

Home Office Weekly Update

from the UNITED CHURCH of GOD

March 13, 2025

From the President...

Greetings brethren around the world,

As the time of Passover draws near, we are in times of self-examination and self-reflection. It is a time to ask God to show us what is in our hearts, and then to recognize, acknowledge—and with God’s Spirit—consciously choose to put the “leaven” out of our lives. That “leaven” the Bible tells us represents sin, hypocrisy, false doctrine, improper attitudes and the works of the flesh as listed in Galatians 5:19-21.

It is also time for us to review our relationships and, if necessary, humbly approach our brothers or sisters in Christ if there is something that is separating us. In the Bible God tells us specifically that sin and iniquity—not doing things His way—leads to division and separation. Isaiah 59:1 says: “Your iniquities have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.”

In preparation for Passover, consider and meditate on Matthew 5:23-24 and make the attempt to be reconciled to your brother. Among the many themes of Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread is the unity God desires for all of us to develop. It takes effort, work and humility to do this, just as Ephesians 4:3 reminds us: “*Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*” (emphasis added).

The life God has called us to is not always easy. God's will is that we come to repentance and submit ourselves to Him and each other, just as Jesus Christ perfectly set that example for us. If we are committed to God, we will do it. We must work hard, using the Spirit and power of God, if we are to enter the Kingdom of heaven.

Our daily Bible reading program

Hopefully, all of us are reading along with the [Bible reading program](#) we introduced last week that leads us up to Passover. There is a link on the home page at [UCG.org](#) to make it easy to find. It's a tremendous opportunity for all of us, all over the world, to be reading and meditating on the same things at the same time.

Timeless and foundational principles are found throughout the book of Exodus as God begins to bring His people out of Egypt and teach them His way. In Exodus 1, for example, Pharaoh determines the children of Israel have grown too many. As a result, he decides to kill a number of God's people and commands the midwives to carry this out as each male child is born. The midwives do not all follow Pharaoh's order. They are right in their actions. Killing in any of its forms, as Christ magnifies in Matthew 5:21-22, is wrong.

The Bible is clear we are to obey our master's instructions and requests unless they are ungodly. To defy is against God's way (Ephesians 6:5-8). But, if we are asked by any leader at work, in government or anywhere else, to do something that is contrary to God's way, *we don't do it*. Acts 5:29 is clear in this respect: "But Peter and the other apostles answered and said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'"

Always do things God's way. His way leads to peace, unity, joy, fulfillment and true love for Him and each other (*agape*).

Remember why we are here

Brethren, remember we are here to become like Christ. Remember your calling, remember the eternal purpose for which God has called you and to which you committed. Nothing in this physical life compares with what God has prepared for those who truly love (*agape*) Him.

As we prepare for Passover, now just a little over four weeks away, let us truly examine ourselves and purpose to endeavor together to follow Him with all our hearts, minds and souls.

Continuing in Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. D. Estill".

Rick Shabi

From Ministerial and Member Services...

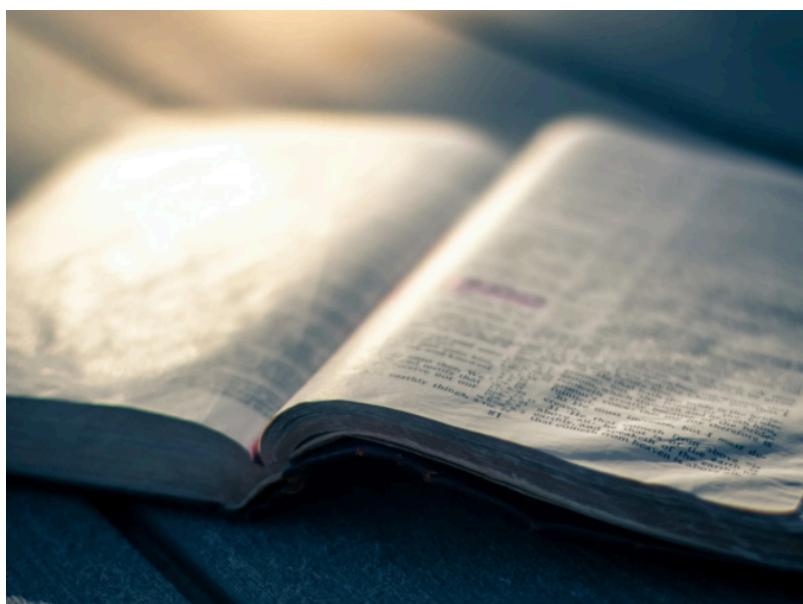
Festival Planning Brochure 2025

The Festival Planning Brochure has been finalized and sent to the printer. Members should be receiving their copies within three weeks or so. The brochure will be posted online tomorrow, Friday, at feast.ucg.org.

Everyone is advised to carefully read instructions on any site of interest before purchasing non-refundable housing deposits or airfare. Feast registration for most sites begins in April after the Passover season. Questions can be sent to festival@ucg.org or please contact the listed festival coordinators directly.

REMINDER: Join Us for Daily Bible Reading

Please remember to join us in reading Scriptures together as we prepare for the Passover this year.



Continuing through April 10, we have created a [website landing page showing scriptures to read each day](#)—along with passages from our own United Church of God [Bible Commentary](#) where available.

Be sure you read the words from your Bible as well as from our commentary, and include your children in this, as we all read and meditate together on God's word. Don't miss out on this valuable opportunity for daily Bible reading and study. The reading schedule is available by going to <https://www.ucg.org/news/daily-bible-reading-pre-passover-scripture-readings>.

