

# OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

March 1999

For United States of America

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## Worldwide Commemoration of Christ's Death

<sup>1</sup> Jehovah has showered us with many gifts. The sum total of his goodness and loving-kindness is eloquently described as "his indescribable free gift." Yes, the "undeserved kindness of God" is so marvelous that to describe it surpasses our ability.—2 Cor. 9:14, 15.

<sup>2</sup> **His Greatest Gift:** Jesus Christ, as mankind's Ransomer, is the greatest gift of all. In expressing his great love for the world of mankind, Jehovah gave his beloved and only-begotten Son. (John 3:16) Such an undeserved blessing from God deserves worldwide commemoration. When and how? On the evening of Thursday, April 1, 1999, Christians around the

world will commemorate the Lord's Evening Meal, observing the Memorial of the greatest of all sacrifices.—1 Cor. 11:20, 23-26.

<sup>3</sup> Christ died for us even "while we were yet sinners," and we can show our personal gratitude by observing the Memorial of his death and by inviting others to be present with us on that all-important occasion.—Rom. 5:8.

<sup>4</sup> **The Most Important Event:** The observance of Christ's death highlights primarily that he upheld God's sovereignty flawlessly. It also reminds us that we can enjoy a clean standing before Jehovah by exercising faith in Jesus' sacrifice, thus be-

ing assured of salvation. (Acts 4:12) Truly, this is the most important event of the year!

<sup>5</sup> Love for our neighbors is manifested in our inviting them to observe the Lord's Evening Meal with us. The benefits of the ransom remain available to millions who learn of its excelling value. (Phil. 3:8) Those exercising faith in Christ's sacrifice can gain the firm hope of everlasting life.—John 17:3.

<sup>6</sup> The Memorial season provides special opportunities for us to show appreciation for the surpassing undeserved kindness of God. This is an excellent time to share zealously in preaching the good news of God's Kingdom. Great benefits await all who reflect prayerfully on Jehovah's indescribable free gift and arrange to be present at this year's celebration of the Lord's Evening Meal!

## Invite Them to Come

*How can you give invites if nothing?*  
<sup>1</sup> An invitation issued centuries ago is now being sounded in 233 lands around the world: "Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, . . . and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths." (Isa. 2:3) Directing people to Jehovah's organization is one of the best ways we can help them to make spiritual progress that leads to everlasting life.

<sup>2</sup> Some publishers may hesitate to invite people to the Kingdom Hall until after they have demonstrated considerable progress in a home Bible study. However, sometimes people will begin attending congregation meetings even before a Bible study can be started with them. We should not delay in ex-

*anyone come? the invitation*  
*gives me a sample*  
tending a hearty invitation and encouraging people to come to the meetings.

<sup>3</sup> **What to Do:** Make good use of handbills<sup>1</sup> to inform people about our local meetings. Mention that the meetings are free and that no collections are ever taken. Explain how the meetings are conducted. Point out that they are actual Bible study courses and that study material is provided for all to follow along. Call attention to the variety in backgrounds and walks of life of those attending. Mention that they are people from the area and that children of all ages are welcome to come. We should invite those with whom we study, offering to assist them in any way to attend.

<sup>4</sup> One of the last things recorded in the Bible is a warm invitation to partake of Jehovah's provisions for life: "And the spirit and the bride keep on saying: 'Come!' . . . And let anyone thirsting come; let anyone that wishes take life's water free." (Rev. 22:17) There is no substitute for inviting others to attend our meetings. *Amick*

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 60:8 prophetically portrays the hundreds of thousands of new praisers now coming into the congregations of God's people as doves that "come flying just like a cloud, and like doves to their birdhouse holes." We can all invite new ones to our meetings and make them feel welcome. In this way, we will be cooperating with Jehovah as he speeds up the ingathering work.—Isa. 60:22. *Taylor*



# SERVICE MEETINGS FOR MARCH

## Week Starting March 1

Song 33

**8 min:** Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

**17 min:** "Worldwide Commemoration of Christ's Death." Questions and answers. Include comments on February 1, 1997, *Watchtower*, pages 11-12, paragraphs 10-14. Emphasize how Jehovah's great love prompted him to provide the ransom for us.

