

Home Office Weekly Update

from the UNITED CHURCH of GOD

February 6, 2025

“The World is a Different Place Today”

Greetings brethren around the world,

A few days ago, U.S. President Donald Trump made a statement that took the world by surprise and created a firestorm of opinion.

During an interview session with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, Trump said the Palestinians from Gaza should be relocated to Egypt, Jordan and other Arab nations. He also proposed demolishing Gaza and rebuilding it with nice homes in a better environment.

He said Gaza has been a place of “death” and war for years. Indeed, it has been a hotbed of terrorism and the radical Islamist group Hamas has fomented terror, murder and hate in the region for years. Trump’s words suggest—for Gaza to ever become a place of productivity and peace—there is a need to start over and remove the human element that leads to constant upheaval in this region.

His comments are interesting and thought-provoking, and even take us back to ancient times when one nation conquered another. Back then, conquered people were sometimes taken out of their land and relocated to other places. It was a way of “assuring” the people did not come back together and overthrow the new king.

This is the very thing that happened to ancient Israel as a result of their continued disobedience to God, when Assyria conquered them. You can read about that in 2 Kings 17. Israel was conquered and they were removed from their land, scattered through the nations. That plan worked for Assyria. Ancient Israel never returned to their homeland—the land given to them by God. (The Bible does tell us that when Christ returns, He will gather His scattered people and bring them back to that promised land.)

Will Trump’s vision work?

Without realizing it, Trump may have said something quite profound. Is this a way to break up the terrorist element? The entire Middle East Islamic region is given to terror, with a vision of taking over the world. Predictably, the world has reacted in different ways to Trump’s comments—some with outrage, and some with fascination and wonder. Would this vision work?

Whatever you may think, I heard one commentator today quoting an article that said, “The world is a different place today because of what Trump said” (or words to that effect).

Think about that. A new idea has people all over the world thinking and talking. It has changed the world and put a thought in their minds that was apparently not there before. Time will tell if anything happens with Gaza and if what President Trump suggests will come to pass. But his words will linger. There is a new direction—an option that has not before been voiced concerning a region that has been “troublesome” to the little nation of Israel.

God’s vision and plan

You know what? God has the best direction in mind—a plan for all mankind that *will* bring lasting peace, joy, safety and harmony to this world—to everyone around the world. It is a “radical” new idea the world has not recently heard.

It is the truth of God’s plan for mankind. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the good news of the coming Kingdom of God, the gospel of peace that Jesus Christ commissioned His Church to preach “in all nations.”

As God’s people today, are we committed to preaching the gospel of truth clearly, directly and boldly to the world? It’s an idea that really will work, and would work today if all the world turned to God and committed to Him.

The world needs to hear His message. His message will anger many, create dissension, and some will find it intriguing. God will *call* some who hear His word. He will open the ears of those He will. But all who truly hear the message, when preached widely with certainty and clarity, will never be the same again. A “thought” will be planted in their minds—one that will certainly come to pass.

Who knows what will happen with Gaza and Trump’s vision? Only God knows. But the world is different for having heard that message and idea.

May God speed that day

We need to be about our Father’s business and Christ’s commission to His Church and sound His message loud and clear. The world will be a different place when they understand it, and they will know it is from God. Christ will return to this earth. He will root out bitterness and evil that dominates our world. The Middle East will experience a major change as new powers in the world emerge (Daniel 11:40-43).

God’s Kingdom will come to this earth, and the world will benefit from and experience the peace, joy and blessing of living that way. May God speed that day.

Let us all join together and ask God to guide us and unite us as He directs the preaching of His gospel that has the power to “turn the world upside down” as it did when it was taught and preached as recorded in Acts 17:6.

Have a great rest of the week and Sabbath. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of

you, all over the world.

In Christ's service,



Rick Shabi

From Ministerial and Member Services . . .

Recent Ordination

We're happy to announce that on Jan. 18, 2025, Derek Strauss was ordained into the ministry. He and his wife, Denise, serve the Fort Worth, Texas congregation.



Derek and Denise Strauss

Job Opportunity—Mail Fulfillment Clerk

The United Church of God is announcing a job opening for a full-time Mail Fulfillment Clerk. Duties include:

- Process incoming mail/literature requests from both the Internet and USPS.
- Maintain and update the address database and be responsible for the accuracy and integrity of the address data.
- Fulfill requests for daily and weekly literature orders.
- Receive office mail and make deliveries as needed.

In addition, this role will perform donation processing functions for the Financial Services department—including opening mail and processing donations, tabulating donations, data entry, preparing bank deposits, processing change of address requests for donors and members.

The incumbent must be a baptized member (in good standing) of the United Church of God, *an International Association* with an associate's degree (A.A.) from

a two-year college or institution; and six months related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience.

The deadline for submission of an application is March 6, 2025. To request a job application or for questions about the position, please contact human_resources@ucg.org.

Feb. 14–16	Connecticut Dutch Blitz Tournament Weekend	Plainville, CT
Feb. 14–16	East Texas Regional Family Weekend	Big Sandy, TX
Feb. 14–17	Wamatochick Young Adult Weekend	Prescott, AZ
Feb. 28–Mar. 2	Southeast Weekend	Atlanta, GA
Mar. 8	60th Anniversary of Church in Maryland	Columbia, MD
Mar. 14–16	Portland Area Women's Enrichment Weekend	Canby, OR
Mar. 15–16	Women's Enrichment Weekend	Springfield, MO
Mar. 21–23	Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Family Weekend	Coppell, TX
Mar. 28–30	Women's Enrichment Weekend	Fairmont Hot Springs, BC
May 3–5	General Conference of Elders Annual Meeting	Cincinnati, OH
May 8–11	Mammoth Cave Camping Weekend	Mammoth Cave, KY
May 23–25	2025 NW Regional Teen Formal	Salem, OR
July 13–16	Preteen Camp Ironwood	Stewartville, MN
Aug. 26–Sept. 1	United Teen Camp	Westeros, AB
Sept. 7	UCG Gear Grinder Bike Ride	Minnetonka Lakes, MN