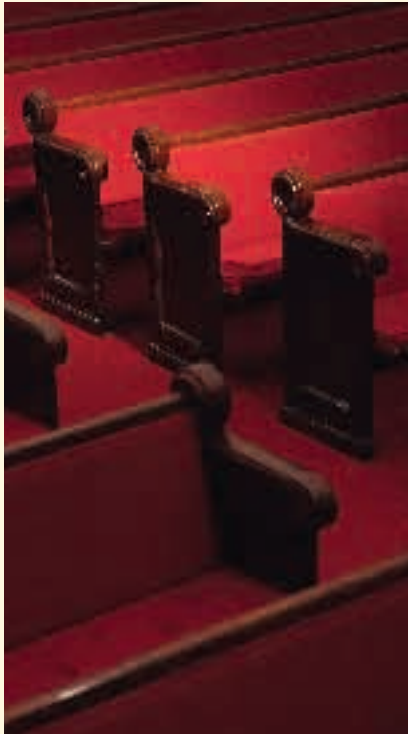


CHURCHRIGHT

Volume 1 Number 1

Seeking to do church right.

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Doing Church Right

As the congregation increased in size, it built new facilities to accommodate its growth and ministry needs. A wealthy church, it hired the best architects and contractors and spared no expense ensuring that the finished product would be the finest in town.

With the building project complete, a weeklong series of events celebrating this fine accomplishment began. Media and city officials attended, and the speaker was a former pastor, well known to the community.

But the grand finale ceremony did not go as planned. As the speaker walked toward the podium, the audience gasped. A giant hand appeared high above the stage, as if from heaven, and wrote in large letters for all to see: "NOW, BUILD ME A CHURCH."

From this modern-day parable three important principles regarding the nature and purpose of the church emerge. First, the church is not a building; it is people. Second, God is not impressed with our finest works of architecture. Solomon's prayer of dedication of the magnificent temple he built underscores this principle: "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27, NIV).

Nothing is wrong with building fine facilities, as long as we remember that they do not impress God and that He is bigger than our buildings.

Third, there are right ways, and wrong ways, to do church.

The notion of "doing church" is unsettling for some because it smacks of self-effort. "We don't do church," they say. "We *are* the church." Christ-centered living emphasizes *being* (who we are in Christ) over *doing* (what we do as Christians). Furthermore, the Bible neither requires nor prescribes most of the things commonly associated with "doing" church.

Interestingly, some who aren't comfortable with "doing church" seem OK with "doing ministry." Aren't these the same? Isn't this really just a matter of semantics? The life and ministry of Jesus should define the ministry of the church. And Jesus definitely believed that there are right and wrong ways of doing church, so much so that He "lost it" when He encountered abuses in the temple (John 2:12-17).

It is one of the ugliest pictures of Jesus in Scripture: He is beating people, overturning tables, opening cages, releasing birds and animals, and scattering money. John comments that zeal for the Lord's house had consumed Him (v. 17), indicating that this was more than an emotional outburst; Jesus was deeply moved by something He felt passionately about.

Make no mistake: As a Christ-centered church, our focus is the finished

REALITY CHECK



How Does Your Church Rate?

A decade ago, *Worship Leader* magazine told of a Minnesota newspaper that critiqued churches in a column titled “Seeker’s Diary.” The columnist used the same criteria used in reviewing movies, restaurants, and music. Through this column, the *Star Tribune* introduced new churches to its readers and kept existing churches accountable.

Why did the newspaper do this? Because it felt that newcomers often slip in and out of a worship service unnoticed and unwelcomed by the congregation. Regular attendees usually stick to their own friends when they gather in the Lord’s house.

Even though the *Worship Leader* article is dated, the idea is still fresh and relevant today. How would you rate your congregation on its first impression, worship style, and greeting visitors? Do you see it as warm and inviting or as awkward and cold? As the article says, “There’s always room for improvement, and it helps to know someone indeed is watching.”

— CR

work of Jesus, not our own efforts. But our love for Christ should translate into a commitment of excellence — our utmost for His highest.

This is the spiritual principle behind coining the name *Churchright* for this new publication. Its purpose is to cultivate a culture of excellence in CoG7 by coupling the publication of relevant church news with insightful articles, new ideas, and helpful resources for “doing church right.” It will bring our inter-church communication into the twenty-first century by engaging the Internet, MySpace, and much more.

We celebrate the role the *Pulse* played in the life of the Church for many years. We’re also excited about moving to a new level through the launch of *Churchright*. Like KFC’s “We Do Chicken Right,” may the slogan “We Seek to Do Church Right” become part of our CoG7 culture — to the glory of God.

