

The World Ahead

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Living Church of God

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THE MISSION “My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish *His work.*” -- John 4:34

Greetings from Charlotte,

Last weekend we had a *Tomorrow's World* Presentation in Austin, Texas where 36 guests, in addition to 39 members, attended while another one in St. John's, Newfoundland had 8 guests. TWPs will be held this Sabbath in Monroe, Louisiana and in Morrisville, North Carolina. Presentations are also scheduled for Sunday, August 6 in Shreveport, Louisiana and Auckland, New Zealand. Dr. Wilner Pierre is visiting the offices this week and will be doing some recordings in the television studio. The African nation of Kenya is holding a presidential election this coming Wednesday, August 9. The country is deeply divided tribally and our members are concerned that, no matter who wins, parts of the nation could descend into violence. Please pray for the safety of our brethren and that this nation will transfer power peacefully for the sake of our members. Mr. Ron McGowen, longtime minister in Texas, died this past week and will be greatly missed (*please see announcement below*). Your prayers for his family, and other families suffering losses, are appreciated.—*Gerald Weston*

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Death of Mr. Ron McGowen

We are saddened to report that Mr. Ron McGowen, Associate Pastor serving in the Houston area, died of cancer on July 31. Mr. McGowen was 79. He was baptized in God's Church in 1969 and volunteered in the ministry for more than 27 years, serving God's people in Texas and also ministering to many in prison. He was much loved and appreciated, and will be greatly missed. Mr. McGowen is survived by his wife Linda. Cards and letters of encouragement may be sent to the Headquarters office, and will be forwarded to Mrs. McGowen:

Mrs. Linda McGowen
c/o Living Church of God
2301 Crown Centre Dr.
Charlotte, NC 28227

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Activity Registration and Payment Now Open!

Activity Registration is now open for most Feast sites. Members and guests attending the Feast of Tabernacles are now invited to begin registering for activities during the Feast of Tabernacles 2017. Payments for activities are also enabled for most sites. (Please note that activity registration is not yet open for a few Feast sites, because details are being finalized—if you have any questions, contact your Festival coordinator.) Activity registration and payment for most Feast sites will be made via your MyLCG account, through the Festival website. To access it, go to www.lcg.org, and click on the “Feast of Tabernacles” link. If you have any questions, please contact your Festival coordinator.

Feast of Tabernacles Sermons—Repeat Announcement

Attention Pastors: Please send to the Church Administration Department (cad@lcg.org) the names of those in your congregation(s) who will be unable to attend the Feast and wish to receive a set of the Feast of Tabernacles sermons on CD. (Sermons are available in English, French or Spanish.) The deadline to submit these requests is **September 1 for recipients in the U.S.** Pending international requests should be submitted immediately. Note: Feast sermons will also be uploaded (one per day) during the Feast at www.lcg.org, for those who have Internet access. The French sermons will be uploaded to www.eglisedieuvivant.org.

LIVING UNIVERSITY

Registration for 1st (Fall) Semester

Just over a week remains until the start of the Fall 2017 semester of Living University. Students should register for classes and order textbooks *as soon as possible* in order to be prepared for the start of classes on August 16. For those who have never taken a Living University course, you will need to enroll in the University first, and then register for your selected course(s). Please note that Living University has lowered its tuition cost by nearly 30 percent for the 2017-2018 academic year. Those age 65 and above are reminded that they are eligible to “audit” one class per semester and the tuition fee will be waived. They are only responsible for the \$45 technology fee and the cost of textbooks. High school students interested in dual-enrolling in an LU course are eligible for our [Early College](#) program which significantly discounts tuition fees. To make application to Living University, to register for courses, and to find out more, please visit the www.livinguniv.com website. For additional information, please contact Assistant Registrar Mrs. Michelle Broussard at mbroussard@livinguniv.com or 704-708-2294. Watch for LU course descriptions in future issues of *The World Ahead*. Below you will find examples of classes being offered this semester. For a full list of classes visit the “Fall 2017 Class Schedule” (Spring in the Southern hemisphere) on the Living University website.

THL 421 – History of Christianity I: This course deals with the history of Christianity from the first century to the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation. It focuses on the growth and development of Christianity during the early centuries in the Mediterranean world as well as its expansion into Europe and the East. If you have enjoyed Dr. Meredith’s article series on the Protestant Reformation, you will find this course fascinating.

THL 460 – Understanding Contemporary World Religions: This course is an introduction to the major religious traditions of the world, particularly Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam; and consideration of neo-pagan and cultic phenomena in the contemporary world. The course focuses on the historical development, key figures, as well as major doctrines and practices of these religions. Students will come to understand similarities and differences between the world’s religions and how they differ from both worldly and biblical Christianity.