**20 min:** Compelling Reasons to Auxiliary Pioneer in April and May. Talk and audience discussion conducted by the service overseer, urging all to give serious consideration to auxiliary pioneering. Review the adjustments in the hour requirement for regular and auxiliary pioneers, as presented in the January 1999 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, page 7. This adjustment should enable many more to enjoy the privilege of full-time service. Explain how our appreciation for Christ's sacrifice compels us to exert ourselves in preaching to others. (2 Cor. 5:14, 15) This year the Memorial falls on the first day of April. What a fine stimulus for all Kingdom publishers to devote the entire month to increased service activity! Review selected highlights from the February 1997 and March 1998 *Our Kingdom Ministry* inserts dealing with auxiliary pioneer service. Consider ways to adapt sample schedules that were provided. Review local service arrangements, which offer ample opportunity to participate in the ministry with others. Encourage publishers to obtain auxiliary pioneer applications after the meeting.

Song 44 and concluding prayer.

## Week Starting March 8

Song 52

**10 min:** Local announcements. Accounts report.

**20 min:** "Invite Them to Come." Questions and answers. Emphasize the need always to direct newly interested ones to congregation meetings. Demonstrate a discussion with an interested person, using the material in the *Knowledge* book, page 159, paragraph 20, and pages 161-3, paragraphs 5-8. Encourage everyone to put forth a special effort to help Bible stu-

dents and other interested ones to attend the Memorial on April 1. Display a copy of the printed invitation, and explain how it can be used effectively. All should begin distributing Memorial invitations this week.

**15 min:** "How Family Members Cooperate for a Full Share in Congregation Meetings." Discussion by a family group. As they comment on main points in the article, they discuss how they can prepare for meetings as a family. They discuss ways in which they can help each other to participate and what must be done for the family to get to meetings on time.

Song 62 and concluding prayer.

## Week Starting March 15

Song 56

**10 min:** Local announcements. Consider "Will You Attend?"

**15 min:** "Ministerial Servants Render Valuable Service." Talk by a capable ministerial servant. Review main points covered in *Our Ministry* book, pages 57-9. Explain how ministerial servants are used locally to help the congregation.

**20 min:** Enjoying the 1999 Yearbook. Discussion between husband and wife. Husband explains that the *Yearbook* was first published in book form in 1927 and that for over 70 years, it has included the worldwide report of Jehovah's Witnesses. They review highlights of the "1998 Grand Totals," on page 31. Then they discuss "A Letter From the Governing Body," on pages 3-5, and comment on how they will follow through on the encouragement given.

Song 68 and concluding prayer.

## Week Starting March 22

Song 162

**10 min:** Local announcements. Announce the names of those who will be auxiliary pioneering in April. Explain that it is not too late to submit an application. Outline entire schedule of meetings for service planned for April. Encourage all to follow the Memorial Bible reading scheduled for March 27-April 1, as outlined in *Examining the Scriptures Daily*—1999 and on the 1999 Calendar.

**15 min:** Prepare for the Memorial. A talk. All should make plans to help

Bible students and other interested ones attend the Memorial. New ones attending may not understand who may partake of the emblems or the significance of this observance. Review what is stated in the April 1, 1996, *Watchtower*, pages 6-8, and show how we can help a newly interested one grasp the meaning and purpose of this celebration. Conclude by reviewing "Memorial Reminders" and outlining local Memorial arrangements.

**20 min:** *What Happens to Us When We Die?* Elder discusses value and use of brochure with two or three capable publishers. We became better acquainted with this brochure when we studied it at the Congregation Book Study. Are we using it effectively in field service? The panel discusses the following: Why are many people interested in this subject? In contrast with false religious teachings, what hope does this brochure highlight? How can we use the questions on the back cover to stimulate interest? What opportunities exist to offer this brochure? Demonstrate a presentation using the scriptures in paragraph 14 on page 27. Encourage all to be alert to make good use of this brochure.

Song 92 and concluding prayer.

## Week Starting March 29

Song 111

**12 min:** Local announcements. Remind all to turn in their field service reports for March. We will offer *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* during April. Display current issues of the magazines, suggest articles that may be highlighted, and mention some specific talking points. All should carry along the *Require* brochure and use it to start Bible studies with interested people.

