

Home Office Weekly Update

from the UNITED CHURCH of GOD

April 3, 2025

From the President...

Greetings brethren around the world,

As I write this it is Thursday, April 3 by the world's calendar. More importantly and significantly, by God's calendar today is the 5th day of the month of Abib.

In just nine days it will be the 14th of Abib, and as that day begins at sunset on what we call Friday, April 11, baptized members of God's Church will gather to observe and participate in the most solemn occasion of the year—recommitting to God and Jesus Christ, after a period of self-examination, and taking of the symbols Christ instituted to demonstrate our commitment to overcoming the world and our own selves to become like Him.

With the world moving into more precarious situations, even while there may be the appearance of peace, we can see the "collisions of principle" as the forces of good and evil meet, and these differences come to a head, resulting in chaos, tumult and treacherous times that will ultimately lead to Christ's return.

While wars, natural catastrophic weather events and false religion have been part of Satan's world for as long as anyone can remember, we know these events will escalate as the time of Christ's return nears. Watching the continuing tensions in the Middle East, between Russia and Ukraine, and between the United States and Europe as policies and positions change, we see powder kegs that could result in the dreaded World War III.

And we know the spirit of evil exists and dominates our world. The Bible tells us that in the end time “evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13).

As the time of the end draws near, Revelation 12:9-10 tells us that Satan, the accuser of our brethren, will be cast down to the earth and he will wreak havoc, hatred and misery upon mankind. Verse 11 tells us we must resist those attacks that will arise and overcome them “by the blood of the Lamb.”

We will symbolically partake of the blood of that Lamb, in a worthy manner, on this coming Passover, now just a short time away.

Brethren, watch, stay awake, draw close to God and do not be deceived by the seeming calm of the world. Remember Christ’s words of Matthew 24:36-51 and take them seriously. Stay awake! Maintain that sense of urgency and desire to truly become like Christ, dedicated to God and His Word, praying “always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36).

This Passover is very important. Take note and let us be resolute in our prayers to God for His will to be done, and pray for each other. Our thoughts and prayers are always with all of you, all over the world.

Member Survey and Daily Bible Reading

The member survey will remain open for another week. This survey is your opportunity to make your comments and thoughts known about the work of the Church, the various means we use to preach the gospel to the world to fulfill Christ’s commission to the Church found in Matthew 28:19-20, and God’s commission to us of warning His physical people of Israel *and* spiritual Israel, as we find in Isaiah 58:1.

Let me repeat those verses so we are mindful of what all of us in the Church are commissioned to do. We all have a part in His work and all have been given talents and skills that God expects us to use as we build and make ready the spiritual Temple He is building in us individually and collectively.

Matthew 28:19-20: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.”

Isaiah 58:1: “Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.”

The survey is your opportunity to answer pre-determined questions, but also to make any comments you would like to make, anonymously, about how you feel or suggestions you may have on how the Church could better fulfill that commission. The Council and administration seek your input, so please feel free to share it. We are all part of the Body of Christ and have our part in the commission He has given each of us.

Finally, brethren, let me remind you of the daily Bible reading as we head toward Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. You can find those daily scriptures, along with pertinent other reading material, at ucg.org.

Take care, and have a good rest of the week and Sabbath.

Continuing in God’s service,



Rick Shabi

ABC Charity Auction Raises Money for Benin Church Building

On Sunday, March 30, the students of Ambassador Bible College (ABC) conducted their annual Charity Auction. This serves as a sort of “capstone project,” as they learn to put on a major event that includes refreshments, decorations and an elaborate entertainment program. The students also strengthen their relationships, their skills and their character in the process of overcoming the many challenges involved in project like this.



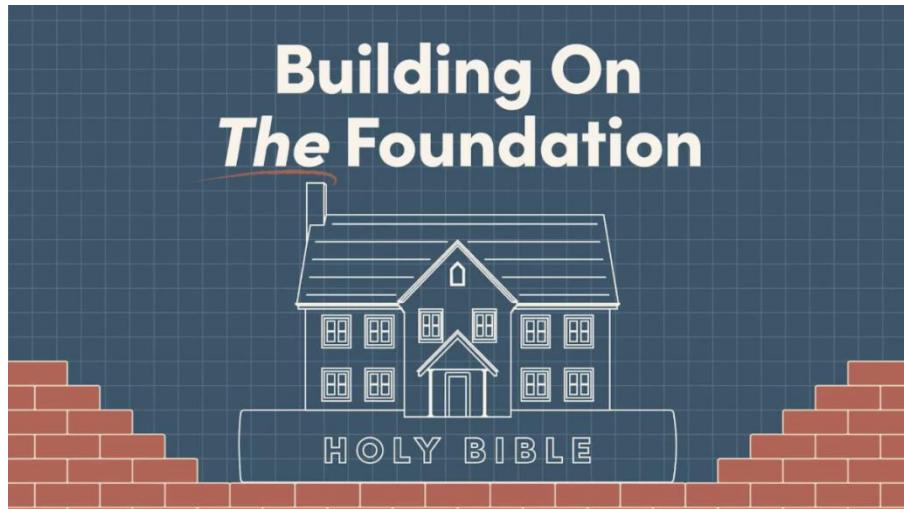
More than 100 church members attended. In live auction segments they bid on a wide variety of donated dessert items. There was also a silent auction of various decorative and household items. The students raised nearly \$8,000 during the event, which will go to complete construction of a new church building in Benin. It will be used for Sabbath services and also for conducting literacy programs for women, both in French and English.

