United News WEEKLY
NEWS of the UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

United News Weekly - September 17, 2026

Greetings from Cincinnati!

As we approach the Day of Atonement, we bring you a message from Ben Light and an event summary of the recent leadership workshop. The next installment of our "Painting the Feasts" series is ready for your enjoyment.

Finally, please enjoy this week's behind-the-scenes photo!



Heidi Braun
MANAGING EDITOR, INTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

Ministerial and Member Services





Ben Light
SENIOR MANAGER, INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

Now that the Feast of Trumpets has concluded, brethren around the world are already preparing to travel for the Feast of Tabernacles. Some will begin their journeys before the Day of Atonement, while others will soon make their final preparations before coming together to worship God and rejoice before Him at the Feast.

Whether we travel near or far, one aspect of the Feast of Tabernacles built into its observance is pilgrimage—the journey of God's people coming together before Him.

Deuteronomy 14 describes God's people setting aside the festival tithe and traveling to the place He appointed, where they were to rejoice before Him. So today we leave behind our normal routines, travel to gather with brethren and set aside this special time to worship God, learn from His Word and rejoice together.

But the Feast is much more than the journey or a physical destination.

It points us to the coming Kingdom of God and the future reign of Jesus Christ on this earth. We have a wonderful opportunity to focus more fully on God's plan, strengthen our relationship with Him, encourage one another and experience a small foretaste of the peace, unity and joy His Kingdom will bring. That's the real purpose behind all the preparation that takes place throughout the year.

Since last year's Feast, many people have been working behind the scenes, securing locations, organizing departments, preparing messages, coordinating music and activities, arranging webcasts for those unable to attend, providing festival assistance and handling countless other details.

All that work serves one central purpose: to help God's people come together to worship their Creator, grow spiritually and rejoice in the hope of His coming Kingdom.

This year, the United Church of God will host 55 Feast sites in 35 different nations around the world. In fact, the only continent without a Feast site is Antarctica. From large sites to small gatherings, brethren will come together with the same purpose and look forward to the same future. It is a wonderful reminder that we are part of an international Church and one spiritual family.

As we approach the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day, please pray for safe travel, for God's blessing on our festival locations and, most importantly, for a spiritually rich and deeply meaningful Holy Day season for all!





Steve Myers
OPERATION MANAGER, MINISTERIAL AND MEMBER SERVICES

Leadership Workshop

During Labor Day weekend, 50 people gathered in Cincinnati for the 2026 Leadership Workshop. The theme, “A Leader is First a Disciple,” guided our activities and discussions throughout the weekend.

The main idea was simple, yet meaningful: Before leading others, we must be willing to follow Jesus Christ. In the Church, leadership isn’t about titles or positions. It’s about character, humility, service to others and readiness to help wherever there’s a need.

The weekend began with a special Sabbath service featuring messages from Darris McNeely and Gary Petty on being true disciples and cultivating a servant’s heart and mind. Throughout the weekend, Darris McNeely, Gary Petty and Steve Myers led presentations and workshops on topics such as defending the faith, Christ’s example of service, preaching the Word, partnering in the gospel and working well with your pastor.

There were many opportunities to interact as well. Q&A sessions, workshops, shared meals and informal conversations helped everyone get to know one another, share ideas and discuss the real challenges of serving in a congregation. Everyone came ready to learn, participate and seriously consider how to serve God and His people. There was a strong sense of camaraderie throughout the weekend.

The workshop also showed that leadership development isn’t just about getting ready for a future role. It’s about becoming a better disciple today. There are many ways to help in the Church, such as encouraging others, supporting the pastor, teaching,

organizing, serving behind the scenes or simply noticing a need and stepping in to help.

By Monday afternoon, everyone went home with plenty to think about and practical ideas to apply in their own congregations.

We are very grateful to everyone who attended, to the pastors who recommended them and to all who helped make the weekend possible. We pray that the lessons, friendships and encouragement from the workshop will continue to make a difference long after the weekend.

Painting the Feasts



Watch the latest video with David Teague: “Painting the Day of Atonement.”

UCG: Behind the Scenes



The Donation and Engagement Services team has been working hard to improve processes in time for the Holy Days.

Upcoming Events

September
21: Day of Atonement
26-Oct. 2: Feast of Tabernacles

October
3: Eighth Day
30-Nov 1: Houston Regional Weekend - Tomball, TX

November
13-15: Tulsa Regional Family Weekend - Tulsa, OK