

# General Council's Indy return features new events

BY DAN VAN VEEN



The RCA Dome will host exhibits, business sessions and youth activities.

This year, in addition to all adult evening services being available online (at [www.ag.org](http://www.ag.org)), all plenary sessions and business sessions will be streamed live. INSP Networks will provide live coverage of the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday adult services.

Thousands of Assemblies of God adherents will visit downtown Indianapolis as the 52nd General Council convenes Aug. 8-11.

Some may find surprising that Indianapolis is rich in Pentecostal heritage. For example, historic AG figures J. Roswell Flower and Thomas F. Zimmerman Jr. both have roots in Indianapolis, and the periodical now known as *Today's Pentecostal Evangel* started in a suburb of Indiana's largest city.

This year also marks the fourth time the U.S. Assemblies of God has gathered in the capital of the Hoosier State — three times for General Council (1989, 1997 and this year) and once for the 2000 Celebration gathering of AG adherents from 147 countries.

This year's events will again be a split venue. Exhibits, business sessions and youth activities will all be located in the Indianapolis Convention Center and RCA Dome, with adult evening services at the Conseco Fieldhouse.

Events will get under way Aug. 7 as registration opens for both youth and adults. The National Youth Convention opening rally starts things off at 7 p.m. with speaker Reggie Dabbs.

As the youth rally begins, pastors, lay leaders and workers are invited to participate in the opening of the first-ever Leadership Seminar. Offering more than 50 sessions from nearly 20 tracks, this two-day event provides expert training and tips. Areas offered include evangelism, worship, church

planting, digital communications, writing and many others (see [www.ag.org](http://www.ag.org) for a complete list of tracks, sessions and speakers).

"I am so pleased by the number of sessions that are planned dealing with all areas of the church," says General Superintendent Thomas E. Trask. "The sessions will be informative, inspirational and challenging, as well as helpful to our laity and pastors."

Trask will be featured in the keynote rally on Wednesday, Assistant General Superintendent Charles Crabtree will speak Thursday and World Missions Executive Director L. John Bueno will speak at the world evangelism service on Friday.

At the National Youth Convention, Russ Evans opens on Wednesday with Rich Wilkerson speaking the next day. The National Youth Ministries team of Jay Mooney, Rick Lorimer and Rod Whitlock will share the podium Friday while Jeanne Mayo will minister in Saturday's youth-adult combined service in the RCA Dome.

Along with the spiritual renewal of the evening rallies, the business sessions are one of the most important aspects of General Council. This year, in addition to the positions of general secretary and executive director of World Missions being considered for a vote, the election of a new assistant superintendent will occur, as Crabtree has announced he is stepping down. The assistant

superintendent oversees AG Church Ministries, which includes Girls Ministries, Royal Rangers, Christian School Services, Men's Ministries/Light for the Lost, Youth Ministries and Music. In addition, the assistant superintendent heads the Commission on Discipleship, which is responsible for Christian Education/Sunday School and Small Groups/Discipleship initiatives.

In recent years, more national AG events have been made available through live video and audio streaming on the Internet. This year, in addition to all adult evening services being available online (at [www.ag.org](http://www.ag.org)), all plenary sessions (such as the Body Life and Communion Service) and business sessions will be streamed live.

INSP Networks will provide live coverage of the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday adult evening services, according to AG Communications Director Juleen Turnage. Coverage begins at 7 p.m. Central Time. INSP's Web site

([www.insp.com](http://www.insp.com)) lists availability of the coverage nationally.

Coverage of Council events and AG ministries also will be found in *The Council Today*, the daily newspaper printed for the convention. Stories and photographs appearing in the print version of the paper will be posted daily to *The Council Today Online* version.

Ministers, missionaries and evangelists who have died since the 2005 Council will be honored at a memorial breakfast service on Friday.

Technology is playing a big role in the Friday evening world evangelism service, which will include a satellite feed to the campus missions commissioning service in the RCA Dome. As World, U.S. and Youth Alive missionaries are commissioned, students will be simultaneously set apart for reaching their high schools.

"Friday night will help many to recognize that America's 65,000 secondary schools are strategic

mission fields," says National Youth Ministries Director Jay Mooney. "The campus missionaries we are commissioning to these schools will in turn become marketplace missionaries or called-out career missionaries."

In addition to joining via satellite with the adult service, the National Youth Convention offers a number of new opportunities for young people. This year, youth are able to participate in Fine Arts Festival and still be involved in the AIM outreach activities and the campus tour. The campus tour not only includes workshops on how youth can evangelize but also features three concerts with the Christian bands Kutlass, Superchick and Group 1 Crew.

This year, Kids Council is offering a regular as well as an expanded activity plan. Kids Council Nitro offers parents the opportunity to bring their children for a night of fun activities during the evening services. The new Kids Council Plus option offers two additional afternoon sessions on Thursday and Friday for kids to enjoy.

Nearly every Council attendee finds something of interest in the Exhibit Hall. Along with countless promotional items and free materials, this area offers an opportunity to interact with ministry personnel as well as to find solutions to ministry needs. Among the nearly 200 exhibits, attendees will find "real-life" interactive experiences, a coffee shop with Internet access, the launching of the new media campaign "Nothing's Too Hard for God," free book signings and a youth exhibit area. **tpe**

DAN VAN VEEN is editor of *AG News* and *The Council Today*.

E-mail your comments to [tpe@ag.org](mailto:tpe@ag.org).