

Introducing the Church of God (Seventh Day)



General Conference
Church of God (Seventh Day)

Our Beginning . . .

The Church of God (Seventh Day) grew from the efforts of dedicated followers of Christ living in western Michigan in 1858 who believed in the Second Coming. Joined by the Marion, Iowa church in 1863, the Michigan church began to extend its influence into the eastern and central United States through *The Hope of Israel*. This publication created interest in the Church's distinctive doctrines: the authority of the Bible alone for Christian faith and practice, the second advent of Christ, and observance of the seventh-day Sabbath.



Through these means, the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) was organized in 1884 and incorporated in Missouri in 1899. Its offices were located in Stanberry, Missouri, until 1950, when they were transferred to Denver, Colorado.

Over the years, *The Hope of Israel* moved from Michigan to Iowa, then to Missouri, and eventually to Colorado. After several name changes, it is now known as the *Bible Advocate*. After more than 150 years, this flagship publication of the Church continues to be published, now six issues per year. It also appears online at baonline.org.

. . . And Our Present

The General Conference is made up of approximately 235 local congregations throughout the United States and Canada. Affiliated

conferences and churches in 40 countries have a worldwide fellowship of more than 150,000 members. Each national church is considered autonomous and regarded as a sister conference. Fellowship, dialogue, evangelism, and doctrinal unity among the worldwide membership are coordinated through the Church's International Ministerial Congress.

Our Beliefs

As a church, we believe that

- Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in charge of nurturing His spiritual body, which consists of all believers. Apart from the divine Son of God, we look to no human being, living or dead, as the church's founder, ruler, prophet, apostle, or spiritual director.
- The Holy Bible is divinely inspired, preserved, and transmitted. As God's Word, it clearly illuminates the way of Jesus Christ and ever remains the only standard for Christian faith and practice. We recognize no other writing as an infallible interpretation or supplement to Holy Scripture.
- Salvation is a gift of God's grace and comes to us solely by our faith in Jesus, the Savior. Saving faith, however, is more than mental assent; it involves active trust and repentance from sin. We believe that Christians, out of gratitude, will evidence saving faith by a lifestyle that conforms to God's commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath that we



observe as a tangible expression of our faith and rest in God as our Creator and Redeemer. We invite penitent seekers to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, be baptized in His name, and live according to His will. To this end we conduct open worship services and Bible studies that glorify God, teach His Word, and strengthen Christian faith.

- The second coming of Christ is imminent. We look forward to the climax of world history when Christ will establish His kingdom on earth, fulfilling all God has promised. We also believe in the resurrection of the dead, the judgment of all persons, the destruction of the wicked, and the reward of the saints who will live forever in the presence of God.
- Doctrinal beliefs are established through Bible study and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, our beliefs do not constitute a closed creed. We encourage growth in scriptural knowledge, understanding, and wisdom throughout the Church.

Our Fellowship

As servants of Christ, we practice . . .

- local church attendance that provides weekly opportunity for warm fellowship with other members, which holds the potential for long and lasting friendships within the body of Christ;
- worship, preaching, and Bible study to



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- strengthen the Church in living for Christ;
 - wholesome social and recreational activities, with emphasis on the family;
 - educational instruction for children and youth;
 - national and international association through conventions, district events, and summer youth camps;
 - financial stewardship on a personal level;
 - the ministry of the Church through the exercise of each member's spiritual gifts and talents.



Our Collective Work

The greatest ministry of the Church is performed by members serving others in Christ's name while scattered within their workplaces, schools, markets, and communities. To assist the members and congregations in accomplishing this mission, the General Conference coordinates the following ministries:

- The Bible Advocate Press produces and distributes a wide range of literature, including the *Bible Advocate* magazine (*Abogado de la Biblia* in Spanish), Bible study lessons for most ages, tracts and booklets on various topics, a church hymnal, and a church newsletter.

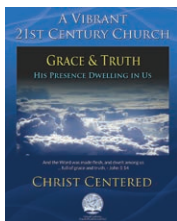
Many of these publications are provided in both English and Spanish. The magazine and much literature are available online at cog7.org and baonline.org.



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- Artios Christian College is an online Bible and ministry training arm. Through Spanish and English language programs, Artios is training the current and coming generation of leaders and workers in the Church. More information is available at artioscollege.org.The logo for Artios Christian College features a stylized graphic of three columns in blue, orange, and green, followed by the text "ARTIOS" in a large, bold, black font, with "CHRISTIAN COLLEGE" in a smaller font below it.
 - G. C. Missions assists in establishing and maintaining sister churches and missions outside North America. It provides literature, training, and salary subsidy for workers in many foreign countries and assists with the construction of church buildings, schools, and medical clinics.The logo for GC Missions features a dark blue square with a yellow globe in the center. Below the globe, the text "GC | MISSIONS" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font.
 - Spring Vale Christian School is a boarding high school near Owosso, Michigan, considered a parachurch ministry alongside the General Conference.
 - Services provided by the districts of the General Conference include youth ministry, young adult ministry (SWORD — Sharing the Word and Offering a Real Difference), women's ministries, and men's ministries.
 - The North American Ministerial Council is an association of ordained ministers of the Church in the United States and Canada. It is responsible for studying and formulating the Church's official doctrines and for maintaining standards, qualifications, and a code of ethics for the Church's professional ministry.

Our Overarching Vision

Believing that the Church's best ministry opportunities are yet future, the leadership of the General Conference has outlined a ten-point vision statement — divided into two sets of five — that describes the vibrant 21st century church we strive to become:



*The Harmony of Grace and Truth:
Our Identity in Christ*

Christ Centered

Christ is our reason and foundation for everything we are and do.

Spirit Formed

The Holy Spirit calls us, draws us, and transforms us.

Bible Based

God reveals Himself and His good will for us through His divine Word, the Bible.

Sabbath Celebrating

We celebrate the seventh-day Sabbath as our rest in Christ and in remembrance that we are His creation.

Distinct Yet Inclusive

We find our identity in being in Christ, not in being different from other Christians.

*The Great Commands and Commission:
Our Obedience to Christ*

Passionate in Worship
Compassionate in Service
Engaging in Witness
United in Fellowship
Committed to Discipleship

These vision points describe a church on the way, a dream in progress. May you be inspired to become part of this effort, and may one of our local congregations truly become a place you can call home.

For More Information

You are always welcome to attend services at any local congregation of the Church of God (Seventh Day)! Visit our website for information on the church nearest you and for our publications and literature. Feel free to contact us:

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