— Whaid Rose
Denver, Colorado

Culture of Excellence Award

Christ’s amazing love for us demands nothing less than our very best: “Love so amazing, so divine,/ Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

Be part of a new effort to cultivate a culture of excellence in CoG7. Offer the name of an individual in your local church who exemplifies excellence in service, such as an outstanding greeter or a Sabbath school teacher. Pastors and lay pastors do not qualify, and not all nominees will be selected for an award.

Submit name and a letter that substantiates the nominee’s qualifications to

Churchright
P.O. Box 33677
Denver, CO 80233
E-mail: churchright@cog7.org
Deadline for the May-June issue is March 31.

Pray 2009

*Many People
Two Weeks
One Goal*

**Annual Prayer Initiative
March 21 - April 4**

In every local church and home

“Rubble to Revival:
Praying Through Nehemiah”

Be part of the action. The prayer guide is available online only. Download it from www.cog7.org.

General Conference
Church of God (Seventh Day)
Denver, Colorado

Download the current issue of Churchright at www.cog7.org.

Anyone can count
the seeds in an
apple, but only
God can count the
number of apples
in a seed.

Publications:

Sowing seeds for
150 years

Need some seeds to
plant? Try these:

- ▶ Download salvation stories from *Now What?* (<http://nowwhat.cog7.org>) and share them with those who need the Savior.
- ▶ Give the BA to a friend. The April-May issue focuses on prayer.
- ▶ Reach beyond your comfort zone by handing out Light for Life tracts *Out of the Closet: Hope for Homosexuals* and *When the Bottom Falls Out* (coping with loss) .

March is
Publications
Emphasis. Your
offerings are
appreciated.



Keith Michalak,
Director



Ten Ways to Improve Your Church's Worship Service

Donald S. Whitney

Associate Professor, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

1 Focus on God in every element in worship. Worship is, by definition, the worship of God. So why would you include something in your worship service that doesn't focus on God? Go through your order of service and ask of every element, "Does this focus on God?"

2 Have clear Biblical support for every element in worship. Go through the order of service once more and ask of every element, "Is there a Biblical basis for doing this in worship?" Discontinue every part of your public worship for which you can find no solid scriptural foundation. If churches practiced just these first two principles, great reformation would occur in their worship.

3 "Offer to God an acceptable service [i.e., worship] in reverence and awe" (Hebrews 12:28). Cultivate a serious-minded pursuit of God; exclude flippancy and superficiality in worship. Smile, even laugh when it would seem that Jesus Himself would do the same.

4 Preach expositively. Many Bible-believing men think they are preaching the Bible when they are not. Preachers, whether your passage is a single text, a paragraph, or an entire chapter of Scripture, preach in such a way that your words are obviously exposing, illustrating, and applying the point of that passage.

5 "Give attention to the public reading of Scripture" (1 Timothy 4:13). One of the easiest ways to go about giving attention to the public reading of Scripture is to read consecutively through books of the Bible. Choose a book and read a chapter each week. If a chapter is particularly long, take half this week and the other half the next. Without obedience to this Biblical command of reading Scripture in worship, how many people in your church will never encounter the message of God's Word in, say, Malachi, unless you read it to them?

6 Pray! Prayerless worship may be an oxymoron, but it is increasingly common in the contemporary evangelical church. True, unbelievers present will find prayer boring, but why should we let the spiritually dead dictate the prayer life of the body of Christ? Can you imagine the apostles and the first century church having worship without prayer? If prayer isn't worship, what is?

7 Transition smoothly between elements of worship. When making transitions, remember that briefer is usually better. When planning them, think sentence or paragraph-length at most. Above all think "purpose and flow." In other words, as concisely as possible, help the movement of worship flow from one element to the next, and do so by giving a reason for the next element.

8 Do as much as possible congregationally. Do not let the sound of solo, small group, and/or choral music characterize your church's worship more

than the voice of all your people lifted together in the worship of God. Every believer present should engage in worship, not observe it. Never let worship decompose into a vicarious experience where the many in the congregation merely watch the few on the platform who at best are worshipping, and at worst are performing.

9 Have congregational singing with musical accompaniment, not music with congregational accompaniment. The music is so loud in some churches I've visited that I can't hear myself sing, much less hear the congregation. A few of the Psalms provide Biblical evidence that sometimes it's appropriate for worship music to be loud. But let's remember our priorities: the musicians are there to accompany the congregation, not vice-versa.

10 Evaluate your worship service each week with several leaders. Instead of staff and interns you may need to choose trusted lay leaders, or even an ad hoc group each time. Make sure to involve as many of the worship leaders as possible as often as possible, for they all need reinforcement or redirection now and then. Yes, you'll be surprised and disappointed by a few of the remarks on occasion, but over time you'll also see some improvements in your worship service you hardly thought possible.

