

OneAccord

January 2026



Sharpening Iron
Build Spiritual Resilience

Foundation Institute Perspectives
From the Classroom to a Field Trip
to Formal Dining

2024 Annual Audit

personal from the president

The Future

FPredicting the future is a difficult task, but one that we participate in on a regular basis. Even before the beginning of January, we've been making preparations for a new fiscal year for the Church.

There are many ideas about what next year will bring, but does anyone really know? Some are predicting economic disaster and others are predicting an economic boom. Which will it be? And who knows?

In the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, we make predictions based on what we know and, of course, with faith that God will take care of us. In our planning we look at this year as a precursor to next year and so on. Each year in December we gather with the Ministerial Board of Directors to finalize the Church's budget and strategic plan for the next year.

For the Church, the period of time after the Feast of Tabernacles each year could be called our "period of planning." In a relatively short span of time, we hold meetings with all our youth camp directors to determine the camp locations, camp directors and camp theme for the next year; then meetings with our Festival coordinators, to assess how the Feast went and begin making plans for the next year. And shortly after these meetings, the administration meets to determine the Church's budget and strategic plan for the next year.

We have now presented the budget and strategic plan to the Ministerial Board of Directors, and I am happy to report that they have approved our 2026 strategic plan and budget. The Church uses the calendar year as our fiscal year. So, on Jan. 1, 2026, we are beginning our 16th fiscal year since our organization was formed in December of 2010.

We really don't have time to dwell too much on what has happened in these 15 years, since we must focus on the year ahead. The administration has prepared its most aggressive budget since our beginning. Our budget has roughly doubled since that beginning 15 years ago, and we are now proposing large expansions, primarily in Media and in the International Work. We have seen good growth

in the international areas this past year with the beginning of new congregations in Africa and Australia. We have also seen good results from our advertising programs, which we plan to expand this next year.

As an organization, we are testing the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to help us with translation. We can now translate messages and articles to different languages very quickly and accurately using AI. This has tremendous possibilities for the future, since everything we produce in English must be translated into Spanish and French. And we are experimenting with translating into other languages. The potential seems to be limitless!

Planning ahead is part of life. Solomon wrote that "where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he" (Proverbs 29:18, King James Version). While our funds are not unlimited, we do have the resources for expanding the work of the Church in all areas.

In the 1940s, when Ambassador College was beginning, Herbert Armstrong said, "Salvation is education!" It's a quote I often use in our meetings. Mr. Armstrong's point was that a major component of the gospel message is *education*—removing false education and replacing it with learning based on the truth.

In order to fulfill our calling to preach the gospel to the world and care for those whom God chooses to call, we must educate those who hear our message. True education is founded on the Word of God and, as such, forms a major part of what we do. With a new budget in place and a new learning center under construction, our plan is to expand in all areas this next year.

Your brother in Christ,



Jim Franks

President

Church of God, a Worldwide Association



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CHURCH of GOD A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Build Spiritual Resilience

Resilience allows us to deal effectively with the challenges of life. Resilience can help us to get beyond obstacles and adversities and succeed in life.

By Bill Welch

Stressors are all around us! They include societal changes, wars and a variety of personal struggles (such as health, jobs

and family). Times like these can create worry and anxiety because we human beings often don't respond well to stressors.

Are there positive and constructive ways to deal with problems and trials in life?

There are! In this article we'll look at just one of them—*resilience*.

Dictionary.com defines resilient as “springing back; rebounding. Returning to the original form or position after being bent, compressed, or stretched.”

In everyday language, this means that when you are knocked down, you get up. When you’re pushed back, you press forward. When you are out of options, you create new ones and find a way to move on.

In other words, a resilient person is not easily defeated. He or she finds ways to continue going forward, despite obstacles and adversities.

What does a spiritually resilient person look like?

Resilience is a product of mental discipline. Resilient people develop mental habits that allow them to maintain their bearings in times of stress and bounce back from adversity. Rather than focusing on the things causing stress and anxiety, resilient people set well-defined goals and maintain focus on those goals.

To be spiritually resilient, we must focus on the promises of God contained in the Bible—the main promise being eternal life in the Kingdom of God. This provides a timeless standard that gives hope and achievable goals. The hope of the Kingdom of God is unmovable and sure, regardless of the difficult reality we are dealing with.

