

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

FROM THE PRESIDING EVANGELIST

Dear Brethren,

We concluded a very encouraging series of Council of Elders meetings this past week in which we affirmed the need to hold onto the biblically based traditions of the Church. However, regarding Living University, we recognize that we are at a crossroads. The current situation is that individuals in at least 20 states are not able to take online courses in Living University due to changing state laws. It is apparent that its existing structure is not able to meet the educational needs of the youth and members of the Living Church of God.

The Council of Elders has reviewed the situation, and in keeping with the clearly stated wishes of Dr. Meredith, the Council has advised that accreditation efforts be dropped, in favor of developing a more flexible, less restrictive, and more effective program to support the development of future ministers, to serve our youth, and to serve our general membership.

This has not been an easy decision as much effort has been put into Living University. Many of you have supported these efforts through your prayers and financial donations. For this we are ever grateful. However, as evidenced by the recent limitations placed on licensed universities, restrictions on conducting online classes in an increasing number of states limit our ability to serve our ministers and members.

I believe there are exciting opportunities before us regarding a variety of educational programs and I will be forming a committee next week to begin restructuring our Living Church of God educational programs to serve our ministry, our youth, and our general membership. In the meantime, classes as currently configured will continue to operate for the time being. The decision as to how we restructure will be announced in the near future. I am looking forward to explaining more about this in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,
In Christ's service,
Gerald E. Weston

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Charlotte Family Weekend—25th Anniversary Celebration

On December 26, 1992 twelve people gathered in Dr. Roderick Meredith's living room for the first Sabbath of the Global/Living Church of God. Many of us will gather together here in Charlotte this coming December to rejoice for what God has done through His faithful servants. We hope that this weekend will be a special tribute to all of the hard work Dr. Meredith and so many others have done for the last 25 years to build the Church of God. Being a 25th Silver Anniversary celebration, we invite anyone attending the dance on Saturday night to wear something silver.

The Renaissance hotel room booking process should not be interrupted anymore, so, if you haven't booked your room yet, please do so soon. You may either call the hotel directly at 704-357-1414, or use the booking link on the [Charlotte Family Weekend Facebook](#) page. Some have emailed regarding being told that there are no more double/double rooms left—this is not the case. Our contract does not guarantee any particular room type—rooms will be assigned upon arrival. The hotel has assured us that most, if not all, guests will receive the bed type they request upon arrival.

We are making a change this year with the Sunday Sports Day. From 9:00-11:30 a.m. there will be some family-oriented Novelty Olympics games designed for all ages. The basketball and volleyball tournaments will start at 12:00 noon. Due to the shortened time for the tournaments, we will have to make some timing changes. In spite of this change, there will still be organized team play.

Registration for this weekend's meals, activities and sports teams will be open in the next couple of weeks, so stay tuned!

Kansas City Family Weekend: December 29-31—Repeat Announcement

The Kansas City Family Weekend is less than two months away! We're so excited about it, we've broken out in rhyme:

Brighten up your dreary days
with a midwest winter escapade.
By plane or train or motorcade,
come join the Kansas City brigade.
Church and fellowship and games well-played
and formal dance with nations portrayed
all beckon you—if we can persuade
your registration with all dues paid.
The airport Embassy Suites awaits
your family for these coming dates:
December 29th through 31st.
The messages all will be well-versed.
The fun show is getting well rehearsed.
Just go get your family registered!

We're all rhymed-out now! Here are some additional details: The Embassy Suites can house up to six people per suite for \$109/night + tax. A brisket dinner is priced at \$22/plate, and children's chicken fingers meals are \$10 or \$12, depending on your child's age. We're introducing a costume theme of "Ambassadors from Around the World" for Saturday evening. Come dressed as though you were appearing before important heads of state as a representative for the country of your choice. Don't embarrass them!

Activities for all ages include Bible Studies, a dinner, fun show and dance, family games, sports and gaga ball. We want the Family Weekend to be "all-inclusive," meaning that we want *all ages* to enjoy the time together, fellowshiping, dining, laughing, dancing and playing. So register to join us this year! Visit our site at kclcg.org (not an official Church website) to register and get the rest of the details. (Any passwords on the site are: security.) See you soon!

LIVING YOUTH PROGRAM

Teen Bible Studies Resuming

The online Teen Bible Study on Friday evening, November 17, will be conducted from 8-9 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 on "The Mystery of the Church," can also be found on the [Living Youth website](#).—*Sheldon Monson*

LIVING UNIVERSITY

Visit the Living University Library Online—Repeat Announcement

Libraries traditionally collected and owned only hard-copy books and journals. But, thanks to the Internet and distance learning, libraries worldwide are depending more on online resources. Living University is no exception. The Living University library website, www.livinguniv.com/library, was recently redesigned for use as a powerful tool for Bible learning and study, and is available for use by all God's people with Internet access.

If you haven't explored this website recently, you will want to check it out! The LU library website contains an excellent collection of and links to Bible-related resources and it is free to use. Here you will find links to countless helpful Bible study tools such as: more than 70 different Bible translations, commentaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, early Christian and Jewish writings, and archived Church of God publications. There are also popular newspapers and magazines; eBooks; tutorials; audio, parallel and interlinear Bibles; historical resources such as Josephus and Eusebius, and much, much more.