If anything is worth doing well, it is the worship of our glorious God. If anything in the life of the church is worth the cost of reformation, it is the worship of our holy God. We shouldn't expect to see changes in worship without prayer and the work of the Holy Spirit, but neither should we expect to see our worship enhanced without taking initiative.

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Ministries Training System

- ▶ Elder Larry Marrs, director of the LITES team in Stanberry, Missouri, for ten years, will become director of Ministries Training System effective April 1. As director, he will head the Church's efforts to identify and prepare men for vocational and pastoral ministry, as well as provide a broader range of training for all its members.

April is Ministries Training System Emphasis. Your offerings are appreciated.



Larry Marrs,
New Director



Calvin Burrell,
Outgoing
Director

Searching . . .
for tomorrow's
leaders.

Where will we
find them?



THEY REST IN JESUS

We honor the lives and ministries of Elders Hubert Weekes and Melvin Sweet and extend condolences to their families.

Weekes Tribute

May 25, 1922 -
November 28, 2008

Hubert Worley Weekes was born in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, West Indies, on May 25, 1922, and died in Inola, Oklahoma, on November 28, 2008. A minister of the Church for more than fifty years, he pastored his first church at age 17 and later served churches in Missouri, New York, and Oklahoma. Brother Weekes was a printer by trade, in Trinidad and the U.S. He received education in both countries and studied by correspondence from Oxford University in London. He was an avid piano player and singer, and he loved fresh fruit, especially mangoes. He also loved cricket, soccer, and volleyball.

Elder Weekes' greatest love, however, was for the Lord God Almighty. He studied the Scriptures daily and prayed fervently. His depth of love for the Church brethren was great. Often he and his wife would play an evening game, where she read a Bible verse and he would guess the book, chapter, and verse. He got most of them right and was sometimes called a "walking concordance." This memory lasted several years into his period of illness.

Hubert loved to preach on the streets in Trinidad and the U.S. and witnessed extensively for Christ. On a visit to Trinidad, Israeli Ambassador Durand proclaimed him a "friend of Israel." To him, it was important to be a friend to God and His chosen people.

Unable to hold a grudge, Hubert was well known for his peaceful disposition. He will be greatly missed by his wife of thirty-nine years, Phyllis (Hayford) Weekes, and their seven children. He was preceded in death by two brothers, a sister, and his first wife.

Memorial services were held at the Tulsa, Oklahoma, church on Thursday, December 4, with Melvin Sweet and Whaid Rose presiding.



Sweet Memories

August 6, 1934 -
December 27, 2008

Melvin Dell Sweet was born in Austin, Texas, on August 6, 1934, to Benjamin and Lucille Sweet. He graduated from George West High School in Corpus Christi in 1952 and then furthered his schooling at Draughon's Business College in San Antonio.

Brother Sweet married Marybell Crisp on June 26, 1955, in Artesia Wells, Texas. The church had been converted from the schoolhouse where Marybell attended elementary school. After attending Midwest Bible College in Stanberry, Missouri, Melvin entered pastoral ministry in San Antonio. He would go on to serve as pastor in Alfred, North Dakota; Hammondville, Alabama; Detroit, Michigan; Hickory, North Carolina; and Grand Prairie, Texas. He also had two three-year teaching stints at Spring Vale Academy in Owosso, Michigan — in the sixties and again in the nineties.

Brother Sweet spent his last years of life and ministry in Stanberry, Missouri, where he provided pastoral leadership to the local church and served with LITES Ministries. A kindhearted, faithful, and hardworking minister, Melvin served within the Church of God (Seventh Day) in a number of capacities, including the board of directors, License and Credentials Committee, and North American Ministerial Council (president). He was also a writer and teacher. The Sweets welcomed many individuals into their home over the years, including several who lived with them for extended periods.

Melvin passed away peacefully at home in Stanberry on Saturday, December 27. He was preceded in death by both parents and by his sister, Lola. He is survived by brothers Murray, Belton, and Wesley, as well as by his wife of fifty-three years; their two daughters, Tami Sweet and Karen (Tim) Stewart; grandchildren Brandon, Kaelyn, Elise, Hannah, and Sarah; and great-granddaughter Kiara. He is also survived by his and Marybell's "adopted" son, Bryan Kaeseman.

Celebration of Life Services were held at First Baptist Church of Stanberry on Friday, January 2, followed by a graveside service at High Ridge Cemetery.



Ministries Highlights

NFYC

- ▶ April 11-12 Conroe, TX, Youth Conference
Contact: Jason and Rose Rodriguez (jandrrodriguez@att.net or 832-797-9916)
- ▶ April 17-19 The "Spring Thing" Rally Nampa, ID, CoG7
Contact: Laura Perez (llperetz40@hotmail.com or 208-468-8970)
- ▶ April 17-19 National Youth Week/Hunger Lock-in

SWORD

- ▶ February 1-5, 2010 SWORD Cruise
Contact: sword@cog7.org or (319) 431-8609 or <http://sword.cog7.org>.