The spiritually resilient will also look at problems and trials as opportunities for growth, not as insurmountable obstacles. When they look at problems, they evaluate the causes and factors they can control and seek solutions based on those factors. This results in personal growth and the ability to carry on in a much stronger position.

Three keys to being spiritually resilient

There are mental habits that can, if consistently applied over time, help us become resilient. Here are three daily thinking habits to put into practice.

1. Focus on what you can control

Focusing our attention on things we cannot control is a poor use of our time and energy.

Resilient people learn how to redirect their thinking to address things they can change—things that are impactful and directly affect their lives. Sometimes areas outside of our control may be more interesting and what we naturally want to focus on. But we can make real progress only when we focus on our own lives, the one thing we have control over.

The factors beyond our control will continue, with or without us.

Persistent focus on areas outside of our control can lead to worrying, fretting and emotional distress. The French philosopher Michel de Montaigne said: “My life has been filled with terrible misfortunes, most of which never happened.”

Jesus told His followers, “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matthew 6:34).

2. Reorient your thinking

Our society is in a period of rapid change, and world events are increasingly troubling. We must develop mental tools to handle these stressors. We have no control over society around us, but we do have control over what we allow into our minds and what we choose to dwell on. This requires mental discipline. It can be difficult and requires daily practice.

The quality of our lives is one thing we do have control over, and it begins in the mind. Facts don’t change, but our mental outlook can. It’s beneficial to critically analyze what we listen to, watch on social media and read. Is it quality and worthy of our time? If not, replace it with something that is.

The Bible gives us many positive things to focus on. Philippians 4:8 gives us eight positive and godly topics to think about.

Reorienting our thought processes will provide stability in an otherwise chaotic and unstable world.

3. Learn to be content

There’s a famous phrase that goes, “It is what it is.”

This is not negative, but rather a recognition that, at times, we will need to learn to patiently deal with disappointment and stressors. We can’t reinvent reality, but we can adjust our perspective. Contentment allows us to mentally deal with life’s ups and downs and maintain a balanced perspective.

The Bible tells us that learning to be content is vital. Paul wrote that “godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Timothy 6:6). This is something that Paul had to learn to practice throughout his life because of the many trials he faced (Philippians 4:11).

We will not always be successful in our endeavors to practice these three keys. But while this process may not come naturally to us, it can be learned over time.

The spiritually resilient can look beyond adversity. Instead of allowing adversity to lead us into depression and hopelessness, we can press forward (Philippians 3:12-14). The standards found in the Bible provide a foundation for us to have a stable, sound mental state amid the turmoil of today’s stressful times.

There is no better time to develop spiritual resilience than now! ☺☺

From the Classroom to a Field Trip to Formal Dining

By Paul Hamilton, FI student

As I write this, we are just a week and a half away from reaching the four-month mark at Foundation Institute. I can confidently speak for all the students when I say that the time has truly flown by. Once again, our weeks have been filled with activities—both in and outside the classroom.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the break for the Feast of Tabernacles, but I will admit, it felt strange not seeing one another for over two weeks. While it was wonderful to reunite and hear about each other's travels, messages and experiences, most of us found it a bit challenging to return to the classroom schedule after such an extended time away.

In the classroom, we were blessed with several guest instructors. It was a pleasure to have Jim Franks cover the Fundamental Beliefs with us. We also appreciated having Isaac Khalil, an elder in New Zealand, join us via Zoom to teach us about Islam for our Comparative Religion class. Several other headquarters staff members have taught classes as well, and we are deeply grateful for everyone who has taken time out of their busy schedules to come into the classroom.

One thing I never expected to experience again was a class field trip—but this year proved me wrong. Our class spent a wonderful day visiting the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza and the Dallas World Aquarium. We began by meeting at the nearest DART station—the light rail system serving the Dallas area—and rode downtown together. Before entering the museum, we visited the site of President John F. Kennedy's assassination, then toured the museum itself, which was both informative and respectfully designed.

Afterward, we enjoyed lunch at a nearby Mexican restaurant before heading to the aquarium. The exhibits were impressive, and we saw everything from fish and penguins to sloths, reptiles and—my personal favorite—otters.

