

The World Ahead

A ministerial publication of the
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,

This week has been a busy time of travel for some of our Headquarters ministers. Mr. Weston has been attending the annual National Religious Broadcasters convention this week in Nashville, along with Messrs. Ciesielka and Smith. Mr. Mario Hernandez is leaving today for South America on a trip that will include the Days of Unleavened Bread. Dr. Douglas Winnail is flying into Johannesburg, South Africa, today, and will be spending the Sabbath in Pretoria. He conducted a very successful TWP last Sunday in Cape Town, with 207 visitors and 46 members and prospective members attending. Dr. Jeff Fall will be conducting TWPs in Monrovia and Garden Grove, California this weekend. Messrs. Rees Ellis, Wil Pierre and Etienne Duval also recently completed productive trips to some of the French-speaking countries (see below). We are grateful for the doors God has opened for His Work—please continue praying for His power and guidance as we go through them!—*Rod McNair*

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Visit to Mauritius

Mr. and Mrs. Ellis just returned to Belgium after an encouraging five-day visit to Mauritius. Mr. Ellis held meetings with members and prospective members and gave a Bible Study on February 21, with 12 in attendance. On February 24, Sabbath services were held with 17 present, including two from Reunion “attending” via Internet connection. Mr. Ellis reports that “with 12-17 people showing commitment at organized services, plus a few who couldn’t make it, [it] seems there are good prospects in the short and long term.”

Report from French Guiana

Dr. Wilner Pierre and Mr. Etienne Duval recently traveled to French Guiana, where we have two members and their children, other interested people with whom they have had previous contact, and about 30 subscribers. They also met with the manager of a local TV station. The French *Tomorrow’s World* telecast broadcasted from Guadeloupe can be received in French Guiana, but it would be good to increase our audience in this overseas department of France that is almost as

large as Portugal. The visit to the members was an opportunity for a family Bible Study, with relatives living in Europe tuning in online. Two Bible Studies were held, one on the Sabbath of February 24, also attended by seven visitors, and another on Sunday morning, with three visitors.

Upstate South Carolina Spring Holy Day Weekend—Deadline Next Week

The room rate of \$119 (plus tax) per night at the Hyatt Regency in Greenville during the Upstate South Carolina Spring Holy Day Weekend **expires March 9**. The Anderson congregation looks forward to you joining us—and Mr. and Mrs. Ames—for our ninth Spring Holy Day Weekend from Friday, March 30 to Sunday, April 1. The weekend promises to be filled with inspiring spiritual messages, uplifting fellowship, and enjoyable activities. Further details about the event, prices of meals, and registration instructions are located on our website lcganderson.org (not an official LCG website). Or, you may contact Mr. Manuel Burdette at 864-638-7719 or by e-mail at mhburdette@att.net for further information. Come celebrate the beginning of the Days of Unleavened Bread this year with us in Greenville.

Northeast Spring Holy Days Family Weekend March 29–April 1—Last Chance!

The deadline for our Spring Holy Days Family Activity is March 11. The activity will be held at the Frost Valley YMCA camp, in the heart of the Catskill Mountains of upstate New York. 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 LCG 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*

Charlotte BRiC Weekend (Memorial Day Weekend)—An Opportunity for Singles

Plans are well underway for the Charlotte BRiC (Building Relationships in Christ) Weekend! Singles of all ages can begin making plans to join us in Charlotte during the Memorial Day Weekend (May 25–28). This will be a great opportunity for singles to connect, build friendships, and learn more of God’s way of life. There will be Bible Studies, BRiC Talks, team activities, and a dinner and dance. Registration for the weekend will open next week. Upcoming announcements will provide more details. If you have any questions regarding the weekend, please contact Mr. Jacob Hall (jacobhall@lcg.org) for more information.

