

## Woman Lay Minister Appointed Ambassador to the United States

Posted by chogministries

On January 28, 2016, Dr. Thelma Phillip-Browne was appointed ambassador to the United States of America by her home country of St. Kitts and Nevis. Ambassador Phillip-Browne is a 2011 graduate of Anderson University School of Theology, where she earned a master of theological studies. She attends the Basseterre Church of God where Eustace Rawlings is pastor, and has served as a lay preacher and active member of the Women of the Church of God (CWC).

Ambassador Phillip-Browne is a partner of Child Evangelism Fellowship (C.E.F.), St. Kitts and Nevis chapter. Her community involvements also included hosting of a morning devotional program on a local radio station, WINN FM, as well as co-hosting a "One Love" spiritually based program on Sugar City Rock radio.

In 1978, following secondary education at the Girls High School and Basseterre High School, Phillip-Browne graduated with a medical degree from the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Mona, Jamaica. She received training in public health at the John Hopkins University School of Medicine, and is also a graduate from the Cardiff University School of Medicine in Wales, with a diploma in dermatological science. Phillip-Browne served in various medical positions in St. Kitts as a civil servant, in 1995 as director of primary health care, and later chief medical officer of the Federation of St Kitts and Nevis. From 1994 until her recent appointment as



Thelma Phillip-Browne with President Obama

ambassador to the United States of America, she also practiced dermatology in a private capacity.

Ambassador Phillip-Browne is tasked with strengthening and deepening the relationship between the United States and St. Kitts and Nevis that began in 1983. With a commitment to education, Phillip-Brown has stated that her country is committed to prepare the youth of St. Kitts and Nevis "to achieve full actualization of their God-given potential."

Thelma Phillip-Browne is the proud mother of two daughters and a son, and grandmother of two girls.

*Article originally published at [www.christianwomenconnection.org/cwc-news](http://www.christianwomenconnection.org/cwc-news). Learn more about the Church of God at [www.JesusIsTheSubject.org](http://www.JesusIsTheSubject.org).*

# Hiller to Pastor St. Helens Sunset Park Community Church

Sunset Park Community Church has selected Aaron Hiller as their new Senior Pastor, according to Dave Marble, Chair of the Pastoral Search Committee.

Pictured here are children of Sunset Park displaying an invitational banner to the Hillers, "Will you be our Valentine?"

No stranger to the Association, Pastor Aaron and his wife, Julie, have served in ministry for over 20 years, most recently at the Lents-Gilbert Church of God in SW Portland, before Aaron's three-year stint on active duty as a Coast Guard reservist.



Pastor Aaron notes, "I have enjoyed honing my vision and leadership skills" during his service as Chief Petty Officer for the Coast Guard. Additionally, he valued his time at Lents-Gilbert during which he says, "I relished teaming my congregation with community leaders to help revitalize our area of the city." Partnering with organizations such as Second Stories Ministries, Human Solutions and local DFS centers afforded the congregation opportunity to impact social concerns such as homelessness, high crime areas and foster children.

Watch for information regarding an installation service for the Hillers.

# Rainier Community Church Welcomes Pastor Sprunger

Rainier Community Church has invited Pastor Roy Sprunger to serve as Senior Pastor, with his first official Sunday slated for April 3, 2016, according to Pastoral Search Committee Chair Howard Butz.

Pastor Sprunger, most recently from Ashland, Kansas, where he has ministered for 16 years, entered the ministry in 1984 and has served the Church of God as Associate and Senior Pastor for the past 27 years.

Roy graduated from Warner Pacific College with a BA in Religion, attended Anderson School of Theology, and graduated from Nazarene Theological Seminary with a Masters in Religious Education. He served on the Elders Board for the Church of God in Kansas and Oklahoma Panhandle. He currently serves in his community as a basketball and volleyball official and as a math and science tutor.

Pastor Roy and his wife, Lynn, have a daughter, Emily, currently attending Azusa Pacific University.



