



Association of  
the Churches  
of God  
in Oregon and  
Southwest  
Washington

## NOTICE: Association Annual Business Meeting

Wednesday, July 29, 2015, 1:30-3:30 p.m.  
Warner Pacific College McGuire Auditorium

<http://orwacog.org/annual-business-meeting/>

## Summer Celebration 2015: *JESUS IS THE SUBJECT*

The Church of God in Oregon and SW Washington will come together again July 26-29, 2015 on the Warner Pacific College campus in Portland, Oregon.

With JESUS as the subject, evening speakers are scheduled as follows:

Sunday, July 26: Dr. T. Allen Bethel

Monday, July 27: Rev. Mark Fast

Tuesday, July 28: Rhonda Philips & Audrey Weiger

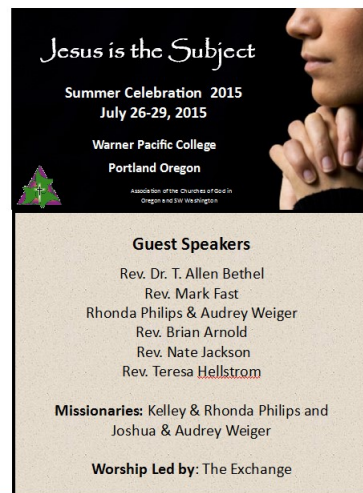
Wednesday, July 29: Rev. Brian Arnold

"The Exchange" team will lead worship. Check them out at <http://www.theexchangerock.com>

During the Monday evening service, July 27, a special time of ministers' recognition will honor those with 25, 40 and 50 years of ordained ministry service, along with a time of remembrance for those ministers in our District who have passed away.

An Ordination Service will be held on Wednesday, July 29, during the evening service. Five candidates will be ordained.

(Continued on page 2)



## Packed House at North American Convention

A capacity crowd attended the North American Convention of the Church of God in Oklahoma City, OK, June 22-25.

Those unable to attend had opportunity to view via internet live-stream Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, as well as the General Assembly sessions Tuesday-Thursday mornings.

The Oregon and SW Washington Association was well represented, networking, reconnecting, and blessed with great times of worship and challenge. The Church at the Crossings in OK City offered their services as well as facilities, and Director Jim Lyon, articulate and gracious, represents the Movement of the Church of God with strong leadership. The week was filled with praise and top quality speakers, worship leaders and musicians. The Church is challenged to be bold, and to take back ground the enemy has stolen. [Jesusisthesubject.org](http://Jesusisthesubject.org).



Francis Chan addresses NAC June 24 in OK City

THE CONTACT

July 2015

Volume 2 Issue 7

E-Contact

# Summer Celebration

(Continued from page 1)

The elementary school children's evening program will be led by Peter and Judi Howland, of Longview, WA, with the theme "Agents of Truth" and the subject: Jesus! Tuesday, July 28, is set aside as "Children's Fun Day". Don't miss it!



Food service is available at Warner Pacific College Dining Hall (except for Sunday, July 26), with meals priced as follows:

Breakfast, \$6.40; Lunch, \$10.00; Dinner, \$10.50  
(Tuesday lunch is complimentary)

A limited number of campus apartments are available on a 1st come, 1st served basis. 24-hour Campus Security. Contact the Church of God District Office (800-873-7729) for information. Off-campus housing includes LaQuinta Inn & Suites, and Ramada Inn (special Warner Pacific College rates may be requested when making reservations).

Registration and detailed information is available online at [orwacog.org](http://orwacog.org). To register by mail, use the form found on page 9 of this publication.

Youth registration is \$45 per person (6th through 12th grades) covers the entire youth event, including lodging, meals and activities Sunday through noon on Thursday. Registration forms may be sent to Pastor Aaron Walton at Mt. Scott Church of God in Portland. Information is available online, but there is no online registration available for youth.

While full refunds are not available as of July 1, 2015, registrations are transferable.

