

A PUBLICATION OF
The Association of the
Churches of God in Oregon &
SW Washington



Lent Season
Vol. 3, Issue 3
MAR / APR 2021

Easter Blessings

— CONNECTIONS —

Connecting our Churches, Ministries & Events



Greetings Friends,

For the past several years I have been observing the season of Lent. Lent is the forty days, (excluding Sundays) before Easter. Lent starts on Ash Wednesday (February 17 this year) and lasts until Easter Sunday (April 4th this year). Lent is a time of preparing ourselves for the Celebration of Jesus' resurrection. Lent is usually observed through fasting. This year I have chosen to fast from eating after dinner. I usually have ice cream or some other snack throughout the evening leading up to bed. I don't need the food, but it becomes a habit and a way to occupy my mind, hands and mouth to bring me comfort. This year, my prayer is that fasting from the habit of snacking after dinner will help me train

myself to rely on God rather than the ice cream for comfort. On the first night of my fast I found myself craving that sweet treat and heard the words of Jesus in my head, "Man shall not live on bread (ice cream) alone" (Luke 4:4).

In a helpful article on the subject, my friend Ben Sternke, co-founder of Gravity leadership says, "fasting can be a powerful practice for a Christian, but it's also significantly misunderstood and culturally challenging, so it tends to be either badly practiced, or not practiced at all." Christian fasting isn't the same thing as dieting, or going on a hunger strike, or punishing our bodies, or fasting for a medical procedure. Ben goes on to give a helpful description of what fasting is and is not:

Christian fasting is not:

- A way to suffer for God
- A spiritual practice that demonstrates how pious or devout you are
- Righteousness (i.e. it doesn't equal holiness or sanctification)
- A way of trying really hard spiritually that God will respond to
- The same thing as repenting of sin (we don't "fast" from sin, we confess it, receive forgiveness, and turn from it)
- An addiction treatment program (if you feel powerless to break a dependence, reach out for help!)

(continued on pg 3)

The Association of the Churches of God in Oregon & SW Washington | 715 S. River Street | Newberg, OR | 97132
www.orwacog.org | (503) 393-3510 | (800) 873-7729 | districtoffice@orwacog.org | Editor, Paula Wilson

District Office, Church & National Events



- Mar 14: Daylight Saving Time Begins
- Mar 17: St. Patrick's Day
- Mar 19-20: CWC Spring Conference (Lynchwood) - See pg 7 for info
- Mar 20: First Day of Spring
- Mar 28: Palm Sunday & Passover

Apr 2: Good Friday

Apr 4: Easter

Apr 20: WARM Virtual Conference (see pg 6)

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

John 10:10 KJV

YOUR CONNECTION TO THE CHURCH OF GOD

CHOG NEWS

CONVENTION 2021 & GENERAL ASSEMBLY
DENVER | JUNE 26-29, 2021

HUNGER & THIRST

FOR JUSTICE. FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS. FOR JESUS.

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR JUSTICE,
FOR THEY WILL BE FILLED. Matthew 5:6 NLT



Convention 2021 is going hybrid — you can choose to attend sessions in person (first 500 participants) in Denver or you can attend virtually.

There are great speakers planned and you can get all the details by logging onto Jesusisthesubject.org - our CHOG website.

To HUNGER AND THIRST is uncomfortable ...

what if we allowed that discomfort to lead us to empathy – for the needs of the poor, those whose voices have been dismissed, and those who mourn?

CONSIDER, PRAY and ACT—You won't want to miss Convention 2021. Register today!!

Letter from Jerry cont/More CHOG News

(article continued from pg 1)

Instead, Christian fasting is intentionally withholding something we'd normally partake in (normally food) for the purpose of creating space in our lives to feast on the presence of Jesus "directly."