Pastor Roy Sprunger  
with his wife Lynn and daughter Emily



<http://www.orwacog/camp-white-branch>

## CWB Camp Dates Slated for 2016

Senior High camp - Mon.-Fri., July 11-15  
(\$200)  
Effingham & Nunnally

Introductory Camp - Fri.-Sun., July 15-17  
(\$150) Jackson

Middle School Camp - Mon.-Fri., July 18-22  
(\$180) Dow

Summer Celebration - Sun.-Wed., July 24- 27

Junior Camp - Mon.-Fri., August 1-5 (\$160)  
Kuykendall

Primary Camp - Mon.-Thurs., August 8-11  
(\$150) Graham

# Church of God Ministries Announces Clergy Advocacy Resource Effort

By *chogministries*

Church of God Ministries, Inc. has received a grant of \$1 million as part of Lilly Endowment, Inc.'s National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders. The initiative supports a variety of religious organizations across the nation as they address the financial and economic struggles that can impair the ability of pastors to lead congregations effectively.

The Endowment is giving \$28 million in grants through this initiative. The grants are part of the Endowment's commitment to support the pastoral leadership development of clergy serving in congregations across the United States.

In late November, announcement of the grant funds came to Bob Moss, chief advancement officer for Church of God Ministries. Holding the check in his hands, Moss observed, "This grant empowers us to change systematically the thinking and practices surrounding pastoral compensation in the Church of God throughout the United States. We are grateful beyond words!"

In applying for the three-year grant, the steering committee created a pilot project target group. A recent 2015 national survey of Church of God clergy and church board leaders revealed the vulnerability of younger clergy within the first decade of their ministry career. These were the most likely to abandon their calling for economic reasons. In addition, funds will provide underwriting of educational resources for clergy and church boards, a network of financial counsel, and dollar assistance for specified clergy support.

The title of this initiative is CARE: Clergy Advocacy Resource Effort. The initial development phase began in January with the anticipated implementation of the stated grant programs by mid-year. Under the umbrella of the advancement and domestic teams of Church of God Ministries, Joseph Cookston will serve as administrator of the CARE initiative.

In January 2015, Jim Lyon, general director of Church of God Ministries, received an invitation from Lilly Endowment to apply for a grant that was offered to several church groups in the United States. The purpose of this Lilly grant is to address economic challenges facing pastoral leaders in the United States.

Immediately, a planning proposal was submitted and, within a few weeks, granted by Lilly Endowment. During the next months, a steering



committee of eight members went to work planning the research, analysis, and writing phases of grant preparation. Two survey tools were developed, one for clergy and one for church leadership boards, and disseminated electronically to all pastors in the United States. The return rate was significant. In addition, representative couples were interviewed at the Church of God Convention in Oklahoma City last June.

After study of survey analysis, the steering committee elected to give emphasis to a specific group of pastors most at risk in financial matters: younger pastors. Young pastors are more likely to have entry-level positions with accompanying lower entry-level pay, children at home, educational indebtedness, and minimal established financial best practices.

Church of God pastors indicated a strong personal openness to financial education and training. CARE will invest and partner widely in the development of both educational resources and experiences. Partnerships will include national agencies of the Church of God, regional pastors, and financial advisors.

Of the top-ranked financial challenges reported by surveyed pastors, the implementation steering committee selected three assistance challenges to be within the scope of the resources provided by this grant and within the reach of Church of God Ministries leadership. The assistance portion of the grant funds will be structured and administered to address these three challenges: 1) education debt relief, 2) retirement planning assistance and, 3) transition in ministry assistance. Grant stipulations state the expectation for the matching of the assistance portion through new monies generated by Church of God Ministries.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937.

*For more information about CARE, contact Joseph Cookston at [JCookston@chog.org](mailto:JCookston@chog.org).*

## Adult Online Degree Programs receive praise

Did you know that in Oregon, 30 colleges and universities offer online degree programs, making earning a higher education degree easier than ever? The online degree programs offered through WPC's Adult Degree Program were recently recognized by Great Value Colleges and Accredited Schools Online as one of the best in the state. Warner Pacific's online program balances academic rigor, student support, and affordability and offers convenience that fits well with adult learners seeking an exceptional education and work-life-study balance. <http://www.warnerpacific.edu/a-best-online-school-2016/> and <http://www.warnerpacific.edu/ranked-no-2-in-portland-for-online-degrees/>

## Distinguished Alumni honored at Homecoming

During the 2016 Warner Pacific College Homecoming Weekend (February 11-13), Alums were honored for their professional and community achievements. See <http://www.warnerpacific.edu/outstanding-alumni/>.

