

OneAccord

May 2026



Sharpening Iron

10 Things I Want to See in My
Congregation

Serving the Global Family

Leon and Reba Walker:
A Lifetime of Service

Foundation Institute Perspectives

Activities as We Approach
Graduation

personal from the president

India and Sri Lanka

I would like to share highlights from my recent trip to India and Sri Lanka during the spring holy days. My wife and I, along with our treasurer, Britt Taylor, and our regional director for Asia, David Baker, spent two weeks visiting members in this region. We returned on April 6, and the experience remains one of the most inspiring holy day seasons I have ever experienced.

During our trip, we observed two Sabbaths, Passover, the Night to Be Much Observed and the first day of Unleavened Bread with members in these countries. Listening to the members' stories of their calling and conversion was deeply moving. India is a nation of 1.4 billion people, with 80 percent Hindu and 15 percent Muslim. All other religions make up the remaining 5 percent. Leaving such a setting to become part of the Church of God is extraordinarily difficult, and the faith and perseverance of our brethren stand out in remarkable ways.

Travel itself was demanding. Reaching India and returning required two overnight flights and about 20 hours

in the air (nearly 30 hours total with airport time). The time difference between India and Dallas is 10½ hours, and we are still adjusting. But every mile was worth it, as we were able to visit all our members in both countries—fewer than 50 in India, scattered across several regions, and approximately 20 in Sri Lanka.

Our first stop was Hyderabad, where we visited Arjumand Ali, daughter of

Dr. Dossibai Ali—the first person from India to be baptized in the modern era of the Church. Dr. Ali was baptized in 1960 while she was attending medical school in Britain, and after returning to India she became the foundation for what eventually (in the 1990s) grew into several congregations and a few hundred members. Dr. Ali died in 2012, and today Arjumand is in a nursing facility with full-time care. Though bedridden, she remains faithful and was grateful for the visit.



Eugene and Deepti Kumar



Tarun Ghosh

From Hyderabad we traveled to Kolkata for Sabbath services with about 20 brethren, many of them recently baptized. Their enthusiasm was contagious. From there, we flew to Colombo, Sri Lanka, where we observed Passover, the Night to Be Much Observed and the first day of Unleavened Bread with the congregation.

We then returned to India and drove from Delhi to Moradabad for a Bible study with about 16 brethren in the home of Eugene and Deepti Kumar.

Across the region, we were able to fellowship with nearly every member, except for a few who were unable to travel to the Kolkata service. In every location the joy, hospitality and dedication of the brethren made our visit inspiring.

Before concluding, I want to introduce three men—and their wives—who carry much of the weekly responsibility in this part of the world. In India, we have two deacons. Eugene Kumar and his wife, Deepti, serve in Moradabad, with the congregation meeting in their home. Tarun Ghosh serves in the Kolkata region. Tarun's wife, Seema, died during the COVID-19 pandemic, and because of



Jean van Heer

strict regulations, he was not permitted to hold a funeral for her. This was a heartbreaking trial for him, yet he continues to serve faithfully.

In Sri Lanka, Rodney van Heer and his wife, Jean, provide consistent leadership and host services in their home. Their service has been vital for the stability and growth of the congregation there.

The apostle Paul encourages us in Ephesians 6:18 to pray “with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.” Our brethren in India and Sri Lanka especially need those prayers. With so few members and often great distances between them, they frequently face trials without the regular support of nearby brethren. Yet their faith remains strong, and their example is inspiring.



Rodney van Heer

Jim Franks



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6



10



11

CHURCH of GOD

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- 4 | **Sharpening Iron**
10 Things I Want to See in My Congregation
- 6 | **Serving the Global Family**
Leon and Reba Walker: A Lifetime of Service
- 9 | **Foundation Institute Perspectives**
Activities as We Approach Graduation
- 10 | **News of the Work**
- 11 | **Church Potluck**
- 14 | **Announcements**



10 Things I Want to See in My Congregation

Here are some things I want to see in my congregation, and I believe they are also part of the guidelines for a growing church.

