

The World Ahead

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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 is a short week for us in the office, with the national Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday. Many are traveling to visit family all over the country. For many in the United States, Thanksgiving is about turkey, football, and shopping. For those of us in God’s Church, let’s take every opportunity we can to pause and consider our blessings, including our awesome calling into His Truth, our opportunity to contribute to His Work, and our tremendous future in His Kingdom. Mr. Gerald Weston is working remotely this week, as he and his wife travel to visit family for Thanksgiving. He’s been writing an Editorial for the *Living Church News* and reviewing Mr. Wallace Smith’s new booklet, *Evolution and Creation: What Both Sides Miss*. This Sabbath, he is planning to visit brethren in Columbia and St. Louis, Missouri. Please continue to pray for brethren who are suffering from various ailments. Mr. Wachowicz is out of the hospital, doing much better, and recovering at home. Mr. Martin Fannin is slowly recovering from pneumonia, and Mrs. Connie Breaux is steadily improving in terms of her breathing, but is still very weak. Let’s pray for one another’s healing and relief, and continue faithfully walking with God in an increasingly dark world.—*Rod McNair*

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

LCG Webcast Live Stream of Sabbath Services and Bible Study from Charlotte Family Weekend—Repeat Announcement

LCG congregations and members are welcome to join us online for the Charlotte Family Weekend Friday night Bible Study on December 21, and for Sabbath services on December 22. The Friday night Bible study will begin at **7:30 p.m.** (EST) and Sabbath services will begin at **1:00 p.m.** (EST). To join, please go to www.lcgwebcast.org, and under “Stream Site” select “Charlotte Family Weekend.” 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.)

Charlotte Family Weekend (Friday, December 21–Tuesday, December 25)—Repeat Announcement

Please Read Where Applicable: We're looking forward to seeing you soon! Be sure to make your reservations at the Renaissance Suites Hotel before November 30 to get the \$99/night special rate, which includes breakfast for two adults. Also, Activity Registration is now live! To access the hotel's special discount, register and pay for activities, and see a detailed schedule of events, go to: charlottelcg.org/cfw (not an official LCG website).

Games: Be sure to begin planning your Family Games and Basketball or Volleyball teams. We want everyone to join in the Family Games on Sunday! Family Games Teams should have 12 to 20 players, with a minimum of three pre-teens (ages 7–12), three teens (ages 13–17), three adults (ages 18–59), and three seniors (age 60+). Team registration will begin within the next couple of weeks. If you don't have a team, come anyway and we will assign you to one.

Crafts: Take note all "Crafters"—We need your help! If you would like to donate craft items for the Craft Auction on Sunday, please contact Mrs. Jeanine Smith at 816-804-8535 or e-mail jeaninesmith1992@gmail.com.

Schedule: Some of the events for the weekend include:

- Bible Study (Friday evening)
- Sabbath Services
- Elegant Dinner Dance
- Family Games and Sports Day (Sunday)
- Educational Seminars: Parenting, Teens, Singles, Mature Singles (Monday)
- Bowling (Monday afternoon)
- "International" theme dance (Monday evening)
- Departure (Tuesday)

Kansas City Family Weekend Update

We are hard at work getting things ready for this year's Kansas City Family Weekend, starting Friday evening, December 28th and running through Sunday afternoon, the 30th.

Over 170 have registered so far and our hotel allotment is filling up fast! Please register on the KC Weekend website and make your reservations at the Embassy Suites as soon as possible. **The deadline for the hotel reservations is December 13th.** You can also elect to stay with brethren. Our friendly housing coordinator will pair you with the perfect place.

Just visit kclcg.org to get started (not an official LCG website). When you register, select your meal options, which include our smoked brisket dinner at \$24.50/person. We also have a children's chicken finger meal that is \$10 or \$13 depending on age. You can also sign up for Sunday events you and your family want to participate in, including the "Contest of Christians," gaga ball, volleyball, basketball, and so forth.

This year's theme is "The Bible Comes Alive!" Again, the idea is to add a **biblical element** to your formalwear. What do we mean by that? Perhaps you could dress like Esther, the Persian queen. Or come as an Egyptian representative in the Kingdom of God who is glad the drought is over. We look forward to seeing you help us bring the Bible to life on Saturday night. Remember to keep it classy and fairly formal.

To date, our art show only has ONE exhibit signed up! We know there is more talent than that out there. If *you* have a talent in arts & crafts or creative writing, we would love to see it. At this point, it's almost guaranteed to be seen! Simply sign up on the KC Weekend website under the menu item "Art Show Signup."

Again, the website link can be found at kclcg.org (not an official LCG website), where all information about the weekend is available, including registration. Information about housing and locations requires a password: **security**. We look forward to seeing you there!—*Mike Keesee*

LIVING EDUCATION

As you count your blessings this Thanksgiving, don't forget to be thankful for the opportunity to study the word of God. An old saying goes, "the best things in life are free," and that certainly applies to the Bible. But what price could be assigned to the words recorded in the Old Testament and New Testament? And what is the value of the words of Christ, recorded and preserved for 2,000 years?

Unit 3 will be available to learn more about "The Life, Ministry, and Teachings of Jesus Christ," starting Sunday, November 25.

LIVING YOUTH PROGRAM

Living Youth Friday Evening Study

The online Friday evening Teen Bible Study, November 30, will continue in the book of Matthew, and will be given by Mr. Sheldon Monson. Join us at 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. The chatroom will open thirty minutes prior to the beginning of the study.

To join the study, just visit www.livingyouth.org, and follow the links to "Friday Evening Bible Study." We'll be utilizing a new streaming provider this year, so please be sure to check the **links from the Living Youth website to join the study**. This also means that **e-mail alerts will no longer be sent when we go live**. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at youth@lcg.org. For those who are unable to make it to the study, archives of previous Living Youth Bible Studies, including last evening's covering Matthew 14–15, can also be found on the Living Youth website.—*Joshua Penman*

COMMENTS

What Are You Thankful For? Today, we live in a world where many people are obsessed with getting what we want, getting our way, getting our rights—getting what we feel we need to have or what we think we are entitled to. Yet, the Bible emphasizes the importance of *being thankful for what God provides* (Psalm 95:2; 100:4). The Apostle Paul encouraged Christians to develop the attitude of “giving thanks always for all things to God” (Ephesians 5:20). This would certainly include being thankful for our calling (1 Corinthians 1:26-28), for our understanding of God’s truth (John 8:32; 17:17) for the gift of salvation (2 Thessalonians 2:13), and for the unique opportunity to be among the firstfruits of God’s plan (James 1:18). Paul also mentions that our prayerful requests should be made with thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6). James states that we should even be grateful for trials that help us grow (James 1:2-4). Paul also warns that *unthankfulness*—especially for the opportunity to know the true God and His Truth—is a trait of *unrighteousness* (Romans 1:18-21). When was the last time you took time to make a list of what you have to be thankful for—and then expressed your thanks directly to your Creator? This Sabbath would be a good time to make that list!

Have a profitable Sabbath,
Douglas S. Winnail

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NEWS AND PROPHECY—November 21, 2018

Drowning in Debt Nation: The United States, like many other nations, is facing an ever-growing mountain of national debt. The interest paid on the U.S. national debt is on pace to even exceed military spending in the years ahead ([Wall Street Journal](#), November 11, 2018). According to the Congressional Budget Office, America “will spend more on interest than it spends on Medicaid in 2020; more in 2023 than it spends on national defense; and more in 2025 than it spends on all nondefense discretionary programs combined, from funding for national parks to scientific research, to health care and education, to the court system and infrastructure.” Interest on the national debt is now the fastest growing area of the U.S. national budget as the country continues to spend more than it earns.

When individuals or nations continue to live beyond their means, it is only a matter of time until serious consequences arise. The Bible has long warned that “the borrower is servant to the lender” (Proverbs 22:7). The covenant that God made with the ancient Israelites stated that turning away from God and rejecting His laws would lead to growing debt that would impact national freedoms and national sovereignty: “The alien who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail” (Deuteronomy 28:43–44). As the U.S. and other Israelite-descended nations move away from biblical morality and pile up national debts as a result of greed, it would be wise to remember these ancient warnings. For more insights into the cause and consequences of national debts, read [“The Debt Bomb!”](#)

Benefits of Being Thankful: A number of nations around the world celebrate a Thanksgiving holiday. Yet, the central element of “giving thanks” is frequently overshadowed by the self-centered commercialism associated with Halloween and Christmas. In the United States, even before the shopping madness of America’s “Black Friday” (the day after Thanksgiving in the U.S. and one of the busiest shopping days of the year), retailers are already busy promoting items for Christmas.

However, at Thanksgiving, it is important to remember that being thankful on a personal and a national level has many physical and spiritual benefits. Modern research demonstrates that being personally thankful can protect against the negative consequences of focusing on personal success and indulgence. Harvard Medical School has reported in its “Healthbeat” newsletter, “In positive psychology research, *gratitude* is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships” (“Healthbeat,” [Harvard Health Publishing](#)). In fact, gratitude has been positively associated with greater life satisfaction, personal happiness, and health ([Psychology Today](#), November 22, 2015). As “Healthbeat” explained, “Gratitude is a way for people to appreciate what they have instead of always reaching for something new in the hopes it will make them happier, or thinking they can’t feel satisfied until every physical and material need is met. **Gratitude helps people refocus on what they have instead of what they lack**” ([Harvard Health Publishing](#)).

In light of these findings, it is not surprising that the Bible admonishes us to be thankful. The Apostle Paul encouraged his audiences, “in everything give thanks” (1 Thessalonians 5:18) and “do not cease to give thanks” (Ephesians 1:16). Being thankful changes our outlook and our focus. It helps us recognize what we have instead of what we desire. Thankfulness is a trait that God wants us all to develop, and interestingly, when we make the choice to be thankful, we are happier and healthier. For more insights into this important topic, read [“Are We a Thankful Nation?”](#) – Scott Winnail and Francine Prater