

April - May 2022

# CHURCHRIGHT

*Doing church right*



## Save the Dates!

We've marked our July 2023 calendar in bold letters: **GC Convention**. Are you making plans as well?

July 10-15, 2023, will be a week filled with worship, fellowship, instruction, and relationships. And don't forget to come early on Monday, July 10, to join friends and family at the Ark Encounter and the evening reception.

It will be an incredible experience you won't want to miss after being apart so long. We are eager to welcome you to Covington, Kentucky. Hope to see you there!

– Convention Planning Committee

## Come and See

John 1 shows us how Jesus' first disciples were called. Two disciples of John the Baptist responded to Jesus' invitation "Come, and you will see" (v. 39, NASB). The next day, Jesus called Philip, who then told his brother, Nathanael, that Jesus of Nazareth was the long-awaited Messiah. Nathanael famously responded, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see" (v. 46, NKJV).

That simple invitation is a friendly, non-threatening approach. We can use it today as we share the gospel with everyone we can. Does God exist, and if He does, what can we know about Him? *Come and see*. Do I truly face God's judgment, and if I do, is there a way that I can be rescued? *Come and see*. Can I learn to effectively share the gospel? Can my local church develop nurturing family and/or common interest Bible study groups? Can my local congregation intentionally become a "Welcoming Church"? *Come and see*.

The theme overarching our entire GC evangelism initiative is "Come and See." All the training opportunities and materials being made available by our three teams – Personal Evangelism, Small Group Ministries, and Welcoming Church – and by our Publications ministry are (or soon will be) available to you and your congregation. *Come and see*.

This is also the theme for our 2023 General Conference Convention, scheduled Monday evening, July 10, through Saturday night, July 15, 2023, in Covington, Kentucky. The primary purpose of GC conventions is to allow adult members to gather and conduct the business of the General Conference as required by our bylaws. That gathering also allows us to worship together, be instructed by God's Word together, fellowship together, and learn and grow together as the Church of God (Seventh Day) United States and Canada.

Should you involve yourself and your congregation in the GC evangelism initiative? Is it worth the time and expense to attend our GC conventions? *Come and see!*

– Loren Stacy  
GC President



# District News

## West Coast

Contributor: Melva Smith



**Baptism.** On January 22, one of our precious youth, Bayley Fields, was baptized. She gave her heart to the Lord and made her public confession of faith at the Eugene, OR church during our morning worship service. Bayley asked her great-grandfather, Carl Cory, a longtime member of the Church of God (Seventh Day), to give a blessing and prayer before her baptism. It was a joyous and tearful moment. We are happy and blessed to welcome Bayley into the family of God. May she be filled with the joy and strength of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Central

### Welcome, Superintendent Rousseau!

Elder Ronald Rousseau has been appointed by GC President Loren Stacy, and confirmed by the GC board of directors, to serve July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2024, as superintendent of our Central District. Elder Rousseau currently serves as a member of the Central District board, leader of SHINE (our evangelistic Medical and Dental missions ministry), and pastor of our congregation in East Chicago, Indiana.

Current District Superintendent Ken Lawson, along with his wife, Sandra, came out of retirement May 1, 2016, to accept this assignment, and they have served faithfully and effectively from day one. They decided, however, that they wish to pass the torch on June 30, 2022, the end of Elder Lawson's current term of office.



Photo: Melisa Vilchis

Elder Ronald and Maria Rousseau

We appreciate Elder Rousseau for agreeing to step into this new role. May God bless them all! We are grateful for their service to Christ and our church.

— Loren Stacy

## Southwest

Contributor: Jamin Teran



SWD photos taken by SWD Media Ministry

**Challenging couples.** Area 1 held a marriage retreat in Dallas, TX, December 4-5, 2021, on the theme "Back to the Beginning." Speakers Ricardo Mendez and Maritza Barrera spoke to about 50 couples and challenged them to live within the will of God. SWD marriage directors Benjamin and Priscila Sanchez were recognized for their work in the past two years. They passed the baton to the next couple who will lead this ministry, Pedro and Claudia Capetillo.



**Super Sabbath.** The Claremore, OK church held its Oklahoma Conference Super Sabbath on January 22. The sermon delivered by Pastor Alex del Toro encouraged church members to present themselves as living sacrifices. Those present enjoyed worship, special music, and fellowship.



Representative Daniel Flores and his wife, Kerenha, listened to leaders and encouraged them to continue strong in their ministries. One day prior on the Sabbath, Elder Flores also shared the Word with the hosting church.