By Ron Kelley

If you were given the opportunity to express what you consider to be the most important qualities of the church you'd like to attend, what would you list?

I'm not talking about the identity of the Church of God that we might express to the world. Some of those things are a given, such as the Sabbath and holy days, the name of the Church, and the fundamental doctrines. I'm talking about the things that I want to see in the congregation I fellowship with.

I have tried to come up with the answer I would give if I were asked that, and here are my top 10 elements.

1. I want the members to have fervent love for one another.

John, the apostle of love, wrote, "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18).

I want to see this aspect of God's Spirit as I fellowship with others. I have seen some incredible examples. It's so nice to see members who take a meal to someone who is sick, who send an encouraging card to someone who's down, who talk with someone sitting alone at services.

Every member is different. Each has a unique role with different gifts from God (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). Each

member is a treasure, called specifically by God. I want to be part of a fellowship where every member is loved and valued for what they contribute, no matter how great or small (Luke 21:1-4).

2. I want to be edified and uplifted in spirit at Sabbath services.

Of the early Church, Acts 9:31 says, “Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.”

Congregations like that have a sense of joy! They are refreshing to be a part of!

3. I want to be taught the proven Word of God (not the opinions of men) with no compromising of the truth.

I don't want to have our Fundamental Beliefs weakened or compromised. We know that times of persecution and deception are still yet ahead of us. Luke 6:46-49 shows us that our doctrinal foundation must be solid and strong, or the coming storms will wash it away.

4. I want to be where the defined mission is to preach the gospel to the world and to care for members around the world, not just in my local area (Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20).

I want to be able to participate in and support a work that is ongoing, dynamic and effective in reaching as many people as possible. Then, once they are called and become new members of the congregation, I want them to find a spiritual family that will help them in their spiritual growth and in understanding what it means to be a true Christian.

5. I want to have opportunities to participate and serve others, and to know my service is welcomed.

I want to see a congregation where all of the members are doing their part to serve. Even if one isn't able to lead songs or give sermonettes, there are still many things one *can* do to help.

6. I want to have opportunities for leadership development and be where all are encouraged to grow and blossom.

I want to be part of a church that recognizes the importance of training its members to be future leaders in God's government. I don't want leadership to be developed for gaining high visibility in the congregation; I want it to be developed because God

has called us to be leaders in His Kingdom (Revelation 5:10).

7. I want to be in a congregation where members set a good example to our children and where children are important and included.

I want the children to have interaction with the elderly members of the congregation. I want members who talk with children and show them the value of God's way of life. I want the children to have access to Bible education and a well-developed camp program where they can meet others of like mind, as well as be immersed in God's way of life.

8. I want the membership and leadership to be of the same mind—to have unity (1 Corinthians 1:10).

I want a congregation that works to have harmony. When I come to Sabbath services, I don't want to see cliques, but fellowshiping with everyone.

I also want to be protected from wolves in sheep's clothing (Acts 20:29-30), with no one worrying that they will be misled or manipulated. I can give my trust when others are trustworthy.

9. I want to worship with other members who are not critical and offensive.

The Bible says both, “Judge not, that you be not judged” (Matthew 7:1) and, “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment” (John 7:24). We can and should judge, in the sense that we can determine right from wrong according to the Word of God. However, we should not arrogantly or self-righteously demean or speak against behavior that is different from our own, as long as the behavior is not sinful. I desire to be among members who strive not to be offensive in their behavior, but also, not to be easily offended.

10. I want regular social activities where members can get to know one another and have fun!

We get to know each other better when we spend time together at social events or in each other's homes. We can have fun when we invite other families to join us for a meal or for games. Spending time together builds bonds that are not easily broken.

I know there are other things that may be important to you that you are looking for in a church fellowship, but that's my top 10.

Now, I need to make sure I'm doing my part to make these things happen! ☺☺



Leon and Reba Walker

A Lifetime of Service

In this issue of *One Accord*, we are beginning a series of articles featuring COGWA's four regional directors. These men and their wives have served for decades in the Church's international work, caring for members and congregations in numerous countries. In these articles, you'll read of the history of their dedication and service to our worldwide Church family.