**15 min:** Local needs.

**18 min:** How Should We React to Counsel? Talk by an elder. All of us are subject to counsel related to our attitude, conduct, associations, or participation in congregation activities. Sometimes we are inclined to resist counsel or to take offense. A willingness to accept and apply counsel can be crucial to our spiritual well-being. Review essential factors that emphasize reasons why we should accept and appreciate counsel.—See the April 1, 1987, *Watchtower*, pages 27-30.

Song 118 and concluding prayer.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **March:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. A special effort will be made to start home Bible studies. **April and May:** Individual copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Have *Require* brochure available for interested people, and endeavor to start home Bible studies. **June:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*.

■ Publishers who wish to serve as auxiliary pioneers in April and May should turn in their application early. This will help the elders to make necessary field service arrangements and have sufficient magazines and other literature on hand.

■ The presiding overseer or someone designated by him should audit the congregation's accounts on March 1 or as soon as possible thereafter. When this has been done, make an announcement to the congregation after the next accounts report is read.

■ The Memorial will be held Thursday, April 1, 1999. If your congregation normally has meetings on Thursday, these are to be switched to another day of the week if the Kingdom Hall is available. If this is not possible and your Service Meeting is affected, the parts that are particularly applicable to your congregation may be incorpo-

rated into another Service Meeting.

■ Those associated with a congregation should send all new and renewal subscriptions for *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, including their personal subscriptions, through the congregation.

■ The Society does not fill individual publishers' requests for literature. The presiding overseer should arrange for an announcement to be made *each month* before the congregation's monthly request for literature is sent to the Society so that all interested in obtaining personal literature items may advise the brother handling literature. Please keep in mind which publications are special-request items.

■ It is important that groups of 20 or more persons planning to visit the Society's facilities first correspond by mail with the Central Tour Desk at 100 Watchtower Drive, Patterson, NY 12563-9204. The Central Tour Desk will care for groups that will be visiting the Society's facilities at Brooklyn, Wallkill, and Patterson, New York, or the Assembly Hall at Jersey City, New Jersey. Please provide information on the number coming and the dates and times for visiting each location. The Society will provide a description of the tours that are available as well as a map giving directions to each location. Before your visit, please review the October 1, 1998, letter addressed to all congregations in the

United States. LODGING INFORMATION HAS BEEN SENT TO THE CONGREGATION ELDERS AND MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE CONGREGATION SECRETARY.

■ On Wednesday, May 19, 1999, the Society's facilities in Brooklyn, Patterson, and Wallkill will be closed to visitors. There will be no arrangements for tours or for congregations to pick up literature on that day.

■ A packet of legal material is available to assist publishers who are involved in lawsuits over child custody and visitation matters in which our religion is under attack. The packet should be requested by the *body of elders only* in a case in which it is evident that the publisher's religious beliefs will be at issue. For those facing secular issues on child custody or visitation, helpful information can be found in *Awake!* of December 8, 1997, pages 3-12, in *Awake!* of October 22, 1988, pages 2-14, and on the chart found in *Awake!* of April 22, 1991, page 9.

## Memorial Reminders

The Memorial observance this year falls on Thursday, April 1. The elders should give attention to the following matters:

■ In setting the time for the meeting, make sure that the emblems will not be passed until after sundown.

■ Everyone, including the speaker, should be informed of the exact time and location of the observance.

■ The appropriate type of bread and wine should be obtained and made ready.—See the February 15, 1985, *Watchtower*, page 19.

■ Plates, glasses, and a suitable table and tablecloth should be brought to the hall and put in place in advance.

■ The Kingdom Hall or other place of meeting should be thoroughly cleaned ahead of time.

■ Attendants and servers should be selected and instructed in advance about their duties and the proper procedure.

■ Arrangements should be made to serve any of the anointed who are infirm and unable to be present.

■ When more than one congregation is scheduled to use the same Kingdom Hall, there should be good coordination among congregations so as to avoid unnecessary congestion in the lobby or entryway, on the public sidewalks, and in the parking lot.

## Will You Attend?

Attend what? The Friday sessions of the 1999 "God's Prophetic Word" District Convention. Last year in the United States branch territory, the peak attendance on Friday was 233,186 less than the peak attendance on Sunday. This means that over 16 percent of the total number attending on Sunday missed about one third of the convention program. Will you arrange your affairs to be present for all three days of the 1999 convention? We hope so.

