



News At a Glance

Elder Ordained in South Africa

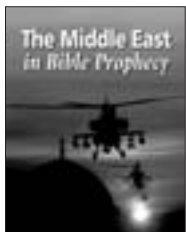
Stanley Botha was ordained an elder on May 17. He and his wife, Barbara, serve the Cape Town, South Africa, congregation.

New Mideast Booklet Produced

A new booklet, *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy*, is scheduled to be printed in mid-July. Fifty thousand copies of the 32-page, magazine-size booklet are being printed, as it is being offered to 200,000 *GN* subscribers in a letter mailed this month and will be mailed automatically to all member households. UCG members do not need to request a copy, as it will be mailed to them.

The booklet should prove to be very popular, as the Middle East regularly makes the headlines around the world. It is also being offered as the featured booklet in the July-August issue of *The Good News*, which has a cover theme focusing on Bible prophecy.

The booklet, written primarily by editorial writer and Lansing, Michigan, pastor Melvin Rhodes, gives an overview of

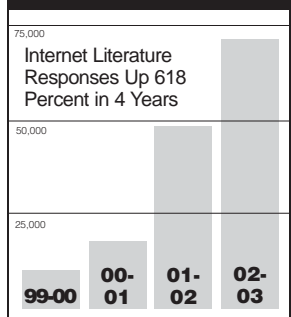


prophecies of the region and its peoples back to Abraham's time. It describes the historical fulfillment of many prophecies, showing that

the Bible is absolutely accurate and trustworthy. It also goes into the history of Islam and the roots of the current con-

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United Statistics



President Holladay Outlines Goals for New Year

As the new fiscal year begins, United News asked Roy Holladay, president of UCGIA, about the goals and plans for the work of the Church in the coming year and beyond. The interview was conducted June 30.

What are the major goals for next year and beyond in the media area?

I think our goal is to proclaim the gospel to the world with as much power and effectiveness as we possibly can. We are constantly evaluating—and when I say we, I mean Peter Eddington and those associated with the media

department—we're constantly evaluating how to do the job better.

We all realize in the early days Mr. [Herbert] Armstrong was a pioneer in radio and television. In fact, he was such a pioneer that the *World Tomorrow* program had a major impact in this country. What's happened since then is that media has become fractured. When the *World Tomorrow* program was first broadcast, there were few radio stations, and at night, most of the clutter was cleared from the air because they had clear-channel stations that stayed on, so it didn't matter where you went, you

could always hear the program.

But that's changed dramatically in our age, because in our time every major city has sometimes dozens of radio stations and they all have different formats. Some are news, some are music, some are talk, and some are easy listening, some are rock. Classical, jazz, whatever. And so, therefore, the audience has been fractured. And most of them stay on until late. And so being on radio today doesn't carry as much clout as it used to.

The same thing was true of television. When we first started on television, there were only three major channels, so if

you were on one of them, you could pretty well guess that you had quite a large audience. But today, with cable systems and satellite television, you can have hundreds of television stations and every type of topic you can think of.

So today, as a result of that, we feel that we need to use a multifaceted approach in media. We need to be on radio because there has been a renewed interest in radio with many of the talk radio programs today. But we do not have the money to be able to spend like

See "President," page 5

United Youth Camps Season Begins



Winners of the Ozzy Engelbart award for best participation at Pinecrest: Janette Willoughby, Amber Epperson, Jacob Wann, Emily Quant, Josh Kinney, Brittney Kurr and Tiffany Zimmerman; right, on the ropes course

by Joel Meeker

From June 12 to 19, 120 campers from 20 different states and 56 staff members gathered near Fredericktown, Missouri, for the annual United Youth Camp at the

Pinecrest camp facility. Campers traveled from as far away as Washington state and Florida to participate in the camp. Campers stayed in five girls' and four boys' dorms,

See "Camp," page 7

Treasurer Reports on End of Fiscal Year

Income up 1.5 percent (slightly less than the budgeted amount); expenses are kept in check.

The Church's total operating income for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2003, was very near the budget figure of \$18,240,000. The actual total was \$18,188,000. This was the first year in the last five that actual income was less than budgeted income, but the shortfall was only three-tenths of one percent.

Given the state of the U.S. economy over the course of the last year, we are grateful that the income held up as well as it did. It appears evident that the members and other financial contributors to the work of the United Church of God continue faithfully and generously in their support. Most operational areas came in under budget on the expenditure side, and those underages more than made up for the income shortage. Total operational expenditures for the year were \$17,756,000.

The results of this past fiscal year have helped us continue progressing to our goals of financial stability, support of the operational imperatives of the Church and adequate reserves.

Here is a breakdown of income, by category. Category One includes first

See "Treasurer," page 6

Being About Our Father's Business: Feast Sermon Video Recording Underway

Planning, recording and editing of this year's Feast sermon video, to be played at all of United's Feast sites, is well underway.

The general theme this year will be "Being About Our Father's Business." The core of the video will be split messages by the chairman, Clyde Kilough, and the president, Roy Holladay. On the Sabbath of June 14, each man recorded a 20-minute, upbeat, inspiring message that focused on the Feast of Tabernacles.

Clyde Kilough specifically focused on the following aspects:

- Why are we being prepared as a people? (God is doing something, and he's doing something through us.)
- How are we being prepared as a people?
- What is the size of the job?
- How does this relate to the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles?



Roy Holladay being taped for the Feast sermon video June 14. Inset: Clay Thornton mans a camera (photos by Janet Treadway)

Roy Holladay then focused on:

- Being excited about the day-to-day work in which we are involved.
- Hitting the "heart" with our message.

- What is our church "doing" to accomplish its mission?
- How does this relate to the meaning

See "Video," page 2

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News At a Glance

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flict between the Arab world and Israel and its supporters.

Several other booklets are in the works, including one on the Old and New Covenants and another on how the true religion of the Bible was transformed over the centuries into the pseudo-Christianity widely extant today.

Scott Ashley

Applicants Being Interviewed for Ministerial/Leadership Seminar

Ministerial Services (MS) has received 23 applications for the Ministerial/Leadership Seminar scheduled for the Labor Day weekend. Four were requested to put off application for a later date, and one withdrew his application. Richard Pinelli, MS operation manager, and MS team members are in the process of interviewing the 18 remaining applicants mostly by telephone. Plans are to complete the interviews by mid-July.

"Our focus in the Ministerial/Leadership Program has evolved as our understanding of how to work with our manpower and leadership grows," said Mr. Pinelli. "This will be a pivotal year as we view what is needed to show us who in the field has the fruits and the leadership to be ordained as an elder and who has the potential for full-time pastoral duties. We are also developing an active program for many of those who attended last year's leadership seminars. We hope to have this program developed before the Feast of Tabernacles to share with all the pastors and elders."

Of this year's applicants, three are elders and 10 have attended Ambassador College. There were more elders and AC graduates last year. "Our emphasis will change from pastoral to ministerial leadership," Mr. Pinelli said. Though the staff will still be looking for those who might be mentored to become full-time pastors in the future, the seminar classes will be designed to give leadership training that will be beneficial to all the couples and their congregations.

Ministerial Services has hired eight men in the last two years, and has budgeted for three new hires this fiscal year. The annual Ministerial/Leadership Seminar is one tool in the ongoing process of helping to train future leaders.

Caribbean Camp Cancelled for 2003

The Caribbean camp planned for Jamaica this year will not be held, camp director Todd Carey announced. "In the course of planning we encountered

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"Video," continued from page 1

of the Feast of Tabernacles?

In addition, the videotaped sermon message will include:

- Anecdotes from new members with first-person accounts of how they were called into God's Church.
- A look at what United is doing to accomplish its God-given goals.
- An examination of how UCG is using a subscriber development plan to bring *Good News* readers along into a deeper understanding of the truth, including encouraging more donors and coworkers to be involved.
- A focus on one international area and what is being done to preach the gospel and prepare the people there.

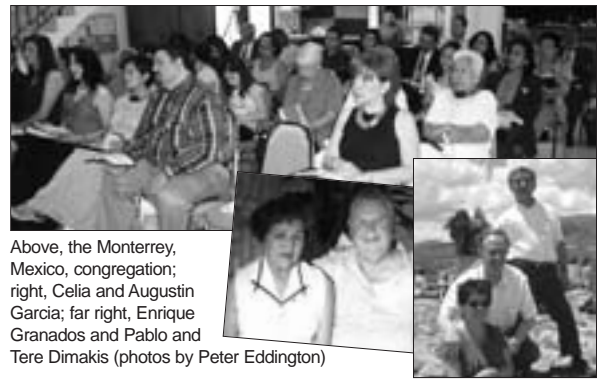
To cover the last point, Peter Eddington was able to visit brethren in both the Mexico City and Monterrey, Mexico, congregations, spending the Sabbath of June 28 in Monterrey where he gave the sermon.

On Thursday evening, June 26, 14 of

the Mexico City brethren were interviewed and gave their impressions of being in the Church, and recounted their experiences of when their eyes were first opened to the truth of God. The downtown Mexico City home of a deaconess and her husband, Celia and Augustin Garcia, was used for the videotaping and an enjoyable potluck dinner.

Around 20 members of the Monterrey congregation of around 40 people recorded their church experiences during the Sabbath afternoon. It is inspiring and emotional to hear the stories of how God's Holy Spirit works in the minds of His people no matter where they are located around the world. Many related the challenges of living in a poor country, some traveling many hours to Sabbath services each week on public transportation.

Mr. Eddington was also able to gather b-roll footage of both cities, including the crowds and traffic of one of the world's largest cities, Mexico City. He visited the pyramids at Teotihuacan



Above, the Monterrey, Mexico, congregation; right, Celia and Augustin Garcia; far right, Enrique Granados and Pablo and Tere Dimakis (photos by Peter Eddington)

about 35 miles outside of the capital city, and spent time in the world famous Museum of Anthropology. The local ministry and their wives ensured that Mr. Eddington found his way around the country by accompanying him on the videotaping project. They included Pablo and Tere Dimakis, Enrique and

Esther Granados, and Larry and Blanca Roybal.

We're looking forward to featuring this small portion of the Mexican brethren in this year's Feast sermon video, helping each of us to understand our brethren around the world a little better!

Peter Eddington

Frequently Asked Questions About the Sabbath School Program

Where do I find the lessons?

The Sabbath School Teacher's Outlines are available on the Internet at www.ucgyouth.org/resources/ss/. They can be downloaded in PDF format for use by teachers or by parents who wish to adapt them for their own children.

Are congregations of the United Church of God required to use these outlines for their youth instruction?

No! These Sabbath School Teacher's Outlines are being made available for any congregations that desire to use them. Some teachers prefer to use their own material or other programs. Instructors may use some or all of the outlines depending upon their need.

There are four lessons prepared for each month during the school year. What if you do not meet four times?

If a particular program does not meet each week, the teachers have the option of choosing which lessons they will utilize that month. We recommend, however, that instructors follow the basic progression of the lessons throughout the year since the program has been

designed to maintain a flow from one month to the next.

When do you recommend Sabbath school classes be held each Sabbath? Can they be held during services?

How each Sabbath school program fits into the time allotted for church services and fellowship is to be determined by the church leadership of each congregation. Some have the classes before or after services, and some have them during a portion of the service. We do not recommend that classes be conducted during the sermon on a regular basis.

Are teachers permitted to edit or use portions of the outlines, or must they follow it exactly as written?

It is understood that every teacher will not follow the outlines word for word. Adding some personal illustrations, omitting some references and modifying the lessons in a minor way is acceptable. However, since the Church has approved the curriculum and outlines, we ask instructors not to extensively revise the lesson so that the original message

developed by the author is still reflected.

Why are some lessons longer?

Over 25 different individuals contributed to writing the outlines. Though there were general guidelines for uniformity, we allowed each teacher the latitude to develop the main purpose of the lesson as he or she felt necessary. Thus, the lessons express a cohesiveness and similarity, yet reflect the individual style and abilities of each writer.

How do we arrange our classes if we only have one or two students in a grade level?

The pastor and Sabbath school coordinators can determine the best way to organize classes and present the material. When making adjustments, sometimes the art projects will need to be modified. We understand that every congregation will not always have sufficient numbers to have six levels. Combining levels is acceptable, if necessary.

Noticed in one of the teacher's outlines that a resource was referenced that contained illustrations of Jesus. What is the Sabbath school policy

with respect to pictures or illustrations of Christ?

The United Church of God continues to maintain our long-held practice of not including pictures or depictions of Jesus Christ in our publications. Because of respect for the Second Commandment and our realization that no one knows exactly what Jesus looked like, we avoid attempts at portraying our Savior. Our Sabbath School Teacher's Outlines reflect this policy by not including drawings or representations of Jesus.

Occasionally, the writers of the lessons have pointed the Sabbath school instructors to outside resources that they feel may help enhance the effectiveness of the overall subject matter. Although these resources may themselves contain certain illustrations or representations, it is not the intent of the author that the teachers draw a student's attention to any specific portrayal of Jesus. The Sabbath school program policy is to not create imagined images, provide coloring materials or create a man-made depiction of Jesus Christ for our children. **UN**

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Editor: Peter W. Eddington Managing editor: Mike Bennett Copy editor: Becky Bennett UCG/IA Council of Elders: Aaron Dean, Robert Dick, Jim Franks, Doug Horchak, Clyde Kilough

Address changes: POSTMASTER—Send address changes to United News, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027

International addresses:

AFRICA (except as listed below): United Church of God, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A.
E-mail: info@ucg.org

AUSTRALIA: United Church of God—Australia, GPO Box 535, Brisbane, Qld. 4001, Australia.
Phone: 0755 202-111 Fax: 0755 202-122

BAHAMAS: United Church of God, P.O. Box N8873, Nassau, Bahamas. Phone: (242) 324-3169 Fax: (242) 364-5566

BRITISH ISLES: United Church of God—British Isles, P.O. Box 705, Watford, Herts. WD19 6FZ England.
Phone: 020-8386-9467 Fax: 01257-453978

CANADA: United Church of God—Canada, P.O. Box 144, Station

D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1, Canada. Phone: (905) 876-9966, (800) 338-7779 Fax: (905) 876-0569 E-mail: info@ucg.ca
Fiji: United Church of God, P.O. Box 10-577, Nadi, Fiji.
Phone: 723-678

FRENCH-SPEAKING AREAS: Église de Dieu Unie—France, 127 rue Amielot, 75011 Paris, France.