By Jim Franks

For nearly half a century, the Spanish-speaking region of the Church of God has been shaped and shepherded by the leadership of regional director Leon Walker and his wife, Reba. Their story is one of lifelong commitment to God's people—spanning continents, cultures and some of the most defining moments in the modern history of the Church.

Their beginning

Mr. Walker's journey began in Shreveport, Louisiana, where

he grew up before heading to Pasadena, California, in 1955 to attend Ambassador College. Although he had never attended any Church of God congregation before arriving on campus, he quickly began participating in church services and activities, setting the foundation for what would become a lifetime of service.

Two years later, in 1957, Reba arrived at Ambassador College from Wilmot, Arkansas. Her family had embraced the truth several years earlier; her parents were

baptized in 1954, and she attended her first Feast of Tabernacles in Big Sandy that same year. Without a local congregation near their home, the annual festivals were her earliest experiences with Church members. When she came to Pasadena, she, too, began attending services regularly for the first time.

Leon and Reba graduated from college to begin a new career together. Leon completed his studies in 1960, and the two married shortly afterward on June 7, 1960. Over the years, while working on two continents, they raised a family of five children: David, Robert, Natalie, Stephen and Catherine. Their family now includes nine grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

The Spanish work

Mr. Walker began what would become his lifelong work even before he graduated. In September 1956, he started working in the Spanish Department under Dr. Benjamin Rea. After Dr. Rea's untimely death in 1965, the department underwent several transitions—first under Charles Dorothy and later under Walter Dickinson—but Mr. Walker's involvement remained constant



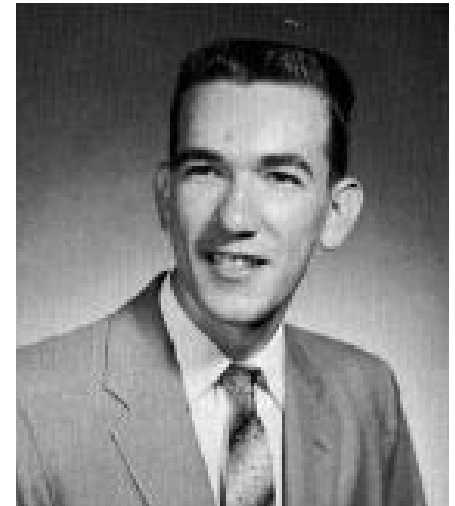
even though the leadership of the department changed.

In November 1979, at a pivotal moment for the Spanish work, he was appointed regional director by Herbert W. Armstrong. According to Mr. Walker, the appointment was both an honor and a formidable challenge. But Mr. Walker embraced the role with zeal and a genuine love for the ministry and members in the region.

Mr. and Mrs. Walker made it their priority to travel—extensively and repeatedly—to every area under their care in order to become personally acquainted with the ministry and the membership. In those early years, they traveled more than 200 days annually, establishing a pattern that would continue for decades.

They visited congregations large and small, shared meals in ministers' homes, met their children, learned their cultures and listened to their concerns. Sabbaths and festivals were spent with the brethren in every corner of the region, year after year. Through this rhythm of personal connection, the Walkers built the foundation of unity and mutual affection that continues to characterize the Spanish work to this day.

The Walkers never viewed their travel as a burden. The flights, security lines and long customs queues were tiring, but they were always refreshed by what awaited them at each destination: the warmth of the members, the joy of fellowship and the opportunity to deepen bonds within the Church. They were welcomed not only with hospitality but with music, cultural presentations and traditional dances—gestures that made the Walkers feel at home across an entire region. Those who traveled with them found it inspiring to watch the expressions



of the brethren as they presented their own culture in each country through song and dance.

Mr. and Mrs. Walker's presence, year after year, created something lasting. As Mr. Walker has reflected, unity flourished because "they know us and we know them."