So, Christian fasting is:

- **Wisdom** – it's love and knowledge meeting together in a practice that avails us to God's resources to meet our needs.
- **Training** – it's the indirect effort that gives us access to something we can't try or make happen on our own.
- **Surrender** – it's voluntarily "making ourselves weak" so that we can know and receive the strength and power of God (2 Cor 12:9-10).

I see fasting as an embodied practice that helps curb our reliance on the things of this earth to fill the desires of our hearts that we should be relying on God to fulfill. So, rather than turning to ice cream in the evening to bring me comfort after a long day, I turn to God and his presence and power to give me the thing I need most. Here is a link to the whole article with helpful tips on possible ways to fast.

<https://gravityleadership.com/how-to-fast-for-lent>. It is not too late to start to fast for this season of Lent. Let's prepare ourselves together for the upcoming celebration of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Jerry

Jesusisthesubject.com—International News



2021 Church of God Women's Convention

September 30 - October 3

You can download a registration form
@ Jesusisthesubject.org (events)

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONVENTION

IYC2021 in Orlando, Florida has been rescheduled for
IYC2022 in San Antonio, Texas.

Registration for IYC2022 will open this fall. Logon to the
CHOG Website for more information.



Moving Forward @ Camp White Branch

Greetings CWB Supporters!

As we look forward to the 2021 summer camp season, we are praying we will be able to reopen for our children and youth. We have still not received updated COVID guidance from the state allowing overnight youth camp programs. The CWB board will meet this month to discuss when we need to make this decision and how we might be able to staff the camp based on when and what we know.



One opportunity we might have is hosting family camps. This could be a unique opportunity to bring families to camp and be a great way to support Camp White Branch. Please be praying for wisdom and guidance for the board and our state leadership. We will notify churches as soon as we have more information.

In November, we asked for your support and saw an influx of donations to meet the needs of overhead operations and necessary maintenance ... which has been amazing! We feel so blessed and loved by you, our supporters. God has continued to show up during these difficult times by providing donations and workers to help keep the camp afloat. Looking forward, we need to continue to rely on your support. Our needs are: **financial donations** for operations and repairs (which can be made at [Donate - Camp White Branch](#) on the CWB website or sent directly to the district office), **skilled maintenance workers** to prep the camp for potential summer operation, and **volunteers** to fill key roles needed to operate the camping ministry this summer. **Skills and repairs needed** to prepare the camp for this summer are:

1. deck and cabin entry repairs,
2. finish trim work, door and window replacement,
3. plumb in new water fountain,
4. repair water slide,
5. make sheetrock repairs,
6. deep cleaning
7. general yard maintenance/clean up
8. cleaning/raking outdoor activity area/trails and
9. many misc other items



Seasonal staffing needs for the summer are: **experienced cooks**, a **couple to be on-site for maintenance and hosting groups**, **camp registration coordinator** to work with our camp coordinator, Danette, and **cleaning/dishwashing personnel**. We will have the caretaker and assistant houses available for staff plus we have a couple RV hook-ups. If you can help, please contact us at: volunteer@campwhitebranch.org

We do not feel we are in a position to hire permanent staff at this time with so many unknowns and so we need to fill these key roles to have a successful camping season. We will continue to trust in God's provisions and faithfulness in providing what we need. Your prayers and willingness to help are greatly appreciated!

Camp White Branch—2021 Camp Dates

Danette Beisley is working with our Camp Directors on plans for 2021 camps and is still in need of a Middle School Camp Director. All directors will also need counselors, certified lifeguards, and first aid/CPR certified health staff (all need to be 18 yrs or older) for their camps. Please contact Danette at danette@oakparkchurch.net if you are able to fill any of these roles. We are planning toward having a full Summer Camping Program.



