

CHURCHRIGHT

Doing church right



Thank You, Sylvia!

Recently, Sylvia Corral retired from her vital role as translator for the General Conference – what she calls “a precious and unbelievable chapter of my life.” Sylvia is precious to us too! For over 32 years she served in various capacities: at conventions, translating services and business sessions, and especially in Publications, translating the *Bible Advocate* and quarterlies into Spanish. Her great attention to accuracy and heart for ministry blessed readers and co-workers alike.

We will miss you, sister!
Our prayers go with you in
this new chapter of your life.

Working Together

The NASB begins 2 Corinthians 6:1: “And working together with Him [God]. . .” Paul writes something similar in 1 Corinthians 3:9: “For we [Paul, Apollos, and other believers] are God’s fellow workers. . .” It’s inspiring to think of being God’s co-workers in God’s great mission to reconcile the world to Himself in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19)!

But I am also inspired by this thought: If each follower of Christ is God’s fellow worker in God’s great mission, then each follower must also be their brother’s or sister’s fellow worker. In Christ, we are working together with God and with one another.

“Working together” is one of the key ideas of the General Conference. Our history is one of groups of believers discovering one another, finding out that they share common understandings of God’s Word and will, and then uniting to become more effective workers with God. By combining their resources, they did things that none of them could do as effectively alone. They discovered that we are better together.

What was true then is true today. We are better together. The members and congregations of the Church of God (Seventh Day) in the United States and Canada are more useful to God as the General Conference than any one of us could be alone. By ourselves, we can do a limited number of good and wonderful things. But together, we can do so much more! We can support Artios Christian College, an institution of higher education that is impacting the world. We can publish the *Bible Advocate* that spreads the gospel everywhere. We can financially contribute to foreign missions projects and indigenous gospel workers around the globe. We can create districts and administrative services and ministries to support the good work of each congregation and member. We can organize a ministerial council to keep us doctrinally unified and help us find pastors we can trust.

Working together with God is great. Working together with God and one another is fantastic! We truly are better together.

– Loren Stacy



District News

Southeast

Contributor: Steve Krome, Superintendent



Planning Youth Retreat

The Southeast District Youth Retreat Planning Committee met February 21-22 at the Ramada Inn in Jacksonville, Florida. Committee members elected a chairperson (Sister Allison Krome) and vice chairperson (Sister Sharon Modeste). Other committee members are Andre Campbell, Jon Unzueta, Kelly Berduo, Silverio Sanchez, Walter Apen, and Patrick George (unable to attend). Committee family members also attended the meeting and were recruited into service for leadership at the upcoming retreat: Kandi Campbell, Maria and Jessica Sanchez, Joel Modeste, and Lilly Apen.

The retreat theme will be “Who You Say I Am” and will take place December 18-21 at the DaySpring Conference Center in Parish, Florida. A lot of preparation was accomplished during this meeting, like deciding speakers and activities, and much more will be done in the future.

Special thanks to all the committee members who willingly sacrifice their time and energy for our district youth!

Central

Contributor: Ken Lawson, Superintendent



New members. Congratulations to Ruben Arzet, leader of the Philadelphia (IL) church, and the leadership team in Chicago, IL. In the last four years, the Central District has added 276 new members, and the Philadelphia church has top honors in numbers added locally: 41! Their average attendance is now 90-plus! Pictured here are the current church board members (L to R): Astari Bustos, Ruben Arzet, Alex Portillo, Monica Portillo, Daniel Valle, and Ariel Pascual. The next top four Central District churches that added new members, in the same time frame, are Rockford, IL (29); Aurora, CO (27); Zion, IL (24); Colorado Springs, CO (23); and Justice, IL (21). May God continue to bless the Philadelphia church and her dedication to serve our Lord in His kingdom!

Southwest

Contributor: Jamin Teran

SWD photos taken by SWD Media Ministry



Training teachers. On February 18-19, the SWD Children’s Ministry had its first training for teachers at the Galena Park church. Both speakers provided skills, curriculum, and a vast variety of examples for teachers to enhance their students’ learning. We praise the Lord for this blessing given to more than 130 teachers.



Learning to Please God

On Saturday, January 25, the El Paso Central church held its quarterly evangelism service. Special guest speaker Martin Luevano from our sister church, Sparks, delivered the sermon titled “What Pleases God.” He spoke about the sacrifice that our Savior Jesus Christ made for us, and said that the heart of God is beating for us because He wants to save us. He also extended a special invitation to first-time guests visiting the congregation to accept Jesus as their Savior.

After the service, attendees enjoyed fellowship in the dining room. Special blessings to Brother Luevano and his loving family for sharing in this event.



