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IMC News

The Whole Word for the Whole World

International Ministerial Congress, Church of God (Seventh Day)



**Lord's Supper 2022
Around the World**



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IMC News

International Ministerial Congress
of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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About:

IMC News is published by the International Ministerial Congress of the Church of God (Seventh Day), sharing our ongoing work throughout the world.

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Cover Photo:

Photo from the Lord's Supper service
in Portugal.

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The Lord's Supper

Welcome to the latest edition of IMC News. Out of hiatus and post pandemic, the past two years have been extremely valuable and reorienting in many ways, despite the sad losses of loved ones, inability to travel freely, and the challenges involved in event planning.

Despite these circumstances and many being unable to share in the emblems of the Lord's Supper again this year within our usual larger church gatherings, around the world many found additional intimacy and warmth sharing the same within emerging family and house groups. This has been especially encouraging.

In this issue, we reflect on the sharing of the Lord's Supper around the world. We're represented in 60 different countries, with differing cultures, languages and civil governments, but in Christ we are one in Spirit, Word and Truth. In Christ, we are one Body.

Jesus left us with two ordinances: that of baptism and the memorial of his death. Both centre on the redemptive process freely made available to us.

We hope this edition of IMC News, featuring snapshots of the Lord's Supper from around the world is encouraging and uplifting as we embrace our calling to proclaim the name of Christ in all we say and do.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,

John Klassek
Secretary



From the President:



Dear brothers, members and friends of the Church of God (Seventh Day) around the world. On behalf of the Officers of the International Ministerial Congress, we send greetings of love, joy and peace in the precious name of Christ Jesus.

With this edition we return to the joy of sharing with all of you the most important news of our faith community at an international level. We thank God because little by little the rhythm of life is being resumed in all those countries that were strongly affected by the COVID 19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, there were hundreds of deaths within our church. In Mexico alone more than 340 members died and, as in many other countries, the losses have been additionally painful by being unable to say goodbye to our loved ones as is normally customary. Please join us in prayer for all the families that continue to mourn, so that the God of all consolation may restore them and that the hope of the resurrection be strengthened day by day.

However, Christ's promise that the church will prevail until his coming is fulfilled and we thank God for being so. Our 7 Zone Representatives have been on the lookout and in contact with the national leaders of their countries, encouraging them to continue on the path of faith, so that they do the same with all the pastors and members in each nation. Using the tools of new technologies, we have kept in virtual contact with each other; in fact, there has

been a "closeness" between leaders and members of different countries and Zones that coincide in one of the many virtual meetings held in the last 25 months.

In this new edition of IMC News we share news and photographs of numerous congregations in different countries participating in the solemnity of the Lord's Supper on April 14, 2022.

As with every year, the commemoration of the death of Christ reminds us of the love and care he has for his children. Our faith in Him who loved us to death is confirmed. To Him be eternal glory!

We take this opportunity to invite you to continue to share photos, videos, testimonies and conference news that can help motivate our international community. We each have the capacity to build up the Body of Christ.

Finally, we invite you to share this most recent IMC News magazine and let us know what you think.

We trust in the Lord, and our desire to meet again is to celebrate the next face-to-face session of the International Ministerial Congress. More information soon.

Faternally,

Ramon Ruiz
IMC President



The Lord's Supper





The Annual Lord's Supper Service would be observed after Sunset, on Thursday, April 14, 2022 in all the churches in India, Pakistan, Nepal and Myanmar.



Lord's Supper 2022

Thursday, April 14th





CHURCH OF GOD
(SEVENTH DAY) UNITED STATES & CANADA
PRAY - PARTICIPATE - BE BLESSED

Jacob Rao, Zone 4 (Asia) Representative of International Ministerial Congress of CoG7.



Reflections

The Annual Lord's Supper Celebration is always a very special time for our local congregation. This year the service was planned around the idea of revisiting Jesus' final week with His disciples prior to His crucifixion.

Tapping the abundance of available resources, we were able to vividly recall Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, His last supper with the disciples, His Gethsemane experience, His journey along the Via Dolorosa, and the crucifixion.

We paused throughout to explore the meaning of these events, interspersed with music and videos. The impact was overwhelming. Words from a well-known song come to mind: *"Was it for crimes that I have done He groaned upon the tree? Amazing pity, grace unknown, and love beyond degree!"*



This service usually ends with a few resurrection songs thrown in. However, this year worshippers were invited to forego the resurrection element and relive what the followers of Jesus must have felt when they walked away from the place of crucifixion that evening. They didn't walk away thinking, "No big deal; He'll be out of the grave in just three short days." As the gospel writers clearly indicate, Jesus' promise that He would rise again was eclipsed by the trauma of the crucifixion and the disciples' fears of an unknown future.

Reliving this intermittent period of hopelessness and fear in real time is helpful in grasping the full weight of that experience. So we ended the service without adding the resurrection element. We were left to simply ponder the redemptive beauty of the cross. Out of the worst tragedy in the history of the world has come the greatest good the human heart can experience!

This heightened our anticipation of a resurrection celebration on Sabbath and allowed more time to focus on it. We don't do Easter (for obvious reasons), but we should do resurrection, for it is such an important part of the story of redemption. Jesus' empty tomb signals the hope which our broken 21st century world so badly needs. Christ has risen; He's risen, indeed!