2021 Church of God Camp Dates

Intro Camp, July 23-25, 2021

Primary Camp, August 9-12, 2021

Junior Camp, July 26-30 2021

Middle School Camp, July 19-23, 2021

Sr High Camp, July 12-16, 2021

Young Adult, June 17-20, 2021

We want to give special thanks to our donors providing funds and items needed at the camp. We also give thanks to those workers performing maintenance at the camp during this time. The caretaker house interior is looking better all the time with a fresh coat of paint, minor repairs made, kitchen cabinets being built and installed soon, and updates to the bathrooms being planned. We also have had some folks come up and stack firewood and the office is being prepared for our reopening with a new camp registration system. These are only a few of the things that have been going on. If you are interested in donating funds to purchase specific items, please see our needs list on the website. If you want to get more involved, please contact Paula at the District Office @ 503-393-3510 (districtoffice@orwacog.org) or email us at info@campwhitebranch.org.

Your continued partnership and support of our Camp White Branch ministry gives us hope and a feeling of deep gratitude.

Blessings and grace,

Lisa Switzer, CWB Chairman

Thank you for your support of CWB!

WARM Conference for Pastors & Leaders

The poster features a central graphic of a person with arms raised in a 'V' shape, set against a background of silhouettes of other people. The text 'empowered to GO BEYOND' is written in a mix of bold and script fonts, with 'EPHESIANS 3:14-21' below it. To the right, 'SAVE THE DATE' is prominently displayed above the date and time. Two speakers are featured with their names and titles: Jim Lyon and Handel Smith. A 'Program Highlights' section lists the speakers and a 'Windows on Ministry' segment. The bottom of the poster has a dark red banner with the event title in white.

empowered to GO BEYOND
EPHESIANS 3:14-21

SAVE THE DATE
APRIL 20, 2021 | 2:00-4:00 PM (PST)

Jim Lyon
General Director
COG Ministries

Handel Smith
Exec Director of US & Canada Strategy
COG Ministries

God is not limited by problems or pandemics. He is able to do far more abundantly beyond what we imagine. Join us for a two-hour online gathering of west coast Church of God pastors and leaders ... a time of inspiration, encouragement, and dreaming of possibilities.

Program Highlights

- Handel Smith, Keynote Speaker
- Jim Lyon
- "Windows on Ministry" stories

WARM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2021

There is no charge for this year's WARM Conference, but you do need to register your participation in order to receive the link to the live event.

To register:

- Go to WARMCOG.org
- Click on "Conference Registration" and register each person/staff member who will be watching and participating. Registrations are due by March 15th.
- After registration, you will receive an email with conference information and a link for the conference.

QUESTIONS? email DEES@CLOVERDALECHURCH.ORG



ADDRESS CHANGE FOR The District Office



The District Office moved last September to our current office in Newberg at the River Street Church of God. We were hoping to continue using our old P.O. Box # in Salem but have found that it is best to change our mailing address to the Newberg physical address. Please alert everyone that needs to know we have a new address — church leadership & bookkeeper, donors and your church families. We apologize if you have had mail returned to you and appreciate your help in getting the word out. Here is our new address:

Association of the Churches of God
715 S. River Street, Newberg, OR 97132
(Phone number remains the same: 503-393-3510)

CWC Spring Connection @ Lynchwood

Women's Spring Connection

March 19-20, 2021

Fri 6-9pm & Sat, 9am-2pm

*Lynchwood
Church of God*

**3818 SE 174th Avenue
Portland, OR 97236**

Cost—\$35.



Speaker—Jenny Mihsill

Worship Leaders—Jackie Scott & Sally Kuykendall



Session Themes:

Session 1: As jars of clay, we need the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Session 2: The all-surpassing quality of the Holy Spirit's power is exceptional.

Session 3: God is our source as we see that this power is from God and not from us.

Jenny Mihsill, along with her husband Bobby, has served as a missionary in Côte d'Ivoire since January 2015. She teaches a variety of theological courses at IBAO, West Africa Bible Institute, and assists the national church in training leaders for the Children of Promise program. Jenny was raised in Woodburn and we look forward to having her share her heart for the Lord with us!!

Registration is due Mar 12th. Brochures are available.