Canadian Family Civic Weekend (CFCW) 2.0

Join us August 3–6 for the annual Canadian Family Civic Weekend. Bible Studies as well as a seminar will provide a chance to grow together by learning more of God’s way, and there will be many opportunities for fellowship and building brotherly bonds. We will visit the beautiful Royal Botanical Gardens Trail. In addition, this year we will be transported back to Medieval Times, with incredible equestrian displays and a tournament with sport, games, falconry and jousting. We will also have a talent show, and if you would like to be part of that, please contact Mr. Tim Dranov at tdranov@lccanada.org. For more information about the price, accommodations, and much more, visit: LCGontario.org/cfcw or <http://eepurl.com/dij1TL> (not official LCG websites).—
Michael Heykoop

Legal: Care, Custody and Control of Minors (i.e. during Passover, Feast of Tabernacles, and *all* other occasions)

Care, Custody and Control of Minors: This applies to all the Church operations in the United States (and is suggested for congregations in other litigious regions, such as Canada, Europe and Australia—but those areas need to access their own national/provincial resources for background checks). If we have a “baby-sitting,” “child-sitting” or “childcare” type situation where the Church takes “care, custody, and control” of minors, only adults (i.e. preferably 21 or older, but never younger than 18) who have been attending with Living Church of God for at least six months are eligible to serve. Those adults need to be screened via a background check, and the Two-Adult Rule must be adhered to (in other words, in any situation where the Church itself is taking care, custody, and control of minors, no adult should have unaccompanied access to “unrelated minors” who are not his or her own children—i.e. “unrelated minors”). This would apply to any “baby-sitting,” “child-sitting” or “childcare” service provided by the Church during the Passover service, Feast of Tabernacles, or any other occasion. This is extremely important, so that we are doing what we can to *protect the children*, and also to help the Church avoid unnecessary liability.

If any teenagers are to **assist** the adults with a “baby-sitting,” “child-sitting” or “childcare” type situation at a Church occasion, then their names should also be checked. It is possible for those under the age of 18 to show up on sex offender registries.

Background Check—How To (U.S.-only): The question has been asked as to what is intended by the term “background check” in the above, since we perform exhaustive background checks for our summer camps. That kind of exhaustive check is not what is intended. For this particular risk exposure (i.e. short-term, non-overnight care, custody and control of minors occurring during Church services or activities—at least two adults must always be present), checking those U.S. residents¹ who will be involved against the National Sex Offender Public Website, operated by the U.S. Dept. of Justice, seems reasonable due diligence—here is the URL:
<http://www.nsopw.gov/Core/Conditions.aspx>

¹ This applies only to residents of the U.S. Those who do not reside in the U.S.—and therefore whose records are not accessible via the U.S. Dept. of Justice’s National Sex Offender Public Website—may not serve in any capacity involving the Church having care, custody or control of minor children in the U.S. No exceptions.

The search function of the above website will search the sex offender registries for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and Indian Country, so it is intended to be thorough. To use the site, one has to accept the terms and conditions and then enter a displayed code to get to the search page.

Note: *There is nothing for those being checked to know, do, be informed of, or to sign*—their knowledge or consent is not required, so this is relatively painless in that regard. The website searches *public* records, so no notification or permission of any kind is necessary. You will, however, need to have their actual “legal” name in order to perform the search (i.e. nicknames are not sufficient)—so, first name, middle name or at least initial, and last name as they appear on their driver’s license, state identification, or U.S. passport.

Obviously, if a search comes back showing an individual is designated as a sex offender, that person may not serve in any capacity involving the Church having care, custody or control of minor children (in the U.S., that is any child under 18 years of age). No exceptions.

If you need assistance, our office will happily assist you—all we need is the list of the adults you intend to use (a week or two in advance, please), and we will run them on the above website and get back to you. Please include their full name (as it appears on their driver’s license, state identification, or U.S. passport), city and state. Otherwise, if you choose to run them (personally, or through a helper), please send our office a print-out of each individual’s search result (as e-mail attachment(s), by fax, or by postal service) as proof of our collective due diligence for the file here. Please remember to include a note with the name and location of the activity and the purpose for which the Church took “care, custody and control” of minors. Since you may need to clear additional individuals coming up to the very day of the activity, you may wish to send those print-outs to us after the activity, within two weeks if at all possible, please.

If you experience difficulty performing a search, or if a search comes back showing the individual is a registered sex offender, please contact our office for assistance. We are here to help.—*Risk Management*. Ph. 704-708-2229 or Risk@lcg.org.