GERMANY: Vereinte Kirche Gottes, Postfach 30 15 09, D-53195 Bonn, Germany. Phone: 0228-9454636 Fax: 0228-9454637 E-mail: info@gutenachrichten.org

ITALY: La Buona Notizia, Chiesa di Dio Unita, Casella Postale 187, 24100 Bergamo, Italy. Mobile phone: 338-4037919 Fax: (+39) 035-452.16.26 E-mail: redazione@labuonanotizia.org

MALAWI: United Church of God, P.O. Box 23076, Kitwe, Zambia. E-mail: malawi@ucg.org

MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 53, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius.
E-mail: mauritius@ucg.org

(chairman), Victor Kubik, Les McCullough, Joel Meeker, Mario Seiglie, Richard Thompson, Leon Walker, Anthony Wasilkoff

President: Roy Holladay

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NEW ZEALAND: United Church of God, P.O. Box 22, Auckland, 1015, New Zealand. Phone: 0508-463-763

PHILIPPINES: United Church of God, P.O. Box 81840, DCCPO, 8000 Davao City, Philippines. Phone: (+63) 82 241-0150
Cell/Text: (+63) 0918-904-4444

SCANDINAVIA: Guds Forenade Kyrka, P.O. Box 705, Watford, Herts. WD19 6FZ England.

SOUTH AFRICA: United Church of God, Southern Africa, P.O. Box 2209, Beacon Bay, East London 5205, South Africa. Phone/Fax: 043 748-1694. E-mail: rsa@ucg.org

SPANISH-SPEAKING AREAS: Iglesia de Dios Unida, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A.

Phone: (513) 576-9796
TONGA: United Church of God—Tonga, P.O. Box 127,

Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

ZAMBIA: United Church of God, P.O. Box 23076, Kitwe, Zambia. E-mail: zambia@ucg.org

ZIMBABWE: United Church of God, Zimbabwe, P.O. Box 3393, Paulington, Mutare, Zimbabwe. Phone: 09 263 20 68102
E-mail: zimbabwe@ucg.org

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News From **Around the World**

Australia Attains 20,000 Good News Distribution Goal

by Ruth Root

With the deadline of June 30, 2003, fast approaching, the Australian Media and Publishing Committee was pleased to report that the goal for expansion of the *Good News* mailing list to 20,000 had been reached.

When this expansion goal was approved by the Australian National Council in May 2002, the Media and Publishing Operational Plan listed in some detail the methods that would be used to reach this goal.

National Advertising

At the time of the formulation of the 2002/2003 Operational Plan, there were plans to advertise the long-awaited booklet *The Middle East in Prophecy*. Since the publication date of this booklet has been delayed, the committee successfully reran a previous advertisement featuring *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy in The Reader's Digest* as well as running it in June in *Take Five* magazine.

Targeting Tasmania

The Australian Media and Publishing Committee has also successfully incorporated the use of the card-deck type advertising used in the United States into its program in Australia. Horizon Media has given us a considerable reduction in price and we have had successful results from a "Yellow Envelope" drop in Tasmania.

Tasmania was chosen as the site for the distribution as previous tests with this medium have indicated that more acceptable results are achieved by adver-

tising in rural areas. Tasmania is an area with two local elders and a deacon in residence. The members there also enjoy regular pastoral visits from Barry Williams, the pastor for the region. Thus, anyone God calls as a result of this card drop would have a warm and loving congregation to welcome them.

Exciting Results

One advantage of working in the

Australian National Office is that we can see first-hand the immediate results these advertising efforts bring.

For instance, already some who responded to this Yellow Envelope drop in Tasmania have called back, amazed at the information provided in our literature and enthusiastically requesting additional literature and, in some cases, the *Bible Study Course*.

A Job for Everyone

As well as the national action steps for media outlined in the 2002/2003 plan, there were many initiatives listed in which Church members could involve themselves. These initiatives included the distribution of letterbox cards and cardholders and the establishment of market stalls and newsstands.

As has become typical in the history of the United Church of God in Aus-

tralia, the members rose to the occasion, far beyond what was expected, with very encouraging results from these programs. It's impossible to accurately calculate the savings to the Church for which these members have been responsible. As Roy Hickford mentioned in a recent address about media and publishing matters to the Brisbane congregation, "There's a job for everyone if you want it." UN

Volunteers Preach the Gospel at the Toowoomba Market

by Anne Burchard

The recent unprecedented public outcry against the war in Iraq and the constant bombardment of other emotionally charged news coverage gives members a compelling desire to become involved in preaching the gospel. But how? Inspiration came once again from the pages of the *United News Australia* in an article recording the efforts of members manning literature stalls at markets and fairs.

So, armed with signs, stands and over 600 pieces of literature, we set up a stall at 6 a.m. at the Sunday market in Toowoomba, Queensland. Feeling somewhat exposed, we braced ourselves for the frontline stand.

Understandably, interest was conservative but, nevertheless, the response was encouraging, with a varied selection of literature being taken. Inquiries came from people of different religious persuasions with the most prevalent

question being, "What do you believe?" This initially caught us off guard and was the classic example of always being ready to give an answer. The booklet *The Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God* assisted us greatly.

Interest was expressed by people from other lands such as Brazil, the Balkans, Africa and the Philippines. One person asked us to notify the National Office to update his subscription to *The Good News* from New South Wales to Queensland.

As the market stalls were closing down, a vendor from a nearby stall took several booklets. The highlight came when an Asian family appeared as the packed boxes were waiting to be loaded. As they began rummaging in the boxes, we informed them they were welcome to anything they wanted. Their reply was that they already had some booklets as they had picked up a *Good News* at a newsstand at a shop-

ping center two months previously. No doubt the strategically placed signs had



Anne Burchard manning the literature stand at the Toowoomba Market

caught their eye from a distance and they recognized the familiar advertisement. They took numerous booklets for themselves and their families.

Our conclusion was that the greater the exposure, the greater the response. Toowoomba, in the last two years, has

been blanketed with letterbox drops, Yellow Envelope advertisements, Australia Post household card deliveries, the waiting room program and newsstands (with a current output of 1,000 *Good News* magazines per issue).

Encouraging results from the members' prayers and volunteer efforts are becoming increasingly apparent. Two new people have attended services, one having responded to the post-card delivery and the other to the market stall.

Our intentions are to make the markets a regular feature as members demonstrate their desire for world peace by focusing greater efforts on spreading the gospel. As the doors open we will walk through them in faith that God will provide the increase. UN

UCG—Australia Treasurer Grateful for Surplus

The articles on this page are from the April-June 2003 issue of United News Australia. This report is from the treasurer of UCG in Australia, Drew Efimov.

We were very blessed during the March quarter with our income for the financial year remaining above the level we had planned. In both February and March, for example, we received \$7,000 [Australian throughout] in first tithes and offerings above what we had anticipated receiving in each month. This has been a trend for most of the last nine months.

As a result, over the course of the financial year we have received almost \$100,000 more in first tithes and offerings than we expected. Most of these additional receipts were in the July to October period.

Our overall income position remained very healthy as we entered the Holy Day season. The Unleavened Bread offerings were also significantly above the level we had expected. Adding to our receipts

have been interest earnings above what we planned. These have more than compensated for the U.S. subsidy receipts, which are lower in our hands as a result of the strength of the Australian dollar.

The Festival Fund and Assistance Fund are the main areas where our receipts continue to be much lower than we expected. We have received \$6,560 less than we expected in the Festival Fund and \$3,650 less than expected in the Assistance Fund.

The expenses side of the ledger remains well restrained. Our total expenditure is more than \$63,650 below what we had expected by March.

Our surplus is very much better than we expected it to be at this time of the year and we have very much for which to be grateful. Despite very difficult circumstances in the surrounding environment from the drought, the war in Iraq and fears of travel as a result of SARS, we have been given the blessing of a cocoon from which to operate. UN

Australian Youth Committee Uses E-mail and Web Site to Serve Youth

Through a variety of initiatives, the United Youth Committee in Australia aims to promote God's message of hope in various ways to the Church youth and also those who come in contact with the Church youth.

Communicating With Isolated Youth

One initiative that the committee is pursuing is to construct an E-mail list of the youth in the Church, especially those who cannot attend regular services, to help facilitate more regular communication with others of their own age.

Using the Web

A second initiative being planned is for members of the United Youth Committee to work with the Media Committee in regularly updating the youth pages of the Australian Web site and to also develop some interactive facilities for the pages.

At the next Youth Committee meeting in August further discussions will be held as to the ways in which the Youth Committee can help with the Web site, including how youth of the Church could participate.

Kim Mihalec has been appointed the editor of the Youth page, and she will be ably assisted in certain software matters by her husband, Steve Mihalec.

Items young people could contribute include stories with pictures, reports on Holy Days and church events, artwork and articles with links to United Church of God literature, etc. A Youth Committee member from each state area has been appointed to be responsible for collecting and collating these items.

It is important that young members of the public who log onto the site be able to see what we, as a church, do for activities, etc. We sometimes gets questions from parents concerning the kind of activities we have for young people,

and the Web site could be developed into an informative source for them.

New Summer Camp Location

The Australian Summer Camp will be held at a new location, the Heathcote Scout Camp in the southern part of Sydney, Dec. 19 to Dec. 28. Many campers felt it was time for a change, and we were also informed that the cost of the camp used for the last three years had increased by over a third. The good news is that the cost for camp will remain the same at \$240 per camper.

Some of the activities planned include: Christian Living classes, dance, speaking club workshops, life skill classes, canoeing, row boats, mountain bikes in the National Park, hikes within the National Park, craft, football, games room (including table tennis, pool table and soccer game), swimming and sports activities at a sporting complex.

Don Goodger and Bruce Dean

International At a Glance

Two More Baptisms in Malawi

Bill Jahns, pastor of the Johannesburg, South Africa, and Malawi congregations, completed a trip to Malawi June 24. Two baptisms were performed (Ruth Ellia and Mesech Chonde) and a sign was placed at the well near Balaka that was funded by LifeNets.

Report From Zambia

Derrick and Cherry Pringle, who run the small office in Zambia which also handles literature requests from neighboring Malawi, reported that in May 250 *Good News* magazines were posted to readers in Zambia, 200 to Malawi and 550 were hand delivered around the Copperbelt region of Zambia to clinics, libraries and other establishments in several towns. They mailed 191 booklets.

"The economy on the Copperbelt is on a continual down drift," they reported. "In the last four weeks we have only managed to get 80 liters of diesel—there just is none. We have had no water from the Council for 10 days. But life goes on!"

Report From Zimbabwe

Mike and Primrose Mukarati, who handle the mailing office in Zimbabwe, reported that 1,380 copies of the March/April *Good News* were mailed, as well as 150 booklets.

"We continue braving the worsening economic crisis. Inflation now exceeds 200 percent. The fuel situation is particularly worrying. . . The congestion and anarchy at fuel stations on delivery days is something one cannot fully describe. Prim and I spent the whole day from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and did not get any."

South Africa Reports Growth

At the National Council meeting for Southern Africa May 25, the financial report was once again very positive, with substantial increases in income. Total money in the bank was 314,053 rand.

The *Good News* subscription list now stands at 11,860, up from 4,600 in November 2000. Average pieces of mail received per month is now 1,495, up 63 percent over the last two years.

U.K. Pentecost Up

Total attendance in the six British Isles congregations was 118 (compared to 101 in 2002) and the total offering was 2,675.30 pounds (compared to 2,477.30 last year, up 8 percent).

United Youth Corps Volunteers Teach in Thailand

Five United Youth Corps volunteers have begun work as teachers at the Legacy Institute School in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Ryan Foster, from the Jefferson, Oregon, congregation; Roberta Bauer, from the Akron, Ohio, congregation; Jessa Moser, from the St. Louis, Missouri, congregation; Aaron Greider, from the Belleville, Illinois, congregation; and Heather Beyer, from the Kansas City, Missouri, congregation, left the United States on June 2 for the flight to Bangkok via Tokyo. Joel Meeker, coordinator of the United Youth Corps, traveled with the group.

The Legacy Foundation was begun by Mr. and Mrs. Leon Sexton in an effort to continue the work Herbert Armstrong began in Thailand in the 1970s. Mr. Sexton was intimately involved in the various Ambassador College and Foundation projects in Thailand through the years.

The Legacy school was founded to give educational opportunities to young adults from the Karen and Kachin tribes in Burma and Thailand. These tribal groups often do not have the same opportunities as ethnic Burmese or Thais. Several of the students come from Sabbath-keeping families living in Burma. The students take classes in English, speech, computers, agriculture and the Bible. Our volunteers are teaching some of these classes as well as participating in an outreach program to local Thai public schools.

After about 30 hours of travel the group arrived in Bangkok at midnight on Tuesday June 3, with a 12-hour time difference from the Midwest of the United States. After a short night in a hotel in Bangkok, they went on a whirlwind tour of Bangkok before flying on to Chiang Mai. In Bangkok they went first to the royal temple and palace complex at Wat Pra Kaew. From there they took a one-hour *klong* (Thai for canal) tour in a long-tailed boat. This gave the volunteers a glimpse of how many residents of Bangkok live, where waterways are the streets of their neighborhoods.

Then they visited the Red Cross snake farm where poisonous snakes are raised for their venom, which is used to make antivenins. The volunteers had the chance to see several kinds of cobras, to

see a cobra "milked" of its venom and to have their photo taken with a friendly (nonvenomous) python around their necks!

After a late lunch it was time to head to the airport for the flight to Chiang Mai where they arrived in the evening. Mr. Sexton met the group and drove them to the Legacy campus about half an hour out of Chiang Mai. Thursday and Friday were orientation days, which included

getting settled in to new lodgings, getting acquainted with the campus, hearing an overview of the history and goals of the foundation and meeting with Bonnie Turner and Heidi Hanisko who have been teaching at the school for the past year. Curriculum and class planning began right away.

On the Sabbath and Pentecost services were held at the school, with an attendance of about 40 people, before Mr. Meeker said good-bye to the new teachers and headed home.

Update From a Volunteer

Ryan Foster sent an update, part of which is included here:

"The students have a wide range of ability in English. A couple can speak and understand very little and others are pretty good at speaking and listening—especially the second-year students. They all speak at least two other languages well; some can understand half a dozen languages. I hope to learn at least some Thai and Burmese while I am here. Most of the students know Burmese and there is plenty of opportunity to practice Thai around here. Right now I can only say hello, good-bye, thanks, what's your name? and a few other things, and I can read about half of the Thai alphabet.

"I will try to give you a picture of what [the area] looks like. The school is in a small village called (I think) Baan Mae Sa. It is about a quarter of a mile off of

the highway heading north out of Chiang Mai. We are maybe 15 miles north of Chiang Mai, and 2 or 3 miles south of Mae Rim, which is a small town. Here in Baan Mae Sa there is an open-air market where fruits, vegetables, eggs and some other things are sold. There is also a small general store, several restaurants, some Internet cafes, two copy shops (i.e., places with a photocopy machine) and some other small businesses. The

school is on the corner of the main drag and one of the roads out to the highway.

