

The World Ahead

A ministerial publication of the
Living Church of God

In this issue:

- Church Administration page 1
- Feast of Tabernacles page 3
- Living Youth Program page 3
- Living University page 4
- Comments page 5
- News and Prophecy page 6

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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,

This has been an exciting week here in Charlotte. Guests are coming in for the Family Weekend and it is good to spend time with dear friends, family, and new acquaintances. We held a video conference with men scattered in six different locations to discuss the Work in India. In addition to three of us here in Charlotte, we had three men in India, Mr. Tyler in Australia, two men in two different time zones in Canada, and Mr. Rajan Moses in Kuala Lumpur. Communication is truly amazing when it is used for a good purpose! After attending the early morning meeting, Mr. Ames went on to record a new *Tomorrow's World* telecast later in the day. I have kept busy writing and holding meetings along with other duties. The South African Living Youth Program (Camp) begins this weekend. The 2018 U.S. Festival site locations are listed below. Mr. Bobby Jacques has been hired for the full-time ministry and should be in Kansas City for further training in the next few weeks.—*Gerald Weston*

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Passover 2018

Important Notice to All Pastors: In 2018, the Passover Service will be observed on Thursday evening, March 29. Please let us know as soon as possible if any of the congregations you serve will need additional Passover Service supplies (bread trays and/or wine trays or glasses) or a copy of the Passover Service recording and letter instructions (available in English, French and Spanish). The Passover Service recording in English is the same as the one from 2017 made by Mr. Peter Nathan. To ensure timely delivery and to save on shipping costs, we need this information before January 29 for international congregations and by February 20 for U.S. congregations.

Also, please let us know of any scattered members who are unable to keep the Passover with a congregation and who need to receive the Passover Service recording and letter instructions for observing it at home. International requests should be received before January 29 and U.S. requests before February 20. Please direct your requests to the Church Administration Department at cad@lcg.org as soon as possible.

LCG Webcast Live Stream of Charlotte Weekend Sabbath Service—Congregations Tuning In Should Have a Backup Plan—Repeat Announcement

We are once again welcoming LCG congregations and members to join us “online” for the Charlotte Family Weekend Friday night Bible Study on December 22, and Sabbath Service on December 23. The Friday night Bible Study will begin at 7:30 p.m. (Eastern time) and the Sabbath service will begin at 2:00 p.m. (EST). To join, please go to www.lcgwebcast.org, and under “Stream Site” select “Charlotte Family Weekend 2017.” Enter the password, your name (or congregation name) and the number of people viewing (for attendance purposes). Please note, this Internet broadcast is for LCG membership and you can find the password at your “MyLCG” account. (Just go to www.cogl.org and click on the “MyLCG” link.) **Pastors: If your congregations are tuning in, be sure to have a lineup of speakers or DVDs set up as backup, in case you have any technical difficulties.** We look forward to “seeing” you all on the live stream!

Note: Simultaneous translation of the Bible Study and Sabbath Service into French or Spanish will **not** be available this year.

Kansas City Family Weekend Deadlines Approaching—Repeat Announcement

Next up is Charlotte, then the Kansas City Weekend! We’re expecting over 400 people this year, and we’re excited to welcome guest speaker Rod McNair and his family. We also have regional guest speakers lined up for the Bible Studies on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

The deadline for reserving a hotel room at the Embassy Suites was Tuesday, December 19. After December 19, much higher, standard hotel rates apply to new reservations.

If you have already registered, please make your dinner payments as soon as possible via PayPal or check. We have to give the hotel final numbers this week, so if we haven’t received your payment, your party may not be counted. Details about payments and housing can be found on the website at kclcg.org (not an official LCG website). The password for the Housing and Information pages is **security**.

The deadline for signing up for a Family Games or Volleyball team was last week! For those who are new to the Weekend or who just want to show up and play, we will happily place you on a team of our choosing. Family games start a little later this year, but if you’re playing volleyball or basketball, the sports Bible Study begins at 8:30 a.m. (it will help you tame your competitive spirit a bit), with the volleyball tournament and open court basketball beginning at 9 a.m.

See you soon!

