

Letter to the Portland Church and Announcement of the Savannah World Missions Jubilee
From Steve Johnson - Evangelist of the Savannah Church of Christ
April 8, 2005



Steve and Lisa Johnson

For both Lisa and me I think Paul's words in Philippians are most appropriate when we think of the Portland church ***"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now."***

These words also describe our relationship with Kip and Elena, which now...gulp...spans three decades and is going on four. Our fellowship since 1976 has seen the four of us involved in campus ministry, church plantings and world evangelism. That God still seems to want to use us is amazing grace indeed. My conviction that our work is far from finished, and may only just really be beginning, was strengthened so much by my family's visit to you just four weeks ago! Seeing the baptisms, the services, the hospitality,

the excitement; the people moving from all over the country just to be with a dynamic congregation of disciples daring to dream again...just let me say you inspired my whole family and challenged me to dream again!

Consider this a thank you note for the generous hospitality you extended to the Johnsons as well as thanks for lending us Kip and Elena for this past weekend in Savannah. As usual, Kip inspired our whole congregation, tiny as we may be, to lead lives of total dedication to our Lord. I always have found myself a little torn when Kip is about to come to town. I've loved him for years and felt his constant support even when we didn't always agree on everything. But no one wakes up slumbering disciples like Kip does and having him come to Savannah did nothing but make my job harder. Now our little church is expecting their evangelist to actually DO SOMETHING! Souls have been stirred, flickering flames have been fanned, hearts have been roused...you get the point. Kip brought us a revival that already is bearing fruit in baptisms, friendships and new plans. And allow me to announce one of our new plans right now.

Lord willing, on June 24th, 25th, and 26th the Savannah church of Christ will host the first ever Savannah World Missions Jubilee. (We named this event in honor of your World Missions Jubilee.) The three day program's featured speakers will be Portland's own Kip McKean, Mike Patterson from Atlanta, Doug Arthur from Baltimore, Ron Drabot from Charlotte and yours truly from Savannah. We will have a women's program led by my wife Lisa and focusing on the role of women in the church and in the full-time ministry. Of course, Elena will also be speaking! And on Sunday afternoon following services at our usual meeting place, the downtown Desoto Hilton Hotel on Liberty Street, we will have a special gathering led by Speech Thomas on reviving the Arts Ministry and a teen devotional led by Will Archer who's now the evangelist for the Macon church of Christ.

Our program will be held at the absolutely gorgeous Trustee's Theatre in downtown Savannah. This theatre is one of the jewels in the crown of Savannah College of Art and Design, known to locals as SCAD. SCAD has nearly single-handedly rebuilt Savannah which is a year round tourist destination, rich in history and one of the most beautiful places in the world. (I always thought I'd only live someplace like this right before or right after I died). Downtown is only twenty minutes from the spectacular Tybee Beach and who knows, maybe some folks would want to combine this with their family vacation plans. We will have a nominal registration fee for the Jubilee and those who wish to attend from out of town have a long list of hotels from which to choose to make their own reservations. We will use e-vites as well as Portland's bulletin and website to further communicate our Savannah event. So, thanks again to all of you in Portland for helping us get started over here on the other side of the country.

Years ago I read a poem that I've probably butchered over and over but it goes something like this:

**One man awake, awakens another
The next man wakes his next door brother
Three men awake can wake up a town
By turning the whole place upside down
A town awake can make such a fuss
That it wakes up the rest of us
One man awake
With dawn in his eyes
Multiplies!**

Thank you again Portland church and my dear brother Kip who just won't leave us alone and let us sleep.

Steve Johnson