



Association of the Churches of God in Oregon and Southwest Washington

Coming Soon: Spring Celebration



# CONTACT

E-Contact Vol. 2 Issue 3 March 2014

## Focus 40: Extreme Living

Forty days have been set aside for an emphasis on prayer and fasting in the life of the Church of God, leading up to Easter 2014.

The Focus, based on John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full" (NIV), begins March 12, and continues through April 20, 2014.

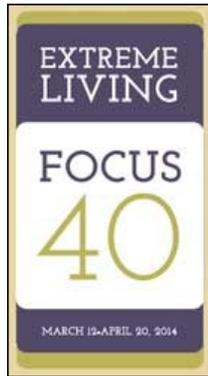
In preparation for the "Extreme Living" emphasis, the national office has assembled a variety of resources to help promote, plan and enhance the forty-day

experience. Check out the web resources at <http://chog.org/>

Focus40-resources, and obtain a daily prayer calendar, family devotions guide, and multiple resources for individuals and churches.

Stories of miracles and deliverance, provision and guidance, salvation and freedom have all been told as a part of recent years' Focus 40 emphasis.

"We expect God to show up in mighty ways this season as well," encourage leaders from the national office.



## Association Launches New Website

<http://orwacog.org>

Check out the new website, and while there, sign-up to receive the CONTACT newsletter.



**Calendar tab:** We now have the option of going to individual months to view events and meetings. Click on events for more information as well as registration information. (Spring Celebration registration will be updated with prices as soon as we hear back from the hotel.) Thank you for your patience during this transition.

## Spring Celebration

Valley River Inn in Eugene, Oregon, is the location for the annual Spring Celebration, May 16-17, 2014. The spring theme, "Why We Love The Church" will be carried through the Summer Celebration as well, and is based

**Co-Mission Offering Sunday, May 4**



The CoMission Offerings will be received during the Spring Celebration

on Ephesians 1:20-23 (NLT): "20 that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. 21 Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. 22 God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. 23 And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself." Celebration registration information will be updated as soon as details are finalized with the hotel.



# Look to the Hills

## Camp White Branch— An Open Letter from Tanna Miller



Hello to all our dearly loved Church Families from CWB.

All is fine here at camp. Had lots of snow storms, electric off, and phone off a lot. We get a bad storm and I am excited that I will get to have snow play. Then, The main road has not gotten plowed and people cannot get down 242. Then we get a heavy rain storm, down tree branches along the 242 and on the main highway. It takes the power out for the whole McKenzie Valley.

We have had snow storms since Tuesday night. It snowed hard last night. Then today (2/20), it rained most of the day. Very weird winter. We were without power for 3-1/2 days. Many other times for a day or

so at a time. I am always prepared for this. I love my winters here.

I suppose you all have heard, I am leaving CWB. I just can't keep up the maintenance. Plus all the other jobs I have to do for camp. I will miss my COG Kid camps and all my other camps. It has been such a pleasure serving and loving you all. I will be out of Camp by the end of April. I will be moving to Camas, Wash. My oldest son and his family live there. I will keep in touch with you.

Thank you all who come up and donate your time to help make camp better. I will come and help at times also.

Rainier Church of God, you truly

are so special. You have come every year that Wayne and I have been here. You make the camp look like a park. I know God looks down with such pride. Thank you so much. Also, all the kids from there - What workers you are! I love you all.

I am going to have some hard times after I leave. I will miss you all.

This camp is blessed: because of all you who love, support and pray for the camp. God knows your love for the camp and your mission for his children and other campers to be able to come to CWB and learn more of his love. Again thank you. God Bless. Love, Tanna

## Pendleton honors retiring Pastor Rick Oliver

by Kay Tira

Pastor Rick Oliver, of the Church of God in Pendleton, Oregon, celebrated his retirement January 26, 2014—just 28 years after his first Pendleton sermon on January 26, 1989.

“I’d like to think of it as ‘retooling’ rather than ‘retiring,’” says Oliver, who wants to continue investing his life to do something of significance.

Although Pendleton had many pastors over the years (beginning with Jim Dougherty in 1953), it has been Rick Oliver’s only senior pastorate position. He served as Youth Pastor in Oceanside, CA, from 1979-81 and at South Bay COG in Torrance, CA, from 1982-86.

Pastor Rick has served as hospital

chaplain for the past ten years, and continues in that role, along with some part-time Hospice work at St. Anthony’s Hospital in Pendleton. His wife, Debbie, continues to teach 4th grade in the community.

“After 35 years of weekend commitments, and now all of sudden you don’t have that—it’s a little bit different,” says Oliver.

Some of the other Pendleton pastors included Brother Mercer, Frost Hatch, Dick Hubacek, Emmett Hofer Ward Rogers, Carl Riley and Harold Davidson.

The congregation held a “going away dinner” for the Olivers, who were surprised with lots of out-of-town guests as well. Rick had the



privilege of dedicating his grandson, Jace Richard Oliver, to the Lord on the same Sunday of the celebration. Rick anticipates good things for the congregation and is grateful for the privilege of serving the Lord.

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# CHOG Convention 2014 Host Church: From Humble Beginnings to Global Impact

—by Carl Stagner  
(Reprinted with permission)

For the first time in more than a century, the Church of God Convention and General Assembly will take place outside of Anderson, Indiana. For more than a hundred years, Church of God people from across the country and around the world grew quite familiar with the venues of the Anderson University campus, the Church of God Ministry center, Park Place Church of God, and the spread of dining options along the main drag. Church of God people from all over the world know the stories of the Gospel Trumpet Company, how a Bible training school grew into a university, and the impact of pillars of the faith, people such as Reardon and Oldham. But do you know the story of the church that will host the Church of God Convention this year?



Crossings Community Church began like so many Church of God congregations in the United States. In 1959, a congregation named Westridge Hills began holding services and preaching the gospel to all who would hear it. In 1981, a young fellow by the name of Marty Grubbs joined the church's staff as an associate pastor of youth and music. By 1985, Grubbs became the senior pastor, and the dynamic story of transformation began.



Rev. Marty Grubbs

"There are several factors that paved the way for the growth of our church," Grubbs recalls. "We were a very small church of 150 people, in a very small and aging building, buried in a neighborhood and out of view of any major traffic pattern. In other words, we had no visibility of any kind. We jokingly referred to our motto of, 'If you can find us, you can join us!'"

It's a story many churches are familiar with. Some are simply off the beaten path, while others are tucked behind industrial establishments or nestled deep within dense subdivisions. But that *invisibility* soon became *visibility* when a certain segment of the church rallied together around Christ with the goal of

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## Where do we go from Here?

—by Rev. Dr. Bruce Steffensen

I have a friend who became a US citizen recently. In fact, during our recent ice storm, when most of us were avoiding the roads at all cost, he drove 120 miles to keep the appointment for his test and interview. I might have assumed the office would be closed, or at least would have called to reschedule, but he wasn't going to take anything for granted. He showed up at 7:45, and even though the office opened 2 ½

hours late, he waited until someone showed up.

His life has absolutely changed. Next time he goes to visit his parents in China, he will have to apply for a Visa. He is no longer claimed by the nation where he was born. I know it was an agonizing decision for him. His life, and identity, will never be the same, and he cannot undo the change that he has made. He made the decision he did, be-

cause the benefits of changing outweighed the benefits of staying the same.

We (the church) are having to consider changes that are just as monumental. Most of our churches are shrinking and aging. Recent surveys have shown that while people in the general populace still have a favorable impression of Jesus, they do not trust,

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# CHOG Host: Humble Beginnings...

*(Continued from page 3)*

making a difference in the community. When members of the community paid a visit to the neighborhood church, their needs were made first priority. All the while, Pastor Grubbs listened intently to the congregation's dreams to make a difference.

"I began preaching sermons aimed at non-Christians," Grubbs explains, "aimed squarely at the people who were not in the church, and the visitors who were coming through our door. Our people began inviting their friends, we advertised the sermon series in local media, and we personally invited the neighborhood, about three hundred homes." But the sermons focused on the community were not the only thing receiving attention. "We were in a neighborhood where there was great pride in the homes and their yards. Grass was green and flowers were everywhere. Except on our property." So in 1986, Grubbs bought a bag of fertilizer and planted some flowers. The neighbors took notice and were very happy.

Pastor Grubbs also shared with the congregation stories and insights from churches who were experiencing success. Excitement increased as the church realized that they, too, could do the kind of ministry larger churches were doing. Grubbs helped lead the church to emphasize those things the church did well, including things unique to themselves.

In 1999, the church saw 3,100 people gather for worship at the new Crossings Church. Since then, among many other incredible events, the church has launched a Hispanic church, started a Christian school, and opened a community medical clinic. Today, Crossings Church gives God glory for a body of between five and six thousand worshipers. Their impact stretches from the city rescue mission to North Korea, from local schools to the streets of Lebanon.

"I have always believed we were a very compelling demonstration of the original idea for the Church of

God," Grubbs reflects. "As we saw the culture becoming disenchanted with the mainline denominations, we were able to offer an affiliation with a wonderful group called the Church of God. When we told people there was no formal membership, but that joining the body was all about turning your life over to Christ, this message was widely valued and appreciated. In essence, we were conservative in theology but liberal in love. We have not shied away from telling the story of our Church of God roots. It is the first thing we tell newcomer classes today. They appreciate the anchor and accountability we have as a Church of God congregation, and they love the emphasis on Christ and not a denomination."



When Church of God pastors, leaders, and laypeople convene this summer in Oklahoma City to worship and speak into the direction of the movement, they will no doubt be welcomed by smiling faces and joyful hearts. "I want people to know that our volunteers are ready to serve them," Grubbs explains. "These volunteers are people from all walks of life, with stories of deep pain and hurt before they found Christ, and amazing stories of all that has happened to them since giving their lives to Christ...We look forward to serving those who arrive on our campus. We are one. We are family, and we are thrilled that we get to meet a large contingent of the rest of the family."

*Your last day to take advantage of early-bird registration is March 15! Register today at [www.chogconvention.org](http://www.chogconvention.org). The Church of God Convention 2014 and General Assembly is scheduled for June 23-26 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.*

## Duo Piano and Organ Concert

Ruth Ann Yerden and Jean Shackleton will present two separate concerts on Sunday, April 13, 2014. The first is at 3:00-4:30 p.m. at the Woodburn United Methodist Church and will be a part of the Community Series. The address is 700 N. Cascade Dr., Woodburn, Oregon. The second concert is at Holladay Park Church of God, 21st and Tillamook, Portland, OR., that same evening at 7:00 p.m. Freewill offerings will be received.



# Where do we go from Here?

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nor really like, the church. That not only sheds light on how the people around us perceive the church, it also shows that many people do not connect the church with Jesus.

That's frightening and convicting.

We're at a place where the reasons to change greatly outweigh the reasons to stay the same. That would motivate most people, or organizations, to change. However, a large chunk of the consequences we'll face by not changing will be borne not by us but by the generations that follow us.

Many of us are old enough that the churches we've grown to love will hang around long enough for us to enjoy them for the remainder of our lives. They may shrink and decline, but there is a chance that something we are comfortable with will still be around for us.

I guess we have that option; hang on as long as we can and let the next generation figure out how to change.

But somehow I don't think that is what it means to be the church. Throughout the church's history, believers have had to figure out what it means to be Jesus in their generation. Those of us who have gray highlights owe that not only to those in the world around us, we also owe it to those in the faith who are following behind us.



We can't do it by going about business as usual. We can't do it by ourselves. We can't do it by minimizing risk or ignoring tough issues and questions. We can only do it by sitting down together, our eyes turned to the scripture and to those around us for whom Christ died, and our ears tuned to each other and the voice of the Holy Spirit.

We began such a conversation with Michael Kimpan from the Marin foundation at the How-To Convention. It was a difficult conversation and an uncomfortable one for many of us. But it was a start. But only a start.

Where do we go from here?



Dr. Bruce Steffensen facilitates a leadership session at the 2014 How-To Convention

## Waves of Grace

"From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace." John 1:16 NRSV

2014 Church of God Women's Convention

*Christian Women*  
connection

Hilton Oceanfront Resort, Daytona Beach, Florida    October 30 - November 2, 2014

| Breakout Sessions  | Speakers  |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Defining Your Ministry</i><br/>Erin Taylor</p> <p><i>Healthy Boundaries</i><br/>Donna Roddy</p> <p><i>Old Fashioned Bible Study</i><br/>Joy Sherman</p> <p><i>New Connections: Revitalize your CWC</i><br/>Holly Myers</p> <p><i>Estudio de la Biblia</i><br/>Mary Ann Garcia</p> <p><i>Designed for You: The Needs of Young Women</i><br/>Rachel McDuffe &amp; Precious Earley</p> <p><i>Serving the Community: Home Missions</i><br/>Donna Rothenberg</p> <p><i>Women's Clergy: Then and Now</i><br/>Cheryl Sanders</p> <p><i>Sacred Memories: Caring for those with Alzheimer's</i><br/>Patricia Bailey</p> <p><i>Get the Word Out: Technology &amp; Ministry</i><br/>Mary Baker Boudissa</p> <p><i>Sister to Sister: Ages 13-19</i><br/>Dee Edmond</p> <p><i>Men's Conference</i><br/>Bill Jones</p> | <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>Cynthia Thomas                 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>Jeannette Flynn                 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>Carol Merritt                 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>Mary Stephens                 </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; color: white;">Worship &amp; Special Guests</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>Leslie Parker Barnes<br/>Worship Leader                 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>Missionaries &amp;<br/>International Delegates                 </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>Qara: Women in<br/>Ministry &amp; Mission                 </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; color: white;">Special Events</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>The Bible Alive Theater<br/>present<br/><i>The Woman at the Well</i> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>Myra Green &amp;<br/>The Bible Alive Theater<br/>present<br/><i>The Woman at the Well</i> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <br/>RED CARPET<br/>EXTRAVAGANZA!<br/>Banquet &amp; Musical<br/><i>The Ten Brides of Christ</i><br/>arranged by<br/>Eubanks Productions                 </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; color: white;">Prayer Breakfast &amp; Communion<br/>Ruth Ann Lambie, Bermuda<br/>Speaker</p> |

