

# CHURCHRIGHT

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IMC Sabbath

CONTINUING  
the Mission of  
Jesus

November 4, 2023



## Gratitude!

Today, my first day home following our convention in Covington, Kentucky, my heart is filled with many different emotions. Relief. Loneliness for friends I won't see for a while. But my foremost emotion is gratitude.

I'm incredibly grateful to God. Throughout the past four years, there have been moments of great sadness, near despair, significant uncertainty, and wake-you-up-in-the-middle-of-the-night fear. And those are just my responses to situations concerning convention contracts I'm responsible to sign! Yet God graciously granted my and others' requests of Him, resulting in the amazing convention we've just enjoyed.

I'm grateful for our many volunteers. The Planning Committee, led by Mary Jean Knoll, deserves special recognition. These wonderful brothers and sisters signed on to help plan our 2021 convention, but then continued another two years when it had to be cancelled. Additionally, our 2023 convention staff consisted of at least eighteen different teams of volunteers, each team covering a different area to serve our attendees. Of the over one-thousand people who attended the 2023 convention, I would not be surprised if somewhere between one hundred and two hundred of them (10-20 percent) volunteered in some capacity during the week.

I'm grateful for a number of "new friends" – staff of the Northern Kentucky Visitors and Conventions Bureau, the Northern Kentucky Convention Center, and the various hotels we inhabited during convention week. The Visitors and Conventions Bureau alone provided tens of thousands of dollars to help us cover our convention needs and obligations.

Finally, I'm grateful for everyone who attended our GC Convention. They worshipped, learned, fellowshiped, conducted business, and left behind great impressions of Christ and our church. The "new friends" who served us would love for us to return!

It hasn't been decided where or exactly when we will hold our 2025 Convention, but it isn't too soon to begin planning to attend. If you do, I'll be grateful.

– Loren Stacy  
GC President



## Board of Directors

The election of members to the General Conference board of directors was unusual at this convention. Because the 2021 Convention was cancelled, this forced several board members to serve an extra two years. Also, two board members resigned between the 2019 and 2023 Conventions. Therefore, nine members of our twelve-member board were elected during the 2023 Convention. Daniel Flores, Jr., Greg Lincoln, Wayne Hrenyk, and Reuben Zaragoza were elected to six-year terms. Ruben Beard, Raul Romo, Ron Cummings, and Tim Endecott were elected to four-year terms. Neftali Hernandez was elected to a two-year term. Narciso Bentances, Kirk Grant, and Dennis O'Banion each has two years remaining in his current six-year term. These twelve men make up the 2023-2025 General Conference board of directors.

Following the last business session of convention on Friday, the new board met briefly to elect officers and consider a few initial business matters. The officers of the 2023-2025 board are Dennis O'Banion, chairman; Kirk Grant, vice chairman; Wayne Hrenyk, secretary; and Greg Lincoln, treasurer.

The convention business sessions were ably led by Chairman Samuel Holland. In addition to electing members to the 2023-2025 General Conference board of directors and receiving reports required by the General Conference bylaws, the members in session also conducted other mandatory and optional business. As required by the bylaws, the members in session elected two members to the 2023-2025 Nominating Committee.

## Business Sessions



Four proposed amendments to the General Conference bylaws were adopted. These amendments 1) added to the article regarding the North American Ministerial Council to bring the GC bylaws into alignment with the NAMC bylaws; 2) added a section prohibiting the amendment of the GC bylaws "in any way that creates or negates an established doctrine of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day)"; 3) changed the name of the Voter Registration Committee to Voter Credentials Committee to eliminate confusion of the Voter Registration Committee

### Six-year terms



Daniel Flores, Jr.



Greg Lincoln



Wayne Hrenyk



Reuben Zaragoza

### Four-year terms



Ruben Beard



Raul Romo



Ron Cummings



Tim Endecott

### Two-year term



Neftali Hernandez

### Two-years remaining



Narciso Bentances



Kirk Grant



Dennis O'Banion



and the GC Convention Registration Committee; and 4) added to the section regarding the GC Nominating Committee to clarify its role and responsibilities. An updated version of the GC bylaws is, or soon will be, available online in both English and Spanish.

One resolution was considered and adopted. It calls for the creation of a committee to study the feasibility of online electronic voting, allowing all eligible GC members to participate in business sessions “regardless of convention attendance.”