- Distinguished Alumni Award, Adult Degree Program (ADP) – Mike Moreland, Sr. '12, Chief Human Resources Officer for Providence Health & Services, Oregon and Alaska Region
- Distinguished Alumni Award, Professional/Academic Achievement – Jennifer Davis '94, Vice President of Marketing and Product Strategy at Planar
- Distinguished Alumni Award, Recent Alum – Heather Phillips '06, Executive Director of City Crossroads, a ministry of the Church of God in San Francisco's South of Market Area neighborhood
- Knights Athletic Hall of Honor 2016 - Kalen Abbott '06, Emergency Medicine Physician at University Medical Center Phoenix

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### Spring Drama Production: *As You Like It*, a comedy by William Shakespeare

March 10, 11 & 12 at 7:30 pm; March 13 at 2 pm  
McGuire Theatre

Enjoy the talents of our students: Rosalind and her cousin, Celia, escape a threat of death at court and seek refuge in the Forest of Arden, where they find friendship, family, and love.

<http://www.warnerpacific.edu/as-you-like-it/>

## Religion and Christian Ministries Spring Events

### Night of Stories:

#### Student Reflections on Ministry

March 2, 7:30 pm (reception immediately following),  
Schlatter Chapel

Students will share their experiences with hands-on ministry in Portland. Learn more about how WP students are changing and being changed by the city we call home through the love of God, self, neighbor, enemy, stranger, and the world today.

## The Art of the Call

May 3, 5:30 – 7:00 pm

Egtvedt Hall, Room 203

The Art of the Call is an interactive showcase addressing the integrative formative experiences in the Religion & Christian Ministries department. This is an open exhibit using creative visual storytelling techniques for graduating students to address who they are in Christ and how they are called to engage the world.

Warner Pacific College is located at 2219 SE 68th Avenue in Portland.

Download Warner Pacific's free mobile app (available from Google Play or iTunes) and never miss an exciting event or the latest news: <http://www.warnerpacific.edu/wp-mobile/>

# Ministers' and Spouses' Annual Retreat Highlights

A couple dozen Association ministers, along with their spouses attended an annual retreat at Best Western Plus Agate Beach in Newport, OR, February 15-17, to focus on “being present”.

This year’s guest speakers were Rand and Phyllis Michael, who are involved in a multi-faceted international ministry of counseling, preaching, speaking, teaching, training and pastoral care.

Pastor Martin and Kathy Shrout, of Holladay Park Church in Portland, served as worship leaders for the event.



Some of the highlights of the three-day retreat included:

- “Six not-so-helpful ways to deal with Anger” (Deny, Distance, Detonate, Do Nothing, Divert, and Divorce);
- “Five helpful ways to deal with anger” (Affirm, Agree to avoid not-so-helpful ways, Admit I’m upset, Ask for help, and Awareness/Share). Coming out of that discussion, the Michaels spoke about
- “Four possible outcomes from conflict: Giving (where, alternately, one person allows the other to “win), Sharing (compromising on a solution), Waiting (until a better time to resolve) and Creating (looking for a new solution).

The retreat concluded with a meaningful communion service on the last day.

Ministers and spouses often carry heavy loads and focus on serving and working to meet the needs of their congregations, sometimes at the expense of their own families. The annual retreat is designed to invest in the lives and ministries of our pastors, offering time to retreat from the workloads, to have time together as couples, to connect with others in similar ministerial roles, and to receive fresh instruction. A big thank-you to those who made it possible for others to attend, and for the opportunity of refreshment.