Now for the main event since my last update for *One Accord*: the annual Foundation Institute Etiquette Dinner, held on Sunday evening, Nov. 16, 2025, at the beautiful home of Cliff and Susan Demarest in Frisco, Texas.

Dressed in their best suits and dresses, students, faculty and guests enjoyed delicious hors d'oeuvres and

champagne (with nonalcoholic options for those under 21), followed by a tour of the Demarest home before dinner began.

Joel Meeker provided instruction on proper dinner etiquette at the beginning of the meal and before most of the seven courses. His guidance was both educational and entertaining.

Chef extraordinaire Judd Servidio traveled from Austin, Texas, to prepare the seven-course menu, with assistance by several Church members. Courses included cured foie gras; chestnut, chicken and truffle soup; black cod; roasted and braised lamb; and a decadent opera cake for dessert. The meal was complemented by white and red wines, with a little port to conclude the evening.

This year's etiquette dinner differed from past years in one significant way: the Foundation Institute instructors were not servers, but guests. It was a treat to sit with them, converse outside of the educational environment and share the evening together.

While the cuisine was exceptional, the evening offered so much more—warm fellowship, a beautiful setting and valuable instruction on how to conduct oneself at a formal dinner. It was a truly memorable experience.

All of us at Foundation Institute would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone involved—those who served as waitstaff, sous-chefs, photographers and more. We especially want to thank Judd Servidio and Cliff and Susan Demarest for their generosity and hard work.

We look forward to sharing more updates with you in the next issue. ☺☺



NEWS OF THE WORK

Education Center Building Update



It's now been two months since construction on the Church's education center began in earnest, and we are finally making good progress!

The latest requirement from the city was for the Church to hire an independent engineer, separate from the engineers who had worked on the building, to confirm that the soil was adequately compacted. Our engineers had confirmed that we had the compaction level necessary to begin pouring concrete, but the city required a third and independent engineer to conduct the same test before they would approve pouring the foundation.

I'm happy to report that step is now behind us, and we have approval from the city to move forward. Our next step is to cover the area of the foundation with lime—lots of lime! This is to prepare the soil for the concrete that is coming.

But before we can pour the concrete foundation, we must first pour concrete piers all around the perimeter of the foundation. This is because of the poor quality of the soil and the need to have the foundation anchored in bedrock.

Hopefully, the piers will be poured in the next couple of weeks. Then the foundation, followed by the parking lot, will be poured.

We are making progress. This is the stage where everything seems to be slower than anticipated. But this will soon be over, and we will see an actual foundation on our property!

Jim Franks

Retirements

Chris Moen will retire from the full-time ministry on Jan. 3. He and his wife, Angela, have served in the West Michigan congregation.

Harris Hlazo will retire from his service to the Church on Jan. 3. He and his wife have served the congregations in Zimbabwe.

Upcoming Travel

Doug and Tanya Horchak
Dave and Dorrie Baker

- Dec. 24, 2025, to Jan. 8, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines for member visits and ministerial meetings.

Doug and Tanya Horchak

- Jan. 15-19, Colombia and Ecuador, to visit Eduardo and Maria Hernández and members.
- Jan. 28 to Feb. 12, Australia and New Zealand, to visit brethren and ministry and hold ILP classes.

Dave and Pam Myers

- Jan. 2-4, Michigan for Mr. Moen's retirement.
- Jan. 17, Houston for Women's Enrichment Weekend.
- Jan. 23-25, Colorado for Mr. Sargent's retirement.

Stats & Facts

In 2025, LifeHopeandTruth.com had visitors from 239 countries and territories listed by Google.

The top five were:

1. United States	2,143,318
2. Philippines	323,031
3. India	249,765
4. United Kingdom	207,984
5. South Africa	197,147

Greg Sargent will retire from the full-time ministry on Jan. 24. He and his wife, Marian, have served in the Colorado congregations.

Headquarters Events



2025 Camp Directors Meetings

The directors (and most of their wives) for COGWA Youth Camps met in person at headquarters Nov. 3-5, 2025. For 2½ days they reviewed how camps went this year, discussed how the theme was used and discussed policies and safety issues.

The group also selected next year's theme and discussed plans for our 2026 camps.

This year Scott and Monica Lord were honored for their decade of service at Camp Heritage, and Zach and Emily Smith were brought back onto the team to direct Camp Arrowhead.