??? Call Nancy Kernutt, 971-570-1633/Leslie Duclo, 503-320-1369.



Association of the Churches of God in Oregon/SW Washington

COVID

We want you to know that we are taking every precaution to make this 'Connection' a safe place to be. We will be following guidelines for 'groups' and will require masks and social distancing. Masks and hand sanitizer will be available and the casual lunch will be eaten in cars or other outside spaces.

We will be asking COVID health questions and a temperature check will take place when you arrive.

We are excited about this opportunity to learn and grow together but we do ask that if you have any symptoms of COVID, that you be safe and stay home.

Do you have a story you would like to share about what God is doing in your church or community?

We would love to hear from you. GOD is ALWAYS PRESENT and AT WORK

and we would like to hear about it. Email your stories to Paula at districtoffice@orwacog.org

Neighborhood & Tigard Churches in the News



Sweet Hour of Prayer

The Church in the heart of the neighborhood with the neighborhood on its heart

NEIGHBORHOOD
CHURCH OF GOD

Neighborhood COG continues to hold Wednesday night **Sweet Hour of Prayer** meetings (Praise, Worship, Prayer, and Bible Study) on Zoom. This night helps our people to learn, study, grow and stay connected. We are currently studying the Holy Spirit.

Every first Friday night of the month is our **Zoom Game Night**. We enjoy each other's company with some trivia—a time of casualness and competition. We love to laugh with each other. Laughter is good medicine. We are trying to stay connected while we are not meeting in person.

Our **Pastor Charles Hunter** is extremely busy working in the Portland Public School District, Portland Police Bureau Volunteer Chaplain and serves on the Crisis Team. He is involved in neighborhood and community events, and of course, Senior Pastor at NCOG. We are blessed knowing Pastor Charles is revered in our city and community.

One of our outreach ministries is sponsoring a **Child of Promise**, a young lady from Uganda.

Submitted by Pastor Julie Jackson

TIGARD Church Gets Creative during COVID

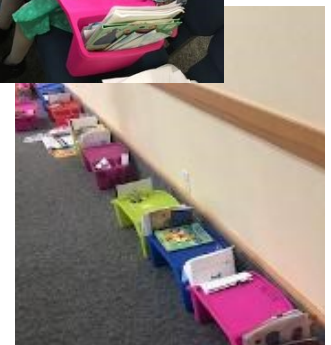
Tigard Church of God is using creative ways to connect with **children**, teens, and church family during COVID. Soon after the shutdown and restrictions began, the children's pastor, Alyssa Krieg, began using individual children's activity trays for the children during the worship service. They are all sanitized and labeled with names for regular attenders. Trays are also available for guests.



The youth pastor, Teresa Hellstrom (with the help of her daughter Hailey) began celebrating birthdays with each **church family** member. Depending on the individual, a card signed by church members and a gift of home baked cookies, a bracelet made by Hailey, or another gift was delivered to the birthday recipient with a visit on the front porch or yard.



Another innovative way to connect with just the **youth** was to send a devotion by text message to each teen each day. For every teen who responded with a summary of the devotion 10 days out of 14, they would get a Dutch Bro beverage delivered to them personally by Teresa.



In Loving Memory—Reta Hofer



Reta Jane Hofer

December 19, 1925—January 20, 2021

Reta Jane Conrad was born December 19, 1925 in Eugene, OR. Her father, Ralph Conrad, was a pastor who along with her mother, Lena Conrad (nee Orr) ministered in multiple Churches of God, particularly in California. Reta had three older siblings: Pluma Dressler, Charlotte Conrad and Sheldon Conrad. She was the older sister of Relda (Dickie) Stone and Virginia Moffenbier. Her sister, Charlotte, died at two years of age prior to Reta's birth.

Following her high school graduation, Reta worked as a secretary at the Merced Air Base during World War II. Following the closure of the Base she moved to Portland to be near her sister Pluma and then eventually to Dinuba, California, where her mother and father were ministering. In December of 1949, she was on a date with an officer when Emmett Hofer approached her and asked "Why are you dating this guy? Why don't you come with me?" And she did.