INTERNET DEPARTMENT

New *BibleProphecy.org* Website Launched

We are pleased to have just launched a new website to further promote the weekly “News & Prophecy” newsletter. We hope this new website will be of interest to additional “new people” who are looking for brief prophetic commentary on current news items. Please check it out when you have a moment. The URL is www.bibleprophecy.org.

As many of you know, in addition to our robust television and publications efforts and conducting *Tomorrow’s World* presentations around the world, we maintain dozens of websites as part of doing the Work of preaching the Gospel to all the world. These range from “big” ones like our various-language “*Tomorrow’s World*” websites, to smaller ones such as www.TheBibleSaysThat.org, our Russian website (www.ZavtrashniMir.org), and the Youth

website. A continuous flow of new visitors is generated by many other even smaller ones, such as www.middleeastinprophecy.com and www.jesuskeptthesabbath.org, plus dozens of social media accounts. We expect that the new [Bible Prophecy](#) website will increase our “News & Prophecy” readership, reaching even more people with brief, powerful commentary on important prophetic news items. Thank you for your prayers for this and all of our Internet efforts!—*Wyatt Ciesielka*

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Festival Website Live

Good news! The Festival website is now live and available for everyone to see! It contains an abundance of information about each Feast site we’ll be having in 2018. All members and guests are now invited to peruse the website, which can be found at www.fot2018.lcg.org or by going to www.lcg.org, and clicking on “Feast of Tabernacles.”

Registration Coming

Final preparations are being made for Festival registration, and we hope to open it up in the next few weeks. Keep listening to *The World Ahead* updates for further details!

Test Your MyLCG Account

We encourage **all brethren** to test your MyLCG account, in preparation for Festival registration. Your MyLCG account must be working for you to successfully register for the Feast. You can test your account by going to the MyLCG webpage (www.cogl.org) and logging in. If you are not able to log in, follow the help menu instructions. If you still cannot log in, contact websupport@tomorrowworld.org.

Housing Reservations

From time to time we hear reports of some brethren already making housing reservations ahead of registration. Out of love for your brethren, **please do not make housing reservations ahead of registration!** Once registration takes place, and you have been successfully registered (and your transfer request approved, if you are transferring) you are free to arrange for your housing.

Festival Advisors Notice

Festival Advisors: Please print off the registration and volunteer forms and **make them available this Sabbath** to brethren without Internet access. You can access the forms on the MyLCG website.

Pastors and Elders Festival Assignments

Pastors and Elders: Be watching your e-mail early next week, as we hope to send out the final approved Ministerial assignments then.

LIVING YOUTH PROGRAM

Friday Evening Online Teen Bible Study

The online Teen Bible Study on Friday evening, March 9, will continue through the book of Matthew. The Bible Study runs from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. Eastern time, and the chat room will be open for a half hour before and after the study. To join the study, go to www.livingyouth.org. For those who are unable to make it to the study, archives of previous Living Youth Bible Studies, including last evening's, can also be found on the [Living Youth website](#).—*Sheldon Monson*

Adventure Camp Registration Closed

Registration for Adventure Camp 2018 in Colorado is now closed! If you *began* an application, but have not yet turned it in, please do so immediately! Registration for other camps remains open at <http://camp.livingyouth.org>.—*LYP Office*

LIVING EDUCATION

On August 15, we plan to begin our first year of “Living Education—Charlotte.” We will accept a limited number of students for our first year, as we focus on building a Godly foundation for life! All students will attend daily classes at our Headquarters facility, in this one-year intensive training program. Class titles will be “Principles of Christian Living,” “Fundamentals of Church Doctrine” and “The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ.” We’ll also study the “Acts and Writings of Paul,” and get an overview of the Old Testament through our “Old Testament Survey” class. This program is for young adults who believe in the Way of God and want to learn more about how to build their life on that Way. Students must live in Charlotte for this program as this is a face-to-face learning and mentoring program by our Headquarters faculty and staff. If you are up for the challenge of this intensive learning experience, listen closely for more details and information about how to apply in next week’s *The World Ahead* weekly update!—*Jonathan McNair*

COMMENTS

His Compassions Are New Every Morning: The Book of Lamentations is a raw and unfiltered description of the horrific destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC. The book describes the Temple destroyed, gates of the city broken down, children starving for lack of food, and dead bodies lying in the streets. In one sense, this book is one of the unlikeliest places you'd think you'd find encouragement! And yet, to me, it contains one of the most comforting and hopeful passages in all the Bible. It's in Lamentations 3:22-26: "His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.... The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD" (Lamentations 3:22-26). When we are in sore trials we must not forget God's power, faithfulness and mercies. He is there. He sees all. He understands our suffering. We must wait patiently, and learn every lesson we can. He loves us—and *He will intervene*.