*By Pastor
Whaid Rose
North Carolina, USA*



With You

a LORD'S SUPPER REFLECTION

As I began to prepare for our annual Lord's Supper service, I realized that this year would be my fortieth Lord's Supper since my baptism. I pondered the significance of that large number. Like Israel's forty-year journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land, my own journey of faith has had its twists and turns but the Lord has been faithful all the way. What I did not know at the time was that this year would be unlike the others.

For all these years, the Lord's Supper has been like a spiritual, and congregational, New Years. Looking back and looking forward together as the Body of Christ. As my anticipation for celebrating this sacred time of remembrance with my brothers and sisters mounted, I was reminded of what Jesus said to His disciples: *"With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer"* (Luke 22:15).

As the pastor of our local congregation, my personal tradition is to spend the day of Lord's Supper at the church venue, meditating on my message and readying the sanctuary and fellowship hall for our special evening service. Two words of Jesus, from Luke 22:15, had settled on my mind. "With you" stood out to me, as I cleaned, decorated and set up the church. I decided that would be the theme of my message that night.

Jesus' statement to His disciples is passionate. He piles up the words, *"with fervent desire I have desired."* Jesus couldn't wait to share this sacred intimate meal "with" His disciples. The new covenant Passover Jesus was about to inaugurate with them, would be finished the next morning "for" them. That event is the focal point of our memory and our hope. Of the bread and the cup, Jesus declared *"This is My body... given for you... My blood, which is shed for you"* (vv. 19, 20).

In saying "My", Jesus locates the magnitude of this event upon Himself. He alone is the new covenant maker. But in saying "you" (plural pronoun), He commits the keeping of this momentous event to us, His new covenant people. We remember it and reenact it as the church, for whom He desires to give Himself, and with whom He desires to be. At each Lord's Supper we remember Him, but we also remember that His sacrificial act has made us a covenant people for Him and for each other.

As I reflected on this "with you", I got more excited for the service and being with the church - my friends - as we gathered together around Jesus. Remembering my previous thirty-nine Suppers, I appreciated how meaningful those meals were, just to the extent that they were shared with my brothers and sister in Christ. I couldn't imagine a Lord's Supper without them. But I was about to.

Maybe my attraction and attention to the theme of "With You" was influenced by two years of COVID, where gathering as the Church of God for Sabbath services and even the Lord's Supper was threatened for many around the world. Thanks be to God that my local church in Jasper was able to meet, with precautions, through most the last two years, including the Lord's Suppers of 2020 and 2021.

Ironically, this year, after COVID restrictions had been lifted and serious concerns mostly dissipated, I tested positive for COVID, on the very day of Lord's Supper. I had a cold the week before and it passed within a few days. But I learned the night before Lord's Supper that a friend I'd spent time with a week earlier tested positive. So the next morning, the day of Lord's Supper, I got tested, to be on the safe side. Sure enough, after two years of dodging COVID, it finally caught me.

For the first time in forty years, Lord's Supper went on without me. Stephanie and I had a lovely service at home, just the two of us. But we were kind of lonely, keenly aware that just a few steps down the hill, our children and friends gathered without us. I learned afterward that they had a lovely service too, but the pain of separation, both for them and for us, was eye-opening for me. My "With You" sermon was not given that night, but the message did not miss its mark. It was for me all

along.

I see now that my desire to be “with you”, brethren, is an echo of the Lord’s fervent desire. It must be the supernatural desire that makes the church the church. Feeling that desire to be together in the days leading up to Lord’s Supper; to be in company together remembering what Jesus has done to make us His new covenant people; to be drawn to speak this “With You” message to you... And then to have been unable to - it only made the essential, existential truth of it resonate all the deeper in me.

I hope your desire to be with the saints is as strong and urgent as mine is to be with you. I hear on the news that many are departing from the faith. The Word tells us it would be like that. Many are not coming back to church in the post-COVID world. I hope this is not true of us in the Church of God (Seventh Day). It is not so for me. If thirty-nine Lord’s Suppers with the church, and one apart from it, has taught me anything, it’s that the journey of faith is meant to be walked together. We can’t go it alone. So may Jesus’ words be all of ours: *My fervent desire is to be with you.*

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25).

By Pastor
Jason Overman,
Jasper, USA



A NIGHT OF REVERENCE AND RECONCILIATION

I have been attending the Lord's Supper service for over 40 years and I look back on those nights with a feeling of excitement and reverence for what it has represented to me throughout those years.

The excitement of coming together with like-minded brethren and sharing the emblems of the bread and wine which are the symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ and not to forget the humility and closeness of the foot washing.

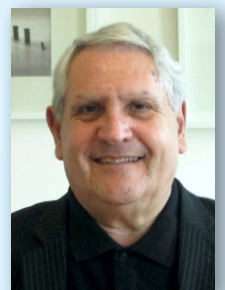
The night is filled with the reverence of our Lord's sacrifice and commitment to restore the lost back to the right standing with His Heavenly Father. The act

of reconciliation fills my heart with profound gratitude and love for my Lord and Saviour!

What a privilege and honour for me to know that Jesus invites all believers of all races and genders, to participate in His memorial service and to never forget the Lord's words “Do this in remembrance of Me”.

This years' Lord's Supper service in Adelaide had a strong spiritual atmosphere and God's grace was evident by the words spoken by the brethren who led the service. I look forward in anticipation to 2023!

By Pastor
Phil Kordabi
South Australia





**“Go
and
make
disciples.”**

IMC Annual Sabbath 5 November 2022
Proclaiming unity in our Lord Jesus Christ



CHURCH OF GOD
(SEVENTH DAY) INTERNATIONAL MINISTERIAL CONGRESS

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