## DECEMBER SERVICE REPORT

Number of:		Av. Hrs.	Av. Mags.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bi.St.
Sp'l Pios.	160	120.9	92.8	51.4	4.2
Pios.	74,781	68.8	44.3	22.1	1.7
Aux. Pios.	17,865	56.5	38.9	15.2	1.0
Pubs.	835,182	9.0	7.5	3.5	0.3
TOTAL	927,988			Baptized: 2,330	



## How Family Members Cooperate for a Full Share —In Congregation Meetings

<sup>1</sup> Christian families must heed the command to gather together at congregation meetings. (Heb. 10:24, 25) With good cooperation, all can succeed in preparing for, attending, and participating in the meetings. Family circumstances vary, but there are things that a Christian husband, a believing wife, or a single parent can do to promote family togetherness in spiritual matters, regardless of the number of children in the home and their ages.—Prov. 1:8.

<sup>2</sup> **Take Time to Prepare:** Family members cooperate to see that each one is suitably prepared for congregation meetings. Many consider the article for the weekly *Watchtower* Study together. Some prepare for the Congregation Book Study or read the weekly Bible

reading as a family. The objective is to get the main points in mind prior to attending the meetings. In that way, all will benefit more from what is heard and will be equipped to participate as there is opportunity.—1 Tim. 4:15.

<sup>3</sup> **Plan to Participate:** Everyone in the family should have the goal of declaring his hope before others by commenting at meetings. (Heb. 10:23) Does a family member need help or encouragement to do this? What assistance does each one need in preparing assignments for the Theocratic Ministry School? Wives appreciate it when their husbands take an interest and perhaps offer an idea for a fitting illustration or a practical setting. Parents need not feel that they should prepare parts

for their young children. Doing so could stifle the children's initiative. But parents can help their young ones and listen as they rehearse aloud.—Eph. 6:4.

<sup>4</sup> **Organize to Attend:** Children can be taught from an early age to be dressed and ready to leave for the meeting at a designated time. Family members should cooperate in caring for household chores so that there are no delays.—See the suggestions in the books *Family Happiness*, page 112, and *Young People Ask*, pages 316-17.

<sup>5</sup> Parents and children alike can reflect on the words of Joshua of old, who said: "As for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah." Then be resolved to cooperate for a full share in congregation meetings.—Josh. 24:15.

## Ministerial Servants Render Valuable Service

<sup>1</sup> "They have demonstrated themselves to be truly dedicated men whose faith has been made manifest in zealous Kingdom service and in helping others to be made firm in the faith." So says *Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry*, on page 57, about ministerial servants. Indeed, the spiritual example set by our ministerial servants is worthy of imitation. Working along with them and with the elders "makes for the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."—Eph. 4:16.

<sup>2</sup> Ministerial servants perform a vital function in the congregation. Think of all their valuable services! They care for accounts, literature, magazines, subscriptions, and territories; they act as attendants, handle sound

equipment, and help maintain the Kingdom Hall. They participate in the Theocratic Ministry School and Service Meeting. Some of them may even give public talks or conduct some of the congregation meetings. Like members of the physical body, ministerial servants perform services that we need.—1 Cor. 12:12-26.

<sup>3</sup> Seeing ministerial servants cooperate harmoniously with the elders as part of one servant body with mutual respect and understanding encourages others to do the same. (Col. 2:19) By faithfully fulfilling their responsibilities week after week and by showing a personal interest in others, they contribute toward a spiritually progressive congregation.

<sup>4</sup> What can we do to show our appreciation for the hardworking ministerial servants? We need to be familiar with their assigned duties and show a readiness to cooperate when our assistance is needed. By word or deed, we can let them know that their work is appreciated. (Prov. 15:23) Those who work hard in our behalf are deserving of sincere recognition.—1 Thess. 5:12, 13.

<sup>5</sup> God's Word establishes the role and qualifications of ministerial servants. (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12, 13) Their valuable sacred service is indispensable to the function of the congregation. Such men merit our continued encouragement, as they all have "plenty to do in the work of the Lord."—1 Cor. 15:58.