*Editor’s Note: Thanks to Rich LaMar and David Shrout for their contributions to this summary report.*

*Photos courtesy Sally Ranton*

**Save the Dates: April 26-28, 2016**

**Regional Convention, Church of God Ministries: “Reclaim Your Neighbor[hood]”**

**Vancouver First Church, Vancouver, Washington**

**Additional Regional Conventions 2016**

**[Anderson IN June 21-23 and Philadelphia, PA Sept. 27-29]**



# Senior Moments

By Ruth Bissett

I recently returned from time in Washington with my son's family and my sister. When I was driving in the Seattle area and on I-5, I became aware of the speed limits and how people drive. As a school bus driver of 30 years and a school bus trainer and evaluator, I probably notice things that other people may overlook. I started thinking about speeding because it seemed like no one, or almost no one, was obeying the speed laws. So what would happen if everyone drove whatever speed they wanted to drive? I saw one driver that must have been driving 85 mph and switching between lanes. Obviously, he was increasing the danger of all those around him. According to the statistics for auto accidents in Oregon, speeding is the 5<sup>th</sup> cause of accidents. In Washington it is number 1. This is a quote from the stat page regarding speeding: "Simply slowing down and obeying posted speed limits can go a long way toward making the roads safer."

Now I know you are asking why in the world I am talking about this in a church publication. I know it is not a popular subject, but we each need to examine ourselves. Psalm 139:23-24 says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

What about this scripture: "Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves." Romans 13:1-2 Or this one from Isaiah 5:20-21 "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!"

There are other scriptures that I could list here, but I think maybe I have said enough, maybe even too much, but this is just one area that I think we need to think about. My intention is not to put a guilt trip on anyone. We all are responsible to God for our lives.

Join me in singing, "Search me, O God, and know my heart today,

*Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray; See if there be some wicked way in me; Cleanse me from every sin, and set me free.*

*I praise Thee, Lord, for cleansing me from sin; Fulfill Thy word and make me pure within; Fill me with fire, where once I burned with shame; Grant my desire to magnify Thy name.*

*Lord, take my life, and make it wholly Thine; Fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine; Take all my will, my passion, self and pride; I now surrender, Lord, in me abide."*

I invite you to respond to this or any of the articles that I write. Here is my information:

[ruthbissett1@gmail.com](mailto:ruthbissett1@gmail.com).

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Speeding is a multi-tiered threat because not only does it reduce the amount of time necessary to avoid a crash, it also increases the risk of crashing and makes the crash more severe if it does occur. In fact, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), when speed increases from 40 mph to 60 mph, the energy released in a crash more than doubles. Simply slowing down and obeying posted speed limits can go a long way toward making the roads safer.

## Old-Fashioned Theme



Start planning now for Summer Celebration. This year we will have an old fashioned theme which will include the old songs from the early years of the Church of God. Get out any old fashioned

clothes you have or get some suspenders, top hat, bonnets for the women, etc. Our sessions will be on Wise Investments, which is not about how you invest your money in stocks and bonds, but investing in lives.



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# Church of God Ministries Reignites State, Regional Assemblies with ‘Boot Camps’

By Carl Stagner, CHOG Ministries

God is truly moving in the Church of God. From the local church, to the state and regional assemblies, to the offices of Church of God Ministries, real change is taking place to position the movement for maximum kingdom impact. Baptisteries are getting wet again. Altars are filling up again. Churches are making more and better disciples. Walls that recently separated saints from one another are crumbling. As ministries coalesce around our common subject, Jesus, we're reclaiming what hell has stolen. Many of our state and regional assemblies are seeing renewed unity and fresh missional fervor thanks in part to what are being called revitalization "boot camps." These opportunities, offered by Church of God Ministries, and led by Handel Smith and the domestic ministry team, are now open to any district, state, or regional assembly that longs to see revitalization.



Handel with Church of God leaders in Georgia

Consider the GPS. First, it has to determine where you are. Then it can tell you which direction to go. For any church or regional assembly to experience a turnaround, it must first be clear on where it is in its life cycle. With honest introspection, it must come to terms with its challenges—as well as its strengths. Revitalization boot camps begin with a SWOB analysis—Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Barriers. They take a close look at the vision and mission statements of the state assembly, as well as the vision and mission statements of churches represented at the boot camp.

“Your systems are perfectly designed to give you the results you’ve been getting,” Handel Smith, Church of God Ministries chief domestic officer explains. Seems obvious enough. But are churches actually paying attention to such a principle? “If churches want better results in ministry, they must improve their systems,” Handel continues. “You have worship systems, assimilation systems, hospitality systems, evangelism systems. Perhaps it’s the follow-up system with visitors to your church. To create a healthy system, you must start with the end in mind. We believe healthy systems lead to healthy churches.”

