

SEMC-Community of Christ Special World Conference Edition

June -2026



Hope Is Here: A Reflection of World Conference

◆ Inside the Temple



*Doctrine and Covenants 161:1a and 2a
1a "Lift up your eyes and fix them on the place
beyond the horizon to which you are sent. Journey
in trust, assured that the great and marvelous
work is for this time and for all time." 2a "Become
a people of the Temple-those who see violence but
proclaim peace, who feel conflict yet extend the
hand of reconciliation, who encounter broken
spirits and find pathways for healing."*

As Delegates, we had the opportunity to share a transformative week in connection with brother and sisters from around the USA and world. Many of these moments were spent in deep conversations, laughter and worship in the temple. This beautifully unique building always captures my spirit deeply as I sit, breath and look up into the spiral. The spiral for me is a reminder of growth and the reflection of journeying from the past to the future. It teaches me to listen with the shell to my ear to capture the ebbs and flows of my spiritual journey. As I listen, I am reminded to courageously choose love and live with hopeful anticipation. It's always adapting and evolving and fills me with hope as God is weaving our divine story together.

We are being summoned now to become "Pioneers in uncharted territory..." -President Stassi Cramm
What is this season of holy risking stirring in you as we move forth in faith, hope and confidence of the uncharted territory ahead? - Andrea Johnson

Hope is something we choose and is grounded in the faith
and trust of the Lord

Reflections, Experiences and Hope Statements From SEMC Delegates



There is something very profound and special serving the sacraments. This was my very first time serving at World Conference. It was such an honor and privilege to serve Apostle Art Smith and his family. There was deep rooted family connection feeling. I feel so much hope with the energetic spirit from our new leaders. As a young adult, I have renewed hope for the future. - Chelsea SantaLucia (Savannah, GA-Bluffton, HHI,SC)

Attending World Conference this year was a blessing for me. Like so many of you, our congregations have gotten to be on the small size and although we still have vibrant worship, ten to twenty people cannot possibly replicate the experience of over 1500 people in the Auditorium singing, "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning," in multiple languages with Jan Kraybill on the pipe organ. That alone stirred a feeling of Pentecost similar to what the early Saints in Kirkland must have felt when it was first sung.

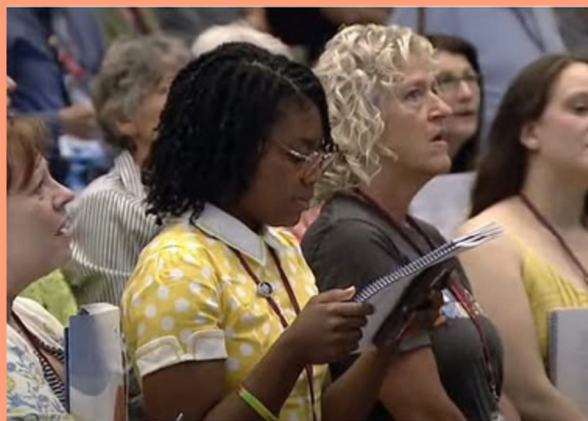
The experiences of worship were uplifting. Praying and singing in English, Spanish and French alongside with brothers and sisters in Christ gave me a new sense of being in a larger worldwide Community of Christ.

I heard testimonies from brothers and sisters around the world on legislation regarding climate issues and the impacts to their living. This made me keenly aware of my responsibility to practice worldwide stewardship. As a sixth-generation member of the church, it was a profound experience to raise my hand in support of Stassi Cramm's call, as I felt connectedness through the generations and God's call to me in this day and time. When my great-great-grandparents joined the church in the 1800's, Joseph III would have been president of the church. Many things had to happen in order for me to still be a part of a movement that has faithfully responded to God's call through each of the previous Presidents and Prophets as God has brought new light and truth into the world.



I was keenly aware of the beautiful diversity of our faith community. Embedded within that are strong opinions and beliefs that vary widely. What continues to stand out is the power of faithful disagreement, that was exercised so well as to preserve our unity. - Ann Martin (Atlanta North, GA)

My first time attending World Conference was in 2000 for the name change. After attending this conference, I wonder why I waited 25 years. What gives me hope is seeing IN person how personable and gracious our World Church leadership is towards everyone. It makes me proud to be a part of a world-wide community who accepts and values the worth of all persons, no matter what. -Christine Gillum (Kernersville, NC)



It was inspiring to see so many young adults not only present at the conference but serving as delegates. It gave me renewed hope for the future of the church. The diversity in leadership of the church assured me of being worldwide community.

