

Announcement Letter November 2014

Dear Brethren:

Thank you for the chance to communicate with you once again in this monthly mailing and to reaffirm our special love and regards for those holding firm to God's revealed way of life.

By saying "holding firm," it is not implied that you are perfectly obeying. Not one of us is perfect, not even close, and we are all fighting against very strong forces within and without ourselves to try and emulate the One who is our perfect example, Jesus Christ. The faithful are those who begin by acknowledging God's revelation of right and wrong, and refuse to embrace a counterfeit standard. It is easier to feel good about ourselves if we convince ourselves that Christianity is more simple to accomplish. It is a whole lot harder to stick with it when we confess the true Jesus Christ and the requirement to crucify what we are by nature. Those natures war against us incessantly, and it is especially discouraging when we have spiritual setbacks which make us disgusted at our failures. How much easier would it be to conclude that God does not really require that much of us. How many have become weary in well-doing and turned to embrace a lie so that they can ease their consciences about committing sin?

There is a reason that many who have left the faith over previous decades will often claim they are now "more at peace" than ever before, and feel so much "closer" to God than when they were trying to live up to the standard that we preach. Yes, the carnal mind feels "relieved" when it thinks it can stay as it is and that God will be OK with that. The pressure is then "off." But that is a very false sense of peace, and it will never last. Those who fall victim to this lie because of their guilt over sin never really find peace at all. Until we face the true requirements of God's calling and return to the faith once delivered, there will continue to be heartache, sorrow, worry, and guilt. The only way for God's called to avoid it is to take hold of that "plow," and to ask God for the power of His Spirit to help us hold firm and to keep fighting against sin.

Thank you for your individual examples to learn to hate sin and to keep working to improve. Your efforts are an inspiration, so please never allow yourselves to think that what you are doing is trivial. It is not. And no matter how many mistakes we may make along the way, it is the determination to acknowledge God's revealed requirements without justification, and to hold that perfect standard, which sets us apart in this world.

Now that the fall Holy Day season has been completed once again, we all have the opportunity to look back at what we each did and to assess the good and the bad of our choices. Did you do all in your power to honor God in keeping His commanded Feasts? Did you plan and prepare for them in advance as required? Did you follow through on the plan with wise choices? Did you recognize obstacles and barriers, both physical and spiritual, which were trying to derail your good intentions? Did you persevere in order to overcome all obstacles and put God first, even when you had to overcome a strong sense of fear? To what extent do you see, in hindsight, that you did not do as well as you should have? Where are the opportunities for improvement as we prepare for the approach of a new year in God's plan?

Now is the time to take stock of where we stand spiritually. No, it is not just an exercise we should embrace just before Passover. Perhaps there is no better time than right after the Feast of Tabernacles to do some introspective analysis. Self-evaluation should be something we do continually, and right after the close of the most recent year of annual Sabbaths is a great time to look back. We can all do better. We all need to do better. That is the truth of the orientation required of true Christians as opposed to those who are kidding themselves. Some of you did very well in that you overcame great obstacles to put God first, including the rejection of pride, fear, or physical disability. Others of us ran into difficulties because we allowed the pulls of family, economics, changing health, or fear to dictate to us. The question today is, will we acknowledge honestly before God the mistakes we made and re-engage this coming year in a plan to improve, or will we justify our past choices? The quality of that analysis may have a lot to do with the success we will achieve in the coming year.

Change in Church Office Holiday Closing Policy

As most of you know, for decades, Mr. Raymond Cole chose to close the Eugene church office on certain major holidays even though those holidays were pagan in origin. The reason that he always closed the office on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day was purely a practical one, given that they are business holidays (meaning that we receive no mail on those days and have somewhat restricted ability to do our full work), and also to provide a chance for staff employees to spend time with visiting family who might be in the area only at that time of year when they have these days off. Since Mr. Cole's death in 2001, we have continued the same policy every year. Those holidays mean nothing to us, so we are not threatened or made superstitious by what the deceived peoples of this world do, even as the Apostle Paul confirmed that meats offered to pagan idols do not taint the physical meat that God made to be good food (1 Corinthians 8). God also made each day of the year, including the ones that the world has adopted for their pagan rites. They are still days that He made for our use.