Reta and Emmett drove up to Fresno to look at the Christmas lights and three months later, on March 30, 1950, they were married. They were married for 66 years until Emmett's passing on September 24, 2017. In those years they ministered in churches mainly on the West Coast. During this time she also worked as a nurse's assistant, a teacher's assistant, and a care giver for senior citizens. In 1955 they had their only child, Brent.

She loved to host dinner parties, cook delicious food, lie in the sun, tease people and love on her granddaughters, Eleanna and Nicole. She was feisty, outgoing and independent. She never did fit the typical "pastor's wife" profile, which endeared her to younger pastors wives.

In 2010 Reta was diagnosed with dementia. While she never forgot who people were, she failed to remember recent information. She and Emmett moved into an assisted living facility in 2012. Following Emmett's passing she continued to live there, as she considered it her home. During the forest fires in September she was evacuated to Brent and Sherry's home but told them she wanted to go back home to her apartment.

On December 19th, her birthday, she tested positive for the COVID virus. She lived through the two week quarantine and moved back to her apartment. Two days later, she fell and broke her hip. She survived the surgery, but on January 20 at 10:48 am she passed away.

Reta is survived by her sister Virginia Moffenbier, brother-in-laws Glenn Stone and Bob Dressler, son Brent Hofer and daughter-in-law Sherry Hofer and her two granddaughters Eleanna and Nicole. Additionally, she has six nieces and four nephews.

Her internment with Emmett was Friday, January 29th at Willamette National Cemetery.

GLA Journey One: Not Just for Pastors

Greetings all Believers!

Just wanted to encourage you to consider being a part of our next Year One **Gravity Leadership Discipleship Cluster** beginning soon.

As a certified Gravity Leadership coach, I have had the privilege of leading seven church leaders and pastors through the Gravity Leadership Academy (GLA) Journey One: Find Your Center this past year. **GLA is a 10-month coaching and training intensive for Christian leaders who want to bring lasting transformation to their own lives and to their church and culture. You can learn more about GLA by going to the link below:**

<https://gravityleadership.com>

I am in the process of recruiting for my next cohort. The usual cost of the 10-month experience is \$1,900. However, I am able to offer coaching for leaders in our Association for \$1,500. We also have some **scholarships** available through the Association that can help cover a portion of your training.

Below is a testimonial from Gary Johnson, a layman from the Woodburn Church of God, who has been a part of this year's cohort.

To sign up or receive more information, please contact me @ jdavisson@orwacog.org **TODAY**. I look forward to hearing from you!!

Grace and Peace,

Jerry Davisson, District Pastor

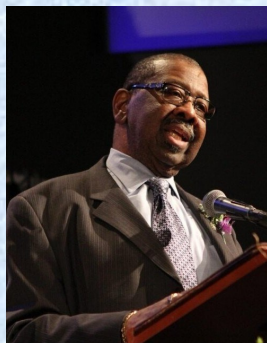
Gravity Leadership Coach

Gary Johnson is a retired teacher and coach and is involved in leadership in his church @ Woodburn. It was great to hear him approach what he was learning to "his reality" and to hear him share from "his perspective". Here is what he has to say about GLA...

"Gravity leadership has been a transformative journey for me. It has magnified God's truth and grace in my life, and has solidified my significance, security and belonging to Christ. I encourage you to 'take this journey,' and you will be transformed as well."

Blessings, Gary Johnson - "Be a difference maker!"

In Loving Memory—Dr. T. Allen Bethel



We have a correction on Dr. T. Allen Bethel obituary that was published in January. We apologize for our mistake. The date of his homegoing should have been December 20, 2020. If you would like a corrected copy for your personal use, please email a request to districtoffice@aol.com or call the office @ 503-393-3510 and we will get that to you.