There was respectful disagreement that took place as we discussed difficult questions and legislation. This is such a sharp contrast to what we see in our current society. To me, experiencing this was a glimpse of what a Zion community can and should be.

Attending World Conference was a mountain top experience for me. If you have never had an opportunity to go, I would encourage you to find a way for 2028. -Kenny Jones (Atlanta North, GA)

Apostle Joey Williams states that “Risk is active Hope.”

Therefore, if faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen, then risk indeed would have to be the invisible or visible action of hope. So, part of hope in mission would be the action of placing our faith in God and risking that which is new to have a positive impact on the lives of whom we have in contact. That through us, the arms and feet of Jesus, their lives may be changed by the God who makes the impossible, possible. That to me is hope and what I’m encouraged because of World Conference. - William “Bill” Cozzens-Bryant (Greenville, SC)



I went there in hopes of reigniting my love for the church. Sometimes it feels like a big struggle when you are so far from people. And it did not disappoint! Just watching people interact was breath taking. It was a joy. I even had my own “angel” pushing me to talk to strangers. She said you never know who you will meet and she was right! (Thanks Marcia)

It was spectacular to see our new President Prophet and the new Apostles. Even though I do not know them personally, you could feel their spirit. And the Spirit of God allowed me to be reassured that we are in a dynamic time and i certainly want to be a part of it. I love our church and the people who make it special. And that week gave me the lift I needed to continue on our mission. God really is good! He hears my pleas and responds with a grace I can’t believe. There is so much hope! - Gina McNeill (Charleston, SC)



While I was very excited to witness our first woman Prophet/President of the church, Stassi Cramm be ordained, as well as our first African man ordained to the First Presidency, Bunda Chibwe, my sense of hope blossomed on Tuesday night with the ordinations of six leaders younger than me. Not only is this refreshing, energizing and exciting to have the next generation leads us onward but some of those ordained are individuals whom I refer to as friend. I am excited to journey forward with my friends! -Mark Johnson (Savannah, GA -Bluffton, HHI, SC)



While at conference I had taken time to visit the peace garden and when I stepped in there, I was welcomed by French Polynesians singing together in their own native tongue. I felt very overcome with the presence of the spirit. I do not know French but could recognize the tune in my heart. It was peaceful, I understood what it meant to be family, one in Christ. This experience along with so many others during World Conference affirmed to me we are united in our diversity. I am overjoyed to belong to this family and feel hopeful for what our future holds. -Kathy Johnson (Charleston, SC)



The personal mantra for Stassi Cramm is ONWARD. I very much felt that call to each of us blessed to attend World Conference. My initial response is Empowerment and Transformation. There was prevalent a compelling energy of embarking on a new journey together. This was evident in our new Prophet and President's words on Thursday evening - Choose Hope-First Presidency Service.

"The Holy Spirit is alive among us. Friends we are part of something scared and still unfolding. Hope is not something we stumble upon; hope is something we choose. And our collective story reminds us: it is especially in the hardest times that choosing Hope becomes an act of faith. An act of courage." And from First Presidency, Janne' Grover "The Pentecost experience of the early church was a profound, SPIRITUAL AWAKENING and deep recognition of God's active presence. The invitation to spiritual awakening today enlivens us to new life in Christ and transforms how we see the world and how we engage in mission." What is the world like when God's will is done? Jan Flanery - (Kernersville, NC)



I have not been to World Conference in over 10 years. The enthusiasm and participation from all ages, the willingness to continue dialogue with peaceful disagreement was honored. There was lots of love from all parts of the world. A special week as well with our host family Carolyn and Ralph Williams, it was like coming home at the end of a day and your parents wanted to hear all about your day. I felt at home all week. I felt so much love from them as well. - Marcia Vlasnik (Atlanta North, GA)



God is doing a new thing. The seeds are barely beginning to sprout. Keep watching. Keep watering. We each have a new song to sing. Now is the time discern our new songs! - Sharon Hines (Greenville, SC)

Reflection experience from home on how the Spirit touched and moved.