Calendar Events

CoG7

- ▶ April 7 Lord's Supper
- ▶ July 6-11 Biennial Convention

Districts

- ▶ April 10-12 NE District Women's Retreat, Saginaw, MI
Contact: Deb (231-544-2036)
- ▶ April 10-12 Youth and Young Adult Retreat
"Shine! Be a Light for Jesus"
Camp IODISECA - Solon, IA
Contact: abe.endecott@cog7.org

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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."

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News and Notes

Second Quarter Lessons

Adult. *Bible Truths for Faith and Life - Book 2 (Basic Teachings of the Church of God [Seventh Day])* is the second quarter 2009 issue of Bible Studies for Adults. This second set of thirteen lessons concentrates on the doctrinal teachings presented in the Church's *Statement of Faith* booklet. Presentations and questions are supported by many scriptural texts, giving a firm foundation for those studying individually or as a group.

Senior High Youth. The adult lessons are also available for senior high youth, titled *Living by God's Word*.

Junior High Youth. The junior high quarterly, *The Greatest Book Ever Written*, portrays some of the marvelous truths taught in God's Word.

Helpful teacher's guides are available for these studies. The price for the student book is \$3.00, and the teacher's guide is \$5.00. (Prices for the junior high books are \$2.50 and \$3.00, respectively.) Order from Bible Advocate Press, P.O. Box 33677, Denver, CO 80233; 303-452-7973; bap.orders@cog7.org.

Tracts

How much do you know about the Lord's Supper? This is a good time of year to renew your appreciation for the observance by reading *The Lord's Supper* tract, published by the Bible Advocate Press. Order it from BAP, and share it with others! E-mail bap.orders@cog7.org or call (303) 452-7973.

We welcome submissions for "Reality Check" (p. 2) that challenge local churches to raise the standard in ministry. Send your ideas to churchright@cog7.org.



HeartSpeak

Have you noticed the colorful, bold pages in the middle of the BA these days? It's *HeartSpeak*, and it's all about reaching our church's youth. Articles communicate the truths of Scripture and are geared for what's going on in their world. Hats off to volunteer Michael Mancha (San Antonio) for his creativity in designing and writing this mini-publication.

Be sure to share *HeartSpeak* with the teens in your life. Give 'em a BA, or direct them to <http://nfyc.cog7.org>.



Spring Vale Academy

- Current SVA needs:
- ▶ Lawn mower engine: \$700
 - ▶ Gas and food for two groups to attend CoG7 retreats for spring break: \$700/\$600
 - ▶ Administrative conference for Mark Caswell and two board members: \$500 each
Contact: Debra Boyles (dboyles@springvale.us).

Call to Convention

On behalf of the board of directors and the convention planning committee, it is my privilege to extend a cordial invitation to you and yours to attend the General Conference's 2009 Biennial Convention, scheduled for Corpus Christi, Texas, July 6-11. Room has been reserved for your stay at the Omni Bayfront and Marina Hotels, with evening worship services at the American Bank Center, just a brief walk away.

Come explore Corpus Christi's fine history and attractions. Be part of the Family Day activities on Monday, which concludes with a Hooks Baseball Game at Whataburger Field.

Enjoy the relaxed atmosphere this waterfront location lends itself to. The hotel and meeting facilities are literally across the street from the Gulf of Mexico. Begin each day with a sunrise walk along the water's edge. Then be edified by the seminars, workshops, general sessions, and other presentations. Participate in the special meal functions highlighting our various ministries and other

entities of the Church. An uplifting worship service and inspiring message by one of our gifted preachers is how each day will close. Sabbath services will be grand. And the fellowship never ends!

I like to refer to biennial conventions as "a cherished tradition" of the General Conference. It is a time to reconnect with friends and family, fuel our faith, and strengthen our fellowship. The theme selected by the planning committee is "Fresh Encounter," with the intent that every attendee will experience God in a new and fresh way during this week together.

Don't miss out. Make plans to attend. Please, and thank you, with all my heart.

Looking forward to seeing you in Corpus,
Whaid G. Rose
Conference President



Fresh Encounter

Biennial Convention
July 6 - 11, 2009

Corpus Christi, Texas



The Omni Bayfront and Marina Hotels
Convention rate: \$95 single-quad

Worship services Tuesday through Friday Evenings
and all day Sabbath at the American Bank Center

Registration by mail or online:
www.cog7.org; click on Convention 2009 or visit
convention.cog7.org; click on Registrations