Outreach to children.
On February 15, youth and young adults from our sister church Nueva Vida Arlington (Area 1), in partnership with a local organization, ministered to children in our communities. As they went door to door, the children were invited to gather and learn about God and to play. Our young members prayed over them and their families. Praise God for their initiative and willingness to serve!



CALENDAR 2020

April 7 - Lord's Supper Service

May 2-3 - Area 3 Super Sabbath and Leadership Meeting

May 9-10 - Area 5 Super Sabbath and Leadership Meeting

May 15-17 - Southwest District Men's Retreat

July 19-24 - Rocky Mountain Youth Camp 2020; theme: Conquer Your Mountain

Artios Events

April 5 - May 10 - Early spring classes in session

May 11 - Late spring course registration ends

May 17 - June 21 - Late spring classes in session

For a complete listing of events, please visit churchright.org.



Volume 12 • Number 3

Churchright is a bimonthly newsletter published by the General Conference Church of God (Seventh Day). It is dedicated to communicating relevant Church news and cultivating a “culture of excellence.”

Copyright © 2020 General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

Church of God (Seventh Day)
P. O. Box 33677 • Denver, CO 80233
Phone: (303) 452-7973 • Fax: (303) 452-0657
churchright@cog7.org • churchright.org

Scripture quotations marked NKJV are taken from the *New King James Version*. Copyright© 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture verses marked NASB are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation.



Gaining vision and mission. Thirty-two pastors and leaders of Area 1 gathered February 9 at our sister church in Dallas to train, inform, and schedule upcoming events in the area. Pastor Ramon Ruiz taught the class “Jesus’ Pastoral as Supreme Paradigm.” Area 1 pastors and leaders are working together to continue the vision and mission for the present year.



Leaders meet. Area 5 representative Manuel Salazar held a leadership meeting with pastors and local church boards on February 23 in Laredo, TX. Several topics were addressed for the growth and development of the Church in the area. We praise the Lord for His work!



Conference Board of Directors Annual Meeting

The General Conference board of directors held its annual meeting in Denver, Colorado, February 16-19. All members of the board, officers, and executive staff were present.

Each morning commenced with a time singing worship songs, devotion, and prayer. Board members visited the Denver offices and had lunch with the office staff, in addition to being updated on several ongoing strategic initiatives.

The board took the following actions:

- Reviewed the 2020 Pastoral Self-Assessment Report;
- Amended its policy on legal immigration status as a requirement for all staff employed by the Conference, a district, or a local congregation;
- Requested to conduct a review of all district policies and procedures;
- Approved the Conference president’s appointments of administrative personnel;
- Conducted its annual performance evaluation of the Conference president;
- Adopted a Conference budget for the fiscal period April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021.

As a result of various submissions made to the board, including a legal opinion, it updated its policy on legal immigration status. The policy now states:

Whereas, The Board desires to protect the integrity of the ministry of the church;

Whereas, The Board desires to minimize the risk of sudden disruption in leadership throughout the conference and in local congregations;

Whereas, The Board desires to remain obedient to the Scriptural instruction to be truthful and obey civil authorities in all matters that do not infringe on the practice of our faith in Jesus Christ;

Whereas, The Board desires to remain good stewards of the resources of the conference and encourage good stewardship for affiliated local congregations;

Be It Resolved, That all individuals hired, including part-time and temporary employees in the General Conference, Districts or local congregations are required to have legal immigration status in the United States or Canada.

On behalf of the Conference board,
 Samuel Holland, Chairman
 Conference Board of Directors



The L&C Committee, standing (L to R): John Lemley, Wayne Hrenyk, Jhabel Chagollan, Monico Muffley, and Noe Reyes. Seated: Kenneth Lawson (left) and Stephen Kyner (chairman).

License and Credentials Committee Meeting

The L&CC met February 23-26 at the General Conference offices in Denver, Colorado. Here is a summary of what the committee members accomplished:

- Worked on motions from the NAMC about updating standards concerning sexual harassment and abuse, and ministerial ethics.
- Updated internal guidelines and gave interviews for prospective ministers.
- Connected with GC leaders and workers who are so helpful and essential to their work: Loren Stacy, GC president; Samuel Holland, chairman of the board of directors; Israel Steinmetz, dean of Academic Affairs for Artios Christian College; and Makayla Ross, custodian of records for Artios.
- Granted one Ministerial Credentials document to Ramon Ruiz; four Ministerial License documents to Loren Gjesdal, James Hassen, Jose Fredy Mata, and David Melendez; and three Local Pastor certificates to Daniel Aleman, Jorge Herrera, and Edgar Rodriguez. The License and Credentials Committee welcomes these men to the ministry of the Church of God (Seventh Day)!