Ken Treybig



2025 Feast Coordinators Meetings

Each year following the Feast of Tabernacles, the U.S. Feast

coordinators hold two days of meetings at our headquarters office. Our most recent meetings were held Nov. 17-18, 2025, and several pastors who serve internationally were able to attend online.

The meetings covered everything from highlights of the 2025 Feast to plans and changes for 2026. Topics included a three-year plan for site selection, our annual Festival planning schedule, special music, speaking assignments, Feast budgets, registration, contract liability issues, the Feast website and much more.

All in attendance headed home energized and ready to prepare for the Feast of Tabernacles 2026.

Mark Winner

Report on 2024 Annual Audit

Every year an independent accounting firm conducts an audit of our finances. The most recent audit, for 2024, again gives a positive review of the Church's financial position.

By Britton M. Taylor

We are pleased to share the results of our annual audit, completed in September 2025, with our Church members and donors who generously support the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Inc.

The income received for 2024 was just over \$17 million, up more than \$1.5 million (9.8 percent) compared to 2023.

Income exceeded expenses by \$1.4 million. This is quite good—especially compared to last year when our income exceeded expenses by roughly \$230,000—and puts the Church in a very good financial position as we begin construction on the new education center.

We're grateful to God the Father and Jesus Christ for our financial blessings. And we are grateful to you, our

faithful members and donors, who generously support the Church through your tithes and offerings. We also appreciate your continued prayers for wisdom, discretion and guidance as we strive to faithfully steward resources God provides.

This year's audited financial statement is for the years ending Dec. 31, 2024, and Dec. 31, 2023. In a confirmation letter dated Sept. 24, 2025, our independent auditing firm, Henry & Peters, P.C., of Tyler, Texas, gave us a favorable "unqualified" opinion that the financial statements accurately present the Church's financial position and results of operations for 2024 and, by comparison, for 2023.

CHURCH OF GOD, A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
REVENUES AND SUPPORT			
Tithes and offerings, individuals	\$ 12,365,114	\$ -	\$ 12,365,114
Local congregation contributions	11,940	-	11,940
Holy Day/Festival Fund offerings	3,647,051	-	3,647,051
Restricted contributions	-	860,989	860,989
Interest and investment gain	735	-	735
Other income	169,621	-	169,621
Net assets released from restrictions:			
Satisfaction of program restrictions	860,989	(860,989)	-
Total revenues and support	<u>17,055,450</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17,055,450</u>
EXPENSES			
Program services:			
Public proclamation	2,300,858	-	2,300,858
Congregational care	6,372,696	-	6,372,696
Education	449,022	-	449,022
Festivals	685,102	-	685,102
International	2,552,267	-	2,552,267
Total program services	12,359,945	-	12,359,945
General and administrative:			
Headquarters office, management and administrative	1,165,924	-	1,165,924
Board of directors	4,606	-	4,606
Insurance and related services	2,123,755	-	2,123,755
Total general and administrative	<u>3,294,285</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,294,285</u>
Total expenses	<u>15,654,230</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,654,230</u>
Change in net assets	1,401,220	-	1,401,220
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>14,533,366</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,533,366</u>
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 15,934,586</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 15,934,586</u>

The unqualified opinion reflects our independent auditor's judgment that, without any identified exceptions, our financial records and statements are fairly and appropriately presented and are in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). It is just one indication of our commitment to responsibly manage the financial resources God has provided.

We have provided two of the financial statements that relate to the Church's operations for the year ending Dec. 31, 2024. You can view the full audit online at members.cogwa.org/uploads/Church_of_God_a_Worldwide_Association_2024_Audit.pdf. ⑧⑨

CHURCH OF GOD, A WORLDWIDE ASSOCIATION, INC.
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024

