



# THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The Official Newspaper of the Church of God International

Vol. 37, No. 4

*"Put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:13)*

Winter 2016

## Church of God International Media Update

by Bill Watson



Bill Watson

**O**ver the last few years I've traveled to many different congregations within the Church of God. Obviously, as a CGI credentialed minister, the majority of my visits have been dedicated to those congregations considered as CGI groups. However, that's not to dismiss the fact that opportunities have been afforded me to visit independent groups as well.

What amazes me, though, is how often so many I've met over the years, throughout the variety of these groups, are still unaware of the comprehensive extent our Internet presence covers with the enormous amount of Christian educational products that are posted, along with many commentaries about the present geopolitical, social, and spiritual issues facing our world today. So, I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce our international website's products and services to those of you who may not be aware of the extended capabilities and edification value it is able to provide.

About four years ago, we hired Mr. Jeff Reed to become our "media coordinator," specifically to work with our different media products, with the objective of expanding our market presence in a variety of venues. Obviously, in today's highly technologically developed world with multiple social, commercial, and Internet mediums available to provide platforms for our products, it became very clear to us that an individual dedicated full time to this task was required. So, for the last four years our "media team" has been developing multiple video, audio, and written products differing in many ways for the express purpose of diversifying our attraction for enlarging CGI's appeal to our audience. This initiative was targeted for marketing on the worldwide web and Internet TV (Roku, Apple, YouTube,) specifically to expand our exposure on a global level at an enormous cost savings when compared to network television. This has proven to be very cost effective and has saved the CGI a considerable amount of money over the years in "cost-per-response"—dropping it from about \$25.00 to less than \$2.00 per response (and in some cases less than a dollar) in real money.

Since then, our product line has grown and continues to grow in areas the media team sees worth exploring for further expansion of preaching the Gospel. They continue to look at the trends to make determinations of just where it is best suited to maximize our effect for time and money invested. Presently, there is a tremendous amount of written material posted on the website. As you become familiar with the inventory, it will become obvious that there is a wealth of information about the Gospel at your fingertips—information that might be helpful in explaining to your network of friends and family, face-to-face, or "virtually," through the Internet—concerning specifics about God's truth, Jesus Christ, doctrinal and Christian living principles that will help you personally contribute to spreading the good news of God's salvation program.

Our present international website is specifically designed for you, the viewer, to be a "participant" as you go out and actively engage the public via your personal social mediums. It is constructed for you to "cut-and-paste" or post on all social mediums—i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Snap-Chat, Google, Tumblr, etc. Many of those interested in what the CGI is advancing have been known to make statements by lifting quotes from articles, booklets, or blogs they have found to be cogent for some discussion they find themselves contending with on the worldwide web—making it easy to personally evangelize. In the same way, many of our video and audio products can be downloaded into different formats that will provide more convenience—i.e., iPads, iPods, Kindle, DVDs, CDs, live streaming, etc. All these different ways of acquiring our products are designed to keep you informed about the latest comments, opinions, truths, world events, and views that are helpful in maintaining a Christian perspective. All of these products are formatted for many of the devices we now are so familiar with—even your iPhone can be used to watch a video message while you're waiting for something to happen (but not while you're walking or driving)!

We are currently so pleased we have such a large amount of products with such a variety of topics that are available in so many venues, and we do sincerely hope you will take advantage of these many products for benefiting your own personal education as well as for others.

Let me take this opportunity to introduce just a few of our products:

**Armor of God:** A half-hour, professionally produced program of Christian topics with a wide variety of subjects designed to address the current geopolitical and social issues facing our world today.

**Web-Chat:** A 35–40 minute unscripted discussion about some biblical subject designed to educate the viewer in a more pragmatic and detailed way of understanding.

**Biblical News Update & Commentary:** A 10–30 minute presentation on some social, political, or current event topic that is in the news, explained from a Christian perspective and occasionally, in light of biblical prophecy.

**Armor of God on the Web:** A 10–12 minute fast-paced biblical topic designed to edify or challenge the viewer with a very pointed perspective.

**Connecting History and the Bible:** A 4-minute presentation designed to introduce some historical point to the Bible with interesting nuances.

**Live Webcasting:** Sermons, Bible studies, and seminars from a variety of personalities.

**Written Material:** Home Bible Correspondence Course, Bible Study Series, Teen Bible Studies, and a variety of booklets, magazines, and articles focused on Christian subjects designed to educate about the truth of God, Jesus Christ, and the Gospel He announced and taught.

**International News:** This is the *Church of God International's* flagship publication. It is a quarterly newspaper, distributed by subscription and designed to inform the subscriber of a wide variety of Christian subjects and the *Church of God International's* congregational news from around the world.

All of these products offer an enormous amount of educational value for your Christian benefit.

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[www.cgi.org](http://www.cgi.org)



## Open Church Policy

**T**he Church of God International is an open church. We have many people attending who are new in the faith. Some will not always keep each of God's laws as they should, and some will not believe everything we teach. We pray that they may be strengthened through the services we render and the examples we set as they come to a closer walk with their God. We request that you be neither judgmental nor base your standard for obedience on what you see your brother do. Christ is our standard, not weak and sinful men. Always remember that you will be judged for what *you* do, not what others do. Your job is to pray for them, set the right example, and please the Father in all that you do. □

## God's Holydays 2017

### New Testament Passover

April 9, 2017 (Observed at sundown)

### Feast of Unleavened Bread

April 11–17, 2017

### Pentecost

June 4, 2017

### Feast of Trumpets

September 21, 2017

### Day of Atonement

September 30, 2017

### Feast of Tabernacles

October 5–11, 2017

### Last Great Day

October 12, 2017

Holydays are observed beginning sundown the previous evening and end at sundown on the days listed. Passover is observed at sundown on the day listed.

Download the *Holy Day Calendar 2015–2017*  
<http://cgi.org/holy-days/>

## Notice!

- It is the desire of the staff to publish *The International News* quarterly. We can do this only if *you*, the reader, help by submitting timely articles, reports, and pictures.
- With few exceptions, submissions should be from 800–1000 words in either .doc, docx, rtf, or .txt format.
- Submissions may be sent either to [vancestinson@cgi.org](mailto:vancestinson@cgi.org) or [lloyd Cary@gmail.com](mailto:lloyd Cary@gmail.com) or, preferably, to *both*.



DEADLINE for the next issue is February 15<sup>th</sup> 2017.

We look forward to seeing you soon... *in print!*

**Download past issues of  
the *International News* at:  
<http://cgi.org/international-news/>  
Help spread the Gospel:  
Send a link to a friend.**

## Watch Sabbath Services Live On Your Computer!

You are invited to attend church services in Tyler, Texas via the Internet. We invite you to tune in Saturdays:

**11:00 Central Standard Time  
at [www.cgi.org](http://www.cgi.org)**

Simply go to the website, choose "Media," then click on the link for "Weekly Webcast." Best results are achieved with a high-speed Internet connection. *Please be patient and be prepared to retry the link until you connect.*

**A**ll of our materials and services are offered to the public *free of charge*. Many naturally ask us how we can afford to send out thousands of booklets and CDs each month. The answer is simple: On a regular basis, prayerful friends and members of the *Church of God International* voluntarily support us with tithes and offerings to further the advancement of the Gospel to the world. No financial obligation is ever demanded, but if you are moved to support this work of God, donations are gratefully accepted. Simply click on the "donate" tab on the homepage of our website ([www.cgi.org](http://www.cgi.org)) and follow the links to donate via credit card, or you can mail a check or money order to the following:

Church of God International  
 3900 Timms Street  
 Tyler, TX 75701



## THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS 3900 TIMMS ST., TYLER, TX 75701

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**NOTICE:** *The International News* welcomes submissions of articles, features, church news, pictures, or manuscripts. However, it cannot be responsible for the return of unsolicited materials. Materials submitted can sent through the postal service, but electronic submissions are preferred.

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*Media Update, continued from page 1*

Literally thousands of hours have been devoted to the development of these products by a variety of men and women who bring to the topic their own unique way of presentation that is guaranteed to be stimulating, educational, and designed to enhance your relationship with Jesus Christ and God our Father. This is why we encourage all of you to visit the website regularly; it's always presenting something *new*. Register with our home office, providing us your email address, so we can send you automatic notifications of newly released materials as soon as they become available.

It's exciting to stay current with the latest information on a variety of subjects and regarding the many events that are happening in our world today, and to stay on the cusp of the changes we see around us. So, don't forget: Subscribe to the *International News* and register your email address with us on our home page (cgi.org) so we can send you automated notifications for brand new releases of all our CGI products as they become available. We know you will be better for it, and they will be a blessing to you and your family and friends!

As you prepare holyday offerings throughout the year, please remember how much work is being done to proclaim this Gospel to the world and how much your support is needed and appreciated! Ω

## Does God Hear the Prayers of the Non-Converted?

by Lloyd W. Cary

Some claim that God does not hear the prayers of an unbeliever, and quote John 9:31, which reads, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners..." Perilously, a text without a *context* is often a *pretext*! The *rest* of the verse says, "...but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."