Stability in times of upheaval

The decades of Mr. Walker's service were not without trials. Through civil wars, along with general and civil unrest in the various countries in Latin America, the Walkers continued to travel. But it was the internal upheavals within the Church, most notably in 1995 that became defining tests of faith for many members and ministers across the world, including those in Latin America. As doctrinal shifts emerged, Mr. and Mrs. Walker remained steadfast in the teachings they had proven and held dear. Many in the Spanish region did the same, though the cost was high—for some, expulsion



from congregations they had served for years.

The period was painful and disorienting, yet the Walkers worked tirelessly to maintain connection and give encouragement. Drawing upon thousands of accumulated airline and hotel points, Mr. Walker traveled throughout Latin America at his own expense to meet with scattered brethren and strengthen congregations facing sudden uncertainty. His presence was a steadying influence at a time when stability was desperately needed.

Years later, the events that unfolded in 2010 would again place him at the center of significant change. Although the specifics of personnel decisions during that time need not be recounted, the result was another major turning point for many in the Church—both in Latin America and beyond. The unity, clarity of purpose and renewed peace that followed in the formation of the Church of God, a

Worldwide Association (COGWA) is something Mr. Walker views as a blessing for the members and ministry alike.

A faithful focus

Though the Walkers have witnessed many challenges over their decades of service, their focus has always remained the same: caring for God’s people through teaching, example and personal connection. Throughout his tenure, Mr. Walker consistently approached his responsibilities with a profound sense of respect for those he served and a deep awareness of God’s calling that brought all of us together, no matter our language or our culture.

His fond memories of working directly with Herbert W. Armstrong also continue to influence him. Across years of travel and conversations, Mr. Walker recalls always being treated “with respect and honor,” by Mr. Armstrong, and he speaks gratefully of the lessons he learned, especially the importance of remaining faithful to God’s Word. Those lessons shaped his leadership in the critical moments of both 1995 and 2010.

After nearly 50 years as regional director, Leon Walker still serves faithfully in that role today. His tenure is one of the longest in modern Church history—not merely a record of years, but a testament to sustained dedication, wise leadership and genuine love for the brethren throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

Reba has been his constant companion and partner throughout every mile traveled, every home visited, every festival observed and every challenge faced. The one exception was during the years of civil war and terrorist activities in much

of Latin America. Her grace, hospitality and unwavering support have made her an essential pillar of the region. Together, the Walkers have modeled the kind of shared devotion that strengthens families, congregations and entire communities of believers.

It is difficult to imagine the Spanish region without the imprint of Leon and Reba Walker. Their influence can be seen in the unity of the congregations, the stability of the ministry, the affection of members and the continuity of the work through generations. They have given nearly five decades of their lives—on top of decades more spent preparing, serving and supporting the Church in earlier years.

Their story is one of humility and endurance, of service and sacrifice, of leadership that has always been grounded in faith and love. As we reflect on their extraordinary contributions, we honor not only what they have accomplished and what they will yet accomplish, but who they are: faithful servants who have dedicated their lives to God’s work and to His people.

Their legacy is woven into the very history of the modern Church—and it continues to grow with every year they serve.

From a personal perspective, it has been one of the greatest honors of my ministry to have known the Walkers and worked alongside them for the past 30 years. I have learned a tremendous amount while researching and explaining the doctrines of the Church. There is no greater living resource for the Church today than Leon Walker in the area of doctrine.

It was a privilege and an honor to write this article about two extraordinary human beings—Leon and Reba Walker. ©

Activities as We Approach Graduation

By Logan Arner, FI student

The last few months have been very busy for the FI students as the end of our year gets closer. We have wrapped up both Dave Myers’ “Harmony of the Gospels” class and Jim Franks’ “Fundamental Beliefs” class.

With only five weeks of class left after our two-week break for the spring holy days, we have begun working on the FI edition of *In Accord* and have been preparing for graduation, which is scheduled for May 17.

But we’ve still found time to have some fun as a class.

One of the activities the FI students participated in was a group outing to a performance of the Plano Symphony Orchestra featuring the Branford Marsalis Jazz Quartet. Our class, along with a few Church office employees, enjoyed this unique and memorable musical experience. The music and the atmosphere blended together creating a really fun evening.