The ABC students had a lot of fun, and a new group of students will do the same next year. We are currently accepting applications for next year's ABC class and encourage those interested to visit our website at abc.ucg.org and to apply right away!

REMINDER: 2025 Camp Video and Important Update for 2026

If you have not already done so, please plan to play the 2025 United Youth Camps Video after services on April 5 and announce the following:

The 2025 United Youth Camps season will be here soon and we are looking forward to another exciting and uplifting camp season. Registration is now open for campers and staff at uyc.ucg.org.



Please take note of an important change taking place next year. Starting in 2026 the youngest age for teen camp will move to 13 instead of 12. Our 12-year-old campers will continue to be accepted as campers at pre-teen camp.

This change, which is a return to our prior practices, will better align the programs with their respective age groups. It will also help in reducing overcrowding at some camps, which have become quite full in recent years.

To clarify, for next year's 2026 camp season, campers must be 13 years old by Aug. 1, 2026 (meaning they must be born before Aug. 1, 2013) to attend a teen camp that summer.

We wanted to let you know about this change now for the 2026 camp season, so everyone can plan accordingly.

—Ministerial and Member Services

REMINDER: Member Survey Available Through April 10

Pastors, please announce:

As members of God's household of faith, it is important we assess the state of our flock and God's Church. In recent years, the United Church of God has used a survey of its members and attendees to measure progress toward the goals and objectives

stated in our Strategic and Operation Plans. Once again, we would appreciate your help and feedback on how we are doing.

The online survey (intended for people of all ages who are associated with the United Church of God) will be available through April 10, 2025 at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2PWTHNH>. We welcome your honest, anonymous input as fellow workers in this building of God's spiritual temple.

Please note, this survey is open to everyone (not just one per household) and we are looking for participation from ***all ages***. As in prior years, the Council of Elders and home office administration will take the statistics and suggestions from the results to help develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan. We will also share the results through *United News* and a members website video presentation later this year.

The survey should only take 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Thank you so much for sharing your input and help.

—Council of Elders and Home Office Administration

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](#) and other resources 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.

Upcoming Events

April 19–20	Phoenix Spring Holy Day Dinner Dance	Scottsdale, AZ
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
May 26–30	Preteen Camp Florida	Umatilla, FL

June 8	Laurel Church Picnic	Columbia, MS
June 15-18	Preteen Camp Colorado	Allenspark, CO
June 15-22	Camp Cotubic	Bellefontaine, OH
June 20-22	Northwest Men's Weekend	Seabeck, WA
June 20-22	Troyer's Hollow Campout Weekend	Charm, OH
June 29-July 6	Camp Pinecrest	Fredericktown, MO
July 6-13	Southwest Camp	Prescott, AZ
July 6-13	<u>Boundary Waters Adventure</u>	Minnesota
July 11-13	<u>Women's Enrichment Weekend</u>	Allenspark, CO
July 13-16	Preteen Camp Ironwood	Stewartville, MN
July 13-16	Preteen Camp Ochoco	Prineville, OR
July 18-25	Camp Woodland	Temple, GA
July 20-27	Northwest Camp	Rockaway Beach, OR
July 27-30	Preteen Camp Seven Mountains	Spring Mills, PA
July 27-30	Preteen Camp Buckeye	Delaware, OH
July 27-30	Preteen Camp Gilmont	Gilmer, TX
Aug. 3	Kid's Rodeo and Fun Day	Portland, OR
Aug. 26-Sept. 1	United Teen Camp	Westerose, AB
Sept. 5-7	Cleveland Women's Enrichment Weekend	Brunswick, OH
Sept. 7	<u>UCG Gear Grinder Bike Ride</u>	Minnetonka Lakes, MN

Upcoming activities may be sent to weekly_update@ucg.org. Additional calendar information is available on the [members' website](#).