

# SABBATH ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

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

SABBATH, DECEMBER 21, 2019

Youngstown – 2:30 p.m.

Wheeling – 2:30 a.m.

North Canton – 2:30 p.m.

Pittsburgh – 2:30 p.m.

*All congregations, services at 2:30 PM for WFW Sabbath Webcast*

Greetings brethren,

" 'Tis the season to be jolly," say some in today's world. But it is instead the season of great folly!

Simon the sorcerer (later known in history as Simon Magus—meaning "Simon the great") tried to gain a position in the true ministry of Jesus Christ. The story unfolds in Acts chapter eight.

Simon watched Philip baptize and heal many in Samaria (the former capital of the House of Israel 700 years earlier). Then Peter and John came and laid hands on those baptized, so that God might give each one His Holy Spirit. Simon the sorcerer had also been baptized by Philip, and offered money to the apostles so he, too, could have that power.

Peter responded to this Simon with authority, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God perhaps the thought of your heart might be forgiven you. For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity," Acts 8:20-23, NKJV.

There is no guessing what Peter meant. Simon Magus was by no means repentant, but instead asked the apostle to "Pray..., that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me" (verse 24). He just wanted to beat the rap.

In ensuing decades, true Christianity would be challenged by a false gospel promoting, among other things, pagan holidays substituted for God's Holy Festivals. Remarkably, Christmas would come to sit at the top of the list - in conjunction with Easter (as contrasted to the Passover).

So today we have *supposed* Christian festivals institutionalized in our national cultures. But that is not, nor must it ever be the case within God's Church! But why?

The answer: in the true, historic Church of God, we keep God's weekly and annual Sabbaths holy. We do *not* participate in keeping the world's false holidays. We do this with no offence to our neighbors or relatives whom God has not yet called to know and be responsible for His truth and way of life.

Thank God sincerely for His spiritual calling into His true Church, and eagerly pray, "God's kingdom come" daily!

Keep the *true* faith and spread it!

In Christ's service,



Randy Stiver, Pastor

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

December 21	Sabbath Services	<i>Webcast - 2:30 PM - Winter Family Weekend in Cincinnati – all congregations</i>
December 27	Bible Study Webcast	Will begin at 7:30 p.m. at <a href="https://www.ucg.org/congregations/north-canton-oh/webcast">https://www.ucg.org/congregations/north-canton-oh/webcast</a>
December 28	Sabbath Services	Youngstown-11 AM; North Canton-2 PM*; Pittsburgh-2:30 PM; Wheeling-11 AM <i>* Anniversary Reception for Bob and Elizabeth Dezso, North Canton</i>
January 4, 2020	Sabbath Services	Youngstown-1 PM; North Canton-2 PM; Pittsburgh-2:30 PM; Wheeling-10 AM
January 10	Bible Study Webcast	Will begin at 7:30 p.m. at <a href="https://www.ucg.org/congregations/north-canton-oh/webcast">https://www.ucg.org/congregations/north-canton-oh/webcast</a>
January 11	Sabbath Services	Youngstown-11 AM; North Canton-2 PM; Pittsburgh-2:30 PM; Wheeling-11 AM

**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!)*

- **Ed Scarpari** (Wheeling) – Ed Scarpari (son of Ed and Marlene Scarpari) lives in France has been diagnosed with a blood clot in one lung and a growth in the other. Medical care in France is not always prompt and Ed is experiencing increasing weakness. His family ask for your prayers for God's healing, and intervention in his medical care.
- **Marlene Ware** (North Canton) – Leg sore is improving, continued prayers appreciated.
- **James Guy** (Youngtown, son of Jimmy and Lily Guy) – Still recovering from complications after contracting a Feast-time E-coli infection.

**3. WINTER FAMILY WEEKEND WEBCAST *this* Sabbath, December 21, 2019 - (2:30 PM service)**

– Come early for snacks and fellowship!

**Services will be at 2:30** in order to tune into the Sabbath webcast from the Winter Family Weekend in Cincinnati. Though there will be no Sabbath Bible Study this month, please plan to come early to enjoy snacks and fellowship since we must vacate the building promptly at 5 PM, shortly after services conclude.

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

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

**5. ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION for BOB and ELIZABETH DEZSO – Sabbath, December 28, 2019**

After services on the last Sabbath of December we will have a special reception to honor the Dezsos for a wonderful milestone, their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, which they celebrated earlier this week! Please contribute finger foods and finger desserts! A special cake will be provided.

**NOTE:** The reception will take the place of our usual 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbath potluck for this month. We'll pick back up with our regular 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbath potluck in January.

**6. PITTSBURGH VARIETY SHOW – Sabbath evening, January 4, 2020**

Get your acts together for the Pittsburgh Variety show. Pittsburgh will be hosting an evening of fun for all ages and all talents from all congregations. The evening will consist of a Teen/ Young adult bible study followed by a potluck meal then the variety show.

If you are a musician, comedian, singer or have any hidden talents, please contact Ben or Kristen Rogers to participate. You can reach them at [benrogers2017@gmail.com](mailto:benrogers2017@gmail.com). Spectators are welcome but performers are preferred. The more acts we have, the more fun will be had for all. This is planned for January 4, 2020.

**7. FEAST PLANNING: SOME INTERNATIONAL SITES OPENING FOR REGISTRATION**

Some of the international Feast sites are or will be opening up for registration in the next few weeks.

The European sites are especially popular and fill up very quickly, within minutes in some cases. The new Feast site in the Netherlands is already full (although there is a waiting list).

If you are thinking of going to an international Feast site, please be sure to sign up for email updates at <https://www.ucg.org/subscribe-to-email-updates> so that you will be on top of registration notices! Also, check online regularly at <https://www.ucg.org/members/feast> for additional information.

The U.S. Feast sites should be open for registration later in the spring, as usual.

*- End -*