COMMENTS

The Value of Counsel: One common pitfall in life is trusting in our own judgment when we only see part of the picture or when we only see what we want to see. When we make decisions or take actions based on how we feel or how we see a situation, the results can be costly for ourselves and for others. This is why Solomon advised in Proverbs 3:5, “lean not on your own understanding,” and in Proverbs 3:7, “Do not be wise in your own eyes,” and again in Proverbs 28:26, “He who trusts in his [or her] own heart is a fool...” Solomon also warned in Proverbs 14:12, “There is a way that seems right to a man [or to a woman], but its end is the way of death.” To help us avoid making serious mistakes in life, God inspired Solomon to write in Proverbs 11:14, “Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in a multitude of counselors there is safety” and again in Proverbs 15:22, “Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.” We can obtain wise counsel from parents, the ministry, and from older, more experienced friends, relatives and associates who can be objective and help us see a bigger picture than we perceive on our own. Seeking wise counsel is a habit we can develop that will help us succeed and avoid making serious mistakes.

Have a profitable Sabbath,
Douglas S. Winnail

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NEWS AND PROPHECY—August 3, 2017

Temple Mount Crisis: Last month an armed gunman killed two Israeli police officers at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. As a result, Israeli security forces installed metal detectors and cameras around the Temple Mount, kicking off violent clashes with Muslims. These devices were subsequently removed, but Israel then banned Arab men under age 50 from praying on the Temple Mount ([Deutsche Welle](#), July 28, 2017). Sympathetic protests also erupted in Turkey ([AFP](#), July 30, 2017). Violent clashes and arrests continue in this ethnic and religious “hot spot” ([Haaretz](#), July 31, 2017). A Vatican representative recently told the UN Security Council that the Catholic Church would like to see a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine, and that Jerusalem should become an international city “with guaranteed access to the holy shrines of all the major religions” ([Catholic Culture](#), July 26, 2017). Jerusalem has long been prophesied to be “a very heavy stone for all peoples,” and it is certainly fulfilling that role today (Zechariah 12:1–3). Jerusalem’s future will be troubled, but it will eventually become a model city of peace. For more about Jerusalem’s sobering and exciting future, be sure to view “[Jerusalem: City of Peace](#).”

Men Who Would Be Kings: Throughout history, unscrupulous men have sought positions of power and brought themselves and others to ruin. Today in Africa we see just such a tragedy of corruption and suffering unfolding. In Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) Robert Mugabe has presided over the country since independence in 1980. Once the breadbasket of the region, Zimbabwe must now import food to feed its people due to a violent land redistribution scheme that saw food production fall drastically. During his nearly 40-year administration, corruption has run rampant and elites have prospered while wages, living standards and life expectancy have fallen and unemployment and inflation have soared. Today, at age 93, the aging patriarch seems determined to hold on to power, in the face of rising calls for him “to go” ([BBC Zimbabwe Country Profile](#), May 9, 2017). In South Africa, where Jacob Zuma holds power, it is the same story. In spite of hundreds of fraud and corruption charges against him, once elected “he began to seize personal control of important state institutions by appointing loyalists... to harass Mr. Zuma’s opponents and protect his corrupt friends and allies” ([The Wall Street Journal](#), July 28, 2017). The legacy of his rule has been soaring rates of violent crime, high unemployment, widespread poverty and a continuing AIDS epidemic—all while corruption among the elite and mismanagement of the economy have destroyed the credit rating of the country. The situation has spawned anger among many South Africans who want to see the president replaced. Long ago, Solomon observed, “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when a wicked man rules, the people groan” (Proverbs 29:2). The Apostle Paul foresaw that selfishness, greed and the love of pleasure would be evident in the last days—including among the leaders of society. These are just two examples of why Jesus Christ is going to return and establish a world-ruling government that will bring peace and justice to all people (Isaiah 9:6–7).

Western Infertility Crisis: Hebrew University scientists report that fertility rates among men in Western nations are dropping each year by 1.4 percent ([The Guardian](#), July 29, 2017). Over the last 40 years, male fertility rates in these nations have dropped by over 50 percent! The problem is compounded when Western families wait until women are over age 30 to conceive, resulting in lower fertility rates among women. Men outside the Western world seem to be unaffected by this trend (*ibid.*). God warned the Israelite-descended peoples at the end-of-the-age that “cursed shall be the fruit of your body”—because they would reject Him and His ways (Deuteronomy 28:15-18). Although God did not specify how this curse would happen, the implication is that it has to do with Israel’s sins—including lifestyle choices that cause infertility (see [mayoclinic.org](#), August 11, 2015). It is sobering to watch this curse begin to happen today in many Israelite-descended nations. However, the Bible also promises blessings of fertility when we obey His instructions (Deuteronomy 28:2–4).—*Scott Winnail, Chris Sookdeo, Francine Prater, Sue Bennett*