Closing moments of the 2023 business sessions included the chairman’s appointment of Greg Lincoln, Kirk Grant, and Richard Palmer as the 2023-2025 Amendments Committee. Also, GC President Loren Stacy and Vice Chairman Dennis O’Banion presented a commemorative gavel to Chairman Samuel Holland, honoring his outstanding service as a board of directors member since 2005 and as chairman of the board since 2015.





## Artios Christian College at GC Convention

Convention is a special time for Artios! Because we're an online school, this event provides an opportunity for students, staff, and faculty to meet in person. This year was no exception. Throughout the week, Artios presented three different workshops, hosted an Open House (commemorating ten years since our first commencement), and celebrated our graduates during a commencement ceremony.

In this commencement, over 50 students were recognized who completed their academic program between early fall 2019 and summer 2023. Here's a snapshot:



- Graduates represented almost 900 classes taken and over 6,000 credits earned.
- Graduates reside in all seven US/Canadian districts and Australia.
- Graduates range in age from early 20s to mid-70s.
- About 20 percent of graduates are women.

- Eighty percent of Associate of BA programs graduated with honors.
- Over half graduated from a non-pastoral program.



### Calendar Events

**September 18** - Early Fall registration closes

**September 24** - Early Fall classes begin

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Please remember us and send your changes of address to [bap.orders@cog7.org](mailto:bap.orders@cog7.org) or Bible Advocate Press • P.O. Box 33677 • Denver CO 80233.



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# District News

## Southwest

Contributors: Victoria (Tory) Capetillo, Maria Beard

SWD photos taken by SWD Media Ministry



**Graduation.** On April 29, the Jacksboro, TX CoG7 hosted the Area 1 Leadership School graduation. School director Javier Ramirez and Superintendent Chip Hinds presented diplomas to those who graduated from the class titled *Becoming a Person of Influence, in the John Maxwell Leadership Course*. The Area 1 Leadership School plans to host five levels of classes on leadership. Please keep them in your prayers.



### Dover Family Camp

Brethren from Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, New Mexico, Michigan, and Illinois gathered in Dover, Oklahoma, June 11-18 to enjoy worship, fellowship, and friendship. With the theme of “Come to the Table,” children, youth, young adults, and adults explored the importance of making our families a priority and of wholeheartedly serving God.

Several activities and early devotions were programmed during the week for all age groups. Our weekly speakers encouraged the church to seek

Christ and accept the invitation to His table. Unexpected tornado warnings were overshadowed by God’s sovereign protection over everyone at the camp.

Several of our brethren presented specials during the Sabbath celebration. The youth and children also presented their programs, and SVA’s group, Echo, gave a concert. We all shared the blessing of being together another year at our precious Dover camp!



### Super Sabbath and New Pastor

On May 13, Superintendent Chip Hinds, Area Director Manuel Salazar, and Noe Reyes, vice president of the License and Credentials Committee, visited Laredo Yireh and Laredo Nissi churches for their Super Sabbath. They also anointed Pastor Marcos Alejandro of Laredo Nissi as he received his pastoral license. Special prayer was also given for Pastor Juan Jose Olguin, Jr.

Approximately 84 brethren gathered for this beautiful celebration. Among them were Pastor Thomas Childers and his wife (district senior directors); Sergio Alfaro (district men’s director) and his wife; Jessica Salazar (district women’s director); and Judith Salazar (district youth director). Sermons by Chip Hinds and Noe Reyes were powerful on the themes of “Loving One Another” and “The Glory of His Name.”

The day was full of joy as everyone gathered to worship God and fellowship. A huge “thank you” to all who were involved and helped with this service.

**Newborn brethren.**

On June 24, Heath Winkelman and Adriel Herrera were baptized in the El Paso Central church. Both said goodbye to the old man and hello to their new creation in Christ! We can't wait to see what our Lord has in store for their new lives.



out and open up the irrigation system that feeds our property and the neighbors' down the road. Teepees were set up for all the sleepy campers to utilize. And we replaced a cross up on the hill that had fallen several years ago. This time we fit it with solar lights for a great night view.

It's hard to beat family time. This event proved to be a wonderful opportunity for our church family to play, praise, work, and grow together.