The highlight of the last few months for me was definitely the trip to the George W. Bush Presidential Center. This incredible museum led us through both the life and the presidential terms of the 43rd U.S. president.

While there, we saw plenty of items from throughout his presidency. My personal favorites were the vast collection of sports memorabilia relating to the tragic events of 9/11. The museum has a whole section dedicated to the sporting events that took place after those tragic attacks.

As someone who enjoys sports and loves to watch feel-good sports movies, I found it really cool and emotional to see how impactful sports were for the nation. On display, for instance, is the baseball from President Bush’s famous pitch less than a month after the attacks. That ball symbolized so much more to the

American people than a baseball game. I found it very meaningful to consider such an important moment of not just the history of baseball, but the history of America.

The museum also had a fantastic simulation that aims to show visitors just how many hard decisions President Bush had to make during his presidency. The simulation would assign you a crisis and give you a few minutes to talk to an “adviser” who would state the two opposing sides of the decisions. During this time, there would randomly be an event that would complicate

the issue. All of the scenarios were based on the real-life events during that time. The conflict my classmates Paul and Tiffany Hamilton and I were assigned was the political struggle between Iran and the U.S. after the attacks of 9/11. This simulation gave us an idea of how hard it must have been for President Bush to choose a course of action.

You can’t go through the George W. Bush

Presidential Center without stopping in the replica of the Oval Office and having a photo shoot behind the desk, and our class was no exception. We took class photos, and those with aspirations of being the future president of the United States of America took some individual photos. It was cool being in a replica of such an important room and learning a bit more about what goes on in the Oval Office.

As we enter the last few weeks of the school year, our class is looking forward to finishing up Doug Johnson’s “Modern Church History” class, where we’ll begin diving into the foundation and timeline of the Worldwide Church of God. We will also be wrapping up production of the FI edition of the *In Accord*, which will hopefully be aired shortly after graduation. ©A



NEWS OF THE WORK

Education Center Building Update



Our building has gone vertical! As this picture, taken on April 27, shows, framing has begun, and we're beginning to see the superstructure take shape with the installation of steel columns and beams.

Jim Franks

Stats & Facts

The Church offers four types of podcasts that are accessible at lifehopeandtruth.com/podcasts/ and on Apple, Spotify and a couple of small platforms. It also offers a fifth podcast that's accessible at members.cogwa.org/podcasts/.

The stats below, as of April 13, 2026, are for Apple and Spotify:

1. The *Verse by Verse* podcast (313,645 downloads) has five-minute episodes that cover a verse for the day. Pithy, fast-paced and inspiring, this podcast is a great way to start your day. New episodes are published every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
2. The *Discern* podcast (112,337 downloads) has audio

recordings of *Discern* articles. A new episode (article) is published every Thursday.

3. The *Life, Hope & Truth Presents* podcast (16,760 downloads) is our LHTP program in audio form.
4. The booklet podcasts (22,614 downloads total) allow you to listen to audio recordings of eight booklets and one book.
5. The *COGWA Sermons* podcast (43,651 downloads) is our newest podcast—began in February 2025. A new sermon episode—recommended by members and reviewed by a team of elders—is posted every Tuesday and Thursday.

Upcoming Travel

Jim and Sharron Franks

- May 22-26, Bogotá, Colombia, for Pentecost.

Doug and Tanya Horchak

- May 7-18, Chile, Uruguay and Argentina, to visit brethren and ministry and hold ILP classes.

Clyde and Dee Kilough

- May 22-25, Minneapolis, Minnesota, for Pentecost and Families Glorifying God Weekend.

Ralph Levy

- May 18-26, Dominican Republic for Pentecost.

Dave and Pam Myers

- May 22-25, Los Angeles, California, for Pentecost.

Britton and Donna Taylor

- May 22-25, Frederick and Salisbury, Maryland, and York and Bedford, Pennsylvania, for Pentecost.