"The school compound has a school building with a large class-



On the *klong* in Bangkok: Aaron Greider, Jessa Moser, Roberta Bauer, Heather Beyer and Ryan Foster; Heather with a friendly python; right: Jessa, Bonnie Turner, Roberta, Ryan and Heidi Hanisko discuss curriculum planning (photos by Joel Meeker)

room, a computer lab/classroom and kitchen on the bottom. Upstairs is the girls' dorm. Across the driveway is the boys' dorm. Behind that is the hut I am living in at the moment.

"Beyond the boys' dorm and my hut are the boys' bathroom and the teachers' house. The teachers' house has a large living room with two glass walls, which we use as an office.

There is a deck attached to the house, and on the deck is a small room we use as a classroom. Around all these buildings is a wall. There are some

trees and plants in the compound too.

"Down the road a little way, in the middle of town, is the apartment building. It is a three-story white building with 15 apartments. A Church member rents one of the bottom apartments and the school rents two of the top apartments for the teachers. Out front there is parking for bikes and scooters and a 'spirit house.'

"A spirit house is a little house on a pedestal for spirits. The idea is that if the demons (not necessarily bad in the view

of the Buddhists) have a separate place to live, then they won't come live in the main house. People leave little food and drink offerings on the stand for the spirits. It is quite ridiculous. There are a lot of these little houses around.

"Speaking of Buddhism, one thing that is kind of funny is seeing a bunch of teenage monks in the Internet cafes playing computer games.

"Anyway, about a mile on down the road is farmland, and this is where the farmhouse is located. This is where the Sextons live and where the students grow crops organically.

"Well, that is about all I have to say for now except that there are a lot of bugs here, it is usually pretty warm and I am learning to enjoy eating rice with every meal."

Our United Youth Corps volunteers would appreciate your prayers for God's guidance and protection as they serve in this exciting project in Southeast Asia.

Joel Meeker

UCG—British Isles Holds Sixth Annual General Meeting

The sixth annual general meeting of the United Church of God—British Isles took place in Gloucester City 29.

The meeting was attended by all of the members of the National Council, plus other Church members who are members of the Church as a charity. In total, 18 people were present, with an additional number participating by means of postal balloting.

After the meeting was opened with prayer, the chairman, Bryan Ellams, addressed the meeting and related how the work of the charity had continued through the past year, and concluded with words of thanks to the members of the National Council, to the members of

the Church and to the Cincinnati home office of UCGIA for its ongoing assistance and support.

Following the chairman's report, the chief executive officer, Peter Hawkins, reported on some of the challenges and successes the Church has experienced in the last year, highlighting some topics that would form the foundation of the business plan he would present.

Next, Brian Penheiro, the treasurer, gave a summary of the Church's accounts for its financial year ending June 30, concluding that the Church should end its financial year with income ahead of budget and expenditure generally on budget.

In the business portion of the meeting, Jan Schroeder, a nonexecutive member of the National Council whose term expired, was returned for a further three-year term; and the Church's budget proposal for its new financial year starting on July 1 was ratified.

Finally, Mr. Hawkins presented the Church's plan for the next year, which he summarized under seven headings:

Church: Assigning of pastors; developing speakers, new areas and youth; selection of Feast sites; etc.

Finances: Finding better interest rates; reporting to home office; etc.

National Council: Effective use of subcommittees; clarify the constitu-

tion; review of CEO's performance.

Office: Evaluation of need for central office; use of mailing fulfillment company for distribution of *GN*; etc.

Internet: Local content on Web sites, e.g., commentaries; interaction with Europe's youth; use of search engines; promotion of *Vertical Thought* magazine.

Good News: Review of The Information Service for promotion; develop programs members would like to take part in; *Reader's Digest* reduced-rate advertising; semiannual letters; etc.

Radio: Development of 15-minute programs; recording several presenters; placing on Web site; seeking affordable radio outlets. **UN**

President Holladay Outlines Goals for New Fiscal Year

"President," continued from page 1

someone like a Rush Limbaugh to be able to get on hundreds and hundreds of radio stations. So we do hope to continue to increase the effectiveness of the *Good News* radio program, doing that in two ways. As the next few years go along, we hope to be able to have more stations and also to prune back those stations that we find are not effective and just stay on those that we find truly are effective.

TV—we have public-access television right now. In the last two *Good News* magazines we've had the TV and radio logs published. And we have the *Tomorrow* program produced by the Portland [Oregon] church area and the *Good News* program produced by Beloit [Wisconsin]. And we're hoping that we can have those on 200 to 250 outlets by the end of this next fiscal year. Now in order to do that it's going to take cooperation between those areas, the home office and the local church areas. Because basically most of the public-access television channels are free, so a local church member who would like to be able to put it on in his area, just basically has to contact the local channel and

We're hoping that we can have [the TV programs] on 200 to 250 outlets by the end of this next fiscal year . . . Basically we need people who can help sponsor it in their own local areas.

then we can provide the tapes for them. Basically we need people who can help sponsor it in their own local areas. So we realize that radio and TV are extremely important.

The *Good News* magazine continues to be our flagship publication. We're hovering between 450 to 500,000 circulation. And we're always looking at ways to improve it. Our goal is to make the magazine and our literature as effective as possible in reaching out to this world. We realize that it has a multifaceted purpose in itself—to teach, to educate, to instruct, to warn, to be a witness.

Our objective is to preach the good news about the coming Kingdom of God, but also to give readers hope now. So one of the things that we want to look at with the *Good News* magazine is how to make it more positive—so that there is good news, that there are things that people can do now. The Bible, as we know, gives a very practical approach on how to live life. As an example, how to have happy marriages, how to rear your children, how to be successful at work—everything that you do. And we started a new series in the *Good News* ("Living Christianity") and the emphasis in this new section is to show a practical application of the Bible to our daily lives. That truly is good news now and it is good news for the future.

We'd also like to emphasize more of appealing not only to the head, but the heart. We do a wonderful job in writing articles that clearly explain and expound what the Bible says, but we're hoping to be able to write in such a way that it moves people, that people will want to respond. In five years we have the goal of having one million circulation for the

Good News magazine, and hopefully that's something we can obtain, but we're certainly going to set that as a goal to shoot for.

The booklets—we have 30 major booklets that address subjects on almost every topic you can think of.

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One of the exciting areas that we're looking into is developing our "first-contact" booklets. These would be smaller publications that a person might be able to put in their pocket, read in 10 minutes and be written with some human interest involved.

So this is an area that we hope to develop. First-contact literature would try to grab people's attention, direct them towards our Web site or other literature, and then they could order the major booklets, correspondence course and magazines. This is something that in August we plan to bring to the Council

to show them different examples, illustrations of how to do this, and then hopefully begin to proceed with it.

Our Web sites, we realize, are major areas for future growth. The big thing right now that we want to be in a position to take advantage of is the convergence of Internet and television. You can put a television program or a video on a Web site on the Internet; you could literally have hundreds of people watching it simultaneously. People could download it and record it. So we realize that as this technology begins to develop and expand in the future, we need to be prepared for it. We plan to upgrade our ability to stream information.

We want people to come to our Web site and do their Bible study, check for news, do research. Our E-learning modules are designed for that purpose, so we'll be able to put the correspondence course and other booklets online. And people will be able to come and study. There are religious Web sites that have a million or more hits a month, and we would like to increase our Web sites to reach that potential.

What we must never forget is that God is the one who opens doors. He's

We want people to come to our Web site and do their Bible study, check for news, do research . . . There are religious Web sites that have a million or more hits a month, and we would like to increase our Web sites to reach that potential.

the one who gives us the opportunity for preaching the gospel. He can provide opportunities that we aren't even aware of presently, that we don't know anything about. As 1 Corinthians 3 states, God is the one that does the calling and

He gives the increase. But He does work through human beings. And we have to plant; we have to help water. But God is the one who gives the growth and the increase. And so we've got to be prepared. It's like the old motto—be prepared and the opportunity will come. If

we're not prepared, then we may miss an opportunity that God provides for us.

One thing we realize, too, is that we're all a team. And the Church is working together with all of us collectively—through our prayers, our efforts, our



Roy Holladay at a Council meeting in May (photo by Janet Treadway)

tithes, our offerings, local involvement—to be able to get a work done. And so we do appreciate the help of all the brethren.

What are the major goals next year for the ministerial area?

What we must never forget is that God is the one who opens doors. He's the one who gives us the opportunity for preaching the gospel. He can provide opportunities that we aren't even aware of presently, that we don't know anything about.

Well, let me state first that Ministerial Services exists to serve and help the ministry and the Church. You look at the fact that we have the ministry, the membership and the youth within the Church. Ministerial Services exists to serve and to help all of these different groups. Our goal that we have for the coming year, and into the future, is to help the min-

istry to continue to grow in a loving, serving, humble approach towards the membership.

When United first started, we understood clearly the biblical principle of providing a shepherd and pastor for all

of our congregations. That's still our aim. And not only just to have a pastor there, but that he would have a servant's heart and that he would love God's people. And our ministers do a very fine job in that area.

But all of us can obviously continue to grow. The Ministerial/Leadership Program was established with this in mind. We realize that as the ministry ages, retires, has health problems, we need to develop more leaders, and more pastors to help guide the flock, feed the flock, love the flock. And so last year we started, I think, a unique program. I don't know of any other organization that has something like this up and running. We hope to continue this program right into the future, to help train couples in leadership and those who have the potential to become ministers. And as a result of last year's program, over the last year,

Our goal that we have for the coming year, and into the future, is to help the ministry to continue to grow in a loving, serving, humble approach towards the membership.

we have hired five new men.

So our major goal is to continue to further the effectiveness of our ministry in pastoring and as part of that to help them to continue improve in all facets of ministry. And also in their speaking.

The health of the ministry is a great concern. And this is something that we constantly are talking about, looking for ways to not burn our ministry out, but to help them as far as their health. The problem is many of our ministers are multitasking. Even though we have smaller congregations, many are still having to travel just as far on the Sabbath as they used to in the early days. Some of them have three or four churches or more that they're pastoring.

But not only do our men pastor today. Many of them write, many of them edit,

many of them review on doctrinal and prophecy committees, sit on various task forces, run camps, serve at the youth camps, run Feast sites, are regional pastors and Ministerial Services team members, serve on the Council, ABC, the administration, plus the daily care of the Church. We're looking at the workload of our ministry and how to adjust it so that we don't wear our men out.

We have to realize that the ministry is older. The average age of the ministry today is 57 in the United States. In some of the countries around the world, it's older. Such as Canada, where I believe it's 62 years of age.

We're looking at how we can continue to feed, teach and educate the membership and our youth. I think as most of you will remember, we've had a four-pronged approach to education in United. General education for the entire

membership, ministerial education focusing on the ministry, youth education and focused education—where we focus on things such as addictions and alcoholism.

We have found that the General Conference of Elders meeting is a wonderful way of educating and covering topics of major importance to the ministry.

We hope to have one-day regional ministerial conferences this coming year, where we will be able to cover especially topics dealing with leadership, developing leadership in local areas.

We've had *Youth* magazine three years online, but we've found that in order for this magazine to be effective, we need to put it in the hands of our youth. So the Council has just approved changing the title *Youth United to Vertical Thought*. And we hope to have our

first hard copy of that magazine out prior to the Feast of Tabernacles.

The idea is to have it in the hands of our young people and basically to start with it will be a magazine directed to the youth of the Church. But as time goes on, it will expand and be made available to the public. Right now, we will only, as far as the public is concerned, try to draw them to our Web site where they can view it there.

What are the major goals next year for the administration?

The home office staff is small, but it's a very close-knit group. Our goal is to continue to develop and foster that closeness in our working relationship, to improve the skills and abilities of the employees. One thing that we're doing to foster a closeness is every Monday we have a "compass check" where we cover a biblical principle that pertains to all of us in our lives or in the office, and we discuss upcoming events that are going to take place. We have periodic staff meetings to discuss subjects that pertain to the home office. Recently we had a number of meetings where we covered servant leadership and how it applies in the workplace. And those proved to be very successful.

We have a management team that discusses almost all of the topics that pertain to the home office, and topics also that we need to present to the Council of Elders. The Bylaws define the management team as all of the officers of the corporation and the operation managers. So that means that we have the officers of the corporation, which are the president and the secretary, Gerald Seelig, as well as the treasurer, Tom Kirkpatrick. The operation managers—Tom serves a dual function because he's also operation manager over the financial area—and then we have Richard Pinelli, who's responsible for Ministerial Services and Peter Eddington with the media area. I've also asked Matt Fenchel to sit in on the meetings. He's basically our recorder and he writes down what we say, reminds us all of what needs to be done

in the future. And Gary Antion as the coordinator of ABC, Ambassador Bible Center, and one who has sat in on the Council for the last seven and a half years. I've found that he could add also to our discussions.

We discuss all kinds of matters that pertain to the home office. Recent topics that we've discussed—our financial reserves, home office TV production proposal, assessment process for non-field employees, procedure manual, HR handbook. And over the last year we have discussed numerous topics, from small things like putting a sign on the door of each of the offices to tell who works there, to major policies that we want to present to the Council.

I've generally followed the procedure of discussing with the operation managers privately, subjects that pertain

And just as the Council practices the principle of "in the multitude of counsel there is safety," so I try to do the same thing within the administration.

exclusively to their departments. But when it comes to subjects that are general in nature, that pertain to the whole office, or something that we're going to bring forward to the Council, I've found that in a multitude of counselors there is safety. And so, therefore, I've tried to bring those topics before the whole management team. And just as the Council practices the principle of "in the multitude of counsel there is safety," so I try to do the same thing within the administration.

One of our goals this year in the administration is to standardize the evaluation process for our employees. In looking at the evaluation processes, Ministerial Services has developed a four-step process for evaluating the field ministry. All of the regional pastors are evaluated by the Ministerial Services team. Richard Pinelli evaluates the Ministerial Services staff. I evaluate all of the operation managers. Plus the officers of the corporation—the president, secretary and treasurer—are all evaluated by the Council. And the Council does a self-evaluation of themselves. So in looking at that we found that the one area we had not developed a system for was evaluating the home office staff. So we just about have that ready to roll out. We will be presenting to the Council, at their next meeting, the forms we have developed.

We are also working on an employee procedure manual for the individual jobs and duties of each staff member. One of the things that I've found when evaluat-

ing each employee, is that they know what they do, and they have it in their minds. But if for some reason they had to be replaced because of health or death or whatever reason, we would have to go back and try to figure out what all did they do. And just like the ministry, many of our employees do multiple tasks.

And so what we're going to do is to ask each one of them to look at all of the tasks that they do and to write out a procedure manual on how they do it. And so if for some reason they had to be replaced then the next person would have a well-defined manual for what their duties, what their jobs, what their many functions would be. This would also help the next president. So when he comes in, he'll have a procedure manual of all of the jobs, which will also include the job of the president, and so

it will aid him in doing that type of work.