**Catching the vision.** On January 23, the 2022 vision for Church of God (Seventh Day) in the United States and Canada was given online. Presenters included Missions Director Bryan Cleeton, BA/Curriculum Editor Jason Overman, GC President Loren Stacy, and Moises and Pete Capetillo. More than 700 brethren gathered virtually to learn about the new resources and training available to carry out the Great Commission. Teams will be available throughout the year to lead us in different areas and help us spread the gospel to the ends of the earth.

**Supporting pastors.** On January 30, Area 2 and 4 pastors, their wives, and local church committee/board members, with their spouses, participated in a pastoral support meeting. More than 50 brethren gathered at our sister church in Fort Smith, AR. SWD Ministerial

## Northeast

Contributor: Esther Winchell



### Understanding 1 John 4:11

The Fort Wayne Women's Retreat took place January 21-23, but we weren't sure if it would. With absences and the virus still active, we became a little concerned how the event would proceed. One great lesson we learned was that God had His hand on this retreat from the beginning of the planning, and it would be completed.

Our gathering did take place, and God's faithfulness surely showed up!

The air was breezy and cold, but as the women began arriving with their warm hearts, no one remembered or cared how cold the weather was. With energy, anticipation, and excitement, 36 women deboarded their chartered bus after a twelve-hour drive from Ossining, New York; Edison, New Jersey; and Bridgeport, Connecticut. They arrived tired but excited. Even amid COVID and masks, the hugs and welcomes filled the room.

By 4:00 p.m. on Friday, we were almost to our number of registrations. New friends were being made, and old acquaintances were reunited. Considering everything going on in the world and continuing to fight the pandemic, one could tell that this retreat would be a huge blessing. The Enemy created obstacles, but as always, God persevered. Others replaced those who were absent.

The retreat theme was “1 John 4:11: ‘What Part Don’t You Understand?’” Sister Stacey Rodriguez got the ladies up and moving with “get to know” questions and prizes. The praise team opened the service and set the stage for the opening message



of “Lovest Thou Me?” by Sister Esther Winchell. The women then broke into groups for prayer.

Sabbath morning began with morning prayer, led by Sister Becky Hernandez. She also presented the morning message, “Jesus Loves You.” Cookies shaped in the letters *L*, *O*, *V*, and *E* were lovingly made by Sister Melissa Chrznanowski. Each lady was given one cookie, and she had to find three other women with different letters to spell *Love*. Those four ladies then formed a prayer group. It was a busy but Spirit-filled Sabbath morning.

After lunch, the ladies enjoyed “me time” to rest and reflect on what the weekend was all about. Later, Sister Sonia Monge brought the message on how to apply the love of Jesus to our sisterhood. We cannot say we love the Lord if we cannot even love the sister who is right before us. Lesson well spoken!

Sisters Marion Noble, Bethany Coulson, Sarah Newton, and Missy Smith led praise and worship Sabbath afternoon, and they “rocked” the room. There was no language barrier as the ladies sang with their entire hearts! By the closing song, everyone had learned some new songs, and faces were radiant with God’s love.

The dining hall was decorated with white chocolate pinatas on the tables for dinner. Sisters entered

with their evening gowns and dresses. The privilege of breaking the pinata was given to the oldest sister at the table, and all enjoyed the goodies inside.

Many young women attended the retreat. It was encouraging to see them seek to be mentored and serve where they could. God bless their young hearts! Our youngest little sister, thirteen years old, entered into the activities.

Sunday morning brought us some good Northeast weather, with blowing and drifting snow. Those traveling distances decided to leave before the roads got worse, cutting the group down to about forty for our closing service. That did not stop God’s Spirit from filling the room. Sister Jacquelyn Scott closed with her testimony and song of God’s love. Information about Love for the Stranger and the ministry of Healthy Minds-Healthy Churches was shared with attendees.

The closing service was awesome with hugs and smiles. As the rest of us began to leave, God brought out the sun, melting the snow and clearing the roads. Praise the Lord!

As we cleared the retreat center, we realized that we hadn’t known about the GC’s plan for our 2022 quarterlies, but we definitely experienced firsthand being “Witnesses.” Eight women, first-time retreaters, were not members of CoG7. The comments from them were nothing but uplifting, proving that these events plant the seed in others. They also show firsthand the joy of serving a loving God and the joy that can be found in Him.

Some of the comments: “You all treat one another like a true sister.” “So much love in this room and it feels real.” “Thank you for the invitation to come and experience Jesus.” No negative comments were heard, only desires to return to another retreat and requesting dates for the next one!