The good news is that God does not expect us to be perfect Christians all at once. In fact, none of us will *ever* be "perfect" in this life. Repentance—turning from sin—is a process, and gets God's attention. Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32).

The only thing we have to do to begin a relationship with God is talk with Him and be receptive to His Word, the Bible.

The following biblical examples describe God hearing and answering the prayers of the non-converted. In most cases, the prayer is combined with repentance. In some, God responded out of compassion or to the genuine faith of the person.

- 1 John 5:14–15 tells us God answers prayers based on whether they are asked *according to His will*. If an unbeliever asks a prayer of God that is according to His will, nothing prevents God from answering such a prayer in His own time and way.
- In John 3:5–10, the people of Ninevah believed God, repented, and were spared.
- In Genesis 21:14–19, God mercifully heard the cries of Hagar and Ishmael and spared them from certain death.
- In 1 Kings 21:27–29, wicked king Ahab fasted and mourned over Elijah's prophecy pertaining to his posterity. God responded by not bringing about the calamity in Ahab's lifetime.
- In Mark 7:24–30, the Syrophenician woman—a Gentile—besought Jesus to deliver her daughter from a demon, and she was cured.
- In Acts 10:4, Cornelius, a Roman centurion, prayed, fasted (verse 30), and was shown the way of salvation.
- In Jeremiah 29:13, God makes promises that are applicable for *all* men: "And ye shall *seek me*, and find me, *when ye shall search for me with all your heart*." And don't forget 2 Chronicles 7:14.

As Christians, we are encouraged to come **BOLDLY** unto the throne of grace to find help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14–16). We are told that when we ask for anything according to God's will, He hears and grants our prayer (1 John 5:14–15). There are many other stronger promises for Christians concerning prayer as well, such as those in Matthew 21:22; John 14:13; John 15:7; and James 5:14–15.

Yes, there are instances in which God does not answer the prayers of an unbeliever. At the same time, in His grace and mercy, God can—and often does—intervene in the lives of unbelievers in response to their prayers. A very basic scripture may be found in Hebrews 11:6: "But without *faith* it is impossible to please him: for he that *cometh* to God must believe that *he is*, and that he is a rewarder of *them that diligently seek him*."

To help you in your prayer life, we have a special free booklet entitled, *How To Be More Effective In Your Prayer Life*. Just ask for it. Ω

## Talking to God

by Rick Dubler



Rick Dubler

I grew up at a time of dial phones and party lines. (Maybe that is the equivalent of today's "Facebook.") Most of this generation probably doesn't know what I am talking about. Just ask your parents or grandparents. Now, of course, we live in a time when technology has afforded us various means to communicate, ways not even imagined then. For some of us, this new technology seems almost miraculous, if not daunting. It seems obvious, though, that many have

become addicted to these devices as is amply apparent as one walks through a mall and observes virtually everyone checking their messages, oblivious to everything around them. Cellular phones are non-expendable even for those in elementary school. There is no more severe punishment than to take an adolescent's phone privileges away. It is regarded as an essential part of how we maintain our relationships, although much of the conversation is minutia.

What about the privilege of talking to God? Prayer is the miracle of being able to talk to God from anywhere in the world at any time and having our words transcend this universe to the throne room of our Heavenly Father. Just like any other relationship, our relationship with our God and Creator depends on communication. Prayer is one of the foundational aspects of the Christian life, and is one of several essentials upon which our spiritual life depends. Jesus was asked by His disciples to show them how to pray. They had witnessed Jesus pray often, and knew that John the Baptist taught his disciples to pray; and they wanted some instruction as well (Luke 11:1–4). Jesus would go on to take the time to outline a template on how to pray. This was as much about how we approach God, i.e., our attitude towards God, as it was about what we should pray for. God is not only the sovereign God of the universe, He is our Father who views us with tender mercies as any father does his child; and we should perceive Him as such when we approach His throne. He is

a God worthy of our highest reverence because of His holy, righteous character. He would have us look at life with a vision of the Kingdom, the big picture; and focus on the unseen, not the mundane things that often capture our attention, distracting us from the eternal things (Matthew 6:33). He would have us come before Him seeking His will in all of our decisions and requests by searching the Scriptures daily.

A prayer without the ultimate desire for His will to be done is a prayer that will not be heard on high. We come to Him daily, recognizing that we are coming before the One who is the provider of all our needs. He sustains us and gives us every breath we breathe. Above all, He is the source of our redemption through the forgiveness of sin, having offered up His Son, the expression of His unimaginable love (John 3:16). We need to go before Him with the greatest of appreciation of that forgiveness with the understanding that that forgiveness is contingent on having a heart willing to extend forgiveness to others.

"Prayer is the miracle of being able to talk to God from anywhere in the world."

Jesus reminds us that we need to be ever aware of the evil one who will tenaciously and subtly try to destroy us by causing us to sin. When we approach God, we recognize Him as the source of power that alone will enable us to withstand the power and cunning of Satan (Ephesians 6:10–13). When we come before our God with a right attitude, one of humility and sincerity, He hears our prayers (Luke 18:10–14). We have this promise: "...that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). With that assurance and confidence in Him, all we really need to know is that God has heard our prayer (1 John 5:14–15).

Brethren, if we are to maintain a healthy relationship with our Father and our God, we must take the time every day to pray, seeking Him diligently. I will conclude by quoting Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians: "Pray without ceasing. In everything giving thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:17–18). Ω

*Rick Dubler co-pastors the London and Kitchener congregations.*



# Feast Reports, 2016

## Collingwood, Ontario, CANADA

**T**he grandeur of God's creation was most evident as we made our way from various parts of Ontario and beyond to where God would have us meet. The network of country roads meandering through the flaming maple tree-covered hills ushered 150 or so brethren to Collingwood, Ontario, the place God had put His blessing on in Canada for this Feast of Tabernacles 2016.

Those of us who attended here might well remember in the years to come things like the fire alarm going off part-way through the opening message on Sunday evening, and a brief encounter with a tornado that narrowly missed the hotel we met in. This powerful storm rendered a power outage during the afternoon sermon so that we strained to read our Bibles and hear the speaker. But that is not what made this Feast so memorable. It was the spirit of peace, joy, and unity with powerful messages that stirred our consciousness of the vision of the Kingdom in which we rest our hope. Many of the messages and studies, although for the benefit of all, seemed particularly relevant to our youth.

The various activities accomplished in marvelous fashion what they were intended to do—have fun, but more importantly, bring us closer together in the bonds of love, unity, and peace. To encourage everyone to meet one another, Family Day took place on Day 2, and began with a “People Treasure Hunt.” Everyone was given a piece of paper with 25 descriptions and were tasked with finding people who met those descriptions. Due to the cold and damp weather, Family Day took place indoors, and great fun was had by all ages with interactive games and picnic-style food.

There were other highlights that we will long remember—like a group of our young people stirring our spirits in leading us in praise and worship after each of the two evening Bible Studies. The music for this praise music included piano, drums, and bass guitars. With Jeff Reed present as one of our guest speakers, these Praise and Worship sessions were posted live on Facebook, and followed by folks as far away as the Philippines.

Our trek through the Scenic Caves only a short distance from our meeting hall was well attended, and all experienced the exhilarating scenery on this brilliantly sunny day with all of the autumn colors in their full splendor. We were filled with the panorama overlooking hills below, and in the distance the calm indigo waters of Georgian Bay.

Other events included Bible Jeopardy, a Family Dance (which was preceded by some line-dancing instruction), a Seniors' Luncheon, and a Cooking Lesson given by the chef of the on-site restaurant. Before the Last Great Day, we closed the Feast on Day 7 as we traditionally do, with Youth Day, where our youth handled all portions of the service, with the exception of the sermon.

In addition to the ballroom where services were held, an adjacent ballroom, replete with tables and chairs, served as the central meeting point for socializing throughout the Feast. Young and old alike talked and played games well into each evening. One final social event took place after the Feast ended, for those who stayed over one extra night. Forty-nine Feast-goers gathered at Boston Pizza for one final meal together—a tradition (as in Myrtle Beach) that we hope to carry on in the coming years.

It seems that we had just arrived, and here we were at the close of the Feast. We all left as we always do, with mixed feelings, with a certain sense of sadness, but with the joy of having been spiritually rejuvenated, determined to stay the course God has set before us until that great day comes to its climatic fulfillment at the return of Jesus Christ.

We look forward to returning to Collingwood next year for the Feast, and invite our brothers and sisters from outside of Canada to take advantage of favorable exchange rates and join in this picturesque setting. We are grateful for all the hard work and examples of service from everyone who made this Feast the edifying success that it was!