## Text Subscribing to Prayer: An E-mail Ministry and the Man Behind It

by Emily Ploetz, posted by ChoG Ministries

*Ding! Chirp! Buzz!* Many of these sounds fly out of phones, tablets or laptops, announcing the latest e-mail to arrive in your inbox. Hundreds of thousands of e-mails are sent every day around the world for various reasons, such as business meetings, soccer games, or lunch outings with friends. David L. Coolidge regularly sends e-mails to more than *1,500 individual e-mail addresses* across the Church of God. Many of the people who receive those e-mails forward them on to others, making it nearly impossible to know how many families Coolidge reaches. But why would someone go to the trouble of getting special permission from an Internet provider to send all of those e-mails? If you were to ask David Coolidge, it all comes down to one thing: prayer.

After serving the Lord for more than forty years as a pastor for youth, music and worship ministry, and visitation and pastoral care, David and his wife retired from their staff ministry positions in 1999. Coolidge admitted that adjusting to retirement, especially in the beginning, was difficult.



David Coolidge

"There were times when I greatly missed former pastoral duties and responsibilities, and other moments when I felt I was only an observer on the sidelines of the playing field of life. I longed for a renewed sense of purpose in my life and a new focus in my vocation as a minister."

The Lord, knowing the desires of David's heart, created a turning point in his life in the spring of 2000 when close friend and colleague at Park Place Church, Anita Smith Womack, fell ill. David Coolidge visited Anita and her husband in the hospital frequently, and felt led to send e-mail updates on her condition to various friends near and far. Many of those recipients expressed gratitude for the e-mails, and after Anita's passing, more recipients began to ask to be added to the prayer mailing list.

This was the beginning of the now-widespread e-mail prayer ministry. Prompted by the Lord, David Coolidge was soon sharing updates on births, weddings, special events, illness/surgery, accidents, deaths, and any other concerns of people in or related to Park Place Church of God, Anderson University, and other communities across the Church of God.

(Continued on page 3)

# Text Subscribing to Prayer

(Continued from page 2)

David even takes the time to research and include the family information for recipients so that everyone who receives the prayer request can relate to each other more personally—or perhaps realize that they are acquainted with that person's relatives or extended family members—bringing more unity to the body of Christ. In times of death, David tries to personally contact the grieving family to express condolences and obtain family information, as well as the times and dates for the visitation and service to include in his e-mails. The ministry has also expanded to not just e-mails, but also to sending sympathy, anniversary and birthday cards, e-cards, and Facebook messages.

David Coolidge has discovered over the past fifteen years of this ministry that the subject individuals of the e-mails and prayer requests are deeply grateful for the support, and often receive more e-mails from others who are a part of the e-mail prayer ministry for encouragement. When asked about how important prayer is to his personal faith, David Coolidge replied, "I strongly believe in the power of intercessory prayer, and prayer is very important to my personal faith."

This e-mail prayer ministry has made an impact on the community as "an important vehicle of communication for them to learn about the needs and concerns of persons they might not know about otherwise, and provides the opportunity for them to pray for and communicate directly with the persons for whom prayer has been requested, and taking advantage of the opportunity to request prayer by many fellow members of the family of God when desired/needed for themselves."

If you would like to "subscribe" to this growing ministry, simply e-mail David Coolidge at [DLeonCool@aol.com](mailto:DLeonCool@aol.com) with your name and e-mail address by which you would like to receive his ministry e-mails.

*Emily Ploetz is a communication intern for Church of God Ministries from Cincinnati, Ohio. She currently studies English education at Anderson University.*

*James 5:16*

*"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."*

# Prayer Summit Report

by Steve Kufeldt

"We need more congregations, and we do that by planting churches. This prayer summit is critical to our future if we are to grow as the church. It is a call to prayer, and to seek the heart and face of God together and to have Him speak to our hearts about His will to establish and enlarge His kingdom throughout the district."