Dr. T. Allen Bethel
January 31, 1953—December 20, 2020

District Prayer List for 2021

Please continue to remember our Church of God congregations in prayer. (Below you will find our District Prayer List for 2021.) There is power in prayer and we are stronger together.

*And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.
Ephesians 6:18*

| | | | |
|--|---------|---|----------|
| Portland - Kingdom Nation | 1/3/21 | Pastors involved in Leadership Focus | 7/4/21 |
| Portland -Winding Road Church of God | 1/10/21 | Albany - First Church of God | 7/11/21 |
| Powers - Powers Church of God | 1/17/21 | Aloha - Aloha Church of God | 7/18/21 |
| Prineville - Living Water Church of God | 1/24/21 | Bandon - Seabird Chapel Church of God | 7/25/22 |
| Rainier - Rainier Community COG | 1/31/21 | Cottage Grove - Riverside Community COG | 8/1/21 |
| Redmond - First Church of God | 2/7/21 | Eugene - Friendly Street Church of God | 8/8/21 |
| Reedsport - Reedsport Church of God | 2/14/21 | Gales Creek - Gales Creek Community COG | 8/15/21 |
| Roseburg - Hucrest Community COG | 2/21/21 | Hillsboro - Valley Hope Community Church | 8/22/21 |
| Salem - Oak Park Church of God | 2/28/21 | Husum, WA - Husum Community COG | 8/29/21 |
| Scappoose - Chapman Community COG | 3/7/21 | Klamath Falls - First Church of God | 9/5/21 |
| Springfield - Springfield Church of God | 3/14/21 | La Grande - Crossroads Community Church | 9/12/21 |
| St. Helens - Sunset Park Comm Church | 3/21/21 | Lebanon - Turning Point Church | 9/19/21 |
| The Dalles - Solid Rock Community COG | 3/28/21 | Longview, WA - Westview Church | 9/26/21 |
| Tigard - Tigard Church of God | 4/4/21 | Medford - First Church of God | 10/3/21 |
| Vancouver, WA - First Church of God | 4/11/21 | Newberg - River Street Church of God | 10/10/21 |
| Vancouver, WA - Iglesia de Dios | 4/18/21 | North Bend - College Park Comm Church | 10/17/21 |
| Woodburn - Hoodview Church of God | 4/25/21 | Oregon City - Faith Rock Comm Church | 10/24/21 |
| Association of the COG leadership | 5/2/21 | Oregon City - Hilltop Community COG | 10/31/21 |
| Camp White Branch | 5/9/21 | Portland - Community Church of God | 11/7/21 |
| Warner Pacific University (Portland, OR) | 5/16/21 | Portland - Lents-Gilbert Church of God | 11/14/21 |
| COG Ministries Council (Anderson, Indiana) | 5/23/21 | Portland - Lynchwood Church of God | 11/21/21 |
| Church of God District Council | 5/30/21 | Portland - Maranatha Church | 11/28/21 |
| Pray for the lost | 6/6/21 | Portland - Mt. Scott Church of God/New Hope | 12/5/21 |
| Summer camp directors & counselors | 6/13/21 | Portland - Neighborhood Church of God | 12/12/21 |
| Summer camp children & youth | 6/20/21 | Portland - Richmond Community Church | 12/19/21 |
| Pray for our ministers & their families | 6/27/21 | Portland - Rockwood Church of God | 12/26/21 |



He is Risen

DEATH COULD NOT HOLD HIM.

Rejoice in the resurrection of

Jesus Christ.



WISHING YOU A BLESSED AND JOY FILLED EASTER!

We at the District Office want you to know we are thinking of you and praying for you during this special Easter Season. We know this last year has been a difficult one but we are assured that God cares about you and that He is active in our lives, if we allow Him to be. If you need prayer, please call us or send us an email. We will make sure that your need is lifted before our Lord and Savior.

Pastor Jerry Davisson and Pastor Paula Wilson

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.