

Frequently Asked Questions about the Church of God, Big Sandy.

Q: *Are services open to the public?*

A: Yes, anybody is welcome to attend Sabbath services, bible studies and Holy Day services.

Q: *Do I have to agree with all your doctrines before I attend?*

A: No. However, familiarity with what we teach will help you get the most out of services.

Q: *Where would I find out what you believe?*

A: We have our Statement of Beliefs posted in our web site at;

<http://www.churchofgodbigandy.com>

Q: *Can I just listen to the services – without being there in person?*

A: Yes. We provide audio hook-up to our services every Sabbath day, special occasions and Holy day services. The number and codes are posted in our web site.

Q: *Can I view weekly services – without being there in person?*

A: Yes. We provide video streaming hook-up to our services every Sabbath day, special occasions and Holy day services. The connection requires high-speed connectivity for best viewing. A slower speed service is also available for those on dial-up connections. Details and links are provided in our web site.

Q: *I can't connect during services, but I still would like to hear some of the sermons. Can I download the messages?*

A: We normally have two 30-45 minute messages during each service. After the first message, we upload the message to our web site. At the conclusion of services, we upload the second message to our web site.

You should be able to listen to the first message within 15 minutes of its conclusion. We have an extensive archive of messages.

Feel free to download and play any messages from our web site.

Q: *I can't connect, but I still would like to hear some of the sermons. Do you send tapes?*

A: We don't send cassette tapes anymore. We send a monthly CD containing an MP3 audio version of sermons, bible studies and seminars.

Check our web site to request that you be added to our mailing list.

Q: *Do the majority of the people that attend leave United in 1998?*

A: No. The majority of the people who attend left the Worldwide Church of God in 1995, and subsequent years over doctrinal questions.

Q: *Was the Big Sandy Church part of the United Church of God - aia?*

A: No. The Big Sandy Church of God was independently organized and incorporated in Texas in April 1995. The Big Sandy Church has had a board of trustees to attend to financial and administrative matters.

The UCG rules of association did not contemplate organizations based in the United States.

Q: *How many employees do you have?*

A: One. Our pastor Dave Havir is the only employee of the Big Sandy Church.

Q: *How much are the trustees paid?*

A: Since its inception, the trustees serve without compensation.

Many people volunteer their services to see that the congregation is served properly. Countless hours go into the preparation of messages, special music, seminars, conferences, meetings, serving our Cub Scout troops, cleaning, landscaping, duplicating, cooking, printing, teaching, etc. by many people who willingly donate time, finances, talent and support to the programs of the church.

We are very grateful for the many hours of our unpaid volunteers who sacrifice to make our congregation a reality. They all strive to serve God by serving people.

Q: *How do you pay for the building?*

A: The Big Sandy Church is a non-profit organization and we gratefully receive tithes, offerings, and other donations from people. Each donor is issued a quarterly receipt as well as year-end receipt for his contributions.

We do appreciate the support of many people around the United States, Canada and other countries around the world.

Q: *How do you pay for all the things you provide?*

A: The board of trustees has a budget committee which works out details for a yearly budget, taking into account potential donations, financing for programs, assistance programs and activities of the Big Sandy Church.

Once a year the trustees review and approve the church's budget. The Pastor and the treasurer monitor expenditures and disburse funds as needed. An accounting firm audits the financial statements every year.

Any left over funds, not spent are added to our reserve funds.

Q: *I want to make a donation for a specific purpose, say, overseas outreach. How do I do that?*

A: The Big Sandy Church does maintain funds which are allocated for specific purposes. Many people see some of the needs we have and want to make a contribution for a specific purpose. Some of the funds in the past have been for outreach work, improvements to our building, parking lot work, new CD duplication equipment, feast sites, computer equipment, Thailand teacher volunteers, conferences, Spanish-speaking areas, etc. etc. It is best to let us know what you would want to do and we can then advise you about how to go about designating funds for the area you would like to see funded.

Q: *Were any of the people who attend with you disfellowshipped from other churches?*

A: In 1995, when many left the WCG, there was not any specific disfellowshippment of people. Some who were employees of the WCG or Ambassador University lost their jobs because they could not, in good conscience, subscribe to the new teachings.

Our pastor, David Havir, was publicly disfellowshipped from the WCG in 1995. His ministerial credentials were revoked as well at that time. Some of our members also were sent letters stating that they were no longer members of the WCG.

Q: *How many members do you have?*

A: The Big Sandy Church does not keep member rolls. Some who attend regularly would prefer not to be considered members. Some who attend in other states consider themselves member of our congregation. We have many friends, visitors, neighbors and members who meet every Sabbath.

Average weekly attendance fluctuates. We do not keep track of how many connect to our services on the internet or audio hook up.

Q: *Are your Board of Trustees' monthly meetings secret?*

A: No. Each trustee represents the congregation who nominated and elected the individual to serve. We have no secrets from the congregation. The Board of Trustees represent the congregation. Anybody is welcome to attend. If anybody has a topic or matter to be considered, he should present the topic or concern to the president of the board who has the administrative authority to bring the topic for discussion at any of the regularly-scheduled monthly meetings. The president conducts the monthly meetings following an agenda set up ahead of time. The secretary records the proceedings of the meeting, including any decisions made during the meeting, i.e. budget approvals, purchases or extraordinary expenses, feast site locations, etc.

A summary of the proceedings and topics is usually published at the next available Church announcement bulletin. The bulletin is published on our web site and distributed to all who attend services on the Sabbath.