

# 2024 Summer Clarion

## A Newsletter of Christ Ministerial Fellowship

A non-denominational communion of ministries with the purpose of mutual encouragement, like-minded fellowship, and love toward one another.

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Please enjoy books, past and current Clarions and recordings of Conference messages.

### UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES AND SEASONS

by Bert Ghilardi

These are critical days in the unfolding of the Lord's kingdom purpose. Like the seasons of the year, seasons can come unannounced and full of trials. 1 Peter 1:6 is very comforting. Even though you're in a season of heaviness, it will work as a trial that purifies as gold tried in the fire and will work for glory and honor at the appearance of Christ. Paul wrote the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 5:1-5) that they are a church that knows the times and the seasons. The writer encouraged the church to be ready for the Coming of the Lord and not to listen to the faith-prosperity preaching of a gospel of peace with total disregard for the upcoming judgments. There are many in this hour who are overly involved in Christian Service, like the foolish virgins in Matthew 25. It is possible to become void of oil, suffer burnout, and miss that very special season of time concerning the Second Coming of Christ.

Jesus spoke to the old order of religion that ruled in Israel, saying that they knew the signs in the sky but didn't know the signs of the times. (Matthew 16:3)

What a terrible fallout on the day of Jesus! The religious order, God's very own people, became stagnant and immovable and had no idea of God's spiritual seasons. In order to understand what Jesus faced in His day, we need to read Jeremiah 8:7-9. God's people do not know the time of God's judgments. Israel's departure from the Lord in the book of Jeremiah carried right down to the Day of our Lord. God's people relied on human wisdom, being content with the Law of Moses rejected the word of the prophets. The Lord does not want us to be like the people of the past. He wants us to adjust ourselves to God's present season lest we miss His visitation. Even God limits Himself to endure a long season as He waits for the precious fruit of the earth.

Surely, God knows the season we are in, and He submits Himself to His own timetable of seasons so He can bring His people into a season of great fruitfulness. Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 is the wisdom of Solomon. It reads, "To everything, there is a season and a time and a purpose under heaven ... a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted." When we are in a long season of testing, we can become distracted by the pain and the long waiting for the trial to end, and we could give up hope of ever coming out of it. Fear could overtake us to the point where we feel that death is the only way out.

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There are four things that the Lord wants to do in any given season: Bring a new birth, bring death to the old, sow new seed, and reap a fruitful crop.

1 Peter 1:23 tells us, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible seed, the Word of God that endures forever." The Word here says **being born again**. This means God wants to bring a new birthing in all seasons of our lives. This is why the Lord says, "Behold, I do a new thing." This new birthing will continue until we die and take our new body of glory. Being born again does not stop at initial salvation but will continue until we reach full kingdom birth. Paul told the Galatian Church, "I travail in birth until Christ be fully formed in you." So, dear saints, be encouraged. The season you're in will be used to bring a new birth and a new day in your life.

The Lord will also use death in a new season, a dying to the old order of living, dying to all forms of self-centered living such as self-gain, self-glory, and putting to death once and for all our natural strength. Paul says it this way in 2 Corinthians 4:10, *"Always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life of Jesus might be manifested in our mortal body."* the purpose of all seasons in the life of the believer and the church is to bring new kingdom birth and the putting to death of the old order. The quicker we die to the old order, the faster we come out of the season of testing. God wants new planting to take place in our present season. Is. 60:21 *"Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."* It speaks in Isaiah 61 of becoming trees or righteousness. Trees have great height and deep roots and can give refuge to the Lord's creation. In our present season, we must stay rooted and grounded in His love. The purpose of the planting of the Lord is to become those trees of righteousness. We need to be joined to key members of the vast body of Christ. This writer thanks the Lord for all the plantings of the Lord that have come alongside me in my present season. Perhaps a season of testing could be used to touch an area in our life that makes us think we can make it alone. May we be like the trees of the forest planted together, reflecting the majestic beauty of the Creator that no single tree alone could display.

