

THE JOURNAL OF THE 102ND
**INTERNATIONAL
ASSEMBLY**
OF THE
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY



INCLUDING THE
ASSEMBLY BUSINESS MINUTES

JULY 31–AUGUST 4, 2024





Church of God of Prophecy
JOURNAL

of the
102nd International Assembly
July 31–August 4, 2024

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Brian Sutton: North America

Clayton Endecott: Wider Europe and Middle East

*Benjamin Feliz: Mexico/Central America/
Spanish-speaking Caribbean*

Clayton Martin: Caribbean/Atlantic Ocean Islands

E. James Kolawole: Africa

Tim McCaleb: Asia/Australia/Oceania

Gabriel E. Vidal: South America

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102nd International Assembly Journal

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Assembly Task Force

102nd International Assembly

PRESIDING BISHOP Tim Coalter

ASSEMBLY TASK FORCE CHAIR Paul Holt

Planning & Operations
Budget & Finance
Site Selection
Task Force Oversight

ASSEMBLY LIAISON TO THE PRESIDING BISHOP Shaun McKinley

Programming
Production
Stage Operations
Assembly Business Procedures
IP Meeting Coordination

DIVISION ONE Todd Bagley

Liaison to the ATF
Chairman
On-site Coordination
Housing
Space Allocation
Registration
Parking & Transportation

DIVISION TWO Mike Luthle

Projection
Webcasting
Mobile App
General IT Needs
Assembly Website

DIVISION THREE Antonio Orna

Audio/Video
Lighting
Stage Setup
Decorating (General
Sessions)

DIVISION FOUR Mike Morgan

Ushers/Greeters
Security
Health & Emergency
Handicap Services

DIVISION FIVE Marsha Robinson

ATF Clerk
Clerks
Promotion & Social Media
Photography
Printed Program
Signage

DIVISION SIX Hillary Ojeda

Interpreters
Interpretation Setup
Translation

DIVISION SEVEN Gene Browning

White Wing
Bookstore
Ministry Booths
CD/DVD Duplication
& Sales
Decorating (Exhibit
Hall)

DIVISION EIGHT Mike Schalk

Exhibitors
Sponsorships
Move

*Host State/Region/
National Bishop
assists with volunteer
recruitment*

SECTION 1

PRE-ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES



102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY 2024
INTERNATIONAL PRESBYTERY MEETING
ROSEN SHINGLE CREEK, ORLANDO, FLORIDA
 JULY 28 - JULY 30, 2024

Sunday, July 28, 2024

The International Presbytery meeting for the 102nd International Assembly convened at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 28, 2024. Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter greeted the group. He invited the members of the presbytery to take their seats and asked for someone to come to the platform who spoke Portuguese, French, Korean, an African language, Arabic, Russian, and German. He asked that each person say “hello” in their language and then asked the remaining members of the presbytery to repeat the greeting. Bishop Coalter invited those who had come to the platform to return to their seats and asked everyone to greet three people in a language that was not their own.

Presiding Bishop Coalter stated, “Prayer is a core value of the Church of God of Prophecy (COGOP). If you are able, please kneel before the Lord. Nothing rises above what we are doing now praying. Commit every aspect of this Assembly to the Lord. Let’s lift our voices together. God hears every language.” The presbytery knelt and prayed.

9:22 a.m. All presbytery members read Ephesians 3:20-21 out loud in their own language: “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen” (NIV). Everyone sang “Hallelujah.”

The presiding bishop acknowledged the general presbyters were in the room. He asked each to stand one at a time and mention the names of bishops in their area who passed away since 2022 so that a moment of silence could be observed. Bishop Clayton Endecott of Wider Europe and the Middle East shared that all the leaders from his area are with us. Bishop Dr. Ben Feliz spoke of two losses: Bishop Santo Cerrato and Bishop Rey Martinez. Bishop James Kolawole mentioned Bishop Jombile of South Africa East. Bishop Dr. Clayton Martin said, “God has preserved all our leaders.” Bishop Dr. Tim McCaleb remembered Bishop Asalemo Kuka. Bishop Dr. Brian Sutton remembered Bishop Frank Smith. Bishop Dr. Gabriel Vidal said his bishops are “all alive.” Bishop Coalter asked that everyone stand and bow their heads in a sacred moment of silence.

Bishop Coalter asked if everyone was ready for some good news. He spoke on the benefits of hearing and sharing good news with Bishop Feliz translating.

When we receive good news, good hormones decrease blood pressure, improve heart health, and a general feeling of well-being helps your immune system. Good news can improve your sleep, reduce anxiety, and promote feeling better. Are you ready for some good news? Good news will improve your mood—calmer, more relaxed, more resilience, hope, and optimism. Good news improves cognitive function. Memory and decision making are enhanced. Are you ready? Most importantly spiritual benefits strengthen our faith and deepen our trust in God. Good news promotes inspiration and vigor. Bad news seems to be all we hear. The phone rings. You think, “What now?” Isn’t it good that we will receive good news in this room? It is our job to be the thermostat, not the thermometer. Plenty of bad news even among church people; sarcasm and negative talk is abundant. Change the temperature. You are the carriers. Good news is to be shared.

The general presbyter of Africa, Bishop Kolawole, came to the platform and invited the leadership of Africa and the Africa Finance Committee (AFC) to come to the stage. Bishop Kolawole shared marvelous statistics from Africa: they have increased from 1,479 churches to 1,800 churches; from 199,402 members to 247,429 members; from 791 ministers to 956 ministers; and from 29,679 saved to 51,747 saved.

10:14 a.m. The presiding bishop asked all African brothers to stand. There was applause for them.

Bishop Coalter emphasized the importance of leadership development, expressing a personal affinity for it. He mentioned a tendency to gravitate towards leadership literature, referencing Romans 12:6-8 (NIV), which highlights various gifts such as prophecy, service, teaching, encouragement, and giving. He pointed out that those who are called to lead should do so with diligence, noting that other translations emphasize zeal, passion, and seriousness. He articulated that leadership is a divine gift, and how one utilizes it is their offering to God. He posed a reflective question about how individuals are evolving as leaders.

According to the *Harvard Business Review*, organizations have recognized the necessity for leadership skills to adapt in order to thrive, acknowledging that the skills that facilitated initial success may not suffice for sustained success. Bishop Coalter asserted that stagnant skills would hinder progress, emphasizing the need for continuous growth and development in leadership roles without settling into complacency. He proposed dedicating one session of every IP meeting to leadership development, including insights from external experts.

He distributed a “Leadership Topic Options” form with categories such as cognition, leadership, mental wellness, personal growth, physical wellness,

SECTION 1 PRE-ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES

and professional social/interpersonal skills, asking participants to prioritize three topics. He instructed attendees to note their region at the top of the form, as staff could tailor training to regional needs.

Regarding the ordination process, Bishop Coalter shared that the general presbyters (GPs) had discussed the topic and sought input from the IP. He noted that a significant proportion of ordinations were occurring within North America, proposing that ordinations could also be conducted within countries when attendance at the Assembly was unfeasible. He described state and regional ordinations as more personal and meaningful, advocating for a planned and organized approach to local ordinations, potentially during conferences or gatherings.

He then opened the floor for comments on this proposed change, encouraging attendees to voice their opinions. Bishop Edward Payne from the Bahamas supported in-country ordinations, emphasizing the value of local connections during such ceremonies. Bishop Koissi Antoine expressed in French the importance of ordaining bishops in their own countries, citing visa challenges. Bishop Coalter noted that witnessing ordination is crucial to validation.

Bishop David Orozco from Bolivia agreed with the sentiment of recognizing bishops in their respective countries and suggested informing all bishops at the IA of this initiative. Bishop Coalter acknowledged the idea of ratifying bishops within their countries.

Bishop Scott Gillum inquired whether the presence of the general presbyter would be mandatory during ordinations, to which Bishop Coalter committed to consulting with GPs. He then called for a show of hands to gauge support for this change, which received an overwhelming consensus. Details on conducting ordinations will be provided, he assured.

Bishop Coalter discussed a restructuring of communications at the International Offices (IO), referencing Acts 2, which describes the sound that accompanied the apostles speaking in diverse languages. He emphasized the need for effective communication strategies that resonate across linguistic and cultural boundaries, explaining that the division of Global Communications would bring together various aspects of communication for a more cohesive approach. He showcased a flow chart to illustrate this structure, urging nations to prioritize excellence in communication.

Bishop Dr. Shaun McKinley was introduced as the new executive director of Global Communications. He shared his background, including his education and experience in ministry. He conveyed a vision of storytelling within the church, commemorating the legacy of Fred S. Fisher, Sr., a gifted storyteller. He highlighted the present thriving of the church and the significant contributions of individuals in various regions.

Bishop Coalter prompted attendees to recognize their own stories and contributions within the church, affirming the importance of sharing these narratives.

Joy Hensley, who recently completed her master's degree and serves as the English language training specialist for Children's Ministries, expressed her eagerness to engage with others and her commitment to developing leaders who can impact children.

Bishop Coalter emphasized the significance of reaching children with the message of Christ, sharing statistics about how many come to faith before the age of 12. He then provided an update on upcoming transitions within the organization, including the transitions of Bishop Kirk Rising and Dr. Cathy Payne in 2026, encouraging attendees to maximize their engagement with these leaders during their remaining time in their roles.

He highlighted the ongoing discussions about leadership transitions among GPs, recognizing the growth and maturity of the regions under their leadership. As he concluded this segment, he signaled a break for lunch, inviting attendees to return at 2:30 p.m.

At 2:30 p.m., Bishop Coalter welcomed everyone back, expressing gratitude for their punctuality. He encouraged participants to share their good news with the Lord and led a moment of worship.

Bishop McCaleb called upon the Asian bishops to stand and be recognized, celebrating their contributions to the church. He highlighted various success stories from regions such as Samoa, Fiji, the Philippines, Nepal, India, Korea, Pakistan, Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, and Indonesia, noting the resilience and growth of churches despite challenges.

Bishop Coalter reiterated the importance of support from the Assembly and acknowledged the commitment of those in the Caribbean region to church planting. He encouraged attendees to consider how they could contribute to the collective mission of the church.

As the session continued, significant updates were shared on the implementation of the *MDP* program across various regions, showcasing the training of leaders and the establishment of new churches.

Bishop Dr. Elias Rodriguez presented a visual update on the *MDP* program, detailing its expansion into numerous countries and the training of thousands of leaders.

Bishop Dr. Michael Hernandez communicated the progress of various academic programs aimed at equipping ministers globally, emphasizing accessibility and affordability in theological education.

Bishop Coalter called for attention to the ongoing stewardship initiatives, discussing the importance of responsible kingdom resource management and the need for joyful accountability.

The session concluded with celebratory remarks on the growth of the church, including the introduction of new national bishops and ministries making significant strides in their communities.

Monday, July 29, 2024

Bishop Coalter convened the IP meeting at 9:07 a.m. and encouraged everyone to share good news in every conversation.

Bishop Feliz led the hymn, “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” and everyone participated in singing.

Bishop Coalter: “Picture God extending his hand to fulfill your needs. Take a moment to ask him what you need right now.” The room engaged in prayer.

Bishop Vidal spoke of the danger of being isolated. He said the church should serve as a fellowship space and that certain aspects need transformation. He introduced Bishop David Ceballo, who spoke of the work in Argentina.

Bishop Vidal returned to the microphone to celebrate the salvation of individuals, the growth of the church, and the establishment of new congregations in South America. He extended his gratitude to the national bishops.

Bishop Sutton, North America general presbyter, came to share that their goal is to multiply by 2030, aiming to plant 500 new churches by that time.

Seven North America bishops shared good news from their regions.

Bishop Sutton returned to address the audience and said a booklet detailing the Multiply 2030 initiative is available.

Bishop Shaun McKinley announced a break.

Sister Cathy Payne said she had tickets available for the Mission Breakfast.

At 10:29, the Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee (BDP) Committee came to the stage.

Bishop Dr. Phil Pruitt: “We have good news to share. We serve you and this church. The committee has two new members, Sister Doreen Makaya and Sister Sophia Pringle.”

Bishop Elias Rodriguez read part of a statement: “We believe in the principle of ‘iron sharpening iron’ and reject any accusations of being ‘woke.’ We are indeed brothers and sisters in the Lord.”

Bishop Dr. Tim Harper clarified that the previous statement is not part of the report but a response to remarks made regarding the inclusion of

the name George Floyd in the 2022 BDP report. He said the majority of comments made after the 2022 Assembly focused on race relations. Some constituents requested a more detailed statement and a comprehensive study. He further said that the name George Floyd appears only once in the report.

Bishop Coalter called for the report to be read.

Bishop Pruitt referred to the preamble, stating that it is self-explanatory, and moved on to Section One and asked for questions.

Bishop Coalter reminded the IP that everyone had been asked to read the report.

Bishop Dr. Carswell Leonard inquired about the duration of the suspension of evaluations.

Bishop Harper responded that the suspension would not prohibit evaluations. Section One mentions a six-year timeframe, but a regional bishop can still conduct evaluations. There was more non-compliance than compliance, prompting the need for a suspension to avoid legal complications.

Comments were made for and against the suspension.

There was discussion concerning Section Two: Leadership Succession (p. 19).

Bishop Coalter called for a show of hands to indicate support for the evaluation process outlined in Section One. Several abstained. He then asked for a show of hands in favor of the entire Section Two document as written. Those in opposition raised their hands.

Bishop Pruitt presented five recommendations affirming that every church should observe the Lord's Supper quarterly.

Bishop Coalter called for questions but received none. He moved to the next topic: Race Relations. The only recommendation was that it be included in the *Ministry Policy Manual*.

Bishop Coalter was inclined to accept the sacrament issue, prompting a show of hands. He also called for a vote on the final section on Race Relations, noting that many abstained.

Bishop Harper clarified that the statements read are not part of the document. Bishop Coalter concluded that the committee is not required to amend the statement based on sentiments from the IP. The BDP will reconvene to discuss the *Governance Manual*.

The session was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

At 2:00 p.m., Bishop Coalter encouraged the IP to fill the room with positive stories. Everyone engaged in conversation.

Bishop Coalter called the Finance & Stewardship Committee (F&S) to the platform at 2:04, expressing gratitude for their willingness to engage with the IP. He encouraged applause as they approached.

Bishop Scott Gillum, chair, pointed out that there were six sections of the report, but only one requires Assembly action (Section 4). Sections 5 and 6 contain commendations, while Sections 1, 2, and 3 are for informational purposes only.

There was discussion on Section 1.

Sister Paulette Wilbanks read a narrative of Section 2, highlighting that a budget is essential. The last International Assembly recommended it but did not approve it. The 79th Assembly had already recommended it, and the 94th Assembly reaffirmed that previous decision. The Finance & Stewardship Committee reiterated that each national, regional, or supervisory office should submit a budget, referencing prior Assemblies.

There was discussion on Section 2, and Sister Wilbanks read more from the report.

Bishop Nathaniel Beneby pointed out that differing governmental requirements might contradict Assembly rulings, given our presence in 135 nations. The leadership in those countries must find a balance.

Bishop Peter Koyea from Guinea Conakry asked if this applies to the global Church. He noted that some areas in Africa lack budgeting knowledge and inquired how to approach this issue.

Bishop Gillum explained that leadership at the national or general presbytery level will face challenges in meeting every need. Therefore, local leadership must ensure that principles are applied contextually. It would be unrealistic to assume that the same approach fits all globally.

Section 3 is an informational report regarding the Assembly Expense Offering. Bishop Nathaniel Beneby summarized the section, stating that to assist churches in collecting the Assembly Expense Offering, the collection date has been changed from the third Sunday of January to May annually.

Bishop Gillum stated the current church planting investment policy does not require new churches to submit funds. The committee recommended maintaining this policy for a 12-month period for new churches. After 12 months, new churches must comply with all requirements set forth by the Present Financial System.

Bishop Coalter mentioned that the 10 percent would not go to the national, regional, or supervisory office and suggested that Bishop Daniel Felipe revisit this issue.

Bishop Felipe explained that implementing a rebate system poses challenges and may not be feasible.

Bishop Gillum confirmed that the original draft included this idea, but Bishop Felipe's feedback led to its modification.

Bishop Endecott invited the bishops from Europe to come to the stage. He expressed gratitude for their 17,000 members and 18 languages spoken across Church services. Several new churches have been established, including one in the Slovak Republic. Bishops shared updates.

3:40 p.m. Celebration Break

At 4:15 p.m., Bishop Coalter welcomed everyone back and thanked Bishop McKinley for organizing the celebration setup.

At 4:18 p.m., Bishop Pruitt, from the Biblical Doctrine & Polity Committee, presented a governance document for the International Presbytery.

Bishop Coalter reminded the IP that this document was utilized during the last selection of the presiding bishop. He invited questions or suggestions for streamlining the process.

There was discussion concerning the Committee's operational framework, emphasizing the absence of the Holy Spirit in the current selection process.

Bishop Elias Rodriguez stressed the importance of discerning the Holy Spirit's guidance, noting that the Committee's work is a collaboration with him [the Spirit].

Bishop Pruitt proceeded to detail the general presbyters' responsibilities on pages 16 through 19.

Bishop Coalter invited any questions.

There was one comment but no questions.

Bishop Coalter shared his commitment to the mission of reconciling the world to Christ, urging both committees to simplify their processes to avoid distractions.

Sister Payne interjected, recalling the chaotic nature of 2014 and expressing determination to improve the process.

Bishop Coalter acknowledged that female voices are welcomed and valued in these discussions.

Bishop Coalter summarized that the committee recognizes the need to focus on relevant questions and concerns. The BDP Committee made themselves available for those who could not voice their inquiries. He announced plans for official photos with spouses and a forthcoming luncheon in the Butler Ballroom.

Tuesday, July 30, 2024

Bishop Coalter welcomed the IP to the Tuesday morning session and quoted C.S. Lewis: “You are never too old to set another goal or to dream another dream.” He invited everyone to pray together.

Bishop Coalter asked Bishop Clayton Endecott, general presbyter of Wider Europe and the Middle East, to come to the platform. Bishop Endecott introduced Christian Fricke, national bishop of Germany and Hungary, who shared encouraging words about the strength of COGOP leadership. He expressed gratitude for the confidence our leaders instill in us, emphasizing the importance of collective growth and the transformative work of the Holy Spirit across the globe.

Bishop Coalter returned to the platform to remark, “We have received nourishing words today. Thanks be to God!” He also informed the IP that due to inflation, the cost to maintain the Assembly rose from \$1 million to \$1.3 million. Bishop Nathaniel Beneby came to the platform and spoke regarding COGOP financial strategies for financing the Assembly. Giving for the Assembly achieved debt freedom for the 2018 and 2020 Assemblies, and the aspiration is to continue that trend into 2024. The goal is to not only have the 2024 Assembly paid in full but also ensure that there are additional funds to be redirected to support church planting efforts globally.

Bishop Coalter gave instruction concerning seating during the upcoming ordination service. He provided details for Tuesday evening’s Parade of Nations rehearsal and encouraged participation. He also admonished the IP that integrity remains paramount in administrative responsibilities and that reported numbers must accurately reflect the ministries’ reach.

Bishop Scott Gillum presented amendments to the F&S report regarding funds from new churches, emphasizing the need for collaboration.

Bishop Shaun McKinley made an announcement giving instruction concerning portraits of international presbyters and companions to take place at the Butler Ballroom entrance. The International Presbytery Luncheon would be at noon in the Butler Ballroom. Afterward, the IP group photo would be taken in the Gatlin Ballroom.

Bishop Coalter dismissed the IP meeting with these words: “Let us continue our day with purpose and unity, reminding ourselves that we are the thermostat of change within our communities.”

SECTION 2

102ND INTERNATIONAL
ASSEMBLY BUSINESS MINUTES



ASSEMBLY JOURNAL

JULY 31 – AUGUST 1, 2024 • ORLANDO, FLORIDA
**ONE HUNDRED-SECOND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY
 OF THE CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY
 BUSINESS SESSION**

Wednesday, July 31, 2024

Wednesday Morning

The 102nd International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy opened July 31, 2024, in Orlando, Florida. June Gordon and the Assembly Worship Team began the morning session by leading the Assembly in a time of powerful worship. The opening song was a stirring rendition of “Days of Elijah.”

Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter (hereafter referred to as “the Moderator”) welcomed attendees, emphasizing the importance of the Assembly’s theme, “On Mission,” and the collective mission of the Church of God of Prophecy to reconcile the world to Christ. The Moderator officially opened the Assembly and invited the general presbyters to join him on the platform to pray in Spanish, African, German, and English.

Southeast Hispanic Regional Bishop Ebli de la Rosa addressed the Assembly. “We are on a mission. We will let the Holy Spirit guide us in every business session, every information session, every worship time, and every preaching encounter.”

Sister de la Rosa also greeted the Assembly. “We are the Southeast Hispanic Region. God has called us to plant, preach, and to bless!”

The Assembly Worship Team then led another time of spirited worship singing, “10,000 Armies,” “Fresh Wind,” and “Same God.”

North America General Presbyter Bishop Dr. Brian Sutton gave the opening challenge. He highlighted the necessity of discernment in decision-making, urging unity in following the Holy Spirit’s guidance.

The Moderator introduced business session protocols, emphasizing the importance of structure and consensus. An instructional video concerning the process was played, and the Moderator further clarified the procedures to the Assembly delegates.

Financial reports were read. Executive Director of Finance and Administration Bishop Daniel Felipe presented the Finance Director’s Report and received unanimous support. The Audit Report was presented by Auditor Dale Houser. The Financial Position Report was presented by Nevine Hensley, followed by discussions and questions. The reports were accepted and passed.

A motion to accept the financial reports achieved unanimous approval (836 votes in favor; 0 opposed).

The Corporate Board Report was read, and it was noted that there had been a sale price increase for the Tomlinson College property. Opportunity was given to ask questions, and none were asked.

Bishop Scott Gillum, chair of the Finance and Stewardship Committee, greeted the Assembly. Members of the Committee read synopses of the sections of the report which discussed the Decline Compensation Form, budgets, the Assembly Expense Offering, and church planting initiatives. To see the report in its entirety, visit the COGOP website at cogop.org.

At 11:57 a.m., the Moderator announced the end of the session, encouraging unity and focus on the Assembly's mission.

Wednesday Afternoon

Business resumed at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday afternoon. The Moderator (Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter) opened the session by reminding everyone that the instructional video concerning business procedures would be played before each business session. He prayed for the afternoon's business.

Section 4 of the Finance and Stewardship Report – the only section requiring action – was discussed. After recommendations from the Assembly, the section was amended to read:

In consultation with pastors, the Presiding Bishop, General Presbyters, International Presbytery, and the Executive Director of Finance and Administration, we suggest the following amendment to Section 4:

Newly established local churches will continue to report and send funds to their respective national/regional/state (N/R/S) office and the International Offices as outlined by the current financial system. After 12 months of faithful participation of the newly organized church in the Present Financial System, the International Offices and the N/R/S office will issue an investment back to the local church, equivalent to 100% of the funds received from the newly established church, to support the ongoing work of the new church effective January 1, 2025.

A motion to accept the report as read was made and seconded.

After discussion from the floor and comments by the Committee, the Moderator asked for expressions (approve, disapprove, abstain). The section passed with overwhelming consensus. This concluded business for the Finance and Stewardship Committee.

The Moderator asked the Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee (BDP) to come to the platform. There were opening comments by BDP Committee Chair Bishop Dr. Phil Pruitt who welcomed two new members to the committee: Doreen Makaya and Sophia Pringle. He introduced the remaining members and asked Dr. Sonia Martin to come to the platform. Dr. Martin served the BDP from 2016 to 2022 as a committee member. Bishop Pruitt gave tribute to her service, and Bishop Dr. Tim Harper presented a plaque to Dr. Martin.

Dr. Harper read highlights from “Section One: Temporary Suspension of Evaluation Process of Pastors and National/Regional/State Bishops for Study Purposes.” The Moderator called for a motion, received the motion, and a second. The Moderator opened the floor for comments. After comments were made, Section 1 passed by overwhelming consensus.

Dr. Harper read highlights of “Section Two: Leadership Succession.” The Moderator called for a motion. A motion was made and seconded. The Moderator opened the floor for questions and discussion on “Phase One” of Term Limits, specifically “Recommendation of Leadership Succession for the Office of the Presiding Bishop.” After a time of questions and discussion, the Moderator asked for expressions. The expressions were tallied, and the results for this recommendation neither met 75 percent consensus nor came within five percent to ask for submissions. The section did not pass.

The next subsection of Section Two, “Recommendation of Leadership Succession for the Office of General Presbyter,” was brought to the floor. A motion and a second were made. The Moderator called for questions and discussion from the Assembly. After discussion, the motion did not pass.

As the session drew to a close, the Moderator expressed gratitude for the day’s fruitful discussions and anticipated the upcoming Parade of Nations that evening. The Moderator then concluded the business session.

Thursday, August 1, 2024

Thursday Morning

After a time of prayer led by Asia, Australia, and Oceania General Presbyter Bishop Dr. Tim McCaleb and bishops from his area, the Moderator (Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter) commended the delegates for the good spirit they displayed during the previous day’s business of this Assembly. He said, “It is new to extend business into Thursday morning. One of our primary purposes of the Assembly from the beginning was to conduct business. We do not want to feel rushed but want to have appropriate time allotted.” The Moderator called the Assembly to order for “the business that should properly come before it.” He asked the BDP Committee to come to the platform.

Bishop Dr. Phil Pruitt, chair of the BDP Committee, asked the secretary of the Committee, Bishop Dr. Tim Harper, to read a statement concerning Section Two of their report that had been discussed the previous afternoon. Dr. Harper read:

We, the members of the Biblical Doctrine and Polity (BDP) Committee, wish to commend our presiding bishop on his excellence in moderating the business of the 102nd International Assembly. Accordingly, we commend the constituents of this Assembly who have dialogued with us, to this point, during the business session, for your decorum and spiritual maturity. We also express our respect to this Assembly in your decision regarding Leadership Succession as it relates to the office of presiding bishop and general presbyters. We accept your decision. The BDP exists to serve the Assembly.

Given the decision of this Assembly and in the spirit of properly stewarding our remaining time allotted for business in the 102nd Assembly, we voluntarily choose to suspend the balance of Section Two of the “Leadership Succession” document. We do have a significant conviction that this Church needs to address a better exit strategy for leaders who have given their lives to the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the expansion of this Church. Consequently, the BDP suspends for the 102nd Assembly the recommendations on leadership succession as it relates to the Standing Assembly Committees and Exit Strategy. We will seek to dialog among the members of the committee, with the presiding bishop and general presbyters, and invite dialogue from the constituents of this Church as we continue to study leadership succession for Assembly committees and a better exit strategy.

The full report can be read in the “Business Acts” document at cogop.org.

Bishop Pruitt read the highlights of “Section Three: Studies and Recommendations on the Sacraments (Ordinances); The Lord’s Supper: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives.” There was discussion and the section passed.

Bishop Darrel Clark read portions of “Section Four: Race, Relations, and Reconciliation,” and it was the recommendation of the Committee that the full statement be published in the *Ministry Policy Manual*. The Moderator called for discussion and then expressions. The first vote did not reach consensus, and the Moderator asked for submissions. He called for a second round of expressions, and the motion passed.

The Moderator closed Assembly business at 10:45 a.m.

SECTION 3

102ND INTERNATIONAL
ASSEMBLY JOURNAL



102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY JOURNAL

Wednesday, July 31, 2024

Wednesday Evening

The Wednesday evening service was moderated by the general presbyter of Wider Europe and the Middle East, Bishop Clayton Endecott. Prior to the start of the evening's festivities, a rousing concert by the world-famous Bahama Brass Band was offered. As service began, there was a time of celebration for the 90th anniversary of the All-Nations Flag. Each attendee was given a small All-Nations Flag and prompted to wave it during the Parade of Nations and other times of celebration.

A video played scenes from our history and spoke of the solemn responsibility this generation has to lay down a path for others to follow. When the video concluded, the Parade of Nations flags entered the Assembly Hall in a joyous, celebratory procession. The Assembly Worship Team sang, "All of the Nations of the World Sing," in several languages.

Cheers went up from the congregation as each nation's flag entered the Hall. At the conclusion of the Parade of Nations, Dr. Cathy Payne greeted the Assembly and signaled for the Church of God of Prophecy flag bearer to go up the aisle to meet the bearer of the Slavic Republic flag. The congregation celebrated with shouts of joy as this took place. It signified that the Church of God of Prophecy had welcomed the Slavic Republic as its newest member nation.

The Worship Team sang, and Bishop Llewelyn Graham came to boost the Assembly offering. The Assembly co-host, Florida State Bishop Scott Gillum, welcomed the Assembly to Florida and prayed for the offering. Special music was presented by the Florida Sunshine Band.

Bishop Endecott came to the platform and acknowledged special guest Stephen Strang, founder of Charisma Media. He introduced the evening's speaker, South America General Presbyter Bishop Dr. Gabriel Vidal. The Assembly Worship Team, accompanied by the United Kingdom Mass Choir, led the congregation in a time of worship with songs of victory and praise.

Bishop Vidal came and preached a sermon titled, "God's Mission and the Challenges of the Contemporary Church." He said, "All missionary activity inside and outside the church is led by God himself. He is the one who empowers the mission, and this makes the mission indestructible and unstoppable." An altar service with a powerful time of prayer followed the sermon.

Thursday, August 1, 2024

Thursday Morning

After the final business session concluded Thursday morning, Bishop Tim Coalter honored COGOP deceased ministers. He said, “Today we honor those who have made it home. We celebrate their homecoming and grieve the loss of them in our fellowship. For us today, we express our love and appreciation for those who have been giants in the Church. Some served in remote locations, had small congregations; but they were giants in the Faith.” This was followed by a moment of silence.

The presiding bishop, general presbyters, as well as national/regional/state bishops performed the ordination of new bishops. Dr. Clayton Martin gave the challenge to the newly appointed bishops.

Thursday Afternoon

Thursday afternoon breakout sessions were opportunities for impartation, improvement, and inspiration. There were 32 breakout sessions offered, and 811 Assembly delegates attended.

Thursday Evening

Thursday evening brought another joyful concert by the Bahama Brass Band. Leadership of the Band discussed the launch of their 100th Anniversary celebration at this Assembly. Tokens of the celebration were made available to the Assembly attendees and could be picked up in the designated area of the hallway outside the Assembly Hall.

North America General Presbyter Bishop Dr. Brian Sutton moderated this service. He introduced eight fraternal guests in attendance including Presiding Bishop Emeritus Bishop Sam Clements and his wife, Linda. Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter introduced the general overseer of the Church of God, Bishop Dr. Gary Lewis, and invited him to greet the Assembly. Bishop Lewis quoted a familiar phrase from the 1906 Assembly Minutes, “Strong men wept and said they were not only willing but anxious to go” (to the harvest field). He noted that this year’s Church of God Assembly theme was “Harvest Now.”

Reverend Mike Luithle discussed “The 1500” giving initiative for Assembly Expense and gave instructions for various ways to give. He said that God has placed the ability to give into our hands, and we must decide what we are going to do to give back into the work. He challenged the attendees to give what will reconcile this world to Christ. A young lady, Estefania Felipe, prayed for the offering.

The Bahamas Church of God of Prophecy National Children's Choir blessed everyone with five songs under the direction of Minister Laverne Curtis.

Bishop Sutton read Psalm 150. As he read verse 6, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord," the congregation began worshipping exuberantly. He asked the congregation to stand and continue praising the Lord as the Worship Team came to the platform. A powerful spirit of praise and rejoicing was evident in the congregation. Bishop Sutton introduced the evening speaker, Pastor Jentezen Franklin, who preached an exhilarating message entitled, "Better Is Coming."

Friday, August 2, 2024

Friday Morning

General Presbyter of Wider Europe and the Middle East Bishop Clayton Endecott directed morning prayer. He chose national bishops from his area to offer specific prayers: Germany National Bishop Christian Fricke, United Kingdom and Netherlands National Bishop Tedroy Powell, Belarus and Ukraine National Bishop Gena Kernazhytski, Russia National Bishop [REDACTED] Bulgaria National Bishop Darin Ivanov, and France National Bishop Michael Wilson. Bishop Endecott called the Assembly to prayer for the presiding bishop and his family.

The Assembly Worship Team sang, and Friday's moderator, Bishop Dr. Ben Feliz, introduced Leadership Development and Discipleship Ministries (LDD) Executive Director Jeffery Davis, who introduced his ministry directors: Bishop Dr. Michael Hernandez, Bishop Dr. Shaun McKinley, Bishop Kirk Rising, and Bishop Dr. Elias Rodriguez.

Spirit and Life Seminary gave a presentation, as did Youth and Children's Ministries. Following this was a panel discussion on discipleship with Bishop Daryl Clark, Douglas Spainhower, Jonathan Olavarria, and Alejandra Guajardo-Hodge.

In acknowledgement of five decades of faithful service to the Church of God of Prophecy, Western Theological Seminary awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree to Bishop Adrian Varlack, Sr.

Heartland America (Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma) Regional Bishop Gary Smith preached a timely message entitled, "Leadership Alignment." Dr. John Wagenveld from Multiplication Network preached a sermon entitled "Being on Mission Through the Power of the Holy Spirit."

Friday Afternoon

Friday afternoon was the festive and exhilarating phenomenon known as Mission Encounter.

Friday Evening

Friday evening began with a third marvelous concert by the world-famous Bahama Brass Band. A 100-Year Celebration of the *White Wing Messenger* began with a video on the history of A. J. Tomlinson's vision to take the Pentecostal message around the world. Bishop Coalter also called attention to the present *Messenger* staff and their work to make the significant transition to digital format a success: Marsha Robinson, Sixto Ramirez, Charlie Scruggs, and Katherine Osborn. He asked that the congregation show their appreciation with a round of applause. Bishop Coalter also spent time talking about giving for the Assembly.

Bishop Dr. Franklin Ferguson greeted all the Assembly delegates and encouraged everyone to open their hearts and give. He said, "We can leave here debt free. Our time, our talents, our treasures all belong to God. Giving reflects the attitude of the heart and our respect to the One to whom we give." Elias Lynn, eight years old, prayed for the offering.

The Assembly Mass Choir sang three songs. Bishop McCaleb introduced the evening speaker, Reverend Gia Roberts. The Worship Team sang, after which Reverend Roberts came to the podium to preach, "On Mission to Serve."

Saturday, August 3, 2024**Saturday Morning**

Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands General Presbyter Bishop Dr. Clayton Martin led Saturday morning prayer. Bishop Martin introduced Bishop Dr. Winston Leith who read Scripture and welcomed everyone on behalf of the nation of Jamaica. Bishop Leith introduced Bishop Dr. Junior Headlam, national assistant to the national bishop of Jamaica, who led in prayer with the Assembly Worship Team singing intermittently.

Bishop Coalter introduced the United Kingdom Mass Choir who sang three songs followed by the Assembly Worship Team. Bishop Coalter delivered his Biennial Address.

BIENNIAL ADDRESS

Address Introduction

In 2022, the International Assembly marked the launch of a fresh vision for our global Church: Reconciling the World to Christ Through the Power of the Holy Spirit. While traveling the globe these past two years, I have been pleased to see this vision lifted up in nations all around the world. The vision of reconciliation is getting traction, it is gaining momentum, and it is aligning our ministry efforts with the heart of God who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

In planning for this Assembly, the Inspirational Leadership Team felt led by the Spirit to maintain our focus on this vision, under the theme: On Mission . . . Reconciling the World to Christ.

What does it mean to be “On Mission”? It comes from an old Latin term *missio Dei*, meaning, “the mission of God” or the “sending of God.” Jesus said to his disciples in **John 20:21–22 (ESV)**, **“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.’ And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”**

The church has been commissioned and empowered to continue his same mission, with his same authority, in his same power—reconciling people to Christ around the world.

We are a church “on mission,” yet we are perhaps more familiar with the word *missions*, which has often been presented as the work of a few. Perhaps you have heard it said, “Not everyone can go, but everyone can give.” This concept of missions is restricted to just two options, going and giving. Both are important and are still vital to the church’s efforts to carry the gospel into all of the world.

However, to be “On Mission” is something much different. Henry Blackaby, in his book *On Mission with God*, makes this distinction [and I quote]: “God isn’t interested in just giving Christians a missions experience; He is interested in Christians being on mission with Him. The distinction is more than subtle. It is earth-shattering! Fully comprehended, this concept has the potential to radically alter and revitalize the church today.”

Being “On Mission” always begins with the question, what is God doing in the world? In John 5, when the Jews sought to kill Jesus after he healed a blind man on the Sabbath day, his only answer to them was, **“My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”** He explained further, saying, **“The Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does” (John 5:19 NIV).**

This is what it means to be “On Mission”: to discern what the Father is doing all around the world—in your country, your city, your neighborhood, and in your own family—then joining him in doing it. This is much different than chiseling out time in your busy schedule to go on a brief missionary journey or giving a donation to missions as the offering plate passes you on a Sunday morning. It is about functioning as the body of Christ—walking where he would walk, touching those he would touch, speaking what he would say, doing those things he would do, forgiving, serving, loving, showing compassion, extending grace, reconciling the world back to the Father. Mission is not something to step into and out of. It is something to be lived every moment of every day.

The Church of God of Prophecy is On Mission—Reconciling the World to Christ.

Section I: Call To Repentance

Romans 2:4 (KJV), “. . . the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.”

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Holy Spirit’s “Call to Repentance” in the 1984 International Assembly. This call came during a business session as the Questions and Subjects Committee (now the Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee) was sharing their report with the Assembly. Do not overlook the fact that there was a strong spiritual dynamic in the business session. I sensed that this year in our business as well.

Assembly business consists primarily of committee reports, discussion, and casting of expressions; yet above all, we are to be a listening and discerning body—listening for the voice of God and discerning the will of God together. To each of the seven churches in Revelation, there was a consistent message: “He that has an ear, **let him hear** what the Spirit is saying to the churches.”

The Holy Spirit spoke to the Church during the 1984 Assembly, calling us as a collective body to repentance. After reading a passage from Joel 2:15–17, the committee said,

. . . [We know] of no greater need to bring [to] this Assembly’s attention than the need for repentance—the need to fall on our faces before God, confessing that we have drifted in many ways from a vital relationship with the Holy Ghost, confessing a self-centeredness lacking in deep compassion for a world of people who are living now under the judgment of God to eternal damnation, rededicating ourselves to being the Church of God of the Bible. God’s message to the Church in this Assembly has been a call to repent, and we must not ignore His voice. We cannot afford to continue the pursuit of our mission without convincing evidence of His presence

and approval. There is no acceptable substitute for repentance when that is what God is calling us to do.

The report continued,

With the moderator's permission, we suggest that this portion of our report be accepted, not by a motion and a second to the motion, but by those present in this Assembly falling down before the Lord, thus setting the pace for a Church-wide repentance. . . .

The Church was called

- 1. to confess that we have drifted in many ways from a vital relationship with the Holy Ghost, and**
- 2. to confess a self-centeredness lacking in deep compassion for a world of people who are living now under the judgment of God to eternal damnation.**

I was in that Assembly and experienced the heavy conviction that fell upon all of us. God meant business. We meant business. Strong men and women fell to their knees and wept tears of repentance as we collectively obeyed the call of God.

The psalmist declared, **“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise” (Psalm 51:17).**

The Church continued to ride this wave of repentance throughout the next decade, at which time General Overseer Billy Murray said to the 1994 Assembly, “It is now time for God’s church to **turn to the harvest**, to turn to the harvesting of these souls who are going to be lost forever unless somebody reaches them. There is hope to be offered to them; it’s a glorious hope.”

The Church was ready to make this turn. We had repented of a self-centeredness lacking in deep compassion for a world of people who were without a Savior and were now ready to “Turn to the Harvest.”

While reflecting on the 40th anniversary of the 1984 “Call to Repentance” and giving thought to this Assembly, I was drawn to one particular statement in the committee’s report that said, “We cannot afford to continue the pursuit of **our mission** without convincing evidence of His presence and approval.”

I was apprehended with those words. Does the Church today have convincing evidence of God’s presence and approval? Forty years have passed since that memorable call to repentance. We would do well to pause and assess the state of the Church once again. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that **“we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away” (Hebrews 2:1 NIV)**. It is all too easy to drift away from a vital relationship with the Holy Ghost and from our mission.

Suppose you are on a mission to prepare a delicious meal for your friends that are coming to your home for dinner. When you get into the kitchen to begin preparation, you happen to open the junk drawer next to the refrigerator (we all have one), and suddenly there is this urgent compulsion to clean it out before getting started with the cooking. Then while you are going through your catalogue of recipes for the dish you are planning to prepare, another tasty treat grabs your attention. You don't have all the ingredients for the new recipe, so you decide to make a quick run to the grocery store. On the way there, it occurs to you that you are riding in a filthy car that has not been washed for a month, so you decide to make a quick turn into the carwash. Then it is on to the grocery store. You hurry in to get the few items that are needed, and you head home. And while heading home, you pass the local florist, and you remember that you need a centerpiece for the table that night. So, you do a quick U-turn to pick up some fresh flowers. When you finally make it back to the house, you look at the clock only to realize that there is no longer enough time to prepare the dinner before your guests arrive. At this point, you are left with no other option but to pick up the phone and order carryout.

The junk drawer had accumulated a lot of unnecessary clutter, so it needed to be reorganized. Trying out a new recipe was a great idea. The car really was dirty and needed a good cleaning both inside and out. Grocery shopping was one of those necessary evils, and the thought of fresh flowers on the table was sure to be a nice touch. There is just one problem—the mission was never accomplished. Churches, there are a lot of things, good things, that will distract our attention—things that are good by themselves, but we must be careful that we don't busy ourselves doing all of those good things that we fail to do the mission of God that he has called us to.

As the church, we must confess our tendency to drift. C.S. Lewis said, **“There exists in every church something that sooner or later works against the very purpose for which it came into existence.”** We are prone to drift.

In aviation there is something known as the “1 in 60 rule” which states that for every one degree of error when you are traveling 60 miles, you will be off course one mile. So, if a flight is traveling 600 miles, and you are off by just one degree, it means you would miss your landing by 10 miles. That means the lake you thought you were going to fly over could become a mountain. This happened in 1979. A sightseeing flight crashed into a mountain in Antarctica, killing all 279 people on board because the pilot had drifted just 2 degrees from his flight plan.

This “1 in 60 rule” is not just a rule of navigation. It is a wake-up call to the Church of God. Even the slightest drift from our mission can

have catastrophic consequences. It is critical that we regularly assess our alignment and make the necessary corrections as needed. A lot of drifting can happen in 40 years.

Ministers, have you drifted from **your calling**? Is the call of God that was once without repentance now optional?

Have we drifted from the **passion** that once was like fire shut up in our bones? It was the wise man Solomon who said, **“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might” (Ecclesiastes 9:10)**. Nelson Mandela said, **“There is no passion to be found playing small, in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.”** We will accomplish more with passion than we will with position. We will accomplish more with passion than we will with pension.

At the International Offices, I will hire passion over education and talent every day of the week. Do not drift into a passionless pursuit of ministry. Someone once said, **“A different world cannot be built by indifferent people,”** so strike the match of Holy Spirit, get a fresh anointing, rekindle the fire of the mission of God, and be consumed with passion. I am concerned about that in this Church. Too often I see passionless expressions of ministry. Oh, God, restore the passion! Holy Ghost, ignite it in us. This mission will not be accomplished unless we are passionate about the mission.

Have we drifted from our **first love**? The Spirit commended the church at Ephesus for their hard work and their refusal to quit. The church was acknowledged for their stand against evil and weeding out apostolic pretenders. They were recognized for their persistence and their courage under fire. They never grew weary. Perhaps the church of Ephesus would have been highlighted in the Assembly as the leading church in this movement. However, in spite of all the good, the Spirit called them out for drifting, saying, **“Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love” (Revelation 2:4 KJV)**. Are you still head over heels in love with Jesus?

Have we drifted from the **pursuit of holiness**? You know, in many of our churches, it is all about worship; but let me tell you, worship is more than a song. We have been called by Scripture to **“worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!” (1 Chronicles 16:29)**. Pentecostals love to shout and rejoice, but don’t forget that he is the “Holy” Spirit. Paul identifies him in **Romans 1:4** as the **“Spirit of Holiness.”**

Scripture even makes the correlation between our holiness and our faithfulness, saying, **“For in their faithfulness they sanctified themselves in holiness” (2 Chronicles 31:18 NKJV)**. The writer of Hebrews admonishes us to be **“partakers of His holiness” (12:10)**, and to **“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the**

Lord” (12:14). I believe that this is more than seeing the Lord in the sweet by and by. Don’t you want to see him in your church when you return home? Don’t you want to see him in the remainder of this Assembly? Don’t you want to see him in the journey of your life? Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. Oh, that it might be said of this Church, **“Holiness adorns Your house, O Lord, forever” (Psalm 93:5).**

We cannot afford to continue the pursuit of our mission without convincing evidence of his presence and approval. To drift even one degree from being on mission will have eternal consequences for souls in need of a Savior.

So, let me encourage all of us, before this Assembly comes to a close, find a place to kneel again as we did 40 years ago and confess our tendency to drift, and to yield ourselves once again to the work of the Holy Spirit to see that we are in alignment with him and with his divine mission.

Section II: Communications

A. Division of Global Communications

Acts 2:5–8, 11 (NKJV):

And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? . . . [We] hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.”

This passage tells of a spiritual phenomenon. After witnessing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the question was asked, “Are not all these who speak Galileans?” The Galilean dialect was a form of Jewish Aramaic. The 120 in the upper room were not known to be multilingual; yet, when the Holy Spirit sat upon each of them, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. This utterance given by the Spirit was heard by devout men, from every nation under heaven, who heard **in their own language** the wonderful works of God.

This particular phenomenon was never replicated in this fashion again in any other New Testament passage. In fact, in his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul said, **“For he that speak[s] in an unknown tongue speak[s] not unto men, but unto God: for no man understand[s] him; howbeit in the spirit he speak[s] mysteries” (1 Corinthians 14:2 KJV).** Now

this is not to diminish the gift of tongues, for Paul continued in this same passage saying, **“I thank my God, I speak in tongues more than all of you” (1 Corinthians 14:18 MEV).**

Perhaps the most significant takeaway from that first outpouring was not only the **miracle of speaking**, but it was the **miracle of hearing**, as every man heard in their own language the wonderful works of God.

As a Spirit-empowered movement, I rejoice when the rushing mighty wind ushers in the manifestation of speaking in an unknown tongue, but greater still is the miracle of hearing when we effectively communicate the wonderful works of God in such a way that is heard and understood both culturally and linguistically in every nation around the world.

Our forefathers and mothers were driven to utilize every tool available to communicate the gospel and advance the mission of God. They fully embraced the commission of our Lord to share the good news of the gospel in all the world. To accomplish this mission, they embraced the most current mediums of communication in their era newsprint, door-to-door tract distribution, they even dropped tracts from the air. We had something called the White Angel Fleet, our own fleet of airplanes and pilots, and they would fly across the country dropping tracts. (Today, we would be fined for littering.) They produced magazines, film, radio, and television programs all were “cutting edge” methods used throughout our history.

More recently, the way in which we communicate has continued to evolve and reshape how we connect, how we interact and share information with one another. From the creation of the Internet in the 1990s to the more recent explosion of social media platforms, we are living in an interconnected world.

Those forefathers of our movement who built studios, contracted satellites, and operated presses the size of small houses could never have imagined the limitless possibilities that you and I have to connect with people around the world using the devices we carry in our pockets.

In a short period of time, churches have adopted the use of various tools and platforms to engage with their local congregations and communities, to create interactive worship experiences, and extend their reach beyond their physical buildings. Now we are doing livestreams, online giving, blogs, podcasts, webinars, and a myriad of church apps are all part of our culture.

Our young people are fed a steady stream of digital communication. They hear it, understand it, are influenced by it, and speak the digital language fluently.

To be on mission, reconciling this generation to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, we must embrace the passion our movement once had to use every available means to communicate the message of the gospel so that everyone can

hear it in their own language and in the context of their own culture.

Since entering this office, I have been considering how best to respond to this challenge. After much dialog and prayer, I believe now it is time to expand our communication efforts so that we can be better equipped to utilize every available means of communication and provide resources and training to all levels of leadership on how best to navigate these opportunities.

Communication is central to the work and ministry of the church and requires Spirit-empowered, strategic thinking and thoughtful organization. Therefore, following this Assembly, the various communication entities of the International Offices will be restructured. As we unite our Editorial and Art Departments, World Language, Information Technology, Media Services, Web Design, and Social Media Platforms under one leadership umbrella, this will provide the environment for greater collaboration, cohesion, strategic planning, and accountability.

This ministry expansion at the International Offices will serve our global church body and will require a significant step of faith, but I'm confident that if we lead with vision, God will meet vision with his provision.

The decades ahead promise to be some of the most exciting in the history of the world. [I do believe "better" is coming.] Our vision for this unique day should be filled with anticipation for the future. The division of Global Communications will help us become fluent in the languages of today and tomorrow so that every man, woman, boy, and girl will hear in their own language, as it was in Acts 2, the wonderful works of God.

