

## **Announcements March 13, 2021**

### **DONNA HENSLEY UPDATE:**

Donna is doing much better and hopes to be able to go home this Wednesday. She asked me to please extend her thanks to all of you for your prayers and cards of support.

### **NICK BOLINGER UPDATE**

Mr. Kelley was able to visit with Nick Bolinger yesterday for the first time since last February and found him to be doing very well. He is hoping to be able to have surgical repair of a tear in his right knee soon. He recently met with his programmer and he gave Nicholas indication that he should be receiving good news soon about his parole and possibly even early release. There are a lot of details to work out, but Nick is hopeful that something will happen soon. He would really appreciate your continued prayers on his behalf. By the way, he received his snack package on Thursday and was really delighted to be able to receive that thanks to many of the members contributing to his snack fund.

### **SNACKS IN RALEIGH MARCH 20**

Please join us again for snacks and after service fellowship in the lower area next Sabbath, March 20th. This will be a good way to use some of your leavened products such as cookies, crackers. Remember to just prepackage in snack or sandwich bags - there will be some bags available as well. If you are unsure of the guidelines, please see Carol Renegar after services today.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT FOR GREENSBORO: PICNIC AFTER FIRST DUB SERVICES IN GREENSBORO**

We are able to use the picnic area after services on the first day of Unleavened Bread. We would like to have a "bring your own food" picnic. Excellent chance for extra fellowship and we should be able to be comfortable outside. If it rains, we will just go home and eat!

### **PASSOVER PREPARATION**

Ministerial Services has requested that we determine prior to the Passover the names of those members planning to take the Passover in person. Actually it is important that we are made aware of your intentions if you plan to take the Passover at home as well. As you know, I will have to make a determination in every location the number of people taking the Passover in person, the number of people taking the Passover at home, and the number of people who may need to take the Second Passover. This is very important information that I will need no later than Monday after the Passover on Friday night.

I believe the best way to coordinate this information is for you to contact the Elder who will be conducting the Passover Service in your area. They are as follows:

Raleigh – Steve Villaescusa

Greensboro – Tom Burrow (Tom will be assisting me)

Hickory – David Baker

We would like for you to please notify these Elders of your current Passover intentions. Here are the options available:

- You plan to take the Passover at your normal church hall in person
- You will be visiting in another church area and take the Passover there
- You plan to keep the Passover at home, but watch the Webcast from Greensboro.
- You plan to keep the Passover at home and use the DVD that was made available last year. (please notify us today if you need the DVD).

It would be very helpful if you could go ahead and notify these Elders of your plans today if you have not already.

## **PREPARING FOR NTBMO**

Hopefully you have started your preparations for Night To Be Much Observed.

The date/time is sunset on Saturday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. If you are still looking for a place to be with someone, this would be a good time to go ahead and let Mr. Kelley or one of the Elders know you are hoping to be invited somewhere. We will try to help you find a location.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT FOR GREENSBORO**

### **LEAVING CHURCH HALL AFTER SERVICES MARCH 27**

Since services will be held at our normal time of 3:00pm on Sabbath of March 27<sup>th</sup>, we realize many of you will need to head home ASAP to finalize your preparations for the special NTBMO meal. This includes the folks who take down, clean up, and lock up the building. Therefore, we are going to ask that we limit our fellowship after services and pitch in where we can to assist with these tasks so that everyone can head home ASAP.

For those of you who had hoped to stay around the Church hall until time to go to your chosen restaurant, you are welcome to stay outside the Church hall (Perhaps at the picnic tables out back), or perhaps go to one of the parks in Greensboro to await your dinner reservation.

## **PASSOVER AND UNLEAVENED BREAD LOCATIONS AND TIMES:**

### **RALEIGH:**

**Passover** – March 26; 7:45pm – Regular Church Hall

**First DUB** - March 28; 2:00pm - Hilton Raleigh North Hills,

3415 Wake Forest Rd., Raleigh, NC 27609.

**Last DUB** – April 3; 1:30pm – Regular Church Hall

### **GREENSBORO:**

**Passover** – March 26: 7:45pm – Regular Church Hall

**First DUB** – March 28: 3:00pm – Regular Church Hall

**Last DUB** – April 3; 3:00pm – Regular Church Hall

### **Hickory:**

**Passover** – March 26: 7:45pm – Regular Church Hall

**First DUB** – March 28: 2:00pm – Regular Church Hall

**Last DUB** – April 3; 10:30am – Regular Church Hall

**NOTE:** The Sabbath of March 27, services will be at regular times and regular locations.

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PASSOVER SERVICE**

Information about how we will conduct the Passover Service was read in full during announcements last Sabbath and are posted on the local church website under announcements. If you have any questions about this, or you would like to have a copy of these guidelines, please see the Elder or your Pastor today.

