

## Announcement Letter November 2021

Dear Brethren:

These monthly mailings are one of the primary tools that we use to stay connected with those of you who share a love for God's true Way of Life, and we are happy for the continued opportunity to reach you in this way. We have always been a small and scattered fellowship, with members and contacts dispersed around the globe. And even as it was back in 1975, so our demographic makeup is still much the same today in late 2021. The names and identities within our core constituency have changed greatly over the last five decades, but those of you today who value the same spiritual services that we provide for the Church of God are just as important as any who ever previously affiliated with and supported this remnant body.

We are happy that you love the same things that we love—the doctrines that this group was founded upon so long ago—and that you personally are showing evidence of your faith in that revealed Way in so many ways. It is a pleasure to help you in your personal walk with God, and it is our determined commitment to continue to pour out ourselves as your servants to provide that consistent support and encouragement into the future. We know that the revealed Truth of God will never fall to the ground, and we are committed to being at least a part of that promised remnant that Jesus Christ said would preserve those doctrines until the very end of this age.

As you know, this group is not—and God helping us, will never be—a personality cult. Our core values are not contingent upon any one man or group of men. We care about what Jesus Christ gave to His own Body—the true Church—by the miracle of divine revelation. We acknowledge that commissioned human instruments are the chosen means for God to deliver that Truth to His Church, but we are careful never to elevate the human servant above that which we should.

This seems to be a difficult concept for some to grasp. On the one hand, they see that we refer often to Herbert Armstrong (and Raymond Cole) in our writings and sermons, and so they jump to the conclusion that we are worshiping human personalities. Not so! If we were treating Herbert Armstrong as having been infallible, then why did we become a remnant group out of the Worldwide Church of God in 1975, while he was still alive and leading that parent church? No, the label of us being Herbert Armstrong worshipers will never stick, credibly.

On the other hand, they see that we are wholeheartedly devoted to the idea of divine Truth being delivered by God to man *through handpicked human servants*. We are ones who want *only what Jesus Christ gave*, and we acknowledge that Christ chose to provide that revelation to all of us *through a human ministry*. God designed this entire Master Plan to require that we recognize *His choice* to use human agents to reveal godly Truth. That very combination—divine Truth *through* the foolishness of human preaching—is *a huge stumbling block for many*, and it always has been. But our logic is sound nonetheless, and absolutely supported by everything that God revealed in His Holy Scripture.

But many still do not "get it." They believe that if God is the One who reveals, it means that they then have *a personal right* to get that divine inspiration of doctrine *firsthand from God directly*. When we remind them that God is the One who chose to reveal real Truth *through chosen human instruments*, and that they *must* find where that Work was done through a human apostle, they balk. That is when the accusation of us being Herbert Armstrong worshipers comes out. But the proof that we are serious about seeking only what Jesus Christ Himself revealed to the Church is proven by the fact that when Herbert Armstrong permitted a departure from those major original doctrines beginning in 1974—doctrines he had originally preached and taught as the revelation of God—we would not follow! Why? Because our conviction that it was truly the Church of God—and not the church of whatever Herbert Armstrong said in contradiction—was verified by *our separation from the parent church once those doctrines were corrupted!*

The very basis of what we really believe and stand for continues to be borne out by our past history as a remnant group, as well as our continued devotion to the very same principles, even all these many years hence.

We followed Raymond Cole because he showed his personal devotion to the original doctrines of Jesus Christ. We followed him until he died in 2001, not because we were following the man, but because that man continued to hold firm to the original teachings that we counted as having come from God, and he did so until his dying day. But others can look at us and say that we were just following Raymond Cole. What is our proof otherwise? It is found in the fact that after Raymond Cole died, this group *continued to survive and to thrive!* That was not the case because the new Pastor-Director was so "charismatic" as to be able to co-opt personal loyalty from the "Raymond Cole worshipers." No, it was because the new Pastor-Director continued to defend *the very same doctrines* that Raymond Cole had defended, and our core brethren who loved those doctrines gained confidence and respect in that continuing ministry because of that manifest faithfulness.