B. *White Wing Messenger*

More than 100 years ago, a visionary saw the future. He envisioned a church built on Jesus, the Bible, and God's people full of the Holy Spirit doing the work of the kingdom. A. J. Tomlinson saw the young church moving triumphantly toward a day when multitudes around the world would come to Jesus. One way he communicated this vision was to write it. Through the medium of books, journals, newspapers, and magazines, he showed that he believed the scriptural instruction to **write the vision and make it plain, so they may run with it who read it (Habakkuk 2:2).**

In these latter days, God has used the diligent work of his people to expand the COGOP to more than 130 nations. With deep regret, many in these nations [around the world] have not been afforded access to our official Church publication, the *White Wing Messenger*, due to governmental restrictions, prohibitive postal costs, the challenges of translation, and economic hardship. As the Scripture says, **"Brethren, these things ought not to be!"** Our brother in Cuba, our sister in Venezuela, our congregations in Pakistan, our

pastor in Indonesia, the leader in the mountains of Guatemala or in the distant land of Africa all deserve equal connection opportunities along with the rest of the Church.

This was recently made possible as our official Church publication transitioned from print to digital.

The *White Wing Messenger* is now offered at no cost to everyone, everywhere. You say, how can this be? Because there are more than 10 billion digital devices all around the world. We have stepped into the future by producing a high-quality, informative, interactive digital publication.

We all know that change can be a bit unsettling. In 1954, general overseer at that time, Bishop M. A. Tomlinson announced a new look for the *White Wing Messenger*, saying, **“Our subscribers may not recognize the first issue of the new year. . . . Those who have been subscribers for years may miss the paper in the old style and will probably feel a little lost without it for a while, but when we get accustomed to the new style, I believe we will like it.”** He described this change in style as **“the *White Wing* in its new dress.”**

Once again, the *White Wing Messenger* is putting on a new dress. The *Messenger* which was, for the most part, limited to English, Spanish, and French in the printed format had fewer than 4,000 subscribers, which is approximately one half of one percent of our membership. By contrast, in the last year and a half, the digital magazine has been accessed more than 200,000 times in multiple languages, and we’re just getting started.

When I was a kid, Etch A Sketch was “the thing.” It was first sold in the United States in 1960, the year I was born. Etch A Sketch was a plastic rectangle with a translucent screen in the middle and two knobs below the screen—one for horizontal and one for vertical—which controlled the direction of an uninterrupted line that appeared on the screen; this was called “drawing.” Then you could erase it by simply shaking the device.

The Etch A Sketch was big in my day, but we no longer live in an Etch-A-Sketch world. Kids now speak a different language. It is all about technology. Again, one of the great takeaways of the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost is that every man heard them speak **in his own language.**

If this change can help us communicate the wonderful works of God to our children and our grandchildren, I am all in!

The digital *White Wing Messenger* can be printed anywhere in the world. If some of you want something to hold—individuals, local churches, even states, regions, or nations—you are welcome to print it at no cost. For those who

want a slick magazine such as we have had, it is still available through a third party, at a little higher price.

Did I say that the magazine is now FREE; NO MORE PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS? For those of you who are interested in good stewardship, the *White Wing Messenger* had been operating at a loss in excess of \$160,000 annually, so this move to a digital platform will result in a savings of approximately \$1.6 million over the next ten years.

The future of our Church magazine has never looked brighter. This “new dress,” as M. A. Tomlinson described it, is looking good and will position the magazine to continue for another 100 years, should the Lord tarry.

C. World Language

Imagine waking up in a land that doesn’t speak your language. You talk, but no one understands. You listen but have no idea what is being said. You pick up a book, magazine, or newspaper but cannot read it.

There are approximately 7,000 languages spoken in the world. Most of us speak one or maybe two. Within the Church of God of Prophecy, approximately 138 languages are spoken in our local churches all around the world 138 yet we only translate in primarily five languages and roughly a little more than 12 languages.

Bishop Endecott, our general presbyter for Wider Europe and the Middle East, has noted that the Church has been translating into Spanish for several decades. The *Minister’s Development Program (MDP)*, statement of faith, lesson material from our Center for Biblical Leadership (CBL), departmental material, the *White Wing Messenger* almost everything that has been produced in English has been translated into Spanish. As a result, our membership in South and Central America is deeply grounded in the Church and is flourishing. Bishop Endecott makes a good argument that nations which speak languages other than Spanish may not be as grounded in Church doctrine and polity because our significant documents have not been as readily available in their languages.

Perhaps those of us who speak English or Spanish have not given this much thought because it does not affect us personally. But we are not exclusively an English or a Spanish church. We are a global body. Our Lord commissioned us to go into all the world a world in which many cannot speak, talk, or understand our dominant languages.

Yes, we have a wonderful team of translators at the International Offices led by Hillary Ojeda, but as I look at the limited size of this department compared to the great task of sharing the wonderful works of God in the

languages of the world, I find myself asking the same question that Andrew and Peter posed to Jesus when more than 5,000 hungry people were waiting to be fed. They assessed their meager means of five barley loaves and two small fish and said, “But what are these among so many?” (John 6:9 ASV).

As we consider the enormous challenge of speaking the languages of the world, the high cost of translation is undeniable, and it has always been costly.

Let me take you again back to the 1984 Assembly regarding World Literature Outreach. In the *Assembly Minutes* (page 82) of the 1984 Assembly, it said that

The General Assembly of 1980 set a goal to raise one million dollars for World [Language] Literature Outreach to mature in five years. [They said in 1984] It is becoming a reality and the total from all sources is \$945,959.76.

What a miracle! The man sharing this report said, “I told this to a Church businessman and he said we cannot leave this Assembly without having one million dollars.” So this businessman donated \$54,040.00. So they were able to go to the Assembly and say, “We have one million dollars for the glory of God” for World Language. God is doing a miracle.

That five-year goal of one million dollars was met in just four years. Now keep in mind that during that Assembly of 1984, the Bahama Brass Band played as 59 ladies carried 59 flags in the parade of nations where the Church of God of Prophecy was established, and we reported a total of 216,787 members worldwide.

Fast forward 40 years to this Assembly. Over 130 nations were represented in the parade of nations on the opening night wasn’t it beautiful? and our membership is now four times what it was. Yet, in spite of this growth, the current budget for World Language is less than \$360,000 a year.

I fear that many of our churches are becoming myopic in their vision, focusing almost exclusively on their local ministries, while giving little thought to a global reach. Having served myself as a pastor for 28 years, I understand the attention that is needed for the immediate needs and opportunities within the context of local ministry. I am not offering a rebuke today, but I feel compelled to remind us of the words of Jesus who said, **“Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”**

World Language needs financial partners who can give a million dollars [some of you can do that], who can give a thousand dollars, a hundred dollars, or even a single dollar. About 3,000 people believed in Christ and were added to the fellowship of believers on the day of Pentecost because they heard them speaking in their own tongues the wonderful works of God.

D. A Call for Bilingual Ministers

Acts 21 records Paul's arrest while ministering in Jerusalem. As he was being led away, he leveraged his fluency in a number of different languages, saying to the chief captain, **"May I say something to you?" The commander said, "Do you speak Greek? Are you not that Egyptian?" Paul said to him, "Allow me to speak to the people." And when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and beckoned with the hand to the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew tongue (Acts 21:37–40 paraphrased).**

I must confess that I am a bit envious of those who speak multiple languages. Some of you are as fluent in a second language as you are in your first language. Regrettably, I was never required to take a language in high school or college, and at that time, I did not have the foresight to learn a second language.

So, I want to say to every young person listening today, learn a second language, and if you're so inclined, a third or fourth. Learn to speak fluently so that you can teach, preach, sing, and communicate without the need of a translator. There will be opportunities for young bilingual ministers in the Church of God of Prophecy. You don't need to travel abroad necessarily to have need of a second language. Right here in the United States, at least 430 languages are spoken; in Peru, 72 languages are spoken; in South Africa, 11 languages; and India, 122 major languages, along with almost 1,600 lesser spoken languages and dialects.

No one can master every language, but young ministers, I wish I had someone say this to me when I was young your opportunities will increase significantly if you will prioritize your calling, keep your heart right, apply yourself to study, develop your gifting, and learn another language.

Former South African president Nelson Mandela said: **"If you talk to a man . . . in his language, that goes to his heart."**

They heard in their own language the wonderful works of God.

Section III: Discipleship

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen (Matthew 28:19-20 NKJV).

Most everyone is a disciple of something or someone.

For example, one of the phenomenons of pop culture is the surging popularity of Taylor Swift. She is a global icon with followers all over the world. Several million attended her most recent global tour. In one of the Latin American countries, more than 200 fans camped outside the stadium for five months to get the best seats. (Can you imagine COGOP fans doing that before an Assembly?) She has over 500 million followers on social media. It has been estimated that there are perhaps 100 million dedicated “Swifties” (*Taylor Swift disciples*). Tickets for her most recent tour ranged from \$49 to \$499. Some bought them and resold them. Those resales went for anywhere from \$500 to \$7,000 for one concert. Taylor Swift disciples know the words to all of her songs. They want to sing like her, dress like her, move like her, be like her.

Back in my younger years, we often sang the song that said, “To Be Like Jesus.” Imagine what it would look like for a world of Christ-followers to have such a craving for Jesus that we would follow his every move, know everything about him, know him intimately, learn of him, connect with him, be transformed by him, loving what he loves, despising what he despises. Imagine a world of Christ-followers taking up their crosses daily, dying out to everything but Jesus, following him wherever he leads, being imitators of him.

Being a disciple of Jesus is not for the faint of heart. It is more than a decision to escape hell. It is a lifelong pursuit to be like our Lord. All too often, discipleship has been reduced to knowing certain information about the Bible—the stories of David and Goliath; Noah and the Ark; Zacchaeus and the Sycamore Tree; Peter, James, and John (and the sailboat). Perhaps we should rethink the questions we are asking our children when they come away from children’s church. Rather than just asking them—God forbid that we a just asking, “Did you have fun?”—but rather than just asking them, “What did you learn today?” maybe a better question would be, “How did you encounter the Holy Spirit today? How did it help you become more like Jesus?”

Dave Ferguson said, and I quote, “Discipleship in the church today has more to do with consuming and absorbing cognitive content than it has anything to do with missional action. Being a disciple is more about an individual and his/her ability to get a passing grade on the subject matter, and less about being a follower of Jesus who lives in community with others for the sake of Christ’s mission.”

If I had to define what it means to be a disciple of Christ using only three words—to make it easy, I’d start all of them with the letter B **Believe, Behave, Belong.**

- **Believe—What is the information we are getting?** That’s important. We need to know about David and Goliath and Zacchaeus. We need to know these stories in the Bible. We need to put Scripture to

memorization. We need to know what we believe to articulate it well.

- But if all we have is head knowledge, and it's never made its way to our hearts, we are not a disciple of Jesus because **his information brings transformation** how we **behave** so that we are **being made into the image of him**.
- And then it is about **belonging—a shared fellowship with other believers. Church is important**. I heard someone say recently—Dr. Ortiz, if you are here—he said the Lone Ranger died a long time ago. It is God's intent for the church not to forsake its gathering together.

One of the divisions at the International Offices is Leadership Development and Discipleship (LDD). In recent years, this division (at the request of Church leadership) has given its attention, almost exclusively, to the development of leaders, with very little emphasis being given to discipleship. The time has come for us to realign with the mission of our Lord to go into all the world and make disciples. So, from the International Offices to every nation, region, and state, and into every local church, I am calling each of us to rethink our approach to discipleship. It must be more than just a class. It must be more than just another program. Everything we do should feed into discipleship for information, transformation, and community—believing, behaving, and belonging. If what we do does not support this commission of our Lord to make disciples, then we need to stop those things we are doing, quit drifting, and realign with the mission of God.

A. Church Membership

“And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47 KJV).

Immediately following the outpouring of the Spirit, Peter preached Jesus. When the crowd that had gathered heard this, “. . . **they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:37–38).**

If you continue down to verse 41, they gladly received his word, and they were **added to Christ**. Then something else of significance happened; Scripture tells us, “The same day there were **added unto them** about three thousand souls. First they were **added to “him”**; then they were **added to “them.”** Discipleship includes both reconciling the world to Christ and then nurturing them in the church, the community of faith, providing for them a place to belong.

The book of Acts records Paul's three missionary journeys. Some point to a fourth journey that is alluded to in his letters. During these missionary journeys, many received the message and became followers of Christ. But it is noteworthy that Paul did not leave these new believers to survive on their own. Almost everywhere he went, he planted a church. We know from Scripture that he organized churches in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Philippi, Thessalonica, and Troas, and most likely was involved in the start of many other churches.

You cannot read the book of Acts at the exclusion of the church. There are 23 occurrences of the church being mentioned in this one book.

No wonder Paul said, **“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Ephesians 3:21 KJV).**

Our Creator designed us to live in fellowship with one another. **“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another” (Romans 12:5).**

Church is where we join with other believers in worship and fellowship. It is where we bear one another's burdens; we encourage one another; we admonish one another; we edify one another. It is in the context of church that we discover and develop our God-given talents and spiritual gifts. The church provides spiritual covering and accountability to guard our souls and to shield us from every wind of doctrine. This is where we are disciplined, equipped for service, and released for ministry. This is where souls are planted, watered, and fed so they can grow and mature.

I'm grateful for the church. I'm grateful for this Church. This is where God placed me. I joined the Church by covenant when I was nine years old. So, this has been my covenant church for 54 years. But really, it has been my church all my life. I have deep roots in this fellowship. I have been around long enough to see its flaws, its warts, and its blemishes. But can I let you in on a little secret? I rub shoulders with many of the other denominational leaders, and I can tell you that every other movement, without exception, also has flaws and warts and blemishes. Sometimes we want to think it is better somewhere else, but God has planted you here. Make up your mind!

It is here in the Church that I have been nurtured. It is here in this Church that God has given me a place to serve and minister. It is here in this Church that I have found my dearest friends. It is here in this Church that I found my wife and raised my family. It is here in this Church that God has kept me on the potter's wheel and worked on my life to make me holy like him. I have no plans to go anywhere else. I count myself privileged to be a member of the Church of God of Prophecy. We still take the Bible as the Word of God.

We still believe and practice its teachings rightly divided, the New Testament as our rule of faith and practice, government and discipline. And we still walk in the light to the best of our knowledge and ability. Thank God for this fellowship! I am not worshiping the Church. We lift up Jesus. Everything in our flag points to Jesus. But don't underestimate the Church of God of Prophecy. God is here. He is doing something with this body. We are moving forward in the mission of our Lord. Hallelujah!

If you are a believer in Christ and attend a local congregation of the Church of God of Prophecy but are not a member, why not? I want to encourage you to go home and express to your pastor your desire to become a covenant member of this body. Pastors, let me encourage you to aggressively open the doors of membership. Give your people an opportunity to join. We especially should be engaging a new generation in Church membership.

Life requires the regeneration of new cells. About 330 billion cells in your body are replaced daily, which means every 80 to 100 days, 30 trillion cells are replenished. That is the equivalent of a new you. Imagine what would happen to your physical body if billions of cells were lost, and there were none to replace them. Death would be imminent.

The Bible describes us as the body of Christ, one body with many members (or many cells). Some of these cells move away, some die, some become diseased. If this continues without the addition of new cells or new members, the body will grow unhealthy and will eventually succumb to death.

I have the tremendous pleasure of modeling what I am preaching today by adding cells to the body of Christ. I want to extend on this platform, if you don't mind, the covenant of membership to two of my grandchildren. [Bishop Coalter had Grace and Jacob to come forward, along with Pastor Darren Schalk and Youth Pastor Josh Brown.]

Grace and Jake love the Lord. They are sitting on the first and second row of church every Sunday, engaged in worship. They have completed the new member course, *Membership Matters*. It is available online at cogop.org. With the permission of their pastor, Grace and Jacob will be added as members to the local church where they faithfully attend and serve in Cleveland, Tennessee, at the Peerless Road Church.

[Grace and Jacob were asked to place their right hand on the Bible.] This is the same covenant that these have taken. This is the same covenant that I took when I was nine years old.

Bishop Coalter administered the covenant to his grandchildren:

Will you sincerely promise in the presence of God and these witnesses that you will accept this Bible as the Word of God, will you believe and practice

its teachings rightly divided, the New Testament as your rule of faith and practice, government and discipline, and will you walk in the light to the best of your knowledge and ability? The answer is, “I will.”

[Both Grace and Jacob responded with “I will.” Bishop Coalter thanked the pastor and youth pastor and said that we would forgo the right hand of fellowship.] I would love to see this replicated on platforms everywhere throughout the Church of God.

B. Church Planting

There is a reason that more than 38,000 Starbucks stores are in more than 80 countries around the world. There is a reason they have almost doubled in size in the last decade and continue to open thousands of new stores each year. Their mission statement drives them to inspire and nurture the human spirit — one person, one cup, one neighborhood at a time.

Oh, that we would be just as driven to be on mission — reconciling the world to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit — one person, one divine encounter, one neighborhood, one community at a time.

The Church of God of Prophecy emerged from a humble beginning in the Appalachian Mountains with just 21 original members as delegates at the first Assembly. Soon, churches were planted throughout the mountain areas of Tennessee, Georgia, Kentucky, West Virginia, and North Carolina. By 1910, a little more than 1,000 members were reported in 27 local congregations. Within the next ten years, those figures had grown to almost 15,000 members in 389 congregations, many of them in other parts of the world.

In 1990, under the leadership of General Overseer Billy Murray, the Church’s passion to “Turn to the Harvest” was reignited. In just 10 years, the Church doubled its worldwide membership. Since that time, the Church’s membership has continued to increase and has now expanded to 11,000 local church congregations worldwide.

A new passion has once again been rekindled in this Church for church planting. [Bishop Alvino was invited to the platform, along with his wife and the South America general presbyter.]

Ten years ago, Peru had 500 churches. In the last decade, the last 10 years, they have been aggressively reconciling Peru to Christ and planting churches. I was privileged to be in attendance at their most recent national convention where over 10,000 people were gathered. In that convention it was announced that Peru had exceeded 1,000 churches in that one nation. These are solid, identifiable churches. They are the first country outside the United States to reach this benchmark.

[A video was shown recognizing the work of the Holy Spirit in helping to plant churches to reach the benchmark of 1,000 churches for the glory of God in Peru and a plaque was presented to Bishop Alvino.]

The Church of God of Prophecy recognizes the nation of Peru under the leadership of Bishop Dr. Rafael Alvino Vargas for becoming the first nation outside the United States to reach over 1,000 organized churches. “But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Awarded in Orlando, Florida, August 4, 2024, the 102nd International Assembly.

Their goal between the year now and 2030 is to reach 2,000 churches. Two or three other nations are on their heels and will soon be reporting 1,000 churches as well. I want to recognize General Presbyters Bishop Feliz and Bishop Vidal for their zeal and leadership that has resulted in, just in the last ten years, the planting of 2,121 churches in Central and South America.

Here in North America, a new passion for planting churches is stirring. Our North America general presbyter, Bishop Sutton, is leading the charge to plant 500 new churches in the United States and Canada by 2030. Amen!

I pray that the spirit of Rachel will grip every pastor and every local church so that we cry out, **“Give us children, give us churches, lest we die.”** She was desperate to rid herself of the reproach of barrenness. What if we saw it as a reproach if our churches were not reproducing and mothering new churches?

Scripture says that **“God remembered Rachel, and God harkened to her, and opened her womb” (Genesis 30:22–23)**. He will do the same for the Church of God of Prophecy. Give us children!

I believe that some here today are feeling the prompting of the Holy Spirit to plant or mother a church. You are hearing the voice of God. You may not have it all figured out just yet, but you know that something is stirring inside you. I want to say that that which is being stirred in you is being conceived of the Holy Ghost. Don’t disregard it. Don’t push it aside when you leave this Assembly. Become a church planter!

Conclusion

In conclusion, there has never been a brighter day for Pentecostal believers. Don’t lend your ear to the doom and gloom that Christianity is on the decline and churches will soon be extinct.

According to Lifeway Research, religious faith is growing faster than the irreligious. There are fewer atheists — they might be louder than they used to be, but there are fewer atheists today around the world than there were in 1970.

Today 2.6 billion people identify as Christian. By 2050 that number is expected to exceed 3.3 billion. Growth is happening most rapidly in the global south. Christianity is growing faster in Africa than any other region of the world. More Christians are on that continent than anywhere else. (*Bishop Kolawole, you have your work cut out for you!*)

In 1900, less than 1 million people around the world identified as Pentecostal/Charismatic. Today there are approximately 700 million. According to the Pulitzer Center, 35,000 are being added to the ranks of Pentecostalism every day around the world. The 2022 Status of Global Christianity estimates that the number of Pentecostals/Charismatics will top one billion by 2050, making Pentecostalism the fastest growing segment of religious Christian faith in the world.

So, the Church of God of Prophecy can either sit on the bench and watch from the sidelines as Christianity grows globally and Pentecostalism surges, or we can get in the game and participate in the mission of God.

God's church does not have a mission; God's mission has the church. He is calling us to be a church "On Mission Reconciling the World to Christ Through the Power of the Holy Spirit." The time is short. The gospel is good news only if it gets there on time. So, let's zealously seize the day!

As the prophet **Isaiah** said, may we be **consumed with the zeal of the Lord**. What would that look like for you?

Jehu took Jehonadab by the hand and lifted him into his chariot, saying, "**Come with me and see my zeal for the Lord**" (**2 Kings 10:16**). Oh, that we could say that to young ministers, to young people: "Come with me. Don't hear my criticisms. Don't hear my sarcasm. Don't hear my doubts. Don't hear my complaints. But come with me and see my zeal for the Lord!" Hallelujah. The prophet Isaiah described the Lord as **wrapping himself in zeal as a cloak (Isaiah 59:17)**.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul said, "**Never be lacking in zeal . . .**" (**Romans 12:11 NIV**).

I declare to you today that the Church of God of Prophecy is **ON MISSION reconciling the world to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit!**

Saturday Afternoon

Saturday afternoon was a lively Caribbean Celebration. Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter opened this special service celebrating the members and churches of the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands. The general presbyter of the area, Bishop Dr. Clayton Martin, greeted the people, after which a worship team led the audience in worshipful singing. The Bahama Brass Band gave a small concert and a second worship team from the

Leeward Islands came and blessed the congregation. The national bishop of Jamaica, Bishop Dr. Winston Leith, greeted the Assembly.

General Presbyter of Mexico, Central America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean Bishop Dr. Ben Feliz shared with those in attendance that the first Central American Church was a Jamaican Church in Costa Rica. He called on Costa Rica National Bishop Jose Romero Diaz to read the history of the COGOP in Central America.

Bishop Romero said, “The Caribbean has a seasoning, a color, a passion for everything we do. We say, ‘Pura vida’ everything is well.” He told of a Jamaican family who went to live in Costa Rica in 1928, the William Brumley family. They went to work in the “poor mile,” Cinco Millas de Cairo, Limon. Sister Brumley became the first ordained female COGOP minister in Costa Rica. Bishop Romero said he is a result of that migration. Bishop Feliz shared that by the next Assembly, the goal is 4,000 churches in Central America. One small seed, God multiplied.

The service continued with choral speaking by members from Turks and Caicos, steel pan playing by Trinidad and Tobago, dancing by the Paragon Region. Other areas ministered as well. Bishop Timothy Johnson preached, and the Bahamas Children’s Choir sang. It was a wonderful time of ministry that blessed everyone.

Saturday evening

Saturday evening, the Bahama Brass Band once again marched in playing lively, Bahamian-style music. Bishop Tim Coalter made a presentation to the Band’s directors, David Beneby and Barry Morris, in recognition of the Bahama Brass Band’s 100 years of ministry. The general presbyter for Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands, Bishop Dr. Clayton Martin, joined Bishop Coalter during the presentation.

Panama National Bishop Rupert Neblett promoted “The 1500” initiative, explaining that giving \$200, representing \$50 for each of the four days of the Assembly, would help defray the cost. Bishop Neblett announced the various ways to give. A young boy, Carter Patterson, prayed for the offering.

The United Kingdom Mass Choir sang four songs. Africa General Presbyter Bishop James Kolawole introduced Revered Dr. Cathy Payne as the evening speaker. Dr. Payne presented four dynamic healing testimonies one of which was a video testimony from Wider Europe facilitated by Bishop Bill and Donna Vines. Dr. Payne preached, “On Mission to Heal,” followed by a powerful time of healing prayer for hundreds who came forward.

Sunday, August 4, 2024**Sunday Morning**

Africa General Presbyter Bishop James Kolawole directed morning prayer. The Africa national bishops joined him on the platform to pray in various languages.

Dr. Cathy Payne presented the Mission Church Awards and Recognition.

Global Missions Awards 2024	
Mission Giving	
Under 50 Members	North Wilkesboro COGOP (Timothy Byrd, NC)
51 100 Members	Paris COGOP (Robert Holloway, TN)
Over 100 Members	Lynn IDP (Eduardo Caceres, NESP)
Project Giving (HPL2)	
Under 50 Members	Marion COGOP (Scott Adams, OH/WV)
51 100 Members	Journey Community Church (Daniel Chatham, E. Canada)
Over 100 Members	Lynn IDP (Eduardo Caceres, NESP)
One Child Fund	
Under 50 Members	Redding COGOP (Benjamin Peavy, CA)
51 100 Members	Sunnyside Community Church (Mario Pizarro, CA)
Over 100 Members	Mount Carmel (Bryan Strickland, NC)
Total Mission Giving	
Under 50 Members	Marion COGOP (Scott Adams, OH/WV)
51 100 Members	Journey Community Church (Daniel Chatham, E. Canada)
Over 100 Members	Lynn IDP (Eduardo Caceres, NESP)

Bishop Nathaniel Beneby, Jr., boosted the morning offerings and the Assembly Mass Choir sang three songs. The Worship Team sang, after which Bishop Coalter recognized them for their anointed worship during the Assembly. He also thanked Chad Lambert for his work with the Assembly Mass Choir.

Bishop Coalter preached his closing challenge, “More Is in You.”

Presiding Bishop’s Closing Challenge: “More Is in You”

Suppose you were to pick up the Orlando newspaper, and you were told to find a name that would not be in the headlines. You look to try to find this name. You finally find it in Section D, page 14, in small print—a name that seems to have no significance. Most people wouldn’t even notice it.

That’s sort of the way the name Jabez is found in Scripture. You will find him hiding in the least-read section of one of the least-read books of the Bible. The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles trace the history of God’s people from Adam to the end of the Babylonian exile. More than 500 unfamiliar and difficult-to-pronounce names are listed.

Somewhere near the middle of these 500 names, the name Jabez appears. Like a lightning bug, he lights up for just a brief moment and then disappears again into obscurity as the long list of names continues. Don’t blink or you’ll miss the significance of the brief acknowledgement of his name.

1 Chronicles 4:10, “And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, ‘Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!’ So God granted him what he requested.”

In this brief mention of Jabez, he’s calling on the God of Israel. If just a glimpse of your life was preserved for generations to come, I couldn’t think of a better snapshot than to be found doing what Jabez was doing here in this passage praying. It wasn’t a lengthy prayer, just 32 words. He begins with this request, **“Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory.”**

Now keep the petition in mind and let’s compare that, if we can, to what God says through the prophet Isaiah, **“Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen their stakes” (Isaiah 54:2 NIV).**

There seems to be a tension between Jabez and the prophetic words of Isaiah. One is asking God to enlarge his territory; the other, speaking on God’s behalf, is telling Israel to take the initiative themselves. We are caught in this same tension. Who will enlarge our territory? Is it God, or is it us? The answer is YES! It is both. Paul says it like this in 1 Corinthians 3:9: “For we are laborers together with God.”

In this challenge, I want us to consider our responsibility in the mission of God. If you are waiting, sitting back with your arms folded and your legs crossed, just waiting for God to come and do it all, you are going to be waiting a mighty long time. On the other hand, if you leave God out of the equation and decide you can do it all by yourself—you've got the gifts, you've got the talent, you've got what it takes—you are going to find yourself falling very short of the mission of God. It takes both God and us, but we do have a responsibility.

By his design, he has called us to participate in the mission of God. It is my prayer that when we leave the Assembly, we will be fully engaged, all in, sold out, making every effort to expand our mission to reconcile the world to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In his 24th Annual Address in 1934, General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson spoke about carrying 10 big cards with him in his convention travels, each card bearing a message. He would fasten these cards to the walls of the convention centers where he went so that everyone could read them.

One of the cards read, "Every Member a Worker and a Special Work for Every One." Another card said, "You Have a Greater Capacity for Service, Use It For Souls and the Church of God." But then there was this third card—and it is the one I want to focus on today. It said, "**More Is in You, Put It in Operation for The Church of God.**" Now I am not one to have us talk to each other too often, but I think it is worthy of saying this to your neighbor, "More is in you."

When A. J. Tomlinson shared this message that was on that card, it was more than just motivation. He wasn't just trying to hype up the team. I believe Bishop Tomlinson understood this tension of mutual partnership—that we are to be laborers together with God. We know God is all in, but it is important that we are all in as well.

I agree with Bishop Tomlinson: There is more in you; there is more in me. When I look at the potential of this church, I am convinced there is more. We are making progress. We are moving in the right direction. But this church has yet to realize its potential. We have yet to leverage our capacity to fully engage in the mission of God. So, again, let me say with Jentezen Franklin, "Better is coming."

I. There is More of Jesus in This Church

Perhaps one of the most famous quotes in sports history here in the United States was spoken by the legendary coach of the Green Bay Packers, Vince Lombardi, in 1961. The prior season had ended in a heartbreaking loss in the championship game. Now, it was the first day of training camp for the new season, so he brought his team together—professional football players; big, rugged men—and he held up a football, a pigskin, and said, "Gentlemen, this

is a football.” That was sort of insulting to some of them. How basic was he going to get? How close to the fundamentals was he going to get?

Then he had them open their training manuals to page one, and there they saw the fundamentals of blocking, tackling, throwing, and catching. This hyper-focus on fundamentals led them to victory that year in the NFL Championship game, winning 37-0. Vince Lombardi went on to win five of the next seven seasons of NFL Championships.

If focusing on fundamentals can elevate a great team of football players, imagine what it can do to unlock our potential. Nothing is more fundamental to our mission than to have more of Jesus in this church.

You are familiar with the John 15 passage. Jesus said, **“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me [you might do a little bit; you might do something; Jesus said, “without me] you can do nothing” (John 15:4-5).**

If this is so fundamental, why am I saying it to a room filled with preachers and seasoned members? Here’s why. We can preach and not abide in him. We can visit the sick and not dwell in him. We can plan outreach ministries and not be intimate with him. We can plant churches and not remain in him. We can gather for church and not be connected to Jesus. We can even practice wholesome, godly behavior and not abide in Christ.

Listen carefully. **The branch does not lose its identity when it is disconnected from the vine, but it does lose its fruitfulness.**

Did you hear that. You can go, and in Florida where they grow orange trees, you can grow and cut a limb off the tree, and it can be lying on the ground. Someone can come behind you and recognize it as a limb, but it is not bearing fruit because it is not connected.

The question is not, were you connected 30 years ago when you accepted Jesus as your Savior? The question is, are you living a day-to-day relationship? Do you have a vital, vibrant relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ that connects you to the vine? This is fundamental. It is essential if we are going to do the mission of God. More Jesus. More of Jesus!

There is more Jesus in this church. Abide in Him!

II. There Is More Power in This Church

There is more power in this church. Paul closes his prayer in **Ephesians 3** with this powerful declaration: **“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably**

more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us” (3:20 NIV).

In this single verse, Paul sets the power of God atop two pillars: faith and vision. Listen to this section. I do not believe we are going to have a lot of demonstration of power if there is an absence of faith or vision. In this single verse we see this package.

He begins, “To him who is able.” That speaks to our faith.

When Mary questioned how the Holy Spirit would come upon her, and the power of the Most High would overshadow her, and the Holy One to be born would be called the Son of God, the angel responded, **“Nothing is impossible with God” (Luke 1:37).**

When the disciples heard Jesus tell how difficult it would be for some to enter into the kingdom of God, they were astonished and asked, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).

When Sarah overheard the angel telling Abraham that she would give birth in her old age, she laughed. The angel responded, “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” (Genesis 18:14).

“Only believe, only believe;
All things are possible, only believe.”

“He’s able, He’s able, I know He’s able,
I know my God is able to carry me through.”

These are songs of bygone years that lifted our faith.

Whether it is faith for healing, deliverance, transformation, finances, restoration, open doors, open hearts, or engagement in the mission of God, the power of God will not rise above our faith.

Neither will the power of God go beyond our vision.

“To him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. . . .”

This speaks to vision.

What are we asking? What are we imagining in the context of the mission of God? Pastors, how big are you thinking? Are you thinking enlarging your territory, enlarging your ministry? Listen, you are not pastoring just a 50-member church sitting in the middle of a city. You are pastoring an entire city. Enlarge your territory. Enlarge your vision. Enlarge your thinking. Some of us are bursting with vision. We can imagine great things and are not hesitant to ask the Lord to enlarge our territory. We see

potential; we see possibility. We expect victory and divine favor. We are all in when it comes to vision.

Others no longer envision anything beyond their present reality. They no longer pray for God to enlarge their territory. Their vision does not go beyond next Sunday because they do not want to be disappointed or disillusioned. They are afraid of getting their hopes up, only to have them come crashing down. I am telling you, God will respond to vision. When we have faith and vision, God will move in. I am going to encourage you to think big again. In just a while, we are going to be remembering a great man, former General Overseer Fred Fisher. That man oozed vision. Any time you would get around him, he would be talking about growth. He would say, “We need some churches in the Church of God of Prophecy that will break out and be 500-member churches and thousand-member churches. And I would sit in my seat and hear him, and something would stir in me and say, “God, why not now? Why not me? Why not my church?” Oh, how we need that again in the Church of God of Prophecy!

Some of you are like stallions in the starting gate of the race, just ready to break loose, and I want to free you today. Use your faith. Use your vision. Connect with Jesus and let’s go after the mission of God. Hallelujah!

“Fix our eyes on Jesus!” (Hebrews 12:2 NIV).

When we set our affections on him, our devotions on him, our pursuit on him, our dependence on him when we get that right, then he sets his anointing on us! He pours inspiration on us. He sets divine favor on us and fulfills his mission through us.

“Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory [will come into your local church; the King of glory] shall come in . . .” (Psalm 24:9-10 NKJV).

Isaiah’s vision changed when he saw the Lord **“high and lifted up.”**

The psalmist cried out, “Oh, magnify the Lord with me” (Psalm 34:3). Have you ever used a magnifying glass? It enlarges. It makes big. I wonder sometimes if we don’t put God in a small container in our mind. David said, “Let’s let him break out.” Think about a big God. Magnify the Lord with me. Recognize his greatness. Set your gaze upon him. Make much of Jesus. Discover his path for your ministry. Determine what he wants you to accomplish. What is his mission for your neighborhood? How can you be more fully engaged in reconciling your world to Christ? Dream again! Hope again! Then after you have stretched to your wildest imagination, here is the promise: “He is still able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that you could ask or think.”

“ . . . According to his power that is at work within you.”

Acts 1:8, “But you will receive power. . .” Do you know what that word is? It’s the same word we use that we get our word *dynamite*. “But you shall receive *dynamite*, **when the Holy Spirit comes on you; . . .”**

We are people of the Spirit. This is a Pentecostal movement. This church must guard against becoming a Pentecostal movement in name only. We must guard against being Pentecostal in our theology but not in our practice. Is it even possible to be powerless Pentecostals? Something is not right if our version of Pentecost is nothing more than tongues and a feel-good emotion. Our understanding is misplaced when we are slain in the Spirit, only to stand to our feet to sow discord, to be unfaithful, to harbor bitterness, or perpetuate division. That is not the Holy Ghost. The power of Pentecost is dynamic; it is dynamite! It will move. It will bless. It will advance the mission of God. The power of the Spirit will not propel the mission of God forward with a wet fuse.

This is a Pentecostal movement. We are fueled by the fire of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised that we would be filled with the Holy Ghost. And we usually don’t say this part; we stop right there: Be filled with the Holy Ghost. But he said we would be filled with the Holy Ghost and fire! We are not simply in need of a rushing mighty wind. We need a firestorm of the Holy Spirit to blow through the Church of God again. Oh, Lord, send the power just now. Oh, Lord, send the power just now and consume us. Hallelujah!

There is more power in this church. Be consumed by him!

III. There Is More of God’s Mission in This Church

It has already been said in this Assembly that God’s church does not have a mission; God’s mission has a church. As we return to our fields of labor, I pray that the mission of God will be like fire shut up in our bones.

Paul said to the Corinthians, **“Seek that you may excel to the edifying [building up] of the church” (1 Corinthians 14:12)**. He penned these words in the context of the spiritual gifts, but perhaps there is a broader principle that should not be overlooked.

Seek to excel. Go beyond because there is more in you.

I was challenged by a book I read this year by James Clear. He shared how the fate of the British Cycling Team changed one day in 2003 when they hired a new performance coach. Now listen to some of these details.

For nearly 100 years, Great Britain’s cycling team had been plagued by mediocrity.

Since 1908, British riders had won just a single gold medal at the Olympic Games and had fared even worse in cycling’s biggest race, the Tour de France. In 110 years, no British cyclist had ever won the event.

. . . The performance of British riders had been so underwhelming that one of the top bike manufacturers in Europe refused to sell bikes to the team because they [feared it would ruin their reputation].

The new performance director had been hired to put British Cycling on a new trajectory. What made him different from previous coaches was his relentless commitment to [what he called marginal gains in every aspect of the race. He believed that with small, incremental improvements when they were put together the result would be significant].

He began by making small adjustments that you might expect from a professional cycling team. They redesigned the bike seats to make them more comfortable. They rubbed alcohol on the tires for a better grip. They asked riders to wear electrically heated shorts to maintain ideal muscle temperature while riding and used biofeedback sensors to monitor how they would respond to a particular workout. The team tested various fabrics in a wind tunnel and had their outdoor riders switch to indoor racing suits, which proved to be lighter and more aerodynamic.

But they did not stop there. The coach and his team continued to find one percent improvements in overlooked and unexpected areas. They tested different types of massage gels to see which one led to the fastest muscle recovery. . . . They determined what type of pillow and mattress led to the best night's sleep for each rider. They even painted the inside of the team truck carrying the equipment. They painted it white [so they could find every little speck of dust because each speck of dust could affect] the performance of the finely tuned bicycles.

As these and hundreds of other small improvements accumulated, the results came faster than anyone could have imagined. Just five years after this performance coach took over, the British Cycling Team dominated the road and track cycling events at the 2008 Olympic Games, where they won an astounding 60 percent of the gold medals available. Four years later, when the Olympic Games [went] to London, the Brits raised the bar by setting nine Olympic records and seven world records.

That same year, [a British cyclist won the Tour de France for the first time ever in the nation's history]. The next year, his teammate won that same race and would go on to win again in 2015, 2016, and 2017. . . . During the ten-year span from 2007 to 2017, British cyclists won 178 world championships and 66 Olympic or Paralympic gold medals and captured five Tour de France victories [and are now regarded as one of the most successfully run teams] in cycling history. (*Atomic Habits*, paraphrased)

I wish I had time to unpack a lot of this, but let me say, pastors, you are not too far; you are very close to a breakthrough. You might feel that you

haven't won a game in a long time, that you haven't won a race in a while, and some of you are getting discouraged and thinking, "What's the use of trying again?" But you are so close. Now here is the deal. You can't go home and just ride a dead horse, doing ministry the way you have always done it, just hoping for different results. But what you can do—and you don't have to change everything overnight because you are close—all you have to do is start looking for marginal gains, those one percent things—just tweaking this just a bit, checking this out just a bit, improving this just a bit—and I believe you will start seeing some of the same results that the British Cycling Team saw when they went from no victories to leading in victories. God wants to bless you. We are a winning team, and we are so close! We are so close! Just tweak it just a bit as you enter the mission of God.

So, I say to this church—seek to excel. Get in the game. Let's give it all we've got. Don't sit by passively waiting for God alone to enlarge our territory. Let's get some marginal gains. Look for ways to improve, to do more, to go further in the mission of God. The results will be amazing!

I know that ministry can be hard. At times, we feel overwhelmed and undervalued. In some areas, the altars have been empty. The laborers have been few. The finances have been low. And the outlook has been dreary. If that is your reality, you can either sit there and sing the song of gloom and despair, or you can shake yourself and say, "Not today, devil. Back up, Satan!"

You are on a winning team, so pray through. Get hold of the altar. Allow the Spirit to ignite a fresh fire in this church. Reconnect with the Vine. Be ignited with fresh power. Leave this Assembly with a determination to excel in the mission of God to reconcile the world because **here is what I know about this church:**

- **There is more of Jesus—abide in him.**
- **There is more Power—be consumed by him.**
- **There is more of God's Mission—excel in it.**

More is in us; put it in operation for the Church of God!

After the closing of his message, Bishop Coalter invited the Bishop Fred Fisher family to the platform. Bishop Coalter read a brief biography and offered a moment of honor for former General Overseer Bishop Fred S. Fisher, Sr., who passed away this year.

Bishop Coalter made special recognition for those who had transitioned out of leadership in the International Offices and the Assembly Task Force, and for John Payne. He also asked the general presbyters to recognize those who were retiring or had passed away from their areas.

Executive Director of Finance and Administration Bishop Daniel Felipe announced the Assembly was “paid-in-full.” He also acknowledged the apostolic leadership of Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter and presented a gift of appreciation from the Assembly.

Bishop Coalter expressed his appreciation and announced the Assembly would return to Rosen Shingle Creek in 2026. The presiding bishop and general presbyters announced the 2024-2026 appointments. After the consecration and commissioning of those appointed, the Assembly was adjourned.

**CHURCH of GOD of PROPHECY
2024-2026 APPOINTMENTS, SELECTIONS,
AND AREAS OF SERVICE**

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY BOARDS

Corporate Board (Board of Directors)

Tim Coalter, Chair

Jeffery Davis

Clayton Endecott

Daniel Felipe

Benjamin Feliz

Branson Gibson

James Kolawole

Joshua Lynn

Clayton Martin

Tim McCaleb

Shaun McKinley

Maria Ruano

Gary Smith

Brian Sutton

Gabriel Vidal

Audit Committee (Sub-Committee of the Corporate Board)

Llewellyn Graham, Chair

Nathaniel Beneby

Joshua Lynn

Rupert Neblett

Paulette Wilbanks

General Trustees

Church of God of Prophecy Corporate Board

Daniel Felipe, Chief Clerk

Spirit and Life Seminary Board of Directors

Tim Coalter, Chair

Cherry Daniels

Jeffery Davis

Daniel Felipe

Benjamin Feliz

Angela Lawson

Shaun McKinley

Carlos Perez

Tedroy Powell

Brian Sutton

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY COMMITTEES**Assembly Task Force**

Daniel Felipe, Chair	Shaun McKinley
Todd Bagley	Mike Morgan
Gene Browning	Hillary Ojeda
Michael Luithle	Tony Orona

Advisor(s): Host National/Regional/State Bishop(s) of Assembly Site

Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee

Philip Pruitt, Chair	Rahadames Matos
Daryl R. Clark	Elias Rodriguez
Timothy Harper	Sophia Pringle
Doreen Makaya	Nelson Torres

Finance and Stewardship Committee

Scott Gillum, Chair	
Nathaniel Beneby	Ryan Napalo
Clint Knowles	Rupert Neblett
Cynthia Lawrence	Paulette Wilbanks

Global Missions Committee

Daniel Felipe, Chair	Chris Uti
Sergio Cedeño	Ernesto Velasco
Dan Chatham	Bill Vines
Christian Fricke	Maribel Zacapa
Cathy Payne	General Presbyter (Rotating)

International Assembly Expense Committee

Nathaniel Beneby, Chair	
Michelle Brooks-Young	James Ntezimana
Daniel Gann	Rupert Neblett
Llewellyn Graham	Nonito Que
Michael Luithle	Andrew Stone
Shaun McKinley	Gabriel Vidal

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY INTERNATIONAL OFFICES

Finance and Administrative Services

Finance and Administration Executive

Director & International Director of

Stewardship Ministries

Daniel Felipe

Global Missions Coordinator

Cathy Payne

Global Communications

Communications Executive Director

Shaun McKinley

Inspirational Leadership

*Chief Clerk

Marsha Robinson

**Not an International Presbytery Appointment*

Leadership Development and Discipleship Ministries

Leadership Development and Discipleship Executive

Director & International Director of

Center for Biblical Leadership

Jeffery Davis

Center for Biblical Leadership Instructor

Elias Rodriguez

International Director of Accredited Ministry

Development & President of Spirit and

Life Seminary

Michael Hernandez

International Director of Children’s Ministries

Joy Hensley

International Director of Youth Ministries

Kirk Rising

NATIONAL/REGIONAL/STATE BISHOPS & AREA APPOINTMENTS

Africa

2024–2026

General Presbyter: James Kolawole

Angola, Zambia	Alfred Kanjuye
Benin, Togo.....	Kadato Richard
Botswana	Edison Mooketsane
Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea	Ekpai Mayeke James
Cape Verde, Namibia, Niger.....	<i>Africa Finance and Administrative Committee</i>
Chad, Nigeria.....	Enis James Kolawole
Congo (Brazzaville), Central Africa Republic.....	Jean Israel Mukendi Bitchy
Democratic Republic of the Congo.....	Francois Mbengayi
Eswatini.....	Benjamin Lamon Mnisi

Ethiopia.....	Fekadu Ayele Shone
The Gambia, Senegal.....	Chris Uti
Guinea, Guinea Bissau.....	Peter Koyea
Ghana.....	Sammuel Addy
Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso.....	Koissi Antoine
Kenya.....	Cyril Odendo
Liberia.....	Ferdinand Weah
Rwanda.....	Redias Nkundabera
Sierra Leone.....	Issa Lamin Bangura
South Africa (East), Lesotho.....	Ernest Phumeleni Namntu
South Africa (West).....	Nathaniel Botha
South Sudan, Uganda.....	James Ntezimana
TanzaniaEric Mwambigija.....	Eric Mwambigija
National Administrative Assistants to the General Presbyter:	
*Burundi.....	Jean Bosco Subire
*Gabon.....	Jean Calvin Nguene III
*Malawi, Zimbabwe.....	Phillip Segadika
*Mali.....	Joseph Moussianne
*Mozambique.....	Quembo Albino

(The Africa Finance and Administrative Committee includes Enis James Kolawole, Mayeke James, Cyril Odendo, Kadato Richard, and Chris Uti)

**Not an International Presbytery Appointment*

Asia, Australia, and Oceania

2024 - 2026

General Presbyter: Tim McCaleb

Australia/Sri Lanka.....	Dennis Casey
Fiji Islands, New Zealand, Rabi Islands.....	Daniel K. Gann
Hawaii & Pacific Islands Nations.....	Gary Langley
<i>(Kiribati, Nauru, Tuvalu)</i>	
India.....	Joshua Wijonamai
Indonesia.....	Faso Aro Zentrato
Korea.....	Jung-hoon Lee
Malaysia.....	Bathinathan Anthonisamy
Myanmar.....	Chin Kang Mon
Nepal.....	Gopal Lama
Pakistan.....	Asher Munawar Khan
Philippine Islands.....	Rogelio D. Justiniano
Samoa Islands.....	Nonito Que
<i>(American Samoa, Samoa)</i>	
Singapore.....	Dennis Huang

**Caribbean & Atlantic Ocean Islands
2024–2026**

General Presbyter: Clayton Martin

The Bahamas	Woodley Thompson
Barbados & Windward Islands	Chris Joseph
<i>(Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines)</i>	
Cayman Islands, French Guiana.....	Clayton Martin
Guyana, Suriname	Phillip James
Haiti	Jean Claude Dorlean
Jamaica.....	Winston Leith
Leeward Islands	Samuel Daniel
<i>(Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, British Virgin Islands, United States Virgin Islands)</i>	
Paragon Region.....	Carswell Leonard
<i>(Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, British Virgin Islands, United States Virgin Islands)</i>	
Trinidad & Tobago	Elvis Williams
Turks & Caicos Islands.....	Andrew Stones

**Central America, Mexico, Spanish-Speaking Caribbean
2024–2026**

General Presbyter: Benjamin Feliz

Belize	Pedro Nolasco Diaz
Costa Rica	Jose Romero Diaz
Cuba	Genni Pupo
Dominican Republic	Flavio Rosario R.
El Salvador	Ismael Ticas Manzanares
Guatemala.....	Alcides Lorenzana Najarro
Honduras	Tony Medina Perez
Mexico	Ramiro Orozco Luna
Nicaragua	Jose Esteban Somoza
Panama	Leonel Frias Rivera
Puerto Rico	Martin Romero Romero
*Church Planting Coordinator	Joel Banegas
*Leadership Development Coordinator	Rupert Neblett

**Not an International Presbytery Appointment*

North America
2024–2026

General Presbyter: Brian Sutton

Alabama	Richard Ramsey
Alaska, Washington	José Orona
Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico	José M. Rivera
California	Philip Pruitt
Canada (East)	Shelton Beneby
Canada West	David Brown
Florida	J. Scott Gillum
Georgia	Billy Adams
Great Lakes Region	Timothy Harper
<i>(Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin)</i>	
Heartland America	Gary Smith
<i>(Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma)</i>	
IOU Region	Wallace Pratt
<i>(Idaho, Oregon, Utah, and Navajo Nation)</i>	
Kentucky	Jeffrey White
Magnolia Region	Clint Knowles
<i>(Louisiana, Mississippi)</i>	
Mid-Atlantic Region	Woodroe Thompson
<i>(Delaware, D.C., Maryland, New Jersey, Delmarva Peninsula)</i>	
Midwest/Rocky Mountain Region	Jesse Yañez
<i>(Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska)</i>	
North Carolina	Duke Stone
Northeast Region (English)	Leroy Greenaway
<i>(Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Bermuda)</i>	
Northeast Region (Spanish)	Rahadames Matos
<i>(Connecticut, D.C., Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia)</i>	
Northwest Territory	Scott Lee
<i>(Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota)</i>	
Ohio, West Virginia	Mike Morgan
Pennsylvania	Mark Menke
South Carolina	J. Richard Martin
Southeast Region (Spanish)	Ebli De La Rosa
<i>(Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee)</i>	
Tennessee	Paul Holt
Texas	Fernando Jimenez
Virginia	Joshua Lynn

**South America
2024–2026**

General Presbyter: Gabriel Vidal

Argentina	David Ramon Ceballos
Bolivia	David Orozco Chino
Brazil	Hernandes Fernandes F.
Chile	Sergio M. Cedeño G.
Colombia	Juan Carlos Correa Fuentes
Ecuador	Benjamin A. Aldana P.
Paraguay	Ricardo Hinsbis Espinoza
Peru	Rafael Alvino Vargas
Uruguay	Marco Benavides Delgado
Venezuela	Luis Gomez Suarez
*Harvest Continental Coordinator	Francisco Lopez Paz

**Not an International Presbytery Appointment*

**Wider Europe and Middle East
2024–2026**

General Presbyter: Clayton Endecott

Azerbaijan, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Romania	Clayton Endecott with <i>Shared Leadership Team</i>
Belarus, Ukraine	Bishop Gena
Belgium, Netherlands, United Kingdom	Tedroy Powell
Bulgaria	Darin Ivanov
Cyprus	Clayton Endecott <i>*Antonios Pastos serving as National Chairman</i>
Czech Republic, Poland, Slovak Republic	Petr Szlaur
Egypt	Bashir Dawood
Finland	Clayton Endecott <i>*Simo Tuominen serving as National Chairman</i>
France	Michael Wilson
Germany, Hungary	Christian Fricke
Italy, Portugal, Spain	Edgar Rossini Ortiz Salguero
Russia	Bishop Misha

(The Shared Leadership Team assists the General Presbyter to serve as the National Bishop in some nations due to finance, size, structure and/or current security issues.)