Northeast Spring Holy Days Family Weekend (March 29-April 1, 2018)

Every year, members of the Living Church of God from congregations throughout the Northeast Region gather to fellowship during the Spring Holy Days. This year, we will travel to the Frost Valley YMCA, in the heart of the Catskills. This facility provides an ideal location to focus on the lessons we learn during the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. We will eat together, worship together, sing hymns together and fellowship together. The focus for these three days will be on building bonds of brotherhood, learning more about God's way, and worshipping God. If you would like to be part of this gathering, just go to www.nelcg.org (not an official Church website) and click on "Spring Family Weekend" under the "Activities" tab. There you can learn more about the program, facility, and cost for the weekend, and view lots of pictures from previous years. We are looking forward to hosting you at the Feast of Unleavened Bread!—*Jonathan McNair*

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

We are pleased to announce the 2018 Feast sites for the United States and their coordinators:

United States Feast Sites in 2018

California, La Quinta (Rodger Bardo: rbardo@lcg.org; 602-910-1086)
Colorado, Snowmass (Stephen Elliott: selliott@lcg.org; 949-293-9086)
Florida, Panama City (Eddie Breaux: ebreaux@lcg.org; 601-649-1911)
Hawaii (Brandon Fall: bfall@lcg.org; 253-292-0698)
Northern Kentucky (Phil Sena: psena@lcg.org; 512-535-6771)
Missouri, Osage Beach (Richard Franz: rfranz@lcg.org; 314-775-3192)
Oregon, Seaside (Jonathan Bueno: jbueno@lcg.org; 361-331-1099)
South Carolina, Hilton Head (Mike DeSimone: mdesimone@lcg.org; 704-844-1970)
Texas, Marble Falls (Gary Stein: gstein@lcg.org; 940-395-9984)
Vermont, Mt. Snow (Jonathan McNair: jmcnair@lcg.org; 516-724-4452)
Wisconsin, Lake Geneva (Phil West: pwest@lcg.org; 262-314-4313)

The international list is not yet complete—more information will be forthcoming as plans are firmed up. Please stay tuned to *The World Ahead* for more information about the Feast of Tabernacles 2018!

LIVING YOUTH PROGRAM

No Friday Evening Online Teen Bible Studies on December 29

There will be no online Teen Bible Study on Friday evening, December 29 (Kansas City Family Weekend Bible Study). However, archives of previous Living Youth Bible Studies can be found on the [Living Youth website](#). Online Teen Bible Studies will resume on Friday evening, January

5, when we will begin the study of the Gospel account of Matthew, covering the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.—*Sheldon Monson*

Texas Teen Camp—“Top 10 Reasons to Come to Camp”—Repeat Announcement

One hundred seventy teens, ages thirteen to eighteen, were surveyed this summer at Lone Star Camp in Texas. The “Top 10 Reasons to Come to Camp” and “10 More Reasons to Come to Camp” are listed on the [Youth website](#). Be sure to check out the results.

LIVING UNIVERSITY

Final Semester Registration

There are only 2.5 weeks left to register for spring semester Living University classes! Classes begin on Wednesday, January 10. This will be the last semester of LU operation, and your last opportunity to experience the in-depth LU learning experience. As the Church transitions its educational efforts, beginning in the fall of 2018 we plan to provide a “limited release” of courses to the general Church membership—with a few classes being added each semester or year. These courses will provide exciting content and have the potential to increase one’s biblical understanding; however, they will be significantly different from the current format.

You may register for the spring semester (fall in the Southern Hemisphere) anytime between now and January 9. Those who have never taken a Living University course will need to enroll in the University first, and then register for your selected course(s). Those age 65 and over are eligible to audit one course with tuition waived (you will be responsible for textbooks and a technology fee). High school students may dual-enroll at a significantly reduced rate. If you reside in a developing nation, you may qualify for reduced tuition. A complete list of spring semester courses can be viewed on the [Living University website](#) under the link “Spring 2018 Class Schedule.” 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 or questions, please contact Mrs. Michelle Broussard at 704-708-2294 or mbroussard@livinguniv.com.

