Denise). She was preceded in death by her husband Bill and son Kevin.

Denise Hadley



LaVonne Knedel

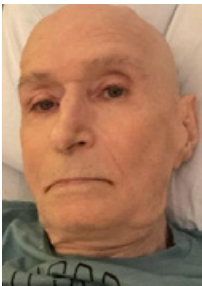
LaVonne Knedel of the Los Angeles, California, congregation died peacefully in her sleep Tuesday

evening, March 25, 2025, at the age of 89. She was growing weaker and more frail by the day, and those close to her knew it was only a matter of time.

We are reminded in Psalm 116:15, "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints." Lavonne was committed to God and was faithful to her death. She is now at peace, awaiting the resurrection.

She is survived by her two sons and their wives and her grandchildren. She will truly be missed by her Church family.

Paul Carter



Rick Augherton

Rick Augherton died on April 27, 2025, at the age of 76. Rick was most recently a member of the Phoenix, Arizona, congregation. When he was baptized in 2016, he was part of the New England congregation.

Rick was born in Bristol, Connecticut, and was recruited out of high school by the Navy SEALs. During one of his recuperations in a hospital, a reduction in force (RIF) took place. He needed to reenlist to stay active. However, since Rick was not aware of this RIF, he was automatically discharged. Upon learning of this, he immediately enlisted in the Marine Corps for the rest of his 25 years in the military. Most of this time he was sent on "black ops" that were not recognized by the government. Because of this, Rick had difficulty in obtaining his VA benefits after he retired.

Rick also served for several years as a deputy sheriff in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Several "celebrity"

inmates came through during Rick's tenure, including James "Whitey" Bulger.

Like many veterans, Rick suffered from many physical and mental health issues. With God's calling in 2015, Rick pursued baptismal counseling and was baptized just prior to Passover in 2016. Rick enjoyed forming relationships with the brethren in both congregations

and cherished visits, calls and cards from the brethren when he could no longer attend services.

As a last act of service, Rick participated in a body donation program to aid medical students in pursuing their education. We all look forward to Rick obtaining a spiritual body and healed mind in God's Kingdom!

Deb Augherton

TRIBUTE



Tom Diaz

Thomas Simon Diaz, an elder of the Laurel, Mississippi, congregation, was born Nov. 12, 1939, and died peacefully surrounded by his wife and daughters on Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2025, at the age of 85.

After high school, he enlisted in the Navy and trained as a radar technician, which sparked a career in electronics and radio engineering. While he was enlisted, mutual friends introduced him to Linda Montgomery by letter. Their letter writing blossomed into a beautiful love story, and they married on Oct. 7, 1961. Tom and Linda made their lifetime home in Mississippi and were married 63 years and three months.

After listening to *The World Tomorrow* for years, they attended

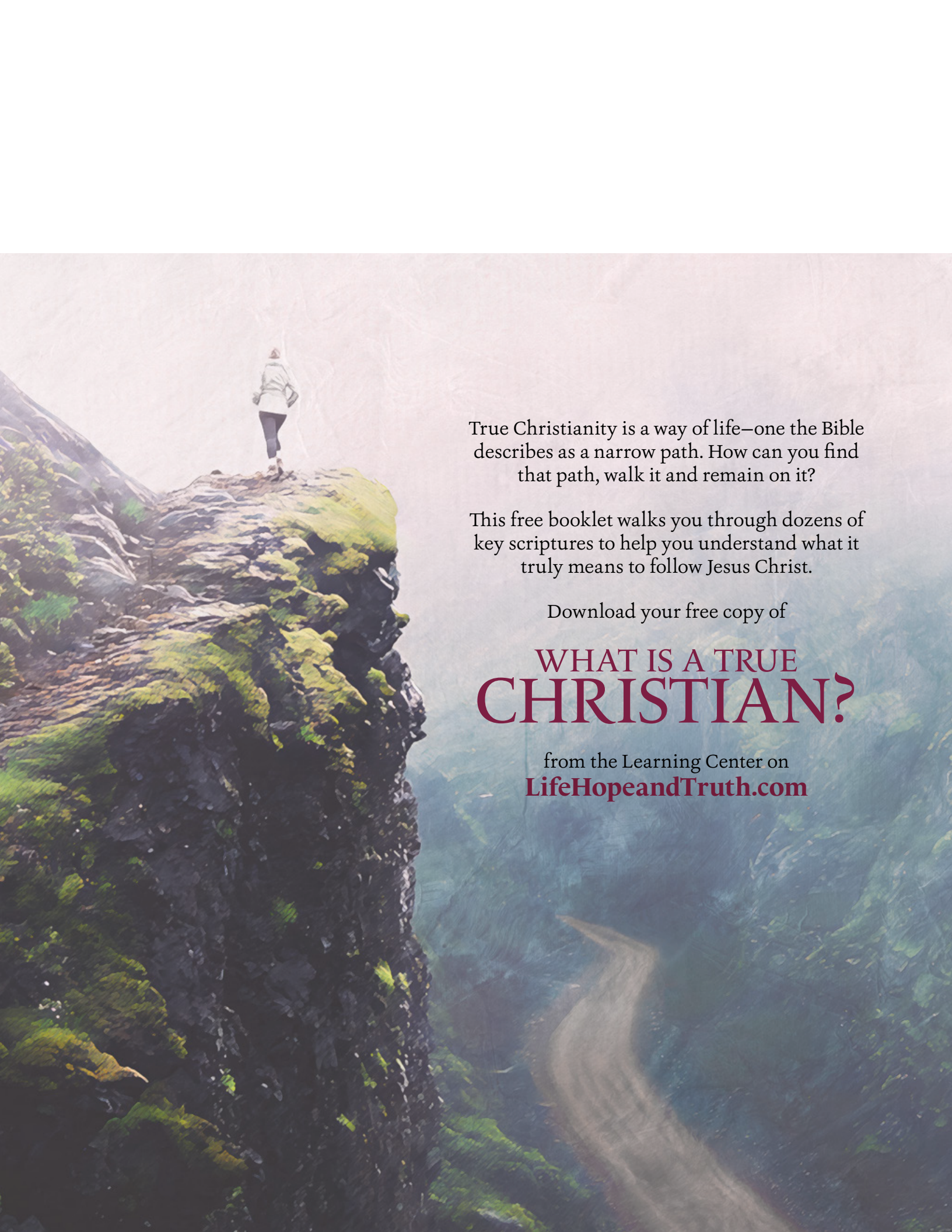
their first Worldwide Church of God service in February 1974, accompanied by their three children. His "first love" was palpable as he sang "Blessed and Happy Is the Man" at the top of his lungs!

He loved being a part of the sound crew, and for years he headed the department for the Biloxi, Mississippi, and Pensacola, Florida, Feast sites. He served as a deacon and a Y.O.U. coordinator, and he coached basketball, volleyball and track. Tom Diaz was ordained an elder on Pentecost in 1991 and faithfully served in the Laurel congregation.

A man of intellect with a servant's heart, he was a devoted husband, wonderful father and lovable Pop, serving God and His Church until the very end. His impact on both the brethren and his community was evident by the large number who attended his memorial service on March 23.

Tom Diaz is survived by his wife Linda (who now attends the Springfield, Missouri, congregation), Laura Linn (Dave), Tony Diaz (Pattie), Stephanie Deschner (Nathan), six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Laura Linn



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