



# CHURCH OF GOD

GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
UNITED STATES & CANADA

April 24, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the General Assembly of the Church of God,

Over this past year, many of us have witnessed the amazing hand of our God at work in our world and within our universities and churches! With a mission to empower the people of God to collectively build a Jesus-centered, biblically grounded Movement that brings the Kingdom to life on earth as it is in heaven, your Ministries Council is committed to serve you.

At our March meeting this year, the Ministries Council met on the beautiful campus of Mid-America Christian University in Oklahoma City. The Council thanks MACU for the wonderful gift of hospitality extended to us by President Greenwald and the university family.

Much of the meeting was devoted to preparing for our biennial convention in Tampa, June 22–25. Most notable of our time together, however, was the announcement of Jim Lyon that he would conclude his ministry as our General Director at the end of his term in June 2025. Jim has worked tirelessly among us, since beginning his tenure as General Director, to lead the Church of God in proclaiming that Jesus is the subject. With a commitment to broad, sweeping, transformative change, while tackling deep financial, cultural, and structural issues, Jim has engaged the Church of God in many changes that will guide us throughout Jim’s leadership and beyond.

The Ministries Council is working with Jim Lyon to create a smooth transition to the next chapter of leadership and, concurrently, continue the important work of Church of God Ministries. To aid this process, the Council has named the following persons to work together as a transition team: Council chair and vice chair, Esther Cottrell and Efrain Cirilo; David Hoag, Warner University President; Robert Oliver, New Covenant Pastor in Philadelphia; and Ben Shular, Church of God Ministries Chief of Staff.

The transition team is charged with developing parameters for the search team to do its work, as well as working alongside our General Director, enabling the remainder of this term to be filled with focused leadership. It is Jim’s commitment to avoid the “lame duck syndrome” and serve with excellence and faithfulness through the remainder of his term.

A search team will be named in a few months to do the important work of discerning and recommending our next General Director. Additionally, a prayer team is being formed to bathe the search process in the grace and wisdom of our Lord.

While we all understand the need for confidentiality to be honored in the transition and search process, it is the commitment of the Ministries Council to keep you, the members of the General Assembly, informed of the process. We do eagerly request your support and prayers as we embark upon this journey. We also request your support and prayers for Jim as he discerns divine direction to guide his steps in leading the Church for the remainder of his time as General Director.

It is our fervent hope that you will make space in your calendars and budgets to join us this year in Tampa. We have much to accomplish together, and your voice is important!

Living in the Resurrection Hope,

Esther Cottrell  
General Assembly Chair