Let's take advantage of this special activity as the entire Church throughout the world reads and meditates on the same passages each day.

Troyer's Hollow Campout Weekend

June 20–22, 2025

Mark your calendars for the annual Troyer's Hollow campout!

Nestled in the scenic hills of Amish Country near Charm, Ohio, Troyer's Hollow in the Doughty Valley has a long tradition within the local community and the Church as a relaxing retreat.

A beautiful creek winds through the secluded canyon hollow where we will camp. We have the entire property for two days, and one side on Sunday. Activities planned include a Friday evening Bible study (8 p.m.), Sabbath Services (11 a.m.), a potluck soon after services, kettle popcorn over the fire and many campfire discussions.

The campground has covered pavilions with a small kitchen, nicely maintained bathrooms and shower facilities. Tent camping is most popular, although there are a few RV/camper sites. There are also hotels in the area for brethren who are non-campers. Please contact Mary Miller or Susan Miller to make your reservations, especially for RVs and campers.

Please plan to provide your own meals and drinks, aside from the Sabbath potluck where everyone shares in providing and enjoying the meal with abundance. Alcohol is prohibited on the property. Don't forget your camping chairs.

- Cost: by donation (a donation box will be available).
- Arrival time: Friday, June 20 after 3 p.m.
- Departure: Sunday, June 22 by 2 p.m.

If you wish to come or have questions, please contact Mary Miller at mary@crawfordmfg.com (330) 204-6972 or Susan Miller at (330) 204-1756.

Northwest Teen Formal

Memorial Day Weekend, May 23–25, 2025

Save the date and join us in Salem, Oregon for three days of spiritual instruction, fellowship and fun!

The theme of the weekend is “Consider the Lilies,” and we look forward to

exploring this scriptural principle through our teen seminars and messages on the Sabbath. We have a number of activities and fellowship opportunities planned, in addition to the NW Teen Formal Banquet and NW Teen Formal Dance on the evening of Sunday, May 25.

Steve Myers and his wife, Kathe, will be joining us as our special guests for the weekend, and we're excited to welcome Joy Jones, who will also be joining us. Please begin making plans to join us this Memorial Day in Salem!

For more information, check out our Informational Flyer at <https://tinyurl.com/NWTeenFormalFlyer> or check out our website for the weekend located at <http://www.tinyurl.com/NWTeenFormal>.

Registration is open!

Young Adults: Boundary Waters Adventure

The Boundary Waters Adventure (BWA) program returns for the summer of 2025, and we look forward to welcoming 14 young adults on a grand adventure. The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Voyageurs National Park are a wilderness area within the Superior National Forest in northeastern Minnesota.

Participants will learn practical outdoor skills, as well as experience personal growth and service. The United Church of God needs leaders and pillars who can not only face difficulties with perseverance and courage, but who will also trust and work well with others, challenging themselves towards growth in leadership and spiritual maturity. This is why BWA is in a wilderness setting.

As a participant you will be learning more about the wonderful God that created you and how to become a better servant leader in the mold of Jesus Christ. This is how you will “make positive ripples” during BWA and beyond. And it is about bonding with a team of like-minded adventurers during your multi-day canoe trip of a lifetime. Yes, sweaty and bug bitten, you will build friendships and learn indelible spiritual lessons traveling in a pristine wilderness—BWA style!

Visit <https://ucg.regfox.com/boundary-waters-adventure> for application details.

Jamaica Feast of Tabernacles 2025: Montego Bay

Registration Now Open

Registration for the 2025 Feast of Tabernacles at Montego Bay, Jamaica, is open.

This year's Feast in Jamaica will be at the 5-star Iberostar Selection Rose Hall Suites in Montego Bay. This is an all-inclusive hotel where you can experience

Jamaica's natural paradise right on the beachfront. The Iberostar complex is just a 20-minute drive from Montego Bay International Airport.

Go to feast.ucg.org for more details and housing information at the Rose Hall Suites. There is room for about 250 international visitors. Join us in Jamaica this year for an inspiring and memorable Feast!

—Andy Diemer, Festival Coordinator

2025 French Feast Site Announcement

[Please share the following announcement on Saturday, March 15.]

Your French brothers and sisters in Christ are pleased to welcome you back to Roquebrune-sur-Argens, France, for the Feast of Tabernacles in 2025! The Feast will be held on the beautiful French Riviera at Club Miléade La Gaillarde, near the well-known tourist destinations of Saint-Tropez and Saint-Raphaël. We have enjoyed the Feast in this region of France for many years, and this will be our fourth time celebrating the Feast at this seaside location.

Located an hour south of the Nice airport, Club Miléade La Gaillarde is situated just across the street from the beautiful Mediterranean Sea with 180-degree ocean views and an underpass walkway to the well-known beach of La Gaillarde. The outdoor heated pool and children's play area overlook the water and the hotel's main building has a restaurant and bar, playroom for children and a spa where visitors can schedule a massage, enjoy a sauna or relax in the indoor jacuzzi overlooking the sea.

The auditorium for church services is located next to the main building and the hotel accommodations—many with ocean views—are a short walk from the main complex. This site's room-and-board package provides the opportunity to experience full-course buffet-style French meals while enjoying fellowship with other brethren from around the world.

We plan to offer three afternoon excursions to nearby points of interest.

Registration will open at 12 p.m. EDT on Monday, March 17, 2025. For further details, visit feast.ucg.org and the 2025 UCG Feast of Tabernacles Locations Facebook page.