



*The birds of the air come and perch in its branches.
- Matthew 13:32*

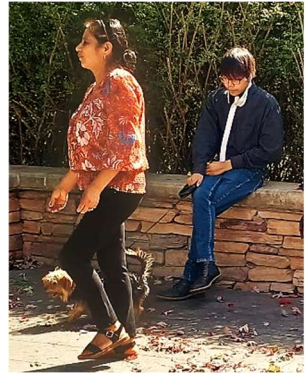
Issue 52
November 20, 2022

In this issue: A double-milestone day – p. 1-3
Honoring an “angel” among us – p. 4
Learning from the Weidners – p. 5
Sharing wedding joy – p. 5
Sweet fall treats! – p. 6-8
Keeping you up to date – p. 8
The beauty of changing seasons – p. 9

Celebrating two kinds of birthday in one day!

Saturday, October 8th, was a milestone in more ways than one for Eli Gonzalez! That was his 18th birthday, which he and his friends and family celebrated with a party at Sweetwater Park that morning—





—and that afternoon, Eli was baptized into Christ at the Emmetts’!



We’re so glad to be able to celebrate together with Eli and his family, as he grows and matures as an individual and as a member of the Body of Christ—“...speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Ephesians 4:15-16). Amen!

With thanks to Danny Emmett and Peter Berry for help with pictures!

Coming Events



On Friday, December 9th, all the sisters in the AcoCG are invited to the Lucky Shoals Park Community Center to celebrate the season, enjoy tasty refreshments, and exchange gifts. The festivities will begin at 6 p.m. – please plan to come if you can!

Our Christmas program will take place on Sunday, December 18th at Meadowcreek High School. Our worship service that morning will include a play that deepens our appreciation of the meaning of Christmas, and special musical performances to bring us joy. This will be a great opportunity to introduce visitors to all God has for them here at AcoCG!

Sister in Christ, everyday hero, adoption angel!

You might know that our sister Ina Cook is a family law attorney whose practice helps families with adoptions, legal representation, legal counseling and more; for over 20 years she has assisted, defended and advocated for the young and vulnerable in the legal system, with special focus on undocumented and foster children. But you might not know that she was among 43 nominees honored this fall by "the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's (CCAI) signature public awareness program. Angels in Adoption is a leadership program that honors a wide spectrum of individuals, families, and organizations making extraordinary contributions to adoption, foster care, permanency, and child welfare." She was nominated by Georgia's U.S. Congressman Hank Johnson, and traveled to Washington, D.C. in September to receive this significant award and to take part in the Institute's national leadership and training program, along with her fellow honorees from all over the U.S.



One of our local news channels got word of this award, and on October 10th they recognized her on their Everyday Heroes series; you can watch her interview with them at this link:

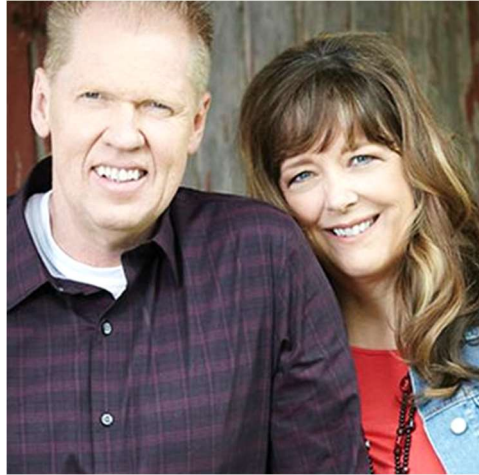
<https://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/atlanta-attorney-receives-congressional-award-for-adoption-advocacy>

Ina and her husband Joe have been foster parents, are adoptive as well as birth parents, and continue to give of their time, their resources, and their hearts for those most at risk of neglect, abuse, or abandonment, fulfilling the charge God gives us in Deuteronomy 24:17a ("Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice..."), Psalm 82:3 ("Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed"), Isaiah 1:17 ("Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow"), and James 1:27 ("Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world"). It's great to know about these shining lights among us, and to see the world acknowledge and appreciate their service to God and to people!



Grateful for the grace!

David and Robin Weidner, the founders of Purity Restored Ministries and authors (separately or together) of powerfully insightful books including Pure the Journey, Secure in Heart, Grace Calls, Eve's Song and Sarah's Song, came to AcoCG the weekend of October 21-23. They taught a marriage workshop both together and in separate men's and women's classes, and Robin taught the single women in their own workshop, before David brought us the Sunday sermon, on "The Transforming Power of God's Grace," to close out their time with us. If you couldn't be there or want to hear these lessons again, they're available on our website, at www.acocg.org/sermons/; if you click on Browse Speakers, you'll find the Weidners' names in the dropdown list.



Rejoicing as two become one!

In the last year and a half, Joseph Emmett went from studying the Bible to being baptized into Christ and growing as a dynamic part of our singles ministry. As his life began changing, he invited his friends to "come and see" as well (Matthew 28:6), and one friend joined him in the Body of Christ, then joined him in marriage! Joseph and Neida were married in a joyful ceremony on October 1st!



And many of us know Frederic Amon, who became a disciple in our congregation then helped start the GGC campus ministry years ago; he met his future bride Farah after moving first to Virginia and then to New Jersey, and several disciples from the Atlanta area were able to travel there to celebrate with them as they were married on October 29th! Here's a glimpse of the happy couple—



A sweet autumn celebration!

As October wound to a close, we had our annual Fall Festival in the lobby at Meadowcreek High School on the 30th (it had originally been planned outdoors, but the onset of cold wet weather prompted us to move it indoors). Here are some of the imaginative costumes, clever decorations and fun themes we saw at our Trunk-or-Treat celebration—







Making sure you know...

- ❖ In case you weren't part of the worship service on October 9th, Alan Rouse officially stepped down as an elder effective on that day. Sherry is doing well since her treatments for choroidal melanoma, a type of eye cancer, and there is no indication that it spread before they caught it, but dealing with such serious health concerns called the Rouses to step away from service as elder and elder's wife in order to take care of other needs that had been put on the back burner for some time. Since the Word only speaks of elders in the plural for each congregation, Steve Collier also stepped down, and the responsibility for direction of AcoCG was taken up by our staff (Steve Mukenya, John Yang and Mikhail Krevosky) and by a board that will determine financial decisions, made up of Steve Mukenya, Steve Collier and Perry Parks. Please continue to pray for our leaders' wisdom, and for the Rouses as they step into this new chapter in their lives!
- ❖ Our midweek services the last few weeks have focused on discipleship, the role of elders, and more—the lessons are recorded and you can listen to them through our website, www.acocg.org/sermons/, but you might not know that at the end of each midweek class, we break into family groups and talk about what we're learning. The discussions are lively and helpful; they provide everyone with the opportunity to express opinions, ask questions and share ideas, but they're not recorded, so if you're not on Zoom for midweek, you might be surprised what you're missing!

"Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17)—let's help one another think, learn, understand, and grow!

Savoring the beauty of the season...

As the weather turns colder and the leaves fall, carpeting the ground and making way for new leaves in the spring, here is one last look at some of the brilliant display God created for us this fall—



"Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding...She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed." (Proverbs 3:13, 18)

We welcome news and pictures on interesting personal stories, family group activities, and more. Please send them to Nancy Berry, nberry2@gmail.com. Thank you!

*Copyright © 2022 the Atlanta church of Christ in Gwinnett; All rights reserved.
To subscribe or unsubscribe, please contact us at info@acocg.org*