This was the Fort Wayne church’s first retreat and, God willing, will not be their last. We were spiritually filled and reminded of God’s love for His daughters – from the date of signing the contract to the last vehicle leaving the retreat center!

“What Part Don’t You Understand?” The message was loud and clear this weekend. Everyone left knowing love is action, love is believing, and love is faith. But most of all, God is love!

## Personal Evangelism Training

“Come and See,” our General Conference evangelism initiative, is being built around our Publications Ministry literature and three “Come and See” training teams: Personal Evangelism, Small or Family Group Ministries, and Welcoming Church. We’ve rolled out Personal Evangelism training first. The other teams will begin making their training opportunities available over the coming months.

So far, representatives from sixty of our congregations have received training from our Personal Evangelism team, Elders Larry Zaragoza and Mike Vlad. Beginning this last August, events have been held in

- Jacksonville, Florida (August Southeast District Leadership Conference; 80+ attending);
- Phoenix, Arizona - December 4 (82 attending);
- San Antonio, Texas - December 12 (80+ attending);
- Ontario, California - February 19 (82 attending).

Upcoming events are scheduled in

- Harrisburg, Oregon - April 17;
- Chicago, Illinois - April 30;
- Lodi, California - May 7;
- Denver, Colorado - May 14.

What does this training involve? *Come and see!*



## Artios Early Spring Sessions

Registration dates: February 15 - April 4

Classes start: April 10

Classes' duration: April 10 - May 15

### Courses offered

- BIS 201
- COM 121
- LEA 155 (English)
- LEA 211
- LEA 321
- MIS 311

## ASLEEP IN JESUS

### Gina Tolbert

1939 - 2021

Gina Tolbert (82) of Denver, Colorado, passed away on December 31, 2021. She was born March 22, 1939, in Springfield, Missouri.



Beginning as mailroom clerk and proofreader, Gina moved on to serve the Bible Advocate Press for several decades and in several capacities, including editor of the children's magazine, *Footprints*, and editor of *The Harvest Field Messenger*. Gina retired after working for almost ten years as accountant for Fairmount Cemetery.

Gina will be remembered in the Denver church for her ministry with her husband, George, in leading the children's department. She will especially be remembered for her puppetry ministry to children and her programming of children's church.

Gina is survived by her husband of 66 years, George; her daughter, Sheri Hanks; and four grandchildren. She was predeceased by her daughter, Kimberly.

*Please visit [churchright.org](http://churchright.org) for other memorials.*



Volume 14 • 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 © 2022 General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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Want to participate in an online service? Search our directory of churches that offer streaming options of their Sabbath services.



CHURCHRIGHT

This newsletter is a great and online publication of events, stories, and updates within the Church of God (Seventh Day).

What can you do on the new GC website?

- Find a church
- Order literature
- View livestream church services
- Make a financial contribution

Visit [cog7.org](http://cog7.org) and discover more!

# Lord's Supper

Thursday, April 14

*"Do this in remembrance of Me"*

(1 Corinthians 11:24).

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The Lord's Supper  
/ La Santa Cena  
21¢ each

Order from our bookstore  
[cog7.org/online-store/](http://cog7.org/online-store/).



Don't have time to read the *Bible Advocate*? No problem! The new AudioBA is just the thing for busy people or for readers who want to experience the magazine in a different way. You can listen on the website or download the files to your favorite electronic device.

The January-February and March-April issues are available for downloading or livestreaming. Thanks to Tabitha and Isaac Overman for their terrific work in reading and recording.

Here are some responses to the January-February audio version:

*What a blessing! Tabi had a great voice for this project and her pacing is excellent. Isaac has done an equally amazing job of editing as well. – M. S.*

*Great work! The transformation of the BA is amazing. Determined and focused on leadership. The Church is marching on. – G. U.*

*Great job, Tabi and Isaac. Fantastic audio presentation of the BA. This issue was full of interesting articles as usual. It will be good to have the audio available to enjoy. – B. S. B.*

*Praise the Lord for giving you this plan. I love that now we have the audio, and thanks to my brother and sister for putting it together. They did a great job. – J. J.*

*This is wonderful. This is "change," the only constant that we have. God bless you and your family for your vision and work. – L. H. R.*