For more information or to register, visit us at [www.christianwomensconnection.org](http://www.christianwomensconnection.org)



# Senior Moments

by Ruth Bissett, Salem, OR

**Celebrate:** to do something special or enjoyable for an important event, occasion, holiday, etc. to praise (someone or something) : to say that (someone or something) is great or important

Hello fellow seniors! As you have noticed I have been absent from The Contact for a while now. Hopefully, I do a better job at getting my article submitted.

My thoughts lately are on celebrating. I just came from a memorial service for a classmate from Pacific Bible College: Rachel Spencer. Her husband, Del, had the grandchildren stand and lead a cheer of Hip, Hip, Hooray! for their grandmother. It made me think about the importance of celebrating people and events. At the end of life we have a celebration of life. At the beginning we celebrate the birth. Then there are celebrations for birthdays, promotions, retirements, weddings, anniversaries, baptisms, Christmas, Easter, 4th of July, etc. We celebrate the Lord's supper and the ordinance of foot washing.

I love celebrations! Our family and church has had many celebrations through the years, but I would challenge you as I am challenging myself to find new things to celebrate. Some of the synonyms for celebrate are: *commemorate, observe, mark, keep, honor, remember* and *memorialize*. These synonyms may give you ideas for new celebrations. The words that stand out for me are *to remember* and *to honor*.

I would invite you to send me ways you celebrate and any new ways you are able to celebrate events and people in your life. Contact me at [ruthbissett1@gmail.com](mailto:ruthbissett1@gmail.com) or Ruth Bissett, 1969 Nut Tree Dr. NW, Salem, Or 97304. Then I can pass them on to you in a future article.

"See" you next time. Mark your calendar for camp meeting July 20-23. I am waiting for confirmation on some of the sessions and activities for the seniors. Be watching for more updates. One of things I am planning on is an event called, "**All Day Sing and Dinner on the Grounds.**" The Lighthouse Quartet plans to be with us for this event. See you there!

## SENIOR RETREAT 2014

### Cannon Beach Conference Center—April 1-3



**Tom Dougherty**  
Speaker



**Mark Kelly**  
Worship Leader

Senior Adults are encouraged to register for the 2014 Retreat, hosted by Vancouver First Church of God, to be held Tuesday through Thursday, April 1-3, at Cannon Beach, Oregon.

**Rev. Tom Dougherty** of Boise, ID, will be the speaker for the three day event, with **Mark Kelly**, of Vancouver, serving as Worship Leader. Deposit is \$25 for single and \$50 for couple, with a March 17 deadline. Contact Julie Murphy, Vancouver 1st Church of God, 360-574-1611 ext. 6904 for details and to check on room availability.

## Winter Storms Put Homecoming Celebrations on Ice

An extended storm covered the Portland area in snow and ice, causing the College to close for two days of classes and postponing all scheduled Homecoming activities. Due to the unfortunate timing of the storms, Warner Pacific is rescheduling key events that were to be held over the weekend of February 6-8, including the Distinguished Alumni Awards, the Athletic Hall of Honor Induction, and the reception honoring retiring faculty members. This year's Distinguished Alumni honorees are **Nicole (Yerden) Wells**, '98, and **Dr. Kerry Kuehl**, '81. The Athletic Hall of Honor Induction will recognize outstanding former student athletes **Darcy Fast** '69, baseball and basketball; and the 1982 and 1983 volleyball teams. The reception to honor retiring faculty will provide an opportunity for students and alumni to share their appreciation of **Dr. John Fazio**, **Dr. Lou Foltz**, and **Phyllis Michael**. To stay up to date as these events are rescheduled, find WPC on Facebook at [facebook.com/warnerpacific](https://facebook.com/warnerpacific) or visit [warnerpacific.edu/alumni](http://warnerpacific.edu/alumni).