So wrote Kent Walton, pastor of Hilltop Community Church of God in Oregon City and member of the Church Extension Commission, to start the one-day Prayer Summit hosted by Hoodview Church of God in Woodburn, OR, on Monday, June 15.

Dennis Fuqua, Director of International Renewal Ministries, has led hundreds of prayer summits and assisted the 17 pastors and church leaders of the Church of God who gathered for this day of prayer. Using the power and beauty of God's Word, the Prayer Summit participants spent much of the day in worship and praying Scripture. While the Prayer Summit experience was new for most participants, most acknowledged that they sensed a fresh wind of God's leading in our lives and churches through this time of focused prayer.



Prayer Summit participants met in Woodburn June 15

While sensing the urgency and need of planting new churches and empowering our present churches, the participants were challenged to carve out time in the near future for an extended multiple day prayer summit. As plans come together, it is hoped that many pastors and church leaders throughout our district will make it a priority to get away for such a future prayer summit, for if we are to do anything of eternal significance, it must be through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

## Oregon Governor Kate Brown declares August 3–7 as “Oregon Private College Week”

The proclamation cites the indispensable contributions of the state’s private, nonprofit sector of higher education to Oregon’s communities and to the state’s 40-40-20 education attainment goal. Together, the private nonprofit sector offers degrees in more than 240 fields of study, such as engineering and computer science. Read more: <http://www.warnerpacific.edu/governor-brown-proclaims-august-3-7-as-oregon-private-college-week/> Interested in college? Learn more about Warner Pacific and other Oregon Private Colleges. Register today (free) for a 9 am or 2 pm session at one or more school. Go to [oregonprivatecolleges.com](http://oregonprivatecolleges.com)

## Outstanding academic achievements by Warner Pacific students

498 Warner Pacific College students were named to the Dean’s List for the Spring 2015 academic term (includes traditional undergraduate and Adult Degree Program students. See the complete list here: <http://www.warnerpacific.edu/deans-list-for-spring-2015/>

## All this talk of graduation got you thinking of getting your degree?

Warner Pacific’s Adult Degree Program offers 8 degree programs including an associates and 3 masters degrees. In just 18 months, you could be walking across the stage yourself. Cohorts are forming now and classes start monthly. We have 6 campuses across Portland and SW Washington and several degrees are available online. Visit [www.warnerpacific.edu/adp](http://www.warnerpacific.edu/adp) to learn more today!

## Free Concert in the Park – Tuesday, July 28, at Mt. Tabor

Lisa Mann & Her Really Good Band (bass-driven blues) perform at 6:30 pm. Bring a picnic dinner, blanket, and friends to enjoy the summer evening together. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/489141> NOTE that this concert is the same week as Summer Celebration at the College, so plan to spend an evening in the park listening to live music.

## Free Movie on the Lawn – Saturday, August 8, on the AF Gray Lawn at Warner Pacific

We are screening The Lego Movie (PG). The movie starts at dusk, but enjoy a free concert by POPgoji starting at 6:30 pm. Bring snack, a blanket, and jacket – oh and the kids! <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/489142>

## Dr. Cook voices prayer at North American Convention



Dr. Andrea Cook was invited to voice the prayer of commissioning for Anderson University President, Dr. John Pistole and his wife during the NAC in Oklahoma City June 24. Evening sessions were live-streamed Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

The E-CONTACT is a publication of the Church of God in Oregon and SW Washington  
PO Box 18000, Salem, OR 97305 503-393-3510 or 800-873-7729 [www.orwacog.org](http://www.orwacog.org)  
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Kay Tira, Editor—[contacteditor@orwacog.org](mailto:contacteditor@orwacog.org)

# Camp White Branch

## SUMMER CAMP DATES

- Junior Camp -  
Monday, July 6, through Friday, July 10, 2015
- Middle School Camp - Monday, July 13— Friday, July 17, 2015
- Intro Camp - Friday, July 17, through Sunday, July 19, 2015
- Primary Camp - Monday, July 20, through Thursday, July 23, 2015
- Senior High Camp -  
Monday, August 3, through Friday, August 7, 2015



Posters and  
information  
available at  
<http://www.orwacog/camp-white-branch>

## Facilities Update

Camp White Branch Chairman Mel Neu reports that the building company confirmed their hiring of a Portland firm to sandblast the structure's painted surfaces, apply a coat of rust inhibitive primer and add a white top-coat. The work – a big answer to prayer – should be underway by the time of this reading.