We invite you to investigate all that the Living University library website offers. Consider using the LU library website to assist in your personal Bible study as you work to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

COMMENTS

Importance of Mercy: One of the fundamental qualities that Christians need to develop to become like God and reign with Jesus Christ is *mercy*. Showing mercy involves exercising patience, understanding, compassion, and forgiveness—even when we don’t feel like doing these things. The Scriptures reveal that God is full of mercy and compassion (Exodus 34:6-7), and He wants us to develop these same qualities (Micah 6:8; Hosea 6:6). Solomon states that showing mercy honors God (Proverbs 14:31). Jesus taught that the merciful will receive mercy (Matthew 5:7) and that God values mercy over sacrifice (Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:13). Jesus also taught that mercy is a vital key to good human relationships and those who receive mercy but do not show mercy to others will face serious consequences (Matthew 18:21-35). In human relations we may judge others guilty before the law, yet, the Apostle James states that “Mercy triumphs over judgment” (James 2:13). As we develop the mind of God, we will come to understand the importance of showing mercy to everyone we deal with—and we will be preparing to rule with Jesus Christ in His kingdom.

Have a profitable Sabbath,
Douglas S, Winnail

Editor in Chief:	Gerald E. Weston	Editorial Director:	Richard F. Ames
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NEWS AND PROPHECY—November 9, 2017

Morality Without God! “Most U.S. adults now say it is *not* necessary to believe in God to be moral and have good values (56%), up from about half (49%) who expressed this view in 2011. This increase reflects the continued growth in the share of the population that has no religious affiliation, but it also is the result of changing attitudes among those who *do* identify with a religion, including white evangelical Protestants” ([Pew Research](#), October 16, 2017). Even among those claiming to be religious, an increasing number of people believe that God is unnecessary for morality. This shift is seen among both white and black Protestants and white and Hispanic Catholics. At the biblical time of the Judges, “everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6), and we see this phenomenon increasing in society today! However, the prophet Isaiah stated clearly that “If they do not speak according to this word [God’s law and His testimony], it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20). Morality without God and without a biblical basis is nothing more than actions based on personal preferences—and this ultimately leads to confusion and division when everyone is doing “what is right in his [or her] own eyes”! True morality rests on a common set of laws or standards that determine what is right and wrong. Historically, for much of the Western world, the source of moral understanding was the Bible—the only *true and constant* source of morality. As nations discard the Bible as a source of truth, personal opinion becomes the basis for right and wrong. For more insights into the real basis of morality, read or listen to our booklet [The Ten Commandments](#).

Saudi Arabia and Iran Clash: Saudi Arabia closed its border with Yemen after Houthi rebel missiles fell near the international airport in Riyadh ([Telegraph](#), November 6, 2017). The Yemeni proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran is heating up and increasingly worrisome. Saudi Arabia is also stepping up its proxy war with Iran in Lebanon through Hezbollah ([Reuters](#), November 7, 2017). The clash between Saudi Arabia and Iran represents two opposing Islamic philosophies, Sunni and Shia, as both nations compete to lead the Arab world. As [Reuters](#) reports, a top Saudi aide claimed this week, “The Lebanese government will be dealt with as a government declaring war on Saudi Arabia, and all Lebanese must realize these dangers and work to resolve these issues before we reach the point of no return.” Jesus Christ warned that “wars and rumors of wars” would increase as the end of the age approaches (Matthew 24:6-7), and the Saudi-Iranian conflict could be part of this escalation. Bible prophecy also tells of the formation of a “king of the south” that could be an alliance of Arab nations that will ultimately confront a European beast power referred to in Scripture as the “king of the north” (Daniel 11:40-43). For years this Work has urged its readers to “watch the Middle East” for events that will fulfill end-time prophecies. To learn more about coming events in the volatile Middle East, be sure to read or listen to [The Middle East in Prophecy](#).

Gonorrhea Soaring in Australia: Over the last five years, the sexually transmitted infection (STI) gonorrhea has increased by 63 percent among Australians living primarily in cities. Gonorrhea has no visible symptoms in 80 percent of cases and can lead to sterility. Australian researchers note that the majority (75 percent) of new cases erupt among heterosexual young people aged 20-29 ([BBC](#), November 6, 2017). STI rates are also at a record high in the USA ([Jewish World Review](#), November 3, 2017). The World Health Organization suspects that a possible culprit behind rising rates of gonorrhea and other STIs may be a reduced concern of HIV infection and a subsequent drop in condom use among the sexually active ([BBC](#), July 7, 2017). Gonorrhea is one of the STIs that is developing antibiotic resistance. Long ago, God promised that if His people would live according to His laws and “do what is right,” they would not be afflicted by common diseases (Exodus 15:26). Public health professionals have long known how to prevent STIs like gonorrhea and even HIV/AIDS. The simple solution is to confine sexual activity to a marriage between one man and one woman—and this is the *exact* prescription found in the Bible! For more practical ways to avoid contracting disease, read “[Defeating Disease: How the Bible Can Help](#).”—*Scott Winnail, Francine Prater and Chris Sookdeo*