COMMENTS

The Dynamics of Friendship: God has given us vital keys in the Bible to help us meet our most important needs as human beings—including how to cultivate friendships. The Scriptures reveal that if we want to have friends, we must learn how to be friendly and remember that true friends are supportive during difficult times (Proverbs 17:17; 18:24). A friend is someone we can confide in and share important thoughts and concerns with (John 15:15). Real friends may not always agree with us, and sometimes they will tell us things about ourselves and our plans and actions that we may need to hear, but might not want to hear (Proverbs 27:6, 17). The Bible also cautions that we should choose our friends carefully because we will be influenced by the company we keep (Proverbs 12:26). Abraham chose to be a friend of God by obeying His instructions to leave a former way of life (Genesis 12:1-4; James 2:23) instead of being a “friend” of this world and its ways (James 4:4). Jesus told His disciples, “You are My friends if you do whatever I command you” (John 15:14). Let’s seek to be a “friend” of God by following His instructions, and a true friend to those who will not influence us in the wrong direction.

Have a profitable Sabbath,
Douglas S. Winnail

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NEWS AND PROPHECY—December 21, 2017

Military Push for Multi-Speed Europe: It has been talked about for years: a multi-speed Europe where nations opt in and out of initiatives as they wish, with those in the center moving forward quickly and powerfully to full integration and those on the periphery lagging behind. In the wake of Brexit, the EU has moved quickly with its new military alliance known as PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation). “PESCO is significant not just because it marks a push by the EU into the military sphere but also because **it represents ‘multispeed Europe’ in action.** Twenty-five of the EU’s current 28 members have signed up—Malta, Denmark and soon-to-depart Britain are the outsiders. But different groups of countries take part in different projects” ([Politico](#), December 14, 2017).

What is so significant about a multi-speed Europe? The sobering truth is that PESCO sets an important *precedent* for European nations because a more militarized and organized Europe is highlighted in end-time Bible prophecy. A review of PESCO reveals—and recent initiatives demonstrate—that different nations can choose to participate in different military activities. For example, Germany and only six other nations are set to begin work on a European Medical Command initiative ([Politico](#), December 10, 2017).

Where will this self-selection of military activities eventually lead? Revelation 17 reveals that ultimately a group of 10 “kings” within a European beast power will receive authority *with* the beast for a short time (v. 12). These kings will have *one mind* and *give their power and authority* (surrender their sovereignty) *over to the beast* (v. 13). Ultimately this militarized group of nations will fight together against Jesus Christ at His return (v. 14). PESCO appears to be a way for a group of nations to push ahead together within the EU, even if others choose to remain behind. For more about this coming European beast power and what it will be like, be sure to view our revealing telecast “[The Beast of Revelation](#).”

Plight of Refugees: Many parts of the world are overflowing with displaced persons. Uganda’s Bidi Bidi refugee camp is one of the world’s largest, with 285,000 residents, mostly from South Sudan ([PRI](#), September 22, 2017). Uganda’s government expects that most of these refugees will become either long-term or permanent residents. Kenya’s Dadaab refugee camp is the second largest in the world, with over 230,000 people ([UNHCR](#), November 30, 2017). It opened in 1991 and is filled with mostly Somali refugees. More than 1,000 children are born each month in Dadaab, and many residents have seen children and grandchildren born there. The Kenyan government has considered closing the camp, which places a tremendous strain on limited national resources ([Times Live](#), December 13, 2017). On a recent visit to Ghana, German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier warned Ghanaians to remain at home rather than to risk their lives as refugees traveling to Europe ([Deutsche Welle](#), December 12, 2017). And in Syria, 5.1 million refugees have fled the country since 2011, while six million are displaced within the country ([World Vision](#), July 13, 2017).

Refugees flee their homes mostly due to war and economic hardship—which are the result of selfish and inept governments. When leaders care more about themselves than their citizens, the consequences are misery and heartache! Today’s refugee crises seem to be unending and promise to intensify. However, the Bible speaks of a far more encouraging future. When Jesus Christ returns to the earth as the “King of kings and Lord of lords,” conditions in the world will change (Revelation 11:15–18; 17:14; 19:16). The government of God will be established on earth and bring unprecedented peace (Isaiah 2:2–4)—and people will be resettled in their own lands (Isaiah 27:13; Jeremiah 31:7–9). The gospel that Jesus preached about a coming Kingdom of God will finally end the plight and suffering of refugees. To learn more about this exciting future reality, be sure to read or listen to [The World Ahead: What Will It Be Like?](#) —Scott Winnail, Francine Prater and Christo Botha