

UNITED CHURCH of GOD

Home Office Weekly Update

December 19, 2024

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Changes in Our World

Greetings brethren around the world,

As we watch what is happening in the world, we see constant change and unusual news stories that seem to have no answer.

Since the recent election in the United States, governments in Europe, North America and elsewhere have gone through an upheaval. Leaders who thought they were well established a few months ago now face opposition. Some governments have fallen and others are in a precarious state.

In the United States, one of the news stories picking up steam is about unidentified drones seeming to show up in a number of cities. For a while, those sightings were in just one area, but now there are reports even from military sources of sightings in areas across the country. No one seems to know what is going on or what any of this means.

Strange things are happening, and life in America and Europe is changing very quickly—all since the November 5 election in the United States.

As we see this change, we are reminded how God is in charge and that “suddenly” is a key word in both Old Testament and New Testament prophecies. Christ warns us to “watch” and constantly draw closer to Him and His way.

Upcoming Church events

While the world is full of activity and people travelling to and fro, the Church of God has many things going on as well.

Summer youth camps are currently underway in South America, Australia and South Africa. Next week our United Youth Camps “Winter Camp” here in the U.S. will be held. A big thank you to all who volunteer time to work in these very worthwhile venues for our young people.

With many families having time off work in the coming weeks, the annual Winter Family Weekend will be held here in Cincinnati. Much preparation and planning has gone into this event, which is expected to be attended by over 1,000 people. At the same time, a winter event in Portland, Oregon is planned for that region. Your prayers for these events are appreciated.

Another important Church event will be occurring in Europe next week, as more than 65 ministers, their wives and leaders from five European countries will gather in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, for a series of seminars and discussions to help us all focus on the work of the Church in Europe going forward. We know Europe features prominently in prophecy, and there is an end-time work to be done there, as Jesus Christ, the Head of this Church, directs.

Aaron Dean, Steve Myers, Darris McNeely and I (along with our wives) are headed for Europe later today. Tim Pebworth, chairman of the Council of Elders and coordinator of our French-language work, will also be there. This is the first such conference in Europe since 1996. Please pray for God’s guidance and direction as we all come together. Our focus is on His will to be done, as we seek His guidance and direction, then actively put that into practice.

Stopover in London

On our way to Amsterdam my wife, Debbie, and I will stop off in London this Sabbath for services there. It is always a highlight of any trip we take to have the opportunity to meet the brethren, and to answer any questions that anyone may have.

God has called us all into His work, and we all have an important part to play in it. The Church does not grow, and God does not call people, solely through public proclamation efforts. Those are important and we are working on those to more effectively use the tools and resources available today. The examples, attitudes and relationships of Church members has always been a primary avenue through which people come to the truth. You can see that in the book of Acts, and the same is true today as we see God working in remote areas around the world.

Brethren, please pray for God’s work and His will to be done. Ask Him to lead us into what He wants done in the way He wants it done. We are here to serve Him and each other, and to become one with Him and each other. We are called to the great purpose He has given us and the great blessing of knowing Him and His truth.

You are all in our prayers and thoughts. May we all pray for each other, for God’s will to be

done, and for His Kingdom to come.

In Christ's service,

Rick Shabi

New ABC Class Recordings Landing Page

A [landing page](#) at ucg.org has now been created for the [“World News and Prophecy: Daniel”](#) video recordings.

Presented by Darris McNeely, these classes are a very helpful tool in your ongoing study and understanding of prophecy and its relevance for us today in God's Church.

One 45-minute class will be released each week on video—with graphics, charts and other helpful aids. So, check back each week on this landing page for a new class recording. The second part in the series to follow mid next year will be about the Book of Revelation.

Complete list of class recordings

A complete list of all Ambassador Bible College class recordings can be found by navigating to “Ambassador Bible College” on our website's “Member” menu. Then, click on [“ABC Courses.”](#)

On the Courses page you will find all our class recordings—mostly audio recordings from over the years. But those recorded on video are now tagged “Yes” in the right column of the class course recordings list.

—Peter Eddington, Operation Manager, Media and Communications Services

REMINDER: Wamatochick Young Adult Weekend

Young adults are invited to join their brothers and sisters for the fourth annual United Young Adult (UYA) Wamatochick Weekend Feb. 14–17, 2025 in the pines of Northern Arizona.

This year's theme will be “Rooted in Him” ([Colossians 2:6-7](#), English Standard Version) and the presentations will invite and encourage us to be proactive in growing our relationship with God.

The Sabbath will include church services and sessions in the afternoon on topics close to our hearts—all connecting back to the theme.

Sunday will feature additional sessions as well as indoor and outdoor activities including hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking—weather permitting. Everyone is welcome to stay an additional night to extend the weekend into Monday to enjoy an additional session, as well as more fellowship and activity time.

Ages are 18–32, and married and single are welcome. The cost is \$165 per person, including

sleeping arrangements and seven meals. The camp is outside of Prescott, Arizona at 5101 S.

Senator Hwy., Prescott, AZ 86303. The Phoenix airport is a two-hour drive from the camp. Rides from the airport can be arranged.

Please plan to arrive no later than 2 p.m. on Friday the 14th and depart no earlier than 1 p.m. on Monday. Check-in starts at 4 p.m. at Camp Wamatochick on Friday.

If you are interested in attending or for more information, please text or email Britton Graham at (480) 290-5920 / brittmg43@gmail.com or Sienna Posegay at (602) 214-3216 / cattlecountry1776@gmail.com.

Please visit <https://ucg.regfox.com/wamatochick-weekend-2025> to register. We hope to see you there!

Young adult Web page

In addition, we have created a Web page just for Young Adults at uya.ucg.org. Emails are sent weekly with sermon and article recommendations, as well as links to activity registrations. So, we encourage young adults to sign up today.

New Website Updates and Tips

We appreciate everyone's patience as our I.T. and Web teams work long hours in releasing our new UCG.org website. Our goal is to provide you with the best Web experience possible.

While an initial challenge for some of our users, we trust and pray that as we work out some of the bugs, it will be an even greater tool for our members, our users and for preaching the gospel.

Why was this necessary?

This all became necessary as Drupal 7, our website Content Management System (CMS) language, became outdated and unsupported for security updates. So, we have now moved to Drupal 10, a very popular open-source CMS. It's the CMS behind some major websites, including *The Economist* and major universities and educational institutions. It's especially good for companies aiming to build a highly customized website that needs to handle a lot of data.

Also, our home office database had reached its practical end of life. So, we have upgraded to a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, CiviCRM, which now ties in directly with our website.

Your UCG dashboard

With this new integration between Drupal and CiviCRM, when logged into your UCG.org account, you will see a lot of information about your congregation, including how to contact your pastor, the latest updates and announcements, the latest sermons, your webcast information, and your donation history.

When logged in, at the top of the page you will see your UCG account details. This includes your Dashboard, My Profile, Study List, Settings and Subscriptions.

New option when logging in

When logging into your account at UCG.org, you now have the option to “Remember me.” This will keep you logged in for longer periods so that you don’t have to put in your username and password each time you visit.

On the login page, there are also links if you forgot your password or need to create a new account. And there is an email link to send a message to our Web team for any difficulty you can’t resolve.

Sermons

Our sermon library at <https://www.ucg.org/sermons/search> has more than 62,000 messages to choose from. And some new features are now available.

A dropdown menu has been added to each message to reveal the sermon summary. You can search by speaker, title or congregation, and see your results by date or topic relevance. And, each message has an icon that shows if a message has video, a transcript and/or download options.

You can now also search sermons by message length and by content tags. For example, there are 373 Feast of Tabernacles sermons, 723 about Passover, etc. And you can search for messages that include a transcript, a video, and video downloads.

It is normally best to be logged in to view sermons. This gives you the greatest variety of speakers and topics, and remember to check “Remember me” when you login!

Roku and Amazon Fire TV sermon apps

With the launch of our new website, the connections between our sermon library and our Roku and Amazon Fire TV apps are no longer working. Therefore, you will find no new sermons since November 23 on these TV apps. However, over time we will get this resolved and even a new, enhanced version of the apps.

Please note, the Cincinnati Sabbath service live webcast feature still works on the apps, and on our website.

In the meantime, our website sermon library at <https://www.ucg.org/sermons/search> has more than 62,000 messages to choose from.

Our new search tool

Our UCG.org search tool is powered by Google, and crawls our website continually. When our new website was launched, it had to be indexed by Google from scratch. So, our search tool will improve and continually “learn” to provide you the best results. It is still actively creating search results from the thousands of pages of material and millions of keywords on our site.

Google will offer recommended auto-fill results as well.

It is best to be as specific as possible in your search. For example, if you are looking for “the gospel of the kingdom” you will get many pages of results. But if you narrow it down to results from our magazine or TV program, like “the gospel of the kingdom beyond today,” you will only get results from our magazine and TV program on this topic. In addition, you can search for “All results” or just “Sermons.”

About searching

- Search looks for exact, case-insensitive keywords.
- Keywords shorter than a minimum length are ignored.
- Use upper-case OR to get more results. Example: cat OR dog (content contains either “cat” or “dog”).
- You can use upper-case AND to require all words, but this is the same as the default behavior. Example: cat AND dog (same as cat dog, content must contain both “cat” and “dog”).
- Use quotes to search for a phrase. Example: “the cat eats mice.”
- You can precede keywords by - to exclude them, but you must still have at least one “positive” keyword. Example: cat -dog (content must contain cat and cannot contain dog).

Once again, thank you for your patience as we continue to take care of some bugs, and work to enhance the website for everyone.

—Peter Eddington, Operation Manager, Media and Communications Services