We're in the process of putting together an employee Web page that will contain information pertinent to the employees of the United Church of God. On it there will be things such as all of our insurance forms, our 403B plan, cafeteria plan, the human resources

So as far as the administration is concerned, we're working on improving everyone's ability to do his or her job and to continue to create a strong working, cohesive group.

manual—anything that would be of help. Our employees would be able to go there and read it and download the information. This will be up and running shortly. We're also in the process of putting out a human resource handbook for all of our employees.

I've asked Matt Fenchel to help coordinate the human resource activities of the Church. In looking over the human resource manual, we discovered that there were about 26 or 27 of the policies that required action by someone who would be very much acquainted with the hiring process and dealing with those types of matters. And yet we didn't have anyone who was actually fulfilling that. So I've asked Matt to help coordinate that.

So as far as the administration is concerned, we're working on improving everyone's ability to do his or her job and to continue to create a strong working, cohesive group.

What are the goals for Ambassador Bible Center?

When ABC was first started, the goal was stated that it is to pass on to the next generation of God's people the precious truths of the Scriptures. Now, we feel that we've been doing that, because Ambassador Bible Center in a year's time covers the Bible from Genesis 1:1 to the end of the book of Revelation chapter 22. And we feel that this is being done. We also find that ABC will help with the Ministerial/Leadership Program, even though it was not started to

And so, each year the level of instruction increases because we're able to build on the previous year.

be a ministerial training program. But it is there for training of couples who have not had the opportunity to go to Ambassador College. If someone is to be hired and to be trained as a pastor in the Church, we feel that it's important for them to have this as a background. This year a local elder and his wife, Gary and Jane McConnaughey, have come and have been taking all of the ABC classes and then will be going out to pastor a church.

We continue to refine and fine-tune the program every year. At the end of the year, we ask the students to evaluate the effectiveness of each class and also the strengths of the presenter and how each

one of the presenters can improve. We take these evaluations to heart. They show our deficiencies; they reveal our strengths. We hope the strengths are greater than the deficiencies. And so, each year the level of instruction increases because we're able to build on the previous year.

As an example, this year, Gary Antion was able to develop a PowerPoint presentation for most of his comparative religion class. This adds interest to the class, it visually helps the students, and it helps them with their notetaking.

One of our goals is to continue with the ABC Mini-Samplers and the week-long Sampler that's held here each year in Cincinnati.

As an example, I might just add, this year in the Sampler in Cincinnati, I plan to cover the book of Galatians. And that's a book that's been much misunderstood by many.

Each year some of the classes are

taped and made available to the Church as a whole. For example, last year Dick Thompson's class on the Gospels was taped and put on a CD. This was sent out to all of the local church areas. Not only did it contain his classes that he gave, but also all the handouts that he had.

As the classes are recorded, they'll be made available on the Internet on our Web site. Right now, you can go to our Web site, click under ABC, Ambassador Bible Center, go to resources, and you will be able to see the number of

classes that are available right now that a person can download off of the Web site or just go and listen to from our Web site. This year the Pentateuch and General Epistles classes have been recorded.

What are the goals and objectives for serving the international areas?

Let me read to you from the job description of the president. The job description approved by the Council for the president, says this: "The president is selected by the Council of Elders to serve as the chief executive officer of the corporation (Bylaws article 9.1). The president serves in a dual role—national and international. While the UCG is an international association and the role of the president will not be the same in all areas of the world, he is responsible for the implementation of policies from the Council of Elders through the various national councils and the active, day-to-day management within the U.S. in the pursuit of the mission of the Church. He is expected to lead in promoting a godly atmosphere

One of the things that we realize—we are an association, but it must be based on trust and good will and based upon God's Spirit working with us all. And so we're striving to promote that.

in relationships with employees and ministers."

So it says that the president serves in a dual role—national and international—and there are many times that the Council will pass certain policies that affect the whole international association. And one of the jobs of the president is to make sure that those policies are passed on, and if there are questions about them, to be able to answer those questions. The rules of association govern the relationship among the national

councils, the Council of Elders, the president and the administration. I view as one of the goals that I have to help seek to promote a unity and understanding of the needs of each area and how we, here as the administration, may help serve them.

To that end, Norma and I recently visited the meetings of the Canadian National Council, sat in on their meetings and were there to get acquainted with the members of the national council. We also had the opportunity of visiting the Canadian office. So it helps me to hear from the ministry and the council in Canada their needs and to be able to see it expressed in a unique way.

In September we plan to travel to Germany to attend their national council meetings. We visited South Africa last year and even though we didn't attend a council meeting there, we were able to meet with most of the members of their national council and spend the Feast with the membership in South Africa and get a feel for some of the difficulties and problems that they face. In 1998 we had the opportunity to go to Australia and to, again, meet with many of the members who were on their council.

And this year we plan to return to the United Kingdom for the Feast of Tabernacles, and we will also be doing the same thing this year. So part of the responsibility of the president is to know these areas as well as possible, so that when budgets are made out and submitted, and subsidies are requested, we can have a working knowledge of all of these areas.

One of the things that we realize—we are an association, but it must be based on trust and good will and based upon God's Spirit working with us all. And so we're striving to promote that. And one

of the very helpful ways of doing that is the General Conference of Elders when the international men come in and we are able to sit down and just discuss their needs.

One of the major areas of needs that we see both in the United States and worldwide is the need for manpower. Not only are we an aging ministry in the U.S., but also worldwide. And helping in those areas, is something that we're going to have to look forward to in the future. **UN**

What ABC Means . . .

To most people, ABC represents the first letters of the alphabet, a TV network or the name of a nursery. But to us, ABC means Ambassador Bible Center.

ABC means a biblical education among those of like beliefs. For the first time in your educational experience, you can enjoy an institution that is geared to your spiritual needs and that places a priority on the morals that you embrace. It means that you may participate in all of the activities because they are scheduled at times you may attend. It means forming close bonds and friendships with fellow ABC students whom you will be with for seven hours a day, five days a week for seven months.

ABC means an opportunity to enhance your life by being taught living principles. At ABC, we are accepting applications! Write for yours at: P.O. Box 54992, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45254-0992. E-mail us at: Gary_Antion@ucg.org. Or, you may call (513) 576-9796 and ask to speak to Registrar Ralph Levy or Admissions Officer Gary Antion about any questions you have.

ABC denotes the beginning. It may mean the beginning of a new experience that will have an eternal effect on your life!



"Treasurer," continued from page 1

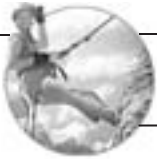
title and offerings, assistance fund and miscellaneous; Category Two is Holy Day offerings; Category Three includes Festival fund, camp fund, ABC tuition and interest.

| | Budget | Actual | Comparison |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Category One | \$13,020,000 | \$12,860,000 | - 1.23 % |
| Category Two | 4,472,000 | 4,697,000 | + 5.03 % |
| Category Three | 748,000 | 631,000 | - 15.64 % |
| Total | \$18,240,000 | \$18,188,000 | - .29 % |

In early August, the Cincinnati CPA firm of Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co. will be on site at the home office to conduct the annual audit of our financial statements.

We express our gratitude to God for providing the financial wherewithal to continue carrying out the multifaceted work of the Church, and our appreciation to those who have helped support it financially. Continued prayers for wisdom in managing these resources would be much appreciated.

Tom Kirkpatrick



United Youth Camps

Philippine Camp Goes "On to the Highest!"

Thirty-two campers and 25 staff members from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao (the three major island groups in the Philippines) gathered at Eden Nature Park, a peaceful and tranquil mountain resort 2,630 feet above the city, from May 18 to 25 for part one of the Philippine United Youth Camp 2003. Part two (May 26 to 30) was optional and consisted of a climb to the summit of Mount Apo, the highest mountain in the Philippines, at 10,311 feet above sea level.

The 32 campers were divided equally into four teams or "dorms" (we actually stayed in tents)—two boys dorms (1B and 2B) and two girls dorms (1G and 2G)—of eight campers each. Two counselors served each dorm. Each camper dorm was divided into two tents of five people each, four campers plus one counselor per tent. With nine more tents for the staff, we had a total of 17 tents in our campsite.

Our theme this year was "On to the Highest!" Three years ago we had a theme that was somewhat related, "A View From the Peak," when 30 of us (17 campers and 13 staff) scaled Mt. Apo. For those who missed out, this year was their opportunity.

The first activity of every day was the Christian living class. Each dorm met with a different member of the ministerial staff to learn the spiritual values revolving around our theme. This included an unflagging commitment to excellence and to seek God's Kingdom and His righteousness first in our daily lives.

After the Christian living classes, our

day activities consisted of basketball, confidence course, campus service, cycling, first aid, inline-skating, riflery, softball, swimming, table tennis, volleyball and wilderness skills. We also had six workshops: art illustration, cooking and baking, electricity, flower arranging, journalism and public speaking.

For the evenings, we all enjoyed a bonfire, a dance clinic, a speech banquet, a dance and variety show and two evenings of Q&A on the Bible and Christian living.

On the Sabbath, we had a "Bible Bowl," followed by more fellowship time. Selected campers rehearsed "How Good and How Pleasant" for the special music for the afternoon service. After the service, we visited each other's tents in the open house activity. That evening, the variety show, dance and awards ceremony were held. Many campers stayed up late trying to make the most of their last few hours together.

Then it was time to say good-bye. About half of the campers and staff went home after part one. The other half stayed and prepared for the four-day mountain-climbing adventure to commence the next day. Fifteen campers and 13 staff members (plus one guest) participated in the ascent to the Philippines' highest peak, Mt. Apo. The journey was challenging, but the enthusiasm remained high.

On Wednesday, May 28, at around 3:30 a.m., we woke up and started to prepare for the final ascent to the peak from Lake Venado, our base camp. We

started the climb at about 4:30 a.m. At 6:57 a.m., the first climber reached the summit. The last climber arrived at 8:54 a.m. We ate our pack lunches at the peak and enjoyed a most spectacular view!

On our way down the mountain, one of our 11 porters remarked that of all the groups that he had known all these years,



Above, the climbers at the peak of Mt. Apo, the Philippines' highest mountain (photo by Richard John Macaraeg). Above right, the Philippine campers and staff at Eden Nature Park in Davao City (photo by Serizalino Dizon)

we were the ones whom he had the most pleasure working with. We asked him why. He said because it was obvious that we had genuine care and love for each other. He could see it in the way we acted and the way we treated him, the other porters and one another—something he said he hadn't seen before. We also left the place better than we found it. We gathered all the trash we could find and brought down five huge sacks of empty bottles, cans and candy wrappers that others had left. It served as a lesson for us: Don't leave



trash—leave a legacy by being a light, just as Jesus said.

God certainly blessed our camp with good weather. Members of the Eden Nature Park staff remarked that it had been raining almost continuously before we arrived. However, we were blessed with good weather the whole time we were there. Even on part two of our camp, some of our porters told us that it had been raining for days before we arrived. But when we came, the rain just suddenly stopped. On the day of our ascent to the peak, it was sunny and almost perfect!

The bottom line is this: We lived, we loved, we learned and we left a legacy. We had fun, and we thank God that no one suffered any serious injury the whole time there. We also wish to thank our brethren for their prayers, and the home office and LifeNets International for all their support. But all the praise, glory and honor go to our great God and Father in heaven for making it all possible!

Daniel Roy Macaraeg

Best Camp Yet at Pinecrest 2003

"Camp," continued from page 1

with each group served by a counselor and assistant counselor.

Camp activities included archery, basketball, journalism, rappelling and rock climbing, riflery, a ropes course, volleyball, softball, speedway and swimming. One of the high points of the camp was the all-day, 13-mile canoe trip down the Black River. Campers and staff also participated in a whacky session of Crazy Olympic games on Saturday night after the Sabbath.

Each day started with a "Compass Check" going through one of the Ten Commandments. That theme was continued during the Sabbath sermons and seminars. Each evening campers could have their Bible and Christian-living questions answered by panels of ministers during Christian living classes.

According to the camp director, Greg Sargent, this year's group of campers was the best ever during UCG's eight-year history at Pinecrest. There was a "wonderful spirit of

respect and cooperation" from the campers he said. He also stated that from his point of view, the high points of the camp this year were "God's intervention in the weather, the tremendous attitude of the campers, the unity and support of the staff and the fact that all ACA standards were passed."

The ACA (American Camping Association) visit, part of the accreditation process for United's camp program, necessitated many hours of preparation by the administrative staff and by the activity staff as well.

National camp program coordinator, Larry Greider, explained that the examination team was very impressed with United's camp at Pinecrest. "After a very thorough examination and walk-through, no standards were missed," he said. "I've been able to be present for most of the ACA visits. The common reaction is that these volunteers (who are usually very knowledgeable and have their own programs) are very impressed. The lead visitor, who directed a resident camp for decades and now works for the Red

Cross as an instructor, mentioned that we were a very impressive organization. Another visitor, who runs a YMCA camp, said she learned much from us. The third visitor, a camp manager, just kept shaking his



Christian living class, where ministers answer Bible and Christian living questions from campers; left, Rhonda Gehrike on the ropes



head, as if to say 'amazing.' This quest for excellence is something to be thankful for since it reflects the greatness of the God we serve," said Mr. Greider.

He went on to say, "The entire camp seemed to radi-

ate the sense of excellence that was mirrored in the standards accomplished. There were dozens of 'coincidences' that suggested to me that we had unseen help and the spirit of harmony was evident everywhere."

Reports on the six other U.S. summer camps will appear in future issues. **UN**



From the Word

Luke Is Dead, but Never Forgotten

■ God calls people of all backgrounds, and sometimes the results of sins of the past bear a high price. "Luke" wanted me to share his story with you.

by Robert Berendt

The name I have used in the title of this article is an alias. I did have the permission of "Luke" to tell about his life. He gave me that permission and asked me to use his example when he lay on his deathbed.

Meeting Luke

It has always been an important event for me as a pastor to meet a person God is obviously calling. Jesus said in Matthew 22:14 that many are called, but few are chosen. The Bible tells us that only the Father takes the responsibility to draw people to Christ (John 6:44). Thus, when a person I meet for the first time is clearly coming to the understanding of God's truth, I am excited and pleased.

Luke was such a man. Our first meeting was unusual in the setting and circumstance, but not unusual in the pattern of the conversation. Luke invited my wife and I to spend the night in one of the finest hotels at his expense. I told him it was not necessary, but he would not hear of that and insisted.