Ω

*Submitted by Richard Dubler and Murray Palmatier*



Family Day



A cross section of attendees at services



Youth Day

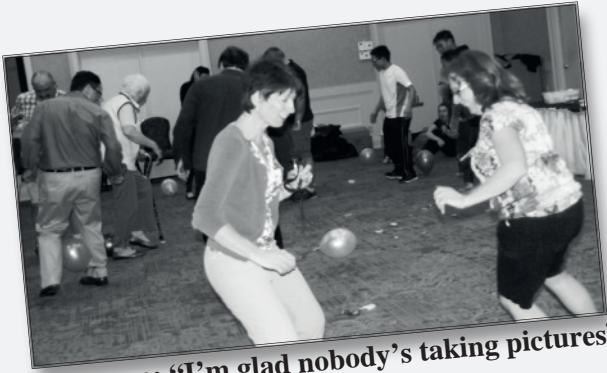
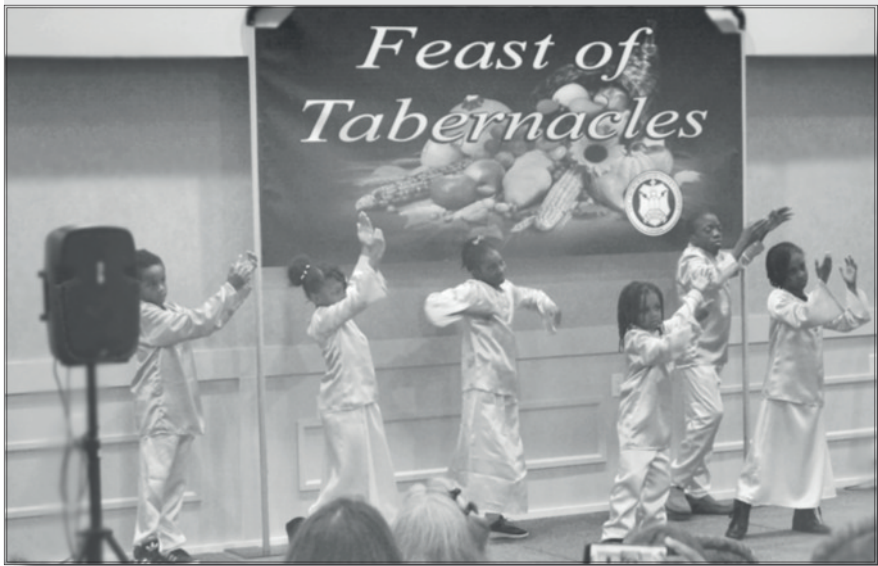




Speakers at Collingwood, Ontario



Mrs. Wilson, Zion Hezekiah’s grandmother, enjoys the Feast at age 100



Fun Dance: “I’m glad nobody’s taking pictures”

# Newfoundland Visit

Over 1900 km by air and 3000 km by car (and ferry) from Toronto is the Canadian island province of Newfoundland. This rugged province was admitted to the Canadian Confederation in 1949. The Church of God movement has had a presence here for nearly 50 years. Currently, CGI Canada has five regular members that meet in the area of the capital city of St. John’s. Edward and Annie Mercer live an hour away in Harbour Grace. Clarence and Jean Williams live nearly three hours away in Britannia, on Random Island. Anna Hines lives in the St. John’s suburb of Mount Pearl.

Nearly every year, these five faithful believers make the long trek to Ontario to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Throughout the year, they remain connected to the brethren via our live web cast service each week, weekly CD and DVD mailings, the new weekly live Bible Study, and through regular phone contact.

This year, we were able to make the Pentecost weekend a special one by arranging our annual visit to coincide with this double-Sabbath weekend. A quaint studio apartment-style room was host to the group for two services, lunches, and extended fellowship. The messages, which included some interaction, centered on *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, a Message to the Church at the End Time*. More than just prophetic insights to events that precede His return, the Revelation, which is an unsealing of the prophecies that were sealed at the time of Daniel, is a clarion call, with time running out, to the church, to be sure it gets right with God.

A drive up to the top of Signal Hill presented a great opportunity to see the beautiful geography of Newfoundland. Signal Hill was the site of the final battle of the Seven Years War (ending in 1762 when the French surrendered to the British). It also was the site of the first transatlantic wireless transmission by Morse Code, by Guglielmo Morcone, in 1901.



Signal Hill

At the recent Ministerial Conference in May, we heard that the first step in building bridges rests in simply connecting a wire to span the expanse. Once the wire is in place, it is much easier to build the bridge, with this wire as the foundational element. After services on Pentecost, we were invited to join the *United Church of God* brethren for a potluck dinner. This was a great opportunity to finish the weekend the way our New Testament forefathers did, by coming together on the Feast of Pentecost, in one accord.

We look forward to future visits to this area. In the meantime, please do pray for our brethren there. They battle distance, loneliness, and age-related health issues. But their faith and love for God, His truth, each other, and the brethren at large, is steadfast and strong. Ω

Submitted by Murray Palmatier



Three-legged race... and the winner is...



# Feast Reports, 2016

## St. Petersburg (Pinellas Park), Florida

**B**eautiful warm weather and great fellowship were abundant during the Feast of Tabernacles this year at St. Petersburg, Florida. Services were again held at the remodeled *Pinellas Park Performing Arts Center* where, for eight days, we heard inspired and instructional sermons and sermonettes.

During the Feast an average of 140 like-minded brethren attended services, with 157 being the highest attendance. All services and Bible Studies were also webcast live for the benefit of those who could not physically attend. An average of 400 persons viewed the webcast daily, with 971 persons being the highest day.

Inspiring presentations were given by Bill Watson, Ben Faulkner, Dwight Harrison, Ray Wendle, Dave Rusinko, Jr., Daniel Pickett, Bill Harkins, Wayne Hendrix, Larry Sharp, Star Pickett, George Ramocan, and Alex Fontao.

Special music was performed by Sunny Faulkner, Jean Harkins, Miriam Moreno, Marge Watson, Ray King, and Paul O'Conner. The talented Peggy Hunter performed her original poetry throughout the Feast.

Two very informational Bible Studies were given by Ray Wendle and George Ramocan. Ben Faulkner also presented two well attended seminars on separate days.

Over 20 children attended Bible Sabbath School during the Feast. They performed a beautiful and lively song program during Youth Day services. As a special treat, Josiah Moreno and Preston Collins did the opening and closing prayer, respectively. The Blessing of the Children was performed during the service. A special thank you to all the Sabbath School teachers: Pam Barnes, Patty Fontao, Eileen Gonzalez, Stacy Grant, Tanya Jones, Jennifer Moreno, and Lisa Sims; and Teen *Ignite* Co-coordinator, Darren Collins; and so many others who helped out throughout the course of the Feast.

Activities included a Family Bowling Night, an afternoon of Games and Rides at Celebration Station, a BBQ Cookout at the Park, and a Luncheon/BBQ and Pool Party at the Holiday Inn. The main highlight of the social activities was the Dinner Dance with around 100-plus in attendance with lots of music, fellowship, good food, and of course, lots of dancing.

It was a great spiritual Feast filled with love, fellowship, and the opportunity to worship and celebrate God's Feast of Tabernacles together with brethren from different Church of God organizations in unity as one body. We had one new member baptized into the family of God during the Feast this year.

Thanks to all who contributed and volunteered their services in many areas, and to everyone in attendance at the Feast; you are the ones who made this Feast of Tabernacles a great one. We look forward to seeing you next year again. Ω

*Submitted by Bill Watson*

## Complete Feast of Tabernacles 2016 Sermon Videos/Audio and Pictures from the Church of God in Miami

**G**reetings! We hope everyone had a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles. Please see the updated links below for complete video, audio, and photos from the St. Petersburg Feast Site. (Simply copy the addresses below into your browser's search window.)

Video from the 2016 Feast of Tabernacles in St. Petersburg, Florida is now available on YouTube:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1K\\_bqWonHxEh0scb2ogIR11HFN6Dn1Lz](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1K_bqWonHxEh0scb2ogIR11HFN6Dn1Lz)

You can find audio for all of the sermons in downloadable format here:

<http://www.godschurch.org/audiosermonsfeed.xml>

You can also find some photos from the Feast here:

<https://goo.gl/photos/q3skdFeaNH5x8wRDA>

The Church of God in Miami:  
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## Kawana Waters, Queensland AUSTRALIA

### The Body of Christ

**S**omething happens each year you get older; you reflect over those years and ponder the life you have lived. More "stuff" seems to fill those memory cells and data banks within your brain. As a child, I remember waking up to the munching sounds of a cow that got out from the farm across the road. It was casually having breakfast, feasting on my mother's garden of flowers below my bedroom window. Now, almost half a century later, and still living in the very same house, it's not the slow munching of cows I hear, but the busy roar of traffic that wakes me up every morning. When did everything get so busy? I believe most people can relate to this comment to some degree. The amount of information we are fed on a daily basis can be head spinning. The issues we need to deal with in our modern world can be at times overwhelming. But, I am so grateful that I and my family understand a little of our heavenly Father's eternal plan. I am so thankful that Almighty God has issued His children a special time each and every year to step away from the noise that consumes so much of our lives, and instead enjoy a FEAST where we can all come and consume His life-giving Word. The Feast of Tabernacles is a way to reconnect with our spiritual family and recharge our batteries with a spiritual boost. It is a special time where we, God's children, can truly feast on the holy bread and wine of our Lord's body and blood. It is a time where we can quench our thirst, drinking from the true and everlasting water of our Living God.