Ministerial Services



Focused Mentoring Program Holds Weekend of Classes

Participants of the 2026 Focused Mentoring Program met for a weekend of classes at the Church's office March 14-15. Pictured left to right are Kait and Mitchell Simon (Tampa, Florida),

Corey and Ashley Maker (Tulsa, Oklahoma), Brittany and Brent Martin (Columbia, Missouri), and Cassie and James Richards (East Texas).

During the weekend, Jim Franks, Clyde Kilough and Dave Myers taught several classes, such as “The Importance of Integrity and Character,” “Learning From Our Mistakes,” “The Heart of a Godly Servant” and “Preaching the Gospel and Caring for the Flock.”

As well, Pam Myers led a discussion with the women on lessons learned as a pastor’s wife, while Messrs. Franks, Kilough and Myers led a similar discussion with the men on lessons learned as pastors.

New Ministerial Hire

Ministerial Services announced a new hire into the full-time ministry. On

March 30, Chris Leyden began serving as a ministerial trainee. He and his wife, Rebekah, will be moving to Georgia, where he will assist Mark Winner, the pastor of the Atlanta, Gainesville and Macon, Georgia, congregations.

International Work



Horchaks Travel to Bolivia and Peru

Accompanied by Saul and Carmen Langarica, Doug and Tanya

Horchak traveled to Bolivia and Peru March 18-29.

A highlight of the trip was the ordination of Jaime Zagal as an elder in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, on March 21. After services members toasted, thanking God for Jaime—our only elder in Bolivia—and his wife, Michelle.

The Horchaks and Langaricas also visited with members in La Paz, Bolivia. They enjoyed a personal tour of the Tiwanaku archaeological site by Javier Escalante, a Church member who manages excavations in Bolivia.

The travelers’ last stop was in Lima, Peru, where they enjoyed time with Lima pastor Carlos Saavedra and his wife, Mirabel. On Sabbath, March 29, Mr. Horchak conducted ILP classes for 11 couples.

CHURCH POTLUCK

What’s cooking in your congregation?

26th Virginia Beach Weekend Held



Over the weekend of Jan. 16-18, the Williamsburg, Virginia, congregation hosted its 26th annual Virginia Beach Weekend, and 73 members enjoyed food and fellowship while meditating on the theme of the weekend: “Be Holy, for I Am Holy.”

Tom Burrows gave the Friday evening Bible study. Guest speaker Ralph Levy presented the Sabbath

morning Bible study and the sermon. After services, we enjoyed a delicious meal, a dance, a Hilltop project and a silent auction.

Before heading home Sunday, attendees had the option of floating an indoor lazy river or watching a movie together.

Tom Burrows

Houston South and Victoria Hold Ladies' Tea



Ladies of the Houston South and Victoria, Texas, congregations enjoyed an afternoon tea on Sunday, Feb. 22, at the home of Allison Nelson. The menu included traditional tea sandwiches, scones and small sweets, along with three different types of tea.

The tea provided ladies with an opportunity to wear hats, fascinators and other tea attire and visit with one another in a relaxed environment. Nadia Soto presented "teatime trivia" to the delight of all. The afternoon ended with everyone agreeing we should enjoy tea together again sometime soon.

Monica Koerner and Kathy Welch

Davao City Members Travel for Services

Elbert Gargar, pastor of the Mindanao congregations in the Philippines, received a text message from Elbert Magdoboy, a new contact who had just completed the Church's online Bible Study Course. His heartfelt words revealed a longing for fellowship and deeper understanding.

Moved by his spiritual journey, the Davao City congregation rallied together. Instead of waiting for him to travel the daunting 200-kilometer distance, we organized a trip to bring services closer to him.

Mr. Magdoboy (third from left) is pictured here with the members. The brethren's warmth, encouragement and genuine care made him feel part of the family.

Flora Gargar



Roanoke Servants Honored



After Sabbath services on Feb. 14, the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation recognized Kenneth "Kenny" and Francis "Fran" Earles for their many years of service.