EXPENSES	Program Services					General and Administrative					Total	
	Public Proclamation	Congregational Care	Education	Festivals	International	Headquarters Office, Management and Administrative	Board of Directors	Insurance and Related services				
Bank services and fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 91,468	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 91,468	
Building and equipment fees	-	9,374	83,098	165,114	-	15,719	-	-	-	-	273,305	
Contracted services and fees	418,735	-	-	-	-	236,879	-	-	-	-	655,614	
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	192,133	-	-	-	-	192,133	
Domestic support:												
Advertising	136,001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	136,001	
Discretionary assistance	-	185,195	-	146,276	36,679	-	-	-	30,826	398,976		
Discretionary retirement pay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	888,370	888,370		
Insurance and health care	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,204,559	1,204,559		
Internet and related services	139,490	-	-	-	-	6,500	-	-	-	-	145,990	
Other	5,624	49,503	11,346	361	18,905	27,748	-	-	-	-	113,487	
Postage and shipping	118,796	2,983	-	-	17,328	4,700	-	-	-	-	143,807	
Printing	125,507	2,352	-	-	-	527	-	-	-	-	128,386	
Salaries and related expenses	1,115,251	3,657,018	143,054	306,879	736,774	443,986	-	-	-	-	6,402,962	
Supplies	170,507	11,669	1,678	35,228	3,030	14,273	-	-	-	-	236,385	
Telephone and utilities	-	28,623	-	-	2,688	47,254	-	-	-	-	78,565	
Travel, mileage, meals and lodging	30,536	2,422,230	43,933	29,215	390,566	52,669	4,606	-	-	-	2,973,755	
Youth camp and activities	-	-	165,913	2,029	39,450	-	-	-	-	-	207,392	
Equipment and facilities	40,411	3,749	-	-	-	32,068	-	-	-	-	76,228	
International subsidies	-	-	-	-	1,306,847	-	-	-	-	-	1,306,847	
Total expenses	<u>\$ 2,300,858</u>	<u>\$ 6,372,696</u>	<u>\$ 449,022</u>	<u>\$ 685,102</u>	<u>\$ 2,552,267</u>	<u>\$ 1,165,924</u>	<u>\$ 4,606</u>	<u>\$ 2,123,755</u>	<u>\$ 15,654,230</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	



2025 Malawi Youth Camp

The Church in Malawi held a youth camp Aug. 4-7, 2025. The 56 attending were composed of 21 boys, 19 girls and 16 staff.

This year's camp allowed a select group of campers to hike Sapitwa, the highest peak of Mount Mulanje, which is 9,849 feet above sea level.

We converged at Likhubula Lodge, at the foot of the mountain, on Monday, Aug. 4. An officer from the forest department explained what the two-day hike would be like, and then campers and staff who were fit for the hike were selected. In the end we had 17 males and two females. The youngest was an 18-year-old boy, and the oldest was a 73-year-old man.

The hike taught perseverance, patience and the need to follow the guide's instructions in order to reach the top.

The campers who remained at the Likhubula Lodge had a busy schedule with various activities, such as



gymnastics and Bible study. They also had a chance to visit the waterfalls at a natural dam, known as Dziwe La Nkhalamba.

Tielmans Chirwa and Bilton Salawila

Cleveland Congregation Hosts Senior Luncheon



Sixteen senior members of the Cleveland, Ohio, congregation were honored with a special luncheon

before services on the Sabbath of Aug. 2. Centerpieces of beautiful blue hydrangeas and baby's breath accented the blue and white table settings. After a general welcome and blessing on the meal, children and teenagers of the congregation served homemade Italian wedding soup, Caesar salad, chicken salad croissants, and turkey and cheese sliders.

During the meal, a member played the piano for background music. Then a small children's choir sang the COGWA preteen camp song, "Seek First the Kingdom of God," followed by lighthearted recitations from the teens.

A few weeks prior to the luncheon, the seniors were sent a survey asking them about how and when they came into the Church, their special Feast memories and their favorite scriptures. Their answers were compiled and shared at the luncheon, which made for some serious reflection as well as laughter!

The event ended with a variety of pies for dessert, and the guests took their leave with small gifts of appreciation. Everything was such a hit that we might have a new annual tradition!

Erica Pavlik

2025 Caribbean Youth Camp

After months of anticipation, it was a blessing to see plans for the Caribbean youth camp finally come to fruition for 22 campers and 23 staff and counselors.

Preteens and teens from Barbados, Bahamas and Jamaica gathered from July 31 to Aug. 4, 2025, for a life-changing experience at Camp Lowe, nestled in the hills of Portland, Jamaica.

Under the umbrella theme “Seek First the Kingdom,” each dorm explored a unique subtheme: the pearl of great price (preteen girls); hidden treasures (teen girls); the mustard seed (preteen boys) and the sower of the seed (teen boys).