This Feast, a number of members from our *Church of God International* congregation in Queensland decided to join with fellow brethren from the *United Church of God* at the Kawana Waters Feast site on the Sunshine Coast. Kawana Waters is situated along the beautiful Queensland coastline just north of Brisbane, Australia. Right from the start, we were warmly



**Australian Congregation**

*Continued on next page*



*Australia, continued from previous page*



welcomed, and we knew we were in for a joyous and inspirational week. Each message issued reinforced our belief in God's ultimate plan for mankind. It also brought us closer to our sisters and brothers in Christ, who were not only from states all around Australia, but from around the world. We had brethren joining with us from New Zealand, the Philippines, Mexico, and the United States; and I believe that service numbers reached at one point close to 360 brethren. But it is not about numbers; it is about God's Word. And if you could not physically make it to services for whatever reason, the message was also available by webcast. Spreading God's truth is spreading God's love, and with the technology we have today, it is a blessing to be able to have His Word enter people's lives through so many different ways.

I think I would have to say, I really enjoyed this Feast. I got to experience God's work from another angle—one where I could step back and soak in His truth delivered by so many spiritually gifted people. To feel God's presence in any situation is outstanding, and to experience it amongst so many brethren was awesome. Singing hymns with our Christian brothers and sisters was music to my ears. Just to wonder that our Father and His Son, along with all the hosts of heaven, watched on and heard us all singing and giving glory and praise, and to recognize that this was going on at Feast sites everywhere around the world, by so many of God's children regardless of what group they came from or were associated with, was awesome. No better time was it to feel the unity amongst God's children, but when we were singing. Our voices raised in praise, I could imagine God's children around the world worshipping together. It just reinforced the image in my mind of a future Kingdom where all of God's people will be united as one, like the Father and the Son.

Every Feast I have been to has a timetable to help make sure things run smoothly. This year's Feast opened up with an evening service to mark the start of the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. The key message given reflected the *Three Reasons Why We Are Here*. We are here at the Feast because God chose it to be. It was He who was the author of this Feast. He appointed the time it was to be, and it was He who proclaimed His plan for all of mankind.

Such a wealth of knowledge was expounded from so many gifted speakers. To only touch on each sermon would not give justice to them. Every sermon and sermonette was filled with so much detail. Again, I found myself looking upon verses I had read many times before, and absorbing more detail from God's Word, as if in my mind new doors were opening up. I am so grateful that God has inspired so many people with the gift of speaking and teaching. To give a message that touches the heart and inspires one to want to change and do better is truly a gift from God.

It was a joy to hear and watch so many talented singers and musicians. The Feast was full of special music throughout the whole eight days, blessing us with delightful music and wonderful singers. Choirs ranging in ages sang songs of praise. It was truly wonderful to see so many children and youth participating in their own choirs. And the harmony of the adult choir accompanying the whole congregation made it all the more special when we sang praises of worship to our Almighty God.

Many events were planned throughout the week. There were charity offerings and fund raisers, and displays set up by the children. There were also Youth and Teen Bible Studies on offer, along with Festival booklets for children of all ages, from five to 18. There were a number of fun social events throughout the week that brought many of all ages closer together. One such activity was set up for the teens and young adults to enjoy themselves at the Bli Bli Aqua Park. There they could swim to and climb various floating pontoons and structures. It all looked very fun, and our son Danjard was quite tuckered out by the end of it.

The next activity on the timetable was a Social Night with games for the children, followed by dinner and dancing for everyone. Those who attended were treated to the local Beefy's Pies for dinner, and delicious ice cream for dessert. The dancing was coordinated by a lovely dance instructor who helped everyone feel a whole lot more comfortable when trying out the various dance styles. She made it look easy, and I'm sure everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves that evening. Another social event was planned at Cooper's Park right next door to the Kawana Surf Club and beach. A great BBQ was offered with hot dogs and cool drinks. It was a great time to relax and chat with brethren while watching the children play games in the park or on the beach. It was a real family affair, and again, it was great to see our son

and the other children enjoying themselves with friends. To close the event calendar, there was also a lunch for our seniors attending the Feast. So much planning went into hosting these events, and I take my hat off to all the generous volunteers who committed their time and effort in making this Feast a very special and enjoyable time for everyone.

The close of the holydays came all too quickly, as they do every year. You no sooner get comfortable with the joy and spirit of these special eight days, and then they're over. Back to the world and its complications, problems, and woes, I have heard it said. But, is that the attitude we should take home with us? What is the message we received during this special time God put aside for us to observe?



It's often questioned when something happens in the world or in our lives that appears to be a game changer, whether good or bad, that *it is the will of God*. Or is it just *our* will? Is it the hand of God moving in our lives, or man's own doing? So on goes the perpetual cycle of analyzing our thoughts and actions and why things are the way they are in our lives. Our Father has given all of us *free will*, but I guess it is up to us to keep our path on the straight and narrow, curb our egos and self righteousness, monitor the choices we make, and see if they stand up to that of our Lord and Saviour's. I know at times we will stumble, and I know at times we will fall, and the problems we have won't always be due to faults of our own. But it is incumbent upon all those who profess the name of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, to at the best of their abilities, keep themselves in check. Are we striving on a daily basis to live God's law and place them as frontlets between our eyes? Are we pursuing to nurture honour and selfless service in our actions and all we place our hands to? Are we changing our selfish worldly ways and trying to mimic the life our heavenly Brother showed us as an example of how we should treat and love one another? Each day, are we turning up the light within our hearts to shine a little brighter for our fellow man to see? Matthew 5:14-16 tells us,

*You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

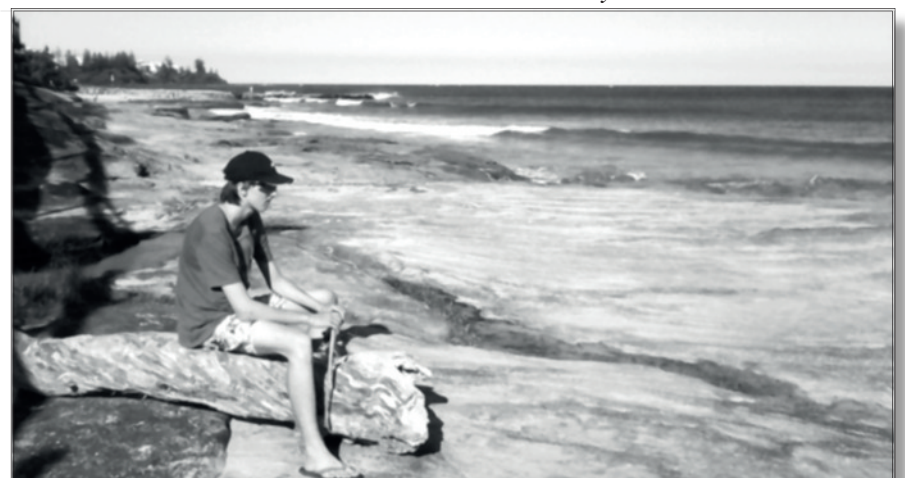
God's plan is marvelous, and we are to live in this world, but at the same time not be *of* the world. In other words, as I heard it aptly said during one of this Feast's sermons, "We must overcome the world while still being in it." Yes, this world we live in can appear to muddy our path to God, and cloud our vision at times, but Christ overcame the world and overcame death. He came to show us the way and make clear our path to our heavenly Father.

So what message did I take home from this Feast? Well, a very important one. It was said that our calling is an event that we will never experience again—a unique experience we will never know a second time. We are the church, the bride, the body of Christ, and it is her very purpose to receive Him. We must continue the work and endure to the end, spreading God's Word as lights on many hills. We must continue to edify the brethren and spread a holy love within the whole body of Christ. The church is the body of Christ, and it is not permitted for any one person or organization to own her. The church is Christ's bride; she belongs to Him and Him alone. *Without the church nothing goes forward from here.*

So, we must live a life of conviction and virtue, and actually live out what we profess and believe as the future kings and priests in God's eternal Kingdom. We as the body of Christ must work in unity, each with our own unique abilities, but in unison and love towards one another in order to tell the world about God's awesome plan—to tell to all the greatest message ever told.

Ω

*Submitted by Dianne Prather-Tuskes*



**A wonderful place to meditate**



# Feast Reports, 2016

## Land Between the Lakes (Kentucky Dam Village)



Day 1—Wesley White



Day 2—Jeff Reed



Day 3—Kevin Kenady



Day 4—Mardy Cobb



Day 5—Chris Rowland

**W**ow! What a Feast. It might be labeled an historic experiment. Whatever could I be talking about? If you like to put puzzles together, you will understand what I'm about to tell you. Many, many years ago the *World-wide Church of God* was separated, and as a result numerous congregations were formed. It has been the desire of many, leadership and congregations, to bring everyone back together. Well, we all know that you can take a puzzle apart in seconds, but it takes much longer to put it back together. The experienced puzzle fan also knows the best way to begin is put the outside edges together and then work toward the center. The participants at Land Between the Lakes put the outside edges together.

Wonderful people gathered, greeted, renewed old acquaintances, made new ones, and enjoyed visiting with familiar friends. Members from *Christian Educational Ministries* (CEM), *The Church of God International* (CGI), and *United Church of God* (United) were represented. There were attendees from Australia, Connecticut, Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky, and numerous other states. If you were unable to attend, perhaps you watched on the Internet as sermons were available from two Feast sites.