The Rainier Church of God held a work project over Memorial Day weekend, chopping, hauling and stacking fire wood. They cleaned up the whole camp and burned debris, cleaned the pool, installed gate, cleaned the kitchen, and did many other things, making the camp look clean and neat.



Leonard refinished the three lower cabins' bathrooms with a plastic coating, and Mel painted the bathroom floors. A group from Idaho pitched in to help Leonard and Stacy paint the dining room in the Dining Hall. Owen and Mel finished spreading the gravel around the wood shed and boiler for the new building. The Albany Church of God scheduled Father's Day weekend to do a number of projects. Praise God for the progress at Camp White Branch. Continue to pray for the finances and Capital Campaign efforts as the work continues toward the completion of the long-awaited multipurpose building. Pray for the summer camps, with Junior Camp kicking off July 6.



**August 21-23**

**Men's Advance**

**Camp White Branch**

**Speaker: Mike Kernutt**

**\$75 by Aug. 6**

**\$85 at the door**

**[www.orwacog.org](http://www.orwacog.org)**

## Senior High Camp

Senior High Camp will be held at Camp White Branch August 3-8, co-directed by Billy Effingham, Teresa Hellstrom, Boston Jackson, and Cody Meyer.

Leaders or adults planning to attend with their groups, please contact Billy at [weffingham@gmail.com](mailto:weffingham@gmail.com).



# Work Camp Crews Help Prepare White Branch

We just concluded a great work weekend with the Albany Church of God. They replaced the seating in the amphitheater north of the new building; replaced the steps to the upper path north of the Dining Hall; made dividers as required for the beds above dining hall; chopped and hauled wood from the meadow as you come into camp; painted bathroom in Lodge and bedroom in the assistant's house; worked on camp truck; cleaned the offices; cut small trees that were in wrong places; and planted flowers in planter barrels in front of caretakers' house; a box in front of the sign, and cleaned the flower bed in front of the assistant's house.

There were over 60 people who came and made our camp a more beautiful and much better place. It is impossible to say how much it means to the camp and staff. Many hands make a big job much easier. It would take many months for the staff to accomplish what they have done.



Work teams: Albany (left and below); Rainier (3 above)



The Memorial Day work weekend came and cleaned the camp from front to back. It always looks like someone loves this place. We are so thankful for all of their hard work. They also chopped and hauled many loads of wood. They worked on the pumps for the pool and the phone system.

As a camp and staff we are so very thankful for each one who gave their time and made this camp a place to be proud. I pray that the Good LORD will richly bless all who were a part of our work weeks. ~Mel Neu



Leonard Meyer, Camp White Branch Manager, fell June 23rd and is in the hospital with a mild concussion, fractured rib and a small fracture in the lower back. Pray for his rapid recovery and for his wife, Stacey, as she cares for him.



# Senior Moments

by Ruth Bissett

Hello fellow seniors! Greetings!

Last time I shared from the senior retreat and I would like to share more thoughts from Dr. Lee Rennick of the Church at the Crossings in Indianapolis, Indiana.

In talking about leaving a legacy for our children and grandchildren, he asked the question, "What do you really want to leave with your family?" I'm sure we have all thought of that from time to time. He asked, "Could it be that sometimes we try too hard? Do you want to leave your mission? Your commission?"

