

United Church of God, *an International Association*



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The Night to be Much Observed

Doctrinal Statement

Approved by the Council of Elders

All scriptures are quoted from *The Holy Bible, New King James Version* (© 1988 Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee) unless otherwise noted.

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The evening at the beginning of the First Day of Unleavened Bread is a very special evening in the Church of God. On this evening most members invite other members to their homes to enjoy a meal and fellowship. Others may choose to gather in a restaurant or similar location to celebrate the evening. There was a time in the Church of God when all members gathered together as congregations to celebrate the *Night to be Much Observed*. Currently, most members gather in small groups in homes or other locations.

In the United Church of God it is our desire to continue this very special observance. We find mention of this evening in Exodus 12:42 (KJV) “*It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.*” Other translations render this expression: “*night of watching,*” and “*to keep vigil.*” We celebrate the evening in commemoration of these events from long ago as described in the pages of the Bible. We also recognize the symbolism for a Christian today. As the Israelites departed from Egypt, so must we repent of sin. As we remove leavening from our homes, we symbolize our repentance of sin and our acceptance of Christ’s sacrifice as our Passover. It is only through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ that our sins may be removed from us.

The *Night to be Much Observed* begins the first holy day of the spring. It is a joyous occasion that we celebrate in worship of the great God. If you plan to celebrate this special evening in a restaurant or other public place, we recommend that you make plans in advance to have a private room or some location where you may be able to truly enjoy the fellowship of your brothers and sisters in Christ.

[Postscript: We highly recommend that the ministry take the time through sermons and announcements to remind the brethren about the deep meaning and significance of this Holy Day season.]