When you are in trouble, remember those inspired and comforting words: "His compassions fail not—they are *new every morning*"!

Have an encouraging Sabbath,
Rod McNair

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NEWS AND PROPHECY—March 1, 2018

Iran-Israel Tension Grows! The increasing rhetoric and military actions in Syria have “intensified fears that the Middle East is heading for all-out war”—although few think all-out war will become a reality ([The Guardian](#), February 17, 2018). At the recent Munich Security Conference, the Israeli president made the following statement while holding up a piece of the Iranian drone that crossed into Israel’s air space: “Israel will not allow the regime to put a noose of terror around our neck. We will act if necessary not just against Iran’s proxies but against Iran itself” ([Telegraph](#), February 20, 2018). In response, an Iranian official threatened “I should say that if they carry out the slightest unwise move against Iran, we will level Tel Aviv to the ground and will not give any opportunity to Netanyahu to flee.”

This tit-for-tat rhetoric is far from a “soft answer [that] turns away wrath” and is a powerful example of how harsh words stir up anger (Proverbs 15:1). The likelihood of Iran “leveling Tel Aviv” is very low given its proximity to Jerusalem—the city at the center of the millennia-long struggle between Arabs and Jews. However, it is this aggressive, war-like rhetoric, along with other global events, that may push the Vatican to take up the request of Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al Maliki to sponsor a “Conference on Jerusalem” ([Agenzia Fides](#), February 17, 2018). Al Maliki recently argued at the Vatican that such a conference is needed to protect *Arab and Christian* interests in Jerusalem from the Jews!

For decades we have urged our readers to “watch the Middle East”—and for good reason. The Middle East, and particularly Jerusalem, will play a central role in end-time Bible prophecies, including being the precise location of Jesus Christ’s return! As “rumors of war” become more prevalent we *can* know their ultimate outcome by becoming more familiar with the prophecies of the Bible. To develop a clearer understanding of events that *will* occur in Jerusalem and the surrounding region in the future, be sure to listen to or read [The Middle East in Prophecy](#).

Go to Church and Live Longer! Multiple research studies now show that those who regularly attend church services are healthier and live longer. A 2016 *JAMA Internal Medicine* study reported that “women who went to any kind of religious service more than once a week had a 33% lower chance than their secular peers of dying during the 16-year study-follow-up period” ([Time](#), February 15, 2018). A 2017 study published in *PLOS One* reported that “regular [church] service attendance was linked to reductions in the body’s stress responses and even in mortality—so much so that worshippers were 55% less likely to die during the up to 18-year follow-up period than people who didn’t frequent the temple, church or mosque.” Those who are *religious* but who do not attend services regularly do not experience these benefits.

Why is church attendance beneficial? Researchers suggest that “factors related to churchgoing—like having a network of social support, an optimistic attitude, better self-control and a sense of purpose in life—may account for the long-life benefits....” Researchers also credit “the values drawn from religious tradition—such as respect, compassion, gratitude, charity, humility, harmony, meditation and preservation of health” with tending to lead to longer life.

God not only set the seventh-day Sabbath apart as a holy time in which no work should be done (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8-11), He also commanded His people to assemble together on that day (Leviticus 23:3). Later in the Bible, the Apostle Paul repeated the importance of assembling together on the Sabbath (Hebrews 10:24-25; 4:9). Science is now shedding light on the importance of church attendance in general. How much more beneficial and pleasing to God is it when we not only assemble together, but worship Him in spirit and in truth on His holy Sabbath day (John 4:24). For more information on the importance of attending weekly Sabbath services, read or listen to [Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?](#)—Scott Winnail, Francine Prater and Chris Sookdeo