These are the four gifts that you alone can give:

Your prayers – No one can pray like you for your family. Let your grandkids hear your voice praying their name. Be generous in your prayers.

Your stories – They are a treasure torch handed to us. Your family needs to know your story. Be personal. Be generous.

Yourself – Be who you are. Just show up. I think this is so important to be there for their games, concerts, awards, hurts, celebrations, etc. I have said many times that I have spent a lot of time on bleachers and lawn chairs. Here it is again: Be generous.

Your blessing – This doesn't mean your approval of something illegal or immoral. Unconditional love. I think this is hard for the

world to understand that we can love them without approving of what they are doing. They are asking, "Do you still love me?" Our response needs to be, **ABSOLUTELY AND I ALWAYS WILL.** What I say to my grandchildren is, "Don't you ever forget how much I love you." Sometimes I just say, "Don't you ever forget....." and they know the rest because I have said it so much. Steve suggested googling Bible Blessings to pray or speak over your children.

Two quotes that Steve gave were these ,and I think they are worth sharing:

"Show us how to live; show us how to die."  
"Please come see me on the other side."

I personally like, "See you at the house" instead of saying goodbye.

By time you receive this, it will be camp meeting (Summer Celebration) time. Be sure to buy your ticket for the *Heavenly Event* for Wednesday, July 29 at 4:30 pm, when you register online. If possible, wear white for this. We will see angels, Abraham, St. Peter, heavenly gates and those who have gone on before. I would invite you to bring a picture to put on the wall of a loved one who has gone to heaven or you can write their name on the wall. Encourage others to come and also for the sessions on Heaven lead by Gale Hency on Monday and Tuesday at 3:30 pm..

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## Empty Pew Project

by Serena Ellens, posted by ChoG Ministries

The Empty Pew Project, a new ministry opportunity developed by North Avenue Church of God in Battle Creek, Michigan, was created to give members the opportunity to serve in their community instead of simply sitting in church every week. The Empty Pew Project defied the negative connotations associated with empty pews and instead transformed this negative image into an incredibly positive and engaging ministry event.

The lead pastor at North Avenue, Jeff Eckman, addressed the idea behind the event, saying "We believe that emptying the pews for the right reason, and with the right motives, is actually a fulfillment of the Great Commandment, and exactly what Jesus would want us to do. We all hear people outside of the body of Christ criticize the church for being ingrown, selfish, hypocritical, and focused on money. Our goal was to show them a different image of the church. One that is more Christ-like. One that is here to serve."

Led by a sermon series on Matthew 20:26–28—a passage that encourages Christians to follow Jesus and serve others just as he did—The Empty Pew Project was a weeklong service opportunity at the end of May for

(Continued on page 11)



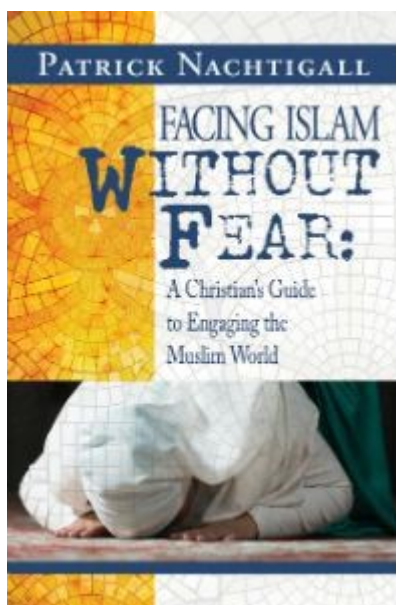
# New Book from Warner Press Explains Events in the Middle East

posted by ChoG Ministries

At Church of God Convention in June, Warner Press released a timely new book by cross-cultural missionary Patrick Nachtigall. Titled *Facing Islam without Fear*, the book covers the dramatic changes occurring in the Middle East and argues that Christians cannot live in fear of the upheaval occurring in the Islamic world.

