

CHURCH *of* GOD

A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.

P.O. Box 1009
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July 5, 2018

Dear Brethren,

Summer has arrived in Dallas! The temperature is regularly exceeding 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius). This has created a few problems at the building site for our new office. We are still pouring concrete, which must be completed before we can begin the actual steel structure. With daytime temperatures above 100 degrees, the desire would be to pour it at night when the temperature drops to around 80 degrees. However, the city of McKinney will not allow us to do so because of nearby residences.

Working in temperatures over 100 degrees is difficult, causing some work to be limited to the morning hours rather than the afternoon, creating a bit of delay. Of course, we have all come to realize that this is the way of construction. It ebbs and flows based on city regulations, the weather, work schedules and material. We are excited and looking forward to when the building will be completed and we can move in! Overall, we are on schedule (taking into consideration that we began two months late), but we will probably lose some time because of the extreme heat.

This is not the first building project that I have been involved with, but I have to admit that I am learning new lessons along the way. The good news is that we have been blessed this year with additional income, above what we budgeted, making it possible for us to manage the unexpected costs. It seems that whenever something has come up, the funds have been there. I am very pleased to say that purchasing the land and constructing the new building have not taken away from our efforts to preach the gospel and care for the brethren.

Evidence of that fact is that since July 2017 we have hired six new men for the full-time ministry here in the United States. And in addition to these six, we are very close to announcing a new hire for video production. We should have this position filled by the end of the summer.

This is the largest number that we have hired in any 12-month period since the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, began. In the case of the ministry, it has always been our desire to hire younger men to replace those who are retiring, so we are pleased that two of our new ministerial hires are in their early 30s.

The six hires are Chad Messerly (hired in July 2017) from Columbus, Ohio; Zach Smith (hired in November 2017) from Akron, Ohio; Caleb Froedge (hired July 2, 2018) from the Kansas City area; Larry Solomon (hired July 2) from East Texas; Wes Cohron (hired July 2) from Buford, Georgia; and David Jackson (from part-time to full-time on July 16) from Maryland.

David Jackson has already taken on the role of pastoring, having replaced Tim Waddle, who was transferred last year to New Zealand. We have high hopes that the remaining five will take on the responsibility of pastoring congregations in the near future.

In the past 12 months, the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, has focused attention on Christ's admonition, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the

Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:37-38). We believe you have taken this to heart as well. As a result of those prayers, we see new men being added to the full-time ministry to go out into “His harvest.” Yes, it is our belief that the harvest belongs to God. He must call each and every one (John 6:44). Our job is to make the gospel message available to as many people as possible, then it is God the Father’s job to call those whom He chooses. And afterward, it is our responsibility to provide the shepherds to care for those who are being called. It is a very important part of what we have been called to do.

In addition to these six new ministerial hires, all in the United States, we are focusing attention on the International Leadership Program to provide the much-needed help for shepherds and leadership in areas outside the U.S. This new program is gaining steam and will include seminars and classes in every region of the world before the end of 2019. We have one more weekend seminar scheduled for this year (after the Feast of Tabernacles) in the Philippines. It will include leaders and potential leaders from Asia as well as the Philippines.

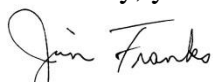
The work of the Church never slows down, even in the summertime. With the new building, two weeklong sessions of FI continuing education classes, and bringing onboard our new hires, this summer will be busier than most. I constantly remind myself that in the process of all this busyness, we must not neglect the most important thing in our lives—our personal relationship with God.

As Christians, we have an opportunity every seventh day, on the Sabbath, to take a break from our weekly routine in order to be spiritually refreshed. We don’t go to work; we don’t seek our own pleasure. Instead, we attend services, and we rest. “Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed” (Exodus 23:12). We see that even God “rested and was refreshed” on the Sabbath day: “It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed” (Exodus 31:17).

I am happy for anyone who can take the time during the summer to get away from all the pressure that we constantly face in society. I know it isn’t quite the same in other parts of the world as it is here in the United States. But having traveled throughout Africa and Latin America, I’ve seen the stress levels and constant activity that have become part of our modern society in virtually all countries. It seems that everyone needs a break, a time of refreshing. We all need a time when we can be rejuvenated physically and spiritually.

Please enjoy your summer. Take some time to get away if at all possible, but never let down in your spiritual growth. The apostle Paul admonished the Ephesians and Colossians to be diligent and to redeem the time (Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5). Prayer, meditation and study are essential activities for every Christian and are just as important in the summer and while on vacation as they are during the rest of the year!

Sincerely, your brother in Christ,


Jim Franks