Over the four days, the camp buzzed with the laughter and fellowship. Each day began with “First Things,” to strengthen the campers’ relationship with God by providing dedicated time for prayer, study and reflection. Other activities included a workshop on Bible journaling (using new Bibles gifted to the teens), Christian Living and Compass Check sessions, Sabbath seminars and Bible-based games such as Bible Jeopardy and Bible Baseball.

Outdoor activities included volleyball, flag football, basketball, cricket and swimming. Both campers and counselors were eager to participate in an “Amazing Race.” On the last night of camp there was a talent show and dancing.



To top off the experience, the campers daily indulged in a delicious culinary feast that made fellowship much more delightful.

The Sabbath day was particularly special. The teens led and served during services, and all the campers participated in singing “Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God” for special music.

Despite some challenges, everyone maintained a positive attitude, which was a testament to the transformative power of God’s Spirit throughout the camp. Saying goodbye was bittersweet, as new bonds and friendships had been forged. We thank God for the unforgettable time we could spend together.

Kandee Grant-Lewis

Minister Retirement Honored

On Sabbath, June 28, 2025, a profound sense of gratitude and celebration enveloped the congregations gathered in Butuan City, Mindanao, Philippines, as Paul Cebrian Sr. was honored for his decades of devoted service to the Church of God.

The event brought together all of the Mindanao congregations, with a total attendance of 92 members. The occasion was further distinguished by the presence of the Philippine ministry, including pastors from both the Luzon and Visayas regions, and David Baker, the regional director for Asia and the Middle East.

Mr. Baker delivered the sermon. His message shone with appreciation, drawing upon the words of Hebrews 6:10, as he acknowledged the effort and enduring love Mr. Cebrian poured into his ministry.

Mr. Cebrian was presented with a commemorative vase, marking his faithful service. Mrs. Cebrian, his steadfast partner in life and ministry, was honored with a bouquet of flowers, reflecting the appreciation of the entire fellowship.



As the congregation honored Mr. Cebrian, there was also a spirit of hopeful anticipation for the future. Elbert Gargar, with his wife Flora, will assume the ministerial responsibilities for the Mindanao congregations.

The Sabbath service was a moving tapestry of gratitude, reflection and renewed commitment. It marked not only the close of a remarkable chapter in the ministry of Mr. Cebrian, but also the beginning of a new era of leadership for the Church in Mindanao.

Carmelita Gumadlas

Youngstown Holds Annual Fish Fry

The Youngstown, Ohio, congregation held its annual fish fry Friday evening, July 18, 2025. The evening was once again hosted by Dennis and Beth Kuhns, an elder and his wife who have served here for many years.

The 29 brethren who were able to attend had a pleasant evening in lovely summer weather. Everyone enjoyed the tasty fish, side dishes and desserts, which were shared in a lovely landscaped garden.

It was an enjoyable evening filled with fun and fellowship among the brethren—and a wonderful way to welcome the Sabbath together.

Melissa McCready

Cincinnati-Dayton Hosts Noah's Ark Weekend



The Cincinnati-Dayton, Ohio, congregation hosted a special Sabbath on July 12, 2025. Our guests were Arnold Mendez, pastor of the Harlingen, Texas, congregation, and his wife Janie. In both a Bible study format in the morning and a Sabbath services format in the afternoon, Mr. Mendez covered the important topics of Noah's ark and early man.

We invited people from all over the region and had an attendance of 177. Between the Bible study and afternoon services, members enjoyed fellowship and snacks or a meal out together.

On Sunday, a group of 90 visited the Ark Encounter theme park in Williamstown, Kentucky. Mr. Mendez led the group and provided a narration of the Encounter.

Anna Zimmerman

Youth Activity in North Luzon



The North Luzon and Manila young adults planned a weekend getaway for July 19 to 21, 2025, that was to include hiking Mount Ulap in Benguet. However, due to Typhoon Crising (also known as Typhoon Wipha), the mountain was officially closed for safety, and the hike was canceled.

Despite the change in plans, the group still made the most of the weekend. After attending Sabbath services in Dagupan City, we traveled to Baguio later that evening. Instead of hiking, we enjoyed a relaxed indoor bowling activity and spent two nights bonding through fun and meaningful socials. It was a weekend of fellowship, flexibility and connection despite the unexpected weather.