The news media has become a very poor source for understanding the complexity of the Islamic world. "Most of us who have traveled, worked, or lived extensively in the Islamic world are struck by the friendliness of the people, their knowledge of politics and history, and the intellectual sophistication of many of the people we meet," Nachtigall writes. The book breaks through the misinformation and simplistic analysis found in the media, but also forcefully argues in-depth that the rise of Islamic extremism indicates that Islam itself is in upheaval.

"Many of these troubles stem from Islam's tension with secular political order and the modern world," he notes. "We are not witnessing a 'clash of civilizations' as much as we are witnessing a clash within a civilization that is spilling out globally."

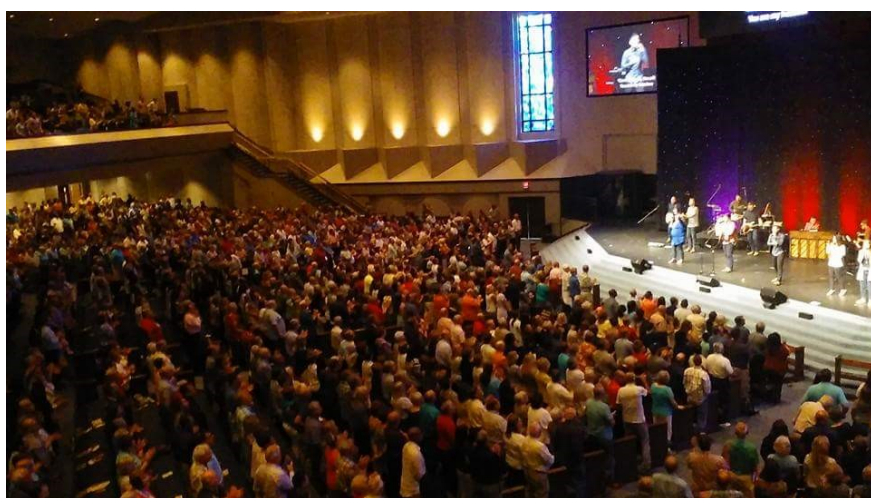


In *Facing Islam without Fear*, Nachtigall introduces the basics of the Islamic faith, explains the underlying reasons for Islam's current instability, and does not shy away from the militancy found in many forms of Islam. He discusses geo-political tensions, the terrorist threat, and Christian revivals breaking out. The book prepares Christians to engage Muslims—free of stereotypes, but with a realistic view of how Christianity differs from Islam.

A graduate of Anderson University and Yale University, Patrick Nachtigall is an emerging authority on the impact of globalization upon Christianity. His previous books on this subject include *Passport of Faith* (Warner Press: 2006) and *Faith in the Future* (Warner Press: 2008). He has traveled to more than seventy countries, lived on four continents, and his work over the past fifteen years has been based in the Middle East, Asia, and Europe.

*Facing Islam without Fear* (ISBN: 978-1-59317-794-2) was made available at Church of God Convention in Oklahoma City, June 22–25. Printed copies also will be sold at the Warner Press website ([www.warnerpress.org](http://www.warnerpress.org)) and Kindle e-books at the Amazon website ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)), beginning on July 1. For more information, and to download a sample chapter of the book, visit <http://warnerpress.org/books/facingislamwithoutfear>.

**The Church at the Crossings, Oklahoma City, OK housed the Church of God N. American Convention**



# Jesus is the Subject

## SUMMER CELEBRATION REGISTRATION

*This includes all events and ministries (except Youth)*

Online Registration is also available @ [www.orwacoq.org](http://www.orwacoq.org)

- **INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION, Sunday–Wednesday** ----- \$30.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION, Single event/day** ----- \$15.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*If an individual(s) decides to attend two or more events later, registration will be as above.*
- **FAMILY REGISTRATION, Same household** ----- \$45.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Sunday–Wednesday, This does NOT include youth attending the youth events.*
- **ADULT DINNER EVENT WEDNESDAY, July 29, 2015** ----- \$10.25 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*Formerly known as the Senior Adult Dinner, all adults are invited.*
- **I want to give a gift so others can go!** My gift amount is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Registration Fees** (maximum per household is \$45) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Include Housing Cost (info at bottom of page) if applicable