Last, we want to mention the fourth purpose for the seasons: pluck up what was planted. This speaks of a harvest to satisfy God's heart. The harvest has a two-fold fulfillment. It's not just a great in-gathering of lost souls or revival. We see in Ezekiel 17:8-10 that God's people were judged and uprooted from their land and transported to another land. God will use severe judgments in a particular season to bring the nations back to Him. We do not know the future for our nation concerning His judgment, but we need to allow God to make the necessary adjustments so we are ready for His Great Coming. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 is the final harvest, concerning a people that will be plucked up from the earth to meet the Lord in the air and be forever with the Lord.

The seasons of God will come and go. May we, as His people, find the grace to endure all the seasons He brings to our lives. When we look in the Word, we see men like Joseph, David, Job, and many others who yielded to the season of God. We who find ourselves in a long season need to cling to the promise found in Isaiah 49:8, *"Thus saith the Lord in an acceptable time have I heard thee and in a day of salvation have I helped thee, and I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;"* Amen! Ω

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Bert and Arlene will be going to Costa Rica from August 14 to August 27. Arlene was there at the Spanish Language Institute for all of 1979. While there, she met a family whose daughter, Marcella Chacon, has connected Bert and Arlene with her Pastors, Carlos and Yamileth Lizano. They will be hosting them. Lou and Ric met them on their trip in May. Bert and Arlene will minister at pastor's conferences and church meetings while in their midst.



Pastor Carlos and Family on the left and Lou and Francisco, interpreter on the right.

Dear Friends,

It was a long day on Friday when we left home and arrived in Costa Rica. Although there was a slight delay with my first flight, the pilot was able to make up the time. On previous trips, we breezed through immigration, but not this time. Eight international flights converged around the same time; our flight was the last of eight. So, we had to wait over an hour to have our passports stamped. Once stamped, we could finally collect our luggage, and thankfully, everything arrived safe and undamaged.



The weather has been in the low eighties with higher humidity during the day, but the nights cool off, and there's even a slight breeze, making very good sleeping weather. Sunday, Ric and I spoke in separate churches, and there always seems to be a hunger in the people, especially the leadership. One pastor we met, Pastor Carlos, was a connection we made through Pastor Bert and Arlene. He is in northern San Jose and wants us to return for a pastors/leaders conference he wants to hold this year! Well, I don't think this year will happen, but maybe 2025. And that's how it generally works. A pastor hears what the Lord has put on our hearts, and he is stirred, Today, we have a couple of fellowship meetings. Tomorrow, we go out of town overnight for a pastor's conference. Then, Friday, we're out of town again, except we'll be back that night.

Saturday, we have another pastor's meeting. On Sunday, Ric and I will go to different, separate churches again, and then we leave to return home on Monday. Thanks for your prayers. As I am able, I will send updates and pictures.

Bro. Lou

Greetings from Costa Rica!

Our hosts, Pastor Ronald Diaz and wife Sadie, are taking good care of us here in San Jose. Last Sunday, Lou and I each ministered in separate churches. We will do so again next Sunday.

Today, we returned from an overnight trip to Turrialba, about two hours from here. It was the first of three pastors' meetings. We were well received, as was our ministry to them.

This is the beginning of the rainy season in Costa Rica. We've had a few showers off and on since we arrived, but today was the first day with several hours of rain. It's usually sunny and humid in the morning, followed by afternoon or overnight rains. The evenings are cool, which makes for comfortable sleep.

It has been wonderful to continue fellowship with those we met last year, and the new joinings have been encouraging.

Yesterday, on our way to Turrialba, we passed through 'Paraiso.' Who knew The Garden of Eden was in Costa Rica?!