The sermons given by elders Wes White, Kevin Kenady, Jeff Reed, Mardy Cobb, Chris Rowland, Richard Crow, Tony Buchert, and John Reedy were inspiring, informational, encouraging, and even reassuring. Hold on, there is much more. If you could keep up, there were three Bible Studies, seven seminars, and other activities too numerous to mention. The youth were not forgotten. There were age-appropriate classes for youth from age three through 19. Youth Day introduced a young teen, Nick Buchert, who has a future as a speaker and leader in the church.

One afternoon the movie *War Room* was presented. If you have not seen it, you might want to do a search on the Internet. It can be purchased or viewed for free. It is well worth your time. I didn't see a dry eye in the room.

We can't forget food. After the sermons, the next of our list of importance is food. Church-sponsored meals were the Fellowship Lunch, Senior Luncheon, Family Picnic, Family Dance, Ladies Luncheon, Volunteers Lunch, and Ministerial Luncheon.

We welcomed new members with baptisms and blessings. We also had anointings and a long list of prayer requests.

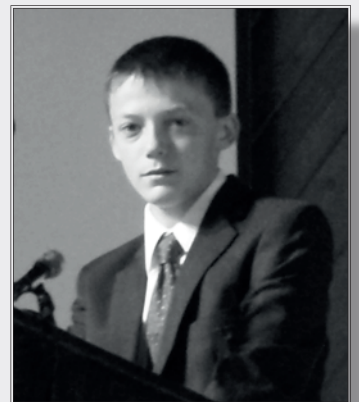
There were those who worked behind the scenes to operate the technical audio and video needs and televise the services, and to keep everything on track; they deserve a big, big thank you.

It was especially gratifying to see the organizers of our Festival provide golf carts with drivers to transport some of us from the parking lot to the convention center. On behalf of all attendees, may I extend a thank you to everyone who contributed to make everything come together so well.

I'm looking forward to putting more of our puzzle together next year. Won't you come and join us? Ω



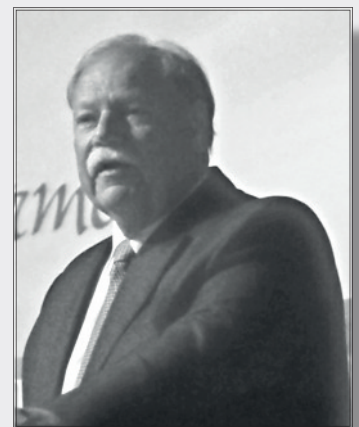
Day 6—Richard Crow



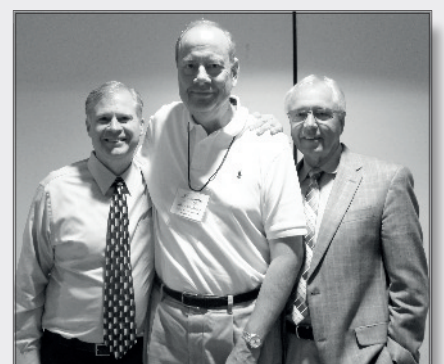
Day 7—Nick Buchert  
Youth Day sermonette



Day 7—Tony Buchert



Day 8—John Reedy



Kevin Kenady, John Beasley,  
and Charles Groce



## Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

**P**lanning for the Feast of Tabernacles always begins during the prior Feast—sharing ideas, deciding what works and what doesn't, and making a commitment to the host facility for the year to come. From one Feast to another, all throughout the year, an eye is constantly kept on Festival planning, looking ahead to making the coming Feast the “best Feast ever.” This year, as the finishing touches were being arranged with our host facility, Ocean Dunes, and as God's people were making their final preparations to leave their homes in anticipation of eight wonderful days together in worship and fellowship, Hurricane Matthew formed and began its journey. As we watched the devastation inflicted by Matthew, making its way across the ocean, skirting the eastern coast of the United States, we prayed. We prayed for all who were so greatly affected, and for those still in its path. We prayed for those who might yet be in its path, and we prayed for our Feast site. With just a little over a week before the Feast was to start, Matthew skirted the shoreline of South Carolina, leaving some devastation, but God answered prayers. The damages to the Myrtle Beach area were present, but there was just enough time for the resort to get things up and running. In the face of some adversity, praying that God's hand be on everyone and everything, preparations were completed.

As arrival day came, so did God's people, many of whom had faced their own personal adversity to be there. We happily greeted each and every one as they came to register, to pick up the schedule, and to talk. Many stayed, waiting for our traditional hospitality event to begin. With finger foods, beverages, and tables laid out, the evening was filled with conversation and laughter. We were off to a great start.

As the next morning dawned, the day was on track to be a beautiful one. As we all came together for the first service of the day, we were eager to greet brethren we had not seen the evening before. Each day of the Feast, we were blessed to feel the joy of being together in worship and fellowship, and we continued to be blessed with beautiful weather.

Our daily services were filled with meaningful, inspired messages by gentlemen who humbly serve God and His people: Wayne Hendrix, Mike James, Clifton Buchanan, Jeff Reed, Morgan Pinkerman, Stephen Glover, and Mike Nolen. We also enjoyed messages from Eric Dettrey, Isaiah Eaton, Robert Balsamo, Dennis Thomas, Mark Willee, Chris Wilkes, and Kyle Wilkes. Another part of our daily services was special music provided by talented, God-gifted people, each inspired in their musical selection and in their performances. Our congregational singing was always enthusiastic and filled with a spirit of love and warmth.

As much as we enjoyed our daily services spent in worship and fellowship, we also enjoyed extending the fellowship through other of our traditional Feast activities. The Senior Luncheon and Women's Luncheon are always well attended events; with delicious food and a relaxing environment, they present a perfect opportunity to catch up with old friends and make a few new ones. The Family Dance and the Family Fun Show are two other events that are highly anticipated. Each of these allows for a great deal of fun and laughter, and provides yet another opportunity to simply be together.

We have been fortunate to have the participation of *Infuse* at our Feast site for many years. *Infuse* is our young adult program, and focuses on service and leadership. For six days of the Feast, *Infuse* offers a daily morning worship service. It is open to all. Each year *Infuse* hosts several events at Myrtle Beach, which have also become part of our traditions. One event is the Kids' Carnival/Parents' Night Out. It offers parents a chance for a date night while the kids are having a fantastic time under the watchful care of volunteers. This year, through previous fund-raising efforts, our Sabbath school teachers were able to provide an inflatable obstacle course as part of the carnival experience. Other *Infuse* events are the Volleyball/Cookout and the Ice Cream Social. This year there were two added events, a luncheon on the first day of the Feast and a basket raffle. The basket raffle was a fundraiser for *Infuse*, and was quite a success. The funds raised help *Infuse* pay for the Feast events as well as other events through the year.

*Ignite* is our teen program, which began last year at Myrtle Beach. With daily sessions for teens only, we offered a format of interactive sessions. We desire to hear what our teens' thoughts may be. Our goal is in making the session topics of relevance to our teens today, while keeping God's Word at the forefront. This is a program we are trying to grow for the future.

Our Feast would not be the same if our littlest of people were not there amongst us. We are always blessed to have several children at our site. We are equally blessed to have very dedicated ladies who are there to teach them through daily classes. One of the highlights of this Feast, as it is with every Feast, was Youth Day and having our precious children perform through their children's choir. After singing a couple of songs, they were joined on stage by our teens, as well as our young adults, who all performed together. In those few minutes, we had a glimpse of the future of God's church, and it looks amazing.

As the Feast began to come to an end, with all activities successfully over, and the Last Great Day just ahead, I fully realized one fact: in the face of adversity, God's people find greater joy. That joy spilled over to every part of our Feast. We were blessed to feel the joy, to be part of the wonderful experience of our Myrtle Beach family. With a high attendance of 200, and with 206 registered, our family is large and full.

To all who came and made it so special, we thank you. This was “the best Feast ever!”—at least until next year. We pray we see you all again in 2017!

Ω

Submitted by Pam Nolen



Senior Luncheon



Children's Performance



Dennis Thomas



Wayne Hendrix



Zealous Song Leading



Brenda Pinkerman



Demetria Buchanan



Clifton Buchanan



# Feast Reports, 2016

## The Philippines

**G**reetings from the Philippines! This year's Feast in the Philippines held at the Summit Ridge Hotel, Tagaytay City, will be remembered as "the best Feast ever." It was a "one-of-a-kind" Feast observance.

The weather cooperated with us when it was time for the scheduled outdoor activities. Monsoon rains had been pouring at the Feast site, triggered by two tropical storms. When we were going to the Feast site, typhoon Lawin (international name "Haima") was fast approaching and had begun to drop heavy rains. But that did not stop us from going to the Feast site anyway. It was amazing that the rains would stop when Feast activities begin. And so we were thankful that we could truly rejoice during our traditional "bayanihan" nights. We had two of these wonderful evening get-togethers. The first night was sponsored by the provincial congregations of Malolos, Naga, Masbate, and Sagay. The second was sponsored by the Manila and Alabang congregations. The original concept of "bayanihan" is centered on communal cooperation in any endeavor; in this case, ours was preparation and contribution to a communal potluck. Everyone pitched in any way they could to make the night a beautiful and joyous occasion. We rejoiced with the bountiful blessings that God had provided for us. The food and drinks were overflowing, and everyone had their fill. More importantly, these were nights of great fellowship, of singing and dancing, of sharing life's experiences that strengthen our collective faith, and simply enjoying each other's company. Laughter and smiles abound during those nights.