Can you imagine the “What ifs?” We know, we do the same thing that you are doing. We all seem to go to all the things that haven’t gone as we hoped. But are you ready? Are you ready WHEN we get it RIGHT?

Prophet and President Stassi Cramm share that if we don’t live in fear and as a faith community will practice daily discernment about the path forward and truly listen and act on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will become pioneers on our spirit filled journey to build the cause of Zion.

Like Stassi said, “who doesn’t like a GOOD adventure!” Let’s join together on this adventure to seek the lost and build the cause of Zion. Let’s go SEMC!!!! -Candy Melsen (Atlanta North, GA)

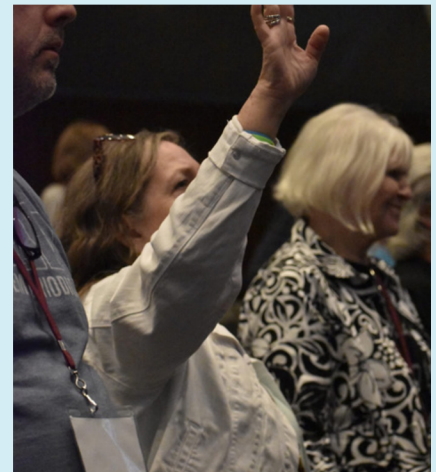
News - Post World Conference

The week of World Conference may be done but the experiences can be revisited online:

I encourage you to go to www.cofchrist.org and under the CONNECT tab there is a news tab. Once in the news you will see opportunities to connect to World Conference Links via YouTube. (You can also subscribe to Community of Christs YouTube channel to have quick access)

There are links for the worship service, spiritual practice videos, hope is...videos and a flickr album.

“In The Know” with Susan Naylor and Jenn Killpack will share highlights and reflect on the spirit of the conference on June 23rd at 1:00PM EST on Facebook and YouTube.



SEMC News and Events

We have a few events coming up that you can add to your calendar so that you can participate within the mission center.

- June 28th - Greenville, SC Community of Christ is participating in Greenville Pride if anyone would like to attend and support. Begins at 9:00AM
- July 11th-19th-SPEC-Graceland University. Deadline is approaching (June 29th) Holly Ellis is Delegation Leader (850)572-6954
- July 20th at 11:00AM EST -Greenville, SC Community of Christ and Zoom. Jared Munson will be sharing in a round table worship regarding outreach. This is a great opportunity to learn and gain some great ideas.
- August 28th-Sept 1st SEMC Reunion at Nosoca Pines-Theme: Choose Hope with special guest ministry: Apostle Carrie Welch, Field Support Minister Blake Smith and Young Adult Minister Tyler Ward. REGISTRATION IS OPEN AT: <https://www.cofchristsemc.org>





Prayer Requests:

- Gordan and Kay Shippy: Kay has been taken home and now on hospice
- John Gailbraith's sister
- Ann and John Gailbraith's lawn guy. He was hit by an 18-wheeler and in critical care. Young family at home.
- Ben Melsen: Continued healing of foot
- Ray and Zee: desiring to get baptized and having conversations with family.
- Harold Weeks Family: Harold passed away
- Raymond "Doc" Scott Family: Doc passed away
- Dan and Miram Land: Dan has aggressive form of cancer and starting chemo
- Tyler and Dee: Tyler's son getting married. Gathering with families and limited English, peace.
- Ken and Lynn Flessas: Continued healing and help with memory
- Patty Seery: Unexpected loss of brother
- Esther: Health concerns



Prayer Requests Continued:

- Arlene Schatzer: Andrea's mother is still battling Stage III CHF and Stage III Kidney Failure along with infection.
- Joe Houston: Continued healing from hospitalization
- Darlene Hartwig: brother, Jerry and partner Audrey
- Jan Flanery: Jessy's family, Grandma Sue will be 100 in Sept and Aunt Connie Brown has pancreatic cancer.
- Gillum family: Healing and reconciliation
- Thomas: Ongoing surgeries



Doctrine and Covenants 161:7

The Spirit of the One you follow is the spirit of love and peace. That Spirit seeks to abide in the hearts of those who would embrace its call and live its message. The path will not always be easy, the choices will not always be clear, but the cause is sure and the Spirit will bear witness to the truth, and those who live in the truth will know HOPE and the joy of discipleship in the community of Christ. Amen