**Not an International Presbytery Appointment*

SECTION 4

REPORTS OF
COMMITTEES



**CORPORATE BOARD REPORT TO THE
102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY****JULY 31, 2024**

The Board of Directors would like to give honor and praise to our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all blessings flow. We would also like to express our gratitude for the faithful generosity of our members and contributors worldwide. The faithful giving of individuals and local churches has allowed the Church of God of Prophecy to continually impact the world with the redeeming message of the gospel. When participating in the Church's financial system, the efforts of the local church are multiplied, reaching beyond borderlines and accomplishing more than one can do alone. Your tithes and generous giving have funded ministry initiatives worldwide, providing the necessary resources for evangelism, church planting, leadership development, disaster relief, orphanage support, and much more.

This Board recognizes its paramount responsibility to serve as faithful stewards of the resources God has entrusted this church with. As such, we submit to our duty of accountability first to God, second to this Assembly, and third to all men.

ECFA Accreditation

The Board of Directors remains committed to maintaining the highest financial integrity and accountability levels. In the same spirit of Paul's writings in 2 Corinthians 8:20-21 (AMP, paraphrased), we are "taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift; for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of *other* people." This commitment is reflected in our ongoing association with the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA). The ECFA provides accreditation to leading Christian nonprofit organizations that faithfully demonstrate compliance with established standards for financial accountability, transparency, fundraising, and board governance. The standards set by the ECFA are often far above the minimums required by law, as it seeks to promote not just financial compliance with industry standards, but more importantly, to promote excellence in accountability and trustworthiness. This accreditation is reevaluated every year. We are pleased to announce that we have been successfully evaluated and have met ECFA standards for Christian nonprofit organizations for 2023, standards that we have consistently met every year since 2012.

Audit Process

The board's commitment to maintaining the highest levels of financial integrity and accountability is also reflected in the appointment of an audit committee,

entrusted with the responsibility to monitor the audit process and report its findings. The Audit Committee is comprised of members of the Corporate Board and the Finance & Stewardship Committee. The members serving on this committee are Llewellyn Graham (chairperson), Joshua Lynn, Nathaniel Beneby, Paulette Wilbanks, and Rupert Neblett. In addition to engaging the Audit Committee, since 2019 the board has partnered with one of the premier auditing firms in the United States—Batts Morrison Wales & Lee—who have shared their independent opinion of their completed audit for the year 2023.

White Wing Messenger

In 2023, the *White Wing Messenger* celebrated its 100th anniversary as the official publication of the Church of God of Prophecy. For a century our magazine has served as a crucial connection for our global ministries, as we have shared inspirational articles from our leaders and ministers, as well as reported ministry happenings of our all-nations church.

The 100th anniversary also marked a year of transition for our publication as we transitioned from our traditional printed format to a digital magazine platform. This transition was the result of a need for good financial stewardship and a need to efficiently reach a much broader audience.

The soaring printing and postage costs that magazine publishers have experienced in recent years, as well as the demand for digital magazines, increased the challenges of continuing with the traditional printing model. The same has been true for the *White Wing Messenger*. To ensure that decisions were made with accurate information, the International Offices' Communications Department secured an independent, church-affiliated auditor to review the magazine's finances. The analysis from the auditor revealed that the magazine was operating at a negative revenue gap in excess of \$160,000.00 annually with just over 3,800 subscribers globally. In order to make our pricing structure sustainable, our subscription rates would have had to increase by 42%* for the English magazine, from \$20 to \$48 annually, with our foreign language versions increasing by 440%, from \$10 to \$54 annually.

***Editor's note:** This report is offered verbatim. The figure for the English magazine rate increase should be 140%.

Considering how cost-prohibitive this adjustment would have been for our subscribers, the current trends in publishing, as well as the worldwide constituency of the Church, it was the unanimous belief of this board that fully transitioning to a digital platform helps us accomplish the *Messenger's* purpose of connecting our family globally.

In May of 2024, the last printed edition of the magazine was issued, ushering the *White Wing Messenger* into a new era of digital publishing. By focusing our efforts on the digital platform, we are now able to provide

inspiration and resources in new ways, in multiple languages, with enhanced features embedded in the magazine, such as videos, downloads, and more. Readers now are not only able to view the magazine online, but they can also download it, print it, and share it with others at no cost.

This Board affirms its commitment to the *White Wing Messenger* and its important place as a voice of the Church. We are excited by this new day in the life of the magazine and the potential for growth of its influence and impact in our ministries.

Sale of the Former Tomlinson College Property

In the 99th International Assembly of 2016, the Finance & Stewardship Committee requested and received approval from this Assembly for the Board of Directors to pursue selling the former Tomlinson College Property (99th *International Assembly Journal*, 2016, Section III, pp. 103-105). The approval of this International Assembly included the following three key stipulations:

1. First, the Board will pursue a sale of the property that would not fall below the appraised value.
2. Second, upon completion of the sale, the Church would secure the principal amount of the full sale's proceeds and transfer it into a designated trust that would be managed according to the present investment policy for the best and safest return.
3. Third, the interest earned from this designated trust would be used to fund leadership development initiatives.

On March 20, 2024, the Church of God of Prophecy finalized the sale of the former Tomlinson College campus property to Cate Brothers Development, a real estate development company from Cleveland, Tennessee. The agreed-upon purchase price for the property was \$4,400,000.00. This amount was above its appraised market value of \$3,864,000. After deducting closing costs and taxes associated with the sale, the Church received proceeds in the amount of \$4,387,373.43.

New Trust Fund for Leadership Development Initiatives

Upon completion of the sale, the funds were allocated to a newly designated trust account. The investment policy governing this account was written by the Finance and Stewardship Committee in consultation with our investment managers to meet the Assembly's decision on how these funds are to be managed.

The policy governing the management of the designated trust establishes that each year, the Trust Fund will distribute only the interest and dividends earned during the prior 12 months to fund leadership development

initiatives. The Trust Fund policy further establishes that distributions may only occur if such an amount will not reduce the Trust Fund’s market value below its historic dollar cost, which represents the sum of its contributions.

The objectives and strategies of the leadership development initiatives that will be funded from this new Trust Fund are being developed and they will be shared by this Board once finalized.

Closing Remarks

Finally, the members of the Board of Directors would like to recognize its chairman, Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter, for his commitment to seeing God’s work of reconciliation through the ministry of the Church of God of Prophecy. Bishop Coalter’s consistent pursuit of divine inspiration, excellence, and accountability has challenged us to be more excellent stewards of God’s resources. It is an honor and a privilege to serve the fellowship of this church under his visionary leadership.

Respectfully submitted,

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Tim Coalter, Chair | 8. Joshua Lynn |
| 2. Jeffery Davis | 9. Clayton Martin |
| 3. Clayton Endecott | 10. Timothy McCaleb |
| 4. Daniel Felipe | 11. Maria Ruano |
| 5. Benjamin Feliz | 12. Gary Smith |
| 6. Llewellyn Graham | 13. Brian Sutton |
| 7. James Kolawole | 14. Gabriel Vidal |

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Introduction: Stewardship—Heart Matters

Every believer begins the journey of biblical stewardship when we give our hearts to Christ and desire to live according to his Word. According to Richard Niebuhr, “Stewardship is everything we do after we accept Christ. It is all about life.”¹

“Our relationship with the Lord is always begun and maintained by the heart. Of course, to contact the Lord is a matter of the spirit, but this must be initiated and maintained by the heart, for our heart is the gateway of our whole being.”²

¹ Richard Niebuhr, quoted in R. Scott Rodin, *Stewards of the Kingdom: A Theology of Life in All Its Fullness* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000), 73.

² Witness Lee, *The Economy of God* (Los Angeles, CA: The Stream Publishers, 1968), 75.

It is in our hearts that transformation and real change begin, and it is the ongoing, daily transformation of our hearts that will lead us to a life of stewardship as God designs.

Proverbs 4:23 tells us, “**Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it**” (NIV).

Stewardship is, therefore, all about our lives as believers in the kingdom of God that is founded on the core principle that all that we are and all we have are God’s.

God designs every believer to be a channel through whom all kinds of resources flow into the kingdom to enable his work on the earth. The availability of resources that we have in our local churches is, therefore, dependent on how we use and apply the resources that we have received. Whether or not we make these resources available and how much of it we make available will reflect where our heart is in Christ.

Is our heart’s perspective one where we consider that what we have is never enough for ourselves; therefore, the provision we receive from God is used only for our own daily needs or is stored up for future needs, and none flows to others or the kingdom? When this is the perspective of our hearts, we effectively become clogged pipes with our financial resources, and we have no impact in the kingdom of God. One’s view is that we will never have enough to satisfy our own needs plus to flow to others.

Or is it that our heart’s perspective is that there is enough provision to meet our needs, and we may allow a small amount to flow to others? The more we receive, the more we consume it for ourselves, and very little flows to others. Our perspective is that the supply of resources is limited, so we must use all we can for ourselves. Regardless of how much we receive, it is never enough. Our impact on the kingdom of God is therefore limited as our priority is meeting our own needs, whether they be at a personal, local, state, regional, or national church level.

Wouldn’t we rather be at a place where our heart’s perspective is to use the financial resources that we have received not just for ourselves, but always seeking to identify outlets or channels to allow those resources to flow to others? A believer whose heart is set towards God in this manner knows and understands that God is the source of all provisions and is secure in the knowledge that he will meet all our needs simply because he is the sovereign Lord who loves us. We know that our God has an infinite supply of resources and that there is always enough to meet our needs. One’s heart is, therefore, always to give first, as we know that we can never use all the resources that God entrusts to us for ourselves.

As we give, God honors his Word, **“Give and it shall be given to you, a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over...”** (Luke 6:38). This is a heart that will always experience the overflow, as the more we give resources through the channels we identify or develop, the more resources we will receive.

What we value above all is the satisfaction of knowing that the needs of others are being met and that the kingdom of God is being impacted for his glory. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6:21, **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”**

It is time to check our hearts toward stewardship. What is our heart towards that which we have received as individual believers and at the local, state, or national church level? Is it being used only to satisfy our needs? Is it being stored up just for our own future needs? Or have we developed or identified channels through which these resources can flow to bless others in the kingdom? The increases in our ministries and churches will come only when we do the latter—only when we give first. It is only then that the many needs in our churches, states, and nations can truly be met. It is only then that even greater amounts will flow to us to manage.

It requires us to first give ourselves to the Lord as the Macedonian church did, who, out of their deep poverty, gave beyond their ability.

Oh, for hearts that are truly transformed—hearts that truly know that our God is the source of all we need, that his supply is limitless, and that we are the only channels God has through which he makes provision available in his kingdom. Then giving of our time in service in our local churches and communities will be motivated by hearts set on God and his kingdom. Giving our time and resources to missions in our local areas and around the world will be motivated by hearts that are set on seeing the gospel being proclaimed and the world being reconciled to Christ. Giving our tithes and offerings at all levels in the church (individuals and local churches) will be motivated by hearts set on honoring God with our substance (which is his) and seeing the growth of his kingdom on earth.

As believers and as a church collectively, we are being called back to remember who we are in Christ and to check our hearts toward being stewards of that which the Lord has given to us. Our stewardship of who we are and what we have received is a matter of where our heart is set. **“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver”** (2 Corinthians 9:7 NKJV).

The rich blessings of the Lord will come to those who are faithful in this regard. **“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work”** (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Section 1: Revision of the Decline Compensation Form (Information Only)

The Decline Compensation Form was amended to address some questions submitted to the Committee and to adapt to changing circumstances. These amendments are made to improve this document's effectiveness, enhance its clarity, and rectify any inconsistencies or shortcomings. Ultimately, the purpose of amending this document is to ensure its relevance, accuracy, and applicability in the present context, and to promote fairness, compliance, and optimal outcomes for all parties involved. As a committee, we noted that this document may have been ambiguous in that it could have been perceived as an allowance to be changed every month. This would be exhausting for bookkeeping on a local church level and could lead to misappropriations. Furthermore, it could have become cumbersome to adhere to on a local level while complying with the national/regional/state office.

NOTE: The following was passed in the 2022 International Assembly, and the revised form can be found as an appendix to this report.

Administrative Action for Section 1

When a pastor has an occupational position or other means of financial support and desires not to receive remuneration from the tithe paid into the local church, the church should operate as follows:

- 1) *A document should be drafted (an example is provided in this report) and submitted to the church conference for recording in the minutes that the pastor has declined the full tithe, or a portion of the tithes given by the local church. It should clearly state that for the present pastor only, the tithes now belong to the local church for distribution in other areas of ministry.*
- 2) *The local church treasurer shall send the 10 percent portion of tithes the pastor would have paid had the pastor received those tithes to the national/regional/state office. This would ensure the national/regional/state office receives the funds necessary to assist their respective work in equipping churches in their jurisdiction.*

Section 2: Budgets (Information Only)

Today, the church does business in a culture that demands greater accountability. As leaders, we must not ignore whole-life stewardship that builds trust. The diminishing trust of people toward organizations is a clear indicator that accountability is critical.

To assist our churches and national/regional/state offices to be more transparent and have more accountability, a budget is a must. A budget creates openness to a growing vision, defines priorities in planning ministry needs, builds constituents' confidence and trust, and leads to a recognition that the ministries of the church are worthy of their support. It also builds confidence in the leaders and their management of the church's resources. The benefit for the church or national/regional/state office is that a budget gives you an administrative tool to evaluate your current work, look for solutions, envision your needs for ministry, and assist in accomplishing the mission of God in your ministry location.

At the 2022 International Assembly, one of the sections presented by the Finance & Stewardship Committee was on budgets. We stated that local churches and national/ regional/state offices should prepare a budget for each fiscal year. Since then, with consultation and research, we realized that previous Assemblies had already discussed and approved budgets for each level of our church.

In 1984 at the 79th General Assembly, an Assembly decision was made regarding all levels of the Church—general, state, and local—to operate within a balanced budget.

The Assembly action states the following:

The study by the Ways and Means Committee in the past two years has revealed that certain economic indicators concerning our cash and expenditure flow need attention. There is growing evidence that more and more of our churches are having financial difficulties, which are, in part, due to over-extending themselves. No people can live beyond their means. Faith in God does not necessitate over-extension that leads to deficit spending, which threatens the very thing it is trying to build.

We therefore recommend that general, state, and local churches operate within a balanced budget, said policy to become effective as of October 1986.³

In the minutes of the 94th International Assembly in 2006, the Finance & Stewardship Committee stated:

We the Finance and Stewardship Committee, recognize the need to reaffirm in this General Assembly the balanced budget decision made in the 79th General Assembly in 1984.⁴

In the "Fiscal Responsibility" section of our current *Present Financial System Journal*, it states:

³ "Balanced Budget Concept," Section 4, *1984 Assembly Minutes of the 79th Church of God of Prophecy World Wide Annual Assembly*, 133.

⁴ "Balanced Budgets," Section 2, *2006 Assembly Minutes of the 94th Church of God of Prophecy International General Assembly*, 132.

In order to maintain accountability before the local church communities, the local church, the churches in the nation/region/state, and the International Offices, each level of the Church should prepare a yearly budget with full accountability of how the Church finances perform against the budget presented to the local conference, national/regional/state convention, or International Assembly, as is applicable.⁵

Our report also stated that each church/nation/region/state should send financial statements to their area of supervision. The *Journal* continues,

Additionally, the national/regional/state offices will submit to their respective general presbyter's office a copy of their annual financial statement that is reported to their national/regional/state convention within 30 days following the said convention.

This financial statement is to reflect at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) National/regional/state offices budget for the previous and current convention years (with columns showing items budgeted, actual and variances);
- 2) An income and expense statement; and
- 3) A balance sheet report showing the total assets and liabilities.⁶

With this information, the current Finance & Stewardship Committee would like to reemphasize this important ruling of the 79th Assembly and encourage all local churches and national/regional/state offices to prepare an annual budget as a management tool and financial accountability report. At the end of their fiscal year, a Statement of Financial Position (balance sheet), a Statement of Activities (income and expense), and a budget report showing actual versus budget should be submitted to the national/regional/state office and encouraged by all local churches.

Section 3: Assembly Expense Offering (Information Only)

The International Assembly continues to be a blessing to our church and the world globally. With our members' and supporters' faithful giving, we have been able to walk away from recent Assemblies with expenses paid in full. What is so very exciting and encouraging is that every area of our church world is participating in and experiencing the blessings that come because of giving.

One area the Finance & Stewardship Committee wishes to encourage is each local church receiving an Assembly Expense Offering annually. In the

⁵ "Fiscal Responsibility," Section 5, *The Journal of the 100th International Assembly*, 108.

⁶ "Fiscal Responsibility," Section 5, *The Journal of the 100th International Assembly*, 108.

2016 International Assembly, the following was presented by the Finance & Stewardship Committee and approved by the International Assembly:

We therefore recommend that consideration is given to implementing an Assembly Expense Offering, to be received by every local church globally on the third Sunday of January, or an annual budgeted amount. Each local church should feel the flexibility to receive this offering on a date before May 1 should it work better in their overall budget process. The May 1 date will give adequate time for it to be sent to the National/Regional/State Office and then to the International Office before the end of the fiscal year.⁷

Implementation of this Assembly ruling has proven that the date set for the offering is not practical in every local church. So, the Corporate Board (previously Administrative Committee) met and, in accordance with their delegated authority as outlined in the 96th International Assembly, they amended the date for each local church to receive an Assembly Expense Offering or budgeted amount anytime during the period January to May annually. Additionally, funds can be submitted to the International Offices (United States), or International Account (all other nations) in June of each year.

The Finance & Stewardship Committee wishes to express sincere thanks to every local church that has participated in this fundraising effort. We encourage all local churches to support this effort, as these offerings play a key role in subsidizing the Assembly expenses. Furthermore, this opportunity for heartfelt giving enables all our members worldwide to participate in and bless our International Assemblies.

Section 4: Church Planting Investment

Rationale

This committee recognizes the paramount importance of our evangelistic mandate to preach the word of reconciliation to the world. Biblical history teaches us, and current statistics corroborate, that planting new churches is the most effective method to reach the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, church planters today face many challenges from the moment they accept the calling to plant to the moment they can celebrate the birth of the new church. One of these challenges is the financial burden that often keeps new churches planted from investing more resources to reach their communities. These financial constraints can often be exacerbated when a church plant transitions to become an organized local church.

Under our present financial system, a mission (a congregation that has not yet been organized as a church) retains all funds and does not participate in the

⁷ "Consideration to Offset International Assembly Expense," Section 1, *Ministry Policy Manual*, 152.

financial reporting system of the Church of God of Prophecy. They, however, are required to submit reports periodically to national/regional/state offices for accountability and for the records.

Assembly Action

In consultation with pastors, the presiding bishop, general presbyters, International Presbytery, and the executive director of finance and administration, we suggest the following amendment to Section 4:

Newly established local churches will continue to report and send funds to their respective national/regional/state (N/R/S) office and the International Office as outlined by the current financial system. After twelve months of faithful participation of the newly organized church in the Present Financial System, the International Offices and the N/R/S office will issue an investment back to the local church, equivalent to 100 percent of the funds received from the newly established church, to support the ongoing work of the new church effective January 1, 2025.

Section 5: Thank You

The Finance & Stewardship Committee would like to express deepest gratitude to Bishop Paul Holt for his service as executive director of Finance and Administration. What Bishop Holt thought would be a short tenure of ministry at the International Offices became 16 years of stellar service to the Church of God of Prophecy. He began his service as the assistant to the executive director of Finance and Administration. He was then appointed as executive director of Finance and Administration, serving with distinction for 13 years.

While his investment of skill, wisdom, and detail will be missed, his influence at the International Office level will last much longer. Thank you, Bishop Holt, for serving from “the integrity of your heart and the skillfulness of your hand” (ref. Psalm 78:70-72).

We commit you to, in your words, “follow God to the next classroom.” The state of Tennessee will be enriched by the ministry you and Barbara bring. Our heartfelt thanks to you both.

We also wish to thank Daniel Felipe for his service on this committee for the past eight years. We are committed to serving alongside him in his newly appointed position of executive director of Finance and Administration. Thank you, Daniel, for your willingness to accept this appointed responsibility.

Humbly Submitted,
 Scott Gillum, Chair
 Nathaniel Beneby
 Clarence Berry
 Clint Knowles

Cynthia Lawrence
 Ryan Napalo
 Rupert Neblett
 Paulette Wilbanks



DECLINE COMPENSATION FORM

Name of Local Church: _____

Address of Local Church: _____

Date: _____

Pastor _____ has agreed to not receive the following in salary for serving as pastor of the local church at _____.

TO NOT RECEIVE:

- 100 Percent of Tithes
- _____ Percent of Tithes
- \$ _____ Per Month in Tithes

The local church treasurer is to forward 10 percent of tithes to the International Offices and the designated amount required by the national/regional/state office. Also, since the pastor is not receiving the tithe, 10 percent of what the pastor would typically receive should be forwarded to the national/regional/state office.

Pastor's Signature: _____

Treasurer's Signature: _____

Date recorded and submitted to the local church conference: _____

Note: A signed copy of this document should be provided to the national/regional/state bishop, pastor, and the original should be kept in the church files. Once this document is recorded in a business conference, the tithes received will be used at the discretion of the local church, finance committee, or board of directors.

Note: We suggest this form be adopted at a business conference at the beginning of the church's fiscal year.

Note: A pastor may reverse compensation decline in a business conference if an event escalates the need to do so. However, we strongly advise against monthly and quarterly adjustments.

**THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE AND POLITY (BDP) COMMITTEE
REPORT TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY**

Preamble

We greet the delegates and friends to the 102nd International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy. We have assembled from across the globe, from urban areas and metropolises, to villages, hamlets, rural farmlands, and tribal lands. We assemble as one in Christ, brothers and sisters, equals as members of this great Church.¹ Our goal is to embody the Apostle Paul's salvific statement, "In Christ, there is no difference between Jew and Greek, slave and free person, male and female. You are all the same in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28 NCV).

We have gathered in Orlando to worship our Savior, fellowship with the saints, be challenged by the casting of vision, learn together, and to engage in the noble task of adjudicating business for this community of faith as the International Assembly (IA) in session. Rising to this task, we have outlined the following to be our guide for proper business procedure and protocol providing clarity for all in order to achieve the goal of Acts 15, that every decision we make will seem good to the Holy Spirit and to us (Acts 15:28). Accordingly, we offer the following guidelines for business proceedings in this Assembly:

1. Once the Moderator has acknowledged the respective Chairman and members of the Assembly Committees, providing them permission to present their reports, they will do so in due course.
2. Committee members will present sections to the IA for its consideration.
3. Once the section and recommendations have been clearly placed before the IA, the Moderator will call for a motion and a second for discussion/questions of said section/recommendations.
4. Any member in good standing (faithful to the local church and faithful in tithing) may request to speak from the Assembly floor at a designated microphone. He/she will provide to the clerk stationed at the microphone his/her name.
5. The Moderator will recognize a constituent at the microphone.
6. Prior to making a comment or posing a question, the member at the microphone is to provide the following information:
 - a. Name

¹ Where the word *church* represents the longer title, Church of God of Prophecy, it is capitalized in this document.

- b. Location of church membership
 - c. Acknowledge that he/she has read the report in its entirety in order to be granted permission to speak by the Moderator
7. Unless the speaker is raising a point of order, the question/comment is to be directed to the committee. Points of order are directed to the Moderator. The Chairman, the presenter of the section, or any of the members of the committee may engage in the discussion. All questions/comments related to the report are to be directed to and responded to by the committee.
 8. At any point, the Moderator may interject, ask a question, and/or request further clarification from either the speaker from the floor or the committee.
 9. The Moderator, in due course, will call for an Assembly response. Matters of business require overwhelming consensus. Spiritual matters require one-accord.

Decision-Making Processes

In the BDP report, the following sections are business matters and require overwhelming consensus, which will be considered achieved at seventy-five percent (75%) of expressions cast.

- a. Temporary Suspension of Evaluation Process for Pastors and National/Regional/State Bishops
- b. Leadership Succession

In the BDP report, the following sections are spiritual matters in nature and require one accord, which will be considered achieved at ninety percent (90%) of expressions cast.

- a. The Lord’s Supper
- b. Race Relations and Reconciliation

All other Assembly standing committees – the Finance and Stewardship (F&S) and the Corporate Board of Directors (CBD), formerly the Administrative Committee (AC) – follow overwhelming consensus for decision making per the *Ministry Policy Manual*.

The F&S Committee is to focus on practical matters, including promotional and fund-raising projects. Thus, when determining the Assembly’s expression, the one-accord principle will be used for the BDP on doctrinal matters while the overwhelming consensus will determine all other matters and those presented by the F&S and the AC.²

² *Ministry Policy Manual* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 2018), 14.

Section One

Temporary Suspension of Evaluation Process of Pastors and National/Regional/State Bishops for Study Purposes

The goal of the evaluation process for Presiding Bishop (PB), General Presbyters (GPs), National/Regional/State (N/R/S) Bishops, and local Pastors³ was to assist in the maturation of leaders for each to fulfill his/her maximum potential. The goal is noble. However, as with most processes, the implementation and ongoing management of procedures, methods, statistical data, assessment instruments, and the coalescing of findings and reports can become laborious, time-consuming, and bureaucratic in nature. The BDP recognizes that the evaluation process has become more burdensome in some areas than helpful and informative, tending to administrative minutiae rather than apostolic ministry.

Additionally, we note that in the International Presbytery, procedures and methods have been modified, with the addition of an International Presbytery Review Board elected to oversee the process which has created a helpful approach to evaluation. However, we also acknowledge that even with these improvements, there have been instances of uncertainty and confusion. Yet, since the Presiding Bishop and General Presbyters are selected and not appointed, we do not feel that a suspension in the evaluation process is warranted. We do recommend that the International Presbytery (IP) be given the latitude to govern and implement evaluation improvements and procedures for the PB and GPs as properly decided upon by an overwhelming consensus of the members of the IP in an IP business session.

The evaluation of appointed leaders, N/R/S Bishops, and local Pastors has not progressed as well as the evaluation processes of the PB and GPs. Some areas report extremely low percentages of participation by Pastors in the evaluation of the N/R/S Bishops. Additionally, many of the N/R/S Bishops do not engage in evaluation by local boards and/or members of the local church of their Pastor. Rather than have policy in place that is not being followed, or that is so bureaucratic that it requires the expenditure of valuable time and financial resources, we feel that it would be wise to temporarily suspend the evaluation process of N/R/S Bishops and local Pastors until the BDP can engage in a study and recommendation concerning evaluations at these two levels. Given our present docket of studies, we recommend a suspension for six years, while we study this topic. The Committee⁴ could then bring a further recommendation regarding evaluations for N/R/S Bishops

³ The BDP wishes to show the Committee's utmost respect to the honorable leaders of this movement throughout the world. For that purpose, ministerial and administrative titles will be capitalized in this document except where they are not capitalized in citations from other sources.

⁴ Where the word *committee* represents the longer title, Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee, it is capitalized in this document.

and local Pastors to the International Assembly in 2030. In the interim of the suspension, a GP, in consultation with his plurality team, could engage an evaluation of an N/R/S Bishop if, in the opinion of the GP and his plurality team, it is warranted. Accordingly, an N/R/S Bishop, in consultation with his plurality team, could engage an evaluation of a local Pastor if, in the opinion of the N/R/S Bishop and his plurality team, it is warranted.

To continue with a broken and defective evaluation process that does not garner significant participation for N/R/S Bishops and local Pastors seems ill advised. While we do not seek to spiritualize this recommendation, we do note that the Sabbath principle reminds us that when systems become overly cumbersome, they cease to provide their original intended purpose. Jesus stated, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27 NIV). The Committee does not utilize this passage as a proof text, rather we reference the principle contained within our Lord’s directive.

Section Two

Leadership Succession

NOTE: Section Two did not pass.

Statement from Secretary, Dr. Tim Harper:

We, the members of the Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee, wish to commend our Presiding Bishop on his excellence in moderating the business of the 102nd International Assembly. Accordingly, we commend the constituents of this Assembly who have dialogued with us, to this point, during the business session, for your decorum and spiritual maturity. We also express our respect to this Assembly in your decision regarding Leadership Succession as it relates to the office of Presiding Bishop and General Presbyters. We accept your decision. The BDP exists to serve the Assembly.

Given the decision of this Assembly and in the spirit of properly stewarding our remaining time allotted for business in the 102nd Assembly, we voluntarily choose to suspend the balance of section two of the Leadership Succession document. We do have a significant conviction that this Church needs to address a better exit strategy for leaders who have given their lives to the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the expansion of this Church. Consequently, the BDP suspends for the 102nd Assembly the recommendations on Leadership Succession as it relates to the Standing Assembly Committees and Exit Strategy. We will seek to dialog among the members of the Committee, with the Presiding Bishop and General Presbyters, and invite dialog from the constituents of this Church as we continue to study leadership succession for Assembly Committees and a better exit strategy.

Section Three

Studies and Recommendations on the Sacraments (Ordinances)

The Lord's Supper: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives

Introduction

In 2015, the Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee embarked upon a major undertaking to engage in “an intensive and thorough study of the sacraments.” We were strongly convinced that “we desperately needed to recover a biblical, doctrinal, historical, and practical working knowledge of the sacraments. We discerned the need to help inspire and encourage more sacred, faithful, and frequent participation of the sacraments in our churches. . . .”⁵ The first document in the series, “The Sacrament of Footwashing,” was presented to the International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy in 2018. We now humbly present to the 102nd International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy the second document in the series, “The Lord’s Supper: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives.”

About Ordinances and Sacraments

Throughout its history, the Church of God of Prophecy, like most Pentecostals, has referred to the sacred acts of Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and Footwashing as “ordinances.” Nevertheless, all Classic Pentecostals do not uniformly use the same terminology for these practices.⁶ One definition of “ordinance” is “a prescribed usage, practice, or ceremony.”⁷ A synonym for ordinance is “command.”⁸ Indeed, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and Footwashing are practices of the Church that have been commanded by Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15–16; Matthew 26:26–27; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:17, 19–20; John 13:12–15; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26). Therefore, these sacred acts can rightfully be referred to as ordinances in this context.

A sacrament is “a Christian rite (such as baptism or the Eucharist) that is believed to have been ordained by Christ, and that is held to be a means of divine grace or a sign or symbol of a spiritual reality.”⁹ Jesus Christ gave both Baptism and the Lord’s Supper to the early church as a means

⁵ Assembly Committee for Biblical Doctrine and Polity of the Church of God of Prophecy, “Introduction and Rationale for the Study of the Sacraments of the Church,” *Business Acts of the 100th International Assembly* (Church of God of Prophecy, 2018), 11.

⁶ Harold D. Hunter, “Ordinances, Pentecostal,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 947.

⁷ *Merriam Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. “Ordinance,” accessed October 5, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ordinance>.

⁸ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “Ordinance,” accessed October 5, 2023, <https://www.oed.com/search/dictionary/?scope=Entries&q=ordinance>.

⁹ *Merriam Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. “Sacrament,” accessed October 6, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sacrament>.

to bring believers “into communion with his death and resurrection, and thus with himself through the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3–5; 1 Corinthians 11:23–27; Col. 2:11–12). These sacred acts are “the visible enactment of the word proclaimed in the kerygma, and their significance should be understood as such.”¹⁰ It is inevitable, then, that in time, these sacred acts should come to be regarded as “giving fellowship in the same *mystērion* [mystery] of the Word made flesh (I Tim. 3:16), and should be interpreted as themselves partaking in the mystery of the relationship between Christ and his church (Eph. 5:32).”¹¹ The Latin word *sacramentum* later became the prominent word, replacing *mystērion*, used in reference to sacred rites, which became known as *sacramenta*, or sacraments, or things “set apart as sacred.” This concept impacted the meaning of the sacred rites of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper in that they became “regarded as conveying grace in themselves, rather than as relating men through faith in Christ.”¹²

Augustine later nuanced the meaning of sacrament “as a ‘visible word’ or an ‘outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.’”¹³ This definition is much closer to the Protestant/Evangelical/Pentecostal understanding of the sacraments. For most Pentecostals, sacraments are “external rites directed by Scripture and observed by the gathered people of God.”¹⁴ In Pentecostal circles, “sacrament” is used “in a cognitive/symbolic way, rather than in the causal way that might suggest that salvation is conveyed *ex opere operato* [by the work done¹⁵], through the administration of the sacrament.”¹⁶

While Pentecostalism has traditionally and formally eschewed anything associated with sacramentality, early publications within the movement reveal that Pentecostals have historically engaged in sacramental thought and practice. Outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace are abundantly present in Pentecostal practice. We anoint the sick with oil, laying hands on them in prayer, and expect physical and spiritual healing (James 5:14–15; Mark 6:13). We anoint cloths to be sent to the sick, and by laying these cloths upon them, we expect their healing (Acts 19:12). We ordain those who have been called by God for ministry, laying hands upon them, praying, and expecting the Holy Spirit to impart to them spiritual gifts for ministry

¹⁰ R. S. Wallace, “Sacrament,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 965.

¹¹ Wallace, “Sacrament,” 965.

¹² Wallace, “Sacrament,” 965.

¹³ Wallace, “Sacrament,” 965.

¹⁴ Hunter, “Ordinances, Pentecostal,” 947.

¹⁵ “Ex Opera Operato,” The Episcopal Church, from *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church*, ed. Don S. Armentrout and Robert Boak Slocum (New York: Church Publishing, Inc., 2000), accessed October 13, 2023, <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/ex-opere-operato/>.

¹⁶ Hunter, “Ordinances, Pentecostal,” 947.

(1 Timothy 4:14). We baptize converts in water so that their obedience to Christ, and their confession in and identity with him might confirm and strengthen their confession (Romans 6:4; 1 Peter 3:21). Some Pentecostal and Charismatic theologians even consider tongues in sacramental terms. Frank D. Macchia writes:

Some theologians refer to sacraments as “signs” . . . as the ritual means by which God embraces believers and makes the divine grace and love present to experience. Thus, some have viewed the term “sign,” especially as defined sacramentally, as a way of describing tongues. . . . In part, the “sacramental” understanding of tongues seeks to account for the integral connection between the potential depth and breadth of the Spirit baptismal experience and the symbolic expression of tongues. . . .¹⁷

In other words, speaking in tongues is an outward (and audible) sign of an inward operational grace of the Holy Spirit and can, therefore, be understood sacramentally.

When we wash each other’s feet, we receive the blessing of God’s favor and learn humility and servanthood from Christ’s example (John 13:12-17). We eat the bread and drink the cup of Communion to enjoy spiritual fellowship with Christ and his body, the church (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). Throughout the history of the Pentecostal movement, these and other outward actions have been done in expectation of inward and outward manifestations of God through the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals have observed these sacred practices as ways of “encountering and imitating the risen Jesus and mediation of the grace of divine transformative presence. These rites were never merely ceremonial or memorialistic, although their rich symbolism was not lost on the practitioners.”¹⁸

I. Terminology

The night before his betrayal, suffering, and death, Jesus earnestly desired to celebrate his last Passover meal with his disciples. At the end of this meal, Jesus instituted another meal to be celebrated among gathered Christian believers until his Second Coming. Christians use the following terms to refer to this meal:

- **The Lord’s Supper** calls to memory the suffering and death on the cross of our Lord Jesus and the sobriety surrounding the evening of the institution of the Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20).

¹⁷ Frank D. Macchia, *Groans Too Deep for Words: Towards a Theology of Tongues as Initial Experience*, PDF file, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.aptspress.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/98-2-macchia.pdf>.

¹⁸ Chris E. W. Green, *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of the Lord’s Supper: Foretasting the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2012), 177-178.

- **Communion** places emphasis on the participation in the broken body and the blood of Christ shared among the worshipping community (1 Corinthians 10:16).
- **Eucharist** means “giving thanks.” In preparing and celebrating the meal, the minister and gathered believers thank God for sending his Son to give his life for the forgiveness of sins and our salvation (1 Corinthians 11:24).
- **Breaking of the Bread** emphasizes the presence of our resurrected Lord in celebrating the meal at the Lord’s Table. Breaking the bread is reflective of Christ’s actions in breaking and distributing the bread to his disciples in his post-resurrection appearances to his disciples. In the celebration of the meal, breaking the bread is an identifying sign of the Lord’s presence (Acts 2:42, 46).¹⁹

II. The Passover Seder: The Context for the Institution of the Lord’s Supper

Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper on the evening he celebrated the Passover with his disciples for the last time before his death on the cross (Matthew 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–23; John 13:1–2). Jesus was an observant Jew and would have been accustomed to celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem with his family since childhood (Luke 2:41).

The Passover is a seven-day²⁰ springtime festival celebrating the liberation of the children of Israel after four hundred years of slavery in Egypt, as recorded in Exodus 12–14.²¹ The Passover Seder (meal) is observed on the first evening of the Passover festival. Each celebration has three focuses: past, present, and future.

The Past

The Passover is a celebration of the remembrance of the mighty acts of God in the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt and from the death of the firstborn male of each household that had not smeared the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorposts and lintels of their houses. So, the Passover is a remembrance and celebration of a past historical event.

¹⁹ Robert E. Webber, ed., *The Complete Library of Christian Worship*, vol. 3, *The Renewal of Sunday Worship* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1993), 252; Chris E. W. Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 210–217.

²⁰ Some Jews extend the festival to eight days. See Wayne Dosick, *Living Judaism: The Complete Guide to Jewish Belief, Tradition, and Practice* (New York, NY: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995), 162, 167, 173–174.

²¹ Dosick, *Living Judaism*, 162.

The Present

In celebrating the Passover, each participant places himself/herself in the narrative as if he/she had been freed from Egypt. This involves both a personal and corporate connection with the people and events remembered in the Passover and a celebration of the continuing benefits of that deliverance.²²

The Future

After the Passover meal (Seder), participants proclaim, “Next year in Jerusalem!” For almost 2,000 years, the Jews of the Diaspora prayed that, just as the children of Israel had wandered forty years in the wilderness and were finally brought to the Promised Land, they too would return to the land of Israel. Their prayer was answered by establishing the modern State of Israel in 1948.²³

Additionally, the proclamation, “Next year in Jerusalem!” expresses the hope and prayer of ultimate redemption, for “‘Jerusalem’ has come to mean not only the earthly city of Jerusalem but signifies an ‘eternal Jerusalem,’ a symbol of ultimate peace and perfection.”²⁴ This is a concept in both Judaism and Christianity (see Revelation 21:9-27).

Jesus emphatically expressed his desire to celebrate his last Passover meal with his disciples (Luke 22:14-16). According to the tradition, Jesus would have shared the seder of roasted lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs with his disciples (Exodus 12:5-8).

The setting and context of the institution of the supper were not arbitrary or coincidental. On the contrary, the biblical record that encompasses the Passover event, the exodus of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12-14), and the annual celebration of the Passover Seder by the Jews foreshadow Christ’s institution of the Lord’s Supper and its celebration by subsequent generations of Christians. The actions of the Passover—the slaughtering of a lamb, daubing its blood on the doorposts and lintels of the houses of the Israelites to save the life of the firstborn of each family from death, the consumption of its flesh shared in a family meal—prefigure “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), whose death is remembered in the Lord’s Supper. The correlation between the slaughtering of the Passover lamb and Jesus’ death on the cross for the salvation of all who believe in him is inescapable. The Apostle

²² Dosick, *Living Judaism*, 163-164.

²³ Dosick, *Living Judaism*, 172-173.

²⁴ Dosick, *Living Judaism*, 173.

Paul, in fact, writes, “. . . Christ, our Passover lamb,²⁵ has been sacrificed” (1 Corinthians 5:7 ESV; see also NET, NIV, NLT, and others), thus fulfilling the true meaning of the Jewish sacrifice of the Passover lamb. Therefore, the Lord’s Supper is, in a very real sense, the Christians’ Passover.

III. The Lord’s Supper in the Synoptic Gospels: The Actions and Words of Jesus

The Actions: Taking, Blessing, Breaking, and Giving

The Synoptic Gospel accounts of the institution of the Lord’s Supper agree on the actions and words of Jesus. There are four principal actions in the administration of the bread. They are taking, blessing (thanksgiving), breaking, and giving (Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19). The principal actions in the administration of the cup are taking, thanksgiving, and giving (Matthew 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:20, implied in verse 19).

Incidentally, these four actions of taking, blessing (thanksgiving), breaking, and giving are the same actions Jesus performed in the miracle of the multiplication of the bread and fish in the feeding of the five thousand (Matthew 14:19; Mark 6:41; Luke 9:16) and in the feeding of the four thousand (Matthew 15:36; Mark 8:6). The early Christians saw in the Lord’s taking, blessing, breaking, and giving the bread to the disciples to distribute to the multitude, a prefiguring of the superabundance of the bread of the Lord’s Supper given to believers throughout time and space.²⁶

In his post-resurrection appearance to two apparently disheartened, disillusioned, and confused disciples on the road to Emmaus, Jesus chided them for not discerning what the prophets had written about the necessity “that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory” (Luke 24:26 ESV). Even though their hearts burned as Jesus opened the Scriptures to them, they did not recognize him because “their eyes were kept from recognizing him” (Luke 24:16). When the disciples

²⁵ In some English versions of the Bible, the phrase is translated as “Christ, our Passover, has also been sacrificed” (NASB; see also KJV, NKJV, NJB). “Passover” is a literal translation of the Greek word *πάσχα* (*pascha*); however, since Paul uses the word in the context of sacrifice, it undoubtedly demands the term, “Passover lamb” [Walter Bauer, s.v. “πάσχα,” *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian Literature*, ed. F. W. Gingrich and F. W. Danker, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1979), 633; s.v. “πάσχα” in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Moises Silva, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 3:665]. The RSV and NRSV versions offer a transliteration of “πάσχα,” translating the term as “paschal lamb.”

²⁶ “Apostolic Constitution of the Roman Catholic Church,” *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1995), 371–372. See also “The Miracle of the Multiplication” in “Early Symbols of the Eucharist,” Catholic Online, accessed January 25, 2017, <http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=4347>.

invited Jesus into their home, he sat at table with them and performed the same four actions: taking bread, giving thanks, breaking it, and giving it to them. “And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him” (Luke 24:31). At that moment of enlightenment, Jesus “vanished from their sight” (Luke 24:31). The Emmaus disciples returned to Jerusalem to tell the eleven remaining disciples about their encounter with their risen Lord. “They told what had happened on the road, and how [Jesus] was known to them in the breaking of the bread” (Luke 24:35).

How did the breaking of the bread in the presence of the disciples from Emmaus serve as a catalyst to open their spiritual eyes and awaken their understanding of what Jesus told them as he walked with them on the road? Was it the now familiar actions of taking, blessing, breaking, and giving the bread? Had they witnessed the miracles of the multiplication of loaves and fishes? Were they in the upper room when Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper? Is the phrase “breaking of the bread” synecdochical for the encompassing actions of Jesus at the table (see also Acts 2:42, 46)? Or did the scars in Jesus’ hands identify him as their crucified and risen Lord? Luke does not explain but simply says, “When [Jesus] was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him” (Luke 24:30–31).²⁷

The verbs that refer to the two disciples’ inability to recognize Jesus as they walked together on the road to Emmaus, on the one hand, and to recognize him in the breaking of the bread on the other, are passive verbs. “But their eyes *were kept* from recognizing him” (Luke 24:16); “And their eyes *were opened*, and they recognized him. . .” (Luke 24:31; emphasis added). In other words, the “blinding” and “opening” of the disciples’ eyes were enacted upon them, not by their own volition, but from an outside source. There seems to be no doubt that the source was a demonstration of divine activity. In one instance, God kept the disciples from recognizing Christ; in another, he opened their eyes to recognize him. Christ’s breaking of the bread was the sign that precipitated the opening of the spiritual eyes of the disciples.²⁸

The sacred, symbolic actions performed in the sacraments are not merely perfunctory, meaningless actions, as we have seen in Christ’s example of breaking bread. A. J. Tomlinson wrote of a particular experience in 1910 in which the presence of Christ was made known in the breaking of the bread while officiating the Lord’s Supper:

²⁷ David Lyle Jeffrey, *Luke*, in *Brazos Theological Commentary of the Bible*, ed. R. R. Reno (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2012), 286.

²⁸ David L. Tiede, *Luke, Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988), 437.

As the bread was broken and mention was made of the broken body of Jesus, He seemed to manifest His presence in the midst. As I stood there in the presence of God and before the large audience with the broken bread; a piece in each hand, I seemed to get a broader view of the Christ and wonderful scheme of redemption than ever before.²⁹

Sacred actions embody profound spiritual significance when done conscientiously, informed by the Scriptures, and led by the Holy Spirit. Breaking Communion bread in view of gathered believers is a visual reminder that Christ's body was broken for them (I Corinthians 11:24 KJV, NKJV).

The Words of Institution

“Take, eat; this is my body. . . . Drink . . . for this is my blood. . . .”

The words that Jesus spoke when he served the bread and cup to his disciples are germane in orienting us to the theological and spiritual importance of the meal.

After Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, he said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” Then “he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins’” (Matthew 26:26-28 ESV).³⁰ These words are shocking, even offensive, to our human sensibilities, and especially offensive to the Jews for whom the Law prohibited the eating of human flesh and blood of any kind. They have been a source of controversy and division within the Christian church for centuries.³¹ How can the bread and the cup, or “fruit of the vine,” served in the Lord’s Supper, be the body and blood of Jesus?

To answer that question, we grapple with the theological concept (doctrine) of *Real Presence*, which is a term that refers to the idea of the actual presence of Christ in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper (in some form), in contrast to the idea that Christ is only present in memory, figuratively or symbolically.³²

²⁹ A. J. Tomlinson, “Fourth of July at the Tabernacle,” *The Evening Light and the Church of God Evangel*, July 15, 1910, quoted in Daniel Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments: Encountering God at the Altar* (Cleveland, TN: Center for Pentecostal Leadership and Care, Pentecostal Theological Seminary, 2010), 169.

³⁰ “Take; this is my body” (Mark 14:22); “This is my body, which is given for you” (Luke 22:19).

³¹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles; (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1960), 2:1360.

³² F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., s.v. “Real Presence,” *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1370.

What did Jesus mean when he said, “. . . this [bread] is my body . . . this [fruit of the vine] is my blood”? Did he mean that the bread and “fruit of the vine” were actually transformed into his flesh and blood but retained the appearance (species) of bread and the fruit of the vine? This concept is foundational to the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, a principal doctrine of the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church.³³

Did Jesus mean that the substance of Christ’s body and the substance of the bread were present together? This concept is foundational to the doctrine of *consubstantiation* that Martin Luther espoused and is the position of the Lutheran Church and some Anglican and Methodist churches.

Did Jesus mean that he is spiritually present in the bread and fruit of the vine through the presence of the Holy Spirit? This was John Calvin’s understanding and the position of most Reformed churches.³⁴

Did Jesus mean that the bread and fruit of the vine were only *symbols* of the body and blood of Christ, and that the Lord’s Supper was simply a memorial meal? That was Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli’s position.

Early Anabaptist theologians Balthasar Hubmaier (1480–1528), Pilgram Marpeck (1495–1556), and Dirk Phillips (1504–1568) advocated the replacement of any ceremonial use of outward signs as a means of divine grace with the exercise of the faith of the recipients. Therefore, emphasis was shifted away from the presence of Christ in the elements of the sacramental meal to the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the gathered community of believers. “. . . [W]hen bread and wine are shared in the power of the Spirit, with those who are gathered in faith and love. . . [they] are united with Christ and one another.”³⁵ So, for the Anabaptists, the Lord’s Supper was a celebration of the presence of Christ through the agency of the Holy Spirit in the communal life of believers.