As I found out, he worked in the hotel. He had arranged to have a private meeting room available, and so the setting was unique in my experience. We launched into his concerns in a straightforward manner. His questions had everything to do with the theme of Acts 2:38: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Growing Tall Spiritually

Luke began attending church and within a short time became a most loved and respected person. He towered near to 6 foot 7 and was easily the tallest man in our congregation.

Luke was tall in more ways than just height. He grew tall spiritually. He was an ardent Bible student. Soon it was obvious that he was contributing much in enthusiasm, warmth and spiritual conviction to the members. Later I found that Luke had great courage and determination in his character. Everyone loved Luke. We wondered why such a well-spoken, well-traveled, gentle, kind, interesting and handsome man was not married. Luke had never been married, though he was in his mid-30s.

Luke had many questions as he grew in the understanding of God's Word. It was a delight to see the zeal and joy reflected in his eyes and demeanor as he found answers to questions that had plagued him for years. He came to know

a loving and caring God who had a plan to save all of mankind.

The next two years passed smoothly and Luke continued to be steadfast and pleased with his exciting new beliefs.

A Deadly Diagnosis

That was when Luke became very ill. I anointed him and helped him get to the hospital. James 5:13-15 were verses we discussed a lot over the next few weeks. It did not take long for the doctors to diagnose Luke with AIDS. Luke was ashamed of himself and told of some things he had done before he came into the Church, some wild weekends that he hardly remembered. I reassured Luke that the blood of Jesus Christ had washed away all of his sins. We talked about the fact that his deeds before baptism had come back to haunt him. Luke asked me: "Why did God let this happen after I had repented and was baptized?"

I visited Luke often, and it soon became evident that his body was wasting away quite dramatically. I encouraged him to let his mother and sister know. He felt so bad about his condition, that at first he refused. After we talked a while, he did change his mind.

I recall so clearly the day I met Luke's sister at the train station and went with her and an interpreter (she spoke only Italian) to Luke's apartment where she could stay and then to the hospital. It was obvious that she loved

her brother deeply. I tried to explain gently and carefully what the illness was and what it seemed the outcome must be. I told her of Luke's repentance and the wonderful loving man that he was. I also told her that Luke was at ease with this sickness now and at peace with God. It was obvious that Luke was loved by his family.

Bible passages like Psalm 102 were topics of our discussions. Luke indeed was losing so much weight that verse 5 had special meaning for him. Finally he accepted the possibility that God would let him die. Facing the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4) became reality for Luke.

Through his suffering and the haunting look I often saw in his sunken eyes, there was burning brightly a confident reassurance that he would not be forgotten. If death was to come, Luke was prepared to face that. Luke did not want to die. He abhorred the thought, just as almost every human being does. But there came a time that he was so ill and so weak, that death seemed a refuge.

Lessons We All Learned

Luke was dead—that was the message I had to give to the members of the congregation. There were great lessons that we all learned from this man. We learned that God is in charge of every life. God can call whomever He wishes and make that person into a saint.

In 1 Corinthians 1:26-27 Paul explained that God does not call many

noble and mighty people. He looks on the heart and chooses those who would obey Him and change their way of living now. In 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Paul goes on to say that some of the members of the Church were fornicators, adulterers or homosexuals before conversion. That was past tense. That was the case with Luke. His past was forgiven and put aside by God, but it was obvious that the effect of his past was not cancelled.

We realize that if a person loses a leg and then becomes converted, the leg does not reappear. If a person has abused his body with smoking or bad eating habits, the penalties may not be taken away. Luke accepted that. He wanted his story told—a story of deep regret and sorrow for that which had caused an early death and much pain and suffering for his family. Luke wanted people to know that the road of sin leads to death (Romans 6:23).

Luke is a man I will not forget. But whether I remember him or not was not what was important to Luke. His concern was whether God would remember him. With all my heart I believe the answer is a resounding yes. Luke will receive a new body—a spiritual one—that knows no sickness, weakness or pain. He will be a spirit being—a son of God. That was his joy and his hope. That was the source of his strength and acceptance. Luke is dead, but he will live again! **UN**

Champion of Misfits

■ "If it had not been for Anne Sullivan, the name of Helen Keller would have remained unknown." With these remarkable words, Helen Keller paid tribute to a woman who made such a difference in her life.

by Janet Treadway

Helen Keller, who was deaf and blind, published 14 books, met every U.S. president from Calvin Coolidge to John F. Kennedy, visited 35 countries on five continents and was a champion for the blind. The world knows the story of Helen Keller and how her remarkable teacher, Anne Sullivan, turned this wild, hopeless young girl's life around.

Winston Churchill said, "Helen Keller was one of the most powerful examples of triumphant over adversity." When Queen Victoria asked Helen how she accounted for her amazing accomplishments in life, Helen's reply was, "If it had not been for Anne Sullivan, the name of Helen Keller would have remained unknown."

Helen certainly could have been considered a hopeless case, a misfit, with no hope of any kind for the future before Anne Sullivan came into her life. But what about Anne Sullivan? What was her childhood like? What made her able to patiently nurture and take a chance on this multiply challenged child? Was Anne, too, the product of others taking a chance and turning her world around?

Anne Sullivan could truly have been considered a lost cause—a misfit. She had everything against her. Anne's mother died when she was young. Her father was a drunk, and was very cruel to the children. He eventually abandoned his children. Anne, half blind herself, was placed in a poorhouse along with people who were considered insane, where survival was a daily chore. She watched her beloved brother die there, and grew more defiant and hostile.

But one day a committee came to investigate the institution, and while they were there, Anne begged them to send her to a school for the blind. Someone from the committee listened, took to heart her request and she was placed in Perkins school for the blind. There she still faced great challenges, but she found some caring and sympathetic teachers

she would choose to model her life after.

Anne did not allow her childhood to permanently embitter her heart. Instead she became a teacher and mentor to Helen Keller, who had no hope either until Anne Sullivan came along. Anne Sullivan became a champion of a misfit.

There is another example of a champion listed in the Bible—King David.

David, Champion of Misfits

David was a great man after God's own heart. He had a caring heart for the people, and they knew it. He had learned this great caring by being a shepherd first. David had risked his life many times saving his sheep from the jaws of a lion or bear. He stood up against Goliath when no one else would.

In 1 Samuel 22:1-2 David was in great danger from jealous King Saul, and so he hid himself. Amazingly, while hiding in a cave, hundreds of people came to follow him. They were the misfits and those who were mistreated under the rule of Saul. David had become the captain of the misfits and soon their king.

God, the Greatest Champion

In Ezekiel 34:11-16 it talks about our great God who will come and gather up all those who are scattered. He will go out and search for His lost sheep. He will gather them, feed them and cause them to lie down and fear no more. He will

take away their pain and sorrow. God will seek out the lost, bring back those who have strayed, bind up the crippled and strengthen the weak.

God will intervene in this world and its sorrows. But in the meantime we, too, must become champions.

Becoming a Champion

You don't have to be a great hero of the Bible to be a champion in someone's life. All we have to do is be alert to people and their needs.

- Be an encourager. Look for those who are down and take time to find good qualities in them and let them know.

I can relate to Anne and others who were misfits. At times I still feel like a misfit, especially if I have goofed up. During my times of deepest discouragement I've asked God to encourage me or send an encourager. Then someone would come along and lift my spirits by a kind word that validates that I am special, that I belong and that God has a purpose for me. Encouragement is one of the most important things you can do for someone who may feel worthless.

Look for those who seem to be the weak, neglected or ignored. Make it a point to make them feel special. Validate them as being a very important, needed part of the human race and especially of the Church. Be alert to those who are shy and who may not fit in. Make them feel

a part of your congregation. It is easy to mingle with our friends when we attend church, but why not make it a point to seek out those who do not fit in?

- Become a mentor to an orphan or other young person in need. James 1:27 says, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress" (NIV). In this world there are plenty of children who are being raised without fathers and some without mothers. Take the time to look around and get involved with the fatherless! Not just occasionally, but roll your sleeves up, get involved and make a difference. Pray for them, care for them and include them in some of your family activities.

We all can become champions if only we take the time to reach out. I would not be where I am today without the help from mentors who have come along to give me a helping hand. As Helen Keller said in an article, "We Can Do More," in *Home Magazine*, February 1934: "We imagine we cannot do anything important because we are not fitted like the great men and women about whom we read. But if we examine ourselves diligently, we may discover that we possess a talent with which we can create beauty or joy, or assist somebody else to achieve something fine." Remember Anne Sullivan, David and God's example—be a champion of misfits! **UN**

Remember the Sabbath Day

■ Does the Fourth Commandment apply only to one day each week? Are we obeying the Sabbath commandment as long as we don't work on the Sabbath? Is it possible to violate the Sabbath command on Thursday?

by Dave Johnson

One of the distinctive doctrines of the United Church of God is our belief in the necessity of obeying God's command concerning the seventh-day Sabbath. For many people, this belief has had a profound impact on their lives. Some have lost desirable jobs or been forced to change careers because their occupation did not allow Sabbath observance. Many have sacrificed in order to obey God's instruction, and in many cases, God has blessed those who chose to put Him and His instructions first.

When we first learn about the Sabbath, much of our focus is upon the 24-hour period between sunset on Friday evening and sunset on Saturday evening. The questions we ask and the concerns we have are about which activities are acceptable on the Sabbath and which are not. We learn that we are not to work on the Sabbath day, and we naturally ask questions about what constitutes "work." We ask questions about recreational activities and what is appropriate for ourselves and our children to do on the Sabbath.

We soon learn that attending weekly Sabbath services is not an optional activity but an integral part of Sabbath observance. We learn that failing to attend services when we have the ability to do so is a form of Sabbath breaking. In the past we may have decided to "go to church" based upon how interesting or effective the minister was or how friendly the congregation seemed. Now we learn that those points are irrelevant because God has commanded us to assemble before Him.

In the process of learning, most of us have probably made mistakes by going too far in one direction or another. Perhaps we were too strict in some areas and too lax in others. As time has gone by, and God's Spirit has worked within us, and God's Church has instructed us, we have gradually come to a more balanced way of keeping God's Sabbath holy.

All of these concerns are natural and right. By learning these principles we are able to begin using the Sabbath in the way God intends and to reap the rewards that come as a result of Sabbath observance. But did God actually give us a commandment that only applies to one day each week? Most of the principles of Sabbath observance would apply to the annual Holy Days as well, but what about the rest of the time? We can easily see that the other nine commandments are applicable all of the time, but what about the Sabbath

commandment? Is it possible to avoid doing anything sinful on the Sabbath day and still fail to fulfill the Sabbath commandment?

Looking More Closely

Let's look a little more closely at the commandment and see what we might be overlooking.

Exodus 20:8-11 says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."

The obvious focus of this passage is upon the Sabbath day and maintaining its holiness. Man does not have the power to make anything holy, but God has clearly hallowed—made holy—this time, and it is our duty to see that this God-given holiness is not defiled. This passage clearly shows us that doing our "work" on God's Sabbath day would defile or "profane" its holiness.

It is important to understand this concept of "holy" versus "profane." Everything that is not specifically labeled as "holy" is automatically "profane" in this sense. When we use the word *profane* today, we are referring to something that is irreverent, blasphemous or lacking appropriate respect.

The biblical usage does not necessarily include that same negative emphasis. One Hebrew word translated *profane*, *chol* (*Strong's* H2455), had an underlying meaning of "exposed." The root word from the Greek, *bebelos* (*Strong's* G952), originally referred to the threshold of a doorway, and refers to something that may be casually and without consideration, stepped upon.

By extension, the concept refers to something that is accessible. Something that is *profane* is accessible to man and man may determine how he wishes to use it. Something that is *holy* can be used legitimately only in the way God designates. In this sense, six days each week are "profane," while only one is "holy." Scripture further reveals that when the religious leaders failed to differentiate between the holy and profane and failed to teach the people that difference, the people fell into sin by carelessly misusing what God said was holy (Ezekiel 22:26; 44:23).

However, we should also note that the passage in Exodus does not begin by defining what can and cannot be done on the Sabbath day. It begins by telling us what we should do the rest of the week in order to be prepared to maintain the holiness of the Sabbath when it arrives.

Remember

We are first instructed to "remember the Sabbath day." The word *remember*

can have different meanings. In this passage it does not refer to "remembering" as opposed to "forgetting." It refers to having a daily awareness that the Sabbath is coming so that work can be planned out and accomplished in such a way that we have completed our necessary work before the Sabbath arrives. This could involve such things as lawn care, housecleaning, preparing and cleaning our vehicles and our clothing, preparing special meals, etc. If we properly "remember the Sabbath day," we can plan and schedule these activities throughout the week in such a way that we are properly prepared before the Sabbath arrives.

The Jewish Soncino commentary makes an interesting observation about the instruction to remember the Sabbath day: "The verb is infinitive and so is not limited in time. Always keep the Sabbath in mind during the week, so that if, for example, you come across a special article of food, set it aside for the honoring of the Sabbath . . . A person should so order his affairs during the week that his mind is completely free of them on the Sabbath" (*The Soncino Chumash*, page 460).

Obviously, there is nothing wrong with doing a portion of our preparation for the weekly Sabbath on a Friday, but if that is the only time we prepare, we are misunderstanding the scriptural instruction. If we neglect preparing for the Sabbath until Friday, we will probably be exhausted by the time the Sabbath arrives. For many people, the Sabbath has become not a "rest" day, but a "crash" day—a time when they are so worn out that they are unable to do much more than eat and sleep. Is that really what God intended His holy Sabbath day to be?

While refraining from work is essential to Sabbath observance, we also understand that there is much more to the Sabbath. For example, we are told to "call the Sabbath a delight" (Isaiah 58:13). The Sabbath is not intended to be a day that we endure or simply sleep through, but a day we anticipate as the most delightful time of the week. How can this day truly be a delight if a person has not properly prepared in advance? Will it be a delight simply because it arrives? Most of us can answer that question from our own experience. Those times when we have put forth diligent effort to prepare for the Sabbath, it was truly delightful. On the other hand, those times when we have failed to prepare properly, we may have gone through the motions of keeping the Sabbath, but we could not honestly call it a delight.

It is encouraging to note that God does two special, supernatural things each Sabbath day. Did you notice them in the passage we quoted from Exodus 20? The account of the first Sabbath day in Genesis 2:1-3 shows these same actions. Notice the last phrase in Exodus 20:11: "Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." God says that He both blesses the Sabbath day and sets it aside as holy. Just as no other day of the week is holy, no other day of the week has this spe-



Attending weekly Sabbath services is an integral part of Sabbath observance. But there's more to remembering the Sabbath (photo by Janet Treadway)

cial blessing from God. That special blessing is not physical—we cannot sense it with our five senses. It is a spiritual blessing. If we are so exhausted when the Sabbath arrives that we can barely drag ourselves through the day, aren't we depriving ourselves of God's blessing?