Kenny, our deacon, and Fran faithfully serve the brethren through countless behind-the-scenes efforts. They arrive early to set up the meeting hall, assist with sound, prepare refreshments and ensure everyone has seating and hymnals. Kenny also leads songs, and Fran coordinates potluck meals.

Our pastor, Tom Burrows, presented them with gifts for decades of dedicated service. They are deeply loved and appreciated by the Roanoke family.

Robert Worsham
Photo by Julie Burrows

Cleveland Hosts Bible Games Social

On the Sabbath of Jan. 24, the Cleveland, Ohio, congregation enjoyed a new twist to testing their Bible knowledge. After services and a delightful potluck, the members accepted the challenge of answering Scripture-based questions in a variety of games.

The digital games were created by a local member who loves to design activities involving trivia questions for all ages. Participants divided into teams at different stations—and the games began! The questions (including in the games designed for children) varied in topic and difficulty. Everyone found it to be a fun and challenging activity!

Erica Pavlik



Women Enjoy Enrichment Weekend in Texas



Around 180 ladies from 13 states and the Bahamas gathered in Conroe, Texas, for the Women’s Enrichment Weekend Jan. 16-18. The theme was centered on Proverbs 31:25.

The schedule was brimming with opportunities for the ladies to serve, fellowship and encourage one another—reconnecting with old friends and making new.

Many participated in the choir and ensemble that performed during Sabbath services. The evening concluded with a catered meal, mixer games, prayer journaling and service projects.

On Sunday, the ladies gathered to hear keynote speaker Pam Myers and take part in discussions and breakout sessions.

Isa Vaughn Ash



Cincinnati-Dayton Holds Dance

The Cincinnati-Dayton, Ohio, congregation hosted a square dance (and line dancing) the evening of Jan. 31. Members of all ages danced the night away, following the directions of the caller to allemande left, do-si-do and more! By the end of the evening, it’s safe to say they were well-rounded dancers—or should we say “well-squared”?

Anna Zimmerman
Photo by Shannon Foster





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.

Wedding



Lynette and Mikhail Ellamil

Mikhail Ellamil and Lynette Puzon of the Manila, Philippines,

congregation were married on Jan. 11, 2026, at Tagaytay City. The ceremony was officiated by Beltran Sison, pastor for Visayas and Bicol regions of the Philippines. Family members and close friends celebrated with the couple during the event. Also present were David Baker, the regional pastor for Asia, and his wife, Dorrie.

Both Mikhail and Lynette were born and raised in the Church, and their loved ones pray for a lifetime of blessings and joy as they begin their life together!

Jeremiah Ellamil

Anniversaries



Brenda and Willis Hogg

On Nov. 1, 2025, the East Texas congregation honored Willis and Brenda Hogg for their 50th wedding anniversary with a beautiful celebration filled with joy and fellowship. Friends in other congregations also came to participate in commemorating this significant milestone.

During the festivities, Ken Treybig read a touching biography written by the Hoggs' daughter, Kelli, capturing the couple's life and history. Willis and Brenda expressed their deep gratitude for their Church family, their loved ones and the honor shown to them on this meaningful day.

Judy McNeely



Kathy and Ken Treybig

Ken and Kathy Treybig celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Feb. 22, 2026. The Ruston, Louisiana, congregation surprised them with an early celebration on the Sabbath of Feb. 14. Everyone enjoyed deli sandwiches, punch and a beautiful anniversary cake.

Then, on Feb. 21, the East Texas congregation helped the Treybiggs celebrate with a potluck and another beautiful cake.

Mr. Treybig has pastored East Texas for 24 years and Ruston for 14 years.

The Treybiggs were married on the Big Sandy Ambassador College campus. They are a wonderful example of what God intended marriage to be.

Johna Barnette and Judy McNeely

Baptisms



Addison Moore

Addison Moore of the Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation was baptized on Dec. 20, 2025.

The baptism took place following services and was conducted by Ron Kelley, pastor of the Indianapolis congregation. Afterward, special snacks were served in honor of the occasion.