Our observance was made more memorable because for the first time in the history of the local CGI Feast observance, we were joined by a visiting minister from North Carolina, Mr. Roger King. He celebrated with us for the full duration of the Feast until the Last Great Day. He delivered wonderful, uplifting messages beside sharing with us his talent and love of music. He gave a soulful rendition of *Let The Lower Lights Be Burning* as special music. During the second bayanihan night, he showcased his piano skills for the brethren and rendered a special number during the Talent Show. He also shared in the song leading during the Sabbath services. As a token of gratefulness and appreciation, we gave him a caricature portrait of himself playing the piano, drawn by Ray Necio of the Alabang congregation.

This year's Feast was also highlighted by the revived "Talent Show," which we haven't had for several years. The brethren showcased their skills and talents. The Talent Show, dubbed "CGI's Got Talent," was a smashing success. Representatives from the different congregations shared their talents in singing, dancing and interpretative dance in groups, and solo performances. Each performance was judged, and the best three performances were selected. The winners were from the Alabang, Manila, and Naga congregations respectively. What's special about the awards was that while the group or solo winners garnered cash prizes, their local congregations were also awarded the same amount, which were later spent for—you've got it—more food via communal potluck!

Sports activities were also held this year at the Tagaytay Highlands, a posh private resort. The brethren enjoyed bowling, badminton, table tennis, and billiards. We also enjoyed the breathtaking scenery offered by the resort and captured those moments.

This year's Feast of Tabernacles was packed with activities designed for maximum enjoyment, camaraderie, fellowship, and socializing. These activities surely helped in the building of relationships that go well beyond this lifetime. And making it more memorable, is a "dozen of individual reasons" for much rejoicing in heaven during this Feast. Twelve new members were baptized and added to the growing Church of God here in the Philippines. Truly, it has been a fruitful and rewarding year for us.

Worth mentioning also is our traditional "Seniors' Day" where we recognized our elderly members for their steadfastness to their calling and for being a source of inspiration to the younger generation. After a sponsored lunch at the Balay Dako Restaurant, a short program for them was held where they participated in a "name-that-tune" game. At the end of the program they were serenaded, and the married couples danced to the sweet tune of the song. It was a sight to behold them, reminding us, love can and should flourish between husband and wife through the years. The Alabang congregation hosted the event.

Another highlight in this year's Feast was a video documentary entitled *The Work of God in the Philippines*. It shows footages of the visit of Mr. Bill Watson and Mr. Jeff Reed in March this year showing the local work, joyfully

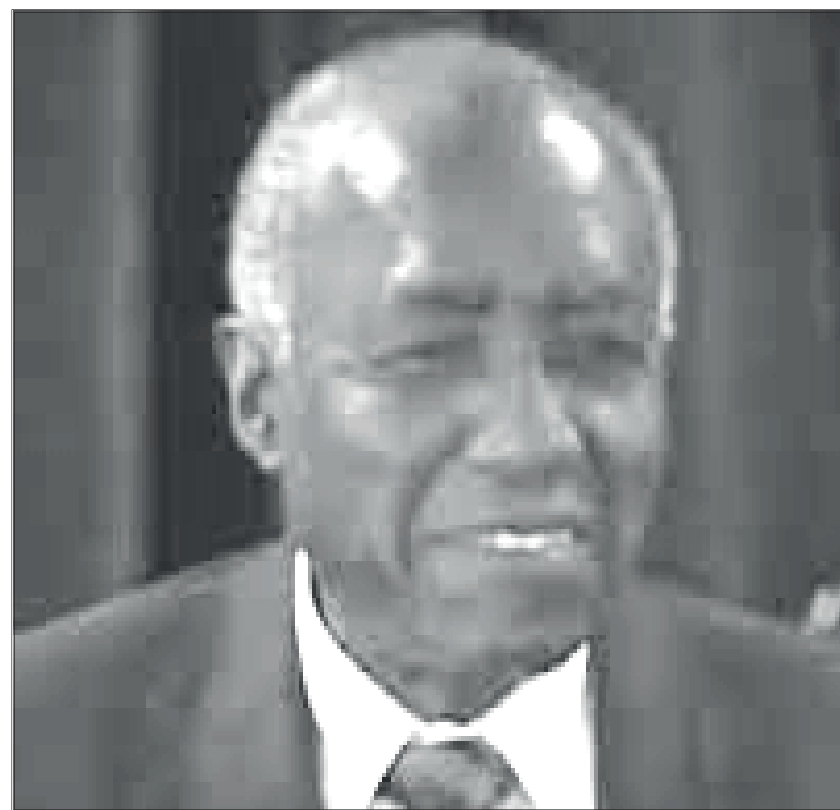
complying with the mandate of our Lord Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 28:18–20). It was a superb and inspiring production, and everyone was happy with the video documentary.

Beautiful, insightful, inspired, and great messages were delivered by the ministers and credentialed speakers. Truly, these messages completed our "best Feast ever" experience. They emphasized that one day, all these Feast experiences will be magnified even more with the establishment of the government of God here and when God finally tabernacles with us. The services were enriched by beautiful and great special music offered by the Alabang, Bulacan, Manila, and Naga church choirs.

This was truly the best Feast ever! And special credit goes to the Festival Committees, and most of all, the individual members themselves who rejoiced and celebrated with much joyful fervor as commanded in Leviticus 23:39–43.

Other Feast sites in the Philippines include Maranding in the Mindanao Islands and Iloilo City in the Visayas region. This year's Feast attendance saw the largest assembly ever—372 attendees in all three sites: 233 at Tagaytay, 97 at Maranding, and 42 at Iloilo.

Truly, we have been blessed by our Almighty Father this year, and we now look forward to next year's Feast of Tabernacles. Ω



Roger King





Group photos of the Philippines



Late Pentecost Report – Auburndale, Florida

Pentecost proved to be an eventful weekend of celebration and fellowship. As is our tradition at the Auburndale Church of God Intentional since we opened our doors at our current location five years ago, we played host to the Church of God Miami and the Church of the Sovereign God, Brandon. The weekend began with the Sabbath service, which was attended by members of the Miami church. We then feasted on sandwiches and proceeded to a local lake for the baptism of **Wanda Green**, church member of the Auburndale Church of God Intentional. The weather was beautiful, and the brethren were able to take part in this joyful celebration. On Pentecost we were at maximum capacity with 76 members in our small church as the Auburndale congregation was joined by the Miami church and the Sovereign church. We had wonderful sermonettes, sermons, and special music, with a huge potluck and fellowship to follow. God was assuredly pouring out His spirit on us throughout the weekend. Ω



Wanda Green baptized



# Feast Reports, 2016

## 440 in Attendance and 7 Baptised at Ocho Rios, Jamaica Feast

**A** major problem for the Kingston, Jamaica, congregation of the Church of God International is that its rapid growth makes it a headache to find adequate convention facilities to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This year some 440 persons turned up for the Feast, outstripping expectations and forcing last-minute changes to seating arrangements.

Fortunately, everyone was comfortable in our new, larger Anglican Church Hall in Ocho Rios—which we virtually outgrew just as we were beginning to think we had finally found a place where we could settle for a few years. No such “luck” with our exponential growth! It’s a cliché, we know, but if it’s true, it has to be repeated: Brethren agreed this was their best Feast ever.

The quality of the sermons was very high, with a strong mix between the doctrinal and the practical. Highlight of the preaching was the three-part sermon series on Islam by former Muslim turned CGI Minister, Canadian Adrian Davis, who had brethren on the edge of their seats looking at Islam in history and prophecy, and showing startling quotations from the Islamic Koran and the Hadith.

Mr. Davis, who in November had a much-talked-about public debate in Canada with a Muslim Imam, displayed his considerable knowledge of Islam and had brethren “eating out of his hands” as it were. Powerful sermons were also given by Deacons Stephen Scale and Derrick Alwood, with equally challenging messages given by Deacons Christopher Hendricks, Winston Samuels, Henry Small, and speakers Dwayne McKenzie, Ray Williams, Jermaine McKenzie, Jonah Lewis and Eliud Ramocan. I gave one sermon on *How to Avoid a Spiritual Heart Attack*, stressing principles of Christian growth. Messages also covered how to keep from falling away, forgiveness, the wonderful world tomorrow, making God our priority, and the resurrections.

It was particularly delightful to host some members from two Church of God 7th Day congregations which have recently come over to Feast-day observance as a result of presentations that I made to them pointing out the necessity of Feast keeping. Led by their bishops Chambers and Sewell, these brethren were exultant as they shared with the CGI the absolute joy of celebrating their first combined Feast meeting.

Another highlight of the Feast was the baptism of seven persons on the Last Great Day. What a morning of rejoicing that was, as approximately 100 brethren joined the baptismal candidates on the beach for that memorable ceremony. The socials were also unforgettable: A Jamaican Night featuring Jamaican food, fashion, and music will long be remembered. The Family Fun Show was spectacular, ending with performance of a live band of professional musicians with international touring experience. Even I was called on stage to perform—which I did!

