

SABBATH ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

United Church of God, *an International Association*
North Canton & Youngstown, OH; Pittsburgh, PA; Wheeling, WV Congregations

SABBATH, DECEMBER 7, 2019

Youngstown – 1 p.m.
North Canton – 1 p.m.

Wheeling – 10:00 a.m.
Pittsburgh – 2:30 p.m.

Greetings brethren,

We understand God’s existence and His truth. But do we sometimes devalue that foundational knowledge—in our minds or in the minds of our children? Historically and presently some have neglected to promote that foundation of the truth when raising their children in the knowledge of God’s way.

Is that a bit blunt? Maybe, but then again, maybe not.

The Wall Street Journal published an editorial this Friday (12/6/19) by Erica Komisar, a psychoanalyst in the state of New York who powerfully promotes “mothers being there” especially in the early years of each of their children’s lives. From what she wrote, she clearly values family as influenced by her Jewish faith.

In her commentary she cited some results of a 2018 study done by Harvard researchers. Published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, it analyzed “how being raised in a family with religious or spiritual beliefs affects mental health.”

Here is how she summarized the Study’s results, “Children or teens who reported attending a religious service at least once per week scored higher on psychological well-being measurements and had lower risks of mental illness. Weekly attendance was associated with higher states of volunteering, a sense of mission, forgiveness, and lower probabilities of drug use and early sexual initiation.”

From her family counseling experience, she described how children of atheistic parents find no comfort in trying to process what the death of a loved one means. Therefore, the implication of the study’s conclusions was that parents must reinforce a belief in God and the Bible.

Translate that to our calling into the true Church of God. We understand the Scriptures like no other people on earth! The meaning of Jesus Christ’s personal sacrifice for our sins is crystal clear to us. Remember, Christ desires that we be fully conversant about God’s incredible plan that ultimately offers salvation to all mankind! The eyes of God are upon us—the comparatively tiny few in His true Church today.

As parents, how well do we parent our children? As members of the true Body of Christ, how well do we encouragingly reinforce the incredible, human potential of the youth in our local congregations? How diligent are we to thank God the Father and Jesus Christ our Savior for every one of the children in His Church?

Keep the true faith—and spread it,



Randy Stiver, Pastor

Pastor's contact information: PO Box 1474, Massillon, OH 44648. Home phone: 330-809-0566, cell phone: 740-739-7248. **Email addresses:** randy_stiver@ucg.org or rpstiver@gmail.com (both come to the same location). For emails regarding scheduling (church events, visits or counseling), please copy my wife Linda ldstiver@gmail.com. Announcements should be sent to my email and copied to our daughter Amanda at anstiver@gmail.com as she helps process them each week.

1. CHURCH CIRCUIT SCHEDULE *(may be subject to change)*

December 7	Sabbath Services	Youngstown-1 PM; North Canton-1 PM* ; Pittsburgh-2:30 PM; Wheeling-10AM *Note: Memorial service for Ruth Wine, following services in North Canton, at 3:15 PM
December 14	Sabbath Services	Youngstown-11 AM; North Canton-2 PM; Pittsburgh-2:30 PM; Wheeling-11 AM
December 21	Sabbath Services	<i>Webcast - Winter Family Weekend in Cincinnati – all congregations – 2:30PM</i> *12 Noon Sabbath Bible study in North Canton
December 27	Bible Study Webcast	Will begin at 7:30 p.m. at https://www.ucg.org/congregations/north-canton-oh/webcast
December 28	Sabbath Services	Youngstown-11 AM; North Canton-2 PM*; Pittsburgh-2:30 PM; Wheeling-11 AM *4th Sabbath potluck in North Canton following services, as usual

2. LOCAL PRAYER REQUESTS:

(If you notice that your prayer request needs updating, please drop us an email or a call with an update. Thank you!)

- **James Guy** (Youngtown) – Following his feast-time E-coli infection James (son of Lily and Jimmy Guy) is still working to restore his digestive health and is making progress, but slowly. Your continued prayers for his healing, and that follow-up tests show that he is clear of associated infections are greatly appreciated.
- **Jenny Luchitz** (North Canton) – With the recent deaths of a dear brother and sister-in-law, Jenny could use your prayers for encouragement.

ONGOING:

- **Marlene Ware** (North Canton) – She would appreciate your continued prayers for healing of an infected sore on her leg.
- **Steve Richmond** (Cambridge) – Continuing to fight liver and colon cancer.
- **Todd Bickel** (North Canton) – Continued challenges with high blood pressure.

3. MEMORIAL FOR RUTH WINE – *this Sabbath, December 7, 2019*

We will hold a memorial service for Ruth Wine at 3:15 PM. In order to do so, services will be moved up to **1:00 PM** for this Sabbath, December 7. We will also have the hall available to us until 6 PM, for extra fellowship time. Refreshments will be provided, but brethren are asked to please contribute cookies!

4. DEATH OF BESS GABRIEL

On December 4 our dear friend, deaconess and sister in the true faith, Bess Gabriel died peacefully in Milford (near the Home Office). Here is her daughter Debra McNeely's post from Facebook:

'Many of you knew our mother Bess Detwiler Gabriel. Her life ended peacefully this morning. She was 91. Another saint awaits the resurrection.'

Bess will be greatly missed indeed.

Cards may be sent to Darris and Debra McNeely at the following address:

4204 Muscovy Lane
Batavia, OH 45103

We are planning a North Canton memorial service for Bess after services on a Sabbath in the coming weeks. Details will be forthcoming.

**5. VACATE HALL BY 5:00 PM EACH SABBATH – North Canton
– (except *this* Sabbath, we have the hall until 6:00 PM)**

Please remember that we need to vacate the Global Gateway facility by 5 PM each Sabbath through the end of the year (unless otherwise announced). The facility staff are scheduled according to our contractual hours and wait for us to vacate to close and lock the building. Thanks so much.

