

# Hope for Mt. Hope ARC--Vol. 8, No. 50--Dec. 12, 2014

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The Mt Hope bethel

They say a tree cannot be measured until it's on the ground. I suppose a similar thing might be said of a church. Last Sunday, Linda and I attended the celebration service for the Mt Hope Church of God in Armstrong County, PA about 30 miles northeast of Pittsburgh. The congregation organized in 1895 and for 120 years bore witness to the Gospel in the greater Leechburg and Freeport communities. In recent years, the worshiping congregation dwindled to the point of being unable to continue operations. For me it's a sad day in the Kingdom when a church closes, but on the other hand there's a lot to celebrate.



Pastor Richard Molgaard

The lives touched and changed over the generations is difficult to measure, and the ripple effect even more so. Never large in size, Mt Hope was mighty in ministry. For the final service on Sunday, about 66 showed up for worship, which packed the sanctuary. I began my remarks by teasing the assembly that we'd hold another "final" service next week and thereafter until no one came. Everyone laughed, but in my humor I intended a very serious commentary on supporting one's local church (Hebrews 10:25).



Pastor Fred Bauer leads singing



100-year-old pianist "Miss Ella"

Interestingly, the Mt Hope church died once before. After starting in Crane's school with 21 members, the church erected a "Schoolhouse" bethel dedicating it on July 30 the following summer with thirteen families in attendance. In an 1897 revival meeting, 37 people came to Christ and 23 of them joined the church. Two years later, 9 more came into the fellowship. However, by the late 1920s the community changed and the congregation aged to the point where the congregation disbanded and the meeting house was torn down.

Then came the great depression and a revival swept the community once again. There were conversions and baptisms in the Kiskiminitas River nearby, and a new generation became fired up for the Lord. They took materials from the old bethel and erected a new facility on the old site. So in 1933, J. L. Updegraph came from the General Conference to officially organize the new church. He commented, "Most of those forming the new church were young men and women in the prime of life. The prospects for the future look good." I've heard it said that God has no grandchildren. How true! Each generation must experience first hand the workings of the Spirit and take up the cause of Christ. For the next eighty years, Mt Hope held up the light of Christ in its community. Several of its young people felt calls to vocational ministry including "Rick" Gamble, who currently serves at Brackenridge, and Janice Bracken, who is pastoring at the Grange church, both in the Allegheny Region. Through its Summer Bible School, missionary support, and community endeavors the church touched hundreds if not thousands of lives. Sadly, they may have missed an opportunity several decades back when they decided not to rebuild on a more accessible location nearby. Undoubtedly facility limitations hindered ministry impact in recent years.



Former Mt Hope Pastor Ron Follett shares special music



Ed preaches the morning message

The celebration last Sunday was like a grand reunion as people who were in some way connected with Mt Hope returned for the last service. I spoke with folks from all over western PA and beyond. Richard and Anna Molgaard, who've been providing pastoral care and leading worship since 2013, put together a great finale for the church. The service included testimonials, special music, and was followed with a catered luncheon.



Cindy Huth shares a musical selection



Lunch in the fellowship hall

After the meal there was time set aside to share stories and continue the celebration of ministry by the Mt Hope church. I preached the morning message from Philippians 1:6 on "Completing a Good Work." Frankly the work of Mt Hope continues in the lives of each one impacted by the ministry of the church. In that sense the real end of Mt Hope's 120-year life won't be until Christ returns.



Fred and Laverne Bauer, Richard and Anna Molgaard, Ed and Linda Rosenberry (left to right)



At Mt Hope I was impressed by several things. First, during the life of this rural congregation its impact has been huge for the Kingdom. Second, the church decided to give its remaining assets to the Church Camp in the Allegheny Region to bless young people in years to come. How wonderful is that! Third, the church had some of the nicest contemporary stained glass windows that will be reused in another ministry.



Last and most important, members and friends of Mt Hope told me they intend to join family members who worship in other congregations. It would seem you can size up a tree when it's cut down, but not so for a church as ministry growth continues beyond the life span of a congregation. There's hope for Mt Hope!

ONE Mission together with you,  
Ed  
*Soli Deo Gloria!*

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## Operation Christmas Child Shoebox List

Below is the current tally of the shoeboxes collected by CGGC churches for [Operation Christmas Child](#) organized by [Samaritan's Purse](#). We know there are more out there! If your congregation participated, please let us know your church's name, your region, and the number of shoeboxes collected by

sending an email to [communications@cggc.org](mailto:communications@cggc.org). Also let us know if your church sent any volunteers to one of the processing centers to help prepare the boxes for shipment overseas.