## **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING COVID-19 PROTOCOLS**

Last summer the leadership of the Church of God, a Worldwide Association, decided to ask all members to wear face coverings and maintain social distance when attending Sabbath services. This decision, based on requirements by local authorities and concern for the safety and health of the brethren, was communicated in the following announcement prior to the Sabbath of July 25:

After considerable thought and discussion, the administration of the Church has reached the decision that face coverings (shields or masks) will be required for all our services. There are three reasons for this decision:

1. It is our desire to follow the state requirements and recommendations. In some states churches are exempt, but not all. Given the change that has occurred in the past two months, we believe that we should abide by these requirements and recommendations.
2. It is our desire to create the safest environment possible in all our congregations. We believe we should err on the side of caution.
3. It is our desire to promote unity in all our congregations. Given the fact that most of the United States is still fighting the virus and that cases are increasing, we believe that all our congregations should be united in our approach to stopping the spread of the virus.

Over the past several weeks, the daily number of new COVID-19 cases, number of hospitalizations and number of deaths in the United States have fallen dramatically. As a result, several states have removed or modified the COVID-19 restrictions for businesses, sporting events, music events and meetings. Some states have removed all restrictions, including face mask requirements; others have removed only some.

With the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread only two weeks away, the administration has had discussions with the Ministerial Board of Directors and pastors and has decided to make no changes in our requirements for masks and social distance through the Days of Unleavened Bread. As we approach this holy day season, it is of utmost importance that we focus on the meaning of this festival and not be sidetracked by a debate of these physical issues. Things are changing so rapidly that by early April we believe the situation will become more clear, making it easier to determine the correct safety protocols for church services. Many businesses and churches are taking this same wait-and-see approach toward any modifications.

On April 8 we will have a webinar with all U.S. pastors to discuss how to determine when our current protocols can be loosened or removed. While we have desired to see all our congregations unitedly adhering to the same requirements, with various states charting their own courses, any decision to amend or retain protocols will likely need to be based on the requirements in the area where each congregation meets. For many congregations, the requirements for masks and social distance will not change, and therefore, the current protocols will remain in place.

This is a very difficult time for our nation and also for the Church. The differing views over masks in particular have created deep divisions, and we must not allow that to happen within the Church. The day is coming when these restrictions will no longer be necessary—for some congregations it will come sooner than for others. Let's be patient and pray for each other and for the leadership of the Church. And for now, let's focus on the spiritual meaning of the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread and not be sidetracked by these physical matters

## Holy Day Offering Instructions

### 2021 Days of Unleavened Bread

For safety reasons, and because of regulations in a number of locations, it is our plan to handle the holy day offerings for the Days of Unleavened Bread as we did the holy days last fall. We will not physically collect the holy day offering as we have in previous years.

While we will have a box on the information table for members who wish to give their offering at services (see below), it is our preference that members send their offerings directly to headquarters, using either of the following options:

- **Donate at [members.cogwa.org/donate/](https://members.cogwa.org/donate/) via eCheck or credit card.** Please choose the holy day (“DUB1 Offering” or “DUB7 Offering”) from the drop-down menu.
- **Donate by check (bill pay or personal check).** Please mail to:

**COGWA  
P.O. Box 731480  
Dallas, TX 75373-1480**

If you desire to donate at services, you can do so by placing your offering in the donation box that will be on the information table before and after services on the holy days. Please use your blue envelope with your name and address on the outside.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation during these unusual and difficult times. If you have any questions, please email us at [donation.help@cogwa.org](mailto:donation.help@cogwa.org).

#### **RALEIGH PHONE HOOKUP:**

**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.

#### **RALEIGH ZOOM VIDEO CONNECTION**

Meeting ID: **862 858 5810**

Passcode: **cogwanc** (all lower case)

Link to join is below:

[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8628585810#success)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8628585810#success>