Dear friends, it really is about the doctrine! It always has been about the doctrine. And God helping us, it will always be about the doctrine.

What makes the difference, then, in our decisions to accept or to reject any teaching that surfaces for question or debate? We use *the very same formula* today that we always have used. That formula was given by God to ancient Israel as the standard to use in assessing any individual or entity that comes along and claims to have "spiritual knowledge" to impart. What is that standard?

If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, *Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams:* for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and *ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.* And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because *he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God,* which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee (Deuteronomy 13:1–5) [emphasis mine throughout].

You can never *turn away* from something that you did not at first embrace. God warns plainly that even if someone appears to be able to do miracles, *any message that is different than what was originally taught is proof that it is not from God.*

If only God's people could recognize this principle and learn to use it when they are faced with challenges. It is exactly the same standard that the Apostle Paul was inspired to repeat to the New Testament Church:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But *though we* [including Paul himself as a legitimate apostle], *or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed* (Galatians 1:6–8).

This is precisely the same yardstick that God gave through Moses! Even if an angel appears, or even if it is a true apostle of the past like Paul had been, but that entity begins to tell you now that *you need to change something about the original teachings or to add a new "correct" way to worship God*, do not believe it! God made sure to establish the foundation of His true Church upon a Rock—Jesus Christ Himself. Moses was only the messenger. Paul was only the messenger. Coming to believe that the original teachings were wrong because a man interpreted Scripture incorrectly is merely claiming that *God was not really the One who established that Church to begin with*. Either God established it and you can trust the doctrines as being inspired by God, or else it was a work of men, and in that case it has no value at all—neither now nor at the beginning. Take your pick. It is one or the other. Was it or was it not *God's Church*? If it was God's Work, then hold on to the original teachings, even though they came through fallible human messengers—like Moses, Paul, or even Herbert Armstrong.

And if anyone comes along and tries to tell you that they have "new understanding" that requires us to do something that God's Church never did historically in our time, then you know what spirit it is that is before you. No matter how appealing or credible that person (like even an angel of light or a minister with past credentials) might seem, if the new message is not consistent with the original, you know it is not from God.

This is exactly the formula that Raymond Cole always used to evaluate any teaching that was presented to him, either within the WCG, or during his years of leading Church of God, The Eternal. There were many who came and went through our fellowship who said that they agreed with these principles, but in time proved that they really did not.

God's Church was established in the twentieth century through the ministry of Herbert W. Armstrong. That means that what we learned *through that man* concerning God's Master Plan for salvation and the proper way to worship God—including the things required for us to do and to avoid doing in order to please Him—were all given by Jesus Christ and became *our traditions* in that Church. We did not have a wrong doctrine concerning what is sin. We were not "missing something" in what God requires us to do, to speak, to think, or to wear. Jesus Christ made sure to give us *everything needed for our salvation*, and we had it *from the earliest decades of the Radio Church of God*. Anyone who says otherwise is speaking according to a different spirit.

That is what we believe and stand for. It is what this little remnant group called Church of God, The Eternal has always stood for. No matter who agrees with the above statements, or not, we refuse to change.

If you continue to be ones who agree with that premise, we are in a position to continue to be able to serve you and to help you in your spiritual walk with God. We pray that your conviction in that Truth will never wane. May we all hold firm until the end.

## **Birth**

After much anticipation, Bonnie Amelia Armstrong was born Monday, September 13. She weighed 8 lbs 7.5 oz and was 21 inches long. Parents, Ryan and Carissa Armstrong are elated with their sweet little girl and enjoy watching her older brother and sister shower her with so much affection! We congratulate them on their new arrival.

## **Thank You**

Mark and Jovie Jebb wanted to thank all of the brethren for the outpouring of love, prayers, friendship and support they received throughout the time Jovie was experiencing a serious health challenge. They are both glad to share that Jovie has recovered incredibly well, and is continuing to do so.