Summoned to Assemble

Another aspect of the Sabbath commandment that can be affected negatively when we fail to remember the Sabbath and prepare appropriately is the special "holy convocation." God provides for His people. Leviticus 23:3 says, "Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings."

A *convocation* is an assembly called together by authority. It is not like a group get-together, a club meeting or some social event. People are summoned to a convocation much in the way a summons is issued to a court of law. A summons is not an invitation, it is an order from the authorities. The fact that this is a "holy" convocation shows that the authority doing the summoning is God. God would certainly want us to eagerly assemble before Him and with His other children, but whether we're eager or not, He summons us to appear. Other scriptures show us we should not attend when we are ill with some potentially communicable disease, and acknowledge that once in a great while, there may be an "ox in the ditch" situation that prevents our attendance.

In years past, many made considerable sacrifices to be able to attend Sabbath services regularly. At times we may have been overzealous in our efforts. There may have been times when we could have been more balanced in our approach. But have we now gone to the other extreme where seemingly trivial matters may cause us to ignore God's summons?

It seems that some routinely skip services because "I worked so hard this week, I was just too tired to come." Other times events make it so it isn't convenient to come to services. We're not talking about sudden, unexpected, uncontrollable events or important family occasions beyond our control. However, there are many other matters we could anticipate and plan for or cut

short. If we fail to do so, are we really remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy in the way God intended?

There is no substitute for weekly Sabbath services. Listening to a tape on some other day is not the same. God has blessed and hallowed the Sabbath day in a spiritual way, not like any other day. The strength we derive from fellowship with God's people cannot be duplicated by some other activity. God blesses us with that opportunity only once each week. If we fail to anticipate and plan in such a way that we can take advantage of that opportunity when it comes, then we are not remembering the Sabbath day in the way God intends.

Remember the encouragement to gather in worship and fellowship recorded in Hebrews 10:24-25: "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

Perhaps we could share one more point from a minister's perspective. When we give sermons, we usually have some idea about how effective the messages have been. Sometimes we feel a message has been helpful and worthwhile, and sometimes, we feel the message wasn't very good at all. (I've given some that made me glad I didn't have to sit in the audience and listen to me.) We sometimes ask God's mercy and forgiveness when we feel we haven't provided a very good "meal" for God's people.

It's surprising how often someone will come up after one of those standard messages and thank us for something we said. It drives home the point that God's blessing is upon His Sabbath day and His holy convocation, and He can produce good results even when we humans come disappointingly short.

The Sabbath commandment is not a one-day-a-week commandment. If we fail to "remember the Sabbath day" and plan accordingly on Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday, we are failing to fulfill the commandment. Unusual circumstances beyond our control will arise, but we can profoundly affect the impact of the Sabbath upon ourselves and our families by properly remembering and preparing each week to make God's Holy Day a delight. **UN**

Treasure Digest

“Blessed Are Those Who Mourn”

Christ's statement in Matthew 5:4 seems contradictory. How can those who mourn be happy? But God's way of life does produce joy (Psalm 16:11; Galatians 5:22). Mourning can be a blessing because:

- It causes us to think more soberly about life (Ecclesiastes 7:2-4).
- It keeps us from becoming complacent (Deuteronomy 8:11-18).
- It helps us to have compassion for others, as Christ did (Hebrews 5:7-9).

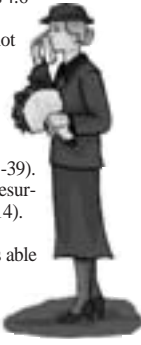
There are three situations where we should mourn:

- When we see the suffering of others (Ezekiel 9:4).
 - When God's Spirit convicts us of sin (James 4:8-10).
 - When we suffer persecution.
- Christ finished His statement by promising comfort to those who mourn (Matthew 5:4). God provides this comfort in many ways:
- Through the Bible (Romans 15:4).
 - By David's example (Psalm 34:4-7).
 - Through prayer (Philippians 4:6-7).

- By reassuring us we are not alone in our trials.
- By His promise not to tempt us beyond what we are able (1 Corinthians 10:13).
- By reassuring us that He is on our side (Romans 8:31-39).
- Through the hope of the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14).
- Through one another.
- By reassuring us that He is able to save us (Jude 24-25).

Ultimately there will be no more mourning. “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (Revelation 21:4).

(Excerpted from a sermon by Richard Pinelli May 24, 2003, in Cincinnati East, Ohio.)



Prayer: A Sacrifice?

In a recent Bible study our minister went through the book of Malachi, which tells us how upset and disappointed God was with the defiled sacrifices offered by Israel. Our minister said that our prayers are part of the sacrifices we offer to God. It made me wonder, What is there about prayer that is a sacrifice? What do we give up of value when we pray?

One thing is our attention, our whole heart. For some of us, focusing is a real effort. However, it is how our spirit reaches out to God, just as we would reach a hand out to a friend.

We also give our time, which is our life. Sometimes it is just a moment when something pops to mind or a prayer over a meal, but usually our prayers are longer and follow the example Christ gave.

When we pray with a right attitude, we know these sacrifices are pleasing to God. In Revelation 5:8, 8:4 and Psalm 141:2 our prayers are described as sweet incense to God and likened to an evening sacrifice. In plain language, He enjoys hearing from us.

So what we sacrifice comes back to us “pressed down, shaken together, and running over” (Luke 6:38). This makes our prayer life a real joy and hardly something we would think of as a sacrifice.

C.K. Vanderraad

That's Not What God Wanted

So often in life we hear the phrase, “That's not what I wanted.” All of us, including God, can identify. Satan and mankind have chosen to go the way that God did not want them to go.

Jesus Christ was no stranger to not getting what He wanted. Though He knew it was necessary to fulfill all things, His terrible beating and sacrifice were not easy. He said, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me” (Matthew 26:39).

Still people are choosing to go the way God does not want. Remember this the next time we think, “That's not what I wanted.” Striving to do what God wants will make it more likely that we will get what we want, now and in the world to come.

Marilyn Braley

Quotable Quotes

“The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails” (William Arthur Ward).

“Stand up to your obstacles and do something about them. You will find that they haven't half the strength you think they have” (Norman Vincent Peale).

“The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings” (Eric Hoffer).

“Seven days without prayer makes one weak” (seen on a sign in Phoenix, Arizona).

“Love is not looking in each other's eyes, but looking together in the same direction” (Antoine de Saint-Exupery).

“If you think that education is expensive, try ignorance” (Derek Bok).

Submitted by Anthony Pacelli, Annette King and Terry Hoffman

Remembering Our Marriage Covenant

Below are excerpts from the meaningful marriage ceremony currently used by the United Church of God:

Surely there can be no greater human joy than to have a happy marriage, filled with giving and sharing. There is no deeper relationship among human beings than that achieved by a husband and wife in marriage.

Marriage is a natural union but a divine institution, ordained of God. It was established by the Creator God at creation and derives its authority from the divine laws of God, immutable and unchangeable.

When God created life upon the earth, He made human beings the pinnacle of the physical creation, fashioning them in His own image. He gave men and women creative minds with the ability to make choices, to develop plans and to build their lives upon those plans.

Men and women were created with the marvelous potential of eternal life in the family of God. And as a loving Father, God gave us the institution of marriage and the blessing of a family, that we might learn to love one another as He loves us.

After He created the first man from the dust of the ground, “The LORD God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him’” (Genesis 2:18).

The woman was made equal to the man in spir-

itual potential, the perfect complement to her husband. To emphasize His purpose for Adam and Eve, the Creator God did not make the woman directly from the ground, but from the very flesh and bone of the man. When the woman was presented to him, Adam said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Genesis 2:23).

The Creator then united this first man and woman as husband and wife, saying, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24).

“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth’” (Genesis 1:28).

And so the institution of marriage and the cycle of human life began with God's personal blessing.

Within the Church, it is God—not merely man or the laws of man—who joins together husband and wife as one flesh. Therefore, let us now consider the laws of God governing this union, and His instruction to husbands and wives as recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

In Ephesians 5:21 Paul talks about “submitting to one another in the fear of God.” The sacred marriage covenant calls upon you to yield yourselves to God and to each other—to hold each other in high esteem, giving honor and respect to one another with love and devotion. Always give preference to the welfare of the other. Outgoing concern is the foundation of the marriage relationship.

[Read Ephesians 5:22-25, 28, 33; 1 Peter 3:1, 5, 7.] The essential qualities of a happy and successful marriage are those that express an ever-growing, godly love as described by the apostle Paul to the Corinthian church. [Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.]

So we see that a loving relationship within marriage is a type of the spiritual relationship between God and the Church. And it is in your submission to God's love that this marriage will be strengthened and protected.

As a loving Father, God wants to pour out upon us His richest blessings. He wants us all to be supremely happy. To that end He has given you, [his first name] and [her first name], this wonderful gift of marriage.

Because marriage is a divine institution, and we are asking God to join you as husband and wife, it is fitting and right that each of you should faithfully promise before God to accept the sacred marriage covenant according to the divinely ordained conditions established by Almighty God.

Do you then [his first name], faithfully promise and covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses, to take [her full name] to be your lawful

wedded wife—in sickness and in health, in good times and in difficult times, for as long as you both shall live—to love her, cherish her, honor her and provide for her? [Groom answers.]

And do you, [her first name], faithfully promise and covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses, to take [his full name] to be your lawful wedded husband—in sickness and in health, in good times and in difficult times, for as long as you both shall live—to love him, cherish him, honor him and, as God has ordained, submit yourself to him? [Bride answers.]

Since all ordination or setting apart in the Scriptures is by the laying on of hands, would you please join your right hands and, with the laying on of my hands, I will ask the Eternal God to unite you as husband and wife.

[Prayer]

By the authority of Jesus Christ, I now pronounce you husband and wife!



Protecting Kids From Punishment: Teaching the Wrong Lesson?

A student was kicked out of school for helping someone cheat on the SAT test. Sounds reasonable, unless you are his parents. His family is suing for \$1.1 million to compensate for the “loss of invaluable childhood friendships . . . and loss to his reputation,” reports *U.S. News & World Report*. In an article titled “Parents in a Haze?” (May 26, 2003), the magazine highlighted the lack of parental support in the teaching of morals. “People don't like to have their children punished,” said Michele Rhule, a principal in Pennsylvania.

“The 2002 Ethics of American Youth survey found that 3 of 4 high school students admitted to cheating on at least one test during the previous year. Some 38 percent acknowledged stealing something from a store, and 37 percent said they would lie in order to get a good job,” the magazine reported.

But what does God say to parents? “You shall teach [God's words] diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deuteronomy 6:7).

Share Your Treasures!

Do you have any short items of biblical wisdom, humor or practical information that you would like to share in this section? Or if you have any suggestions, please contact *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027 or mike_bennett@ucg.org.

Be Ready to Give an Answer: Does the Bible Teach a “Secret Rapture”?

Millions have read the *Left Behind* books based on a secret rapture. According to the most common version of the rapture, Christ will approach the earth, not return to it, to secretly seize believers seven years before His actual return. Does the Bible teach this? The basis of the teaching is 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 where Paul says Christians “shall be caught up . . . to meet the Lord in the air.”

Context: Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 after the unexpected deaths of some brethren there to remind them of the hope of the resurrection. Nothing in this passage justifies an understanding other than that it is referring to Christ's second coming. The “shout,” “voice of an archangel” and “the trumpet of God” seem anything but secret (verse 16).

Related Passages: In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul wrote that the resurrection would occur “at His coming” (verse 23) and at “the last trumpet” (verse 52). This is the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15-18, which announces Christ's second coming, the establishment of His Kingdom on earth. Where will Christ be after meeting the saints in the clouds? “In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives” (Zechariah 14:4; compare Acts 1:9-11). Matthew 24:36-44 does talk of some being prepared for Christ's coming, and others left unprepared, but it doesn't say God's people will be taken to heaven.

For More Information: “What's ‘Left Behind’ in the Rapture Theory?” (March/April 2000 *Good News*, www.ucg.org/gn/gn27/rapture.html), *Heaven & Hell*, *The Book of Revelation Unveiled* and the GN radio program 48 “Are Christians Raptured Away?” (www.ucg.org/radio/gnprarchive.htm).

Half Empty or Half Full? We Don't Know the Half of It!

■ We humans tend to frame our outlook in terms of half empty or half full. But there is a different—a higher—perspective.

by Robert Curry

Tonight the Big Dipper dominates the northern sky. Beaming brilliantly just above the mountaintops west of Pikes Peak in Colorado Springs, Colorado, this famous constellation awes even unbelievers.

For me, the way it was placed—perfectly upright—inspired me to imagine a cup ready to pour out God's blessings on His children below!

A thought followed that seems to naturally accompany any drinking vessel: Is it half empty? Or half full?

Overflowing!

Has God ever done anything halfway? The Creator pronounced everything He had made "very good." Talk about an understatement! The Big Dipper is a "very good" example!

What does God promise for obediently tithing and giving offerings? "And try Me now in this," says the LORD of Hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it!" (Malachi 3:10).

Sometimes, though, maybe our room feels half empty. Maybe there's nothing that you're sure was a special gift from God. You don't even want to say it, but do God's windows feel tightly shut?

Maybe a little better, does your room feel half full? "We have food and a roof over our head, thank God!"

The truth is, if we are faithfully tithing and giving offerings, our spiritual and physical "rooms" are lovingly decorated wall to wall, and God wishes we were

ready to handle more opportunities, challenges and growth. God ladles blessings overflowing that we too often don't fully appreciate.

Loads Us With Benefits!

Notice a very interesting scripture, Psalm 68:19: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits." The wording might make some picture adding heavy goods to the back of a donkey. Some Christians constantly act like they think God has burdened them with too much! Or at least they feel they are pretty close to "the last straw."

I prefer to picture "loads us with benefits" as scooping dips of delicious chocolate-chocolate chip ice cream onto

a waffle cone. With a big dipper! Of course, in this case I don't want to end up without room to receive it—lest there be hours of discomfort later!

God promises He "will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able" (1 Corinthians 10:13). God knows when two dips are enough!

If we think

No, verse 5 says God "gives to all liberally!"

Mud or Stars?