Thank you all for your continued prayers on our behalf. Blessings to each of you,  
Ric





## Lima, Peru June 2024

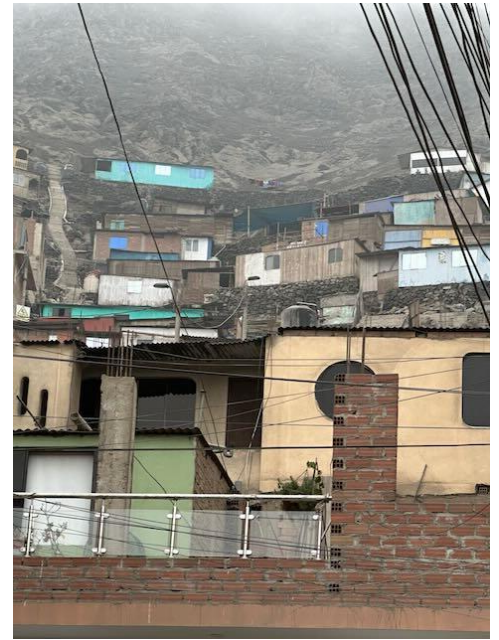
Hello Everyone,

Our time in Peru has been busy but with much satisfaction. The Word is going forth and well received. Every day, we have had pastors and



leaders meeting, and they all have been exceptional. Lima is a big city of about thirteen million, and traveling around during the busy day takes time because there is a lot of traffic. Our hosts, Pastor Ronato and his wife Simone, have been wonderful. They are people we bond with and have opened up many doors now and in the future.

Two pictures I want to draw your attention to are of the housing. To the right, you see these primitive houses built into the mountainside.



The other shows a close-up of the steps. These are not government-authorized. The land has just been taken over, and crude houses have been built almost overnight. Think of the effort to bring materials up to where they will be built. These are not uncommon in many of these Latin American countries.

Well, I must run for it, for we have a pastor's meeting soon. Ric and I are doing well. Thank you for all your prayers. Blessings, Bro. Lou

Dear family and friends,

Our time here in Peru has come to an end. It's hard to believe we've only been here for one week. Much has happened, for which we give God both thanks and glory. Our host pastor, Renato, and his wife, Simone, have cared very well for us. Our ministry was well received in each place we spoke, and as the Apostle Paul said, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto us."



I was genuinely taken by surprise by the weather here in Lima. It's been overcast daily; we didn't see the sun once. The sun only appears 2-3 months a year during the summer, from January - March. Even then, it's not fully sunny. Lima has 13 million people, which is almost half of the entire population of this country. Reports we have heard through the years of Peruvian food being the best in Latin

America were not exaggerated. So good! Peru is also known for surfing! Who knew? A couple of world-champion surfers are from here. We have an overnight flight on Friday (June 21) to Santa Cruz, Bolivia, followed by an afternoon flight to Sucre. This will be our first time in the city of Sucre, Bolivia. We'll have a long day on Saturday, followed by morning and evening services on Sunday, and then a pastors' meeting on Monday morning. Once again, thank you all for your support and prayers. We are truly grateful for you. With love & appreciation, Pastor Ric  
A great door and effectual....



# 2024 CMF Spring Conference in Review

Bert Ghilardi

Bethany Christian Fellowship, Athens, PA, hosts a blessed retreat every April. Pastor Mark Waters, Tony Papandrea, Sandy Keeney, and Amy Vogel of Bethany make the necessary sacrifices so we can all feel welcomed and enjoy wonderful meals. We will forever be grateful for their labor of love toward all the saints.

In our opening service, Mark Waters brought a very enlightening teaching called "Jesus in the House." When Jesus comes into the house, away from the multitudes, He can speak intimately with His disciples, teaching them the value of the kingdom of God and dealing with heart issues. In the house, Jesus can find rest among those to whom it is given to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. It was a heart-searching time in the opening service.