## **New Moons**

The new moon, Kislev (ninth month), begins Thursday evening, November 4. The new moon day is Friday, November 5.

The new moon, Tebeth (tenth month), begins Saturday evening, December 4. The new moon day is Sunday, December 5.

## **Feast Reports**

**Don Carlos, Bukidnon, Philippines:** Unlike past years, this year's Feast was different. Different because we lost two wonderful leaders. Yet, there was no difference in our celebration, because we celebrated God's Feast of Tabernacles with enthusiasm and fullness of hope. Brethren from far places had difficulties in traveling because of the restrictions, but we are blessed that many of our brethren from Davao City were able to attend the Feast.

We are very happy to say that we are always blessed with spiritual and physical food. We heard very inspiring live and prerecorded messages. During the afternoon activities,

young men enjoyed playing basketball, the children enjoyed games, and they all had wonderful camaraderie. On the sixth day, we had a picnic in a private resort where everyone enjoyed swimming and games.

We had fifty-three in attendance during the Last Great Day. We also had a night program with games, food and karaoke the same as last year. Once again, God blessed us with another successful and meaningful Feast.

**Suna-Migori, Kenya:** Greetings to you all with much hope that you are well there. Here, we are fine, and God is taking care of us even though life is getting tougher and tougher.

We had a very pleasant Feast of Tabernacles here in Kenya with a total number of eighty people attending, minus children. God blessed us with rain and protection. Nobody fell sick all the eight days.

We thank our brethren in the USA who have been sacrificing from their pocketbooks to enable us to attend the Feast for all these years. May God bless them and give them long lives.

**Townsend, Tennessee:** The Feast in Townsend is always a surprise weather-wise, and this year's started out rainy and foggy, but ended with beautiful Fall days of sunshine and pleasant temperatures. We did not have to anoint many for illness during the ten days, and most stayed in good health and fine spirits. There was a count of ninety-two for the opening night, and we all enjoyed the catered meals and fellowship provided at the Barn. The spiritual meals provided by Mr. Brisby, Mr. Litz and Mr. Burke were also appreciated and were strengthening for the year ahead. We added to our membership with four new baptisms and the blessing of a new baby born to Ryan and Carissa Armstrong. A few of the members ran into difficulty on their return trips home, with schedule changes and demands for covid testing, but everyone is now safely back home and looking forward to the Feast of Tabernacles 2022.

**Hermanus, South Africa:** Greetings! Though few in number (being only four South Africans at Hermanus in the Western Cape), we were incredibly blessed at the Feast of 2021.

We all arrived safely and were able to settle in to our respective accommodations ahead of time. We were located within walking distance of each other, as well as near enough to the shops, restaurants and coastline for real convenience! The views from some of the restaurants, and along the famous cliff paths are breathtaking, and we enjoyed the full moon rising, the sight of the ocean, and even a bit of whale watching, for which Hermanus is famous.

Despite being earlier in Spring than usual, we were very blessed with good weather for the most part. The day of the opening service was rainy and quite windy, but this did not spoil things for us. But after that we enjoyed pleasant sunny weather with occasional wind, We went for a couple of drives to neighboring towns, but for the most part we were in and around the town center.

We were also blessed to be able to spend time in good fellowship at the main house, out walking, and at various restaurants. We enjoyed a typical South African braai (barbecue), on the 24th, Heritage Day in South Africa—traditionally Braai Day. It was great to be with others who believe the same thing, as we are not able to get together much during the year.

The sermon series on *Prophecy That Matters*, reconfirming the Truth as taught by Mr. Raymond Cole, was presented in a refreshing and new way. For the other services we had Mr. Robert Burke's sermons from 2020, which melded perfectly with Mr. Brisby's messages, and rounded everything off very well. We enjoyed peace, tranquility and harmony for the time we were together, and feel very privileged to be able to do so under the current circumstances.