The L&C Committee used the newly remodeled conference room at the GC offices. We appreciate so much the friendly, welcoming atmosphere

ASLEEP IN JESUS

Vernon Lawson

Our condolences to the family of Vernon Edward Lawson, who passed away January 12 at a nursing center in McAlester, Oklahoma. He was 87.



During his working years, among other jobs, Vernon owned a cattle ranch, best known for raising Brangus bulls for sale. He also was an elder and deacon of the McAlester Church of God (Seventh Day) for over 40 years. During that time, he supplied beef on several occasions for the summer youth camp.

Read the entire memorial for Vernon on our Memorials page at churchright.org.

and the technical help for our video conferencing from Eddie Villalba (who did the remodeling) and Christopher Idemmili, our IT specialist, who kept the equipment working!

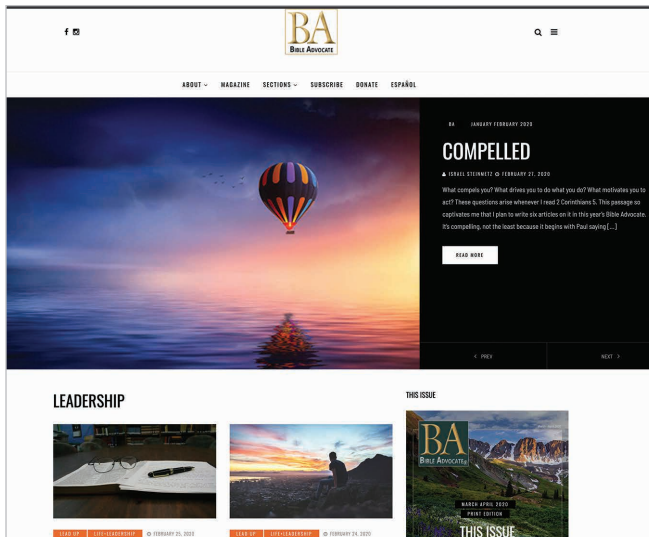
– Stephen Kyner
Chairman

BA Online: Changing for the Times

In recent issues of the *Bible Advocate*, you might have seen announcements about the revamped BA Online. If you don't venture onto the Internet often, or at all, or if you're unfamiliar with our online body of work, here's some information you might find interesting.

Since 1996, when the General Conference and *Bible Advocate* first entered cyberspace, we have been reaching an audience we can't reach through print. We've gone through a number of facelifts since then, but nothing like what we went through recently.

In 2019, Amber Riggs, dean of administration at Artios College, suggested that *Artios Magazine* merge with BA Online. So if you go to baonline.org, you'll see its articles in the Lead Up section.




As with the BA print magazine, you'll find the current issue's articles, plus Online Extras – articles we don't feature in the print version. There's also an extensive archive of past issues you can browse and search. In recent days, a section for a reader favorite, "Questions & Answers," has been added. Now you can read through an archive of probing questions and find Bible-based answers to them. We've also added a poetry section on the site so you can enjoy the work of poets from past issues.

There are other things BA Online offers. Want to read about the latest faith-based films or other media? Our Media4U section includes information on films like *Breakthrough*, the latest releases of Bibles, and other Christian books hitting the shelves. Media4U also announces upcoming exhibits at Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. and other Christian-based events.

As with anything on the Internet, BA Online is constantly changing to keep up with the online world. We're glad that our changeless God knows how to communicate His truth no matter the medium. Stop by and visit the site sometime!

– Sherri Langton
Associate Editor



Lord's Supper Tuesday, April 7

“This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me”

(1 Corinthians 11:25, NKJV).

Call to Prayer

At this writing, the spread of the coronavirus in various parts of the world is



International Ministerial Congress
Church of God (Seventh Day)

dominating the news. Because of this, the International Ministerial Congress (IMC) is requesting prayer for countries affected by this pandemic. The IMC received reports of shortages in various countries due to efforts to manage the contagion. The coronavirus is having a significant impact on travel, manufacturing, and medical services.

At a recent IMC meeting, potential risk factors of the coronavirus were highlighted. With the next congress-in-session coming up in Nigeria in November, the safety of all those traveling must be ensured, as well as those throughout the seven zones with pending travel plans. Therefore, we ask that the Church around the world pray, asking God for His protection and provision for His people everywhere. We praise God for our ultimate victory in Christ!



Attention: Teachers

Spring Vale Christian School is seeking one full-time Grammar School teacher and full-time teachers in all Upper School subjects. A bachelor's degree is required of all teachers, but teacher certification is not required. Teaching experience in the tradition of Classical Christian Education is strongly preferred. For information, contact Spring Vale at 989-725-2391 or submit a résumé and cover letter to principal@springvale.us. Letter should include your faith journey and your experience with Classical Christian education.

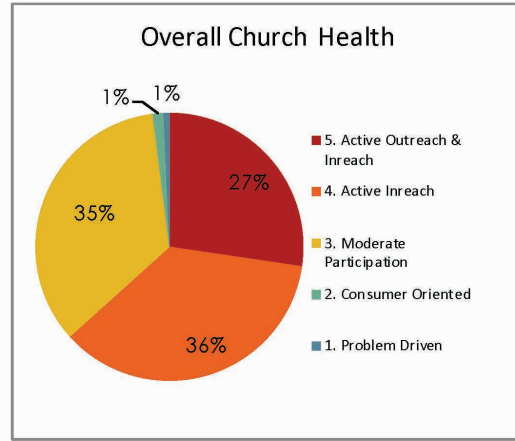
Pastors' Annual Assessment of Local Churches

The pastors/leaders of our 244 churches are in the best position to assess the health of our church. As they do this each year, we can see if we're allowing God's Spirit to transform us into a vibrant 21st century church. If we're doing the right things, God will provide our spiritual growth as He uses us to draw others to Him. Year by year, we hope to celebrate our successes together as we grow in Christ.

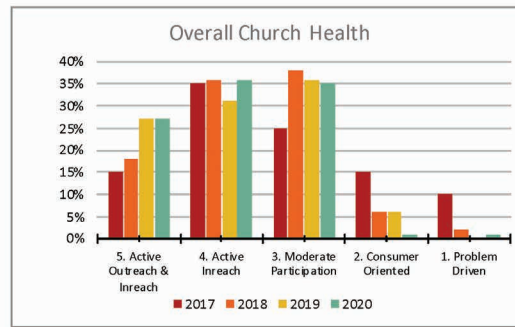
For 2020, 150 pastors assessed their local congregation's health. The pastors/leaders used the following metrics:

- 5. Active Outreach:** Our members are actively engaged in ministries that meet spiritual needs (and often physical needs) both inside and outside the church. We have active welcoming teams that introduce guests to other members and help them become a part of the church. We are a welcoming church filled with gratitude for Christ, and possess His grace and His truth in harmony.
- 4. Active Inreach:** Our members are engaged in vibrant youth programs, lively fellowship events, committed prayer groups, and other internal activities. We're doing well internally, but we lack active outreach programs.
- 3. Moderate Participation:** We have a sufficient pool of volunteers who maintain a routine. Our activities are mostly limited to SS classes, Bible studies, and occasional fellowship events. Our church isn't growing.
- 2. Consumer Oriented:** We have a limited pool of volunteers who serve a less committed majority.
- 1. Problem Driven:** We struggle with recurring relationship problems.

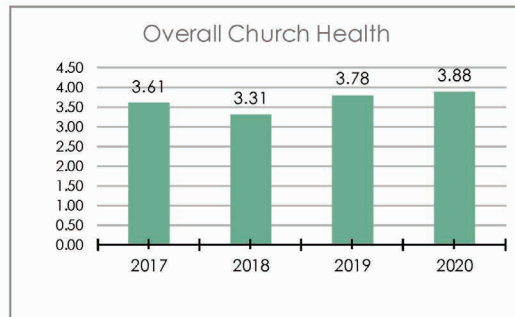
View the full report here:
<https://cog7.org/pastoral-assessment/>.



Overall Church Health		
	Counts	Percentage
5. Active Outreach & Inreach	41	27%
4. Active Inreach	54	36%
3. Moderate Participation	52	35%
2. Consumer Oriented	2	1%
1. Problem Driven	1	1%



Overall Church Health (Percentages by Year)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020
5. Active Outreach & Inreach	15%	18%	27%	27%
4. Active Inreach	35%	36%	31%	36%
3. Moderate Participation	25%	38%	36%	35%
2. Consumer Oriented	15%	6%	6%	1%
1. Problem Driven	10%	2%	0%	1%



Overall Church Health (Raw Counts by Year)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020
5. Active Outreach & Inreach	15	11	42	41
4. Active Inreach	30	21	49	54
3. Moderate Participation	32	41	56	52
2. Consumer Oriented	5	7	10	2
1. Problem Driven	2	5	0	1
Total Count	84	85	157	150
Average Score	3.61	3.31	3.78	3.88

The Bible Advocate Press is going digital!

To update our 47-year-old printing press and other machines, the board of directors approved the purchase of a Canon printer. We can now do smaller print-on-demand jobs — you print only what you need.

To learn more about our new addition, watch for updates in future issues of *Churchright*.

Why are we asking you to say YES.

When you say yes, you help your district by . . .

- Participating in functions — retreats, Super Sabbaths, youth activities
- Supporting financially — in partnership with local, district, and national needs
- Praying for our leaders — local, district, and national
- And supporting GC Ministries — Artios Christian College, GC Missions, Bible Advocate Press



Say YES to a strong, healthy church!