– Kurt Lang

**Upcoming Events**

- August 5** - District SWORD Young adults service
- September 1-4** - Hispanic Women's Retreat, Albuquerque, NM



**Faithful and prudent.** The annual district Men's Retreat took place May 26-28 in Oakhurst, CA. More than 140 men from various states worshipped, shared, and received the Word of God from Daniel Flores, Jr. on the theme "A Faithful and Prudent Servant."

**West Coast**

Contributors: Kurt Lang, Jennifer Stucker, Aaron Carbajal, and Larry Zaragoza, superintendent



**Eugene Family Camp**

The Eugene church participated in a Family Camp May 26-29 at our district-owned SIS-Q Meadows facility in southern Oregon. More than 60 of our members chose to spend this long holiday weekend together.

The Sabbath morning worship service around the fireplace of the newly finished picnic shelter was amazing! Group games, hikes, swimming, Frisbee, golf, and crafty card-making were just a few of the activities that dotted our weekend landscape. Each family was assigned one meal to help with, which involved preparing, serving, and cleaning up.

We also prepared the camp for the busy summer camping season. One group hiked up the river to clean



**New church.** On June 24, Superintendent Larry Zaragoza visited the CoG7 Mount Sinai church in Arizona to present their membership certificate and welcome their affiliation in the General Conference. Three other GC congregations joined in, making about 225 in attendance. Along with the worship time, all leaders who were present participated in a special prayer and dedication.



### Learning to Abide

The district Women’s Ministries hosted a Women’s Retreat June 2-4, with more than 100 women participating. This year’s theme, based on John 15:5, was “Abide in Me.” At the private retreat center in Oakhurst, CA, featured speakers included Barb Burrell, Aracely Robles, and Jennifer Stucker. Worship was led by Debbie and Danielle Hawkins, Genesis Robles, and Gigi Flores. Session themes included having a relationship with Jesus, abiding in Christ, and living fruitful lives – fruit that will last.

In small group sessions, attendees participated in practical application methods and prayed for each other in our spiritual growth. They made a branch and vine bracelet to help us remember what we learned during this spiritual weekend.

We not only received biblical instruction and enjoyed sweet fellowship but also honored our spiritual leaders. We gave them words of encouragement and prayed for them as they continue to serve God according to His good purpose.

Attendees were given discipleship tools to use in their home church after the retreat. Comments from participants about their experience: “God brought a lot of women together for His honor and glory and a lot of healing and restoration took place.” “Very inspirational – I was really blessed, as this was a much-needed retreat.” “Lord, thank You for moving amongst your women through Your Holy Spirit during this retreat.”

– Jennifer Stucker  
Women’s Ministry Director

### Books from BAP

[cog7.org/online-store/books](http://cog7.org/online-store/books)



*Make your own home the center of evangelistic mission to your friends and neighbors. \$11.20*



*Join the Capetillo brothers on a journey toward becoming a truly welcoming church. \$11.20*



### 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 specific 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.



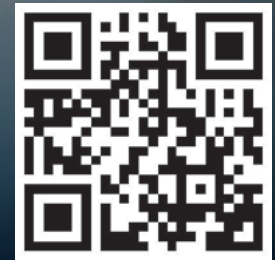


**THE ARTIOS  
CENTER** FOR VIBRANT  
LEADERSHIP

## Vibrant Church Available in Spanish!

The book *Vibrant Church* was written to capture the General Conference's ten-point vision in simple, practical terms. Since its publication in 2019, the book has been warmly received, with one complaint: It isn't available in Spanish!

The Artios Center for Vibrant Leadership is therefore thrilled to announce that the translation into Spanish is now available! Get your copy here: <https://amzn.to/447whKm>.



## Growing Up in the Body of Christ

2023 Fourth Quarter Lessons

So far in the Spiritual Formation series we have studied the Disciplines, the Beatitudes, and the Fruit of the Spirit, but these virtues do not come to us in a vacuum, nor are they practiced in isolation. In this final set of Bible lessons we will study the fundamental context of spiritual formation: life in the body of Christ as outlined in Romans 12.

To set up a standing order for Sabbath school curriculum, go to <https://cog7.org/online-store/>.



Growing Up in the  
Body of Christ

Bible Studies for Adults

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