Rizza Dizon

Nashville Honors Seniors

The Nashville, Tennessee, congregation honored its senior members with a luncheon on July 20, 2025. The special meal was prepared by chef Chris Proctor and sous-chef Zach Evans and was served by Tammie Eldridge in the Eldridge home.

The event fostered lively conversation, delighted palates and created a memorable afternoon.

Tammie Eldridge





We encourage members to send announcements to be featured in *One Accord*. We feature events in members' lives, including births, weddings, significant anniversaries (25, 40, 50, 60, etc.), baptisms, ordinations and obituaries. Entries should run between 50-100 words with obituaries being 100-250 words. Please submit a high-resolution color photo along with the written copy to your congregation's reporter.

Births



Charlotte Kennedy Ditto

Prayers were answered for Russell and Alex Ditto on the safe and joyous arrival of Charlotte Kennedy Ditto on Feb. 26, 2025. Dad, Mom and big sister Monroe could not be happier or more grateful for the new addition. Charlotte weighed 8 pounds 6 ounces and was 20½ inches long.

Alex Ditto



Luke Benjamin Fritz

Alex and Marissa Fritz of Laughlin, Nevada (and the Los Angeles, California, congregation) are delighted to announce the birth of their fourth child, Luke Benjamin Fritz.

Luke arrived on Sept. 25, 2025, weighing 7 pounds, 2 ounces and measuring 19½ inches long.

His siblings Levi, Caleb and Chloe were thrilled to welcome him and overjoyed that he arrived just in time to attend his first Feast of Tabernacles in Oxnard, California.

Luke is the fifth grandchild of David and Deborah Fritz, also of the Los Angeles congregation.

Debbie Fritz

Weddings



Angela and Everett Martin

It is with great delight that we announce the marriage of Angela Smith and Everett Martin.

The happy couple exchanged vows on June 29, 2025, surrounded by friends and family. It was a beautiful day filled with sunshine, love and joyful moments.

Parents Charles and Tammie Smith and Don and Heather Martin join in wishing them every joy and the abundant blessings that God bestows.

Mr. and Mrs. Everett Martin attend the Fort Worth, Texas, congregation.

Tammie Smith

Anniversaries



John and Kathy Earls

John and Kathy Earls celebrated their 50th anniversary on March 16, 2025. The Earls are longtime members, originally of the Phoenix, Arizona, congregation. Since 2017, they have lived in Arkansas and attended in Sedgwick and Little Rock, Arkansas.

John's family moved from Ohio to Arizona in 1963, and his family started attending the Radio Church of God. Kathy was an Arizona native and met John in high school in 1972. They were baptized in 1974, married in 1975 and have served in the Church for many years.

The Earls are enjoying spending their time together in retirement.

Justin Adkins

Baptisms



Jone Bale

On Oct. 7, 2025—the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles—the Fijian brethren welcomed Jone Bale into the Body of Christ. Jone was baptized by Jon Pinelli, senior pastor for the South Pacific. He was assisted by Fijian elder Emori Toloi and visiting New Zealand elder Isaac Khalil. Jone is a great addition to the small but dedicated members in Fiji.

Jon Pinelli



Antonella Iturra

As the Sabbath approached on Friday evening, Oct. 24, 2025, Antonella Iturra of the Dallas, Texas, congregation was baptized into the Body of Christ. Surrounded

by Antonella's family and friends, pastor Andy Burnett conducted the baptism, and Clyde Kilough led the laying on of hands. Afterward everyone shared a very nice Sabbath meal, made especially meaningful by this joyous event.

Clyde Kilough



Aubrey Kapales

Aubrey Kapales, of the Bentonville, Arkansas congregation, was baptized by Dennis Fultz during the Feast of Tabernacles in Branson, Missouri, on Oct. 11, 2025. Randy Salyer assisted.

Aubrey is a fifth-generation Christian. Those attending her baptism were her parents, Kevin and Andrea Kapales; sister, Makenzie Kapales; and brother, Drew Kapales. Her grandparents, Buel and Peggy Dame; aunts, uncle, cousins, many members of the Bentonville congregation and her friends from several other congregations.

After the baptism, everyone enjoyed light snacks and fellowship to celebrate the occasion.