However, it seems that we always get questions from some members each year, especially newer members, when we announce that we are closing the office on a pagan holiday. We can easily answer those questions as above, but the fact that we continue to have to do so became a concern. Therefore, with input from each of our office staff members, we created a new formula for assigning business holidays for the church office at those particular times of year. We believe this still will provide the same overall benefits for each employee, but without the "appearance" of respect for any pagan practices. This is the new formula:

Beginning this month, we will no longer close the office on the actual day of pagan celebration, but treat it as a normal workday for all of us. We will still provide one day to close the office at these times of year, but it will be on either a Monday or Friday nearest the holiday, so that employees still have long weekends for their personal benefit. This means that this month, instead of closing the office on Thursday, November 27, we will work on that day and close the office on Friday, November 28. The office will be open on Thursday, December 25, but closed instead on Friday, December 26. We will also work on Thursday, January 1, but close the office on Friday, January 2, 2015.

It is hoped that this change will preserve most of the benefits of having one day off at the same time that many other working family members likewise have days off, but mitigate any questionable appearances by closing on the actual holiday itself.

New Moon

The new moon, Kislev (ninth month), begins Sabbath, November 22. The new moon day is Sunday, November 23.

Deaths

Mrs. Julia Shaw of Marion, South Carolina, died Sunday, September 21, after a long struggle with stomach cancer. Julia was eighty-three years of age at the time of her death. We offer our sincere condolences to her family; she will be missed by all who knew her.

Mr. Earle Koman of Port St. Lucie, Florida, died Wednesday, October 29, of age-related causes. Earle was a longtime member of the church and was ninety-three years of age at the time of his death. He is survived by his wife Virginia, who says he finally wore himself out by refusing to slow down or give up on anything. A grandson preceded him in death. We offer our condolences to his wife, one son, one daughter, five granddaughters and three great-grandchildren.

Feast Reports

Hermanus, South Africa: We are all so grateful for the safe travels and arrival of the nine members who gathered in Hermanus for the Feast this year. Everyone arrived in good spirits and full of excitement about the upcoming days of fellowship, food and fun. It was such a privilege to have Jeremie and Aurelie Litzler with us and to have live accompaniment to our worship services. A beautiful spirit of peace, joy and unity prevailed, and the fellowship was very uplifting and edifying to all.

The initial two days were quite cold, but we were blessed from then on with warm, sunny weather, which enabled outings, walks, meanders and hikes.

The sermon series has encouraged us and given us a fresh, different insight to the Faith Once Delivered and its history. How blessed we are to be a part of this remnant that is preserving the Faith! Our thanks to Mr. Brisby, the other ministers, and the church office staff for making the material available to us.

Everyone was sad, as always, to see the end of the fall Holy Days arrive, but the tiny glimpse into the coming Kingdom of God encourages us all, and motivates us to hold fast, keep our feet down and stand firm in the time we have until that Day appears. Love, regards and blessings to all the brethren from sunny South Africa.

Don Carlos, Bukidnon, Philippines: Greetings from one hundred thirteen brethren who enjoyed the Feast of Tabernacles here in Don Carlos, Bukidnon, Mindanao. They traveled from all over the country to attend services at this church site where God placed His name. Although evening services were cancelled due to a heavy downpour, the Philippine brethren still enjoyed warm, sunny mornings, as well as light showers late in the afternoon throughout the rest of God's Feast. One man was baptized.

Port Sorell, Tasmania, Australia: The Feast of Tabernacles was enjoyed by all the members of Church of God, The Eternal in a place that God chose to place His name for 2014. All the brethren appreciated both the physical and spiritual food. We were all blessed with fine weather and fellowship of like minds. The Faith Once Delivered has truly been our guide and we thank all of God's people around the world for your prayers and support for a smooth Feast. We had the wonderful opportunity to meet and fellowship with Mr-s. Cullwick from the island of Vanuatu. We had a total attendance of nine adults and four children. We thank God for a successful and inspiring Feast.