## General Conference Ministries

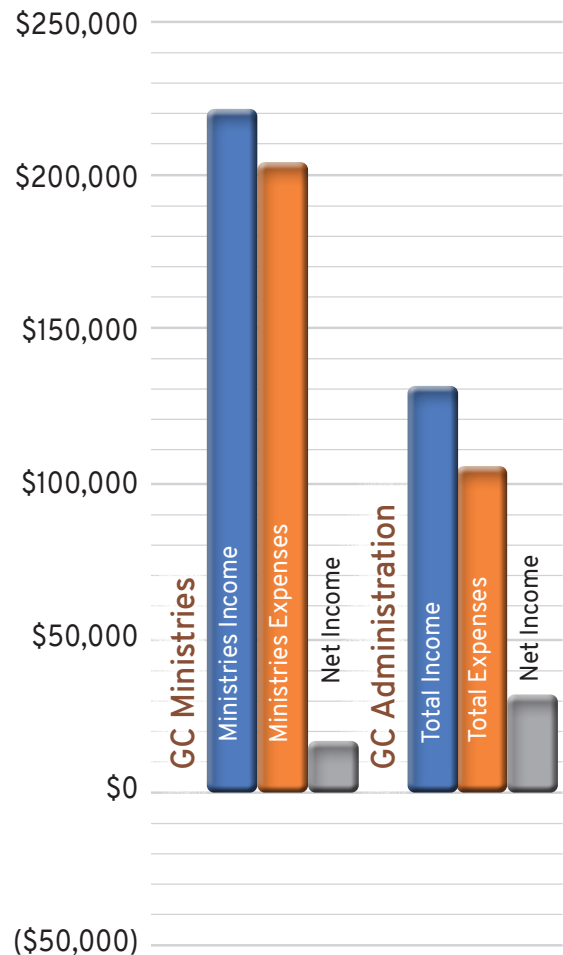
### Total Receipts and Total Expenses

Artios Christian College, Missions, and Publications (Bible Advocate Press) are the current GC Ministries. They receive financial support from direct offerings and from a portion of the 15 percent of members' tithes received by the General Conference. Expenditures are guided by each ministry's annual budget. In addition, the General Conference manages the receipt and disbursement of your gifts to a variety of additional ministries, such as Orphans and Widows, SHINE, Cristo Viene, and Disaster Relief.

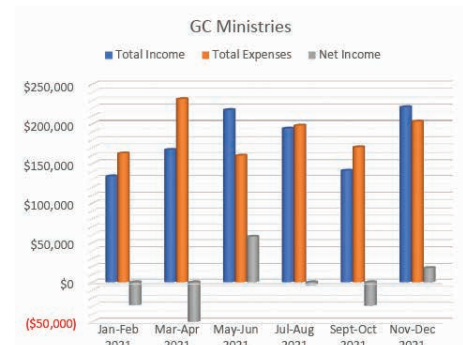
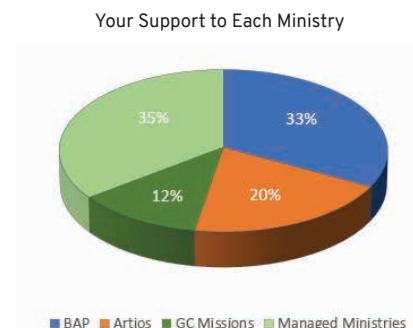
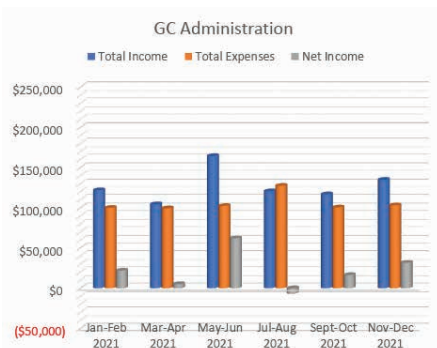
## General Conference

### Total Receipts and Total Expenses

The General Conference administration (president, executive director, IT, finance, office management, and other staff not connected to a GC Ministry or district) receives financial support from 15 percent of members' tithes (minus what is then allocated to the GC Ministries) and direct offerings. Expenditures are guided by an annual budget.



November-December 2021





# Bible Advocate Press



## We've come a long way . . .

From handset type for print to digital — and now, audio (see page 6)!

Along the way, the Bible Advocate Press has endeavored to make the best of our resources. The past few years have taken a toll on those resources, so we're asking for your help. Please read the letter on page 6 in the February-March issue of *Churchright* for more information.

Thank you for your continued support!

# Share the Wonder

Giving your time and talents through your district ministries can shine a light in the world.

Let your district leaders find the right place for you to serve. We can all be a part of sharing God's wonder of salvation.