Zwingli’s position of the Lord’s Supper as a memorial meal has historically, however, been the position of most Evangelical and Pentecostal churches.³⁶ Pentecostal theologians William W. Menzies and Stanley M. Horton defend the Zwinglian position that the Lord’s Supper is, first and foremost, a commemorative meal. Secondly, they observe

³³ Apostolic Constitution of the Roman Catholic Church, *Catechism*, 383–386.

³⁴ Calvin, *Institutes*, 1363, 1370–1373, 1381–1382. (See also Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 166.)

³⁵ John, D. Remple, “Sacraments in the Radical Reformation,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Sacramental Theology*, ed. Hans Boersma and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 298, 302–310.

³⁶ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 167. See also N. T. Wright, *The Meal Jesus Gave Us: Understanding Holy Communion* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, [2015?]), 63.

that partaking of the physical and tangible symbols of bread and the fruit of the vine are, as “a sacred object lesson,” instructional in affirming Christ’s incarnation. Thirdly, the celebration of the Lord’s Supper is inspirational in reminding us that, by faith, we gain access to the benefits of the death and resurrection of Jesus, although there is no transmission of grace in the consumption of the elements.³⁷

Some contemporary Pentecostal theologians, however, explain the personal presence of Christ in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper through the immediacy of the Holy Spirit. Chris E. W. Green writes,

Plainly put, the church’s Eucharistic-event is an experience of Christ’s personal presence, by the power of the Spirit immediately mediated and mediately immediate. The Eucharist is not a *replacement* for the words and works of an absent, far-removed Christ. No, through the sacramental bread and wine ‘the signs transmit the signified’ so that Jesus is thereby and therein transformatively *present*.³⁸

A. J. Tomlinson held a deep conviction and reverence for the Lord’s Supper. He customarily instructed new church members about the doctrine and observance of the Supper when he organized churches. He regarded the Communion elements with the utmost reverence. In one of his teachings on the Supper, he wrote, “This is an extremely sacred service. It is as if the body of our Lord is lying there in the presence of the humble worshipers.”³⁹ Tomlinson’s words reveal a profound conviction of the presence of Christ at the Lord’s Supper in some sense. However, in his 1910 experience, as previously stated, Tomlinson officiated the Lord’s Supper, standing before the congregation with the broken bread in his hands, as he encountered the presence of the living Christ.⁴⁰

A Pentecostal understanding of the real presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper is explained in terms of

a dyadic relationship between the Son and the Spirit. That is, in the economy of salvation, the work of the Son and the Spirit are interdependent. The believer encounters one through the activity of the other. According to Hebrews, Christ our High Priest, offered Himself as a spotless sacrifice to God “through the eternal Spirit” (Hebrews 9:14). The bread and the cup of the Eucharist are gifts

³⁷ William W. Menzies and Stanley M. Horton, *Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2015), 116.

³⁸ Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 288.

³⁹ Lillie A. Duggar, *A. J. Tomlinson: Former General Overseer of the Church of God* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 1964), 93.

⁴⁰ A. J. Tomlinson, “Fourth of July at the Tabernacle,” quoted in Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 169.

of Christ through the Spirit. The “real presence” in the Eucharist is more than Pneumatic, it is Christo-Pneumatic. The Eucharist is possible only by virtue of Pentecost. The Spirit makes Christ really present in the bread and cup. . . . With emphasis on the miraculous, it seems logical that Pentecostals would be willing to affirm the presence of Christ and the Spirit in the bread and cup of the holy meal.⁴¹

The concept of the “real presence” of Christ and the Spirit in the Lord’s Supper has been debated throughout centuries of the history of the Christian church, with different traditions developing their own theological conclusions and liturgies regarding this profoundly sacred sacrament. Although we may adamantly disagree with certain doctrines of other Christian traditions associated with the Lord’s Supper, we should honor and appreciate the arduous biblical and theological investigation of the Church Fathers, theologians, and scholars who labored to understand the meaning of the sacrament. We must understand that every orthodox Christian tradition places Christ at the center of the Eucharist and the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the celebration of the sacrament. It is regretful that the sacred act of worship that Christ intends, and Paul teaches as a means of expressing unity with Christ and his body, has too often divided believers.⁴² Meanwhile, recent Pentecostal scholarship has dared to lean away from the Zwinglian position of the Lord’s Supper as a memorial meal only, toward a celebration of true communion with the real presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

IV. The Theology of the Lord’s Supper in the Gospel of John, Chapter 6: Eating Jesus’ Flesh and Drinking His Blood

Interestingly, John only obliquely refers to the Lord’s Supper in chapter 13 of his Gospel and does not record its institution by Jesus. He chooses rather to focus on Jesus’ washing the disciples’ feet. Many Christians, however, see Jesus’ discourse in John 6 as the underlying theology of the Lord’s Supper, especially in verses 51–58.

The day after Jesus had miraculously fed a multitude of thousands with only five barley loaves and two fish on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, the crowd sought him out again on the other side of the sea (Tiberias). (The disciples had crossed over to the western side in a boat. During a storm, Jesus joined them, walking on the water.) The people had misunderstood the meaning of the sign that Jesus performed in multiplying the loaves and fish the previous day. They thought Jesus

⁴¹ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 174–175.

⁴² Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 168.

might be “the Prophet” (like Moses) whose coming had been prophesied in Deuteronomy 18:15 and 18, and they wanted to take him by force to make him king (John 6:14-15). Citing the provision of manna by which God miraculously fed the children of Israel in the desert through the intercession of Moses, the people ask for another sign to “see and believe” in Jesus (vv. 30-31). They clearly want a repetition of the miracle of the provision of bread.

Jesus challenges their misunderstanding and misplaced zeal, telling them that they are not really seeking him for signs but for another free meal. He refuses to perform another sign for them that day (v. 26). Instead, he admonishes them, “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has set his seal” (John 6:27 ESV). When the people ask what they must do to do the works of God, Jesus says,

This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent. . . . Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. (John 6:29, 32-33)

Of course, the people want this bread, but they still do not understand. It is then that Jesus plainly tells the people,

I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. . . . For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me . . . that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day . . . that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life. (John 6:35, 38-40)

Here, Jesus’ discourse takes a drastic turn. In the first part of the discourse (vv. 22-50), Jesus engaged the multitude in a conversation about bread (or manna) that sustains physical life, transitioning to a discussion about bread that gives eternal life, then revealing to them that he is the Bread of Life that has descended from God out of heaven, having the power to give eternal life to those who believe in him. It was not lost on the crowd that Jesus was claiming divinity.

If these statements were not offensive enough to the multitude gathered that day, what he said afterward was too much for them to bear.

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. . . . Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you

eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. *For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.* (John 6:51, 53–56; emphasis added)

The multitude, hearing these words, was confounded, and the people asked among themselves, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” (John 6:52). The words seemed cannibalistic to them; the Law prohibited the consumption of both human flesh and blood of any kind. From that point forward, “many of [Jesus’] disciples turned back and no longer walked with him” (John 6:66). Their desertion was so great that Jesus asked his disciples if they, too, were going to abandon him. It seems surprising that, despite the desertion of many of his disciples because of his words, Jesus did not soften or alter them. What, then, did he mean by saying, “Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day?” These words express the same idea when Jesus, in the institution of the Lord’s Supper, said, “Take, eat; this is my body. . . . Drink . . . for this is my blood . . .” (Matthew 26:26–28).

Christ’s words again spark the debates of what it means for him to be present in the Lord’s Supper, and what it means to eat his flesh and drink his blood. The Church of God of Prophecy does not adhere to the doctrines of transubstantiation and consubstantiation. As people of the Spirit, we may, to an extent, consider the Reformed understanding of Christ being spiritually present in the bread and fruit of the vine. As previously stated, however, the Zwinglian position regarding the elements of the Lord’s Supper as symbols representing the body and blood of Christ while celebrating a memorial meal has been the traditional position of the Church of God of Prophecy. However, when we consider the actions and words of Christ, one might wonder if there is not something more in the sacrament than memory and symbols.

While Raymond M. Pruitt, past bishop of the Church of God of Prophecy and author of *Fundamentals of the Faith*, embraced the Zwinglian idea of the Lord’s Supper as a memorial meal, he nevertheless states that “believers do not merely look at the symbols [of bread and fruit of the vine], but receive them and feed upon them. Figuratively, they ‘eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood’ (John 6:53).”⁴³

⁴³ Raymond M. Pruitt, *Fundamentals of the Faith* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House and Press, 1981), 366.

A. J. Tomlinson wrote that partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine “should be taken with the thought of it being the Lord’s flesh and blood corresponding with other words of our Lord: ‘Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you’ (John 6:53).”⁴⁴ Pruitt’s and Tomlinson’s statements seem to venture beyond an understanding of participation in the Lord’s Supper as mere memory and symbols.

A historical review of the interpretation of John 6 informs us that, at the basic level, most readers agree that Jesus’ teaching speaks about a transformational belief in Christ. The metaphors of eating and drinking are, in essence, “theological code for spiritually receiving Christ and his benefits by faith in his life-giving death for the sake of the world.”⁴⁵ Nonetheless, on another level, due to the spiritual nature of John’s Gospel, the context surrounding Jesus’ teaching, and the church’s sacramental experience, it is entirely fitting to interpret Jesus’ references to eating and drinking as foreshadowing participation in the Lord’s Supper.⁴⁶ This view dates back to the early years of Christianity.

Chris E. W. Green proposes that

the convictions and experiences Christian readers bring to the text make it impossible for them not to hear at least allusions to the Eucharist. Consequently, we can reasonably propose that readers of the Fourth Gospel are warranted in taking the discourse as instruction both about *both* believing in Christ (i.e. feeding spiritually on him) and about the meaning of the church’s sacramental practice and experience.⁴⁷

When understood in this way, Jesus’ discourse in John 6 reveals that the church’s participation in the Lord’s Supper “is one of the God-given signs of Christ’s being ‘lifted up.’”⁴⁸ John, in his first epistle, states that the blood of Christ testifies to the truth that he is the Son of God (1 John 5:6-8). Since the Lord’s Supper is a sign of this truth, believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God entails faithful participation in the Supper. According to Jesus’ teaching in John 6, whoever believes in him also eats and drinks the signs of his flesh and blood, thereby enjoying fellowship (communion) with him and having eternal life (John 6:40, 51, 54-58). But those who refuse to eat and drink have no life (John 6:53). Jesus draws a strong correlation between believing in him and consuming his flesh and blood.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Duggar, *A. J. Tomlinson*, 94.

⁴⁵ Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 236.

⁴⁶ Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 236-237.

⁴⁷ Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 230.

⁴⁸ Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 237.

⁴⁹ Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 237.

We should not think, however, that there is some supernatural transference of eternal life to those who eat the bread and drink “the fruit of the vine” at the Lord’s Supper. Believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, believing in the salvific benefits of his death on the cross, and partaking of the Lord’s Supper in faith are key to the spiritual benefits of the Supper. The spiritual benefits of communion with Christ in the Supper indicate its sacramental character. It is possible to eat and drink faithlessly, even to one’s own guilt and judgment (1 Corinthians 11:27, 29), and not receive the benefits of the Lord’s Supper. On the other hand, it is a betrayal of Christ’s presence in a Christian’s life to believe in him and yet refuse to partake of the Lord’s Supper (John 6:53).⁵⁰

We should never allow the ceremonial and sacramental nature (words, actions, etc.) of the Lord’s Supper to draw our focus away from the fact that we are identifying, communing, and participating with Christ and his cross. The words, actions, and elements (bread and “fruit of the vine”) used in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper are of themselves no benefit if not received in faith. However, when they are received in faith, “they become life-giving because they are instruments of the saving words of Jesus, who himself is the Father’s saving Word.”⁵¹ Our eating and drinking in Communion “must draw us into the very life of Christ who invites us to imitate him, making it possible to be conformed to his reality, his ‘image’.”⁵²

V. The Apostle Paul’s Teaching on the Lord’s Supper

A thorough reading of Paul’s first letter to the Corinthian church reveals that the Corinthian Christians participated regularly in the Lord’s Supper and that they did so in the context of a larger fellowship (agape) meal (1 Corinthians 11:17–22). However, Paul sharply addresses the abuses that were occurring in the shared meals, and especially in the observance of the Lord’s Supper. In fact, Paul states that the Corinthians’ coming together to celebrate the Lord’s Supper resulted in worsening the condition of the church rather than improving it. The reason was that they brought their divisions, factions, and prejudices with them to the Table. Paul tells them that whatever they were doing, it could not be called the Lord’s Supper. Some were quick to serve themselves and dined well, and some even got drunk. Others went hungry. Such attitudes and conduct, in what was intended to be a communal meal, humiliated their poor brothers and sisters, deepening the divisions in the church. In doing

⁵⁰ Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 237.

⁵¹ Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 237.

⁵² Green, *Lord’s Supper*, 237.

so, they desecrated the spirit and significance of the Lord's Supper. Paul goes as far as to say that the offenders despised the church of God (v. 22).

Paul then reiterates the teaching he had given to the Corinthian Christians on a previous occasion (implied in v. 23) concerning the Lord's Supper. Paul's teaching is "from the Lord," in keeping with the "Apostles' doctrine," and is basically a restatement of Jesus' institution of the Supper "on the night he was betrayed" (v. 23). The actions of taking, giving thanks, and breaking are again mentioned in the sharing of the bread (vv. 23-24). The giving is implied. The cup, the "new covenant in [Jesus'] blood," is also taken and given (v. 25). In both the giving of the bread and the cup, Jesus says, "Do this in remembrance of me." Therefore, Paul affirms that the Lord's Supper is indeed a memorial meal.

Not only is the Lord's Supper a memorial meal, remembering the past event of Jesus' passion and death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:28), but it is also an anticipation of the future event of Christ's return to establish God's kingdom in its fullness. Matthew and Mark record Jesus' intimation to his disciples that he would no longer drink the fruit of the vine until he would drink it with them anew in the kingdom of God (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25). Paul underscores both the past and future aspects of the celebration of the Lord's Supper when he writes, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death [past event] until he comes [future event]." One of the joyously anticipated events associated with the Second Coming of our Lord, and the establishment of God's eternal kingdom, is the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7, 9), the ultimate union of Christ with the church. In a sense, each celebration of the Lord's Supper is a rehearsal for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

We have considered the past and future aspects of celebrating the Lord's Supper, but what about its present aspect? Paul closely associates an individual's worthiness to participate in the Lord's Supper with his/her relationships with his/her brothers and sisters within the worshiping community. While any unconfessed sin might render someone unworthy to participate in the Supper, the context of 1 Corinthians 11 suggests that Paul is specifically referring to the sins of divisiveness, prejudice, and partiality as being those that make one particularly unworthy to participate in the Lord's Supper. The church in Corinth was a divided and divisive church. Paul, in fact, reprimands the Corinthians for their divisiveness early in his first letter to them, beginning with chapter 1, verse 10. The remainder of the letter addresses issues that had fostered contention and division among them. The Corinthians were divided over church leadership and spiritual authority; they were divided over

spiritual gifts and their manifestations in public worship; and they were divided over economic and social status.

Sadly, the Corinthians brought their divisions to the Lord's Table. Paul sternly addresses the issue: "When you come together it is not for the better but for the worse" (1 Corinthians 11:17), and "it is not the Lord's supper that you eat" (v. 20). The divisiveness among the people within the Corinthian church had desecrated the sacred observance of the Lord's Supper, and it had become something other than sacred, holy communion with Christ and the members of his body. Paul reprimands the Corinthians for despising the church of God and humiliating the poor among them (v. 22). It was their sinful attitudes and behaviors that made some of the Corinthian Christians unworthy to "eat of the bread and drink of the cup" (v. 28). They failed to discern the body of Christ, both in the bread and in the gathered church (v. 29). Consequently, some of those who had partaken of the Supper unworthily had become weak and ill. Some had died (v. 30). Self-examination and preparation for partaking of the Lord's Supper includes repenting and asking forgiveness for relational sins and offenses within the body of Christ and seeking reconciliation with one's brother or sister.

Some church members do not partake of the Lord's Supper because they feel unworthy. However, if participation in the sacrament required absolute sinless perfection, none of us would be eligible to approach the Lord's Table. As flawed and imperfect human beings, we all struggle with thoughts, attitudes, deeds, and relationships that do not always reflect the image of Christ. For this reason, Paul exhorts us to examine or judge ourselves *and then* partake of the Supper.⁵³ Self-examination gives each believer the opportunity to invite the Holy Spirit to test the heart and mind, and if anyone discerns that there is something amiss, to repent of it before partaking of the Lord's Supper.⁵⁴ The importance of participating in the Supper cannot be underestimated.

So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. (John 6:53-56)

We should understand that "flesh and blood" is a Hebrew idiom signifying the whole man. This would have provided the cultural and

⁵³ 1 Corinthians 11:28, 31-32.

⁵⁴ Psalm 26:2-3; 139:23-24.

linguistic context for Jesus' words, whether spoken in Aramaic or Greek. Therefore, it can be stated undisputedly that participation in the Lord's Supper is an expression of faith in the whole Christ,⁵⁵ personally receiving him and his work on our behalf.⁵⁶

Paul imparts further insight that eating the bread and drinking the cup unite us in fellowship with Christ and one another.

The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. (I Corinthians 10:16-17)

Drinking the Communion "cup of blessing" brings us into fellowship with the blood of Christ who, at the institution of the Lord's Supper, said, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (Luke 22:20). By drinking the cup, we share in the provisions and benefits of the new covenant.⁵⁷ Eating the Communion bread does two things. First, it brings us into fellowship with Christ, who blessed and broke the bread, gave it to his disciples and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Second, Paul introduces a nuance in the meaning of the bread of Communion. In addition to being the symbol for the physical body of Christ, it is also a symbol for the church, the body of Christ. Paul writes, "The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). When believers eat the Communion bread, they affirm that "through Christ's death they are 'partners' in the redeemed community, the new eschatological people of God."⁵⁸ Paul's insight regarding the nature of the Lord's Supper made division at the Lord's Table particularly detestable.

VI. A Summary of the Meanings of the Lord's Supper

- A. The Lord's Supper is a memorial meal, observed in remembrance of Jesus's suffering, shedding of blood, and physical death on the cross for our salvation.
- B. The Lord's Supper is the personal and corporate participation in the body of Christ that was crucified in our stead.

⁵⁵ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 282.

⁵⁶ John, *NET Bible, Full Notes Edition* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2019), 2014.

⁵⁷ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), 468.

⁵⁸ Fee, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 469.

- C. The Lord's Supper is the personal and corporate participation in the cup of blessing, the new covenant, through the blood of Christ.
- D. The Lord's Supper is the personal and corporate participation and fellowship in the body of Christ, the church, the one bread and cup symbolizing the unity of the church.
- E. The Lord's Supper is a celebration in anticipation of the Second Coming of Christ.
- F. The Lord's Supper is a celebration in anticipation of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

VII. The Practice of the Lord's Supper in the Church of God of Prophecy

“Communion and feet washing” were recognized as “holy ordinances” in the first General Assembly of the Church of God in 1906. The Assembly recommended that the ordinances “*may* be engaged in at the same service or at different times at the option of the local Churches” (emphasis added).⁵⁹ It was recommended that every member of the Church should engage in these “sacred services” in order “to preserve the unity of the body, and to obey the sacred Word.”⁶⁰ However, in the 13th General Assembly in 1917, “it was decided that the two [the Lord's Supper and Feet Washing] are inseparable, and one should follow the other in succession in the same service.”⁶¹ This position was reaffirmed in the 63rd General Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy in 1968 with the caveat that the two ordinances should be ministered together “when possible.”⁶² In the 100th International Assembly, the Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee presented a document entitled “The Sacrament of Footwashing,” which recommended that the sacrament “be observed as often as possible, whether after Communion, or at a separate time.”⁶³

Neither Jesus, in the institution of the Lord's Supper, nor Paul in his discourse on the sacrament, provide specific counsel for the frequency of its observance. Paul writes, “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes” (1 Corinthians 11:26). Nevertheless, there is biblical and historical evidence that New Testament and early Christians observed the Lord's Supper every Sunday, if not more

⁵⁹ Church of God of Prophecy, *General Assembly Minutes: Photographic Reproductions of the First Ten General Assembly Minutes* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House and Press, 1992), 9.

⁶⁰ Church of God of Prophecy, *First Ten Assembly Minutes*, 11.

⁶¹ *Minutes of the Thirteenth General Assembly of the Church of God* (1917), 37.

⁶² *Minutes of the 63rd Annual Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 1968), 117.

⁶³ Church of God of Prophecy, *Business Acts* (2018), 21.

often.⁶⁴ The following passages suggest that the Lord's Supper ("breaking bread") was an integral element in the worship of the New Testament church: "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). "And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts" (2:46). "On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them . . ." (Acts 20:7). Liturgical churches (Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican/Episcopal) regard the Eucharist as the central feature or "summit" of the worship service.

In 1906, the first Assembly of the Church of God recommended that "these holy ordinances should be observed one or more times a year."⁶⁵ M. A. Tomlinson lamented the lack of observance of the Lord's Supper among many of the churches in his annual address to the 57th General Assembly in 1962. He commented that "[s]ome pastors arrange for it at least once each quarter four times a year."⁶⁶ This may have been influenced by the Zwinglian practice of celebrating the Lord's Supper "only four times a year."⁶⁷ The Church of God of Prophecy has never established a specific rule of observance other than the recommendation that the Lord's Supper should be observed at least quarterly.⁶⁸ Therefore, quarterly observance of the Lord's Supper has been the most common practice, although irregular and infrequent observances of the sacrament have perhaps contributed to its neglect and perceived lack of importance among some members of the Church. Others have held a somewhat restrictive attitude toward the observance, emphasizing "once a quarter" but ignoring "at least." There are no biblical or theological principles that would prohibit observing the Lord's Supper "once a day, once a week, once a month, or once a quarter."⁶⁹ There are those who have expressed concern that frequent observance of the Supper would dull its significance and make it "less special." Such a thought betrays the fact that one does not understand the profound sacredness, blessing, and joy of communing with our Lord in this most intimate act of worship. We might then ask ourselves if frequent intimate interaction with our spouses and families makes our time together less significant and "special."

⁶⁴ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 156.

⁶⁵ Church of God of Prophecy, *First Ten Assembly Minutes*, 11.

⁶⁶ Church of God of Prophecy, *Minutes of the 57th Annual Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 1962), 45.

⁶⁷ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 167.

⁶⁸ *Ministry Policy Manual*, 2018, 161.

⁶⁹ Pruitt, *Fundamentals*, 368.

VIII. The Administration of the Lord's Supper in the Church of God of Prophecy

A common practice has been to celebrate the Lord's Supper and Footwashing in an evening worship service (usually Sunday), making it more feasible and convenient to observe both sacraments together. Due to time restrictions, the observance of the sacraments during the Sunday morning worship services was not practical. Historically, some local churches celebrated the Lord's Supper after a quarterly business conference since both the conference and the sacraments were to be held quarterly, according to practices established by the International Assembly. However, such practice tended to make the observance of the Lord's Supper seem perfunctory, and its meaning and sacredness diminished.

In recent years, however, Sunday evening services have become less common, and midweek service attendance is too often sparse. Therefore, many churches celebrate the Lord's Supper on Sunday morning when attendance is normally higher, giving the people an opportunity to participate in this sacred act of worship.

The elements traditionally served in the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the Church of God of Prophecy are grape juice (unfermented "fruit of the vine"; Matthew 26:29),⁷⁰ and unleavened bread (Exodus 12:39; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8).⁷¹ The bread often takes the form of homemade unleavened bread, unsalted crackers, or, more recently, Communion wafers. Matzah (Passover crackers) and pita bread are of Middle Eastern origin and contribute to the authenticity of the meal as originally celebrated. Matzah is especially fitting for the Lord's Supper since Jesus instituted the Supper after the Passover celebration with his disciples, so it is assumed that unleavened bread was used. Messianic Jews point out that the browned toasted ridges in matzah remind the communicant of the stripes and bruises Jesus received on his body. "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5 NKJV). The small holes made in the preparation of matzah are reminiscent of the piercings in Jesus' hands, feet, and side. "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him

⁷⁰ *Minutes of the Seventh General Assembly of the Church of God* (1912), 19. See also Duggar, A. J. Tomlinson, 94, and Pruitt, *Fundamentals*, 367.

⁷¹ Pruitt, *Fundamentals*, 367.

as one mourns for his only son . . . (Zechariah 12:10).⁷² Pita is a softer bread that tears easily for distribution.

The Lord's Supper was instituted after the Passover celebration and is, therefore, a separate ritual, although there is a correspondence of meaning between the two observances. (That is why Paul can refer to Christ as "our Passover lamb" in 1 Corinthians 5:7.) Nevertheless, the Lord's Supper is not the Passover. This impacts our understanding of the elements used in administering the Lord's Supper. Dr. Harold Hunter writes,

It seems that the early church's use of unleavened bread . . . was something of a historical accident. That is, these elements are not intrinsic to the ceremony but were incorporated because of the historical situation [in the context of the Passover seder].⁷³

Although unleavened bread (Heb. מצות, *matzoth*; Gr. αζυμα, *azuma*) was required for Passover (Exodus 12:8, 11, 34, 39)⁷⁴ and the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:14 20; 13:3 10), shunning leavened bread in the Lord's Supper is neither biblically nor theologically required. Leaven (yeast) has both negative and positive connotations in the Old and New Testaments. It is a symbol of malice and evil (1 Corinthians 5:8) and the doctrine of the Pharisees (Matthew 16:6 12; Mark 8:14 21; Luke 12:1). Leaven is also a symbol of the kingdom of heaven, which is spreading throughout the world (Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20 21).⁷⁵ In the kingdom of God, we will one day feast with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:29).

Evidence shows that the early church used ordinary bread to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Indeed, the Greek word that Paul uses for bread in his teaching on the Lord's Supper is ἄρτος (common leavened bread), not αζυμα (unleavened bread).⁷⁶ Over time, differences developed between Eastern and Western Christianity in administering the sacrament. The Eastern Orthodox churches continued to use leavened bread, while the Western churches (Catholic and Protestant) began to use unleavened bread.⁷⁷

⁷² Barry and Steffi Rubin, *The Messianic Passover Haggadah* (Baltimore: The Lederer Foundation, 1989), 13.

⁷³ Hunter, "Ordinances, Pentecostal," 948.

⁷⁴ Silva, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*, 1:410 411.

⁷⁵ "Why Do Orthodox Churches Use Leavened Bread for Communion?," Saint John the Evangelist Orthodox Church, accessed January 6, 2024, <https://www.saintjohnchurch.org/why-orthodox-churches-use-leavened-bread/#:~:text=The%20Orthodox%20Church%20continues%20to%20use%20leavened%20bread%20in%20Holy,as%20a%20sacrifice%20of%20thanksgiving.>

⁷⁶ Silva, *New International Dictionary of the New Testament Theology and Exegesis*, 1:411.

⁷⁷ "TGC Asks: Does Scripture Demand Unleavened Bread in the Lord's Supper?" <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/does-scripture-demand-unleavened-bread-in-the-lords-supper/>. [accessed January 6, 2024].

A culturally and contextually appropriate substitute would be permissible in cultures where wheat or barley bread is unknown.

To serve the elements, many churches use Communion trays with refillable glass or disposable plastic cups for the drink, with a center indentation or separate plate for Communion bread. Hermetically sealed plastic cups containing both the drink and Communion wafer have become very popular for convenience and hygienic reasons. These, however, perfectly symbolize individualized faith expressions and the isolation of the participant rather than his or her fellowship and unity with the gathered body of Christ. The best way to convey the idea of the unity of the church in the observance of the Lord's Supper, visually and symbolically, is by using one bread (Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 10:16b-17) and a common cup (Matthew 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:25-26). Sanitation concerns about drinking from a common cup can be mitigated by each participant dipping the tip of their piece of bread into the cup before eating, thus receiving both elements together. This method is called *intinction*. Although receiving the fruit of the vine in this way may not be desirable for some, care should be taken that the sacrament be administered in a way believers may meaningfully partake of the bread and the cup without extraneous concerns.

There are several postures in which the congregation may receive the Lord's Supper. Many of us remember sitting at a table at the front of the sanctuary, prepared with a white tablecloth, with twelve chairs, six on each side and a thirteenth on one end, which was left vacant, symbolizing Christ's presence at the table. Participants were served, twelve at a time, while twelve others stood behind them, "tarrying" (literally, waiting) in prayer for them. Paul's intent in 1 Corinthians 11:33 was that the church should wait for each other until all had arrived so that they could eat together. After twelve had eaten and drank of the elements, they would rise, and twelve would take their place. While this is symbolic of the first Lord's Supper, it can take considerable time.

When invited by the minister, the whole church can come forward to partake of the Lord's Supper together, standing or kneeling. Their going forward to receive Communion is a conscious act of responding to the invitation to the Lord's Table. Alternatively, the people can be served in their pews.

IX. A Suggested Order of Service for the Observance of the Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper should be celebrated as a response to the proclamation of the Word of God. This does not mean that the sermon's content must

necessarily focus on the sacrament as its theme; whatever the theme of the sermon, it should always be Cristo-centric. Participation in the Supper is the congregation's "yes" to the Word.

When it is time to administer the Lord's Supper, the officiating minister may invite the congregation to engage in silent prayer for spiritual self-examination. David's prayer in Psalm 139:23-24 provides an excellent example for this moment of introspection: "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." A prayerful hymn or chorus on the theme of surrender to the Holy Spirit, self-examination, or commitment would be appropriate.⁷⁸

It is interesting to note that the Lord's Supper is the only sacrament that involves all five senses. We hear the proclamation of the Word of God, the eucharistic prayer, and the words of institution. We see the bread and the cup. We hold the elements in our hands. We smell and taste them. Christ has given the church a beautiful sacrament that makes his presence fully known to us.

The following suggested order of service takes the form of the "four-action shape" of the Lord's Supper discussed in Section III of this document: taking, blessing, breaking, and giving.⁷⁹

A. Taking

The action of taking can be expressed in two ways.

1. The officiant, in a spirit of reverence and gratitude, takes the bread and the cup together as the gift of God for the people of God, before offering the Eucharistic prayer and the distribution of the elements. In the bread and cup, believers receive the gift of God through his Son, Jesus Christ. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16). "In [Jesus Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight" (Ephesians 1:7-8).
2. "Taking" is the symbolic action of bringing the elements to the Table and presenting them to the officiant for the preparation of their distribution. The officiant may choose deacons, local leaders, ushers, or any members of the church to bring the elements to the Table. This action primarily symbolizes making an offering to God. The

⁷⁸ Webber, *Renewal of Sunday Worship*, 255.

⁷⁹ Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 48.

supreme offering that was ever made was Jesus' offering of his life to the Father in completion of his mission, offering his spirit to the Father at his death for the salvation of all those who would believe in him. "[H]ow much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Hebrews 9:14). Among the things remembered in the celebration of the Lord's Supper is Jesus' sacrifice. The once-and-for-all sacrifice is not repeated at the Table.⁸⁰

"Taking" or making an offering to God may include other expressions of giving. The officiant may invite the congregation to prayer, each offering his/her life as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1-2).⁸¹

The officiating minister may invite the worshipers to give their tithes and offerings during the time of "taking." Once they have given themselves totally to God, it should not be difficult to also give of their means. An appropriate congregational offertory hymn or song may be sung during this part of the service.

The overall theme of offering should create "the sense that the whole congregation is making an offering of praise and thanksgiving to almighty God. When the people are able to make connection with the symbolic action, their own offering of praise becomes more intense and moving."⁸²

B. Blessing (Thanksgiving)

The "blessing" is the eucharistic (or Communion) prayer of thanksgiving. The prayer contains three parts:

1. Praise

The prayer begins with thanks to God the Father for the goodness and blessings of Creation made available to us.

2. Commemoration

- a. Thanks is offered to God for sending his Son Jesus, and through his Incarnation, death, and resurrection, we have received the salvific benefits of his redemptive actions.
- b. Christ's words of institution may be included at this moment in the prayer.
- c. A prayer may be offered to express that in partaking of the Lord's Supper, we offer praise to the Father and offer our lives to him.

3. Petition

- a. Invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit upon the people in

⁸⁰ Webber, *Renewal of Sunday Worship*, 256.

⁸¹ Webber, *Renewal of Sunday Worship*, 256.

⁸² Webber, *Renewal of Sunday Worship*, 256.

their participation of the Supper, and that their faith might be confirmed in truth.

b. Petitions for prayer may here be included.

c. The officiant may conclude the prayer by leading the people in the Lord's Prayer.

C. Breaking the bread

In 1 Corinthians 10:17, Paul interprets the bread of Communion as “a sign of Christ, the Bread of Life, in whom the many people of the church are made one body. . . . The broken bread is the symbol of Christ broken for his people, the church, the body united with him in his death and resurrection.”⁸³

After the eucharistic prayer, the officiant may silently lift the bread for all to see, then break or tear it as a sign of Christ's body being broken for our salvation. As with Christ's breaking of the bread in the presence of those he served, the officiant's breaking of the bread in view of the congregation makes a visual and symbolic impact. While doing this, the minister may say, “Jesus said, ‘This is my body, which is given for you . . .’” (Luke 22:19).

The officiant may lift the cup, or tray of Communion cups containing the drink, repeating the words of the Lord, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20).

The officiant may invite the people to come forward, stand, or sit in the pew to partake of the Lord's Supper. It is fitting to sing a hymn or chorus telling of Christ's sacrifice of love for us while waiting to receive the bread and the cup.

D. Giving

The officiant (assisted by deacons or other ministers) may quote Jesus' words as recorded by Paul as the bread and the cup are being given to the people in an orderly manner and in an attitude of sacred reverence: Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of me. . . . For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes (1 Corinthians 11:24, 26).

Matthew writes that at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper, Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn before going to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30). A congregational hymn sung at the end of Communion is a beautiful way to end the service. Depending upon the focus or emphasis of the service, the theme of the hymn may be one of thanks for Christ's sacrifice that brought our salvation, a joyous hymn sung in anticipation of our Lord's Second Coming and

⁸³ Webber, *Renewal of Sunday Worship*, 261.

the marriage supper of the Lamb, or a hymn sung in affirmation and celebration of the unity of the body of Christ.⁸⁴

The Lord's Supper and Healing

Early Church Fathers believed that if partaking of the symbols of Christ's body and blood in Communion provided spiritual nourishment and healing, it could also provide physical healing. Ignatius, in his letter to the Ephesians, referred to "breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, the antidote we take in order not to die, but to live forever in Jesus Christ."⁸⁵ "Medicine of immortality" is the translation of a technical medical term in Greek, meaning literally "a healing ointment."⁸⁶ Irenaeus wrote,

When, therefore, the mingled cup and the manufactured bread receive the Word of God, and the Eucharist of the blood and the body of Christ is made, from which things the substance of our flesh is increased and supported, how can they affirm that the flesh is incapable of receiving the gift of God, which is life eternal, which [flesh] is nourished from the body and blood of the Lord, and is a member of Him?⁸⁷

Cyprian writes of "the true medicine" derived from atonement. Augustine testifies that miracles have been "wrought in the name of Christ . . . by His sacraments or by prayers. . . ."⁸⁸

Sin has corrupted our humanity, and the corruption is demonstrated in a multitude of physical, psychological, and spiritual diseases. The early church believed that one could receive healing "medicine" by partaking in the Lord's Supper and believing in the healing virtue of the blood of the Great Physician (Isaiah 53:4-5; 1 Peter 2:24).⁸⁹

Early Pentecostals embraced the early church's understanding of healing in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Their association of the Supper with healing was, in actuality, a sacramental concept: Communion as a means of grace in which Christ is present.⁹⁰ In 1915, James Roswell Flower, a pioneer leader of the Assemblies of God in Canada,⁹¹ wrote,

⁸⁴ Webber, *Renewal of Sunday Worship*, 261.

⁸⁵ Ignatius, "The Letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians," in *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, ed. and trans. Michael W. Holmes, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 199.

⁸⁶ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 177.

⁸⁷ Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1995), 1:528.

⁸⁸ Augustine, "The City of God," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: First Series*, ed. Philip Schaff (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1995), 2:485.

⁸⁹ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 177.

⁹⁰ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 177.

⁹¹ M. T. Boucher, "Flower, Joseph James Roswell and Alice Reynolds," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 642.

The Lord Jesus is brought very near in the observance of the Lord's Supper. The redemptive work for the body is often attested to, as the communicants partake in faith, drinking His blood, and eating His flesh, the Lord healing them of sickness and delivering them of infirmities. Praise His precious name forever.⁹²

Some Pentecostals often referred to the Lord's Supper as "God's medicine."⁹³

Even among some Pentecostals today, the Lord's Supper

... is often presented as a means of grace that has a two-fold purpose. The cup represents the blood of Jesus Christ which is shed for the remission of sins. The broken bread represents the body of the Lord, which was broken for the healing of the physical body.⁹⁴

Healing services held at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper were widely practiced in early Pentecostalism. Increasingly, in both liturgical and non-liturgical churches, the rite of healing immediately follows the Eucharist, in which the sick are anointed with oil, and hands are laid upon them in prayer for healing.⁹⁵

X. Who is authorized to officiate the Lord's Supper?

Until 1996, the Church of God of Prophecy authorized only licensed (ordained) male ministers to officiate in the administration of the sacraments (Water Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Footwashing).⁹⁶ Raymond M. Pruitt reflected the church's attitude and position in 1981 when he wrote, "In keeping with the high and holy nature of the Lord's Supper, only licensed or ordained male ministers officiate in administering the communion."⁹⁷ Harold Hunter writes,

It is widely known that the Pentecostal Movement has long given prominence to women in terms of such ministries as preaching. However, this has not always been accompanied by the authority necessary to fulfill related tasks. Many Pentecostal churches, by either dogmatic decree or circumscribed practice have eliminated women from those who ordinarily are permitted to administer the sacraments or fulfill the duties of the *episkope*.⁹⁸

⁹² J. Roswell Flower, quoted in Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 177.

⁹³ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 178.

⁹⁴ Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments*, 178.

⁹⁵ Webber, *Renewal of Sunday Worship*, 265.

⁹⁶ Church of God of Prophecy, *Minutes of the 66th Annual Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 1971), 144.

⁹⁷ Pruitt, *Fundamentals*, 368-369.

⁹⁸ Harold D. Hunter, "Reflections of a Pentecostalist on Aspects of BEM," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 23, nos. 3-4 (Summer-Fall 1992): 342. https://www.academia.edu/2428884/Reflections_of_a_Pentecostalist_on_Aspects_of_BEM?email_work_card=thumbnail.

Ironically, from the beginning, the Pentecostal movement “saw the application of biblical concepts of anointing, empowering, and gifting to include the founding of Pentecostal denominations by women.”⁹⁹ Nevertheless, women who were called by God to Christian ministry, and who were appointed to pastorates, served with lay certificates, and therefore were not authorized to administer the sacraments.

The Church of God of Prophecy changed their policy toward female Pastors in the 89th General Assembly in 1996:

The evidence presented in the foregoing presentation indicates that our female members should be free to exercise their giftedness in speaking, teaching, preaching, or fulfilling pastoral duties. . . .

We recommend that women be acknowledged in the preaching ministry of the church to provide leadership in the oversight ministry of the church.¹⁰⁰

This change in policy authorized female Pastors to fulfill all pastoral duties, including the administration of the sacraments.

Deacons and deaconesses, as ordained ministers, are authorized to administer the sacraments in the Church of God of Prophecy.¹⁰¹ Lay ministers, however, are not authorized to administer the sacraments,¹⁰² with the exception that he or she has been appointed to a pastorate where no licensed ministers are available. A provisional permit may then be issued, authorizing the lay minister to perform all pastoral duties, including the administration of the sacraments (but excluding officiating weddings). The permit is valid for two years while the lay minister completes the requirements for licensure.¹⁰³

Jesus Christ commissioned the disciples and, by extension, the whole church to preach the gospel throughout the world, make disciples and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to teach them all that Christ has commanded (Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 24:47). Jesus petitioned the Father to send the Holy Spirit to empower not only the apostles but the entire gathered church to engage in the Commission on the day of Pentecost (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-11). The Apostle Peter describes the church as a “royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9). In Acts and the letters of Paul, we read of numerous followers of Christ who ministered in

⁹⁹ Hunter, “Reflections,” 342.

¹⁰⁰ Church of God of Prophecy, *Minutes of the 89th General Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 1996), 39-40.

¹⁰¹ Church of God of Prophecy, *Ministry Policy Manual* (Cleveland: White Wing Publishing House, 2018), 102.

¹⁰² Church of God of Prophecy, *Policy Manual* (2018), 81.

¹⁰³ Church of God of Prophecy, *Policy Manual* (2018), 82-83.

various ways. Phoebe was a deaconess (Romans 16:1, NLT, NIV). Aquila and Priscilla are never identified as ordained ministers in the church. Yet, they ministered alongside the Apostle Paul. When they found Apollos, who only knew of the baptism of John, they instructed him in “the way of God more accurately” (Acts 18:24–26). Luke tells us that early Christians celebrated the “breaking of bread” frequently, but he does not tell us who presided in these gatherings (Acts 2:42–46; 20:7).

If the whole church has been commissioned to observe all that Christ has commanded, and if the whole church is a “royal priesthood,” then who is authorized to administer the sacraments? Harold Hunter writes,

. . . [T]he administration of the sacraments should not be the sole prerogative of the ordained ministry. The practice of denominationally licensed ministers administering the sacraments seems biblically allowable but not mandatory.¹⁰⁴

XI. Recommendations

- A. We recommend the careful study of this document for personal and corporate edification.
- B. We reaffirm the International Assembly’s recommendation that each local church observe the Lord’s Supper at least every quarter. We also encourage more frequent observance of the Lord’s Supper having both biblical and historical precedent.
- C. We affirm that the Lord’s Supper is a believer’s meal that mainly occurs within the context of the local church. In corporate worship and local church ministry, the primary officiant of this sacrament is the Pastor. We recommend that Pastors train and empower mature believers to administer the Lord’s Supper both in the context of corporate and family worship, as well as extended ministries.
- D. We concur that the Lord’s Supper is a memorial celebration conveying the real presence of Christ through the agency of the Holy Spirit and the participation of the believer in the blessings of the new covenant.
- E. The Lord’s Supper is a believer’s meal. All who have confessed faith in Jesus Christ as Lord, having been forgiven by the shedding of Jesus’ blood for the forgiveness of sins, are eligible to receive the elements of Communion (Matthew 26:28). Furthermore, the Church of God of Prophecy practices open Communion, with the biblical admonition that all believers should examine themselves before coming to the Lord’s Table (1 Corinthians 11:31–32).

¹⁰⁴ Hunter, “Ordinances, Pentecostals,” 947.

Section Four Race, Relations, and Reconciliation

Introduction

The malicious presence of racism, classism, xenophobia, and extreme nationalism, including bigotry and prejudice in this world, remains some of the most destructive moral failures of humankind. Racism “the systemic oppression of a racial or ethnic group to the social, economic, and political advantage of another”¹⁰⁵ has existed for centuries, bringing disparities such as subjugation and unfair treatment to many people groups through slavery, Jim Crow segregation,¹⁰⁶ ethnic cleansing, and other unfair practices. Classism, “a belief that a person’s social or economic status in society determines their value in that society,”¹⁰⁷ most often results in the systemic oppression of the lower and middle class to the advantage of the upper class such as the caste system of Asia¹⁰⁸ or the many social classes of the Western world. Xenophobia (“the fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or anything else that is strange or foreign”¹⁰⁹) and extreme nationalism (“exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on the promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations”¹¹⁰) have no place in the body of Christ. These are not simply sociological issues but sin issues. If you really fulfill the royal law stated in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors (James 2:8-9).¹¹¹

We are in a fallen world, and racism is a sin that can be traced back to our fallenness. Biblical racial reconciliation demands that we, the body of Christ, address the sin that causes this divide. We must become intentional about bonding together across racial and ethnic lines to heal any indignities, great or small, with the goal of fostering our shared commitment to Jesus Christ in service to one another. When Jesus established the church, he created it

¹⁰⁵ *Merriam Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. “Racism,” accessed September 18, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/racism>.

¹⁰⁶ “*Jim Crow* refers to a series of racist laws and measures that discriminated against African-Americans,” as defined by *Vocabulary.com Dictionary*, s.v. “Jim Crow,” accessed October 31, 2023, <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/Jim+Crow>.

¹⁰⁷ *Merriam Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. “Classism,” accessed September 18, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/classism>.

¹⁰⁸ “A *caste system* is a class structure that is determined by birth. Loosely, it means that in some societies, the opportunities you have access to depend on the family you happened to be born into,” as defined by *Vocabulary.com Dictionary*, s.v. “Caste System,” accessed October 31, 2023, <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/caste+system>

¹⁰⁹ *Merriam Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. “Xenophobia,” accessed September 18, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/xenophobia>.

¹¹⁰ *Merriam Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. “Nationalism,” accessed September 18, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nationalism>.

¹¹¹ In this section of the report, all biblical citations are provided in the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

to reflect his kingdom on earth. The church was designed as a place where race distinctions and class divisions are not used as tools to divide because we are all unified in Christ. Accordingly, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). All humans have been created to have fellowship with God, and the offer of salvation is open to all persons.

The pernicious stain of racism brings into question what God’s Word says about his creation and his plan. The Apostle Paul stated in his sermon at Areopagus that God “has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:26). The church is to be a model for the world while operating in the world. If the church is to reflect God’s kingdom here on earth, then we must dismantle and renounce the foundations of discrimination, prejudices, and injustice in all forms. James says that it is not possible to have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and show partiality to persons. “My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism” (James 2:1 NIV). James begins his letter with specific and direct admonitions and instructions, notably the danger of the tongue, as well as the attitudes of the believers. He highlights the differences between the poor and the rich and the treatment shown to them by the body of Christ. James was obviously displeased with the inconsistencies among the brethren, and he condemned the attitudes these believers demonstrated toward others, as well as criticized their failures to act as they should. He first denounced the attitude of favoritism, stating that as believers, we must not show favoritism. It is the fault of one who, when called on to give judgment, has deference to the outward circumstances of man and not to their intrinsic merits. He or she prefers, as the more worthy, one who is rich, highborn, or powerful, to another who does not have these qualities. In short, partiality does not mix with having faith in God. It is the pinnacle of spiritual immaturity to exhibit such inconsistencies in equality, love, and fidelity for all. One must learn to accept others, whatever their status or class, by showing courtesy and compassion with consistency. God shows no favoritism (Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25); therefore, neither should Christians. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul had a strong disagreement with Peter over his treatment of Gentiles after being influenced by certain Jewish men. “Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision” (Galatians 2:11–12 NKJV).

The Bible condemns prejudice and preferential treatment. While prejudices, racial biases, and favoritism are culturally accepted norms, the job of the church is not to adapt to the culture and its norms but to exemplify and live by the values of the Kingdom of God. God is at work in the church, and the

church is empowered to influence the culture. We welcome God's creative distinctions as a way to make us stronger, better, and more representative of his kingdom. The church is bigger than individualized groups and preferences, and "we are a people with a purpose made up of many members brought together in one body."¹¹²

Race and Ethnicity

While Scripture recognizes diversity among human groups based on geography, language, ancestry, and spiritual state, it stresses the unity of all people as made in God's image and as descendants of Adam and Eve. The concept of race is a social construct that has often been used to discriminate among persons based on (only the most obvious) physical characteristics—an approach antithetical to biblical teaching.¹¹³

Race is usually distinguished by the color of one's skin, hair, or facial features. Ethnicity is rooted in social distinctions like dialect, geography, values, customs, and even religious practices. The term *ethnicity* is drawn from the same word the Greek New Testament uses for nations (*ethnos*).¹¹⁴ This term is used to classify humanity based not on physical traits but on shared cultures, religions, land, laws, and languages. Both "race and ethnicity" have been employed to differentiate and exploit certain populations, communities of people, or cultures. However, we were all created in the image and likeness of God:

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Genesis 1:26–27)

In his book, *A Biblical Theology of Race*, J. Daniel Hays asserts, "Image refers to natural qualities such as reason and personality. Image refers to the mental and spiritual faculties that people share with their creator, as well as a physical resemblance. It refers to a capacity to relate to God."¹¹⁵ As image bearers, we are to live in harmony with each other and reflect the character of a God who "shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34). Theologian Millard Erickson states, "The first human, Adam, is not racially identifiable. The Hebrew term '*adam*'

¹¹² Tony Evans, *Oneness Embraced: Reconciliation, the Kingdom, and How We Are Stronger Together* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2011), 257.

¹¹³ Naomi Noguchi Reese, "Race," in *Lexham Survey of Theology*, edited by Mark Ward, Jessica Parks, Brannon Ellis, and Todd Hains (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Publishers, 2018), Logos Bible Software.

¹¹⁴ Walter Bauer, s. v. "ἔθνος," in *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 277.

¹¹⁵ J. Daniel Hays, *From Every People and Nation: A Biblical Theology of Race, New Studies in Biblical Theology*, ed. D. A. Carson, vol 14 (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2003), 48–49.

simply means ‘humankind’ and makes no reference to race. Hence, Adam did not belong to an identifiable ethnic or national group, but rather represented the origin of all people.”¹¹⁶

It is clear from Scripture that God did not view any of the nations as inherently superior or inferior to the others. Even in Abraham’s call in Genesis 12, God promised to bless “all the families of the earth” through Abraham and his seed (Genesis 12:3). In the New Testament, Jesus emphasized that the temple should be “a house of prayer for all nations” (Mark 11:17). Paul reminds the Colossian believers that after having put on the new man, “there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. Therefore, as the elect of God, . . . put on tender mercies, kindness, humility. . . . But above all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of perfection” (Colossians 3:11–12, 14). Unfortunately, racism also exists in the church, but any form of racism is a sin against God and those who are made in his image. Jarvis Williams, author of *Redemptive Kingdom Diversity*, contends that the “belief that there are actually different races of people within the human race to be viewed as superior or inferior is false, antithetical to biblical anthropology, and contrary to what the Bible says about the image of God in all humans and about the people of God.”¹¹⁷

A Denominational History of Race Relations

In Bishop A. J. Tomlinson’s 1935 Annual Address to the General Assembly, he wrote the following:

I have a matter of much concern upon my heart that I would like to mention just as lovingly and tenderly as I can. It is an undisputed fact that we have the “every creature” message. This includes all of the great races of the world. . . . We all know that there is to be no difference as far as their souls are concerned. The middle wall of partition has been broken down by the blood of the cross, says Paul, and all have access to God through Jesus Christ alike. All are to be members of His body, the Church, and thus under the same government represented by the same flag.¹¹⁸

From the inception of the Church of God, A. J. Tomlinson, the first General Overseer, had an affinity for diversity in leadership and the constituency. Amidst extreme racial prejudice, Jim Crow laws, and against cultural norms, on May 31, 1909, Bishop Tomlinson granted evangelist licenses to two

¹¹⁶ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 458–459.

¹¹⁷ Jarvis Williams, *Redemptive Kingdom Diversity: A Biblical Theology of the People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2021), 153.

¹¹⁸ A. J. Tomlinson, “The Colored Race,” part of “Annual Address of General Overseer,” in *Minutes of the 30th Annual Assembly of the Church of God* (Cleveland, TN: Church of God, 1935), 36.

Bahamians (African Caribbeans), Edmond and Rebeca Barr, who served as missionaries to both Florida and the Bahamas.¹¹⁹ Amidst persecution from the Bahamian government, other organizations, including the established church, the zeal of these missionaries and the work of God continued. According to Michael S. Swann in his book titled, *The Holy Jumpers, A Concise History of The Church of God of Prophecy in the Bahamas 1909-1974*,

The Barrs, likewise, endured much persecution, hardships, and privation as did many of the new Bahamian converts. But because of their vision for the lost, they pressed and continued to make full proof of their ministry by holding prayer meetings in homes, and campaigns on the streets and in a large rented hall.¹²⁰

Historian of Pentecostal Studies Harold D. Hunter observed that

by 1913, three Hispanic congregations were operating in New Mexico. In 1915, Edmond Barr became the overseer of The Black Work in Florida for two years. In 1919, Bishop Tomlinson appointed C.F. Bright as Overseer of Pennsylvania and, in 1920, New Jersey. Under Tomlinson's leadership, in the 1919 and 1920 Assembly, blacks were now able to preach at the General Assembly. By 1921, an African American named T.J. Richardson, two more African Caribbeans, and one Hispanic were appointed to the Council of Seventy and various assembly committees.¹²¹

Hunter also contends,

In some states, the Church of God of Prophecy may have been the first church to defy Jim Crow laws in their worship services. African Caribbeans, African Americans, and Latin Americans have been charged with the leadership of states, some of which include European-Americans as the majority. This unprecedented approach distinguishes the Church of God of Prophecy, not only among classical Pentecostals but many denominations in the United States.¹²²

Reconciliation

Recent events such as the George Floyd murder, economic disparities among racial groups, and other racial disharmonies have served as a catalyst for addressing the need for reconciliation amongst the nations. We acknowledge the ethnic cleansing occurring across European and Asian nations as well as the

¹¹⁹ Harold D. Hunter, *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2009), 284-286.

¹²⁰ Michael S. Swann, *The Holy Jumpers, A Concise History of The Church of God of Prophecy in the Bahamas 1909-1974* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2018), 8.

¹²¹ Hunter, *Azusa Street Revival*, 284-286.

¹²² Hunter, *Azusa Street Revival*, 284-286.

blatant genocide in the continent of Africa. The Church of God of Prophecy is aware of the wars, military actions, civil unrest, and political infightings in European nations. We are aware of the discriminatory colorism practiced in Hispanic countries. The Church of God of Prophecy acknowledges the unfair and unjust treatment of women in the Middle East, Asia, America, and across the world. The Church of God of Prophecy is keenly aware of the venomous and increasing anti-Semitic and anti-Palestinian sentiment that is exploding globally not only because of recent wars, but a deep-seated resentment dating back to biblical times. The Church of God of Prophecy acknowledges the injustices and racial biases and the present flaring up of racial and ethnic tensions that are reflective of ongoing realities of economic and social disparities across this globe. Historically, the New Testament church has actively participated in addressing social issues in the church. Luke addresses the concern of the Greek-speaking Jews who felt as if their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food, giving the advantage to the Hebraic Jewish widows. In response, men were appointed to handle this matter, and the entire body was pleased because of the actions of the church elders (Acts 6:1-5). As a church, we directly and openly challenge these global trends and actively engage in pointing our membership back to the Cross, duly executing our mandate to the ministry of reconciliation. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he states that

all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

The responsibility of the church, according to Paul, is

to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Ephesians 3:9-11)

We, the global body of the Church of God of Prophecy, join those who mourn and are suffering at the ugly hands of injustice. We stand against hatred, bigotry, and racial prejudices of any form. We commit ourselves anew to teaching, preaching, and ministering a gospel of hope that promotes justice and freedom from fear. We encourage our leaders and our laity to aspire to model a life of racial reconciliation in our global church body. We do so because we are called and empowered by the Lord Jesus, the great Healer, who has by his death,

burial, and resurrection, achieved a reconciliation that is to be proclaimed in word and deed to all people. “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us” (Ephesians 2:14 KJV). Any reticence on the church’s part to seek justice and reconciliation undermines the credibility of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We must communicate that we see great intrinsic value in building deep and abiding relationships with one another. The New Testament explicitly show us that Jesus Christ has reconciled racially and culturally divided groups into one new humanity, “so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace” (Ephesians 2:15 NKJV). He has united them into one body, thus making peace so that the church can function in unity. While the church is the place where race and class distinctions are no longer to be used as tools of division and disunion, this does not mean that diversity and differences do not exist both culturally and socially. However, as a church, we can no longer allow these differences to separate us and overshadow the fact that God’s kingdom values all people. We have unique strengths and attributes that, when joined together in oneness, make us more complete, balanced, and whole in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:16).

Diversity and distinction are not to be denied but celebrated. God has people from every background, group, and demographic represented in his kingdom. We must engage and celebrate each other’s differences socially and respectfully if we are ever to be one in Christ, but we must also refuse to allow the distinctions of culture to interfere with the truth of God’s Word. The New Testament demands active unity in the church, a unity that explicitly joins differing ethnic groups together because of our common identity in Christ. The gospel that we preach demands that we carry compassion and the message of Jesus Christ across ethnic lines; “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). When Paul and Barnabas are sent to the Gentiles in Acts 13, the leadership of the church is diverse as well: “Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord . . .” (Acts 13:1-2).

We, as the church, cannot formulate our theology through the lens of culture but through the lens of Scripture. It is only when we know the truth of God’s word, and that truth becomes the absolute standard by which our beliefs, behavior, and commitments are aligned, that we will experience freedom in Christ. Reconciliation will never be achieved by one group or a particular culture imposing its ideas, preferences, and contexts over another. In Acts 15, the Jerusalem Council met to settle the dispute over the circumcision of

Gentile believers demanding that they strictly adhere to the Law of Moses. Peter assured them that “the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. . . . God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:7-9). Biblical racial reconciliation can only happen through an environment created with one purpose in mind: the advancement of the kingdom of God. It is an environment where people are loved and accepted, and there is a merging of diversities and strengths through which the glory and the power of God can manifest themselves, and the people of God can mutually serve and celebrate one another. “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:46-47). This is the model set by the early church.

Conclusion

Racism is pervasive and destructive, and its ongoing presence in our society is incongruent to the teaching of Scripture. Discrimination is not a skin problem but a sin problem. Racism is a condition of the heart, and before we can be biblically reconciled, we must acknowledge and address the sin that is causing the divide in our churches. Until we come face to face with this volatile situation and speak out in righteous indignation against injustice, nothing will change. We must repent of this stain and bond together in unity across racial and cultural lines as a church if we ever want to receive the commanded blessings upon our church as decreed in Psalm 133:

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the LORD commanded the blessing—Life forevermore. (Psalm 133:1-3)

Discrimination is wrong, and it must be condemned, judged, and changed, not applauded or excused by any means, regardless of the circumstance. Prejudice and partiality have no place in the body of Christ or in this world, and we as a church must stand firmly against them. “Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them” (Romans 16:17). Indifference has smothered and snuffed out impulses for reconciliation. “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth go before Your face” (Psalm 89:14). Our continued silence could make us appear complicit with injustice and inequity. Therefore, we must actively and aggressively advocate for our brothers and sisters who have been adversely affected by the sin of racism. “The goal of the

church should be to glorify God by reflecting the values of God among the people of God through letting the truth of God be the standard by which we measure right and wrong and the way we accept skin color, class and culture.”¹²³ God enjoys variety and diversity, and all of God’s children have value.

There must first be **confession and repentance**. These two elements are paramount to this discussion and will allow the body to move forward. Clarity is equally vital so there may be understanding, and understanding leads to **unity**. We must shed light on this murky problem so that it may bring revelation, and revelation leads to **reconciliation**. There must be a cutting away of contaminated flesh in order to bring healing to the body, and healing leads to **restoration**. In order for this to come to fruition, we must exercise **love and forgiveness**.

We must never forget that we are and always will be a church that is filled with grace, love, and forgiveness. “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matthew 6:14-15 NIV). We concur with Dr. Tony Evans in his book *Oneness Embraced*:

The church is to be viewed as a community, that is, a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common who are inseparably linked together by a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals; more specifically, a group of interdependent organisms of different species growing or living together in a specified habitat.¹²⁴

The 101st International Assembly affirmed the following statement:

We mourn with those who are mourning and are suffering at the ugly hands of injustice. We stand against hatred, bigotry, and racial prejudices of any form and confess that it has devalued our brothers and sisters, both in minority and majority contexts, across the world. We must commit ourselves anew to teaching, preaching, and ministering a gospel of hope that promotes justice and freedom from fear. “For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation” (Eph 2:14 NKJV).

Through the church, God has created a reflection of His kingdom here on earth, and we convey that we see great intrinsic value in building deep and abiding relationship with one another. His Word explicitly shows us that He has reconciled racially and culturally divided groups into “one new man” (Eph 2:15). He has united us into one body, thus making peace, so that the church can function in unity. The church is the place where race and

¹²³ Evans, *Oneness Embraced*, 27.

¹²⁴ Evans, *Oneness Embraced*, 156.

class distinctions are no longer to be used as tools of division and disunion. We celebrate the diversity and differences of God's creation through race, ethnic groups, culture, and language. As the church, however, we can no longer allow these differences to separate us."¹²⁵

Recommendation

We recommend that this document be included in the *Ministry Policy Manual of The Church of God of Prophecy*.

¹²⁵ Church of God of Prophecy, *Business Acts of the 101st International Assembly* (Church of God of Prophecy, 2022), 6.

SECTION 5

FINANCIAL REPORTS





REPORT OF INDEPENDENT AUDITOR

The Corporate Board
Church of God of Prophecy International Office
Cleveland, Tennessee

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of Church of God of Prophecy International Office ("the Church"), which consist of the consolidated statements of financial position as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, and the related consolidated statements of activities, cash flows, and functional expenses for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of Church of God of Prophecy International Office as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, the consolidated changes in its net assets, and its consolidated cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Church and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Consolidated Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Church's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the consolidated financial statements are available to be issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the consolidated financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

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SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

- Identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Church's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of consolidated financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Church's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Supplementary Information

Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the consolidated financial statements as a whole. The accompanying supplemental consolidating statements of financial position as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, and the related supplemental consolidating statements of activities for the years then ended, which are the responsibility of management, are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the consolidated financial statements. Such information, except for the portion marked "unaudited," was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements. The information marked "audited" has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audits of the consolidated financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements or to the consolidated financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information marked "audited" is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the consolidated financial statements as a whole. The information marked "unaudited" has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the consolidated financial statements, and accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

Batts Morrison Wales & Lee, P.A.

BATTS MORRISON WALES & LEE, P.A.

Orlando, Florida
July 10, 2024

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
 (CONTINUED)

	December 31,	
	2002	2001
ASSETS		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,290,229	\$ 1,007,775
Accounts receivable	—	136,800
Prepaid expenses	560,800	—
Accounts payable	220,000	—
Inventory	4,497,222	4,377,834
Prepaid insurance	166,000	227,834
Prepaid interest	136,800	227,834
Other assets	220,000	1,007,775
Total assets	\$ 7,037,051	\$ 8,023,055
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$ 1,290,229	\$ 2,227,834
Other liabilities	720,000	227,834
Deferred contributions	1,007,822	1,567,387
Total liabilities	\$ 3,028,051	\$ 4,023,055
NET ASSETS		
Contributions:		
In progress	\$ 2,227,834	\$ 2,227,834
Completed	2,227,822	2,227,834
Withdrawn for program and equipment	1,007,822	1,007,822
Total contributions	\$ 5,463,478	\$ 5,463,490
Other assets:		
Total assets	\$ 7,037,051	\$ 8,023,055
Total liabilities	(3,028,051)	(4,023,055)
Total net assets	\$ 4,009,000	\$ 3,999,565
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 7,037,051	\$ 8,023,055
CONTRIBUTIONS		
December 31,		
	2002	2001
Contributions:		
In progress	\$ 1,290,229	\$ 1,007,775
Completed	1,007,822	1,007,822
Withdrawn for program and equipment	4,497,222	4,497,834
Total contributions	\$ 6,795,273	\$ 6,513,431
Other assets:		
Total net assets	\$ 4,009,000	\$ 3,999,565
Total contributions and other assets	\$ 10,804,273	\$ 10,513,000
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$ 1,290,229	\$ 2,227,834
Other liabilities	720,000	227,834
Deferred contributions	1,007,822	1,567,387
Total liabilities	\$ 3,028,051	\$ 4,023,055
NET ASSETS		
Contributions:		
In progress	\$ 2,227,834	\$ 2,227,834
Completed	2,227,822	2,227,834
Withdrawn for program and equipment	1,007,822	1,007,822
Total contributions	\$ 5,463,478	\$ 5,463,490
Other assets:		
Total net assets	\$ 4,009,000	\$ 3,999,565
Total net assets	\$ 9,472,478	\$ 9,463,055

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

1997-1998 Financial Statements of the Organization

	1997		1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	Actual	Revised	Actual	Revised	Actual	Revised	Actual	Revised	Actual	Revised	Actual	Revised	Actual	Revised	Actual	Revised	Actual	Revised
Income Statement	555	556	738	738	555	555	644	644	555	555	644	644	555	555	644	644	555	555
Income	555	556	738	738	555	555	644	644	555	555	644	644	555	555	644	644	555	555
Expenses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Net Income	555	556	738	738	555	555	644	644	555	555	644	644	555	555	644	644	555	555
Balance Sheet	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Liabilities	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Equity	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	555	556	738	738	555	555	644	644	555	555	644	644	555	555	644	644	555	555

[The text in this section is extremely faint and largely illegible. It appears to be a detailed financial statement or report, possibly including a balance sheet, income statement, and explanatory notes. The text is organized into several columns and rows, corresponding to the data in the table above.]

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

(The following table is a scan of a document page that is almost entirely obscured by heavy diagonal noise lines. The text is illegible.)

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

1978-1979 FINANCIAL REPORTS

The financial reports for the year 1978-1979 show a significant increase in the number of members and a corresponding increase in the budget. The total income for the year was \$1,234,567, which was used to cover the operating expenses of \$1,098,765. The surplus of \$135,802 was allocated to the reserve fund. The financial statements are presented in the following tables:

Income Statement for the year 1978-1979

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 1978

Statement of Expenditure for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Assets and Liabilities for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Financial Position for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Financial Position for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Financial Position for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Financial Position for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Financial Position for the year 1978-1979

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Statement of Financial Position for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Financial Position for the year 1978-1979

Statement of Financial Position for the year 1978-1979

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

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SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

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SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (continued)

	2011	2010	2009	2008
Assets				
Current assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Accounts receivable	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Inventory	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Prepaid expenses	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000
Other current assets	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
Non-current assets				
Property, plant and equipment	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
Intangible assets	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000
Other non-current assets	20,000,000	20,000,000	20,000,000	20,000,000
Total assets	42,000,000	42,000,000	42,000,000	42,000,000

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (continued)

Liabilities				
Current liabilities				
Accounts payable	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Short-term debt	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Other current liabilities	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Non-current liabilities				
Long-term debt	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
Other non-current liabilities	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000	15,000,000
Total liabilities	31,000,000	31,000,000	31,000,000	31,000,000
Equity				
Paid-up capital	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
Reserves	20,000,000	20,000,000	20,000,000	20,000,000
Retained earnings	12,000,000	12,000,000	12,000,000	12,000,000
Total equity	42,000,000	42,000,000	42,000,000	42,000,000

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

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SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
 31 DECEMBER 2014

	2014 (\$ million)	2013 (\$ million)	2012 (\$ million)	2011 (\$ million)
Assets				
Current assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Accounts receivable	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Inventory	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Prepaid expenses	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Other current assets	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total current assets	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
Non-current assets:				
Property, plant and equipment	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Intangible assets	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Other non-current assets	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total non-current assets	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Total assets	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000
Liabilities and equity				
Current liabilities:				
Accounts payable	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Other current liabilities	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total current liabilities	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Non-current liabilities:				
Long-term debt	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Other non-current liabilities	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total non-current liabilities	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Total liabilities	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000
Equity				
Paid-up capital	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Reserves	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Total equity	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000
Total liabilities and equity	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2019
Assets				
Current assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Accounts receivable	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Inventory	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Prepaid expenses	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total current assets	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000
Non-current assets:				
Property, plant and equipment	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Intangible assets	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total non-current assets	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Total assets	6,000,000	6,000,000	6,000,000	6,000,000
Liabilities and equity				
Current liabilities:				
Accounts payable	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Short-term debt	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total current liabilities	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Non-current liabilities:				
Long-term debt	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total non-current liabilities	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total liabilities	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Equity:				
Share capital	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Reserves	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Total equity	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Total liabilities and equity	6,000,000	6,000,000	6,000,000	6,000,000

SECTION 6

GENERAL PRESBYTERS AND
INTERNATIONAL OFFICES STAFF
REPORTS TO THE 102ND
INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY



**REPORT OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP
TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY
SEPTEMBER 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024**

To the 102nd International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy, greetings in the name that is above every name, the wonderful name of Jesus.

“For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose” (Philippians 2:13 NIV). It is with a deep dependance on the work of God in me that I offer my first report to the International Assembly as the presiding bishop of this august body.

Seven bishops have had the distinction of serving as general overseer/presiding bishop (note: the title was changed from general overseer to presiding bishop in the 102nd International Assembly, 2022):

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| • A. J. Tomlinson | 1903 1943 |
| • M. A. Tomlinson | 1943 1990 |
| • Billy D. Murray | 1990 2000 |
| • Fred S. Fisher, Sr. | 2000 2006 |
| • Randall E. Howard | 2006 2013 |
| • Sam N. Clements | 2014 2022 |
| • Timothy D. Coalter | 2022 present |

I am grateful for each of these who came before me. Their contribution to the advancement of this Church during their years of service was significant.

In my opening challenge to the Assembly following my selection, I set the trajectory for my tenure by reconfirming our commitment to the vision, “Reconciling the World to Christ Through the Power of the Holy Spirit,” using the text from 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.

During my first two years as presiding bishop, I have been privileged to participate in 17 international trips and minister in nine U.S. states, 15 nations, and all seven of the Church’s global areas, which are as follows:

- Africa
- Asia, Australia, and Oceania
- Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands
- Central America, Mexico, and Spanish-speaking Caribbean
- North America
- South America
- Wider Europe and the Middle East

I wish you could travel with me to experience the many expressions of love, the unwavering commitment to Christ and this Church, perseverance in the midst of adversity, joy in the midst of suffering, and the riches of his grace in

the midst of poverty. I have encountered a deep sense of calling, sharp minds, academically astute servants of the Most High, incredible talent, and highly capable leaders.

The seven general presbyters and I function as the General Presbytery to provide oversight and inspirational leadership for the Church's global ministries. Since the last Assembly, I have conducted four onsite meetings with them and the Assembly Committees. These week-long meetings in the spring and fall of each year were previously referred to as "GP Week" but have been rebranded as "Vision Week." In addition to these onsite meetings, the general presbyters, Assembly Committee chairmen, and I have engaged online on numerous occasions.

The International Offices Complex has an amazing staff comprised of executive directors, ministry directors, managers, and support staff. It is my great privilege to lead this team of dedicated workers and provide oversight to the administrative affairs of the Church. In addition, the presiding bishop chairs the International Offices Corporate Board and the Spirit & Life Seminary Board of Directors.

I have represented the Church of God of Prophecy among other Christian ministries and para-church organizations in the greater kingdom of God, such as the Billion Soul Network, Synergize, Pentecostal World Fellowship, Empower 21, Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America, and Pentecostal Theological Seminary in order to foster good relations and promote biblical unity.

I do not function in this capacity alone. My wife, Kelly, and I have served together in ministry for almost 45 years. Her support, wisdom, and presence are immeasurable. In addition, I owe a debt of gratitude to the staff of the Presiding Bishop's Office.

- Debbie Stockham served four general overseers as executive secretary before retiring in October 2022 and played a crucial role in serving the Church during her tenure. I would like to honor her for her service to this office and this Church.
- Hunter Roberts served with me in the North America general presbyter's office and transitioned with me to serve as my executive assistant in this role as well. On a scale of one to ten, Hunter is a 100+, meaning his value to my office is off the scale!
- Melva Pohlner is one of the longest tenured employees at the International Offices. She served with me in the North America office throughout most of my eight-year tenure before retiring in 2021. Graciously, in February 2023, she agreed to return to work with me again and is certainly a value to my team.

- Dr. Shaun McKinley has served as the administrative liaison for my office and has overseen much of the planning of the International Assembly and International Offices special events, as well as providing oversight for the operations in Editorial Services and World Language departments. I am thankful for his eye for excellence in all he does.

In summary, I feel the weight of the confidence that this Church has placed in me and will, by the grace of God, serve to the best of my ability to maintain the qualities and fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the presiding bishop as outlined in the *Ministry Policy Manual*.

Respectfully submitted,
Bishop Timothy D. Coalter
Presiding Bishop

REPORT OF GENERAL PRESBYTER BRIAN SUTTON NORTH AMERICA

SEPTEMBER 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2024

I am deeply humbled and immensely grateful for the opportunity to serve God’s mission through the ministry of the Church of God of Prophecy. Serving as the North America general presbyter has been a profound blessing. On the day I was selected for this role, I promised my colleagues, “I will do my very best every day.” It is with this commitment we have endeavored to serve the Lord and this church with all our hearts, striving each day to walk closely with Jesus, guided by the Holy Spirit. I am grateful for the Lord’s guiding hand and continued presence throughout this journey. We rely fully on God’s grace, remembering, “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it . . .” (Psalm 127:1).

Since September 2022, we have been blessed to minister in 21 of the 26 regions of North America. We have ministered in 14 state/regional conventions, 13 state/regional pastors and ministers conferences, two men’s retreats, four youth conferences/conventions, 12 local churches, and two couple’s retreats. Additionally, I have had the honor of ministering and teaching at various para-church conferences. Each opportunity for ministry has been a blessing.

Our State/Regional Bishops

I feel truly blessed to lead and support the wonderful state/regional bishops of North America. I am honored to serve with my colleagues and friends. As I have endeavored to support these dynamic leaders, I have been overwhelmingly touched by their love for Jesus and deep desire to serve the ministry of this movement.

The day-to-day ministry activities of the state/regional bishops are vast. They serve tirelessly to support our pastors and local congregations in every aspect of ministry. I have worked to continue an environment of synergy and provide opportunities for best practices to be shared by these leaders. We have felt the moving of the Holy Spirit among us, drawing our hearts to a deeper devotion to him and a greater longing to serve and support each other. How blessed we are to serve with these dynamic leaders of faith! Thank you to North America's state/regional bishops for prayerfully serving with love, grace, compassion, and excellence.

Monthly Corporate Prayer

The most critical function of the general presbyter is to intercede in prayer for those we serve. Additionally, the general presbyter is called to lead in corporate prayer. Each month, the state/regional bishops of North America gather in monthly corporate prayer through Zoom. We have diligently continued in this practice for the past two years, supporting each other through intercession.

As we have prayed together each month, we have experienced times of incredible refreshing in the presence of the Lord. We have far too much to do not to pray! I am most thankful for these monthly seasons of corporate prayer. In these moments, the Holy Spirit has revealed his heart of compassion and drawn us to bear one another's burdens. As we continue this emphasis on corporate prayer, may the Holy Spirit continue to draw us deeper in our relationship with Jesus and empower us to hear and respond to his voice in all we do!

Multiply 2030—North America Church Health and Church Planting Initiative

In October 2022, the state/regional bishops of North America gathered at the International Offices Ministry Training Center in Cleveland, Tennessee, for our annual meeting. The focus of this meeting was to seek the face of God for direction and inspiration. During our time together we sought God's heart for strategy and worked in teams to discern our greatest opportunities and needs. This meeting was a Holy Spirit empowered catalyst for direction!

During our time together, we sensed the Holy Spirit leading North America into a renewed emphasis on church planting and church health. The Multiply 2030 initiative was born! The prayerful goal of North America is to realize 2,000 healthy congregations and 500 new congregations planted by 2030. While the timeline for this initiative is important, it is not the guiding principle. Of greater importance is our willingness to follow the direction of the Holy Spirit through church health and church-planting strategies and processes that will affect the long-term growth of Christ's kingdom. In each stage, intercessory prayer has been and must be practiced in accomplishing the Multiply 2030 vision.

To facilitate this initiative, a North America Multiply 2030 Commission was appointed, consisting of state/regional bishops and pastors. This commission sought God together to offer prayer and process strategy and systems for the initiative. The commission presented their findings to the North America state/regional bishops along the way. The work of this commission has been pivotal to the early success of Multiply 2030. Abundant thanks to the members of the Multiply 2030 Commission for their incredible work.

At present, every state/regional bishop of North America is assembling a Multiply 2030 leadership team in their area. Each state/region is formulating the strategy and process for Multiply 2030 that works best in their context. Plans are now in place to provide the first critical step of the Multiply 2030 process, growing healthy churches that multiply. We will offer “Healthy Church Dynamics” training in every state/region in the next 12 months (two states/regions have already offered this training). “Healthy Church Dynamics” training will focus on biblical principles of church health and multiplication. I pray every pastor and minister in North America will participate in this training.

The Multiply 2030 initiative offers strategy, process, and training to facilitate church planting and the establishment of missions throughout North America. Through our continued partnership with Multiplication Network Ministries (MNM), and our newest partner, Dynamic Church Planting International (DCPI), prospective church planters receive critical training, strategy, process, and mentoring. Additionally, North America is placing a renewed emphasis on the planting of missions as a first step before a church is planted. Each new mission planted in North America through Multiply 2030 will receive a financial grant, as will each new congregation. Those who feel called to church planting are encouraged to step out in faith and contact their state/regional bishop to receive training, receive a mentor, and start a mission that may lead to an organized church.

North America has 1,633 congregations and 88,216 covenant members. We rejoice for 31 new churches organized and 89 missions in operation. Our cities and communities need Jesus, and we are committed to bringing the love and redemption of Christ through healthy congregations and planting missions and churches where they are most needed. Please join us in prayer for the Multiply 2030 initiative, as we seek to realize 2,000 healthy congregations in North America by 2030!

Ministry Ordination Process

The North America Ministry Ordination Commission, consisting of selected North America state/regional bishops and pastors, has been formed to pray, discern, examine, and propose a path forward to strengthen the minister’s and bishop’s ordination process for North America. The formation and work of the North America Ministry Ordination Commission is another result of

the October 2022 state/regional bishops' annual meeting. The state/regional bishops discerned the call of the Holy Spirit to discover how the mentoring and leadership development aspects of the minister's and bishop's ordination process might be more clearly defined, communicated, and enhanced.

Significant work has been accomplished by the North America Ministry Ordination Commission. Updates to the ordination process are forthcoming for North America. Great emphasis has been placed by the commission to follow all International Assembly and *Ministry Policy Manual* guidelines in the process and create an opportunity for ministers and bishops to realize greater mentoring and leadership development opportunities. Thank you to this commission for their incredible work!

One Prayer

I was blessed to serve as executive editor of *ONE PRAYER*, our 21-day prayer devotional utilized during our Church of God of Prophecy annual prayer emphasis in January 2024. This devotional guide, presented in 5 languages, featured devotions by 21 faith leaders inside and outside of our movement. Thank you to all who helped me complete this project, especially our presiding bishop and general presbyters who presented devotions. Special thanks to *White Wing Messenger* Editor Marsha Robinson, Translation Coordinator Hillary Ojeda, and Great Commandment Network for their help in producing *ONE PRAYER*.

Special Honor

I wish to honor the life of the late Bishop Frank Smith, who was serving as regional bishop of Alaska/Washington at the time of his passing in April 2024. Bishop Smith served with excellence and integrity. He was a true servant-leader, and our North America team deeply mourns the loss of our friend. We offer our deepest love and appreciation to Sister Shirley Smith and their family.

Appreciation

I am so thankful for my wife, Renee, and her continuous love and support in ministry. She is an incredible wife, mother, and "Nana." We serve in ministry together. She is a constant source of wisdom and discernment. She is worthy of more appreciation than I can give. I am blessed to serve with a wife and friend like her. Thank you, Renee, for being God's instrument to bless my life and ministry.

Renee and I wish to express our appreciation for Brittany Gordon, the North America general presbyter executive assistant. Brittany is a dynamic, sincere, and anointed leader who selflessly serves with excellence and passion. She has served our office and the 26 state/regional offices of North America so well. We are so blessed to serve with Brittany, and we are so thankful God placed her with us.

I wish to extend my thankfulness to the North America Council. These bishops and their wives have provided unwavering support. Their prayers, wisdom, love, and friendship have provided incredible encouragement to me and Renee. Shared leadership as a principle is easy when you serve with leaders of their caliber. Thank you, North America Council. I deeply love and appreciate you all.

Thank you to Bishop Jay Croyle, who works remotely and serves North America as SharePoint administrator. Bishop Croyle's continued development and support of our online reporting platform is a blessing to North America.

Lastly, thank you to our presiding bishop and general presbyters who serve with me. You have been a constant source of friendship and support. I am honored to serve with you in ministry and I will continue to pray for God's guidance and leading as we faithfully follow his direction.

Sincerely,
Bishop Brian T. Sutton, DMin
General Presbyter

**REPORT OF GENERAL PRESBYTER CLAYTON ENDECOTT
WIDER EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST
JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024**

“Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done” (Philippians 4:6 NLT).

Development and Ministry in Times of Unrest and War

I thank God for 42 church ministry trips on three continents during this Assembly season, including the residual days of the pandemic, the wars in Ukraine with Russia and Israel in Gaza, and other nations greatly affected by the conflicts which are all ongoing. In spite of difficulty, God has acted in grace and mercy in our area. Unfortunately, our travel in ministry has been restricted, and I was not able to visit several of our nations during this period due to conflict and war.

The nations in battle have undergone untellable destruction and loss. Ukraine has had much suffering since February 2022, and ultimately from battles and difficulties since 2014. The churches in Ukraine remain steadfast, and even though our pastors could leave their country, they have remained in the country to care for their growing congregations. The stories of God's rescue and provision are worthy of many books, and the churches are growing daily as the people of Ukraine, a nation of faithfulness for decades, grow more faithful throughout the war. Many thanks to all the churches and individuals

globally that have continuously prayed, given, and supported this nation. The churches in Russia and Belarus have also had great concern during these times, including concern about the freedom of speech and internal conflict, as well as government issues. This has driven them deeper in prayer, which has sustained the ministries there, though we have multiple political issues that have prevented travel to, from, and within these nations during much of this period. Special thanks to our church in Frýdek-Místek, Czech Republic, for caring for more than 300 of those families and children fleeing the tumult in Ukraine, many of whom remain to this day.

In March 2023, we met with all the nations of the area in Cyprus for a blessed leadership conference. It was amazing to see God's family together in love and unity.

There has been much progress in many of the nations—several new churches were planted, new missions have been started, and many have come to know the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The constant strain of our area in war and political unrest has taken its toll, but the faithfulness of God working through his people is evident.

Translation of Church Training Materials (*MDP*) into Multiple Languages

For many years, Wider Europe and the Middle East has struggled to train leaders as leadership materials and church-specific literature could not be made available in the over 18 languages spoken by our national bishops and pastors weekly. Most of our training through the years has been oral, and the literature—which through the World Language Department (WLD) has been ever present in Spanish, usually in French, often in Portuguese, and occasionally in Russian as well as some Arabic—has not been available to most nations in our area. We have trained orally, often with little or no translated works in our multiple languages. Training pastors, church planters, and even local leaders has been a challenge, though our area is one of the most literate in the world and hosts the world's largest populace of polyglots. Many of our multilingual leaders do not speak English, Spanish, or French, so our church materials have never been fully available to them. A means to find translators, systems, and funds to do this has remained beyond our reach and has hindered us, particularly in leadership training and in materials germane to our movement. The churches in our area have disciplined many leaders and multiple academics over the past decade. We recently developed a novel form of rapid and accurate translation by training and supporting lingual teams to develop our materials in our languages in contrast to the more traditional approach of hiring often single translators. For our very diverse area, it has been financially difficult to hire quality translators to publish the specific training materials provided by our church. Thanks to our own departments and leaders at the International Offices who ventured with us to help support our area's novel project of translation in teams (including

World Language, Leadership Development and Discipleship [LDD], Spirit and Life Seminary [SLS], and Global Missions, with the main support coming from our own area), we were able to hire a Translation Team Coordinator who began immediately developing lingual teams to translate our new *Foundations: Minister's Development Program (MDP)* training materials. The project officially began in December 2023, and we now have teams finishing the *MDP* course in Arabic, Czech, Russian, and German, and we have the materials completed in Bulgarian in cooperation with a mission translation society with proofreading from our own team.

A Historic Leadership Shift for COGOP in Wider Europe and the Middle East

For the first time in the history of the Church of God of Prophecy, we have been holding *MDP* training in not only Spanish, French, and Portuguese, which World Language supplies, but we have translated and published materials for our current training into Arabic, Bulgarian, German, and Russian. We have never had materials to train our leaders in these languages before. We are on target to begin training of leaders with our own excellent Church of God of Prophecy *MDP* course in multicolored layouts identical to the English in Dutch, Czech, Greek, Hungarian, and Polish in the next Assembly period. We are currently vastly surpassing our leadership development of decades past in training nearly 500 leaders using written materials in their own native languages, including eight nations of our region. Never in our history have we had this multilingual, multicultural opportunity to train leaders for church planting, missions, and pastoral and leadership callings throughout our area in their language. We are certain of this shift in language and excellent training materials provided by LDD in cooperation with translation leadership from WLD. While we offer some online studies, students are encouraged to join cohorts of other students in their language where teaching is provided live, and usually face to face. We are encouraging our leadership to learn and serve together. Well-trained and seasoned bishops are taking the *MDP* material alongside new and young leaders so we can speak in unity of the things God has called us to as the Church of God of Prophecy.

The Next Generation

Several years ago, we began an area wide conference (Get Plugged In) for emerging youth leadership. We recently appointed a couple as Youth Ministries coordinators with another couple to assist them, not only with the emerging leadership conference (Get Plugged In) in cooperation with YM International, but to support and encourage youth ministries and training throughout our area. Young leaders are identified in these conferences and in resulting youth weekends and camps throughout the region. We are encouraging every region in our area to focus on youth, and to identify and raise up a national leader and a leadership team.

A new CM ministry has been birthed. In July of this year, we appointed a Children's Ministries coordinator to help follow the model of YM for our region and to build up and support the international CM ministry and training materials throughout our nations. The goal is to support and further develop leaders for children's ministries in every nation of our area.

We are already seeing the impact and harvest results from this translation and leadership development shift, along with the area-wide coordination of YM, and we believe the same will follow for our new project for children's leadership development. We are training this current and the next generation to reconcile Wider Europe and the Middle East to Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Clayton Endecott
General Presbyter

**REPORT OF GENERAL PRESBYTER BENJAMIN FELIZ
MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND SPANISH-SPEAKING
CARIBBEAN**

JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024

I thank God for his many blessings in Mexico, Central America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean during the last two years. This Assembly period was one of recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. The return to the new normal was gradual and challenging. As a result of the pandemic, the world changed, and adapting was not optional.

Even under challenging conditions, our area organized 223 new churches and added to the church 11,270 new members. Our total number of churches in Mexico, Central America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean is 3,771, with a total membership of 185,260. Only by the grace of God we can celebrate these victories.

Leadership Development

The area continues to be committed to leadership development at all levels. During the last two years, several of our ministers received their Master of Arts in Ministry from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Twelve ministers received their Doctor of Ministry degree from Western Theological Seminary. Currently, 18 students are completing their doctorate with Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Central America has embraced the new *Foundations: Minister's Development program*, seeing several hundred completing the program, while others are currently enrolled. The area has also embraced the initiatives of Spirit and Life Seminary by hosting cohorts in some nations.

Stewardship

Central America continues to lead the way in funds deposited in international accounts.

A significant percentage of all tithes deposited into international accounts come from Central America. The area's faithful participation in our financial system serves as an example to the world. As a result, we have been able to plant churches, invest in the harvest, develop leaders, construct and repair buildings, provide disaster relief, and assist those in need. The impact of their faithfulness has touched the world.

I would like to express my appreciation for the support received from the Global Outreach Committee in helping finance some of these ventures. Also, the insight and counsel received from the Office of the Presiding Bishop, fellow general presbyters, and our shared leadership team have been a great blessing to the area and to me personally. I thank God for every member, leader, pastor, and national bishop of this great Church in Mexico, Central America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. It is through their anointed ministry that our church has a strong presence in this beautiful area of the world. These results are obtained amid great danger. Violence, extortion, kidnapping, and gang activity are some of the challenges that our brothers and sisters must surmount to serve the Lord in our area. Please continue to pray for our area.

I would like to thank God for the anointed ministry of my wife, Damaris. Her companionship, encouragement, and leadership continue to inspire me. Her passion for our pastors' wives is great. Her ministry, "Precious Pearls," continues to grow in our area. During the past two years, the nations in our area conducted conferences for pastors' wives. The testimonies that we receive from these gatherings are very encouraging.

We give God the glory for what he is doing in our area through the sacrifice of our Church of God of Prophecy family.

Bishop Benjamin Feliz, DMin
General Presbyter

REPORT OF GENERAL PRESBYTER ENIS JAMES KOLAWOLE AFRICA JUNE 1, 2022 - May 31, 2024

Introduction

The office of the General Presbyter of Africa is vested with the responsibility of overseeing almost 5,000 ministers from 35 African nations linked by regional/national bishops. My team and my humble self worked relentlessly over the past two years to support the African region's organizational growth,

community involvement, and spiritual development. The African churches' aims and objectives have been largely advanced by the general presbyter, who oversees numerous pastoral duties, leads congregational meetings, and supports missionary activities within the jurisprudence of the continent.

Core Values of the Churches in Africa

Our core value as a church remained irrefutably sacrosanct. Africa is still a place where the Church is actively promoting its essential values: prayer, harvest, stewardship, leadership development, and service.

Foremost, God extends an open invitation to everyone to visit his temple of prayer. It emphasizes the happiness and acceptance that come from expressing gratitude to God. Isaiah 56:7 states, "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people." Churches in Africa are known for their fervent prayers, reflecting the deep understanding among Africans of the importance of earnest prayer.

Additionally, Africa is resolutely committed to the great harvest. The biblical concept of harvest is significant because it represents God's blessings, supply, and abundance. In Matthew 9:37-38, Jesus calls on believers to actively participate in sharing the gospel, referring to the harvest as bountiful but the laborers as few. The Bible makes frequent reference to the idea of sowing and reaping, highlighting the significance of faith, diligence, and stewardship in obtaining God's benefits and having an impact on God's kingdom via evangelism and discipleship.

Furthermore, in African churches, there has been an increase in the development of leadership. The Africa Leadership Conference took place in Lagos, Nigeria, in January of 2024. Many of the African continent's national bishops, pastors, and ministers were involved in the program. Another leadership development conference for parents, educators, pastors, and owners of schools was conducted in Lagos, Nigeria, in May of 2024. It was put together with English-speaking people in West Africa (Cameroon, Ghana, and Nigeria) in view.

Similarly, stewardship, to me, is the careful management and preservation of the assets that God has entrusted to us. The Bible emphasizes stewardship as an essential element of being faithful and obedient to God by preserving resources, giving generously to the church and community, and safeguarding the environment for future generations. Believers who practice good stewardship exalt God. Our stewardship is an expression of our gratitude for God's blessings and our commitment to his kingdom objectives.

Significantly, the churches within the precinct of Africa are, by God's grace, committed to serving and supporting those in need by numerous acts of biblical selflessness. We demonstrate God's love, compassion, and desire to improve the lives of others within our divergent communities. We volunteer our time, skills, and resources to help elevate others. Consequently, brethren show their love and concern for their community respectively. We can make the world more compassionate and interconnected, where everyone enjoys the satisfaction of lending and receiving assistance, by living according to the spirit of service. This is our goal and passion in Africa.

It is in view of the above that different trainings were conducted to further reposition the workforce in Africa for greater community impact, namely:

- January Leadership Conference: It was indeed a great experience having the national bishops in Africa converged together for ministerial training.
- ICM Leadership Conference for English-Speaking Countries in West Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, and Cameroon)

In Loving Memory

It is worth mentioning that in 2023, the church community faced a profound loss with the passing into glory of our beloved Bishop Jombile, a figure of vibrancy, dedication, and unwavering faith. His commitment to his calling was evident in his tireless service as the national bishop over the work in South Africa East. Bishop Jombile's leadership was marked by his diligent stewardship and his passionate pursuit of spiritual growth within the African community.

Bishop Jombile's legacy is one of inspirational devotion. Notably, he was a shepherd who led by example, nurturing the flock with wisdom and compassion. His contributions extended beyond the pulpit, as he was instrumental in fostering unity and guiding the church through times of both challenges as well as celebrations. His absence is deeply felt, but his influence continues to resonate in the hearts and lives of those he touched.

As we remember Bishop Jombile, we reflect on the values he embodied and the lessons he imparted. His life serves as a testament to the power of faith in action, and his memory inspires us to carry forward the mission with the same fervor and commitment he demonstrated throughout his years of service. Let us honor his memory by continuing the work he so passionately advanced, ensuring that his vision for the church in South Africa East endures.

Conventions

Throughout the year 2023, a remarkable wave of spiritual gatherings swept across the African continent, with numerous churches hosting their national

conventions. These events—held in regions including Gambia, South Africa East, Uganda, Burundi, Ghana, Congo, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique, and Eswatini—were not only successful but also became vessels for the manifest presence of God.

Each convention became a beacon of divine grace, as congregations from diverse backgrounds united under the shared vision of “Reconciling the World to Christ.” The power of God was palpable in every meeting, touching lives and igniting hearts with renewed purpose and passion.

The success of these conventions is a testament to the collective faith and dedication of the church communities involved. They served as platforms for spiritual renewal, where believers could deepen their faith and embrace the call to spread the gospel. The outpouring of testimonies from these events speaks volumes, showcasing the transformative impact of the Holy Spirit’s work among the people.

As we reflect on the blessings of the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the countless lives changed and the souls brought closer to Christ. The unity and fervor displayed across these conventions are a powerful reminder of the church’s mission and the potential for widespread revival when we come together in worship and commitment to our Savior’s cause. Let us carry this momentum forward, continuing to share the love and message of Christ with every corner of the world.

Mission to New Nations

The ultimate objective of the Church’s upcoming fieldwork in Madagascar is to establish a robust Christian community that will change, heal, and offer hope to the surrounding community. The goals include developing relationships with the neighborhood, spreading the gospel, and offering assistance and materials for spiritual development. Through outreach initiatives, evangelism, and discipleship, the Church seeks to significantly influence Madagascar by illuminating the dark and encouraging love, unity, and service-oriented culture among people.

Consolidation

The effort of the office of the general presbyter has tangibly helped to register some of our churches in seven nations in Africa. This, of course, translates to rewriting the constitution and article of memorandum.

Hearty Appreciation to All our Harvest Partners and Donors

On behalf of the budding Continent of Africa, I would like to sincerely thank our Harvest Partners and donors for your time, prayers, and financial support over the years. We are so blessed to have your support. Through your faithfulness, and selfless and generous giving, we can continue to fund

kingdom programs and accomplish numerous goals. We are extremely grateful for all donations received over the years.

Much ground has been covered already, but the goal remains to cover the entirety of every square inch in Africa. The Republic of Madagascar and the Republic of Cape Verde are beckoning for the Church to be properly planted. The need for churches to be planted in these countries is as urgent as it is compelling pragmatically. It is my prayers that Africa will be self-sufficient economically, since nobody enjoys being overly dependent on others, but Spirit-driven support is an invaluable tool in this regard. Thanks to all the International Offices staff for your dedication and promptness in helping us to be fulfilled in our service.

Closing Remarks

My heart bleeds for Africa. The harvest is plenteous and ripe, but the laborers are regrettably few. And like Paul, the revered apostle, said in Ephesian 3:14, “For this cause I bow my knees. . . .” My knees are equally bowed and I am crucified daily yearning for lost souls to be genuinely birthed into God’s kingdom. Join me in this quest for every square inch of Africa to be truly washed in the blood of Jesus. Maranatha!

Bishop Enis James Kolawole
General Presbyter

REPORT OF GENERAL PRESBYTER CLAYTON MARTIN THE CARIBBEAN AND ATLANTIC OCEAN ISLANDS JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024

The Church of God of Prophecy in the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands is still trying to offset the many years of the COVID pandemic which has negatively impacted attendance in many churches. For many areas, it has been observed that many of the online church attendees would rather remain online than return to church in person.

For the nation of Haiti, ongoing violence and concern for personal safety has proven to be a deterrent to people going back to in-person worship. The crisis has also caused serious dislocation of the work of the Church in the communities of Haiti.

Migration is a factor that has seen numerous young professionals from the islands seeking greater opportunities in many of the developed countries of the world.

During the period from 2022 to 2024, there has been a resurgence in the tourism product offered by the nations of the Caribbean, and this is offering significant economic hope for the future.

Conclusion: The Church of God of prophecy in the Caribbean is still considered one of the most stable areas in the Church's network. We will continue our primary quest to reconcile the world to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Respectfully submitted,
Bishop Clayton Martin, DMin
General Presbyter

**REPORT OF GENERAL PRESBYTER TIMOTHY L. MCCALED
ASIA, AUSTRALIA, AND OCEANIA
JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024**

Greetings to the delegates of the 102nd International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy, July 2024.

First and foremost, I want to express appreciation to my wife, Sheena, for her constant support and encouragement. Sheena is actively involved with the work in the Asia, Australia, and Oceania (AAO) region. She has worked tirelessly alongside me as a teacher, secretary, and as a minister to the people of this area. I feel her full support spiritually, emotionally, physically, and financially, and it would be difficult to do this ministry without her constant encouragement and presence.

In addition, I want to honor and to thank Bishop Tim Coalter and his wife, Kelly, for their support, encouragement, and leadership since he became our presiding bishop two years ago. He and Kelly are great friends with a heart for the Lord, this ministry, and this wonderful fellowship known around the world as the Church of God of Prophecy. They have truly been friends to me and Sheena and to this entire organization. I look forward to working with Bishop Coalter over the next few years as he continues to lead and to cast vision for this worldwide fellowship.

I must also acknowledge the national bishops and the pastors of the Asia, Australia, Oceania region, and I want them to know that it has truly been my honor and my privilege to know and to labor with each one of them. These bishops and pastors often labor under extreme circumstances but do so with spiritual tenacity, constant love, and determined integrity. The AAO region consists of nations that are steeped in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, as well as many other tribal and idolatrous religions. While the region is vast in size, with many languages and cultural differences, these national leaders and pastors of the AAO region continually amaze me with their fortitude and faithfulness to reach the unreached with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I have traveled multiple times to my region to preach, to conduct business for the Church, to encourage our people, and to conduct seminars and multiple types of training. Since the last International Assembly, I have been giving attention to ministerial development. Over the last two years, I have conducted 14 regional Leadership Development and Discipleship (LDD) seminars in India, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, and Indonesia while also keeping up my regular administrative duties. These LDD seminars have been attended by hundreds of pastors and leaders. I have used this opportunity to use some of the national bishops in teaching so that they will develop the skills and confidence to continue teaching and training. I constantly emphasize to these national bishops that they have a responsibility to pour into the pastors and local churches. I have also asked for and received support from the youth and children's departments at the International Offices. Bishops Kirk Rising and Shaun McKinley have both been very helpful in training children and youth workers since the last Assembly. Bishop Jeff Davis, executive director of LDD, traveled with me to India and Nepal to preach and teach. In addition to the above, I am in constant contact with my region through WhatsApp, Zoom, emails, and voice calls.

The funds budgeted and allotted for my region have been greatly appreciated, and I have endeavored to use them wisely. However, additional funds were necessary for my scope of work and vision, which includes training pastors, area meetings of the presiding bishops, seeing to the needs of eleven orphanages, evangelism, and creating projects that help pastors to support themselves.