Ron Kelley



Rylan Ferguson

On the morning of Saturday, Jan. 3, 2026, Rylan Ferguson was baptized into the Body of Christ. Gary Black, the pastor of the Houston North, Texas, congregation, performed the ceremony, which took place at the home of Bryan and Rhonda Waddle.

Rylan was surrounded by family and friends, who delighted in this joyful milestone in Rylan's life. We rejoice with Rylan and welcome him as a member of the Body of Christ.

Gary Black

Ordination



Chris Leyden

The West Michigan congregation was delighted to witness the ordination of Chris Leyden as an elder on March 14, 2026. The ordination was performed by pastor Michael Hanisko and retired associate pastor Chris Moen.

The Leyden family has been an integral part of the West Michigan congregation for the past 13 years. Ordained a deacon in 2022, Chris and his wife, Rebekah, have been dedicated servants to the congregation.

He has been hired to serve in the full-time ministry, and the Leydens will be relocating to the Atlanta, Georgia, area to assist Mark Winner. They will be dearly missed in West Michigan!

Ginny Neal

TRIBUTE



John Lusk Jr.

John Lusk Jr., an elder in the Dallas, Texas, congregation, died on Nov. 13, 2025. Born in Dallas on Jan. 13, 1950, John was raised with his brother, David, in Oak Cliff, Texas.

As a youth, John loved reading his favorite comics, collecting stamps and exploring new technologies of the time, like CB radios and computers. His favorite sport was tennis, and he loved playing with his friends. He also enjoyed football, rarely missing a Dallas Cowboys game on Sundays. He attended Dallas Baptist College and earned a bachelor's degree in 1971.

John made a career out of his curiosity with technology. He worked in information technology for several companies and for the city of Grand Prairie, Texas, where he worked until he retired in 2019.

At the age of 22, John began attending the Worldwide Church of God in Dallas with his father. He was incredibly shy and would often leave services immediately after the closing prayer, sitting in the car until his dad finished visiting. Other members encouraged John to join Spokesman Club, which he later said helped him overcome his shyness.

In fact, his wife, Gloria, recalls that when she first met John at services in Dallas in 1972, the trait that drew her to him was how personable he was with everybody! They married in 1974 and raised their family in Grand Prairie.

John and Gloria served God's people faithfully, and he was ordained an elder on Pentecost in 1993. He was always willing to fill speaking assignments when needed and kept everyone up-to-date on prayer requests. Gloria managed the congregation's cards of encouragement program, and both were always willing to drop everything to go anoint someone. They truly cared for and about their brothers and sisters in Christ.

In their later years, as John neared retirement, Gloria was diagnosed with cancer, battling that and other physical ailments. John continued working while tirelessly caring for her needs.

Shortly after he retired, John was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. As his physical and mental health deteriorated in the years that followed, Gloria cared for John, looking after him until he breathed his last breath. They both provided a beautiful example of selfless love for one another and for God's people.

John was predeceased by his parents, John Lusk Sr. and Connie Lusk. He is survived by his wife Gloria; his sons Brad (wife Laura) and Todd (wife Veneta) of Dallas; and his five grandchildren, Claire, Nathan, Alex, Katie and Zack. Pastor Andy Burnett officiated the graveside service in Savoy, Texas.

Todd Lusk and Andy Burnett

Graduating High School Seniors

WE NEED YOUR BIOS

Attention class of 2026! We would like to feature all of our high school graduates in the *July One Accord*. Please provide the following information—separated into the listed categories—for your bio (no more than 100 words), plus a quality, high-resolution photo by **June 1**.

1. Graduate's name.
2. Parents' or guardians' names.
3. Congregation and pastor's name.
4. High school accomplishments.
5. Hobbies/interests/church activities.
6. Plans after graduation.

Also include a phone number and email address we may use to contact you if need be. Please give your bio and photo (conforming to biblical standards of dress and hair length) to your congregation's reporter or pastor by June 1. Please keep all bios within a 100-word limit.

College Graduates

We'd also like to honor you! Please provide a bio—100-word maximum—plus a quality, high-resolution photo by **June 1**.

Thank you!