Suna-Migori, Kenya: Greetings to all. The Kenya Feast of Tabernacles was very, very good, and we had good weather throughout the Feast. Members came from our four groups to the one Feast site. The sermons were inspiring, and we had good lunches and good fellowship among brethren. It was peaceful all of the days. The total number attending was seventy-four adults plus children. We thank you, brethren, for the sacrifices you have made to let us keep the Feast over the past eleven years. We pray that God may continue to bless you as the brethren in Kenya have been blessed. We all look for the finish line, which is the Kingdom of God. Thanks and may God be with you all.

Yachats, Oregon: Eighty-one brethren met together in Yachats, Oregon, for the Feast. The weather was unseasonably warm and sunny at the beginning, with a day of wind, rain and high waves in the middle and clearing but cloudy by the end of the week. A few activities like horseback riding and deep sea fishing were cancelled because of the weather, but everyone still had a busy, enjoyable and inspirational Feast. We are grateful for the reminder and instruction of God's faith once delivered given to us by His ministry this year. We send our love and regards to our brethren around the world.

Townsend, Tennessee: It was another year in which our efforts to come together where God has placed His name was truly blessed with an abundance of physical and spiritual rejuvenation. Once again we had the privilege to convoke at "The Barn" conference center. Although it is peak season for wedding events in the Smoky Mountains, the owners and staff have been most accommodating in making our time very enjoyable. This venue not only allowed for our services, but also for two wonderfully catered meals on the Holy Days and a platform for one of the greatest family nights ever! There were one hundred twenty-three brethren present this year, including those who came from Canada, France and South Africa. We also had two baptisms. The weather was mostly amicable, and the spirit of oneness, cooperation and unity abounded throughout. With a strengthening of our foundation on the faith once delivered achieved, all had the opportunity once again to go back with renewed confidence and determination to work toward the next Holy Day season. The Townsend Feast site brethren would like to thank the Kandersteg brethren for loaning us a good portion of their musical talent!

Kandersteg, Switzerland: Seventeen brethren from England, France, Spain and Switzerland (including two teenagers and two children) gathered in Kandersteg, Switzerland for a very beautiful Feast of Tabernacles. The weather, mostly sunny for the first part, remained favorable until the end in spite of some rain (even snow on the tops of the mountains) and cooler temperatures for the second part. This allowed pleasant outdoor activities to take place: hiking, tobogganing, mini-golf, promenades. The social afternoon was joyful and very interesting, with an active involvement of the Aviolat and Litzler families.

There were songs, guessing games, presentation of a big veggie garden and henhouse (by Isabelle Litzler), and slides shown by Corentin Litzler to present his job training. The sermons of both Mr. Cole (the Christian Living series, *Goodness*, translated and recorded by Mrs. Christine Sherwood, whom we thank very much) and Mr. Aviolat's: *How to Pray, Our Spiritual Fight, The Family*, and *The Reward*, among others, were very enriching and encouraging.

Mr. Aviolat's knee was so much better, which was very gratifying! We send our sincere regards to all the members of God's family and keep them in our prayers.

Trip Schedule

Mr. Jon Brisby

December 20..... Don Carlos, Mindanao, Philippines

December 27..... Patar, Luzon, Philippines

Mr. David Brandenburg

December 20..... Don Carlos, Mindanao, Philippines

December 27..... Patar, Luzon, Philippines

Recorded Sermon Schedule

Sermon #	Mailed	Played	Title
WSE-JB 149-19	09-18-14	11-01-14	Prophecy Revisited #19 The Two Witnesses #3
WSE-RC 59-39	10-23-14	11-08-14	Despair or Glory, Which? #39 Habakkuk Chapter 3 #9
WSE-JB 157	10-23-14	11-15-14	Are You a True Friend?
WSE-RC 59-40	10-23-14	11-22-14	Despair or Glory, Which? #40 Habakkuk Chapter 3 #10
WSE-RC 59-41	11-13-14	11-29-14	Despair or Glory, Which? #41 Habakkuk Chapter 3 #11
WSE-RC 59-42	11-13-14	12-06-14	Despair or Glory, Which? #42 Habakkuk Chapter 3 #12
WSE-JB 138-24	11-13-14	12-13-14	The Family Handbook #24
WSE-JB 138-25	12-04-14	12-20-14	The Family Handbook #25

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby