

UNITED CHURCH of GOD

Home Office Weekly Update

January 9, 2025

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As we face the hardships of life, let us remember these trials are not in vain. They are opportunities for growth, for deeper faith, and for a closer relationship with our Creator.

When Adversity Strikes

Difficulty comes in many forms. It doesn't need an invitation and often shows up at the most inconvenient times. One day life feels peaceful and under control, and the next, you find yourself facing a mess. For some of us, life can feel like one challenge after another. Tough times are a part of life, no doubt. As the saying goes, "Sometimes you choose adversity, but more often, adversity picks you."

When difficulties arrive, the real question is: *How will I respond?*

I was surprised by a survey that found almost nine out of ten people said a painful event—whether illness, death, tragedy, or loss—led them to find a deeper, more positive meaning in life. That may seem counterintuitive, but it shows that we have the power to choose a hopeful and confident perspective, even in the midst of hardship and suffering.

In fact, as God's people, we are called to strive for that outlook. Jesus taught us in [John 16:33](#), "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

"Be of good cheer" can also be translated as "take heart," "be courageous," "be confident," "be undaunted," "be filled with joy" or "be brave." These are not just words—they represent a mindset, a way of life—showing us how, with God's help, we can choose to respond to life's difficulties with strength and perseverance.

God's Word instructs us that adversity can be beneficial because it can:

- **Build courage** in us ([Acts 27:22](#)).
- **Reveal our weaknesses** so we can grow ([2 Corinthians 12:9](#)).
- **Push us to pray** ([James 5:14-18](#)).
- **Toughen us** ([Romans 8:28-29](#)).

- **Humble us** ([Deuteronomy 8:16](#)).
- **Work for good** ([Genesis 50:20](#)).

So, when adversity strikes, remember: don't ever get angry with God, and don't ever give up. Keep in mind what the apostle Peter wrote: "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([1 Peter 1:6-7](#)).

When adversity strikes, we have a choice: to let it break us or to let it shape us into stronger, more resilient individuals. God doesn't promise us a life free from challenges, but He does promise to be with us through them. With His strength, we can rise above the trials—not just enduring but thriving—knowing that our faith is being tested and refined like gold in fire.

As we face the hardships of life, let us remember these trials are not in vain. They are opportunities for growth, for deeper faith, and for a closer relationship with our Creator. In the end, we can take comfort in knowing that "the joy of the Lord is our strength" ([Nehemiah 8:10](#)). So, take heart. Be courageous, knowing that through every challenge, He is preparing us for greater things.

—Steve Myers, Operation Manager, Ministerial and Member Services

Upcoming Advertising in the *New York Post*

We will soon be running tests of full-page color advertisements in Sunday editions of the *New York Post*.

The ads include, "What Next for America?" on January 19 and "Next Four Years of Prosperity?" on January 26. Both ads will offer our Bible study aid "You Can Understand Bible Prophecy."

Then, two ads with the same title but different graphics, "What is the Purpose of Life?," will run on February 2 and 16 offering our Bible study aid "Why Were You Born?"

Readers can respond by various means including: by telephone, or by going to [ucg.org/freeoffer](#), scanning the QR code, downloading a free copy or requesting a free hard copy be mailed to them.

Your prayers for the success of these advertising tests will be greatly appreciated.

—Peter Eddington, Operation Manager, Media and Communications Services

60th Anniversary of the Church of God in Maryland

On March 8, 2025 the UCG Columbia, Maryland congregation will host a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Church of God in Maryland.

Sabbath services will begin at 1 p.m. at The Other Barn, 5851 Robert Oliver Place, Columbia, MD 21045. After services there will be a slideshow with old photos and memorabilia to enjoy during a catered meal.

We invite all past attendees of Maryland congregations to attend this special anniversary. If you are interested in attending, but are not currently a member of the Columbia congregation, or have any pictures related to the Church of God in Maryland that can be included in the slideshow, please contact Rhonda Diggins at rddiggins@yahoo.com or text (443) 653-1195 by Sunday, February 23.

We hope you will be able to join us for this special occasion.

Dutch Blitz Tournament Weekend

The Connecticut congregation cordially invites you to its Dutch Blitz Tournament Weekend! Come for the cards but stay for the fellowship.

We'll start the weekend off with a meal and a Friday night Bible study. The next day we'll enjoy Sabbath services followed by a dinner before the tournament begins. If there is enough interest, we'll plan a group trip on Sunday morning.

Please register for the weekend here: [Dutch Blitz Tournament Weekend Registration](#). There are plenty of hotels in the area, but we've secured a special group rate at a local hotel (register for more information). There is a required registration deadline of Feb. 7.

Dutch Blitz Tournament Weekend events include:

- Friday (2/14): Soup and Salad at 6 p.m.; Bible Study at 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday (2/15): Sabbath Services at 1 p.m.; Potluck Dinner at 3 p.m.; Tournament at 5:30 p.m.
- Sunday (2/16): Connecticut Excursion.

For questions, please contact Lena VanAusdle at lenavanausdle@gmail.com.

A Bahamas Beach Feast Is Back!

This year Freeport Bahamas will host God's Feast of Tabernacles at The Grand Lucayan Resort at Lighthouse Pointe. The all-inclusive beachfront resort will be home for 250 attendees this year. The seven-acre tropical resort and conference center was our host 11 years ago, and welcomes us back to share our eight-day festival for both locals and visitors.

The four-star resort features a picturesque beach with a crystal-clear Caribbean Sea as a backdrop. Registration instructions will be available later. Plan now to join us and the Bahamas brethren for an idyllic tropical Feast this year.

—Chuck Smith, Senior Pastor, Caribbean

Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Family Weekend, Teen Prom and Young Adult Fellowship

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

March 21–23, 2025

Join us for a dynamic weekend featuring a group volunteer activity, charcuterie and dessert social, teen and young adult fellowship, enriching Bible studies and Sabbath school, uplifting church services, recognition of graduating seniors, a memorable teen prom (for ages 12–19), a young adult dinner and social (for ages 18–35), a dance for all ages, a preteen carnival and costume party, and engaging sports events! The theme of the weekend, “Choose Life” ([Deuteronomy 30:19](#)) will be interwoven into that Sabbath by our presenters Gary Petty, Jay Ledbetter, Brian Hoselton and Jorge de Campos.

This weekend is a perfect opportunity for our church family to deepen connections, strengthen faith and create cherished memories together. Most of Friday's and Saturday's activities will take place at the Four Points Sheraton in Coppell, Texas, which conveniently provides a free shuttle to and from the DFW Airport.

Please register to help us plan seating and food quantities and make the necessary prepayments. **The deadline to make payment for any paid aspects of the weekend is March 4.** However, there is an early bird discount for teens who pay for the prom by February 18. Our website <https://bit.ly/dfw-regional-weekend> contains additional details about the schedule of events, the cost of different meals/events, and how to book a hotel room. We hope to see you there!

Seeking Young Adult Writers

Are you a young adult (aged 18-32 years) with an interest in writing about spiritual topics? United Young Adults is seeking writers to create new content on spiritual growth, meaningful relationships and making the most of talents.

Articles will be posted on uya.ucg.org. To see some examples of the type of content we produce, visit this page and sign up for our weekly email newsletter to begin receiving updates with our latest featured content.

If you have an idea for an article or would like to learn more about writing for United Young Adults, please contact us at uya@ucg.org.

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.

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.

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!

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All correspondence and questions should be sent to info@ucg.org. Send inquiries regarding the operation of this Web site to webmaster@ucg.org.

For other support contact support@ucg.org