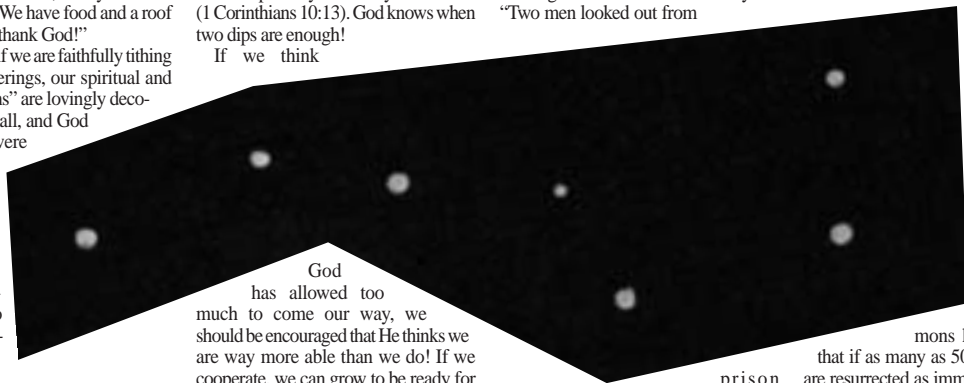
God's relationship with us is overflowing! Remember the little rhyme: "Two men looked out from

"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19). The Big Dipper testifies this message mightily and nightly, until one day God will bring new heavens and a new earth.

Hebrews describes how we will inherit "all things"—the universe (2:8)! Sermons have speculated that if as many as 50 billion humans are resurrected as immortal children of God, they could each inherit at least two galaxies!

Truly, "eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Corinthians 2:9) For you! And "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

Half empty? Half full? If we think that way, we really don't know the half of it! Choose overflowing! **UN**



prison bars. One saw the mud, the other stars."

This concept is thought-changing! More than that, it can be life-changing! Both men stayed in prison. Both windows offered the same view. The ground was muddy. But we want to be the one with vision. The solution was where he chose to look.

Everybody looks at the same water level. The difference is how we choose to evaluate it. What we choose is everything.

Follow-up to Article on Dating Outside the Church

by Mike Bennett

Several letters, E-mails and telephone calls came in response to the article "Courting Compromise: Myths About Dating Outside the Church" in the May issue of *United News*, page 16.

To the Married

A number of those who responded pointed out that the article could be seen as offensive and "devoid of sympathy" for those who are already married, especially the many mates who attend United Church of God services but who are not baptized.

We are truly sorry that the article came across that way to some who are already married. As managing editor, my heart goes out to those who felt offended by the article. Those who are already married are in a much different situation than those the article was addressed to. Those mates who are attending church, interested in reading the literature, perhaps considering baptism, are certainly in a much different situation.

We did run a "Q&A" in the same May issue that was more directly to those who are already married (page 18). For this different audience and situation, a much different approach is called for.

We respect and honor all who

choose to attend services with us, and we give our sincere apology to any nonmember mate for any unintentional offense this article may have caused.

To the Unmarried

The article was written and intended for those not yet married, and the author was trying to approach the subject in a straightforward way to reach those not yet married who had some of those questions.

Though the approach was straightforward and pulled no punches, its underlying teaching is based on the "Marrying Outside the Faith Church Policy Paper" approved by the Council of Elders in January 1998.

The full text of the paper can be read or downloaded from the study papers page of the United Web site at www.ucg.org/papers.

The Q&A included here addresses another question we received in response to the article, and covers several elements of the policy paper as well.

A related personal story shared by a young person in the Church also appeared in the October-December 2002 *Youth United E-magazine*. You can find this touching, interesting article, "One, but Not the Same," on the Web at <http://youthmagazine.org/you/article.asp?volume=3&issue=4&article=soulmate>. **UN**

Q&A: Why do ministers perform marriages between members and nonmembers?

Thank you for your question about "Courting Compromise: Myths About Dating Outside the Church" (May 2003, page 16). Apparently, there's a misunderstanding about what the UCG is doing, and we welcome the opportunity to clarify this important issue.

From your letter it seems that you see a contradiction between the article and the fact that some UCG ministers perform marriages between one of our members and a nonmember. The true picture is that we are working together. We're using *United News* as one of many ways to communicate the values to which we hold as an organization. What the article said to unmarried members is based on the official teaching of the Church, including every elder of the GCE.

The *United News* article is part of a united effort to educate our unmarried membership and encourage everyone in the direction that will benefit them the most. In addition to educating people through publications, our pastors and elders teach the same approach in sermons, sermons, and counseling, as well as in private conversations. By all of those methods, we strongly advise our members to choose to marry in the faith.

But, what are we to do with one who wants to be a member of the UCG, who, after receiving our strongest recommendations to the contrary, is deter-

mined to marry someone who is not a member? Our leadership has given this matter serious and prayerful consideration. A task force was commissioned to produce a study paper on the subject, which we distributed to all of our elders to receive a multitude of counsel. God sometimes gives us only principles on issues, instead of commandments. We determined after much study that God gave us a principle in this matter, not a commandment. The consensus we reached was that marrying outside the Church is ill-advised, but there's no scriptural basis for us to discipline a member who chooses to do so (that is, no scriptural basis for us to refuse to perform the marriage or to put the member out of the Church).

We leave it up to the individual elder asked to perform the ceremony between a member and a nonmember to decide if he will perform it. In some situations, it promotes the relationship between minister, member and nonmember spouse.

We assure you that we clearly advise everyone of the potential problems he or she faces in marrying outside of the Church and that we recommend against it. And, we would not officiate at a marriage in which the attitude of the member is defiant against authority. But, if he or she is subject to God and respectful of our counsel but expresses that he or she is willing to live with the conse-

quences, we're left with a decision. Do we perform the marriage in a spirit of love, respecting the member's difference of opinion and hopefully establishing a relationship with the non-member? Or, do we refuse to perform the ceremony, potentially hurting our relationship with both the member and the nonmember?

What would Christ have us do? It's not an easy decision. It's a weighty challenge to be a faithful minister of God, teaching people what we believe is the best way for them to live and yet continuing to serve them when they make unwise choices. Yet, there are many examples in the Bible of God continuing to work with His people, in spite of the fact that they chose not to fully follow His advice. These examples encourage us to realize that we sometimes need to do the same.

It is our standard procedure that all of the above take place before any marriage ceremony. It may seem on the surface that the ministers were not in agreement with what you read in the *United News* article, for you would not know all that went on in the counseling process before the marriage.

I hope this clarifies that the entire UCG ministry is in agreement on this issue. We solicit your prayers for God to give us the wisdom that we need to serve Him and His people.

Cecil E. Maranville



Local Church Updates

Church Teen Makes Headlines by Not Running on Sabbath

"Bridgette Sexton is one of the premier high school sprinters in Washington. However, she won't win a state track title today, and she wouldn't have it any other way," reported the Vancouver, Washington, *Columbian* newspaper Saturday, May 31.

"Sexton, competing at the Class 2A



Bridgette Sexton made headlines by not running on the Sabbath

state meet, posted the fastest preliminary time in the 400 meters and also qualified for today's finals in her other three events. However, the La Center junior said she will remain faithful to her religious beliefs and not compete today while observing the Sabbath," wrote reporter Howie Stalwick.

It turns out Bridgette's time in the preliminaries on Friday of 58.30 seconds in the 400 meters was faster than the state champion on Saturday (58.46). Her dedication to her religious beliefs made several headlines. The May 31 *Columbian* article quotes her as saying:

"I just wanted to come out here and make a statement," said Sexton, non-denominational Christian and member of the United Church of God, whose Sabbath runs from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. "There's something more than winning."

An earlier article in the May 24 *Columbian* was titled, "Sexton will let her times make statement: beliefs prevent her from running in the 2A state finals." Reporter Andrew Seligman wrote:

"Where Sexton would finish at state is something of a mystery. Every year, she qualifies. Then, she withdraws before the championship round. Why? She's willing to sacrifice a medal, not her religious beliefs . . .

"My goal is to go to state, run my hardest, make a statement and walk out," Sexton said. "If I give up now and I don't follow my beliefs, what was this all worth?"

"It's not easy though. There is a temptation. Teammates probably would prefer she run on Saturdays, but they would never pressure her to do so. It wouldn't work, anyway.

"It's really cool that she does that, but sometimes it's disappointing because . . . we don't have her," teammate Sarah Davis said. . .

"Her coaches and directors all accommodate her. They know the rules. No games on the Sabbath. No rehearsals. No concerts. Not even state championships."

Bridgette is the daughter of Rex and Patty Sexton, who pastor the Tacoma and Olympia, Washington, congregations.

Family Weekend Held in Phoenix

Brethren from several states gathered for a delightful Family Weekend on March 29 and 30, 2003. Sabbath services were held at the Phoenix East congregation's meeting facility. Sermons by Randy Schreiber and Robert Dick were about communicating with our Heavenly Father and with Jesus Christ as our future "husband." The combined Phoenix Choir sang very inspiring special music.

After services a variety of educational seminars were given on family-related topics varying from grief management to choosing a mate God's way. A panel of members from the Northern Arizona congregation held an open informational forum about the "Growing Kids God's Way" program they had just completed. That program has been recommended by area members who have participated in it.

Brethren met the next morning at the South Mountain Preserve State Park in Phoenix. In a gorgeous Sonoran Desert environment they enjoyed hiking, biking and a delicious



Brethren enjoy outdoors and seminars at the Family Weekend in Phoenix, Arizona. Top left, Bob Dick and James Capio; right, Randy Schreiber (photos by Helen Braman)

pancake breakfast prepared by Phoenix brethren. After breakfast four more enlightening and uplifting seminars

were held outdoors. Brethren heard advice on how to let go of emotional "baggage" and better relate to their spouses. The pastors presenting the various sessions were well prepared and inspiring, and it was enjoyable for all who attended.

What a blessing to be able to gather and remind ourselves of the importance of the family!

Denise Dix and Helen Braman

Bismarck High School Senior Receives Director's Award

At the last performance of the Mandan High School Concert Choir on

May 18, 2003, 18-

year-old senior

Brandon Schulz,

who attends the Bis-

marck, North Dako-

ta, congregation,

was presented with

the Director's Award

by choir director

Keri Hess. This

award is given to one

choir student at the

end of each year.

For Brandon the

award was extra special

because it had never

been given to anyone

before for the reasons

it was awarded to him.

Brandon was chosen to be the recipient

of the award because he went above

and beyond what was required to partici-

partate in choir. Specifically, he

received the award due to his diligence

in adhering to his religious beliefs and

the fine example he set for his fellow

classmates in choir during his four

years at the high school.

Barb Schulz, Brandon's mother and

longtime member of God's Church,

said that she was speechless and that

seeing Brandon

receive the award was a

"very moving experience."

"Through the years it has been

challenging to rear children in

God's way. It's

not easy for youth in God's Church to

be different. Something like this

makes it all worthwhile; that kind

of recognition is rare." It was an

honor to Brandon; but even more,

his mother concluded, "It was such

an honor to God, especially."

The choir director, Keri Hess,

stated, "I have the utmost respect for

Brandon and the sacrifice he made. He

held onto his religious beliefs and didn't

infringe on anyone else's beliefs."

Ms. Hess was impressed with Brandon's

dedication to the choir despite his

religious beliefs, which prevented him

from singing Christmas and other sea-

sonal songs during the school year.

Ms. Hess noticed that Brandon did not do homework for other subjects while in her class, but listened attentively to her instruction. In addition Brandon never ridiculed anyone else for their beliefs and never complained about not being able to participate during the singing of the Christmas and other seasonal songs. He acknowledged the way things were and accepted them.

"Due to the way he acts, everyone respects him for it. They don't think it's a weird way to live; and it's not. It is just a way to live your life. Kids were standing up for Brandon, too. Other kids respected him, too." Ms. Hess concluded, "I could talk for a long time about Brandon because I just like him so much."

Pam Redline



Brandon Schulz receives Director's Award

Beloit Honors Gary and Gale Black

The Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation gave a surprise tea in honor of Gary and Gale Black being hired into the full-time ministry following Sabbath services on May 24. Mr. Black has also been named as the new pastor of the St. Paul, Min-

nesota, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin, congregations. Their transfer will take place later in the summer. Their official hire date was June 1.

It is a wonderful opportunity for the Blacks and their three daughters, Kristen, Kelsey and Kaitlyn, but the Beloit and Wisconsin Dells congregations are going to miss them very much. Following their graduation from Ambassador College in 1988, the Blacks have been strong pillars of faith and service in the local area.

Taped congratulatory telephone messages were played during the tea.



Gary and Gale Black, and their children Kristen, Kaitlyn and Kelsey, were surprised with a tea in their honor by the Beloit congregation

Messages were heard from various family members, from Richard Pinelli, operations manager for Ministerial Ser-

vices, and from former pastors in the area, Gary Petty and Randy Stiver. A beautiful cake was baked by Daphne Schultz for the tea.

Mr. Black was ordained by Steve Nutzman as an elder on the Feast of Trumpets in 2001. The Blacks attended the Ministerial Candidate Program at the home office in Cincinnati in September 2002. Five elders who were a part of the Ministerial Candidate Program at that time have now been hired into the full-time ministry.

Steve Nutzman

Dallas Seniors' Luncheon: Blast From the Past and Present

Our much anticipated Dallas Seniors' Luncheon was held on Sabbath, April 12, in the Fellowship Hall of Unity Church where we meet for services. A first for the now combined Dallas North and South churches, the theme was



Amanda Hendee and Colby Vaughn escort Sarah Prado at the Dallas Seniors' Luncheon; above, two of the performers, Katie Collins and Amber Benedict (photos by John Lusk)

Dallas Teens and Big Band Sounds! Most of our teens joined our older members to enjoy a fine catered meal. Teens arrived early to be ready to pin flowers on all our honored brethren. The rest of the teens greeted our seniors and escorted them to their tables.

Our pastor, Doug Horchak, offered a hearty welcome to our seniors and provided introductory remarks to get the luncheon off to a rousing start. After a prayer of blessing on the meal, teens at each table provided each of our seniors with a delightful plate of Italian food and drink.

During the luncheon everyone enjoyed decorations and memorable big band sounds of the '40s. After dinner we were all treated to lovely musical presentations from several of our teens: Katie Collins, Becky Horchak, Chelsea Glasgow, Amanda Richards, Emily Sandilands and Amber Benedict.

After a break, another special treat for those present was a panel, on stage, of three of our senior members, Tina

Engelbart, Louise Winant and Wayne Carpenter. John Lusk moderated as they answered many questions from the teens about their own lives as teenagers, the lessons learned growing to adulthood and the influence of God's way



A senior panel of Tina Engelbart, Louise Winant and Wayne Carpenter, with moderator John Lusk, fielded questions from teens in Dallas; above, John Holmes enjoys his meal compliments of Justin Sandilands

throughout the years. We feel it was very educational and informative for our teens, and an opportunity to share years of experience with them even in such a short time.

After concluding remarks by Mr. Horchak and a list of thanks to many who helped make this a fine luncheon, another Dallas teen, Amanda Hende, sang a final song and everyone was dismissed to our regular Sabbath service.

Thanks again to all our teens and to these brethren who helped make our Senior Luncheon a success: Rick and Diane Bennis, Kris Brooks, J.J. Brooks, John Bynum, Justin Glasgow, Dora Jennings, Matthew Jennings, D.J. Palacios and David Treybig.