**Mail this completed form and payment to: The Association of the Churches of God,  
 PO Box 18000, Salem, OR 97305**

**Youth, 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade, need to register & pay separately with Pastor Aaron Walton  
 @ Mt. Scott Church of God, 503-771-1195**

### REFUND POLICY: Full refunds until July 1, 2015.

No refunds after that date. Registrations may be transferred to someone else.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*If children, other than those attending youth events, will be attending, please list their names and ages:*

Name	Age
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please note any information for your registered children we might need to know: medical, restrictive diet, etc.

### Housing Information:

*There are a limited number of campus apartments available on a **first-come, first-serve** basis. The cost is \$50.00 per night for a two bedroom unit. These unfurnished apartments include bunk beds, bath & kitchen. You are responsible for your own food (meals available in Dining Hall), utensils, table, chairs, etc.*

**Mark the nights you are requesting:** Sun \_\_\_\_\_ Mon \_\_\_\_\_ Tues \_\_\_\_\_ Wed \_\_\_\_\_

**Cost:** \$50.00 X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please add to registration amount above

**••Scholarship grants are available for individuals/families who cannot afford this registration fee on an individual basis. Please contact the Church of God District Office, 800-873-7729.**

# Rev. Grant Fall receives title of Pastor Emeritus

The Oak Park Church of God in Salem, Oregon, bestowed upon Rev. Grant Fall the title of Pastor Emeritus. The celebration took place during the morning worship service of May 24, just prior to Grant's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, and was attended by a number of Grant's family and friends, including three of his daughters and their families. A potluck luncheon followed the event.

Rev. Grant E. Fall was born and raised in the state of Washington. He accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior at age 20 while serving in the United States Marine Corps. A couple of years later in 1957, Grant felt God calling him into ministry while attending a youth camp at Mt. Palomar, California. While in California, Grant began attending the First Church of God in Oceanside, California where he met and married Margaret. Four of their five daughters (Janelle, Janine, Jackie and Joy) were born in California. Grant served as the Youth Pastor in Oceanside, California from 1960 to 1966.

In 1966 Grant began 10 years of ministry as Senior Pastor at the First Church of God in Klamath Falls, Oregon. During Grant's time of ministry at Klamath Falls, he was ordained in 1968 at the Oregon State Campmeeting. Daughter Jill joined the family in Klamath Falls.

In 1976 Grant and Margaret moved to Salem, Oregon where he served 11 years as Senior Pastor at the Oak Park Church of God. Grant's ministry also extended beyond the local level. During 8 of the 11 years in Salem, Grant served as the Chair of the Association of the Churches of God in Oregon and SW Washington. He served 11 years on the Board of Trustees for Warner Pacific College starting first during his pastorate in Salem, and continuing during a couple of his later pastorates in the Northwest.

From Salem, Grant and Margaret moved to Anchorage, Alaska for two years where Grant served as Senior Pastor at the Cornerstone Church of God. In 1989 they found their way back to Oregon and



**Pastor Glen Hossler, right, presents Rev. Grant Fall with title of Pastor Emeritus at the Salem, Oregon Oak Park Church of God**

pastored the First Church of God in Medford, for six years. 1995 found Grant and Margaret moving to Edmonds, Washington where for seven years he continued serving as a Senior Pastor. While in Edmonds, Grant served as Chair of the Washington Credentials Board and Chair of the Pacific Northwest Association of the Church of God.

At the age of 67 when some people choose retirement, Grant continued in ministry for another 12 years as an Associate Pastor. First he served four years in Klamath Falls, Oregon and then eight years in Salem at Oak Park Church of God. Grant will never fully retire from ministry as he is constantly looking for ways to love, encourage and serve people. We commend his dedication to faithfully serve God in the pastoral ministry his whole adult life.