Region	Church	# of Boxes
ERC:	Camp Hill	100
	Carlisle	121
	Country Meadows Retirement Community	60
	Elizabethtown	156
	Kennedy's Valley	110
	Mechanicsburg	104
	Mt. Pleasant	60
	Newburg	228
	Shiremanstown First	77
GRC:	Catalyst	75
	College First	253
	Mt. Carmel	100
	Pathway Community	26
	Union Chapel	12
ARC:	Buchanan	300
	Brunswick First	42
	Center Bethel	352
	Orchard Ridge First	314
MRC:	Berreman & Pleasant Valley	240
	The Crossover	924
	Mt. Pleasant	121
Total		3775

## We need your Gem Writing Contest Entries!

### Do You Enjoy Writing? Share your gift by entering the 10th Annual **GEM WRITING CONTEST**

**Open to all ages in three levels:**  
Adult, Youth, & Child

**Two categories:** Short Story and Poetry  
Plus Coloring Page for Children under age 7)

**Deadline:** Postmarked by December 31, 2014

For Rules and Entry Forms see your church office,  
contact Rachel Foreman at the CGGC office  
(419) 424-1961, or go to the website at  
[http://www.cggc.org/ministries/  
denominational-communications/  
gem-writing-contest/](http://www.cggc.org/ministries/denominational-communications/gem-writing-contest/)





## Deadline for CGGC Executive Director Applications is December 15

The Churches of God, General Conference, based in Findlay, Ohio, is now receiving applications for the position of Executive Director of the denomination. Bill Reist, CGGC president, is serving as the chairperson of the transition team along with eight others from across the Church.

An application, position description and desired attributes of the Executive Director are available on the Churches of God website or by contacting [wreist@collegefirst.org](mailto:wreist@collegefirst.org) or [revrockey@gmail.com](mailto:revrockey@gmail.com). Applications received by December 15, 2014 will be given priority, with a decision to be made, Lord willing, by March 31, 2015.

For more information regarding values, beliefs and history of the CGGC you may visit <http://www.cggc.org/about/> online. Please direct all inquiries pertaining to the Executive Director position to the e-mail addresses above and not to the CGGC offices.

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## WTS Presidential Search in Progress



Winebrenner Theological Seminary, Findlay, Ohio is seeking a President. Candidates should have an earned doctorate; organizational leadership and managerial skills; demonstrated ability to understand, articulate, and carry out fiscal, academic, and institutional responsibilities; a welcoming and affirming spirit for a broad range of theological perspectives while maintaining an evangelical position; an understanding of governance within theological education; the ability to communicate and network with a variety of constituencies; and the ability to support the school's mission, vision, core values and basic beliefs. Details will be posted at <http://www.winebrenner.edu>, and *curriculum vitae* may be sent to:

Winebrenner Theological Seminary Presidential Transition  
Edward L. Rosenberry, Search Committee Chair  
700 East Melrose Avenue  
P.O. Box 926  
Findlay, Ohio 45839  
OR  
[director@cggc.org](mailto:director@cggc.org)

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## Train Your Church Leaders

In the fall of 1988, my last semester of college, I filled in as the youth pastor at a local church. I was given a key to the church and wished the very best of luck. Truthfully it was a fairly frustrating few months.

I didn't know how to engage volunteers. I didn't know how to turn the youth into an effective team. I didn't know how to develop young leaders. I was young and available. Luck wasn't enough. I needed training. I wasn't the only one.

I have built a solution for developing leaders in your church. You may want to start with yourself. You may want to train your staff or key volunteers. There are three steps to this solution.

**Step # 1: Take our "Foundations in Christian Coaching" class.**

During January and February of 2015, we are offering it at three different locations (Mattoon, IL, Findlay, OH, and Pittsburgh, PA), AND we are offering this class for the first time online.

**Step # 2: Take "A Coach Approach to Christian Leadership" class.** This class will be taught in Findlay, OH on March 23-24 (Mon-Tue) by Bill Copper, a seasoned ministry coach and teacher.

**Step # 3: Take our Mentor Coaching class** and hone your coaching skills to a level of confidence.

These three steps will also make you eligible for the Certificate in Christian Leader Coaching from Coach Approach Ministries.

It is very frustrating to be want to lead for your church and not know how to do it. These three classes will give your leaders confidence and tools to lead your church into the vision God has for it.

Can you imagine how much less frustrated and more effective your church leader could be by May of 2015?

To sign up for any or all of these classes, click here: <http://www.coachingclarity.org/become-a-coach/>

Because you are with the Churches of God General Conference, use the Promo Code "CGGC" for a 30% discount on any or all classes.



**Brian**  
Miller

Listen to my interview with author Reggie McNeal, as he speaks about the importance of building a coaching culture in your church: <http://www.coachingclarity.org/?p=917>

Thanks!  
Brian Miller