A picnic planned was canceled because of weather, but there was enough fellowship to substitute. There was also an all white party (referring to clothing, not people!) which was very delightful, and a couples night out at an entertainment spot.

There was a strong emphasis on prayer this year, and in addition to prayer on the beach every morning, there was a special and very moving prayer meeting on Friday night where members prayed for their leaders and one another. Some brethren were literally crying out to the Lord in supplication and praise.

Praise and worship, with drums, was magnificent. CGI services here have a strong element of praise and worship. Our vibrant worship along with our strong emphasis on doctrinal presentations and emphasizing our distinctive truths have been responsible for our extraordinary growth. CGI Kingston hosts the largest Church of God Feast of Tabernacles in the entire Caribbean.

Our annual speaking competition at the Feast where a distinctive Church of God doctrine is defended against its critics this year featured the topic, *Are Signs and Wonders for Today?* Again, Deacon Stephen Scale emerged winner, marshalling arguments to show that signs and wonders have ceased as an evangelism tool and won’t reappear until the prophetic work of the Two Witnesses.

High spirits, renewed commitment, and passionate engagement characterized our Feast of Tabernacles observance. We left Ocho Rios recharged and reenergized to go back to our various homes to practice what we learnt and to show greater appreciation for having found “the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.”

Ω

Submitted by Ian Boyne

## Why Do We Keep the Feast of Tabernacles?

by Lloyd W. Cary

**W**hy do we keep the Feast of Tabernacles? The answer is easy. It is bewildering why the rest of Christendom does not keep it.

The Feast of Tabernacles is simply loaded with rich spiritual and symbolic significance. Those who honestly and fully submit themselves to God’s command to assemble for eight days with other worshipers “in the place which he shall choose to place his name” (Deuteronomy 14:23) for worship and instruction find it incredibly rewarding. Their understanding and gratitude of it grows year by year.

This “Feast of the Lord” (Leviticus 23:2,4,34,39,44) pictures the 1,000-year rule of Jesus Christ on this earth, known as the Millennium (Revelation 20:4–6). This follows the binding of Satan depicted by the Day of Atonement (Revelation 20:1–3).

Immediately upon His return to the earth, Christ will set up the Kingdom of God on the earth. Isaiah describes this future period as a time of peace when God’s law will go forth to all nations from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2–4). The wild nature of animals will change (Isaiah 11:6–9; 65:25), the wilderness will blossom productively (Isaiah 35:1), and, most importantly, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9). “...Neither shall they learn war any more” (Isaiah 2:4). Satan’s evil supremacy will be removed, and all of humanity will at last learn God’s ways.

What a wonderful world it will be!

A prophecy in Zechariah speaks of a time when *all nations* will have to keep the Feast: “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16).

*So, why do we keep the Feast of Tabernacles?*

The Bible commands it: “It shall be a statute forever” (Leviticus 23:1).

Christ, our example, kept it (John 7:2). Assuredly we cannot go wrong following His example. Scripture shows that Jesus attended this important Festival even when His life was threatened (John 7:2–14, 25).

The early Christian Church kept it (Deuteronomy 4:5; Matthew 28:20; Acts 18:21).

God promises *blessings* for those who obey Him, and *curses* for those who disobey (Deuteronomy 11:27–28).

The Feast of Tabernacles will be kept during the Millennium in the future. Why should we *not* keep it now?

Be sure to request our free booklets, *God’s Seasonal Plan* and *The Second Coming—and Beyond*.

Ω



## Zablonanyumba, Africa

**G**reetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Hoping that you are doing well on the other side of the world, we are also doing the same.

We give thanks to God for His guidance all through to accomplishment of our past Feast of Tabernacles where we had a good attendance and people were full of excitement and everything was OK. It actually took place at our normal site respectively and we had several activities like Bible

Studies especially in the afternoons and even our children got opportunity to be taught, even giving special music in different sessions and even playing their football at their given opportunities.

It's rainy season in our country, but it wasn't so during those days.

For that may you be blessed of God so much.

In the one hope,

Ω  
Zablon



## Mananasi, Kenya

**H**ello Brethren, Receive our warmest greetings from Mananasi, Kenya. This year's Feast of Tabernacles was a big win for us here in Kenya, as more than 89 brethren gathered at Fonmark Hotel to celebrate the Feast. The Feast was a feast among Feasts as I through the will of God received the Holy Spirit and saw the holy spirit work among us. three brethren who had been suffering from heart attack, the other one from leprosy, and the other who was demon possessed received healing and they went home praising God for what He did in their lives.

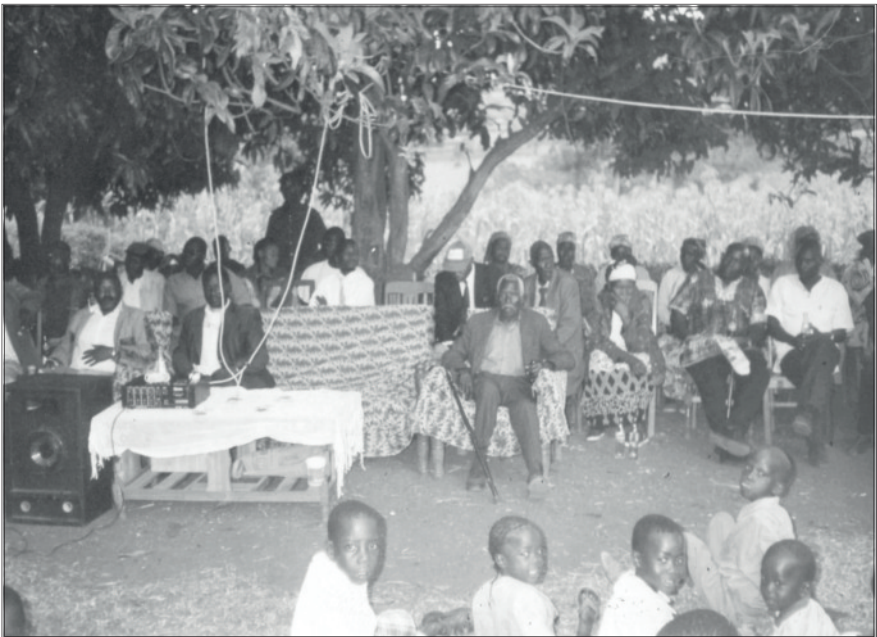
The Feast was also enriched by Gospel songs from women, men, children, youths, and even the elderly. Leviticus 23 was all our theme to keep the days that God had commanded, also unity of purpose was our weekly prayers. Pastor Nehemiah and Kennedy also gave their sermons on the nature of God's kingdom.

We had fun as we visited some orphanage homes where we shared food and clothes with the less fortunate. We also visited Maasai Mara game reserve, courtesy of the county government of Kisii, and to all those we owe gratitude to the Almighty Father. We played volleyball, handball, and soccer on 22nd afternoon at Tendere sports ground.

Towards the end of the Feast on 23rd, I gave the main sermon on unity of purpose, where everyone interceded for the church funds for construction of a multi-story modern church. We encountered some challenges of rains disrupting most activities and inadequate funds to run the Feast, but God allowed us to celebrate it in our own kind.

The Last Great Day was on 24th October, and brethren wished each other well with touching testimonies and a word of prayer from Eveline Kwamboka. We appreciate for your prayers and look forward to sharing with you in next year's Feast. May God richly bless you.

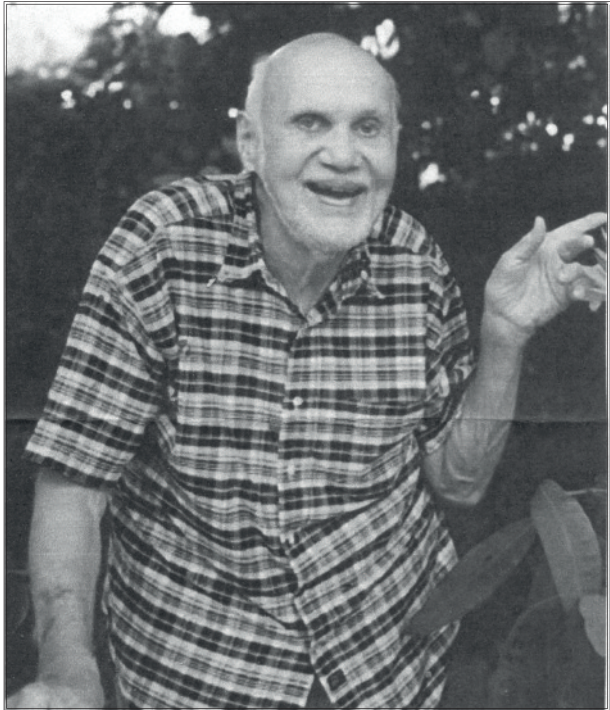
*Isaac Gwaro Motanya, CGI Leader, Mananasi Kenya*





Church News

In loving memory...