6. SABBATH DRESS REMINDER

Though we gather for spiritual meaning each Sabbath we also physically come before the presence of God, and the Holy Angels gathered at His throne, and in so doing please remember to assess your attire, bearing in mind the principle of the wedding garments from scripture.

Let's step beyond casual and dress up in what we call "Sabbath-appropriate" or "dressy-business" attire. For ladies dresses are preferred, but nice dress pants are acceptable for those with restricted movement and in the cold winter months, but please no leggings or tightly fitted trousers. Gentlemen, as you are able, please wear suits or slacks and sport coats. Also remember to check for modesty from front and back views, tightness of garments, and sheerness. Thank you for your kind thoughtfulness toward your fellow brethren and, mostly especially, toward our Almighty, Eternal God.

**7. SABBATH BIBLE STUDY (12 Noon) and WINTER FAMILY WEEKEND WEBCAST (2:30 PM service)
– December 21, 2019**

Bible study will be presented by John Miller at 12 Noon, with services at 2:30 PM. Please bring a pack lunch and enjoy the fellowship before services.

Services will be at 2:30 in order to tune into the Sabbath webcast from the Winter Family Weekend in Cincinnati.

8. FRIDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY – December 27, 2019 – 7:30 PM

The next webcast Bible Study will be on December 27th at the usual 7:30 PM time, at <https://www.ucg.org/congregations/north-canton-oh/webcast>.

9. KITCHEN SERVICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – North Canton

If any additional volunteers would like to serve on the rotating kitchen schedule, we are updating the listing for the coming six months (Jan-Jun). On a rotation basis, volunteers usually only serve once a month, and less so with more volunteers. Working together on a rotating basis keeps the work light on the Sabbath and from overwhelming any one individual. It is a service that is greatly appreciated. Please check with Debbie Kuhns if you would like to volunteer.

10. WOMEN'S ENRICHMENT WEEKEND – CLEVELAND – April 24-26, 2020

Cleveland will be hosting a women's enrichment weekend, April 24-26, 2020.

The theme is "The Secret Garden, Stepping Stones to Spiritual Growth".

The registration deadline is March 7th.

To register please visit: <http://women.ucg.org/enrichment-weekends/cleveland-ohio-2020>

SABBATH FOCUS

World News Commentary: NATO and Real Peace

by Rex Sexton

(pastor in Portland and The Dalles, Oregon, and former COE member)

The foreign ministers of 12 countries in North America and Western Europe gathered in [Washington](#), D.C., to sign the North Atlantic Treaty on April 4, 1949. According to the NATO charter, the purpose of the alliance is, “.. *to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.*” However, it was understood as a mutual defense agreement, a military alliance.

The treaty was an important change in American foreign policy. For the first time since the 1700s, the U.S. had formally tied its security to that of nations in Europe—the continent that had served as the flash point for both world wars. Our founding fathers had warned about entanglements in European wars, but times had changed. The Atlantic Ocean was not the formidable boundary any longer.

NATO formed the backbone of the West’s military bulwark against the USSR and its allies for the next 40 years, adding member states and growing larger over the course of the [Cold War](#) era. Greece and Turkey were admitted in 1952, the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) in 1955 and Spain in 1982. France often felt overlooked and not regarded enough in the organization. France opted to withdraw from military participation in NATO in 1966 and did not return until 1995.

For decades the annual NATO summits have been a necessary boredom, but not this year. NATO nations agreed to a target of spending 2 percent of GDP on their military, but only four, the United States, the United Kingdom, Greece, and Estonia reach that level. The others use the excuse that their domestic social needs are too high to spend more on defense. At this year’s meeting in London last week, President Donald Trump described nations who don’t pay their fair share in terms of defense spending as “delinquents”, whereas French President Emmanuel Macron described NATO’s strategy as “brain dead.”

When world leaders meet there is always a positive front presented to the press and public. The disagreements and conflicts are rarely revealed. But a microphone was left on and caught on video were Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada, President Emmanuel Macron of France, Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands, UK Prime minister Boris Johnson and Princess Anne. Their gossip about Mr. Trump was not flattering so the US President left and flew home.

“He’s two-faced,” Mr. Trump said of Mr. Trudeau, when asked about the viral video. He attributed Mr. Trudeau’s apparent frustration to the American leader’s pressure campaign to increase Canada’s military spending to 2 percent of its economic output.

While the alliance will endure, some observers wonder how long it will be before historical enemies (such as Greece and Turkey, both NATO members) will erupt in conflict, or members in Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Albania, Croatia) will ask for military assistance that other members will vehemently object to. The newer members of the alliance are not historical allies of the US, Canada, or the UK and many have asked why we are bound to defend them.

A nation truly under God would base their trust in God's promises, not agreements with other nations. God warns "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because *they are* many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, But who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, Nor seek the LORD!" (Isaiah 31:1) We are also cautioned not to put trust in men, "Do not put your trust in princes, *Nor* in a son of man, in whom *there is* no help." (Psalm 146:3)

The promises of protection that the Creator God made to Israel of old still apply to the descendants of Israel today. "If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. You shall dwell in your land safely. I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make *you* afraid; and the sword will not go through your land. You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you. I will look on you favorably and make you fruitful, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you."

President Thomas Jefferson prayed these words and recorded them for us on March 4, 1801: "Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage; We humbly beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favor and glad to do Thy will."

As a nation we are no longer mindful of God's favor or want to do His will.

In a speech to the American People on February 6, 1986, President Ronald Reagan admonished, "To preserve our blessed land we must look to God... It is time to realize that we need God more than He needs us... We also have His promise that we could take to heart with regard to our country, that "If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

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