

## **Announcements June 13, 2020**

### **FESTIVAL ASSISTANCE**

Please announce as needed, beginning on June 6, 2020:

Each year many faithful brethren donate extra funds from their Festival tithe so that other needy members can receive the financial assistance they need to attend the Feast of Tabernacles. Last year these generous contributions enabled nearly 200 people to attend the Feast who would have been unable to attend otherwise. The Church recognizes its responsibility to see that those contributions are distributed fairly and equitably.

If you have no titheable income or if you have faithfully saved your Festival tithe and will still not have sufficient funds to attend the Feast this year, we will be happy to help where we can. If you think you will need additional funds to be able to attend the Feast this fall, please contact our local Festival advisor, \_\_\_\_\_, or your pastor to get a *Festival Assistance Member Information* form. Complete the form and return it to your pastor or festival advisor as soon as possible. (All information on the form will be treated as confidential.)

Ministerial Services has asked us to have all assistance applications turned in by July 13, so please pick up the form and return it to your congregation's Festival advisor or your pastor as quickly as possible.

Again, Festival financial assistance is available for those who do not have a titheable income and for those who do not have adequate funds to attend the Feast even though they have faithfully saved their Festival tithe.

### **Camp Cancellation Announcement:**

The COGWA administration has had ongoing discussions with our CYC camp directors for the last few months, striving to take into consideration all the factors that might affect our ability to effectively run our summer camps. As all are aware, we made the decision earlier to cancel our June camps due to the restrictions that came about from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the weeks that followed, the camp directors continued to study the situation and evaluate the protocols that would be required if we sponsored our camps. The camp team met again with the administration this past week, on June 3, to discuss our ability to run our camp programs in light of the current community standards and guidelines required of overnight (residential) camps.

Unfortunately, we find that the restrictions that caused us to cancel our June camps are still in place and will likely be so throughout the summer. As such, it seemed unreasonable to the administration and the camp directors to attempt to run our camps amid restrictions requiring social distancing, face coverings, disinfection protocols, transportation restrictions etc. Sadly, this realization necessitates the cancellation of our remaining summer camps.

While this is disappointing to us all—especially our campers—our camp directors will do their best to provide a virtual program that will help to fill the void left by cancellation of our summer camps. Listen for announcements on this as the summer progresses. We would add that we are still planning to host our CYC Winter Camp in late December and are looking forward to a dynamic and exciting camp program in the summer of 2021.

We have appreciated your prayers about this decision and feel that God has led us to the wisest choice at this time.

## **RALEIGH PHONE HOOKUP NUMBER CHANGED:**

**Raleigh Phone Hookup** – If you ever have to miss Sabbath services you can call in to a central number and connect to the live phone hookup via FreeConferencing.com. At 1:30 pm you need to dial the conference number and then enter the participant access code, and that should connect you.

The dial-in number is: **(712) 770-5363**. The participant access code is: **539955#**.

If you have any questions, please contact Julius AungMin.

## **MEMBER GUIDELINES ANNOUNCEMENT**

Dear Brethren,

We are very encouraged that a growing number of our COGWA congregations in the United States have begun in-person Sabbath services for the first time in many months. What a wonderful blessing—one for which we thank God!

However, along with the blessing of meeting together for services also comes our responsibilities during this period of pandemic.

We want to remind each member of our collective duty as God's people when we come together on the weekly Sabbath to worship God and see one another. In the guidelines for returning to services (which your pastor shared with you), we asked members to consider wearing a face covering to services even in areas where it is not required. However, we also asked everyone (regardless of whether or not he or she wears a face covering) to be aware of these important responsibilities:

The first is regarding symptoms of illness. While we have always asked our members to not attend services if they show symptoms of any sickness, it is imperative during this time that you simply stay home if anyone in your family has symptoms of illness—particularly those symptoms associated with COVID-19.

The second is the responsibility to practice the 6-foot social distancing at services, as most authorities agree that this is the most effective protocol for mitigating any possible spread. However remote we may believe our chances of contracting COVID-19 might be, it is important and appropriate that we remember and fulfill these personal responsibilities when attending services in the weeks ahead.

We fully understand the urge to hug, shake hands and have closer contact with one another at services—it's a natural desire in such a situation! However, we ask everyone to honor the need to keep that 6-foot social distance between each other and families while at your local Sabbath service.

As we do our best to comply and work together during these unique times, we will better ensure a safer and less stressful environment for all of our brethren. We look forward to the day in the future when these temporary restrictions will be lifted.

May you all have a wonderful Sabbath day!