Ted Eugene Sterling

Ted Eugene Sterling  
(1937–2016)

**T**ed Eugene Sterling died Tuesday, September 13, 2016, at age 79. He was born May 6, 1937, in Bolivar, Missouri, the son of Rodney and Mildred Sterling, who preceded him in death. He attended schools in Bolivar and worked at the Drake Theatre. After graduating, he earned a degree in education from Drury College.

Ted was an avid gardener and loved to share his produce with family and friends. He loved reading and staying in touch with all current events and his church.

He is survived by a son, Christopher, and daughter-in-law Charlotte and their children, Liam and Coraline; a sister, Sue Schofield; and several cousins and many friends.

Per his request, his body has been donated to the University of Missouri Medical School in Columbia.

Ted was very faithful in keeping with Sabbath services on his computer. Because of his disability, he was unable to travel and missed the Feast last year. He attended the Feast site in Harrison, Arkansas in his later years.

Thank you to all who were a comfort to him. He was a very special brother to me and will remain in my heart forever. He wanted to give this to the church for being there for him. Ω

Submitted by Sue Schofield (Ted's sister)

Francico Xavier Henriques  
(1932–2016)

**F**rancico Xavier Henriques was a faithful servant of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and long time member of CGI Toronto. Francis was committed to the Word of God in his life and wanted others to have access to the Word, both at home and abroad, including brethren in Ghana. His generosity touched nearly all in the CGI congregation. He especially provided Bibles for many of our young people. We will all miss him dearly and look forward to seeing him again in God's soon-coming Kingdom.

Francis was born May 5, 1932, in Goa, India, and died on September 9, 2016 in Markham, Ontario, Canada. He had migrated to Germany (via Portugal) in about 1962. He worked in the ship-building industry in Germany. He spoke several languages including Spanish, German, Portuguese, and English, to say the least.

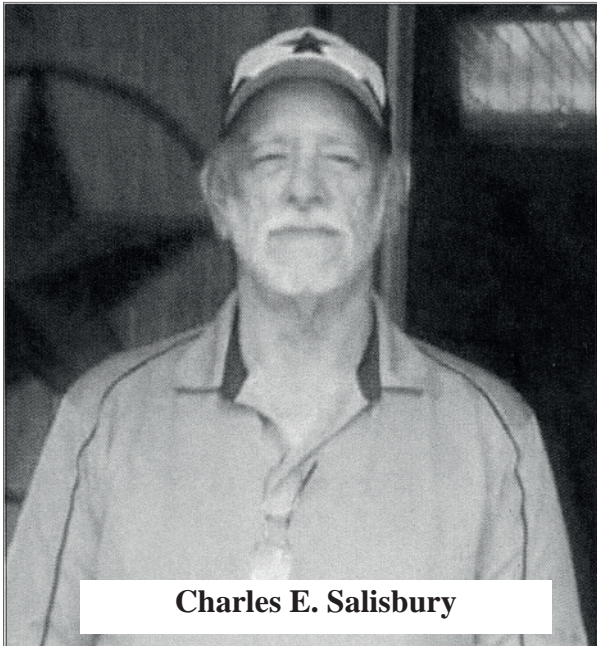
Francis is survived by his son Michael Henriques and his two grandchildren. Ω

Submitted by Louis Kwabena Anane, MPA, BSW



Francico Xavier Henriques

Charles E. Salisbury  
(1939–2016)



Charles E. Salisbury

**C**LYDE, Texas—Charles Salisbury, 77, of Clyde, Texas, died Wednesday, August 31, 2016, in a Round Rock hospital. Chapel services were held on Sunday, September 4, at the Bailey-Howard Funeral Home with Jim Bailey officiating.

Charles was born August 21, 1939, in San Antonio to Charles Lloyd Salisbury and Shirley Johnson. He attended school at King High School in Kingsville, Texas. He was a veteran of the United States Air Force. He married Emma Yvonne Tiffie in Kingsville on August 27, 1960. He worked for the Dupont Corporation, retiring in 1991. He also worked as a diesel mechanic and was a member of the Church of God of International. He and his wife moved to Clyde from Sweetwater in 2014 and from Clyde to Round Rock in 2016.

Charles is survived by three sons, Robert Salisbury of Abilene, Bill (Sonny) Salisbury of Hutto, and Tres Salisbury of Austin; two daughters, Lore Christmas and husband Clayton of San Leon, and Marie Norris and husband Rick of Hutto; ten grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and numerous other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife in 2015, and two sisters, Carol Elliott and Doris Newman. Ω



## Three Ordinations in Toronto



**Ken Allen, Elder**



**Bernard Wilson, Deacon**



**Shey Smith, Deacon**

## Elder, Two Deacons Ordained in Toronto

**A**n elder and two deacons were ordained in the Toronto congregation recently. They are **Elder Ken Allen** and **Deacons Bernard Wilson** and **Shey Smith**.

**Ken Allen**, accompanied by his wife Marie, and witnessed by 150 brethren from four congregations, was ordained as an elder at the Feast of Trumpets holyday service at the Puslinch Community Centre, near Guelph, Ontario on October 3. Both Marie and Ken have been serving in the Toronto congregations for more than 16 years.

Elder Ken completed the Ministerial Apprenticeship Programme (MAP) in June, this year. He started the programme in July 2013, under the mentorship of Pastors George Ramocan and Horane Smith.

In accepting the ordination, Elder Ken said he was “humbled by the responsibility he has been given” to serve the brethren in this new capacity as elder. He has been a member of the diaconate in Toronto for many years, and also served as a deacon while he was in the *Worldwide Church of God*. Kenroy Allen’s journey with the Church of God started in Kingston, Jamaica with the WCG in January 1979 where he was baptized in December of the same year.

Kenroy and Marie Angela were instrumental in the process which led to the official affiliation between CGI and Faith Community Church of God in Ghana, West Africa. The Allens are co-founders of the PUREAIDE Project, Inc., a non-profit organization providing educational funding for underprivileged youth in Ghana and Jamaica.

**Bernard Wilson**, who’s currently enrolled in the Ministerial Apprenticeship Programme (MAP), was ordained to the diaconate on November 5. Bernard has been serving in the Toronto congregation for more than ten years and has been instrumental in developing a mentorship and discipleship programme for members. Bernard is married to Jesse Bennett.

**Shey Smith** was also ordained the same day, and brings to five, the number of deacons serving the Toronto congregations, where attendance ranges from 75–100 people weekly. He has been in the church since 1985, and serves in many areas of church activities in Toronto, especially in the area of Internet development. Shey is married to Jasmin Smith. Ω

*Submitted by Horane Smith*

## Seven New Baptisms at Ocho Rios, Jamaica

**A**t 7 AM on the Last Great Day on an Ocho Rios beach, I had the distinct honour of joining Pastor Ian Boyne as we baptized seven new converts into the body of Jesus Christ.

Included in this group were Denisha McLaughlin-Thomas of the Toronto congregation and Haniel Ramocan, Pastor Ramocan’s grandson! We rejoice with them and the angels of God. Please pray for their strength as they embark on this spiritual journey with us. Ω

*Submitted by Adrian Davis*



## Mike James Visits Ottawa

**T**he Ottawa brethren were delighted to have Mike James visit them on September 17th. His edifying sermon was followed by lots of discussion and fellowship. Ω



## Christian/Muslim Debate

**O**n November 17th at 7:00 PM at the Sandman Hotel in Mississauga, a professionally moderated debate was held between Pastor Adrian Davis and Imam Sheharyar Shaikh as they explored the identity of Allah and the true God of the Bible.

This is one of the most important questions of our time!

The religious complacency of the West contrasted with the religious zeal of the East is shifting the balance of power. The rising economic and political power of Islamic nations is rooted in their belief that they serve the true God. Do they?

If you missed seeing the Christian/Muslim debate—*Is Allah the God of the Bible?*—you can watch or download it on our updated website at: <https://godofthebible.ca/>. Ω



# Food For Thought...

- If you want to know how to pray in the hard times, pray in the easy times.
- A democracy is a political system where a fellow who didn't vote can spend the rest of the year complaining about the candidate the other fellows elected.
- Christians are like coals of fire—together they glow; apart they grow cold.
- Sharing the Good News is one beggar telling another beggar where to find food.
- The one who serves God only for money becomes spiritually bankrupt.
- Be aware that if we obey the Word of God faithfully, some will not like us.
- It is a sickly faith that is shaken because some frail human being goes wrong.
- When a person wants to believe something, it doesn't take much to convince him.
- Faith with works is a force. Faith without works is a farce.
- People do not remember what you SAY—they remember how you make them FEEL.

- If you walk with God, you will not run with the world.
- A thousand possibilities do not make one fact.
- For every sin, the devil is ready to provide an excuse.
- The cell phone is a remarkable instrument. It enables teenagers to go steady without holding hands.
- Rare is the person who can weigh the faults of others without putting his thumb on the scale.
- Sin nearly always starts out as "fun."
- The three greatest sins of today are indifference to, neglect of, and disrespect for, the Word of God.
- It takes much more courage to repent than to keep on sinning.
- Between tomorrow's dream and yesterday's regret is today's opportunity.
- Man up. It IS what it IS. Get over it.
- A prayer that moves God can move anything God can move.
- Faith is *believing* what God says and *acting* on it.



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