Handel’s 33 years of ministry experience has brought him to a place where he speaks strategically and with wisdom when it comes to ministry revitalization. From

being a minister at one of the fastest-growing churches on the East Coast, to experiencing firsthand every stage of a church’s life cycle—including rebirth—to his twenty-nine years sharpening business leadership skills as a senior leader for Verizon—Handel’s credentials for revitalization are matched only by his heart for seeing churches and church networks turn around. “My mantra is to be a loving leader helping others—including churches and ministers—reach their full potential in Christ.”

Each boot camp experience is tailored for the specific needs of the region. Church leaders are given the chance to choose one ministry system in their church to discuss and analyze. From that point, the boot camp becomes a practical, how-to course on improving ministry systems. Be Bold Academy’s treasure trove of ministry resources are made available to everyone who participates. But if a state assembly is suffering from division, that has to be dealt with first. Ministries have already benefited from boot camp mediations in partnership with the professional counsel of Chris Cottrell, husband of Esther Cottrell, who serves as the state pastor and director of Ohio Ministries. Handel gives God the glory for each time he witnesses longstanding suspicion and disunity melt away for the sake of the kingdom.

*(Continued on page 8)*

# Tickets Available for Holiness Leaders Day

March 10 is the deadline to purchase tickets for the Holiness Pastors and Leaders Day, scheduled for Thursday, March 17, at the Salem Kroc Center, located off I-5, exit #258 (1865 Bill Frey Drive NE, Salem, OR).

Featuring keynote speaker Danielle Strickland, a Salvation Army officer, the focus of the annual event is the message and life of holiness and its power in engaging and transforming lives and communities.

Internationally recognized in her capacity as leader, speaker, writer, justice advocate, mission developer, and church planter, Danielle currently leads the social justice fight in the US, Western Territory based in Los Angeles, CA.

The \$17.50 registration fee includes lunch. Check online for ticket information: <http://holinesspastorandleader.eventbrite.com>. Sponsoring group discounts are available. Contact the District Office for the required discount code.



Danielle Strickland, Speaker

## COG Ministries 'Boot Camps'

*(Continued from page 7)*

"We're finding that it's very difficult for a state or church to move forward unless they deal with past hurts, habits, and hang-ups," Handel explains. "In accordance with James 5, we confess our faults to one another so we may be healed. In the mediation, we ask the churches to come to the table and identify the elephant in the room. We begin the difficult process of making amends, confessing, forgiving, uniting, and moving forward."

Handel continues, "The challenges of the church is to address its own culture before attempting to address the culture in which the church lives. The real issue is about developing leaders who are able to lead change in their communities and churches. God never changes, but our society and culture is ever-changing."



Boot Camp experience in Missouri

Handel Smith has already brought revitalization boot camps to multiple state assemblies and districts, including Missouri, South Dakota, Texas, Georgia, northern California, the North-Central Region, Tennessee, Louisiana, Alaska, Arizona, Oregon, and Canada. Church of God Ministries does not charge for these events, though consideration for Handel's travel expenses is encouraged. "It's just part of what we do at Church of God Ministries," Handel explains. "I'm here to wash your feet."

To learn more, contact the Church of God Ministries domestic ministry team at 800-848-2464 or email [TWilkinson@chog.org](mailto:TWilkinson@chog.org).

### THE PURPOSE

of The Association of the Churches of God in Oregon and SW Washington is to:

- Conduct business as the legally-incorporated body of the Association of the Churches of God in Oregon, Inc.
- Provide assistance to Oregon and Southwest Washington congregations and be a channel through which local congregations shall be mobilized to fulfill our united vision and mission.