During the Thursday morning service, the Lord moved mightily by His Holy Spirit to comfort, heal, and give prophetic words to many. Gary Rose lit a prophetic spark in the meeting with a word out of Luke 8 concerning the woman with the issue of blood. It is up to each one of us to seize by faith our own miracle. It was good to hear from four more brothers and sisters whose words complimented the move of the Spirit. John Penrosa from Florida, Dan Beaulieu from Connecticut, Nancy Sulzynski from Montrose, PA, and Tom Worth from Syracuse, NY, all gave messages to flow along in the Spirit of what the Lord was doing.

At the Thursday night service, Bert Ghilardi shared from John 11 how Jesus visited His friend Lazarus' tomb and raised him from the dead. Let us believe that before Jesus' Second Coming, He will visit the true Church with resurrection power.

The morning service closed the gathering with a word from Ric Vargas out of Isaiah 40. Ric encouraged us by explaining that God is speaking a word straight from His heart to those in covenant with Him to address their greatest need. The Lord confirmed us in the way, showing us how much He cares with a move of the prophetic and prayer. The Lord was in our midst to meet every need, and it was beautiful to be with our precious brethren from many places. We hope to see you at the end of October to meet the Lord through one another again.

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## WOMEN'S RETREAT 2024

Bethany Christian Fellowship, Athens, PA June 7 & 8

The purposes of God keep rolling on. Century after century, God performs His sovereign will, and we have been made part of it by rebirth into His glorious Kingdom. The theme this year was *The Eternal Purposes of God*. The Ladies of Bethany Christian Fellowship started us off on the right note by leading worship on Friday night. Joann Laws gave us an overview of God's general purpose: His great plan for **all people** to enter into the mysteries of the Kingdom through Christ. In addition, the Church is called to know God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent, and to bring forth fruit that would redound to the glory of God. Ice cream sundaes and fellowship topped

off the evening.

A few more people joined us Saturday morning; after worship, which Judy Weller and Gold Clark led, we enjoyed a bookmark ice-breaker led by Mary Ann Kittle. Joy Waters gave us her testimony of how God has led her all her life to the purpose of God. She pointed out that when we meet God in the everyday, little things in life, we will automatically walk in the

purposes of God. Then we got into Ezekiel to explain the Living Creatures and the Wheel within the Wheel as it relates to the General Purpose of God (the outer wheel) and the Specific Purpose for each of us. We wrote our own Mission Statement and then our Purpose Statement. This was a time of reflection and articulation of our life's purpose. After a beautiful ham dinner for lunch, more worship, prayer, and intercession, the exchange of gifts for each other, and the Lord's Supper, led by Theresa Pressman. Tony Papandrea led a capable group of men who volunteered their time and talents to prepare and serve delicious food all retreat long.





## Prayer Requests

1. Joe and AnnMarie Faillace of Salt and Light Community Church in Montague, NJ



2. Bert and Arlene Ghilardi as they go on a mission trip to Costa Rica August 14-27.

Condolences to Chuck Parrish (co-editor of the Clarion) and his family at the passing of his wife, Stephanie on June 27. Expressions of sympathy could be sent to: [chuck95555@gmail.com](mailto:chuck95555@gmail.com) or

4039 Kilbannon Way, Dublin, OH 43016

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[www.christianmaturity.com](http://www.christianmaturity.com)

invites you to listen to  
the messages from the  
CMF Spring Retreat  
April 24-26, 2024



# SAVE THE DATE!

## Christ Ministerial Fellowship Fall Conference

October 23-25, 2024

Bethany Christian Fellowship, Athens, PA

The registration is \$15/meal. Meals include Wednesday supper, Thursday lunch and supper, and Friday lunch. We have booked a block of 10 rooms at the Comfort Inn Hotel in Sayre, PA. Call (570) 888-1100 to make your reservation. Please mention that you are part of the Christ Ministerial conference group for the special price of \$97.02 per night. The deadline for registration is October 15. We hope you will join us for fellowship and this critical time of seeking the Lord.