We all returned safely to our homes on Wednesday after the Last Great Day, ready to face head-on whatever the Eternal allows in each of our lives; strengthened and determined to hold fast to the Faith which we have been taught.

**Kandersteg, Switzerland:** In the midst of the difficult circumstances in the world, God blessed our gathering in Kandersteg for the Feast of Tabernacles, which was peaceful and beautiful. Indeed, we did not have any interference from the local authority about the wearing of masks in our meeting hall. Also, the French brethren were able to cross the border to enter Switzerland on the Sunday before the Feast, just one day before the tightening of restrictions.

A total of nineteen members attended, including the twin little girls.

God strengthened Mr. Aviolat to be able to preach. The encouraging sermons were about some of the few faithful kings of Judah and "signs of success" among other servants, and we also appreciated six translated sermons from Mr. Brisby from the Feast of 2015 about the restitution of the Creation: "The Millenium—a Test."

We were all thankful, too, for the weather since the forecasted rainy week gave way to mostly sunny days. Some foggy days that we had did not prevent us from enjoying outdoor activities like hikes, scooters, bike rides, summer sleds or just walks.

The very sunny and warm day of the social afternoon allowed us to have a group meal for lunch in Spiez on the lake of Thun down the valley, on the terrace of a restaurant, since the restrictions prevented us from eating inside. Songs and music were then performed at the meeting hall where we had a very joyous time together. We also viewed nice old photos on screen as well as in a beautiful printed photo album, and a video of animal scenes and the scenery in Kandersteg.

We are very thankful to God for all the blessings He gave us during the fall Holy Day season, including the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Brisby for the Feast of Trumpets in France.

We send our warm greetings and love to all the brethren around the world.

**Carnforth, South Lakes, Cumbria, England:** The Feast this year went very well. There was complete accord between all three of us at a site with idyllic surroundings—Inland Lake, surrounded by well-appointed cabins. It was an ideal, quiet locality—perfect for enjoying the spiritual benefits of the services.

**Penguin, Tasmania, Australia:** The Feast here in Tasmania was really good, with three members able to come over from mainland Australia, making it a total of eight attendees in the coastal village of Penguin. We shared memorable Holy Days, meals and outings together and enjoyed a bit of reprieve from the chaos of the world. Services were a blessing with mostly live special music, and Mr. Brisby's sermons on prophecy were encouraging. Therefore, both spiritual and physical sustenance was in abundance, and the general consensus was that it was a fantastic Feast! We all send our warm regards to the brethren around the world holding fast to the faith once delivered.

**Otter Rock, Oregon:** After a very rainy Sabbath before the Feast, it cleared up and the temperatures were comfortable and the winds were mild—a perfect combination for the Oregon Coast. The convention center where we met sits high on a bluff, so the ocean views were lovely, especially from the attached restaurant where we enjoyed fantastic catered meals on both High Days.

There were fifty-four in attendance, and the convivial fellowship was infectious. In these times of closures and being shut off from others, it made this Feast even more meaningful. The spiritual food from the sermons was most needed and will fortify us once again for this coming year. We send our love and encouragement to every one of our brothers and sisters around the world.

## Recorded Sermon Schedule

Sermon #	Mailed	Played	Title
WSE-RC 66-9	08-19-21	10-02-21	Where Is Christ Since His Personal Days in the Flesh? #9
WSE-JWB 225-41	09-09-21	10-09-21	Just What Do You Mean—Faith Once Delivered? #41
WSE-JWB 225-42	09-09-21	10-16-21	Just What Do You Mean—Faith Once Delivered? #42
WSE-RC 66-10	09-09-21	10-23-21	Where Is Christ Since His Personal Days in the Flesh? #10
WSE-RC 66-11	10-07-21	10-30-21	Where Is Christ Since His Personal Days in the Flesh? #11
WSE-RC 66-12	10-07-21	11-06-21	Where Is Christ Since His Personal Days in the Flesh? #12
WSE-RC 66-13	10-07-21	11-13-21	Where Is Christ Since His Personal Days in the Flesh? #13

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby