

California Visits-Part II--Vol. 8, No. 45

[Click here for printable version.](#)



The Wheatland building

Two weeks ago Linda and I flew to Sacramento for the fall quarterly meeting of our California churches at Wheatland. I gave eNews readers the first part of my report last week (See eNews archive), and this week I want to finish the story. In short, good things are happening in the Churches of God, General Conference (CGGC) congregations on the west coast with new Hispanic works developing in Los Angeles and Wheatland, a connection with the Liberian community in Oakland, and the growth of ministry in several of the legacy

(long established) churches.

Sunday morning (10/26) we checked out of our hotel and traveled route 65 north to Wheatland. It was about a 25 minute drive on a Sunday morning, and as we drove I saw possibilities for new congregations in the towns along the way (Roseville, Lincoln, Sheridan, etc.). When I asked John and Anita Burns, they told me we once had a congregation in Sheridan, but not the other two. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will raise up workers. When we flew to Sacramento, the Lord sat us with an 83-year-old grandma from Lincoln who confirmed the golden opportunities for the Gospel in California.

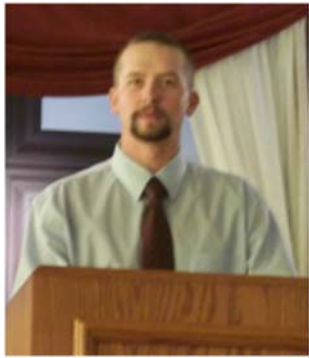


Anita and John Burns



Thurl Pankey leads the Sunday morning Bible class at Wheatland

The morning services at Wheatland started with a traditional Sunday School opening before everyone went to their respective classes. We stayed in the sanctuary for the Bible class led by Thurl Pankey. The worship service began at eleven o'clock with singing and special music. Michael Burns, who serves as the associate pastor with his father, brought the morning message from Jeremiah. He encouraged the congregation to remain true to their profession and remember that God is always found faithful. His love and his plans are unchanging even when he disciplines his people. After the services John and Anita, along with Thurl, took us out to lunch at the local Chinese buffet. It was tough to say goodbye not knowing when or even if we will return.



Michael Burns brings the morning message to the Wheatland congregation



Lunch out with Linda Rosenberry, John Burns, Anita Burns, and Thurl Pankey (l to r)



From Wheatland we hit the freeways to try and make a special 3:30 p.m. service at our Oakland church. Sometime back I promised we'd visit them when we came to CA. Readers may recall that Victor and Carliethia Glover from Raleigh, NC invited their ministry associates Clinton and Yassa Bobray to join the CGGC family back in 2013.

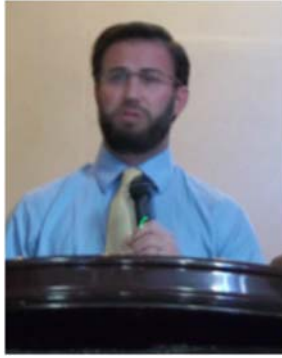


Linda Rosenberry is greeted as she enters the New Beginnings front door



Clinton and Yassa Bobray

The Bobrays and their congregation, New Beginnings International Ministry, linked up with the California Eldership and through them several other connections also developed in CA and in Bristol, PA. Well, given the stop and go traffic around Sacramento and congestion in the bay area, we didn't arrive at our destination until 4 o'clock, but things were actually just getting started.



TJ Welsh

Tim (TJ) Welsh, CGGC pastor at Manteca, emceed the evening program which was dedicated to raising awareness and support for the Ebola crisis in West Africa and particularly in Liberia. Clinton and Yassa as well as many members of their congregation have friends and family directly affected. Several other churches joined in the meeting with their pastors participating in the service. The hall was packed, but as is the custom Linda and I were escorted right up front when we arrived.



Sister Gail Davis shares special music



A view of the congregation



The worship team

The first half hour was devoted to congregational praise and worship after which Pat Welsh, TJ's father and associate in ministry, offered the opening prayer. After this various leaders gave remarks and others shared special music. I especially enjoyed the Welsh family acappella quartet.



The Welsh Family Singers (l to r): Rhonda, Pat, TJ, and Jamie

When it came time for the message, Yassa escorted Linda to the podium for my introduction. Oh my, what she could have said and didn't. PTL! I chose to speak from Matthew 9 using the opening Jesus story as a foundation for my remarks from verse 36. My purpose was to bring encouragement and challenge for the people. Given the Ebola crisis or even life as it is for many people, we must 1) See each person with the eyes of Jesus, 2) Open our hearts to them in Jesus' name, and 3) Reach out to

help them in whatever ways we can. When I finished, Clinton invited any and all to come forward for prayer. Quite a few did so.



Clinton and a fellow birthday honoree

As it happened, that Sunday was Clinton's birthday and at the end of the service the church surprised him with singing and a cake. The ladies also set out a buffet line in the courtyard behind the building for all to partake. Of course the food proffered possessed an ethnic West African flavor. It was very good!



A West African feast



An outside view of the church facility

After a good hour of fellowship we said our farewells and drove back to Sacramento for the night. The next day we needed to arise at 4 to make our 6 a.m. flight back to Detroit. Monday was a long day, but full of memories of our California visit.

Before closing this eNews I want to call upon individuals and churches to respond generously to all those caught in the Ebola crisis. Everyone can pray and should do so for the victims, doctors, nurses, etc. who are directly involved. Congregations should put this matter on their prayer lists and include it in all services of worship. In addition, if any individual or church wants to make a contribution to Ebola relief, I suggest it be done via the larger agencies that have established channels to do so, such as [Samaritan's Purse](#), [Mennonite Central Committee](#), [Doctors without Borders](#), or some other such organization.



Ed and Linda say farewell to the Bobrays and California

As Jesus followers let's be known for our love.

ONe Mission together,
Ed
Soli Deo Gloria!

Rob Warren to Hold Seminar on *Reaching the Post Christian Generation*



Pastors and church leaders, please promote this to your congregation. Come and bring a group of leaders. When I look around the Great Lakes Conference (and the church as a whole), one of the greatest concerns I have is that we are not reaching young adults with the gospel message. We have an aging population in our churches and that is not good. God has given us commands all over Scripture that we are to pass on His message to the next generation. Come out on November 22 as **Rob Warren** from H2O Church in Bowling Green leads us in practical insights into reaching 18-35 year old persons in our churches.

Here are the details about the seminar:

Saturday, November 22, 2014

9:00 am (registration begins at 8:30) – 3:00 pm

Christian Ministries Center, 700 East Melrose Ave

Findlay, Ohio 45840

Cost -- \$10 if registered by November 10

\$15 for registrations after that date

Cost includes lunch and handouts

To register, contact the Great Lakes Conference office

glcsecretary@cggc.org, 419-423-7694

[Download a PDF copy of the flyer here.](#)

Pastor Earl E. Mills

Director, Great Lakes Conference