## WP Author in Residence Named Regular Contributor to Leadership Journal

As the College's Author in Residence, Tony Kriz explores the often paradoxical experiences of faith as he shares stories, real-life conversations, and encounters which prove that God can and will use anyone and anything. He will now be able to share that message with a wider audience of church leaders in his new role as a regular contributor to Leadership Journal. Kriz is the author of



*"Welcome to the Table: Post-Christian Culture Saves a Seat for Ancient Liturgy"* and most recently, *"Neighbors and Wise Men: Sacred Encounters in a Portland Pub and Other Unexpected Places."* Leadership Journal, published quarterly by Christianity Today International, provides today's church leaders with biblically faithful, pastorally practical writing. Their mission is to serve Christ's church by keeping leaders informed, encouraged, and connected to the global community of leaders.

## Warner Pacific Welcomes New Act Six Cadre



Ten high school seniors have been awarded full need scholarships to Warner Pacific through the Act Six Leadership & Scholarship Initiative. These diverse student leaders were selected following a rigorous three-month competition among more than 900 applicants. Cadre 5 scholars were chosen for their distinctive leadership, academic potential, and commitment to making a difference in their communities. Learn more at [warnerpacific.edu/act-six](http://warnerpacific.edu/act-six).

## National Guide Honors Warner Pacific for Distinctive Educational Excellence

Warner Pacific was honored as a College of Distinction for the 2013-2014 school year. The College of Distinction

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# WPC: Distinctive Educational Excellence

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designation is given to select schools to honor their excellence in student-focused higher education. Colleges of Distinction is a web-based guide for high school juniors and seniors seeking a school that is nationally recognized and highly recommended by professionals in the field education. Colleges and universities are nominated for participation by high school counselors, and then evaluated using qualitative and quantitative research. Schools selected must excel in the Four Distinctions: engaged students, great teaching, vibrant communities, and successful outcomes. To view Warner Pacific's profile or to find more information about the online guide visit [CollegesofDistinction.com](http://CollegesofDistinction.com).

## ASSOCIATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### March

8 General Council Meeting, District Office  
12-April 20 Focus 40: "Extreme Living"  
<http://chog.org/Focus40>

### April

1-3 Senior Adult Retreat, Cannon Beach  
4-5 Christian Women's Connection Spring Convention, Lents Gilbert Church; Jenny Marble, speaker  
12 President's Tea & Scholarship Auction, WPC  
20 Easter—Resurrection Sunday  
29-May 1 WARM, Lynchwood COG

## Lynchwood to host WARM 2014 Conference

With a focus on *Being the Body of Christ Yesterday, Today and Forever*, the WARM 2014 Conference features historian Dr. Merle Strege, guest Dr. Leonard Sweet, and General Director COG, Dr. Jim Lyon. With such a great line-up of speakers, the event is sure to be a time of refreshing.

This year's conference kicks off with a Golf Tournament early in the day Tuesday, April 29, with Registration from 3-6 p.m. followed by an evening banquet from 6-7 and main session with Dr. Strege. Dr. Sweet will speak several times on Wednesday, and Thursday's main session will conclude with Dr. Lyon.

Cost for the event is \$109 for the first registration, and each additional registration \$89 (when registered at the same time). Spouses and Retired Ministers may register for \$69i.

This WARM event only offers a spe-

**Yesterday. Today and Forever**  
*Being the Body of Christ*  
"Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Hebrews 13:7-8

Dr. Merle Strege "Yesterday"  
Dr. Leonard Sweet "Today"  
General Director COG Dr. Jim Lyon "Forever"

**WARM 2014 Conference**  
April 29 - May 1, 2014  
Lynchwood Church of God, Portland, Oregon  
[www.warmcog.org](http://www.warmcog.org)

cial \$69 Welcome Back Rate for those who have not attended in the past 5 years or more, if registered by the due date. NOTE: A \$20 late fee is added after April 15, 2014. Lodging: Discounted rate when staying at Days Inn (\$55,

\$60 double plus tax). A limited number of host homes is available for lodging. Contact Pastor John Kuykendall 503.665.6638 to make arrangements.

See [www.warmcog.org](http://www.warmcog.org).

**MISSION STATEMENT:** "This Association exists to serve and empower affiliated churches and ministries to fulfill the call of Christ."

**VISION STATEMENT:** "To serve and empower by: coordinating ministries, providing guidance, giving encouragement, supplying information, and offering training, in order to enable churches and ministries to mature in holiness, unity, services and growth."