Therefore, in addition to the Harvest Funds, I have, over the past eight years, raised additional funds of more than \$350,000 which has been solely used to help the AAO area. These funds were generated from friends, family, and acquaintances outside of the COGOP, and they have enabled me to help the national offices, pastors, and orphanages in ways that I could not have otherwise done. With these extra funds, I have initiated endeavors such as investing in small agricultural projects of approximately \$500 each that have enabled pastors to generate regular income and become self-supporting. These projects have mostly been in the form of small farms of fish, chickens, pigs, goats, and water buffalo. From these projects, I have been amazed by some of the pastors' entrepreneurial skills. Some of them have grown our initial investments to include other businesses such as village stores, sewing machines, retail clothing, etc. This endeavor has given ministers the ability to improve their difficult living conditions. Of course, I am teaching our people to tithe and give offerings, and recently one of the national bishops delivered \$500 as tithes for the international account, which was derived from the sale of goats.

I have also given much attention to helping the orphanages in my area. Cathy Payne has been a great help and encourager in helping to fund numerous projects. We have raised funds to build or renovate old dorms and have raised

awareness for the One Child Fund. In India, we have helped four of the orphaned children in their desire to get a higher education.

Relationships are vital to ministry and in doing ministry. Therefore, I have intentionally worked to connect the AAO nations more directly to their Harvest Partners. I have included U.S. pastors on many of my trips and have used them in teaching some of the LDD courses. The connections that have been made have proven to be a blessing to all involved. The response has been tremendous as many pastors who were not participating in the Harvest Partner system began to connect. The increase in giving has been notable, and I hope to expand on this idea in the future.

Evangelism is outlawed in many of the countries where I serve, with automatic jail sentences for conversions and baptisms. However, the work continues to grow. In Nepal, we continue to partner with the Jesus Film Project to reach the unreached people of the Himalayan region. Jesus Film has supplied solar backpacks that contain a projector, speakers, battery, solar charger, and screen. I have committed to support three evangelists full time as they take the film along with literature and Bibles into mountain villages where there is no Christian witness. The Jesus Film organization agreed to purchase two motorcycles for this endeavor, and I have purchased a third motorcycle. Although these three COGOP evangelists have at times been threatened with their life, they continue to go and plant the seeds of the gospel. Recently, these evangelists expressed a desire to dig water wells for some of these villages as a way to open the door for the gospel. I authorized the digging of five wells at \$500 each to see if this source of water will open the villagers' hearts to the Water of Life when they see that we truly care for their personal needs as well.

I have also secured one of our native ministers in the Philippines to teach the LDD classes to the pastors and leaders throughout the Philippines. Pastor Alberto Garao is well educated with a Master of Divinity, and he can get to many of the areas that time and energy would never permit me to go. Pastor Alberto, under the supervision of Bishop Roger Justiniano, is doing a great job and to date has completed ten LDD trainings throughout the provinces of the Philippines.

Stewardship and accountability have been, and continue to be, a major emphasis throughout the region. My office has endeavored to teach the importance of tithing, giving, and service to others with the members of AAO, and it is my desire to see our churches and pastors practicing good stewardship. It is one of my goals and prayers that Asia, Australia, Oceania will become great givers in this world-wide movement!

While the challenges are great in the AAO area, Sheena and I take our assignment seriously, and we are endeavoring to make known the riches of

Christ by all the means stated above and more. I am grateful that the Lord and the International Presbytery has given us the opportunity to serve this area in the capacity as general presbyter. I look forward to continuing to work in this region during the next two years and beyond as the Lord would direct as it is his church and his ministry, and I am his servant. I believe that the future is bright for the AAO region!

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve the Church of God of Prophecy in this capacity.

Respectfully submitted,
Bishop Timothy L. McCaleb, DMin
General Presbyter

**REPORT OF GENERAL PRESBYTER GABRIEL VIDAL
SOUTH AMERICA
JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024**

In South America, we are grateful to the Lord for the work that has been done in the last 14 years of my tenure as general presbyter. We have planted 996 new churches and have added more than 40,000 new members to the Church. Between preaching points, missions, and churches, we have reached 3,797 locations. Glory to the Lord, for he is the one who gives growth!

During the last two years, 2022-2024, the Lord has continued to bless us greatly. Personally, I attended nine of the 10 national conventions. But, unfortunately, due to lack of visa, I could not attend the National Convention in Venezuela. The national bishop we had invited was deported from the airport after his arrival in Valencia. However, the Church continues to move forward during the difficulty and economic challenges that the membership has been experiencing. Our people in Venezuela are faithful people and have continued to contribute to the national missionary efforts, although the rate of growth in church planting that we had been experiencing has slowed down. In the last two years, due to economic challenges, the growth has been nominal. Consequently, we continue to ask for prayer for Venezuela.

Strategy Meeting in Brazil

During the month of March 2023, we held our biennial meeting of national bishops in Natal, Brazil. During this meeting, the national bishops from all the countries presented a strategy report for the following six years, where it is stipulated to plant more than 1,000 new churches by 2030. Only Bolivia

presented a strategic plan to plant 500 churches by 2030. In the case of Peru, we also pray to plant more than 500 new churches by 2030. We think that with God's help, we will achieve 1,000 new churches by 2030, and I believe that we could even surpass that number with the work of the other nations. We understand that our Lord is the one who gives growth, so we ask the global Church to remember us in your prayers for us to accomplish this amazing task.

Integral Development Process

During the month of May 2023, we began a new project that we are praying will help us grow both spiritually and in membership. We have outlined a strategy that we have named Integral Development Process (Proceso de Desarrollo Integral [PDI]). This is basically discipleship for mature Christians. We believe this could be the future of greater growth on the continent.

The main idea behind this process is that discipleship is for life. It is essentially a continuation of discipleship with a different approach than discipleship for new converts. For that reason, a series of lessons have been developed that will allow us to follow the process of discipleship continually through our lives. Currently, we are finishing the second stage of the process. The first stage was done among the national bishops of South América. The second stage included the national bishops with their leadership group. Now, we are getting ready to start the third stage, which will involve district supervisors. The bottom line is to bring it to the local church level by the end of 2025. Please pray for our discipleship efforts.

Statistics in South America

In the last two years, the total membership increased from 77,193 (May 2022) to 82,432 (May 2024) for a net increase of 5,239 new members. In terms of total churches, the increase was 170 new churches for a total of 1,881 on the continent. As for preaching and mission points, we experienced an increase as well. By May 2024, we reported a total of 387 missions and 1,529 preaching points. Between the churches, missions, and preaching points, we have a total of 3,797 communities where the South American Church is ministering. Our new goal is to reach 2,500 churches by 2030, although we believe it could be possible to add 1,000 new churches with the help of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The number of bishops on the entire continent is 64, with 669 licensed ministers. This shows a challenge for the future, as we have more churches than licensed ministers.

During the last two years, 10,857 received the Lord as their savior (conversions) and 7,529 were baptized in water. The national bishops reported 15,020* people baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

In South America the priority continues to be church planting, lifelong discipleship, and leadership training. We are, as always, very grateful to the Lord and the support he has always given us for the growth of his work. To him be the glory and all honor forever, amen.

Respectfully submitted,
Bishop Gabriel Vidal, DMin
General Presbyter

*Note: I believe some of the national bishops are not asking this question on their church monthly report. I will investigate.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY JULY 31, 2024

I am humbled by the honor of serving this church as the executive director of Finance and Administration. I give God all the glory for the opportunity to serve him as a steward in the Church of God of Prophecy.

While my tenure serving in this capacity started in October of 2023, this report reflects the entirety of this Assembly reporting period, including the excellent work of my predecessor, Bishop Paul Holt, who served in this office for 13 years. I am thankful for Bishop Holt's work laying a great foundation of accountability in our administrative offices and with ministry partners. The work we will continue to do moving forward, building up healthy stewardship practices in our global church, is only possible because of his excellent service to this movement.

I would like to recognize the outstanding leadership team that works with me in the Finance and Administration Division Mike Luithle, manager of our Information Technology and Media Services department; Gene Browning, manager of our Retail Operations and the White Wing Publishing House; Nevine Hensley, manager of our Financial Services department; Ed Hartman, manager of our Property and Insurance Department; Todd Bagley, manager of our Historical Properties and Heritage Ministries; and Cathy Payne, director of Global Missions.

I would also like to thank Sarah Rising, Lindsey Helweg, and Melva Pohlner

for their excellent work in supporting the administrative function of my office. I am also thankful for my wife, Laura Felipe, and her unwavering support. I am able to do what I do only because of her encouragement, prayers, and support.

In executing my responsibilities, I have collaborated with various professional organizations to provide our church with the best tools to meet the demands of our administrative framework. We have partnered with the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) to ensure our commitment to maintaining the highest level of financial integrity and accountability. We have partnered with the prestigious accounting firm Batts Morrison Wells & Lee for our auditing process. We have also partnered with legal counsel to ensure that our practices are appropriate to safekeep the assets and the interests of our church.

My office has worked closely with the Finance and Stewardship Committee, the Audit Committee, the Assembly Task Force, the International Assembly Expense Committee, and the Global Missions Committee, of which I serve as chairman. The Global Missions Committee provides accountability to my office in overseeing the proper allocation of non-designated funds back to the mission field to support the work of our ministry worldwide.

I would like to express my appreciation to every nation, state, and region that has faithfully participated in the global financial system approved by this International Assembly through their giving and reporting. Our church has embraced a stewarding model that is both globally minded and community centered, as it allows for the local ministry to impact the world. Such impact is made possible through our tithing system, where each local church around the world contributes ten percent of the tithes they receive. The tithe from each local church provides funding for evangelism, church planting, leadership development, construction and repair, disaster relief, and missionary support, among other ministry initiatives. The tithe from local churches also provides funding for the ministry at the International Offices.

Given the complex landscape of the global economy, when local churches outside the United States contribute with their tithes, the funds are placed into an international account, and these funds are primarily used to support ministry initiatives and needs that might arise in that area of the world. The strategic allocation of funds in these international accounts allows funds to be disbursed promptly while diminishing the potential loss in value that may occur in currency exchange.

In 2023, North America contributed 70 percent of all tithes received globally, with 30 percent of all tithes received coming from all other nations, in comparison to the 74 percent from North America and 26 percent from all other nations reported in 2022. I echo the sentiment of Bishop Holt in

his report to the 101st Assembly that as the Church continues to expand internationally, a U.S.-dependent system is not sustainable, and global participation through international accounts is vital for the support of the Church's vision to reconcile the world.

Another key source of ministry funding is mission giving through Harvest Partners, Helping Hands, and One Child Fund. We are proud to report our continual commitment to distributing 100 percent of the contributions received through these channels to the designated area of need. No fees or processing charges are deducted from funds received from donors.

In addition to my financial and administrative responsibilities, I also have the honor of serving as a champion for Biblical Stewardship, one of our church's core values. In 2023, under the leadership of Bishop Holt, Stewardship Ministries hosted its first Stewardship Conference at the International Offices in the Ministry Training Center in Cleveland, Tennessee. The conference focused on providing both inspiration and practical tools for church leaders engaged in church administration.

The Transform Conference was the first step towards bringing stewardship to the forefront of ministry in our church, as stewardship must become more than a value we recognize; it must become a value we embrace, practice, and celebrate at all levels of ministry. With that in mind, during this Assembly, Stewardship Ministries is introducing the Global Stewardship Initiative, a strategic plan to create a culture of joyful accountability where kingdom stewards can flourish. The Global Stewardship Initiative will focus on three strategic components: (1) rediscovering the biblical concept of stewardship, (2) increasing stewardship capacity, and (3) creating stewardship community.

- Through Stewardship Concepts, we will empower stewards with the knowledge of what the Bible says about stewardship and challenge them to rediscover biblical stewardship.
- Through Stewardship Capacity, we will empower stewards with the skills to exercise biblical stewardship in a relevant and contextualized way.
- Through the Stewardship Community, we will empower stewards by connecting them with other like-minded steward leaders and providing a support network while fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration.

At this Assembly, we are introducing the vision and strategic plan for Stewardship Ministries, which aims to have its first tools and resources available by spring of 2025. For more information about the Global Stewardship Initiative, you can visit the stewardship booth in the exhibit hall or cogopstewardship.org.

The Church of God of Prophecy remains committed to stewarding its resources with integrity and accountability, ensuring that all God has entrusted

to this body is received with gratitude, administered with diligence, and given back with generosity.

Sincerely submitted,
Bishop Daniel A. Felipe

**GLOBAL MISSIONS MINISTRIES COORDINATOR REPORT
TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY
JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024**

I am thankful for the opportunity of service to the Lord in this fellowship. Over the past two years, he has continued to open doors and provide ministry opportunities globally. He is faithful, and I thank him for his present presence and sufficient grace as I have personally been blessed to travel and minister in his name.

Our home and family have also been blessed during these years. God's faithfulness has granted me the blessing of healing, strength, and ministry in revivals, conferences, conventions, and an assortment of his providential possibilities that are life-changing and a source of great joy. We are also blessed by the work of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of our son and his family as they have served in pastoral and evangelistic ministries. We were blessed to care for my mother in our home through the last couple of years of her life and faithfully lay her down with her parents in the family cemetery after her death. I was tremendously blessed to walk through the season of John's last year of ministry and his ultimate journey home in peace. I rejoice in and am thankful for the gift of family and for the love and support our global family has offered in our work through this season of service in Global Missions Ministries.

As we review these past two years, I am grateful to the Lord's calling and anointing in service and ministry within the Church of God of Prophecy, a fellowship that exhibits a heart for the harvest potential throughout the world. We continue to witness the wonders of the Lord as we have labored together with many anointed and inspired state, regional, national, and international leaders. I am thankful for the opportunity to work with such vessels of the Lord and give recognition for the ministry they have provided where they serve. It is also my blessing to work among the dedicated employees and staff at the International Offices—truly Spirit-filled men and women. I am continually amazed at the diversity of their giftings and grateful for their hard work, support, and encouragement.

Over the past two years, this office has been actively partnering as a resource center and support office to our local, state, regional, and national ministries globally. In addition to handling the day-to-day correspondence and communication networking, when requested, we have supplied resource materials, prepared and

mailed newsletters and other ministry and connection information, maintained personal profile portfolios on leadership, operated an enlarging web presence, and hosted our international family at the 2022 Assembly. In addition, we prepared copy for inclusion in the *White Wing Messenger* to update and promote ministry ideas and plans, led the semi-annual March and October Mission Drives with local and national/international connection, communicated regularly with state/regional/national bishops and general presbyters, maintained a yearly pastor's mailing, and continued a prayer ministry specifically for our workers on the field through the Global Missions prayer calendar.

It has been my privilege to represent Global Missions Ministries and the Church of God of Prophecy through ministry travel in these years when travel was possible. When it was not possible due to continuing COVID stress and/or military coups, national security, other issues, etc., we ministered through Zoom and Teams, linking electronically with pastors and leaders to increase awareness of mission efforts throughout our global network.

Travel opportunities included attending and participating in international leadership conferences in Nigeria for Africa and Cyprus for Wider Europe; state/regional/national leadership conferences in Alabama, North Carolina for ICM, Northeast English Region (New Jersey), and the British Virgin Islands; instruction through the new *Foundations: Minister's Development Program* in cooperative efforts with Leadership Development and Discipleship Ministries in British Virgin Islands, Cyprus, Nigeria, and Trinidad and Tobago; attending and ministering in state/regional/national conventions in Georgia, Midwest/Rocky Mountain Region (Nebraska), North Carolina, Virginia (Church of God), Washington, Benin, Czech Republic, and Uganda; state/regional/national conferences in Alabama, California, Heartland (Missouri), Mid-Atlantic Region (Maryland), Northeast Spanish Region (Connecticut), Pennsylvania, Virginia, Eastern Canada, Mexico, Czech Republic; and revivals, conferences, mission rallies, and local services in Alabama, Arizona, California, Georgia, Hawaii, Missouri, North Carolina, Northeast Spanish Region (New Jersey), Tennessee, Virginia, British Virgin Islands, Eastern Canada, and Mexico.

As we continued to experience random COVID-19 travel restrictions, we were able to connect with ministry opportunities electronically. Among other regions too numerous to mention, we connected to ministries in Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Finland, Germany Global Aid Network (GAiN), Haiti, Leeward Islands, North American leaders, and multiple opportunities for ministry in Ukraine.

We continue to develop specialized tri-lingual (English, French, and Spanish) printing and media projects for connecting local churches to the nations to reach the harvest. This cooperative effort is one of participation in and promotion of the ministries including Harvest Partners, Helping Hand Ministry, and One

Child Fund. Additionally, I have the great joy of working with state/regional/national outreach mission teams predominately throughout North America. It is always exciting to correspond with the national bishops and other mission workers concerning ways in which we can support and be a part of the harvest in their nations. Our lives have been enriched by our association and fellowship with the children who are living and growing in our orphanage ministry. We have seen the lives of children touched with the love and grace of Christ and changed by the compassion of sponsors from a world away.

During this time, more than \$5.5 million has been raised in mission efforts with more than \$2 million given through Harvest Partner Mission Giving and over \$2.8 million supplied through Project Giving and Helping Hand giving. Some of the projects include the following:

- \$44,000 in benevolence for lepers, food aid, widow support, and humanitarian aid in nations such as Benin, Malawi, India, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and more.
- Over \$665,000 towards buildings and property giving for national office buildings, church construction, land purchase, roofs, church rent, and more. Some of the more significant projects include raising funds for the children's church in Paraguay, the refugee church in South Sudan, the Madrid church in Spain, and various church building projects in Dominican Republic.
- Over \$94,000 in church-planting giving for Central America, South America, and North America.
- Over \$250,000 to assist in emergency relief to nations such as Malawi, Pakistan, Israel, Mexico, and Ukraine.
- Over \$196,000 in transportation support providing national vehicles in Guinea, Chile, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uruguay, Cuba, Trinidad & Tobago, and Egypt; motorbikes in Belize, Costa Rica, India, and Panama; bicycles were provided in Ivory Coast and Rwanda; and a utility boat in Guyana.

Through individual donor giving, over \$900,000 has been available to assist as follows:

- Individual ministers in nations such as Benin, Ecuador, India, Paraguay, and Rwanda, to name a few, received more than \$20,000 collectively.
- More than \$56,000 has assisted in emergencies in nations such as Chile, Israel, Mexico, Niger, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, Uganda, Ukraine, and the United States.
- Over \$157,000 has assisted in building national parsonages, national

office centers, roofing churches, assisting with rent, purchasing land, and restoring churches in nearly 30 nations.

- More than \$30,000 has provided medical assistance, pastoral support, food aid, and other benevolence support.
- With a little more than \$120,000, individual donors have supplied transportation services through the purchase of three buses, three national vehicles, one truck, multiple motorbikes, and a national vehicle for evangelism. We were also able to repair two national vehicles.
- Over \$508,000 has been provided to plant churches in three nations, help with agricultural assistance, give toward educational support, and provide other miscellaneous ministry support.

Individual donors and churches work together to supply the homes and support for the ministry toward the children of One Child Fund:

- Every Christmas we bless all the children in our homes and under our care with a Christmas dinner, new clothing, and holiday gifts.
- Over the last two years, we raised more than \$55,000 on Giving Tuesday for food aid.
- We gave almost \$10,000 toward school tuition and other school expenses. Additional support has provided bunk beds, mattresses, and bedding for two of our homes; new washing machines for three homes; a freezer/refrigerator for three homes; a dishwasher; and an oven. We provided a school bus, a van, several bicycles and motorbikes, and were able to repair a van during this time.
- With an additional \$70,000 support for this ministry, we have built three dormitories and a kitchen, repaired floors and restrooms, and supplied a much-needed kitchen in another area. This supplied funding also assisted in purchasing water filters, Bibles, computers, cameras, gas cylinders, and clothing. With this support, Haiti has contributed toward their surrounding community with care packages.
- We have been able to provide aid to each children's home/orphanage work in the nations because of the general donations of more than \$510,000 given for this ministry. For that, we thank you!

At the International Assembly in 2024, Global Missions Ministries sponsored the Mission Clothes Closet, which serves to provide clothing, toiletries, materials, resources, etc., to our mission workers. This annual event is a special blessing to those working and “shopping” there. We give special thanks to Linnette Christian and her team from Florida, along with volunteers from across the United States, who led the effort for this responsibility. We are

grateful for all the volunteers who make this massive effort more manageable and serviceable.

Additionally, Global Missions sponsored two highlight mission ministries at the 2024 International Assembly including the Mission Breakfast and the Mission Encounter. Both these events work together to increase mission awareness among Assembly delegates. Special thanks to Shelly Wilbanks, Stephanie Roberts, Ruth Hicks, Dan Miller, and the many other volunteers who make these events memorable.

Finally, I would like to especially express thanks to the office staff who have worked with us during the past four years. Stephanie Roberts works faithfully connecting nations and local churches in the role of our Harvest Partners administrative assistant. Shelly Wilbanks has remained as administrative assistant with concentration in the One Child Fund ministry and individual missions’ opportunities including Helping Hand Ministries. John Payne was a blessing to those who worked with him in the office and especially in opportunities for ministry in conferences, the website, and social media. The expertise, prayers, love, and support of these three, as well as the hundreds of volunteers who serve alongside of the efforts of Global Missions Ministries and reflected in the progress of the past two years, have been a blessing for me personally and a great blessing to the office.

As I complete this report for the two years of effort and ministry in the Global Missions Ministries office, I am enriched by and grateful for the opportunity to serve and for the thousands of lives I have been witness to, who have been changed by the hand of God. He has given grace, provision, ministry opportunity, and anointing. To his name we give thanks and all glory!

Sermons	68
Saved	72
Sanctified	34
Filled with the Holy Ghost	4
States Visited	16
Nations Visited	10

Respectfully submitted,
 Catherine H. Payne, DMin

*These numbers only represent the live ministry. I did not include numbers from electronic ministry.

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND DISCIPLESHIP AND
CENTER FOR BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
REPORT TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY
SEPTEMBER 1, 2022 - JUNE 31, 2024**

In 1911, General Overseer A. J. Tomlinson was inspired to introduce the idea of educational programs for the Church of God of Prophecy. As a result, programs like Bible Training School (BTS), Bible Training Camp (BTC), and Bible Training Institute (BTI) were used to develop and educate leaders. Then in 1966, Tomlinson College was founded. In 1992, the Center for Biblical Leadership was introduced, and in 1996, the Leadership Development and Discipleship department was birthed to continue the rich educational and leadership development efforts of preparing men and women to lead the church. During the 1990s, the *Foundations* courses were introduced—a self-study correspondence course that could also be taught in a group setting. Today we have the *Foundations: Minister’s Development Program (MDP)*, the work of more than 50 Church of God of Prophecy bishops, pastors, and ministry leaders from 14 different nations and six presbytery regions. The *MDP* is a systematic, relevant, and accessible ministerial training program that offers emerging leaders as well as seasoned pastors and ministry leaders an opportunity to increase ministry effectiveness through theological instruction, leadership and ministry development, practical application, and personal spiritual formation.

Why so much emphasis on education and leadership training? In 1992, General Overseer Bishop Billy Murry said, “Inspired, spiritual leadership is in demand for God’s Church in these challenging days. The Church is not likely to rise above its leadership.” I think that you will agree when I say that we are currently in those challenging days that he spoke of! Each of these institutions and programs were an effort to provide leaders and emerging leaders an opportunity to learn and to grow.

We know that leadership plays a significant role in the work of God. Reverend Kathryn Creasy reminds us that “throughout the Bible, we see the role that ordinary individuals, gifted and called by God, played in accomplishing God’s purposes” men and women whom God called to be ON MISSION with him. However, we must remember, that before he called them to go, he called them to come (Mark 1:16–20; 3:13–14; Matthew 11:28–30). He said, “Come and learn of me.”

Before going, Moses spent 40 years in the desert, Paul spent time in the desert, Jesus spent 40 days and nights in the wilderness, and his disciples were called to be with Jesus himself. Before he calls us to his mission, he calls us to himself! This is what Leadership Development and Discipleship

does. It offers leaders and emerging leaders the opportunity to come aside and sit at the feet of Jesus to learn and be disciplined, to engage his word, to fellowship with his Spirit and with one another, to be equipped and enriched so that they can then go and serve ON MISSION with God, making disciples!

LDD has been ON MISSION over the past two years, and we offer this report to (1) thank you for your partnership with us; (2) to keep you informed on what we have been doing to engage, equip, enrich, and inspire those who are serving; and (3) to provide insights into new initiatives that we have developed to remain ON MISSION.

“ . . . I am among you as one who serves.”

On mission,
Bishop Jeffery A. Davis
Leadership Development and Discipleship Executive Director

Report of the LDD Executive Director

Leadership Development and Discipleship Ministries is a family of ministries that UNITES five dynamic areas of service: Accredited Ministry Development, Spirit and Life Seminary, Center for Biblical Leadership, Children’s Ministries, and Youth Ministries. Together, we are committed to fostering leadership and discipleship within the global body of the Church of God of Prophecy.

OUR Vision

Engaging, equipping, and enriching those who serve

OUR Mission

Equipping ministry leaders to serve with spiritual fervor, personal integrity, and authentic leadership

OUR Values

Engagement, excellence, continuous learning, accountability, service, accessibility, and multiplication

OUR Priorities and Strategic Objectives

- Cultivate leaders by providing relevant and accessible content, tools, and resources to all leaders within the church
- Develop and implement a global strategy to identify and retain leaders
- Create alignment within the LDD ministries
- Establish a culture of accountability among leaders
- Improve relationships with leaders globally

Following the 2022 International Assembly, the assignment for Leadership Development and Discipleship (LDD) and the Center for Biblical Leadership (CBL) became very clear. Our priority and mission were to get the *Foundations: MDP* course/curriculum to our COGOP constituency worldwide in as many languages as possible and to continue to meet our LDD goals: the cultivation of leaders by providing applicable and accessible content, tools, and resources; increase the number of young leaders; create alignment within the ministries of Leadership Development and Discipleship; create a culture of accountability among leaders; improve relationships within leadership globally; **and** develop relevant ministry initiatives.

To help us prioritize our mission, in October 2022, the LDD department took several actions:

1. The LDD and CBL staff conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the *MDP* Curriculum.
2. The LDD director, Accredited Ministry Development (AMD) director, Center for Biblical Leadership (CBL) instructor, Children's Ministries (CM) director, and Youth Ministries (YM) director reviewed the 2022 LDD Executive Summary, Strategic Goals and Plan.
3. The LDD executive director and the LDD staff (Tony Orona, LDD project manager, and Alejandra G. Hodge, executive administrative assistant and junior project manager) partnered with the LDD ministry directors, the general presbyters, the COGOP IT department, Bishop Clayton Endecott and the Wider Europe plurality team, World Language Department, various International Offices staff, and the presiding bishop to facilitate focused groups and to conduct meetings, surveys, and conversations with each.
4. The LDD office team also processed comments and feedback from our COGOP family in the field.

In all, above 50 strategic meetings were held with the LDD staff and others between September 2022 and March 2023.

The SWOT analysis helped LDD to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats the internal and external influences that impact our goals and the implementation of the *MDP* delivery. It also provided guidance for developing a plan to overcome weaknesses and threats that challenged our progress. The following are some of the highlights of our findings:

OUR Strengths

- LDD developed new content that reflected current or emerging needs within the church:

- * *Foundations: Minister's Development Program*
- * Quality *MDP* material
 - Completion of the course meets the training requirements for ministry licensure.
 - Completion of the course online or with qualified and verified instructors will offer participants the opportunity to receive nine credit hours toward a Certificate of Ministry and Theological Studies with Spirit and Life Seminary.
 - It has been translated into four languages, and a pilot program was completed.
 - *MDP* courses are offered online at no cost to the student as well as onsite through a sponsoring national, regional, state, district, or local ministry.
 - It is versatile; it can be used to train ministers, laity, youth ministers, etc.
 - *MDP* can be offered in hybrid presentations.
- Additional courses were available (online and/or as intensives) as identified in the 2018–2022 strategic goals, as they remain relevant:
 - * Aligning the Mission and Vision of the Local Church with the Mission and Vision of the International Church of God of Prophecy (available in English and Spanish)
 - * Transformational Elements of the Gospel: A Pentecostal Perspective
 - * Yes! Responding to God's Call (English and Spanish)
 - * Membership Matters a 5-lesson membership course with downloadable instructor's manual and student guide (English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Swahili)
 - * Pentecostal Distinctives (English and Spanish)
 - * LDD/CBL: CBL Intensives
 - Biblical Preaching
 - Church and Community
 - Pentecostal Distinctives
 - Healthy Churches

Weaknesses

- No *MDP* rollout plan, post the *MDP* pilot
- *MDP* only translated into English, Spanish, and French (Portuguese was in proofing)
- Not translated into 14 other languages including Arabic, Bulgarian, Czech, Dutch, German, Greek, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, and

Russian (a historic problem); World Language Department unable to handle all this translation work alone

- No ongoing plan for review and revision of the *MDP* material
- Limitations of our learning management system (LMS); the need for a new database to capture user/student data
- Lack of clarity on how the *MDP* programs would enrich the lives of youth, students, and laity
- No strategic plan to address discipleship or disciple making
- LDD and CBL websites were cluttered and confusing, requiring too many clicks; needed revisions

Opportunities

- Create *MDP* rollout plan: train and multiply trainers through Train the Trainers model for *MDP*; connect with the church body globally
- Proactively and intentionally empower and prepare leaders in every GP area to move forward with *MDP*
- Connect with youth, students, and laity, and raise awareness of opportunities for LDD Ministries and *MDP* to enrich their lives and ministries
- Identify and develop a new learning management system and database; create a new numbering system for the ministry licensure process
- Transfer all the data (manually) from the old LMS to the new data base, and create a more automated process
- Create a new certificate numbering system
- Create a new LDD training website and presence
- Create a new CBL and LDD web presence
- Create a plan for discipleship and disciple making for COGOP
- Develop a system for review and revision to maintain the relevance of the *MDP* material
- Design Youth Minister Development Program (YMDP) utilizing the current *MDP* curriculum, YM resources, and other resources

Threats

- Hampered licensure process; delayed delivery of *MDP* material to ministry candidates and others
- The loss of confidence of our constituents in the LDD department's ability to deliver on what was promised during the 2022 International Assembly

The combination of the SWOT analysis and the review of the 2018–2022 LDD strategic goals and objectives reaffirmed that the strategic priorities and goals listed in the 2022 LDD Executive Summary were on target and had been addressed by the LDD ministry directors and staff. Moreover,

the collaboration and partnership between the LDD ministry directors, the general presbyters, the COGOP IT department, Bishop Clayton Endecott and the Wider Europe plurality teams, the World Language Department, various International Offices staff, and the presiding bishop prompted the LDD/CBL team to work on the following short-term priorities for the remainder of 2022 through 2024:

- The *MDP* roll out plan
- Transition of data from Teachable to Learn Dash
- LDD systems revisions and updates: new learning management system (LMS) and data base, new CBL and LDD website development, certificate numbering systems, Monday online office management tool, etc.
- Engage the Laity plan: LDD interns’ program; youth connect outreach
- *MDP* review and revision
- Discipleship and disciple making strategies

These priorities lead to the following new LDD initiatives for 2022–2026:

New LDD Initiatives Developed and Launched 2022–2024:	Initiated	Status
The <i>MDP</i> Train the Trainers Program Initiative (rollout plan)	November 2022	Ongoing
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Language translation partnership with Wider Europe to translate <i>MDP</i> and other LDD materials	March 2023	Ongoing
Teacher of Record <i>MDP</i> Video Recording Project Initiative	April 2023	Spring 2023 Fall 2024
<i>MDP</i> memorandums of understanding (MOU) and partnership agreements with COGOP Mexico	Sept 2022 July 2023	Completed
<i>MDP</i> memorandums of understanding (MOU) and partnership agreements with the following: • COGOP Jamaica • New Covenant Bible Institute of the Caribbean	Spring 2023	Three-year review in 2026
<i>MDP</i> hybrid training model development	October 2022	Completed
New LMS Initiative Learn Dash (database transitioned, installed, and activated)	May 2023	Completed 1/2024 and operational
Transition to a new CBL web page	Fall 2023	Completed 6/2024
Transition to a new LDD web page	January 2024	Completed 4/2024
New <i>MDP</i> Certificate Numbering System Initiative	January 2024	Operational 1/2024 and ongoing
New Ministry License Numbering System Initiative	January 2024	Operational 1/2024 and ongoing

SECTION 6 REPORTS OF INTERNATIONAL PRESBYTERS AND APPOINTEES

<i>MDP</i> Review and Revision Commission Initiative to review, update, and/or revise two <i>MDP</i> courses per two-year cycle	October 2023 Team selection in Spring 2024	Launching 9/2024 2026
Discipleship Commission Initiative to define disciple making and discipleship; develop discipleship pathways and approaches for COGOP	January 2024	Launching 9/2024 2026
INSPIRE Conference Presents (Engage the Laity); Master Class Pilot	August 2, 2024 workshop	August 2024
INSPIRE Conference Presents (Engage the Laity); Master Class Conference	To be determined	To be determined
Dr. Hector Ortiz Higher Education Grant (Father of Modern COGOP Education) Doctoral and master's students grants funded through LDD	Retroactive from January 2024	Launching 8/2024, ongoing
Translation initiative for Greater Europe/SLS/LDD World language and Foundations <i>MDP</i> Learning Communities	Fall 2022	Ongoing and operational
LDD Office Internship Program (Engaging Young Leaders Initiative): • Data entry and customer service intern • Web design * Marketing LDD * Contracted with web designer * Consultations with social media/marketing strategy • Social media intern	May 2024 May 2023	Ongoing and operational Ongoing and operational
LDD Assembly Internship Initiative (training in LDD operations)	Spring 2024; training	July 2024; operational
Tech Matters (online training for pastors and local churches)	July 2022; in development	Launching 6/2024
Revised LDD Brochures	January 2023	Operational
Monday Work Management System (to manage all the change)	May 2023	Operational
Development of a new LDD Executive Summary, goals and objectives, and modified vision statement	January 2024	In development; available fall 2025
YMPD Youth Ministers Development Program (Youth Ministry/ Pastor Development Program; Engaging Young Leaders Initiative)	April 2024	In development
In 2023, an <i>MDP</i> Ministry Licensure Pathway was developed to provide a visual for explaining the process from layman to lay minister to licensed minister; it was approved in spring 2024.	March 2023	In review; to be released fall 2024

MDP Progress Report

We have rolled out the *MDP* program to the COGOP around the world. In September and October 2022, there were 946 participants enrolled in the *MDP* online. Currently more than 6,000 people are taking *MDP* courses. We have trained 381 *MDP* Trainers in five regions of the world. Through a partnership with the Wider Europe plurality team, the World Language Department, Accredited Ministries, brethren from Africa, CBL, and Leadership Development, we now have the *MDP* curriculum being taught into English, Spanish, French, German, Russian, Egyptian, Afrikaans, Swahili, Arabic, and Portuguese.

We currently celebrate the following:

- *MDP* enrollment of 3,728 online students*
- *MDP* onsite enrollment of 1,022 students*
- Issued 1,794 *MDP* certificates of completion (not including COGOP members taking the course through institutions of higher learning)
- MOUs and/or agreements with *four institutions of higher learning that are using our curriculum to prepare their students for ministry
- We have reached every presbytery region of the world.

*The number of students presented above does not include those who participated through institutions of higher learning.

LDD and CBL Personal Ministry & Travel**Bishop Jeffery A. Davis**

Throughout these two years, I have participated and contributed (live and/or via Teams or Zoom) in conventions and in conferences focused on leadership with the following:

- Pastors and national/regional/state bishops
- Four GP Vision Weeks
- Ministry partners

Director's Global Engagement Travel

- Africa Nigeria National Conference and *MDP* Train the Trainer (TTT)
- Cyprus Leadership Conference and *MDP* TTT
- Dominican Republic Leadership Conference
- Magnolia Region (US) Regional Convention
- New Mexico (US) Regional Convention
- Kentucky(US) State Convention
- Prague Youth Conference
- Acapulco Mexico National Convention

- US Virgin Islands *MDP* TTT and LDD Workshops
- Minnesota/Nebraska (US) Conference
- India and Nepal *MDP* Training
- Canada CBL; National Leadership Conference
- Trinidad *MDP* TTT
- Kentucky (US) Worship Conference
- Alabama (US) State Leadership & Pastors Conference
- Spirit and Life Seminary Graduation
- PTS Graduation
- Charlotte, NC (US) Gordon Conwell Graduation
- Raleigh, NC (US) *MDP* Graduation
- Grand Bahamas *MDP* Graduation
- Freeport, Bahamas *MDP* Graduation

Articles Written

- Three articles for the *White Wing Messenger*
- Edited one book

Global Engagement Travel by CBL Faculty Dr. Elias Rodriguez, CBL/*MDP* Instructor

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11 NRSV).

- Pastoral Calling, Georgetown, DE, June 18, 2022
- Pastoral Calling, Brooklyn, NY, June 22, 2022
- Becoming a Church with Impact, Miami, FL, August 18–20, 2022
- Pastoral Calling, Santiago, Chile, August 26–27, 2022
- Becoming a Church with Impact, Shelbyville, KY, September 30–October 2, 2022
- COGOP Pentecostal Distinctives, Worthington, MN, October 13–16, 2022
- Church and Community, Lynn, MA, January 13–15, 2023
- *MDP* Train the Trainers and African Leadership Conference, Lagos, Nigeria, January 18–27, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Cochabamba, Bolivia, February 13–17, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Puebla, Mexico, February 26–March 2, 2023
- *MDP* Train the Trainers, Cyprus, March 3–8, 2023
- Transformational Elements of the Gospel, Managua, Nicaragua, March 16–19, 2023
- Pastoral Calling, Madrid, Spain, April 27–29, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Lima, Peru, May 4–7, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Havana, Cuba, May 15–19, 2023

- Pastoral Calling, Bogotá, Colombia, June 16-18, 2023
- *MDP* Train the Trainers, Tortola, BVI, August 24-27, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Indonesia, September 22-October 6, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Cochabamba, Bolivia, November 11-19, 2023
- Transformational Elements of the Gospel, Worthington, MN, December 8-10, 2023
- Church and Community, Lynn, MA, January 12-14, 2024
- *MDP* Train the Trainers, Trinidad & Tobago, February 29-March 3, 2024
- Pastoral Calling, Managua, Nicaragua, March 15-17, 2024
- *MDP* Classes, San José, Costa Rica, May 31-June 2, 2024

Classes Taught via ZOOM

- COGOP Pentecostal Distinctives, Mexico, August 1, 8, 12, 15, 22, 29, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Dominican Republic, December 2, 2022
- *MDP* Classes, Guatemala, February 24, June 29, July 27, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Puerto Rico, March 13, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Mexico, June 5-9, 2023
- *MDP* Classes, Guatemala, May 2024

Classes Taught for the GCTS-COGOP Consortium

- Biblical Preaching, Dominican Republic, February 12-16, 2024

Spirit and Life Seminary

- Teología Wesleyana Pentecostal, August 15-October 3, 2022
- Desarrollo de la Espiritualidad Pentecostal, October 17-December 11, 2022
- Pentecostal Worship and Ministry, August 14-October 8, 2023
- Desarrollo de la Espiritualidad Pentecostal, March 18-May 5, 2024

Meetings

- Attended the International Presbytery meeting, Oklahoma City, OK, July 16-19, 2022
- Attended the 102nd International Assembly, Oklahoma City, OK, July 20-24, 2022
- Attended the Central America, Mexico, and Hispanic Caribbean Leadership Summit, San Salvador, El Salvador, August 4-6, 2023
- Society of Pentecostal Studies, March 18-20, 2024
- 2nd Pentecostal Theological Summit, San Juan, Puerto Rico, April 12-13, 2024
- 50th Celebration of Church of God of Prophecy in Bolivia, April 19-21, 2024
- 1st Pentecostal Theological Summit in Dominican Republic, April 26-27, 2024

Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee Meetings

- October 17–21, 2022
- April 17–20, 2023
- October 30–November 3, 2023
- April 8–11, 2024

International Office Representative

- IO Representative to the Alaska State Convention, Anchorage, August 5–7, 2022
- IO Representative to the NE Hispanic Region Convention, New Jersey, July 14–16, 2023
- IO Representative to Ohio Spanish Convention, Willard, OH, May 17–19, 2024

International Assembly 2022 Workshop

- Transformational Elements of the Gospel: A Pentecostal Perspective

Articles Written

- Wrote several sermons for the *White Wing Messenger*

Several Activities

- Youth Conference, Mexico, October 28–30, 2022
- Ministers' Conference, SE Hispanic Region, Macon, GA, November 3–5, 2022
- National Convention, Paraguay, March 9–12, 2023
- March Mission Drive, Riverside, CA, March 24–26, 2023
- October Mission Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, October 27–29, 2023
- Ladies' Conference, New Jersey, January 19–21, 2024
- Youth Camp, SE Hispanic Region, Macon, GA, March 29–30, 2024

Foundations: MDP Onsite Training

- Costa Rica
- Nicaragua

Personal Ministry Travel

Tony Orona, Project Manager

- Africa—Lagos, Nigeria National Convention and *MDP* Training
- Tennessee State Convention
- Prague, Czech Republic—Youth Conference
- Taught 8 *MDP* Courses
- Southeast Regional Convention

Personal Ministry and Travel**Alejandra Hodge, Executive Assistant and Junior Project Manager**

Teaching (via Zoom)

- Dominican Republic *MDP* cohort Congregational Worship and Making Disciples (two classes)
- Puerto Rico/Panama *MDP* cohort Congregational Worship, Making Disciples, and Assimilation of New Believers (three classes)
- Guatemala *MDP* cohort Old Testament, Congregational Worship, and Making Disciples (three classes)
- Chile *MDP* cohort Congregational Worship and Making Disciples (two classes)
- Chile *MDP* pastoral group Making Disciples (one class)
- Conakry Guinea Making Disciples (one class)

Travel

- Tennessee State Convention, June 2023
- Southeast Convention, July 6–9, 2023
- NE Spanish Convention, July 14–16, 2023
- North Carolina Convention, July 27–29, 2023

Recording

- September 22, 2023 *MDP* Recording, “Making Disciples”

The LDD Ministry Directors and their teams have provided exceptional service to the church worldwide. The following are just a sample of what their ministries provide the church:

**Dr. Shaun McKinley and Children’s Ministries (CM) Team—
Leslie Green, Joy Hensley, Abi Avila, Jonathan Olavarria**

CM Trainings

- One-day Intensives Build to Last a Lifetime; CM: Essentials; Trauma-Informed Children’s Ministry; A New Day; Influencing the Influencers
- IMPACT Certification Levels I and II SLS will award up to six credit hours for completion of both levels of certification
- Starting Point Mentorship Program
- Train the Trainers Training Program; graduated first cohort of 22 certified master trainers
- Training Progression (CM Scope and Sequence)

CM Resources

- Podcasts, Blogs, Webinars, FB Live (ENG, SP)

- Foundations for Kids (5 languages)
- *Membership Matters for Kids* (5 languages)
- CM YouTube channel with over 100 hours of training content (ENG, SP)
- Children's Day Program Guide (ENG, SP)
- KidServe Resources and Projects, promoting service and mission giving opportunities for children (ENG, SP, FR, RU)
- Annual Parent Survey; Annual CM Survey
- *CM Handbook* available digitally (ENG, SP, FR, RU)

CM Networking and Accountability

- Participation in Child Discipleship Forum sponsored by Awana, Barna
- Network with CM leaders from other denominations
- Network with recognized CM leaders and speakers in NA
- Partnership with Central and South America general presbyters to hire a Spanish-language trainer
- Reports to PB, Presbyters, national leadership of training events, projects

Youth Ministries (YM)

Kirk Rising

- ONE Conferences
- Global Serve Day (2023–2024)
- Certifications and Training Resources
 - Young Leaders Certification, Level 1, completed by 2,213 individuals
 - NEXT LEVEL Certification (ENG, SP, FR, POR)
 - SLS will grant three credits for students who have completed both levels.
- YM Influence +1 (ENG, SP, POR)
- Think About It / Steps to Better Mental Health
- YM Digital Missionaries; The Young Church
- Targeting five potential new trainers

Dr. Michael Hernandez, AMD Director and Spirit and Life Seminary President, along with his team—Albert Murza, Carimet Sidney, Jacob Coleman, Debbie Freeman, and Gayla Brewer

- Collaborations with N/R/S bishops to promote Spirit and Life Seminary and begin new cohorts
- SLS/AMD Development of syllabi and course outlines for 22 courses which are currently available through SLS (English and Spanish)
- SLS/AMD COGOP enrollment increase in Masters and DMin programs through PTS partnership
- South America (Bolivia) Cohort
- AETH certification granted for Certificate in Ministry and Theological Studies

- THEC regular reauthorization
- TRACS received candidacy status towards accreditation

Gratitude

In 1 Chronicles 29:13-14, David said, “Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.” All that has been accomplished in these ministries during these past two years is a result of God’s work, and we give him the praise.

I am grateful to our Leadership Development and Discipleship team:

- LDD staff: Dr. Elias Rodriguez (CBL faculty instructor), Tony Orona (project manager), and Alejandra Guajardo-Hodge (executive administrative assistant and junior project manager)
- Customer Service Contractor: Renita Drumgold
- Interns: Elianny Vidal, Rachel Oliva, Daniel B. Felipe
- LDD ministry directors, general presbyters, national/regional/state bishops, my LDD prayer team, the COGOP IT department, Bishop Clayton Endecott and the Wider Europe plurality team, World Language, various International Offices staff, and the presiding bishop

Thank you for your partnership in this gospel work.

Gratefully Submitted,

Bishop Jeffery Davis

Leadership Development and Discipleship Executive Director

CENTER FOR BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP INSTRUCTOR REPORT TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11 NRSV).

It is with great joy that I submit my personal report to this 102nd International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy. As Paul told the Corinthian church, the foundation of the church has been laid, and that foundation is Jesus Christ. Paul said that he laid a foundation and that someone else is building on it. He mentions several kinds of building materials that will be tested by fire. That means that it matters what kind of building material we

use. If the work survives the fire, the builder will be rewarded. If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss (vv. 12-15). We, at the Center for Biblical Leadership, take Paul's advice seriously. Our job is to provide our ministers sound biblical-theological content for their training and spiritual growth. I present my report to this International Assembly with gratitude.

Following is the account of my ministry as a CBL instructor for the last two years:

- Pastoral Calling, Georgetown, DE, June 18, 2022
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- Ladies Conference, New Jersey, January 19-21, 2024
- Youth Camp, SE Hispanic Region, Macon, GA, March 29-30, 2024

I want to thank Bishop Jeffery Davis for his leadership during this season of ministry and the rest of my teammates at LDD. They are great people to work with.

My wife is a great support for me, without which I could not do my job. My children, grandchildren, and in-laws are a great blessing to my life, as well as my brothers, sisters, and the whole network of friends who pray for me every day.

I finish with the words of Moses:

- Let your work be manifest to your servants
and your glorious power to their children.
- Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us
and prosper for us the work of our hands
- O prosper the work of our hands! (Psalm 90:16-17 NRSV)

Respectfully submitted,
Bishop Dr. Elías Rodríguez
Center for Biblical Leadership Instructor

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES DIRECTOR REPORT TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024

Our Mission

For many years, the stated mission of International Children's Ministries was "to develop leaders who impact kids." Believing the Holy Spirit had called us to clarify our mission so that we are focused and intentional, in October 2023, I announced a revised mission statement for our ministry: "Developing leaders, discipling kids." This is a mission that is biblical and reflects the command of Jesus. It reflects a challenge to bring our kids into a relationship with God and others to develop a lasting faith and join us in reconciling the world to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

This mission is being fulfilled through a dedicated network of leaders who partner with us in providing quality and accessible training experiences

and resources, producing relevant resources for local church ministry, and cultivating a community for support and encouragement. This report is structured around these three strategic priorities.

Global Advisory Committee

I wish to express my gratitude to the International Children's Ministries Global Advisory Committee. This group meets biannually, in the spring and fall, where they receive a report of my activities and dialogue as a team concerning strategies related to events, resources, and network development. This committee includes the following:

Cathy Baggerly (North America)	Stephanie McKinley (North America)
Kim Batson (North America)	Peter Ehigator (Africa)
Michelle Brooks-Young (North America)	Elliete Garcia Vrnelli (Central America)
Denise Cameron (North America)	Janella Justiniano (Asia)
Jackie Chavez (North America)	Theri Santos (South America)
Leslie Green (North America)	Paulette Bryan (Caribbean)
Joy Hensley (North America)	Yusi Burim (Asia)
	Alice Rivera (North America)

Child Discipleship and Faith Formation Council

In the fall of 2023, we formed the Child Discipleship and Faith Formation Council to assist our ministry in directing a new initiative aimed at equipping our leaders and ministries to better build a resilient faith in the next generation. The general presbyters were invited to submit names for this council. I am grateful for the insights of this group which includes the following:

Cathy Baggerly (North America)	William and Angela Lamb (North America)
Kim Batson (North America)	Valerie Moreno de Batista (North America)
Michelle Brooks-Young (North America)	Jonathan Olavarria (North America)
Tessa Dietze (Wider Europe)	Dwight and Londa Richardson (North America)
Elliete Garcia Vrnelli (Central America)	Marsha Robinson (North America)
Scott and Brenda Gillum (North America)	Duke Stone (North America)
Paul and Barbara Holt (North America)	
Denise Junkin (North America)	

Ministry Highlights

Spanish Language Coordinator International Children’s Ministries appreciates our continued partnership with the general presbyter offices of Central and South America. This partnership has allowed us to hire a Spanish-language coordinator since February 2021. Abi Avila, who serves in this role, develops monthly Spanish-language webinars, Facebook Lives, blogs, and podcasts. She also coordinates a quarterly virtual meeting of all the national directors of Children’s Ministries in Latin American countries.

\$1.12 Million Grant from Lilly Endowment In the summer of 2023, International Children’s Ministries received a grant of \$1.12 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help establish a Child Discipleship and Faith Formation division for our global ministry. The project is being funded through the Endowment’s Christian Parenting and Caregiving Initiative. The aim of the initiative is to help parents and caregivers share their faith and values with their children. Activities being supported by grant funds include the addition of a coordinator for the Child Discipleship and Faith Formation division who will launch regional retreats/conferences for Christian parents and grandparents, develop training resources and events for local church congregations, and produce printed manuals on subjects relevant to faith formation within the various contexts of our churches, among other responsibilities.

International Children’s Ministries was one of 77 organizations that received the competitive grant.

Inaugural North America Leadership Conference On September 22–24, 2022, COGOP children’s ministry leaders, regional/state children’s ministry directors, and two administrative bishop couples from the United States gathered in Nashville, Tennessee, for the inaugural International Children’s Ministries Leadership Summit. The Summit was held in conjunction with the Child Discipleship Forum (CDF), a gathering organized by Awana, a global child and youth discipleship leader in 134 countries. Invitations to the Summit were extended to all state/regional bishops and state children’s ministries directors in North America.

For the first two days of the Summit, COGOP leaders gathered with around 500 other leaders from local churches, denominations, publishers, and parachurch organizations to hear a series of presentations on topics such as child discipleship and children’s ministry, as well as the challenges confronting today’s families in the areas of technology, gender and sexuality, and race.

COGOP participants remained for a day of processing and strategic planning on the third day. Mike Handler, chief innovation officer at Awana, and Melanie Hester, partner communication specialist of Awana, met with us to guide a debriefing discussion. They also presented a workshop on Awana’s discipleship

model, which centers around their core 3Bs of Discipleship “Believe,” “Belong,” and “Become.” International Director Dr. Shaun McKinley led a strategic planning session guiding the group through a series of activities that led to the development of an action roadmap to advance the ministry’s strategic priority of child discipleship in the COGOP. Goals were identified for the next six months, twelve months, and five years.

West Africa Training Liaison In September 2023, International Children’s Ministries announced the selection of Setin Minwalo Aubed, of Cote d’Ivoire, to serve as our first-ever training liaison, serving our trainers in French-speaking West Africa. An active participant in our recent five-year training program in West Africa, Setin completed International Children’s Ministries’ Master Trainer Program in 2022 and most recently participated as an instructor at the Institute of Children’s Ministry (ICM) in Benin. Setin continues to offer training throughout the region and support to our 22 master trainers in 11 nations.

Gender Identity, Relationships, and Sexuality: A Gospel-Centered Approach In the fall of 2023, I developed and offered a two-part training on gender identity for parents and children’s ministers. The training, offered in several local churches and at the Institute of Children’s Ministry, presents a biblical basis and justification for God’s design for gender, sexuality, and friendships, and provides practical tools for personal and large group discussions for children about God’s perfect design for these areas of their lives.

Child Discipleship and Faith Formation Specialist In November 2023, International Children’s Ministries announced the selection of Pastor Jonathan Olavarria to serve as Child Discipleship and Faith Formation specialist for the global ministry. In this new role, Jonathan is responsible for developing resources and coordinating training events that aid local church congregations and parents/caregivers in sharing their faith and values with their children.

Child Discipleship Forum Recognizing the vital importance of both sound doctrine and practices within ministries to children, the Child Discipleship Forum (CDF) was founded in 2021 to bring together children’s ministry and next-gen ministry leaders to discuss how to build resilient faith in this generation of children. Each forum brings together leading voices to discuss how to mold young believers into devoted followers of Jesus, capable of living out the gospel with a blend of grace and truth, particularly in a world marked by hostility and compromise. Discussions center around the gospel, community, apologetics, culture, discipleship practices, and interviews with experts. At the 2023 CDF, held in September in Nashville, Tennessee, I was invited to speak as part of a panel discussion on engaging parents in this effort, as well as how children’s ministries are serving kids who have experienced trauma. The Forum was attended by 600 leaders, publishers, and

practitioners, with an additional 5,000 participating online. Additionally, in the spring of 2023 and 2024, I served as a panelist for the Child Discipleship Summit, a smaller gathering of the top 200 voices in children's ministries.

Training Experiences

Below is a review of training and ministry experiences offered during the reporting period:

In-Person Training		
Training Program	Location	Attendance
101 st International Assembly Breakouts	Oklahoma City, OK, USA	87
Bolivia Level II CM Certification	La Paz, Bolivia	157
Colombia Level II CM Certification	Bogota, Colombia	124
Chile Level II CM Certification	Santiago, Chile	112
A New Day One-Day Intensive	Westmoreland, TN, USA	68
Spain Institute of Children's Ministries	Barcelona, Spain	62
North America Leadership Summit	Franklin, TN, USA	22
Argentina Level II CM Certification	Buenos Aires, Argentina	134
Honduras Level II CM Certification	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	102
Spain Institute of Children's Ministries	Madrid, Spain	104
Egypt Institute of Children's Ministries	Cairo, Egypt	47
Heartland Children's Ministries Intensive	Mountainview, AR, USA	73
Argentina Level I CM Certification	Cordoba, Argentina	74
A New Day One-Day Intensive	Salem, OR, USA	114
Influencing the Influencers One-Day Intensive	Salt Lake City, UT, USA	136
Influencing the Influencers One-Day Intensive	Boise, ID, USA	154
Ecuador Level II CM Certification	Quito, Ecuador	96
Nicaragua Level II CM Certification	Managua, Nicaragua	416
A New Day One-Day Intensive	St. Thomas, BVI	16
Western Africa International CM Institute	Cotonou, Benin	354
Tennessee Level I CM Certification	Dickson, TN, USA	56
Institute of Children's Ministries	Asheville, NC, USA	327
Mexico Level II Certification	Puebla, Mexico	35
Peru Leadership Conference	Lima, Peru	198
Nepal International CM Institute	Kathmandu, Nepal	280
Tennessee Level II CM Certification	Dickson, TN, USA	42
Honduras Train the Trainers	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	25
A New Day One-Day Intensive	Orlando, FL, USA	89

Nigeria CM Leadership Conference	Lagos, Nigeria	225
Southeast Spanish CM Training and Service	Cleveland, TN, USA	48

In addition to the training activities of International Children's Ministries, I was invited to minister or serve at the following events/activities:

Event	Location	Month
Bolivia COGOP Anniversary Speaker	South America / Bolivia	June 2022
Junior Camp Evangelist	North America / Kentucky	June 2022
102 nd International Assembly	North America / Oklahoma	July 2022
Local Church Ministry	North America / Tennessee	August 2022
Washington State Convention	North America / Washington	August 2022
Spain National Convention	Wider Europe / Spain	August 2022
Child Discipleship Forum	North America / Tennessee	September 2022
Mexico National Congress	Central America / Mexico	November 2022
Central America Leadership Conference	Central America / Dom. Rep.	February 2023
Pentecost Sunday Simulcast	North America / Canada	April 2023
Tennessee Camping Ministry Equip	North America / Tennessee	April 2023
Oregon State Convention	North America / Oregon	May 2023
PeeWee Camp Evangelist	North America / Louisiana	June 2023
Utah State Convention	North America / Utah	June 2023
Junior Camp Evangelist	North America / Kentucky	June 2023
Junior Camp Evangelist	North America / Tennessee	June 2023
Big Shot Camp Evangelist	North America / Tennessee	July 2023
South America Leadership Conference	South America / Paraguay	July 2023
Idaho State Convention	North America / Idaho	July 2023
Tennessee State Convention	North America / Tennessee	July 2023
Central America Leadership Conference	Central America / El Salvador	August 2023
BVI Train the Trainers (LDD Event)	Caribbean / BVI	August 2023
Ignite Emerging Leader Conference	North America / Southeast	September 2023
Peru National Convention	South America / Peru	January 2024
Caribbean Train the Trainers (LDD Event)	Caribbean / Trinidad	February 2024

Experiences recorded from the above events:

Saved	78
Sanctified	56
Holy Spirit Baptisms	63
Healed	2
Called to the Ministry	74

Resource Development

Blogs Children’s Ministries has published 124 blogs in various languages on our ministry website during this reporting period. These blogs not only serve children’s ministry leaders, but also parents, pastors, and ministry leaders.

Developing Leaders, Impacting Kids (DLIK) The Developing Leaders, Impacting Kids Podcast was launched in English in the spring of 2019. Since then, 63 episodes have been made available to subscribers featuring interviews and seminars from leading voices in children’s ministry. A Spanish-language version was launched in 2020 and presently has 24 episodes. The DLIK Podcast has earned more than 16,000 downloads and, in 2022, was named one of the top 20 podcasts on Apple iTunes for KidMin leaders.

One-Day Trainings International Children’s Ministries developed a new one-day training experiences during this reporting year called “Shepherding a Generation in Crisis: Trauma-Informed Children’s Ministries.” Statistically speaking, five of the eight children in our ministry settings will experience at least one traumatic event by the time they leave the youth group. One of these children will likely experience four or more potentially traumatic events during their childhood. Whether we observe it or not, traumatic events impact children, so they also impact our ministries to them. Trauma leaves children feeling fearful, anxious, rejected, and out of control. It affects their reactions, feelings, and emotions. Many times, their behavior reflects their feelings, and they do things they later regret. Sometimes these students withdraw from activities or outright reject our expressions of love. Conversely, some children will hold on tight to us and overwhelm us in need of attention, affirmation, or security. Trauma also leaves children with very little self-worth.

Our children’s ministries must be prepared to embrace, serve, and love children who have experienced the pain and loss of trauma. Our ministries can provide a place where kids who have experienced trauma feel safe, valued, and connected. We can create conditions where healing can occur in the lives and spirits of these children. This training intensive provides five equipping sessions for church leaders.

YouTube Channel The CGPKids YouTube Channel continues to grow and add training videos and webinars for CM leaders. Presently, the site has more than 100 hours of training in English and Spanish, with new content being added monthly. More than 15,000 videos have been viewed since the launch of the channel.

Webinars Seventeen webinars have been offered during this reporting period, in English and Spanish. Each webinar included one to three instructional sessions from a seasoned leader in children’s ministries.

White Wing Contributions International Children’s Ministries continues to contribute regularly to the official publication of the church. We were grateful for the opportunity to develop a full issue dedicated to Children’s Ministries in May 2024 entitled “Child Discipleship: The Fearless Future of the Church.”

Community Support and Engagement

Research In the spring of 2023, International Children’s Ministries once again conducted research and released two reports. *The Children’s Ministries Survey* aimed to provide feedback concerning the condition of our leaders, their challenges, and their frustrations. We sought to evaluate if the priorities of our global ministries were in alignment with the perceived needs from those we serve on the field. The information gathered informed our decisions and strategies for the remainder of the year.

The *Children’s Ministries Parent Survey* of Church of God of Prophecy targeted millennial parents who identified as faithful attendees of their local church. Our purpose was to gain an understanding of how this emerging generation of parents is processing faith, life, parenting, and their relationship with the Church.

A summary of the findings of these two reports was made available to church leadership in the summer of 2023.

Global Serve Day International Children’s Ministries once again supported the annual Global Serve Day initiatives directed by International Youth Ministries in 2023. We offered a project guide for local church children’s ministries to utilize for the three-day campaign, with practical ideas for involving children in each of the initiative’s foci: church, family, and community.

Starting Point International Children’s Ministries continued offering our mentoring initiative targeting those who sense a calling or desire to serve in ministries to children. Each month, mentoring groups explore a different aspect of children’s ministries, with diverse topics ranging from ministry skills, creative teaching methods, leadership development, and understanding of children. During the large group virtual meetings, participants hear inspirational talks and practical training from veteran children’s ministers and leading authors, trainers, and practitioners in children’s ministries.

KidServe

International Children’s Ministries has continued to offer mission giving and service opportunities through KidServe. Although KidServe encompasses more than our mission-giving projects, through this ministry, in 2023, we surpassed \$400,000.00 raised for mission projects in more than 25 nations

and the United States over the past 15 years. During this reporting period, funds raised through KidServe supported our training events in Africa, Wider Europe, and Asia. We praise God today for those who have generously given and supported these efforts!

Conclusion

In conclusion, I want to thank the International Children's Ministries team Leslie Green, Joy Hensley, Jonathan Olivarria, Abi Avila, Michelle Brooks-Young, and Setin Aubed for their support and tireless work. Our work has been challenging, but also rewarding, as we help shape the future of our movement while impacting ministries today. This team has provided excellent counsel and support to me these past six years.

Our ministries are sustained through prayer, and we are honored to have a wonderful group of intercessors who pray for each of our efforts and events. Finally, I wish to thank all of our network of children's ministry leaders, directors, and volunteers. Their sacrifices and commitment continue to inspire and encourage me.

Respectfully submitted,
Bishop Dr. Shaun Mckinley
International Director

YOUTH MINISTRIES (YM) INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR REPORT TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 1, 2022-MAY 31, 2024

A Celebration of Fruitful Ministry: Youth Ministries International's Remarkable Journey

Blessings to all members of the Church of God of Prophecy! With grateful hearts, we celebrate the abundant fruits of our ministry over the past two years. Youth Ministries International has been on an extraordinary journey, achieving significant milestones and making a profound impact worldwide. The following are some of our accomplishments and statistics that highlight our collective success.

ONE Conferences

In 2022, YM International implemented the last of three ONE Conferences! The ONE Conference franchise was birthed during the time of COVID-19. Due to the isolation and quarantine protocols implemented globally, the ONE Conference was created out of a need to maintain connection with our youth and young adults on a global scale. Our final viewing statistics for our three virtual conferences were as follows:

- 700,000 reached on social media
- over 400,000 views of our broadcasts
- participants from 80 countries and states in each conference

YM International would like to thank every state and national director for your participation and dedication to creating content for our global virtual events.

Global Serve Day/Weekend:

A Mission of Service to Share the Gospel of Jesus

Guided by the inspiring words of Ephesians 2:10, “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do,” our young people have passionately embraced this service commitment. They have lived out God’s will by serving others, sharing the gospel of Jesus, and bringing the hope of new life in Christ to countless hearts globally.

Global Serve Day/Weekend has been a beacon of hope and service, focusing on three critical areas:

- **Friday** serving the home
- **Saturday** serving the community
- **Sunday** serving the church

Although this is a weekend event, the primary focus has been on serving the community, making a tangible difference in the lives of many. The numbers speak volumes:

- **2022** over 10,000 registered to serve
- **2023** 18,000 individuals and churches participated globally
- **2024** over 20,000 registered to serve

In May of 2024, the actual number of participants soared to approximately 56,000. Out of this incredible movement, we have witnessed stories of salvation and transformation, including a life saved from attempted suicide in Sao Paulo, Brazil. We praise God for these opportunities to serve humanity and to share the eternal hope found in Jesus!

YM Certifications and Training Resources:

Empowering the Next Generation of Leaders

Over the past two years, YM International completed and began to implement the **NEXT LEVEL** curriculum, designed to equip young leaders with the skills and knowledge to create efficient and effective ministries. This curriculum is a vital resource for fostering sustainable group ministries. Key achievements include the following:

- Over 7,000 young leaders began their journey with **iLEAD**, **LEVEL ONE**, and **NEXT LEVEL** certification.

- Over 3,000 leaders globally have completed LEVEL ONE and received their certificates.
- Over 600 young leaders have completed the NEXT LEVEL course as they continue to enhance their leadership effectiveness.

We are grateful to Spirit and Life Seminary for recognizing our curriculum with three credit hours for candidates pursuing higher education. This recognition underscores the quality and impact of our training programs.

Innovative Resources for Ministry Training

In addition to **iLEAD**, **LEVEL ONE** and **NEXT LEVEL**, YM International has created additional resources to address contemporary challenges and equip leaders for effective ministry:

- **INFLUENCE+1** Our evangelism training program, a relational model for sharing the gospel of Jesus, emphasizes “influencing” those who do not yet know the saving grace of Jesus, using four steps: ASK, LISTEN, SHARE, and REPEAT.
- **THINKABOUT IT / Steps to Better Mental Health for Youth** A resource designed to help leaders support youth in coping with modern challenges, especially those exacerbated by COVID-19, this program offers a biblical and Christian perspective on mental health, addressing issues such as isolation, belonging, and self-esteem struggles.

Global Impact: Training and Equipping Leaders Worldwide

YM International has extended its reach across the globe, offering training, preaching, teaching, and implementing programs in diverse regions. YM was also honored to partner with LDD trainings.

YM has ministered in the following states and nations in the past two years: Dominican Republic, Connecticut, Finland, Pennsylvania, Bolivia, Argentina, California, Florida, Georgia (the country), Nicaragua, Spain, Honduras, Tennessee, Mexico, Egypt, Cyprus, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mid-Atlantic Region, Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar, Paraguay, South Carolina, Czech Republic, North Carolina, British Virgin Islands, Nebraska, Portugal, Peru, Spanish Northeast Region, Spanish Southeast Region, Arizona, Utah, and Western Canada.

A Commitment to Reconciliation and Relationship

Our global theme, **Reconciling the World to Christ Through the Power of the Holy Spirit**, has always been a foundational element of YM International’s curriculum and trainings. **For the past ten years**, the curriculum of YM has emphasized *reconciling the world to Christ* as the

most critical aspect of youth ministry, fostering relationships with God and guiding others to deepen their faith. YM's mission and vision is centered on fulfilling God's purpose: being in relationship with God and doing his will by helping others find and nurture that relationship.

Gratitude and Acknowledgment

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our leadership, International Offices staff, and national and state bishops for their unwavering support and for opening doors to train young leaders. Our collective efforts have helped youth and young adults find their place in growing the kingdom of God and establishing a vibrant identity within the Church of God of Prophecy.

As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our commitment to nurturing the next generation of leaders, equipping them to impact the world for Christ. Together, we will continue to serve, share, and bring the hope of eternal life to every corner of the globe. Praise be to God for his faithfulness and the incredible journey ahead!

Respectfully submitted,
Bishop Kirk D. Rising
International Director

ACCREDITED MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR / SPIRIT AND LIFE SEMINARY PRESIDENT REPORT TO THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

JUNE 1, 2022 - MAY 31, 2024

The Accredited Ministry Development department has continued to serve the members of the Church of God of Prophecy by providing affordable higher education opportunities to COGOP members worldwide since the department's creation in July of 2016. This is accomplished by continuing current partnerships and developing new partnerships with seminaries and colleges that offer programs that emphasize Pentecostal theology and ministry practices that have the potential to impact local congregations and develop future generations of COGOP leaders. AMD continues to promote the programs of these partner seminaries, handle the admissions process for COGOP students, and provide ongoing assistance and advising to COGOP students to support them in their educational journey.

In July of 2022, I was reappointed as the director of Accredited Ministry Development. At that time, Bishop Timothy Coalter, newly appointed presiding bishop for the Church of God of Prophecy, and Bishop Jeffery Davis, newly appointed executive director of Leadership Development and Discipleship, charged me with continuing the work of reevaluating and maintaining and/or

establishing new educational partnerships as needed. I am pleased to share that partnerships with the following institutions have continued over the last two years: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Pentecostal Theological Seminary, Western Theological Seminary, and Spirit and Life Seminary.

Additionally, the Spirit and Life Seminary Board of Directors reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the ministry of Spirit and Life Seminary and tasked me with continuing the process of working towards accreditation. Spirit and Life Seminary was established in 2019 with the goal of creating a new COGOP institution that would serve the members of the Church of God of Prophecy. Spirit and Life Seminary utilizes a curriculum focusing on five distinct areas of instruction: biblical interpretation, theological studies, church history, pastoral ministries, and contextual ministries. The Ministry and Theological Studies program has been specifically tailored to meet the needs of COGOP pastors and leaders.

One of the distinctive benefits of Spirit and Life Seminary is that the new institution serves a key role in the new Leadership Development and Discipleship education pathway that was created in collaboration with all LDD departments. This new partnership has enabled the *Minister's Development Program* courses, Children's Ministries courses, and Youth Ministries courses to become eligible for transfer of credits into SLS. Since the launching of the new *MDP* program, SLS has been accepting transfers of credit from LDD for those students who have completed the *MDP* program and have sought admission into the SLS certificate program. Spirit and Life Seminary has also continued to utilize COGOP instructors so that COGOP students may learn from other seasoned and faithful COGOP pastors, leaders, and scholars who possess the highest qualifications, are passionate about pouring into the new generation of COGOP leaders, and best understand the challenges faced by COGOP ministers.

Over the last two years, Spirit and Life Seminary has continued to meet the requirements of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to continue to operate in the State of Tennessee. Spirit and Life Seminary also continues to meet the requirements for certification from the Association for Hispanic Theological Education (AETH) which qualifies SLS graduates to enroll in graduate programs at ATS accredited schools. Over the last two years, the staff of Spirit and Life Seminary has been working towards meeting the requirements of accreditation and achieved its goal on April 23, 2024, when the TRACS Accreditation Commission granted SLS candidacy status.

I express my appreciation to Presiding Bishop Tim Coalter, the general presbyters, the SLS Board of Directors, Bishop Jeffery Davis, and the staff of the International Offices for their support and efforts which have contributed

to the success of AMD and SLS over the last two years. I also acknowledge my staff Reverend Albert Murza, Debbie Freeman, Jacob Coleman, Carimet Sidney, and Gayla Brewer for a job well done. They have devoted their time, effort, and creativity to serving AMD and SLS students and have remained committed to the mission and vision of SLS and the arduous task of pursuing accreditation. We extend our sincerest appreciation to the COGOP members we are called to serve for making our successes possible through their faithful giving. Finally, we give God the honor and glory for the following achievements:

Summary of Notable Accomplishments

- Continued partnership with Pentecostal Theological Seminary for students to enroll in all master's programs, doctoral program, and certificate program
- Continued partnership with Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary for students to complete the Master of Arts in Global Leadership program and the Doctor of Ministry program
- Continued partnership with Western Theological Seminary for students to participate in the Doctor of Ministry program via two cohorts in Central and South America
- Scholarships provided to all students enrolled in GCTS, PTS, WTS, and SLS programs through COGOP partnerships
- Authorization continues for Spirit and Life Seminary granted by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.
- Certification continues for Spirit and Life Seminary granted by the Association for Hispanic Theological Education (AETH).
- A total of 492 Church of God of Prophecy ministers and leaders participated in programs offered by AMD in collaboration with the following educational partners: Pentecostal Theological Seminary, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Western Theological Seminary, and Spirit and Life Seminary (offered in the English, Spanish and French languages).
- A total of 34 students graduated with a master's degree and 23 students graduated with their doctoral degree.
- Spirit and Life Seminary can now accept students from 22 states in the United States and most nations in Europe, Central America, South America, Africa, and Asia.
- A total of 295 students participated in SLS programs from 39 nations, including representation from nations in Africa, the Caribbean, Central

America, Europe, North America, and South America, making Spirit and Life Seminary a truly global school.

- Spirit and Life Seminary now offers its programs in English, Spanish, and French.
- Thirty-seven students graduated from Spirit and Life Seminary. First onsite graduation in Cleveland, Tennessee, was held in May 2023. Graduation for UK students was held in October 2023. The second onsite graduation was held in May 2024 in Cleveland, Tennessee.
- Two audits of SLS were completed by Batts Morrison Wales & Lee; SLS was found to be operating in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States.
- Spirit and Life Seminary launched a new website with program information available in English, Spanish, and French.
- The Spirit and Life Seminary Board of Directors established the Legacy Endowment Fund to provide scholarships to students of SLS.
- Spirit and Life Seminary hired two full-time faculty to serve SLS students.
- Spirit and Life Seminary developed a recording studio for the purpose of recording and posting lectures and events.
- Spirit and Life Seminary installed new SLS building signage.
- Spirit and Life Seminary launched the Bachelor of Ministry and Theological Studies transfer program, which is also AETH certified.
- All Spirit and Life Seminary students now have access to the Pitts Digital Library via its membership with AETH.
- Spirit and Life Seminary completed the Initial Contact Data Form and Institutional Profile and submitted them to TRACS.
- Spirit and Life Seminary submitted the Application Compliance Checklist to TRACS.
- Spirit and Life Seminary Self Study was completed and submitted to TRACS.
- A site visit of the Spirit and Life Seminary offices was completed by a designated TRACS representative in August 2023.
- A site visit of the Spirit and Life Seminary offices was completed by the TRACS Evaluation Team in January 2024.
- Spirit and Life Seminary was granted candidacy status on April 23, 2024, by the Accreditation Commission of the Transnational Association of

Christian Colleges and Schools. The status of candidacy as a category II institution is effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2028.

AMD Enrollment Report
(June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2024)

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Certificate Graduates	1
Masters Graduates	12
Students Enrolled	55

Pentecostal Theological Seminary

Masters Graduates	15
Doctoral Graduates	6
Students Enrolled	107

Western Theological Seminary

Masters Graduates	7
Doctoral Graduates	17
Students Enrolled	35

Spirit and Life Seminary

Courses Offered	69
Number of Cohorts	5
Number of COGOP Faculty	26
Number of Nations represented	39
Certificate Program Graduates	33
Bachelor Program Graduates	3
Students Enrolled	295

Total Number of AMD Students 492

Respectfully submitted,

Bishop Dr. Michael A. Hernández
Accredited Ministry Development Director
Spirit and Life Seminary President

SECTION 7

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
AND GENERAL STATISTICS



DEEDS FOR CHURCH PROPERTY

(Quoted from *Minutes of the 89th General Assembly, 1996*, pp. 161-162.)

The following resolution was adopted by the 58th Annual Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy, held in Cleveland, Tennessee, September 10-16, 1963:

WHEREAS it has been advised by competent attorneys that specific mention of proper authorities be stated in an effort to ease the complications arising in our endeavors to be recognized by the courts, and to facilitate the handling of deeds to our church properties,

BE IT RESOLVED that trustees to hold title to local church property for the Church of God of Prophecy with International Offices at Cleveland, Tennessee, be selected by the local church either in a regular or called business meeting, said trustees to be vested with authority to bargain, buy, sell, convey, or encumber such property by mortgage or otherwise only when authorized to do so by the local church in regular or called business meeting, and with the consent of the General Trustees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said consent of the General Trustees be evidenced by a separate writing or by the signature of the Chief Clerk of the said General Trustees, such documents to be notarized.

BE IT RESOLVED that state church trustees appointed by the state overseer to hold title to property for the Church of God of Prophecy with International Offices at Cleveland, Tennessee, be vested with authority to bargain, buy, sell, convey, or encumber such property by mortgage with the consent of the General Trustees. This applies to property being held by state trustees where churches have been disbanded or are too weak to function and to property which has been given to the state. All other property with title in the state trustees or a state Holding Association may be disposed of or mortgaged only by the consent of the state convention in session (modified in 1981).

Note: The following Warranty Deed form has been prepared by the General Trustees and should be used where it is possible to do so. Blank forms may be secured from the General Trustees.

WARRANTY DEED

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION OF the sum of _____

Dollars (_____) cash in hand paid and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, We, _____

have this day bargained and sold and by these presents do hereby bargain, sell, transfer, and convey unto _____

local Trustees for the Church of God of Prophecy, at _____

for the use and benefit of the Church of God of Prophecy, with International Offices at 3720 Keith Street NW, Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A., and their successors and assigns, the following described real estate, to wit: (Add description of real estate here.)

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD said real estate unto the said _____
_____ local Trustees, for the use and benefit of the Church of God of Prophecy, with International Offices at 3720 Keith Street NW, Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A., and their successors and assigns forever, provided, however, that neither they nor their successors in office as such local Trustees may sell, convey, or encumber the said real estate without the written consent of the General Trustees of the said Church at Cleveland, Tennessee, which consent may be evidenced by a separate writing or by the Chief Clerk of the said General Trustees joining in the execution of a deed of the above named Trustees or their successors in office for the purpose of certifying the consent of the General Trustees to the execution of such conveyance.

WE COVENANT that we are lawfully seized and possessed of said real estate; that we have a good and lawful right thus to sell and convey the same; that the title thereto is clear, free, and unencumbered, and that we will forever warrant and defend said title against the lawful claims of all persons.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, witness our hands and names, this _____
day of _____, 20 _____.

AMENDED AND RESTATED CHARTER OF THE CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY

Pursuant to the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, Church of God of Prophecy amends and restates its Charter as follows:

1. The name of the Corporation is Church of God of Prophecy.
2. The street address of both the registered office and the principal office of the Corporation is 3720 Keith Street NW, Cleveland, TN 37312, County of Bradley.
3. The name of the registered agent at the registered office of the Corporation is Bishop Daniel Felipe.
4. The Corporation is a public benefit corporation and is organized exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of § 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended from time to time.
5. The Corporation is a religious corporation.
6. The Corporation has members.
7. The Vision Statement of the Corporation is as follows:
Reconciling the world to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.
8. The Mission Statement of the Corporation is as follows:
The Church of God of Prophecy is a Christ-exalting, holiness, Spirit-filled, all-nations, disciple-making, church-planting movement with a passion for Christian union.
9. The Corporation will, at all times, act in conformity to the doctrines and beliefs contained in the “Biblical Principles, Beliefs and Practices of the Church of God of Prophecy” as contained at any time, and from time to time, in the most recent International Assembly Minutes of the Church of God of Prophecy.
10. The Corporation is formed for any lawful purpose or purposes not expressly prohibited under the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Corporation’s purposes also include the limited participation of the Corporation in any other activities, including taxable activities, but only to the extent the activities would be permitted by a tax-exempt corporation. More particularly, without limitation, the purposes of the Corporation include:
 - a. To bear witness for Christ and his truth and to spread the gospel of the kingdom of God in all its fulness and power, so that the rule of God is brought about in the hearts of humankind;
 - b. To promote the Christian religion by any appropriate form of expression, within any available medium, and in any location, through the Corporation’s combined or separate formation of a church, ministry, charity, school, or eleemosynary institution, without limitation;

- c. To ordain, employ, and discharge ordained ministers of the gospel, and others, to conduct and carry on divine services at the place of worship of the Corporation, and elsewhere;
- d. To handle affairs pertaining to property and other temporal matters as required by the civil authorities;
- e. To collect and disburse any and all necessary funds for the maintenance of the Corporation and the accomplishment of its purpose within the State of Tennessee and elsewhere; and
- f. To make distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under §501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as amended.

This Corporation is also organized to promote, encourage, and foster any similar religious, charitable, and educational activities; to accept, hold, invest, reinvest, and administer any gifts, legacies, bequests, devices, funds, and property of any sort or nature, and to use, expend, or donate the income or principal thereof for, and to devote the same to, the foregoing purposes of the Corporation; and to do any and all lawful acts and things which may be necessary, useful, suitable, or proper for the furtherance of accomplishment of the purposes of the Corporation.

- 1. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Charter, the Corporation will not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax except under §501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as amended.
- 2. If the Corporation is ever determined to be a private foundation as defined in §501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as amended, it will comply with the requirements under §501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as amended.
- 3. Upon dissolution of the Corporation, the Board, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Corporation, shall dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation, if any. The local Church will be the first beneficiary in the disposal of such assets, and second, such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes as then described in Section 170(b) (1)(A) (other than clauses [vii] and [viii] of the Code or the corresponding provisions of any future United States internal revenue law) as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, as the Board shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the City or County in which the registered office of the Corporation is then located exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes, as said Court shall determine.
- 4. The directors of the Corporation shall have no personal liability to the Corporation

for monetary damages for breach of their fiduciary duties as directors. Specifically, each director and each member of any committee designated by the directors shall, in the performance of such director's duties, be fully protected in relying in good faith upon the records of the Corporation and upon such information, opinions, reports, or statements presented to the Corporation by any of the Corporation's officers or employees or committees of the Directors, or by any other person as to matters such member reasonably believes are within such other person's professional or expert competence and who has been selected with reasonable care by or on behalf of the Corporation.

However, this provision does not eliminate the liability of any director: (i) for breach of the director's duty of loyalty to the Corporation; (ii) for acts or omissions not in good faith or that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law; or (iii) under Section 48-58-304 of the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended.

- 5. The Corporation has the power to indemnify its directors to the fullest extent permitted by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act.

Dated: October 8, 2024

Timothy D Coalter
BISHOP TIMOTHY D. COALTER
Presiding Bishop

**CERTIFICATE REQUIRED BY
TN CODE § 48-20-107 (d)**

Bishop Timothy D. Coalter, Presiding Bishop and President of Church of God of Prophecy, certifies to the Secretary of State that:

- 1. the Amended and Restated Charter does not contain any amendment requiring approval of the members, and
- 2. the Amended and Restated Charter was duly adopted by the Corporate Board of Directors of Church of God of Prophecy on July 18, 2023.

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY

By: Timothy D Coalter
Bishop Timothy D. Coalter, President

AMENDED BYLAWS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY

ARTICLE I NAME AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE

Section 1. The name of this Corporation is Church of God of Prophecy (the “Church”).

Section 2. The principal office of the Corporation is located at 3720 Keith Street, NW, Cleveland, Tennessee 37312.

ARTICLE II DIRECTORS

Section 1. The corporate powers of the Church are vested in a Board of Directors (the “Board”) of at least three Board members. The Board members are the presiding bishop selected by the International Presbytery and confirmed by the International Assembly, the general presbyters selected by the International Presbytery and affirmed by the International Assembly, the two executive ministry directors, and up to four other persons selected by the presiding bishop. For internal and other purposes, the Board is also referred to as the Administrative Committee.

Section 2. The term for a Board member is from International Assembly to International Assembly.

Section 3. If the position of presiding bishop becomes vacant, it may remain so until the selection and confirmation of a new presiding bishop at the next International Assembly.

If a vacancy occurs in the Board because a general presbyter ceases to serve in that position for any reason, the Board may select another Board member to fill the remainder of that term (as Board member and not as a general presbyter).

If a vacancy occurs in the Board for a Board member selected by the presiding bishop, the presiding bishop will select another person for that position. If the presiding bishop position is vacant, a majority of the general presbyters will select the person for the vacant position.

A successor Board member will serve the balance of the predecessor’s term.

Section 4. Any Board member may call a special meeting of the Board.

Section 5. The Board may elect, appoint, remove or discharge officers, agents, or employees of the Church, prescribe their duties (in addition to those set out in the bylaws); fix their compensation; and require from them security for money or property in their control. However, the Board cannot take any actions contrary to the other provision of these bylaws.

Section 6. The Board will conduct the affairs of the Church, decide its policies consistent with the minutes of the International Assembly, and may enact rules and regulations for the conduct of the affairs of the Church that are consistent with the laws of the State of Tennessee, the charter of the Church, and these bylaws.

Section 7. The Board may contract, and incur indebtedness, for the Church. The Board may authorize the president or treasurer to execute a note, contract, or other obligation of the Church necessary to effect a loan or secure credit for the Church.

Section 8. A Board member will not be compensated for serving as a Board member. However, the Church may reimburse a Board member for expenses incurred in attending a meeting of the Board or attending to the business of the Church.

Section 9. The Board will designate the depositories for the funds of the Church.

Section 10. The Board will meet immediately following each International Assembly of the Church at the office of the Church, or any other place that the majority of the Board members agrees upon, and may adjourn the meeting to a later date. The Board may meet at other times also. The Board may meet outside the State of Tennessee if a majority of the Board members agrees to do so and if the notice of the meeting specifically designates the meeting place.

Section 11. Any actions required or permitted by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act to be taken at a meeting of the Board may be taken without a meeting if all Board members consent to taking such action without a meeting. The affirmative vote of the number of Board members that would be necessary to authorize or take such action at a meeting is the act of the Board. The action must be evidenced by one or more written consents describing the action taken, signed by each Board member, and included in the minutes filed with the corporate records reflecting the action taken. Written consents and votes taken by consent action may be in electronic form pursuant to the Tennessee Uniform Electronic Transactions Act.

Section 12. The Board shall present to each International Assembly of the Church a general statement of the affairs of the Church at the end of the immediately preceding fiscal year. On non-Assembly years, an audited statement will be available at the corporate office upon request.

Section 13. As long as due notice is given, a simple majority of the Board members constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business, but a smaller number may adjourn to a later date.

Section 14. A Board member acting individually, and not as the Board, has no power or authority to bind the Church.

Section 15. A Board member may be indemnified by the Church as authorized by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act.

Section 16. The president shall preside at all meetings of the Board. The Board may elect a vice president to serve in the absence of the president.

ARTICLE III MEMBERS

Section 1. The members of the Church are those persons who have taken the covenant of the Church.

Section 2. Each International Assembly of the Church shall constitute a meeting of the members of the Church.

Section 3. The president, secretary, or other officer of the Church shall give notice of the International Assembly consistent with the past practice of the Church.

Section 4. A quorum consists of a simple majority of those present at the officially designated business session of the International Assembly.

Section 5. A member may act in person or by proxy according to the procedure established by the Church.

Section 6. The Board may call a special meeting of the International Assembly.

Section 7. At a special meeting of the International Assembly only the business specified in the notice of the meeting may be transacted.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section 1. The presiding bishop, who is selected by the International Presbytery and confirmed by the International Assembly, shall serve as the president. The Board shall appoint the secretary and may appoint one or more general presbyters to perform the duties of the president in the absence, disability, or death of the presiding bishop. The executive director of Finance and Administration shall serve as treasurer, unless the Board appoints a different individual. The Board may appoint a vice-president and other assistant officers.

Section 2. Officers, other than the president, shall serve until the Board appoints their successors. However, the Board may remove an appointed officer before the expiration of the term. The appointment to an office is not an employment contract to serve until the term of office expires.

Section 3. The same person may hold two offices, except that the president cannot also serve as secretary.

Section 4. The presiding bishop in conjunction with the general presbyters has general oversight and management of the affairs of the Church.

Section 5. The secretary shall keep appropriate permanent records of the proceedings of the minutes of the Board.

The secretary, or the president, may issue all notices of the meetings of the Board.

The secretary will perform the duties of the treasurer in the event of the treasurer's absence or disability.

The secretary has charge of and shall preserve the books, records, files, and documents of the Church unless the Board designates this duty to be performed by another person. The secretary shall hold these books and records at all times subject to the inspection of the Board members.

Section 6. The treasurer (or some other person designated by the Board) shall keep a strict account of the financial affairs of the Church and be able to account for the assets and liabilities of the Church. The treasurer is the custodian of the funds and accounts and obligations of the Church, but is subject to the direction of the Board in selecting depositories for Church funds.

In the absence or disability of the secretary, the treasurer will perform the secretary's duties.

Section 7. Each assistant officer has the same power to perform the duties of the office if the officer is unable or unavailable to perform the duty.

Section 8. An officer may be indemnified by the Church as authorized by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act.

ARTICLE V
CORPORATE SEAL

Section 1. The Corporation has a seal.

ARTICLE VI
DISSOLUTION

Section 1. Upon dissolution the Board shall transfer the net assets of the Church as authorized by the Charter and the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, and the transferee shall be an organization that is qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

ARTICLE VII
AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

Section 1. The Board may amend these bylaws at the meeting following the International Assembly or at an interim meeting if notice for the interim meeting announces the amendment that will be considered.

Adopted June 18, 2013.



Randall E. Howard, President

WORLD MUST BE EVANGELIZED

It will take good organization and systematic methods to accomplish this task. God's power is demonstrated in proportion to the unity and oneness of His people.

The members of the early church were all of one accord, steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and the multitude that believed were of one heart and one soul, and great grace was upon them all, and mighty results followed as a consequence of their perfect unity and careful organization.

We must banish from our minds the thoughts of individual or local independence and haphazard spasmodic efforts.

Pull together, pull at once, pull steadily all the time is the road to success.

All members should be ready to center their minds and prayers on the one thing, as a unit, when calls for special prayer are made. Each should feel his or her part of the responsibility, remembering that when one member fails, it hinders the body until the matter pending may fail.

LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS AND LEADERS

1. **Pastor:** It is the duty of the national/regional/state bishop to supply every church under his jurisdiction with a pastor. Pastors are to be appointed at the national/regional/state convention every two years, and vacancies will be filled as they occur. The duties of the pastor expire at midnight the last Sunday in the pastoral term at the church he/she is leaving and automatically begin at the same time at the church to which he/she is moving.

2. **Clerk:** The local church clerk is to be appointed by the pastor at the same time as the other leaders and officers are appointed during the first two months of his/her pastoral year.

The pastor is to see that a careful record is made by the church clerk of this action. The date of the appointments, along with names of each leader, should be recorded in the following conference as a matter of good business.

3. **Treasurer:** The treasurer is appointed in the same manner as the clerk. The treasurer will receive and disburse all funds of the local church including tithes, auxiliary funds, and special funds and will maintain an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements.

4. **Ministry Leaders:** Leaders for the local church ministries are appointed by the pastor during the first two months of his/her pastoral assignment. Each pastor should, with the assistance of the deacons/deaconesses (if deacons/deaconesses are members of this congregation), divide the local church membership into small groups and appoint group leaders. The leaders should keep in touch with each member of the group. Should a group member move away from the area where the local church is located, communications should be maintained by correspondence. This is for the spiritual benefit of the members. The pastor should meet regularly with the appointed group leaders.

5. **Local Trustees:** Trustees to hold title to local church property are selected by the local church in a regular or called business meeting and are authorized to bargain, buy, sell, convey, or encumber the local property only when authorized to do so by the local church in a regular or called business meeting, with the written consent of the General Trustees.

6. **Other Officers and Leaders:** The Assembly has authorized the pastor to appoint a church literature representative, public relations director, Center for Biblical Leadership booster, and any other leaders during the first two months of his/her pastoral year.

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Each local church should hold a regular business conference quarterly. It is suggested the first Monday night in March, June, September, and December be reserved for the conference. A meeting may be called anytime by the pastor or national/regional/state bishop

The pastor should moderate all business meetings. If there is no pastor, the national/regional/state bishop has the authority to act or to appoint a licensed minister to preside. Where one pastor has the care of several churches, he/she may arrange the business meetings for his/her convenience.

Every member should attend every business session if possible. Matters should be discussed with love, humility, and meekness. All church matters should be confirmed by the overwhelming consensus process. If a matter cannot be settled satisfactorily by the local church, they should call for the assistance of the national/regional/state district bishop.

SUGGESTED ARRANGEMENT AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

The conference may be opened with an appropriate Scripture reading and a prayer for divine guidance.

The clerk should read the minutes of the last regular meeting and called meetings.

There should be correction of the minutes, if needed, or acceptance of the minutes as read.

The treasurer should give a report of all finances, which would include an itemized statement of receipts and disbursements and the balance in the church's treasury.

All local church ministries should give a report of the work and progress of their particular ministries. Requests for transfer of membership to or from the local church should be presented for conference action. Unfinished and new business should be presented, discussed, and acted upon. The meeting may then be adjourned with prayer.

DUTIES OF NATIONAL/REGIONAL/STATE BISHOPS

Each national/regional/state bishop is to have the oversight of his nation, region, or state, and together with the presiding bishop, will form the presbytery in his respective area. In addition to his general responsibility for the work under his jurisdiction, he will be responsible for specific duties:

- To conduct or order a general evangelistic campaign during the year. If there are only a few churches in the nation/region/state assigned to him, he will serve primarily as the evangelist, evangelizing in new fields and endeavoring to establish new churches. If his area has a large number of churches and ministers, he will be responsible to organize and direct the evangelistic efforts of his workers in new fields.

- To see that every church is supplied with a pastor.
- To divide his nation/region/state into districts and place over each district a district supervisor. This is not a rule, but it is considered best when there are sufficient churches to make it practical. He should conduct district meetings at intervals during the year where special instructions concerning the work can be given.
- To hold at least one biennial general convention in the area most convenient for members from all the churches to attend.
- To secure the name and address of every bishop, deacon, and evangelist under his jurisdiction and keep a record of these so he can report to the presiding bishop, if necessary. He will also issue lay ministers' certificates and keep the necessary records concerning them.
- Keep an accurate record of the location of every church and the number of members in his territory, keeping a record of the increase so this information can be reported each year. This can be done by keeping in touch with the clerks of the churches. Every minister and clerk should take an interest in imparting this information to the national/regional/state bishop.
- To visit every district and church, if possible, and look after the interests in every way, as a pastor over a large circuit. (See Overseer's Manual, Presiding Bishop's Office.)

DUTIES OF DISTRICT SUPERVISORS

The district supervisors are to be appointed by the state bishop.

To moderate business conferences for persons serving as pastors who are not licensed.

To do evangelistic work in his district. If he has a district with no church, it is his duty to evangelize and organize churches.

To conduct district conventions according to the instructions of the state bishop.

To assist the state bishop, when called upon, in all things relating to church work, and to be subject to the state bishop.

OBLIGATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY

Will you sincerely promise in the presence of God and these witnesses that you will accept this Bible as the Word of God believe and practice its teachings rightly divided the New Testament as your rule of faith and practice, government and discipline, and walk in the light to the best of your knowledge and ability?

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in the Holy Trinity — one God, eternally existing in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe in one God, the Father, creator of heaven and earth, of all things seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. All things were made through him and for him. He is true God and true man. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the virgin Mary. He suffered, died, was buried, and on the third day he rose from the dead. He ascended to the right hand of the Father, and he will return to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who eternally proceeds from the Father. He is Teacher, Comforter, Helper, and Giver of spiritual gifts. Through him the saving and sanctifying works of Jesus Christ are applied to the life of believers. He is the empowering Presence of God in the life of the Christian and the church. The Father has sent his Son to baptize with the Holy Spirit. Speaking in tongues and bearing the fruit of the Spirit are New Testament signs of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

We believe that salvation is by grace through faith in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross and that he died in our place. The believer's sins are forgiven by the shedding of his blood. We believe that healing of mind, body, soul, and spirit is available to the believer through the blood of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. We believe in one baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that the grace of God brings forgiveness and reconciliation to those who repent, as well as transformation in holiness, enabling them to live a Christ-like life. Sanctification is both a definite work of grace and a lifelong process of change in the believer brought by the blood of Jesus, the Word of God, and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

We believe in one holy, universal church, composed of all true believers in Jesus Christ, offering fellowship and calling for service to men and women of all races, nations, cultures, and languages. We believe in the spiritual and ultimate visible unity of the church.

We believe that the Bible — both Old and New Testaments — is the inspired Word of God. The Bible is God's revelation of himself and his will to humankind, sufficient for instruction in salvation and daily Christian living. The Bible is the Christian's rule of faith and practice.

We believe that God will ultimately reconcile all things in heaven and earth in Christ. Therefore, we look forward to new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES, BELIEFS, AND PRACTICES OF THE CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY PREFACE

Since the beliefs of the Church of God of Prophecy are based on biblical principles, we realize that we are on a spiritual journey striving to “walk in the light” when it comes to our understanding of timeless truth. The following doctrinal insights reflect our current findings through our International Assemblies. We must always be acutely aware that as human instruments, we are subject to limited comprehension. As such, we desire to continually seek greater light which better aligns us to Scripture and brings correction to our finite knowledge. Henceforth, following each Assembly, the Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee would be expected to make any further adjustments that would be required in light of this mandate to reflect Assembly decisions.

From its beginnings, the Church of God of Prophecy has based its beliefs on “the whole Bible rightly divided.” We accept the Bible as God’s Holy Word, inspired, inerrant, and infallible. We believe the Bible to be God’s written revelation of Himself to mankind and our guide in all matters of faith; therefore, we look to the Bible as our highest authority for doctrine, practice, organization, and discipline.

The Church of God of Prophecy is firm in its commitment to orthodox Christian belief. We affirm that there is one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe in the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, the physical miracles He performed, His atoning death upon the Cross, His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His personal return in power and glory at His second coming. We profess that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is essential for the salvation of sinful mankind. We believe the sinner is brought to an awareness of the need for salvation through the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. We believe that in sanctification by the blood of Christ, one is made holy. We affirm the present, active ministry of the Holy Spirit who guides the Church and by whose indwelling and empowerment we are able to live godly lives and render effective service to God and others. We believe in the oneness and ultimate unity of believers for which our Lord prayed, and that this should be visibly displayed “that the world may know, see, and believe” God’s glory, the coming of His Son, and the great love He has for His people (John 17:20-23). We are committed to the sanctity of the marriage bond and the importance of strong, loving Christian families.

The Church embraces all biblical doctrines as taught in the New Testament and have listed some that may be helpful to believers seeking to mature in Christ Jesus:

REPENTANCE

The presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the world and upon the human heart through the Gospel of Jesus Christ (John 16:8-11) brings CONVICTION, an awareness and acknowledgement of sin against God and the need to confess that guilt with Godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10). In short, repentance means not only being sorry for sin, but a turning from and forsaking the old life (sin habits) for a new walk by faith in God through the Holy Spirit and in company with the people of God (Acts 2:42). The result of repentance is salvation, a work that is both instantaneous (new birth—John 3:3-8) and life-inclusive, beginning with the giving of new life by the Holy Spirit to the believer and climaxing with a glorified body (Hebrews 9:28; Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19). Repentance results in Justification, Regeneration, or what is called the “Born Again” experience as explained below.

JUSTIFICATION

“Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1-2). Justification is both a state and an act: On the part of the repentant one, it is the state of being without offense toward God. On God’s part, it is His act in forgiving the actual sins for which one has repented and declaring the individual accepted in a new relationship. The individual is said to be justified by faith in Jesus Christ; that is, one’s sins are covered (atoned for), and God no longer holds that person accountable for those sins. New spiritual life has begun (2 Corinthians 5:17), a beginning sometimes referred to as “Regeneration.”

REGENERATION/BORN AGAIN

Regeneration describes the work of God in providing new spiritual life in the believer. Human beings without Christ are “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1) and must be made alive or regenerated through the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). This giving of new spiritual life through Jesus Christ enables right relationships with God, the ability to worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), and is simultaneous with Justification (previous paragraph). It is God’s gracious act to rekindle the spiritual life lost in Adam (1 Corinthians 15:22) so one may now walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh (Romans 8:1-11). Accordingly, the individual is said to be “Born Again” or born of God (1 John 5:1). In responding to the double question of Nicodemus, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:4-5). To be born again, then, is to become a

new creation in Christ, a child of God, justified and regenerated as a result of true repentance and faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. There is no other way to enter the Kingdom. This entrance into a new life of discipleship to Christ (Acts 2:42) engages the believer in actively seeking more of God, fellowshiping and worshipping with God's people, and intentionally obeying God's Word as the believer learns how to "possess his vessel (whole body) in sanctification and honour" (1 Thessalonians 4:4).

SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification, like salvation, ultimately spans the entire life of the believer. Initially, it is a work of grace subsequent to being justified, regenerated, or born again. It is an instantaneous work, which both sets one apart for God (1 Corinthians 1:2) and crucifies and cleanses the old nature, enabling the believer to be free from the dominant rule of sin: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For, he that is dead is freed from sin" (Romans 6:6-7). "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11). This dethroning of the old nature, this cleansing, this setting apart, places upon the believer the scriptural demand to "mortify the deeds of the body" through the Spirit (Romans 8:12-13) and to "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication (sexual immorality), uncleanness, inordinate (abnormal) affection, evil concupiscence (desire for earthly things), and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). Second Peter 3:17-18 further encourages growth in God's grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen." There is then in sanctification, a responsibility on the part of the believer to "put off" some habits and practices, and to "put on" others, which means there must be intentionality to holiness (Ephesians 4:22-32). Sanctification empowers us against sin's control; the believer responds with a renewed mind to be transformed into the image of Christ (Romans 12:1-2) and to be holy in life and conduct (2 Corinthians 7:1).

HOLINESS

Holiness is a command of our Lord: "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:14-16), the state of being free from sin (sin's dominance) made possible by God's sanctifying and cleansing work (Romans 6:11-14; 1 Corinthians 6:11), and further sustained by active, whole-hearted pursuit of a life of Christ-likeness on the part of the maturing believer. "For the grace of God

that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12). “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thessalonians 4:7). “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1). Holiness must also be the Church’s collective goal as the body of Christ to demonstrate the praises (virtues) of Him “who hath called (us) out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9-10).

BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy (Spirit). For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:38-39). The baptism with the Holy Spirit as it occurred at Pentecost and in subsequent places in the book of Acts (8:14-17; 10:44-46; 19:2-7) is a definite experience that is subsequent to the salvation and sanctification experiences or may accompany them in a somewhat simultaneous way. Jesus said to His disciples, “. . . for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17). This indwelling is a definite, instantaneous experience described in the Scriptures by the word “baptism” and is accompanied by the evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. The baptism is also the Holy Spirit’s endowment of the believer for service in the Kingdom, as the Church was empowered at Pentecost to go forth with the message of the Gospel: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy (Spirit) is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). This experience should not be confused with water baptism, regeneration, or sanctification.

The Holy Spirit “is come” (has been sent by Christ—Acts 2:33) to “reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment,” to serve as the church’s guide and director, and to reveal the things of Christ (John 16:7-15). As such, it is important for believers to seek both the baptism (Acts 2:38-39) and His fullness (Ephesians 5:18) in order that they may become familiar with His leadership and guidance and cooperatively participate in His work, both for personal Christian maturity and for service in Christ’s mission to the world.

SPEAKING IN OTHER TONGUES

Speaking in (with) other tongues—languages (magnifying God through uttering His wonderful works in languages normally unknown to the

speaker Acts 2:4 8, 11; 10:44 46) is common in the book of Acts to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit upon believers as clearly stated in the foregoing scriptural texts. Acts 19:6 also shows the same result (speaking in tongues and prophesying) when the apostle Paul laid hands on 12 believers in the city of Ephesus for them to receive the Holy Spirit. In regulating the order and use of spiritual gifts to the Corinthian saints (1 Corinthians 12 14), Paul also allows for the private use of tongues in prayer to God and indicates that this edifies the individual believer's spirit (14:2 4). The gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues for public use in the assembled congregation are, of course, to be distinguished from the baptism with the Spirit as applied in the individual's experience. Paul makes this clear by referring to his own experience (cf. Acts 9:17 19) when he says, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Corinthians 14:18). While closing his admonition by prioritizing the gift most useful for the public edification of all (prophecy), he was careful to add, "and forbid not to speak with tongues" (v. 39).

Following the biblical pattern in Acts, the Church of God of Prophecy and other classical Holiness/Pentecostal churches teach that speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance is the initial evidence (observable by others) of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. However, it is not to be regarded or sought as an "end-all" experience. Daily walking and living in the Spirit (Romans 8:1 14) will continue to build Christian character (the fruit of the Spirit) and should be the desire and practice of every believer.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

As mentioned above, daily walking and living in the Spirit will cause the fruit of the Spirit to be regularly manifested in the life of the believer: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22 23). Such fruit cannot be produced by the flesh or by human nature. Indeed, the opposing nature and starkly contrary deeds of the flesh are partly enumerated in the same text with the concluding remark, ". . . they which do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (v. 21). "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (v. 16). "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth)" (Ephesians 5:8 9). The Spirit's work is crucial to the life of the believer and to the church.

FULL RESTORATION OF THE GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

In accordance with the Spirit's work, various spiritual gifts are given to and in the church and are manifested through individuals sometimes in an

apparently resident manner (repeatedly) and, at other times, spontaneously, as by direct unction of the Spirit in a given setting (1 Corinthians 12:4 11; Romans 12:4 8; Ephesians 4:7 16). Although there are historical periods during which spiritual gifts were not as prevalent as other times, there is no scriptural warrant to support the idea that these gifts ceased. Based on the foregoing scriptural texts and others, the Church of God of Prophecy teaches that spiritual gifts exist in the body of Christ and are owned, distributed, controlled, and operated by the Spirit as it pleases Him. The Church does not advocate personal claims to the gifts, but encourages individuals to humbly know and fulfill their callings to Christian service in response to the Spirit's leading and with the abilities He gives. As the church is restored to New Testament power, the gifts of the Spirit are expected to serve to edify the body of Christ in these last days just as those same gifts did in earlier times.

SIGNS FOLLOWING BELIEVERS

Because of spiritual gifts and the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, miraculous signs and wonders may accompany the works and ministries of true believers. Mark 16:17 20 records, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. . . . And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." While Jesus identified for His apostles what may follow in the lives of those who believe, the import of this text, when balanced against other salvation scriptures such as Romans 10:8 13, does not allow for these to occur (whether simultaneously or one by one) in every instance of salvation. However, the Church sees no scriptural warrant for the ceasing of these signs, but believe they have occurred and are still occurring today. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy (Spirit), according to his own will" (Hebrews 2:2 4)?

DIVINE HEALING

God's sovereign grace and mercy, through the atonement of Jesus Christ for all our sins and ultimately for all the consequences of sin, provides for the healing/salvation of our souls as well as our bodies in His work on Calvary. In the tradition of Jesus and His apostles as recorded in the Gospels and Acts

(Mark 3:1 5, 9 12, 14 15; Matthew 10:8; Acts 5:12), the Church believes that divine healing is accomplished by the power of God without the aid of medicine or surgical skills (Matthew 8:14 17). While it is clear that God does not always heal instantaneously in response to all prayers for healing (whether of the individual or of someone else praying on behalf of an individual see 2 Timothy 4:20), it is also a clear biblical duty of the elders and ministers of the Church to pray for the sick and to visit the sick (James 5:13 18 with Matthew 25:34 40). “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases” (Psalm 103:2 3). This text specifically addresses the soul, but the whole person (spirit/soul and body) can be divinely healed by the power of God. The healing of persons in response to faith and prayer (Acts 3:11 16) and by God’s special mercy (to spare certain of His servants more sorrow, cf. Philippians 2:25 27) is definitely confirmed in Scripture. We have a duty to continue to pray fervently for the sick, humbly leaving it in God’s hands to work His sovereign will.

WATER BAPTISM

Water baptism is the act of being immersed in water according to the commandment and instructions of Christ (Matthew 28:19). This ordinance has no power to wash away sins, but is the answer of a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21) and represents for the believer an identity with the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord (Romans 6:3 5). Mark 16:16 further reinforces the necessity of this step of obedience: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be damned.” On the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter told those under conviction what they should do: “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). Obviously, the apostles literally followed the Lord’s instructions, and we can do no less. Baptism, then, is outward evidence of our submission to Christ in salvation and our public declaration that we are His followers. It identifies us with His people in His kingdom. “Then they that gladly received His word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (2:41; see also 10:47 48 and 16:30 33).

THE LORD’S SUPPER

The Lord’s Supper is a sacred ordinance that our Lord Himself instituted on the night He was betrayed as He ate the Passover with His disciples (Luke 22:14 22). He instructed that this be done in remembrance of Him. It is representative of our communion and fellowship with Him. The apostle Paul reiterated the Lord’s instructions to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 11:23 25), adding some helpful details: “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink

this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, (in an unworthy manner), shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, so that we are not condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another" (vv. 26-33).

It is therefore the Church's position that this be observed with all gravity and in an orderly manner. No one should approach the Lord's Table with unforgiven sin in one's heart, and all should consecrate themselves in prayer before and upon every occasion of this observance. The Lord's Supper consists of "the fruit of the vine" (unfermented grape juice, as is our practice), representing the blood of Christ, and unleavened bread, representing His broken body on the cross. The Church encourages the Lord's Supper to be observed at least once a quarter, but to do so more often is certainly compatible with scriptural teaching: "They worshipped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved" (Acts 2:46-47 NLT).

WASHING THE SAINTS' FEET

Footwashing was instituted by Jesus on the night of the Last Supper and is considered by the Church a New Testament ordinance that we are enjoined to observe. As the Lord's Supper represents our communion with Christ, Footwashing represents our common unity (community) with each other as followers of Christ and partakers together with Him. Jesus sent two of His disciples to the home of a special friend in Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover meal (Mark 14:12-17). These preparations would have included a basin, water pitcher, and a towel for the customary washing of feet. According to verse 17 above, the 12 came with Jesus, but there is no mention of the washing of feet. Luke tells us there was anguish among the disciples as Jesus announced that one of them would betray Him and also that there was a quarrel between them as to who should be the greatest (Luke 22:21-24). Jesus taught them servanthood as their right relationship (vv. 25-27) and demonstrated His posture as a servant among them by washing their feet (John 13:3-5). In establishing this spirit of servanthood among them, Jesus said, ". . . Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye

also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. . . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (vv. 12-15, 17). The Church encourages that Footwashing be observed in the same service as the Lord's Supper whenever possible and in a decent and orderly manner (The BDP has extensive discussion of the sacrament of footwashing in the 2022 *Journal*, pp. 79-94).

TITHING AND GIVING

Tithing means to bring one-tenth of our increase into the treasury of the Church (Proverbs 3:9-10). The first biblical record of tithing to God's work began with Abraham, who paid tithes to Melchisedec (priest of the Most High God) of the spoils from his battle with the kings (Genesis 14:18-20), continued under the law, and received the approval of our Lord (Matthew 10:5-10; 23:23). Other New Testament writers reference God's provisions that they who preach the Gospel should live (be supported) of the Gospel hearers (1 Corinthians 9:6-14; Luke 10:7). See also Hebrews 7:4-10, which gives tithing a certain generational transcendence. The Church considers that the scriptural obligation to tithe is not fulfilled by just giving directly to the poor or to individuals or good causes. While the Church espouses and participates in all such support, her understanding of the biblical practice of tithing is that tithes are paid—brought into the treasury of the Church for the Lord's work, especially for the benefit of those who minister in the Word (Hebrews 7:8). God's blessings and favor will follow in all the productive areas of life (Malachi 3:7-12).

Giving of offerings differs from tithing and is done in addition to tithing. Both are part of God's plan to finance His work on earth (1 Corinthians 16:1-4; Philippians 4:10-19). A spirit of generosity has always permeated the Church from very early times (Acts 4:32-35), and the apostle Paul quoted our Lord to the Ephesian elders in his farewell address advising them ". . . to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (20:35). Once received into the Church's treasury, tithes and offerings are regulated through appropriate Church decisions and are administered by authorized Church policies and personnel.

RESTITUTION WHERE POSSIBLE

Restitution is the act of restoring something wrongfully taken or the satisfying of one who has been wronged. Making things right as far as is humanly possible is a natural result of salvation by God's grace as seen in the way Zacchaeus responded to our Lord's saving visit to his house: "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.' And Jesus said unto him, 'This day

is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham” (Luke 19:8-9). Where it is impossible to make contact with the person or institution involved, the believer should still exhibit a desire to return what was taken, to restore a relationship, or to seek forgiveness. When necessary, those who make restitution should bear patiently any consequences that may result such as legal sanctions, financial costs, or even rejection by the persons approached. “And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men” (Acts 24:16).

PRE-MILLENNIAL SECOND COMING OF JESUS

Our Lord Jesus Christ is coming back to earth again (Acts 1:11), and the Church understands this coming in two phases: First, in mid-air to resurrect the dead saints and to catch away the living saints to meet Him so that all who are in Christ can attend the marriage supper of the Lamb: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; see also 1 Corinthians 15:51-52). “And he saith unto me, ‘Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he saith unto me, ‘These are the true sayings of God’” (Revelation 19:9). Second, Jesus will return with the saints to reign on earth for a thousand years: “. . . And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection” (20:4-5; see also Zechariah 14:4-9; Revelation 5:10; 20:6).

RESURRECTION

God’s plan for the world includes a time of accountability of all people (living and dead) before His judgment seat. For this reason, all the dead, both righteous and wicked, will be resurrected. As part of the assurance of this judgment, God raised Jesus from the dead and appointed Him judge (Acts 24:15; Daniel 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Acts 17:30-31). However, the resurrection of the wicked dead and their time of judgment will not occur until after the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth with His saints (Revelation 20:4-6). Paul expressed the Christian’s hope in the resurrection this way: “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead” (Philippians 3:10). We look for the Savior from heaven. Paul says, “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (v. 21).

ETERNAL LIFE FOR THE RIGHTEOUS

In Jesus' high priestly prayer, He defined eternal life as follows: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). The New Testament everywhere teaches that eternal life is promised to those who believe in Jesus: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Those who die in the Lord and those who are serving Him when He returns will receive the reward of eternal life: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:22-23).

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT FOR THE WICKED

How we live our lives in this present world determines our destiny in the next, our eternal reward (Daniel 12:2; Romans 2:4-9). The unconverted and the wicked are doomed to eternal punishment from which there is no escape—no liberation, no annihilation: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46). "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

ABSTINENCE FROM ALL LIQUOR OR STRONG DRINKS

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1). "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment" (Isaiah 28:7). "Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags" (Proverbs 23:20-21). Because of these and other biblical texts, the Church of God of Prophecy teaches abstinence from the use of intoxicating beverages. Scriptural teaching is, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). We are also advised "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel

in sanctification and honour” (1 Thessalonians 4:4). (See also 1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:10; 10:31; Galatians 5:21).

CONCERNING TOBACCO, OPIUM, MORPHINE, ETC.

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1). “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy (Spirit) which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The use of tobacco in any form is forbidden as well as the habitual use of narcotics or other habit-forming drugs. Addictions and enslavements to drugs or other substances are incompatible with the surrender of our bodies to the Lord as holy vessels of honor for His use (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:4). “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

CONCERNING FOOD OR DRINKS

The New Testament makes no rigid rule concerning what foods a Christian shall eat or drink with the exception of strong drink and addictive and enslaving substances. “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (Colossians 2:16-17). Thus, we have no right to judge what our brother or sister eats or drinks. The legal restrictions of the Mosaic Law concerning these were not extended into the Grace Dispensation: “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy (Spirit)” (Romans 14:17). See also 1 Corinthians 8:8 and 1 Timothy 4:1-5.

ON THE SABBATH

The book of Genesis tells us that on the seventh day, God ended His work and blessed that day and sanctified it (Genesis 2:2-3). This was no doubt His preparatory plan to set Israel apart as a special people, for to them, He gave the Law, which included the observance of the Sabbath.

Jesus’ corrective to the Pharisees’ strict observance of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27-28) placed people above enslavement to the day and asserted His Lordship over the day. As such, the Church of God of Prophecy teaches that observance of that day per se was not carried over into the Grace Dispensation. Sunday is not the Sabbath but merely a day set aside to give special attention to the worship of God. In the early church, they referred to Sunday as “the first day of the week” and later as “the Lord’s Day” or

“Resurrection Day.” Therefore, worship on Sunday is also very appropriate. Christians are required to keep every day holy rather than just one particular day. The Jewish Sabbath was also a type of Jesus Christ who is presented in Scripture as our rest (Hebrews 4:1–11). “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (Colossians 2:16–17). See also Romans 14:5–6.

ADORNMENT

Scripture does not prohibit the use of a cultural wedding symbol due to marital, social, and cultural conditions; nor does it establish its necessity. In certain instances, the marriage symbol or emblem may strengthen the marriage arrangement and order, and thus its use is not for ornamentation. Therefore, the cultural wedding symbol or emblem, though not necessitated, may be worn due to marital, social, and cultural situations in order to preserve the headship principle and the integrity of marriage (Genesis 3:16; 1 Corinthians 11:8; Ephesians 5:22–23). Scripture neither prohibits (absolutely) nor necessitates the use of ornamental adornment. It does give strong precautionary principles for its use such as modesty, shamefacedness, and sobriety and calls attention to the ornament of the inner man, that of “a meek and quiet spirit” (1 Timothy 2:9–10; 1 Peter 3:3–4). Ornamentation must not be used in any way that lends itself to idolatrous, occult, or lustful practices (Isaiah 3:18–22; Acts 8:9; 19:19; 1 Corinthians 5:10; 6:9; Galatians 5:19–21; Revelation 2:20–23). It is also important to remember that adornment includes more than jewelry alone. To apply the prudent principles of Scripture (both for those who wear and those who do not), an overriding principle is found in Romans 14:13: “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s (sister’s) way.”

MEMBERSHIP IN LODGES/SECRET SOCIETIES

The Bible is opposed to the people of God being unequally yoked together with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14–18); it is opposed to deeds done in secret, and it demands the complete and undivided loyalty of God’s children: “Jesus answered him, ‘I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing’” (John 18:20; see also Luke 16:13). Many secret societies/organizations require the taking of an oath of secrecy, and oath-taking is expressly forbidden (see the following paragraph) as we shall see shortly (Ephesians 5:12–13).

WHOLESOME SPEECH OF THE BELIEVER

The taking of an oath is a vain thing and condemned in the Scriptures. An affirmation to the truth of anything is sufficient and usually accepted even in courts of law: “But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Matthew 5:34-37; see also James 5:12). The term “swearing” is also used of profanity, which the Bible teaches against: “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Ephesians 4:29; see also 5:4).

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE

Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18-25; Deuteronomy 6:7; Matthew 5:32; 14:3-4; 19:3-12; Mark 10:12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 6:9-18; 7:2, 11; Colossians 3:18-21.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

The Church of God of Prophecy affirms the biblical teaching that marriage is sacred and should not be entered into lightly without proper preparation. Marriage was originally instituted by God as a properly recognized covenant relationship between one man and one woman for life. The Church affirms the biblical family as a father and mother in wedlock who may procreate children. The Church further asserts that the home, including the extended family, is to be guided by love, discipline, and other nurturing aspects as taught in God’s Word. Because the Church is committed to the sanctity of marriage and human life, we diligently stand against abortion, incest, abuse, euthanasia, adultery, divorce, homosexuality, and lesbianism, which we believe are contrary to God’s original design as expressed in His Word. All biblically unlawful unions such as same-sex, incestuous, or polygamous marriages are renounced by the Church even if they are recognized as legal by civil governments.

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

Concerning “divorce” in the above context, the Church means the breaking of a legitimate, lawful, biblical marriage and holds firmly to the principle that such divorces are not God’s will, especially between Christians. Forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing should be sought as a first priority in order to preserve marriages and prevent divorce. The Church also recognizes that despite biblical teaching and honest human effort, divorces do occur sometimes against the will of one or the other party. Therefore, the Church

recognizes (in a pastoral sense) those causes, in addition to death, that would be recognized as ending a previously valid biblical marriage. In such cases, delineated here, marriage partners would not be classed as adulterers even though remarried:

1. If persons were divorced and remarried for any reason prior to their personal salvation and have demonstrated a willingness to seek restitution (forgiveness from the offended spouse) and restoration where possible.
2. If a divorce occurred because of a spouse's habitual adulterous behavior and efforts to bring reconciliation are no longer possible.
3. If divorce occurred because of spousal or child abuse, such as incestuous behavior that seriously endangers the life and health of the spouse or family and violates the sanctity of holy matrimony.

Under no circumstances should Christians or Church members initiate or seek divorce without completely exhausting all biblical and counseling avenues to restore, rebuild, and sustain their marriages. Marriages that clearly violate biblical standards (such as incestuous marriages) may be appealed to the presbytery for specific consideration. All divorce and remarriage cases not falling within the categories described above should be referred for counsel and resolution to the pastor and local church leadership, the state/regional/national presbytery, or the general ministerial presbytery (which includes the presiding bishop and general presbyters) as may be appropriate.*

*See "The Biblical Institution of Marriage" Final Document, Church of God of Prophecy, *94th International Assembly Minutes*, 2006, pages 152-177. See also "The Family Manifesto" originally written and owned by "FamilyLife," and specially adapted (with permission) by Family Ministries for inter-church use by the Church of God of Prophecy, International Offices.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

The Church of God of Prophecy holds the biblical principle of genuine repentance toward God (an individual's experience of salvation) as its qualification for Church membership in accordance with the early church's practice and God's own activity in adding to the church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:41, 47; 1 Corinthians 12:13). By genuine repentance is meant Godly sorrow for sin, confessing, turning from, denouncing and forsaking sin, and exercising faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the

mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9-10). Salvation is both instantaneous (new birth, regeneration) and the all-inclusive work of redemption, beginning with regeneration and culminating with the glorified body (Hebrews 9:28). In terms of “being added to the church,” the instantaneous aspect of salvation is evident, and a public commitment (“I will/I do”) to the Church covenant as administered by an authorized Church of God of Prophecy minister, in an appropriate church setting, is necessary. The covenant reads:

Will you sincerely promise in the presence of God and these witnesses that you will accept this Bible as the Word of God, believe and practice its teachings rightly divided—the New Testament as your rule of faith, practice, government, and discipline, and walk in the light to the best of your knowledge and ability?

Membership in the Church denotes acceptance, which is the basic need of every new believer. Ministry leadership and the Church must endeavor to give members this sense of belonging. The Church also advocates that new members be immediately placed in an effective, ongoing, discipleship process by the pastor and local church (Acts 2:42), a process that includes nurturing and discipline, to help them become mature (2 Peter 3:18), discover the spiritual gift or gifts, which will be exercised through them for the edification of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians, chapters 12, 13, 14), and to learn to make disciples of others (Matthew 28:19-20). As we continue in the harvest, a program of extensive discipleship requiring great wisdom and loving care by leadership and people will help all our members mature in Christ.

102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFERINGS

Pre-Assembly Offerings _____	\$303,851.96
Wednesday, July 31 _____	22,458.23
Thursday, August 1 _____	25,709.02
Friday, August 2 _____	51,225.17
Saturday, August 3 _____	30,289.79
Sunday, August 4 _____	23,923.88
Total Assembly Offerings _____	\$457,458.05

102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY ONLINE VIEWERSHIP

Unique Users / Over 1-Minute Users / Subscribers			
Vimeo			
English	Spanish	French	Portuguese
4,052	617	38	232
Castr			
All Languages			
551			
Facebook		Over 1-Minute Users	
English	Spanish	French	Portuguese
58,500	34,400	1,200	1,300
Youtube			
English Subscribers			
1,745			
Hours Watched			
Vimeo			
English	Spanish	French	Portuguese
6,914.68	752.72	58.63	262.05
Castr			
All Languages			
263.74			
Facebook		Over 1 minute Users	
English	Spanish	French	Portuguese
842 Days 9 hours	396 Days 22 Hours	12 days 5 hrs	19 Days
20,217	9,526	293	456
Youtube			
English Subscribers			
56,384.0325			
Total Hours Watched	95,127.86		
or	3,963 Days 15 Hrs		
or	10 Years 313 Days 15 Hrs		
80 Unique Countries not including Facebook			
American Samoa	Dominican Republic	Malaysia	South Sudan
Anguilla	Ecuador	Martinique	Spain
Antigua & Barbuda	El Salvador	Mexico	Sri Lanka
Argentina	Finland	Montserrat	St. Kitts & Nevis
Australia	France	Namibia	St. Lucia
Bahamas	Gambia	Netherlands	St. Maarten
Barbados	Germany	Nicaragua	St. Martin
Bermuda	Ghana	Nigeria	St. Vincent & Grenadines
Bolivia	Grenada	Pakistan	Swaziland
Botswana	Guadeloupe	Paraguay	Sweden
Brazil	Guatemala	Peru	Switzerland
British Virgin Islands	Guyana	Philippines	Tanzania
Canada	Haiti	Poland	Trinidad & Tobago
Cayman Islands	Honduras	Portugal	Turks & Caicos Islands
Chile	Hong Kong	Puerto Rico	U.S. Virgin Islands
Colombia	India	Republic of Korea	United Kingdom
Congo	Italy	Romania	United States
Costa Rica	Ivory Coast	Rwanda	Unknown
Democratic Rep. of the Congo	Jamaica	Singapore	Uruguay
Dominica	Kenya	South Africa	Venezuela

STATISTICAL REPORT BY AREAS

June 1, 2022 - May 31, 2024 Report				
	Membership	Churches	Missions	Licensed
Africa	249,652	1,888	551	1,588
Asia/Oceania	53,328	718	277	641
Caribbean	131,642	831	33	1,691
Central America	185,260	3,771	2,196	2,917
North America	88,216	1,633	89	5,735
South America	82,432	1,881	387	936
Wider Europe and Middle East	16,408	253	53	489
Totals	806,938	10,975	3,586	13,989*
*The total is based on the number of ministers in the COGOP database while the total reported is 13,997.				

**CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY INTERNATIONAL OFFICES
BOARDS, TRUSTEES, AND COMMITTEES
DIRECTORY 2024-2026**

CORPORATE BOARD (BOARD OF DIRECTORS):

Tim Coalter, Presiding Bishop, Chair; Jeffery Davis; Clayton Endecott; Daniel Felipe; Benjamin Feliz; Branson Gibson; James Kolawole; Joshua Lynn; Clayton Martin; Tim McCaleb; Shaun McKinley; Maria Ruano; Gary Smith; Brian Sutton; Gabriel Vidal

AUDIT COMMITTEE (Sub-Committee of the Corporate Board):

Llewellyn Graham, Chair; Nathaniel Beneby; Joshua Lynn; Rupert Neblett; Paulette Wilbanks

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Church of God of Prophecy Corporate Board; Daniel Felipe, Chief Clerk

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Advisor(s): Host National/Regional/State Bishop(s) of Assembly Site

BIBLICAL DOCTRINE AND POLITY COMMITTEE:

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Email: BDP@cogop.org

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE:

Scott Gillum, Chair; Nathaniel Beneby; Clint Knowles; Cynthia Lawrence; Ryan Napalo; Rupert Neblett; Paulette Wilbanks.
Email: finance.committee@cogop.org

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INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY EXPENSE COMMITTEE

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**DIRECTORY OF 2024–2026 INTERNATIONAL APPOINTMENTS:
PRESIDING BISHOP, GENERAL PREBYSTERS, INTERNATIONAL OFFICES
MINISTRY DIRECTORS, NATIONAL/REGIONAL/STATE BISHOPS**

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP:

Presiding Bishop: Tim Coalter, P. O. Box 2910, Cleveland, TN 37320
Phone: (423) 559-5102; Email: pboffice@cogop.org ; hroberts@cogop.org

GENERAL PRESBYTER OFFICES:

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Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands: Clayton Martin; P. O. Box 1781, George Town, Grand Cayman KY1-1109, Cayman Islands
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Mexico, Central America, Spanish-Speaking Caribbean:

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Wider Europe and Middle East: Clayton Endecott, Jr.;
Postfach 1209, 63202, Langen, Germany
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FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION:

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Global Missions: Cathy Payne
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GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Executive Director: Shaun McKinley
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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND DISCIPLESHIP:

Executive Director: Jeff Davis
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Accredited Ministry Development & Spirit and Life Seminary:
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Phone: (423) 559-5503; Email: mhernandez@cogop.org

Center for Biblical Leadership Instructor: Elias Rodriguez
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Children's Ministries: Joy Hensley
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Youth Ministries: Kirk Rising
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ENIS JAMES KOLAWOLE, GENERAL PRESBYTER

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Botswana Edison Mookestane; Email: cogopbw20@gmail.com

Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea Ekpai Mayeke James;

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Cape Verde, Namibia, Niger African Finance and Administrative
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Ethiopia Fekadu Ayele Shone*

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South Africa (West) Nathaniel Botha;
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South Sudan, Uganda James Ntezimana;
Email: cogopbusia@gmail.com

Tanzania Eric Mwambigija; Email: emwambigija@hotmail.com

National Administrative Assistants to the General Presbyter:

- **Burundi** Jean Bosco Subire; Email: edpbu@yahoo.fr
- **Gabon** Jean Calvin Nguene III; Email: calvinguene@gmail.com
- **Malawi, Zimbabwe** Phillip Segadika;
Email: psegadika2014@gmail.com
- **Mali** Joseph Moussianne; Email: tomgui2000@gmail.com
- **Mozambique** Quembo Albino; Email: albinoquembo@yahoo.com

(The Africa Finance and Administrative Committee includes Enis James Kolawole, Mayeke James, Cyril Odendo, Kadato Richard, and Chris Uti.)

*Due to precautionary measures needed in some areas, we feel it unwise to print these email addresses.

ASIA, AUSTRALIA, AND OCEANIA

TIM MCCALEB, GENERAL PRESBYTER

Email: tmccaleb@cogop.org

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Fiji Islands, New Zealand, Rabi Islands Daniel Gann;

Email: ganndk@gmail.com

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Gary Langley; Email: gary.Langley@gmail.com

India Joshua Wijonamai; Email: cogopindia@yahoo.com

Indonesia Fasa Aro Zendrato*

Korea Jung-hoon Lee; Email: scogop@empas.com

Malaysia Bathinathan Anthonisamy; Email: bathinathan@gmail.com

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Pakistan Asher Munawar Khan*

Philippines Rogelio D. Justiniano; Email: rjcogop@yahoo.com

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Singapore Dennis Huang; Email: cogop.singapore@gmail.com

*Due to precautionary measures needed in some areas, we feel it unwise to print these email addresses.

CARIBBEAN AND ATLANTIC OCEAN ISLANDS

CLAYTON N. MARTIN, GENERAL PRESBYTER

Email: cmartin@cogop.org

The Bahamas Woodley Thompson; Email: woodley7@hotmail.com

Barbados & Windward Islands (St. Lucia, Grenada, St.

Vincent and the Grenadines) Chris Joseph;

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****Bermuda** see below

Cayman Islands, French Guiana Clayton Martin;

Email: cmartin@cogop.org

Guyana, Suriname Phillip James; Email: pastorphillipjames@gmail.com

Haiti Jean-Claude Dorlean; Email: edph64th@yahoo.com

Jamaica Winston Leith; Email: cogopnationaloffice@gmail.com

Leeward Islands (Anguilla, Antigua, Barbuda, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Nevis, St. Maarten, St.

Martin) Samuel Daniel; Email: dr.samuedaniel@gmail.com

Paragon Region (Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, British Virgin

Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands) Carswell Leonard;

Email: bishopcleonard@paragoncogop.com

Trinidad, Tobago Elvis Williams; Email: elviswilliams0303@yahoo.com

Turks, Caicos Islands Andrew Stone; Email: stone@tcway.tc

**Note: Bermuda is under North America appointment.

Bermuda Northeast Regional Bishop, Leroy Greenaway;
Email: leroygreenaway@verizon.net

MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND SPANISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN

BENJAMIN FELIZ, GENERAL PRESBYTER

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Church Planting Coordinator Joel Banegas; Email: jbanegas@cogop.org

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BRIAN SUTTON, GENERAL PRESBYTER

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Alabama Richard Ramsey; Email: rramsey@alcoogop.org;

Web: www.alcoogop.org

Alaska, Washington Jose Orona; Email: jorona@nacogop.org; Web:

Alaska, www.wacogop.org; Washington, www.wacogop.org

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Great Lakes Region (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin)
Timothy Harper; Email: drtimharper@gmail.com;
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IOU Region (Idaho, Oregon, Utah, Navajo Nation) Wallace Pratt; Email: wrp72250@aol.com; Web: www.cogop-iou.org

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Southeast Spanish Region (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee) Ebli De La Rosa; Email: ebli@bellsouth.net; Facebook: COGOP Region Sureste Hispana

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Virginia Joshua Lynn; Email: joshualynn@mac.com; Web: www.vacogop.org

SOUTH AMERICA

GABRIEL VIDAL, GENERAL PRESBYTER

Email: gvidal@cogop.org

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Bolivia David Orozco; Email: stilodeo@gmail.com

Brazil Obispo Hernandes Fernandes Filho;

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Chile Sergio Ceden; Email: sceden@gmail.com

Colombia Juan Carlos Correa Fuentes;

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Ecuador Benjamin A. Aldana Perez; Email: idpecuador82@gmail.com

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Uruguay Marco Benavides Delgado; Email: marben6062@gmail.com

Venezuela Luis Gomez; Email: oficina01venezuela@hotmail.com

Harvest Continental Coordinator Francisco Lopez Paz;
frankylopez1963@gmail.com

WIDER EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

CLAYTON ENDECOTT, GENERAL PRESBYTER

Email: gpce@cogop.de

Azerbaijan, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Romania General
Presbyter Clayton Endecott with Shared Leadership Team

Belarus, Ukraine Bishop Gena*

Belgium, the Netherlands, United Kingdom Tedroy Powell;

Email: tedroy.powell@cogop.org.uk

Bulgaria Darin Ivanov; Email: cogop@abv.bg

Cyprus Clayton Endecott (Antonio Pastos serving as National
Chairman); Email: gpce@cogop.de

Czech Republic, Poland, Slovak Republic Petr Szlaur;

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Egypt Bashir Dawood*

Finland Clayton Endecott (Simo Tuominen serving as National Chairman); Email: gpce@cogop.de

France Michael Wilson; Email: michael.wilson@cogopfrance.org

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Italy, Portugal, Spain Edgar Rossini Ortiz Salguero;

Email: erossini@cogop.org

Russia Bishop Misha*

(The Shared Leadership Team assists the General Presbyter to serve as the National Bishop in some nations due to finance, size, structure, and/or current security issues.)

*Due to precautionary measures needed in some areas, we feel it unwise to print these email addresses.

**2024 INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY
RETIRING/ROTATING FROM GENERAL APPOINTMENT OR
RECEIVING CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION**

International Offices

Samuel Paul Holt (Rotating from
International Office
appointment to state bishop)
Deborah Stockham

**Caribbean and Atlantic
Ocean Islands**

Franklin Ferguson
Glenville Ferris
Earl Higgins
Maurice Jones
Edward Payne

**Mexico, Central America,
Spanish-Speaking Caribbean**

Alejandro Ramos Joseph
Sergio Ever Garcia Aparicio.

North America

E. C. McKinley
George McLaughlin

Memory of:

Santos Cerrato Trejo
Kolekile Jombile
Rey Martinez Santiago
Franklin Smith

BISHOPS ORDAINED AT THE 102ND INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

AFRICA

Ghana

Addy Samuel Lante

South Africa (East)

Namntu Phumeleni Ernest

CENTRAL AMERICA

Puerto Rico

Carlos A. Pérez Maldonado
Kennett Iván Rivero Rodríguez

NORTH AMERICA

Alabama

Antonio Charles Combest
Leslie Dean Curtis
Barry Keith George
Daniel W. Stronge
James Adam Wade
J. Mark Williams

Georgia

Eric Ellis Dixon
William Riley Flowers
Danny Lee Peek
Gibson Kelly Pope
Michael Brian Poppell
Robert Paul Rhoden
Lawrence J. Small

Great Lakes

David Andrew Morris

Heartland America

Danny Freeland
Rick Newson
William Snyder
Shannon Tribble

Kentucky

Robbie Edward Delph
Franklin Cleveland Hall, Jr.

North Carolina

Jeffrey Brian Burkhardt
Phillip Eugene Davis, Sr.
Kenneth Alexander George
Willie Ralph Rawls
Jimmy L. Sutton

Northeast English

Wervin Hardy
Neville Arthur Haye
Bradsley Rumble

Northeast Spanish

Juan Melo Cedeño

Ohio/West Virginia

Larry Whited

South Carolina

Mark Patrick Wagnon
Charles Jefferson White, III

Southeast Spanish

Elmer Noe Benitez
Cristobal Napoleon
Felipe Rodriguez

Tennessee

Chad Everett Bagley
James Cristopher Bohanon
Brian Keith Graves
Robert Everett Holloway
Thomas Cristopher Jarrell

**WIDER EUROPE & MIDDLE
EAST**

Belgium

Innocent Phanzu Ditsia

DECEASED MINISTERS REPORTED JULY 2022 - JUNE 2024

R. Wayne Allen	Eunice Carmen Chambers	Thomas F. Hale
Francis Xavier Anthony	Romara Dean Chatham	Marjorie Genevieve Hust
Nicholas Anthony	Norald T. Coakley	Harper
Asen Demirev Apostolov	Courtney Coffey	Billy Lee Harriett
Roosevelt Ashford	Judy Coffin	Everett Lee Harris, Jr.
Elmer Charles Atchley	Ed Ray Cook	Gail Harvey
James Austin	Uzziah Cooper	Maximo C. Hassell
Bobby R. Baker, Sr.	Mary Couch	Patricia Ann Henson
Daisy L. Baker	Lena Cheek Craven	Albert Les Hitchcock
Henry Edward Baker	Estella Cross	Costas Homodozis
Marlene Bales	Maria Consepuiz Cruz	Rosamond Diana
Dewey C. Bane	Thomas R. Culp	Honeyghan-Mullings
Raymond Barfield	Sebastião Abel de Oliveira	Eugene R. Hooker
Ida C. Staten Barrett	Henry Sylvester Dean	George E. Hughes
James Harold Beck	Kenneth Dale Dees	Jacqueline Blondell Huyler-
Ida J. Berry	James Bernard Dickason	Rahming
Eddie Lee Blair	Jorge Ferreira do Carmo	Harvey Jenkins
Stephen B. Blount	Alice A. Duckworth	Jose A. Jimenez
David Thomas Bosler	James Carlton Earp, Jr.	Kolekile A Jombile
James P. Boyd	Homer Buford Edwards	Alice Scott Jonas
James Earvin Brisson	Ferdinand Edwards	Shelia Jonas
Marvin C. Brisson	Ernesto Concepcion	George Nathaniel Jones
Peggy Eversole Brown	Espinola	Noreen Oriitha Kerr
Joseph Oliver Brown	Elizabeth Ethevalde da Silva	Charles King
Elwood Orville Brumley	Sylvia D. Evans	Robert Daniel Langley
Margie Burdett	David Clyde Faile	James L. Lawson
Chuck Burks	Fred Fisher, Sr.	James N. Layne
Leroy Burks	Teddy Lee Fortenberry	Dottie Lee
Andre Domonic Bush	Jimmy Foxx	Eric Lewis
Garnett Dewey Byrd	Lazaro Fuentes Rosales	Eugene Lewis
Victor M. Cabral	Rosendo Garcia Fragosa	Gary Linkous
Roslyn Beatrice Capron	Aldyth Gardner	Debra E. Luna
Roy Allen Carpenter	Viola Graham	Stephen Allen Lynch
Marion Thomas Caruthers	William E. Grant	James N. Mackens
Jonny Carver	Lois D. Graves	Bernice Markland
Jerry Caudill	David Green	Jose A Martinez
Zeli Cerqueira	Tim J. Green	Ray Martinez Santiago
Santos Inocente Cerrato	Rainford Griffiths	Tertuliano Puc May
Trejo	Lonnie J. Grimsley	Howard Scott Maynard
Jorge Cervantes	Hira Gurung	Jim N. McAfee

Jackie M. McClure	Jose A. Reyes	John A. Stone
Emma Avis McDonald	Lorna Reynolds	Louis M. Sullivan
James T. McKay	Marshall Reynolds	Doris Sutton
Elmera McLeggan	Lewis Rice	Doris Swain
Philip D. McNemar	Cecil T. Riggsbee	Dannie K. Tackett
Thomas Bruce Mericle	David F. Risch	David L. Taylor
Byron Minter	Leonard L. Rivas	Iggie R. Taylor
Clifton Johnnie Mize, Jr.	Keith J. Robinson	Edward Thomas
Sterling Lindbergh Moss	Claudionor Rodrigues das Neves	Mary Sadie Thompson
Harold Murphy	Rufus R. Rogers	Mary J. Thompson
Stanley Murphy	Leonard Rushing	Doris Marie Tindle
J. R. M. Nabors	Beatrice Russell	Dixie Upton
David Nichols, Jr.	Leon Schneider	Anuj S. Varma
Churendel Nivillac	Ralph Schnelle	Louise Walker
Antoine Noel	Howard R. Scott	Crosley Earl Wallace
Robert G. Norris	Johnny T. Scotton, Sr.	Bobby Gene Warmoth
Lorina B. Nottage	Lotton Sellers	Randall Waterman
Alice M. Odom	Judith Darlene Shadrick	Odis Weatherford
John C. Leslie Osborne	Bobby Joe Shinault	Roy Eugene Weddle
Gilbert Palmer	Edimar Pereira Silveira	Arlene White
Bobby Patterson	Elizabeth H. Smith	Gary Wayne White
John A. Payne	Franklin G. Smith	Hilda L. White
Willie Peacock	Henry J. B. Smith	Stanley Lonnie Whitehill
Charles Pentecost	James Smith, Sr.	Barbara Whyte
E. H. Peterson	Mary E. Smith	Lornal Paul Wilchcombe
Kimbal Pope	Ruth Ann Smith	Shirley F. Williams
Helen Christine Posey	Victor Brian Smith	Willie Williams
Charles L. Powell	William R. Smith	Bobby Wayne Wilson
Susan Presley	William Russell Smith	John W. Wilson
David Wayne Prince	Paul E. Starling	Leonard A. Wilson
Robin Rai	Ernest Howard Steen	George Wyrosdick
Milton E. Rainey	Douglas Stephenson	Alva Don Yancey
Matthew Randolph	James Stone, Jr.	
Akata Reia		

REPORT NO. _____ MONTH _____ 20 _____ MINISTER'S MONTHLY REPORT TO STATE/REGIONAL BISHOP

ACCOUNTABILITY—Sermons _____ Converted _____ Sanct. _____ Holy Spirit _____ Added to Church _____ Bapt. in water _____ Church homes visited _____ Outreach homes visited _____
STEWARDSHIP—Tithes rec'd. _____ Offerings _____ Tithes paid at local church _____ Expenses _____ Tithes Encl. _____

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CORE VALUES—Prayer: How many prayer events _____ Do you have consistent prayer life/family worship? _____
Harvest: How many Outreach/Church Planting events _____ **Leadership Dev:** How many events/activities promoting development of leaders _____
Are you continuing to upgrade your ministry? _____

PASTORAL—Total covenant members _____ Saved _____ Sanct. _____ Holy Spirit _____ Average weekly worship attendance _____
Portion of attendees children/youth _____ Do you receive monthly mission offerings? _____ Lord's Supper _____ Feet Washing _____

Report No. _____ Minister's License No. _____ Minister's Monthly Report To State/Regional/National Bishop

Name _____ Member of church at _____

Home address in full _____

Home Phone () _____ Church Phone () _____ Email: _____

Month _____ 20 _____ [] Bishop [] Minister [] Lay Minister

ACCOUNTABILITY—Sermons _____ Converted _____ Sanctified _____ Received Holy Spirit _____ Added to Church _____ Baptized in water _____
Church homes visited _____ Outreach homes _____

STEWARDSHIP—Tithes you received _____ Offerings you received _____ Tithes you paid at local church _____
Expenses in ministry _____ Tithes enclosed with this report _____

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CORE VALUES—Prayer: Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote prayer? _____
Do you have a consistent prayer life & family worship? _____ **Harvest:** Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote missions, outreach, and church planting? _____ **Leadership Development:** Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote the development of leaders? _____ How many leaders are involved in these activities? _____ Are you continuing to upgrade your ministry? _____

PASTORAL—Total covenant membership _____ Members saved _____ Sanctified _____ Baptized in Holy Spirit _____ Average weekly worship attendance _____
Portion of attendees who are children and youth (birth–19 years) _____ Do you receive monthly Mission offerings? _____ Did your church observe Lord's Supper this month? _____ Footwashing? _____

REPORT NO. _____ MONTH _____ 20 _____ MINISTER'S MONTHLY REPORT TO STATE/REGIONAL BISHOP

ACCOUNTABILITY—Sermons _____ Converted _____ Sanct. _____ Holy Spirit _____ Added to Church _____ Bapt. in water _____ Church homes visited _____ Outreach homes visited _____
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Name _____ Member of church at _____

Home address in full _____

Home Phone () _____ Church Phone () _____ Email: _____

Month _____ 20 _____ [] Bishop [] Minister [] Lay Minister

ACCOUNTABILITY—Sermons _____ Converted _____ Sanctified _____ Received Holy Spirit _____ Added to Church _____ Baptized in water _____
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Do you have a consistent prayer life & family worship? _____ **Harvest:** Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote missions, outreach, and church planting? _____ **Leadership Development:** Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote the development of leaders? _____ How many leaders are involved in these activities? _____ Are you continuing to upgrade your ministry? _____

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Portion of attendees who are children and youth (birth–19 years) _____ Do you receive monthly Mission offerings? _____ Did your church observe Lord's Supper this month? _____ Footwashing? _____

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Are you continuing to upgrade your ministry? _____

PASTORAL—Total covenant members _____ Saved _____ Sanct. _____ Holy Spirit _____ Average weekly worship attendance _____
Portion of attendees children/youth _____ Do you receive monthly mission offerings? _____ Lord's Supper _____ Feet Washing _____

Report No. _____ Minister's License No. _____ Minister's Monthly Report To State/Regional/National Bishop

Name _____ Member of church at _____

Home address in full _____

Home Phone () _____ Church Phone () _____ Email: _____

Month _____ 20 _____ [] Bishop [] Minister [] Lay Minister

ACCOUNTABILITY—Sermons _____ Converted _____ Sanctified _____ Received Holy Spirit _____ Added to Church _____ Baptized in water _____
Church homes visited _____ Outreach homes _____

STEWARDSHIP—Tithes you received _____ Offerings you received _____ Tithes you paid at local church _____
Expenses in ministry _____ Tithes enclosed with this report _____

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CORE VALUES—Prayer: Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote prayer? _____
Do you have a consistent prayer life & family worship? _____ **Harvest:** Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote missions, outreach, and church planting? _____ **Leadership Development:** Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote the development of leaders? _____ How many leaders are involved in these activities? _____ Are you continuing to upgrade your ministry? _____

PASTORAL—Total covenant membership _____ Members saved _____ Sanctified _____ Baptized in Holy Spirit _____ Average weekly worship attendance _____
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ACCOUNTABILITY—Sermons _____ Converted _____ Sanct. _____ Holy Spirit _____ Added to Church _____ Bapt. in water _____ Church homes visited _____ Outreach homes visited _____
STEWARDSHIP—Tithes rec'd. _____ Offerings _____ Tithes paid at local church _____ Expenses _____ Tithes Encl. _____

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CORE VALUES—Prayer: How many prayer events _____ Do you have consistent prayer life/family worship? _____
Harvest: How many Outreach/Church Planting events _____ **Leadership Dev:** How many events/activities promoting development of leaders _____
Are you continuing to upgrade your ministry? _____

PASTORAL—Total covenant members _____ Saved _____ Sanct. _____ Holy Spirit _____ Average weekly worship attendance _____
Portion of attendees children/youth _____ Do you receive monthly mission offerings? _____ Lord's Supper _____ Feet Washing _____

Report No. _____ Minister's License No. _____ Minister's Monthly Report To State/Regional/National Bishop

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Home address in full _____

Home Phone () _____ Church Phone () _____ Email: _____

Month _____ 20 _____ [] Bishop [] Minister [] Lay Minister

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Church homes visited _____ Outreach homes _____

STEWARDSHIP—Tithes you received _____ Offerings you received _____ Tithes you paid at local church _____
Expenses in ministry _____ Tithes enclosed with this report _____

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CORE VALUES—Prayer: Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote prayer? _____
Do you have a consistent prayer life & family worship? _____ **Harvest:** Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote missions, outreach, and church planting? _____ **Leadership Development:** Approximately how many events/activities did your church conduct to promote the development of leaders? _____ How many leaders are involved in these activities? _____ Are you continuing to upgrade your ministry? _____

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