Vicki Willoughby



Remy J. Gumban

On the morning of Oct. 11, 2025, the fifth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Remy J. Gumban from the Kiara,

Mindanao, Philippines, congregation joyfully accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. The baptism was held at Nature's Village, Talisay, Bacolod City, and was officiated by Mindanao pastor Elbert Gargar. Also assisting were deacons Lynie Baylon and Arcadio Gargar Sr., as well as retired pastor Paul Cebrian Sr. It was truly a beautiful and memorable day, marked by God's grace and a new beginning of true Christian faith.

Segrid Joy Pabilona

Ordinations



Tina Hernandez and Christi Waite

The south Texas congregations were blessed with the ordination of two deaconesses during the fall holy day season.

Tina Hernandez, a member of the Corpus Christi congregation, was ordained a deaconess on the Sabbath of Sept. 20, 2025. Arnold Mendez, pastor of the Harlingen congregation, performed the ordination, assisted by Steve Moody, pastor of the Corpus Christi and San Antonio congregations.

A few days later, Christi Waite, a member of the Harlingen congregation, was ordained a deaconess on the Feast of Trumpets, Sept. 23, 2025. Mr. Mendez performed the ordination ceremony, assisted by Michael Watts, an elder in Harlingen.

Arnold Mendez



Ken Walton

On the Last Day of Unleavened Bread, April 19, 2025, Ken Walton of the Augusta, Georgia, congregation was ordained an elder.

Ken and his wife Jeanne were ordained a deacon and deaconess in 2018. Ken has willingly served in many areas over the years, including hall setup and takedown, song leading and speaking.

Ken and Jeanne have been married 39 years and have two adult daughters, a son-in-law and a baby grandson, who were all present for the occasion.

The ordination was conducted by local pastor Drew Tranquada, with elders Tom Kirkpatrick and Richard Haughee assisting.

Drew Tranquada

Obituaries



Sharon Woodland

Sharon Woodland died of respiratory complications May 29, 2025. Sharon had been a member of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, for only a few years, but a member of other Church of God groups for decades.

Even though confined to a nursing home, she was the full-time caregiver to her disabled husband, Thyone Woodland, a former Baltimore police officer.

Sharon was memorialized in an

outdoor ceremony, attended by family and friends. Her favorite Jamaican foods were served in her honor.

She will be greatly missed by those who knew and loved her.

Scott Lord

TRIBUTE



Walter Hawk

Walter Hawk—a longtime member, deacon and elder in the Akron-Canton, Ohio, congregation—died on Sunday, May 11, 2025. He was born in New Philadelphia, Ohio, on Dec. 20, 1935. He and his wife Dorothy, also a COGWA member, were married on June 20, 1959, some 66 years ago.

Mr. Hawk is survived by his wife; their three sons, Brian (and Sara), Jim (and Linda) and David (and Paula); and their three grandchildren, Amy, Adam and Ethan.

Mr. Hawk was a U.S. Army veteran, serving from 1954 to 1957 in the 29th tank battalion in Baumholder, Germany. He held several different jobs over the years and in 1999 retired from his position as a purchasing and materials manager for Dunlap Memorial Hospital in Orrville, Ohio.

Mr. and Mrs. Hawk began attending God's Church in Akron

in 1969. They were baptized in January 1970, and he was ordained an elder in 1984.

He was a skilled handyman—Mr. Fix-It for any and every household challenge. He was also an accomplished woodworker who loved to be in his shop making furniture and working on special projects for his grandchildren. One of his signature creations was a portable footstool for people whose legs are too short to reach the floor when seated. He always carried a couple extra with him, to hand out to members wherever he traveled. To this day, dozens of ladies carry one in their purse to use during the Sabbath service.

His sons expressed that his most outstanding characteristics were patience, kindness, diligence, honesty and service. He taught them practical skills and always modeled the life of a genuine, faithful Christian. One of his sons wrote of him, “Everywhere I go, you’re right here reminding me of the lessons learned through God, loving family and good friends. Thank you, Dad.”

A pillar member of the local congregation for decades, Mr. Hawk is greatly missed and remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather and friend, and as a willing and ready servant to all.

Don Henson

One Accord has switched to a monthly publication schedule (except for the months of April and October).

If you have an announcement you'd like published in *One Accord*, please submit it to your congregation reporter by the first of the month.