For 46 years of ordained ministry and 54 years total of vocational ministry, we hereby bestow upon Rev. Grant E. Fall the title of Pastor Emeritus at Oak Park Church of God, Salem, Oregon.

**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."

# Empty Pew Project

(Continued from page 7)

members of the congregation to engage in various acts of service at several local organizations. From weeding and yard work, to tying quilts and sorting clothes, North Avenue benefited their community in deliberate and enjoyable ways that engaged those outside the church and hand-delivered the gospel message to them.

Though the project was primarily focused on serving and assisting people outside of the church, the reaches of its influence extended inwardly, as well, blessing the members of the congregation themselves and drawing them closer together in a beautiful display of unity and cooperation. Pastor Eckman testified to this unity, saying, "The most encouraging thing to me was the way that everyone worked together. The youth were working alongside some of our elderly, and families with kids were doing projects together. We also had one family that visited the church after recently moving into the area during the series. They immediately got on board and, after only being here two Sundays, they worked with us and built immediate connections to the church."

As Pastor Eckman told of the more than one hundred pairs of dirty, muddy shoes sitting outside the doors of the church during The Empty Pew Project's conclusory celebration service, I was reminded of one of Jesus' final acts of service: the washing of his disciples' feet. Just as Jesus humbled himself and washed the feet of those he came to save, so too North Avenue Church humbled themselves as a congregation and served the community that surrounded them.

The Empty Pew Project not only defied the stereotypically negative connotations associated with empty pews, it achieved a nearly opposing mindset that actually encouraged the emptying of pews in order to effectively minister as Jesus did. Whether washing one's feet or clearing brush in a local park, North Avenue discovered the blessing of service and the ability it has to spread the gospel in the name of Jesus.

*Serena Ellens is a communication intern for Church of God Ministries from Grand Rapids, Michigan. She is currently studying English at Anderson University.*

## Upcoming Events

**Independence Day** - Saturday, July 4,

**Junior Camp, entering 5th-6th grade** - Monday, July 6, - Friday, July 10, - All Day

**Middle School Camp, entering 7th-8th grade** - Monday, July 13, - Friday, July 17,

**Region #1** - Tuesday, July 14, - 10:00 am

**Intro Camp, entering 2nd-3rd grade & Parent** - Friday, July 17, - Sunday, July 19,

**Primary Camp, entering 3rd-4th grade** - Monday, July 20, - Thursday, July 23, - All Day

**Summer Celebration** - Sunday, July 26, - Wednesday, July 29 - All Day

**Annual Business Meeting.** Wednesday, July 29, 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

**NACOG Campmeeting** - Sunday, August 2, 2015 - Sunday, August 9, 2015 - All Day

**Senior High Camp, entering 9th-12th grade** - Monday, August 3, 2015 - Friday, August 7, 2015 - All Day

**Men's Advance** - Friday, August 21, 2015 - Sunday, August 23, 2015 - All Day

**Retired Ministers, Missionaries & Spouses Appreciation Dinner** - Thursday, September 3, 2015 - 4:30 pm

**LABOR DAY** - Monday, September 7, 2015 - All Day

**Christian Women Connection Fall Retreat** - Friday, September 18, 2015 - Sunday, September 20, 2015 - All Day

**Camp White Branch Campaign Sunday** - Sunday, September 20, 2015 - All Day

**2015 Children of Promise Sunday** - Sunday, September 27, 2015 - All Day

**Clergy Appreciation Month** - Thursday, October 1, 2015 - Saturday, October 31, 2015

See: [www.orwacog.org/calendar](http://www.orwacog.org/calendar)



**Annual Business Meeting**  
**1:30-3:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 29, 2015**  
**McGuire Auditorium, Warner Pacific College**  
**See [www.orwacog.org](http://www.orwacog.org)**