### THE VISION

of The Association is for every believer to fulfill the mandate of the Great Commission, the Great Commandments, and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

### THE MISSION

of The Association is to:

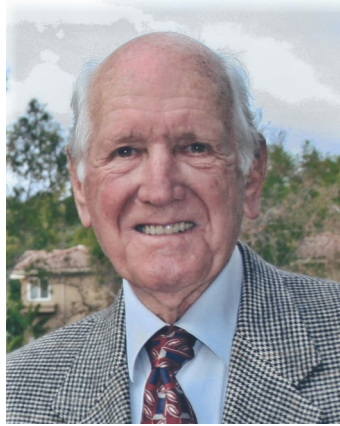
- Create and maintain ministries that will strengthen, encourage, supplement, and promote local congregations of The Association;
- Inspire commitment to the teachings, mission, and theological perspectives of the Church of God, Anderson, IN;
- Provide support for the development of healthy Church of God congregations.



# Homeward Journeys

**BUTZ, Paul**  
December 25, 1916-September 11, 2015

Paul Alvin Butz, born Alvin Paul Butz on December 25, 1916 in Sabetha, Kansas, passed away September 11, 2015, age 98, after a short illness in Pucallpa, Peru, South America. For the last 57 years he has given his energy, time and resources to minister to the people of Peru, South America as a Missionary for the Church of God, (Anderson, Indiana).



After living in Southern California a few years and being drafted into the Army, the family moved to Central California, and built a house in Ripon. They immediately became intensely involved in the Modesto congregation of the Church of God never missing a meeting or opportunity to be of service. Service included providing transportation for children to attend Sunday school, developing a weekly prayer meeting in Ripon, and visiting the hospital every Sunday afternoon to pray for the patients.

After much prayer and preparation, in 1957 Paul and Mary left Ripon taking their five children ages 15 to 3 years old to the jungles of Peru. Without any missionary board support they knew "God will provide". Settling in a small town called Tournavista (a road construction camp established by RG LeTourneau)

Further, he and his wife, Mary, established a Bible Institute called La Buena Tierra between the towns of Pucallpa and Campo Verde. The Institute still exists and has been the home of Paul and his second wife Marilu for many years.

Paul was preceded in death by two sisters, Ione VonHeeder and Alice Wilson and two brothers, Keith Butz and William Butz, Mary his wife and a daughter Catherine Keyser-Mary. Surviving are his brothers Kenneth Butz, Seattle, WA, Alfred Butz, Spokane, WA and David Butz, Chandler, AZ, his wife Marilu, Pucallpa, Peru, two sons George Butz, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA and Howard Butz, Rainier, OR and two daughters Ginger Child and Rachel Dance, Felton, CA., eight grandchildren and twenty-one great grandchildren.

## Upcoming Events

- REGION #2 Mtg - Thursday, March 3, 10 am
  - REGION #4 Mtg. - Thursday, March 10 - 10 am
  - District Council mtg. - Thursday, March 10 - 5:30 pm
  - Daylight Savings begins - Sunday, March 13, 2016
  - Faith Promise Event: Mihsills - Sunday, March 13 - 9 am
  - Lynchwood: Mexico Mission Trip Sharing - Sunday, March 13 - 6 pm
  - REGION #7 Mtg. - Wednesday, March 16 - 12 pm
  - Pastors & Leaders Day - Thursday, March 17 - 9 am - 3 pm
  - Faith Promise Event: Camille Melki - Sunday, March 20
  - REGION #3 - Tuesday, March 22 - 10 am
  - REGION #5 Mtg. - Thursday, March 24 - 10 am
  - EASTER - Sunday, March 27
  - CWB mtg - Tuesday, April 5 - 5:30 pm
  - REGION #8 Mtg. - Thursday, April 7 - 4:00 pm
  - REGION #1 - Tuesday, April 12 - 10 am
  - COG Regional Convention, Vancouver, WA - Tuesday, April 26 - Thursday, April 28
  - WARM - Tuesday, April 26 - Thursday, April 28
  - REGION #2 Mtg - Thursday, May 5 - 10 am
  - Ministers Gathering (NEW DATE!) - Saturday, May 7 - 9:30 am - 3 pm
  - MOTHER'S DAY - Sunday, May 8
- Visit the Association Calendar online at [www.orwacog.org](http://www.orwacog.org).



### District Pastor to Retire at Year-End

On February 25, the District Council for the Association of the Churches of God in Oregon and SW Washington accepted Rev. David Shrou's letter of intent to retire from the role of District Pastor, effective December 31, 2016. The Council is forming a Search Committee.