John Lusk

May Family Weekend Held in Twin Cities

On May 17 and 18 the Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, congregations

hosted the annual Family Weekend in St. Paul. More than 300 people, including families from across the region, joined together for fun, fellowship and learning.



Minneapolis elder Lonnie Gjesvold pitching at the picnic May 18 (photo by Pete McNair)

“Unsinkable Faith” and focused on strengthening the faith of all ages.

On Sabbath, Steve Myers delivered a young adults Bible study in the morning. Guest speaker and UCGIA president Roy Holladay spoke at services. Following services, Arnold Mendez

gave two presentations on Noah's ark and early man.

Saturday evening the teenagers and young adults attended a dinner and prom. Others stayed at the St. Paul church hall for a potluck dinner and games.

On Sunday a midday picnic was held at Kaposia Park. Everyone had a great time enjoying several activities, including softball, football, eating, singing and just plain old talking.

Pete McNair

Principal Receives Awards

Dan Salcedo, principal of Santa Ana High School, Santa Ana, California, and an elder in the Garden Grove congregation, was the recipient of the Vision of Excellence award presented by Project Tomorrow. Project Tomorrow annually recognizes outstanding efforts and accomplishments in the field of science. The event was held at the Beckman Center on the campus of University of California, Irvine, on the evening of May 3.

According to the Project Tomorrow Web site, “Awards were based on outstanding instructional leadership, focus



Dan Salcedo, center, an elder in the Garden Grove, California, congregation, was one of the winners of the Vision of Excellence award

on student learning, evidence of a collaborative professional learning ability to engage the community . . . Mr. Salcedo [was honored] with a letter from the Governor and a \$5,000 check.”

Santa Ana High School, with 4,000 students and 200 certified staff members, has the highest enrollment of any school in Orange County.

Al Mijares, superintendent of the Santa Ana school district, wrote: “Dan Salcedo represents the highest ideals of school leadership. He richly deserves the recognition and accolades for his

excellence, enthusiasm and love for students, parents and staff. Dan consistently demonstrates that ‘high expectations bring high performance.’ Additionally, he continues to display the highest degree of character and integrity.”

Mr. Salcedo also was the honored recipient of the Administrator of the Year Award on June 10 at the Santa Ana Unified School District Board meeting. The award winner is chosen annually by the SASAA (Santa Ana School Administrators Association) members.

Australian Regional Youth Weekend Includes Dance and Car Rally

On the Labour Day long weekend, the Brisbane, Queensland, congregation hosted a Regional Youth Weekend for young adults in Brisbane and surrounding areas.

The weekend started out on Saturday



Brisbane, Australia, hosts a youth weekend including a barbecue and car rally

morning with a youth Bible study by Stephen Clark. The study highlighted the similarities in Daniel's and Joseph's experiences to that of youth today. We discussed how both Daniel and Joseph were placed in foreign cultures, and needed to prove and maintain their commitment to God in a society that did not embrace God's way of life. Their demonstrated commitment and faith provides an example for us today.

Following a light lunch, regular church services were held—a again with a youth-focused theme. David Maczek gave the sermonette, which highlighted the importance of improving our character through ensuring that we have the right attitude. We then heard from Mr. Clark again, who spoke on the importance of family life in society and the impact that our family relationships have on the overall condition and state of the world in which we live.

After services, a potluck dinner was held prior to a bush dance that was enjoyed by the young and young-at-heart. The musical talent of the band for the evening—Crossfire—was much appreciated by all and provided the boot-scooting rhythms for the dancing throughout the night!

The highlight of the weekend was on Sunday morning with the commencement of the car rally. After weeks of announcing the big event, we were all rather curious to see how the day proceeded and, of course, who would be successful in the quest to complete the clues with the minimum amount of assistance.

The rally was held throughout the suburbs of Brisbane, taking about three and a half hours to complete. Cryptic

clues—provided by Evan Ware and Russell Barnett—were given for each mystery venue and points allocated depending on the amount of help needed to successfully establish the destination. After much deliberation over adding up the score, our successful car was the Maczek family finishing with the least amount of points.

The car rally finished in the Mt. Coot-tha parklands, where a BBQ and games were held.

Wendy Lister

“Elvis” Appears at Eureka Variety Show

After Sabbath services March 29, the Eureka, California, congregation enjoyed a delicious potluck meal and in the evening we experienced our 12th annual variety show. There was quite a variety of acts, including singing, lip-sync, knock-knock jokes, songs by our local “Elvis” (pastor Wayne Dunlap), a skit titled “Amazing Ants,” accordion music played by Vern McGaughy, etc.

There were participants of various ages. The youngest was 22-month-old Sarah Goodrich, who can talk like the animals. The most hilarious act was the appearance of the “Soggy-Bottom Boys” from the movie *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (played by



“Soggy-Bottom Boys” Jerry Bilyeu and sons Andrew and Travis; inset, Sarah Goodrich, one of the “Amazing Ants” (photos by Kandy Goodrich)

our own Jerry Bilyeu and sons) which kept us all in stitches! But all was

kept under control by our gun-slinging master of ceremonies, Mark Taylor. Every year there is something new. What will we come up with next year for our 13th annual show? Who knows, but it is guaranteed to be a lot of fun!

Kandy K. Goodrich

Home Office Staff Celebrates Two 40th Anniversaries

On June 23 the home office staff honored two couples with cake and punch for their 40th wedding anniversaries. Roy and Norma Holladay and Gary and Barbara Antion celebrated their 40th wedding anniversaries in June.



Norma and Roy Holladay and Gary and Barbara Antion celebrated their 40th anniversaries in June and were honored by the home office staff June 23 (photo by Janet Treadway)

Matthew Fenchel did the honors of presenting each couple with a dozen beautiful yellow roses from the staff and ABC students.

What is the glue that has held their marriages together? Mr. Antion said, “I would say having God in our lives is the number one factor. Besides that great factor is safe communication—knowing you can talk to each other about anything and receive understanding. Finally, truly enjoying being with each other. When you spend virtually 24 hours a day together when becoming a pastor without an assistant, you'd better like being with each other. Sharing fun occasions helps us enjoy being with one another.”

Mr. Holladay said, “That is not an easy question to answer—certainly not in one sentence. I would say love, respect and appreciation of one another are part of that glue. We have tried to not let our love die or grow stale and have continued to date and court during all those years. God's Spirit and God's laws governing our marriage have helped immensely. It helps to build a marriage on the right foundation to start with and then use the proper building materials after that.”

Terri Eddington and Lisa Fenchel worked to put this activity together.

Janet Treadway

Baptisms in Roanoke, Virginia

In January 1996, a number of members living in Virginia and Jim Haeffele, now a pastor in North Carolina, formed the Roanoke congregation of the United Church of God. Seven years later, just prior to Passover this year, we had our first baptisms. The four people baptized were Bob Born, Robert Worsham,



Bob Born, Robert Worsham and Kirk and Jenny Spitzer II were baptized by Don Shaw and John Foster

Kirk Spitzer II and his wife, Jenny (Earles) Spitzer. Don Shaw, elder, and John Foster, pastor, conducted the baptisms.

John Foster

Announcements

Births



Micah Allen and Hallie Elizabeth Averett

Rich and Rachel (Velting) Averett of Dallas, Texas, are very proud and very blessed to announce the birth of Hallie Elizabeth and Micah Allen. Hallie and Micah were born on Feb. 3, 2003, at 6:33 p.m. and 6:37 p.m., respectively. Hallie weighed 6 pounds and was 18 inches long. Micah weighed 5 pounds 9 ounces and was also 18 inches long. Big brother, Ethan James, is really happy to have a brother and a sister both at the same time!

Hallie and Micah are the second and third grandchildren for proud grandparents, Richard and Nancy Velting of the Dallas congregation, and the sixth and seventh grandchildren for proud grandparents Jim and Jannette Averett of Greensboro, North Carolina.

Abraham and Cathy Stores of Portland, Oregon, are pleased to announce the birth of their first child, Makana Kay



Makana Kay Stores

Stores. Makana was born on April 9, 2003. She weighed 7 pounds 8 ounces and was 19 inches long. This precious gift from God is welcomed by the Portland East congregation and proud grandparents.

Engagements

Allen and Sandi Hirst of Spokane, Washington, are pleased to announce the



Kristina Hirst and Luke Crane

engagement of their daughter, Kristina Marie, to Luke Elliot Crane, son of Walter and Kitty Crane of Gladewater, Texas. Plans are being made for a wedding in Spokane on Jan. 3, 2004.

Weddings

Mr. and Mrs. George T. Allen Jr. of Springville, Alabama, and Mr. and Mrs. Dan Summy of Mingo Junction, Ohio, are very pleased to announce the marriage of their children Rachel Caroline Allen and Michael David Summy. The



Michael and Rachel Summy

wedding took place on July 28, 2002, at the Historic Carriage Room and Courtyard in Springville, and was officiated by Bruce Gore. The bridesmaids were Sarah Allen and Melanie Yates. The groomsmen were Scott Summy and Fred McDougale. A dinner and dance reception followed the ceremony. The couple resides in Springville and attends the Gadsden, Alabama, congregation.

Mr. and Mrs. George T. Allen Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. Steve M. Hicks Sr. of Springville, Alabama, are very pleased to announce the marriage of their children Sarah Letitia Allen and William Vernon Hicks. The wedding took place



William and Sarah Hicks

on Aug. 25, 2002, at Matthews Manor in Springville, and was officiated by Bruce Gore. The bridesmaids were Rachel Summy, Melanie Yates, Andrea Shipman, Whitney Satterfield and Cindy Gore. The flower girl was Sydney Rutter. The groomsmen were Steve M. Hicks Jr., Isaac Shultz, George T. Allen III, Gabriel Satterfield and Michael Summy. A reception and dance followed the ceremony. The couple resides in Springville and attends the Gadsden, Alabama, congregation.

Raymond Blank and Vivian Smyda exchanged vows on May 24, 2003. The



Vivian and Raymond Blank

ceremony was held in Cedar Hill, Texas, in the home of James and Linda Smyda. The couple will reside in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Anniversaries

John and Winifred Kieviet, deacon and deaconess in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, congregation, celebrated their 50th anniversary on May 22, 2003. They were surprised on May 10 with a party given by their children: Bruce and Debbie Kieviet of Cincinnati, Ohio; Cindy and Fred Slikkers of Michigan; and two



John and Winifred Kieviet

grandchildren, Angela and Robert Whitaker of Cincinnati. On May 30 they were honored by the Grand Rapids congregation with a beautiful cake and snacks. The Kieviets have attended since 1963.

Obituaries

James Edward Sharver, 69, of Boise, Idaho, died June 9 at a Boise hospital. James was born June 6, 1934, in Sallisaw, Oklahoma, the oldest of three children. After serving his country in the Air Force, he worked in commercial construction most of his career. He was baptized into God's Church in 1964.



James Edward Sharver

Jim and his wife Marjorie enjoyed travel. They made trips to Europe, Alaska and loved traveling south for the winter in their RV.

Jim is survived by his wife of 10 years; his sister Mary Tucker of Ft. Worth, Texas; three children and their spouses: Sherri and Paul Wimberly of Sumrall, Mississippi; Steven and Monica Sharver of Garland, Texas; and Sharla and Peter Paige of Whitsett, North Carolina; and 11 grandchildren: Shanda, Shaina, Sasha, Mark, Amanda, Melissa, Eric, Alyssa, Adam, Josh and Jake. Jim is also survived by three stepchildren and their spouses: Pamela and David Blue of Boise and their children Aaron and Ryan; Michael and Kelley Farley of Boise and their children Ashley, Jessica and Kelsey; and Jerry and Mariann Farley of Troutdale, Oregon.

The world has lost a kind and wonderful man. Jim used to say he woke up happy every day. He shared that happy spirit with everyone he met. He enjoyed life and had great faith. He will be missed dearly.

Barbara Dean Catoe, 70, of the Kingsport, Tennessee, congregation, died May 18, 2003. Mrs. Catoe is sur-



Barbara Dean Catoe

vived by her husband, Harvie; three daughters, Jenny Lynn Morgan, Karen D. Loden and Sonja Paulette Catoe; one son, Allen Russell Catoe; five granddaughters; and one great-granddaughter. She was preceded in death by her mother, Louise P. Wallace, and a brother, Jimmy Wallace. A memorial service was conducted May 25 by David Dobson.

Sarah Rynerson died at home on Jan. 12, 2003. She was born Sept. 23, 1914, in Georgia. She was one of six children and was home schooled at an early age.



Sarah Rynerson

After some testing, she entered grade school in the fourth grade and graduated from high school at 14 and Georgia State Teachers College at 18. After teaching high school math for a time, she joined the Women's Army Corps during World War II. After the war ended, she met John Rynerson through

John's sister. John had just returned from being a POW in the Pacific theater. They were married Jan. 6, 1946. In 1965 they came in contact with the Church of God and attended in various congregations in Indiana, Tennessee, Alabama, Arizona and Utah.

She is survived by her husband, John; children, John III and Willis; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Kenneth Edward Ellis died May 2, 2003. He was born July 26, 1933, in Chicago, Illinois, the eldest of seven boys. After working his way through college with a teaching degree, he married Barbara Joan Johnson and they soon went to Puerto Rico, where Ken was assigned to teach trainees for the Army.

Daughters Barbara Lynn, Elizabeth Karen and Becky Alesia were born between 1957 and 1962. In 1964 the family moved to Pasadena, California, where Ken was offered a position at



Kenneth Edward Ellis

Imperial Schools. In 1972 a son, Christopher, was born.

After serving in Chicago area schools for many years, Ken and Barbara relocated to the Atlanta area in 2001, where they were living at the time of his death after a long illness.

Ken was an educator with a master's degree in natural science from the University of Idaho, and was credentialed for public safety and driver education, which he taught at Imperial High, along with biology. His interests included fishing, camping, water sports, watching football and baseball, reading and sharing his love of learning with his children and six granddaughters.

A 42-year member of God's Church, baptized in 1960, his faith was strengthened over the years. Married to his college sweetheart for 47 years, he was dearly loved by his family, friends and thousands of his students.

Rudolph V. (Rudy) Anderson, 98, passed away May 3, 2003, in Spring Hill, Florida, after a brief illness. He was



Rudolph V. (Rudy) Anderson

born March 7, 1905, on a farm in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. His parents and grandparents migrated there from Swe-

den. Rudy was the youngest son in a family of three sons and five daughters. The only remaining sibling is Elsie Slye who resides in Escanaba, Michigan.

Rudy left the family farm at age 17 for employment in the rubber industry until his retirement in 1963, after which he returned to the Upper Peninsula. There, he and his wife purchased 40

acres of land just outside of Escanaba where he subsidized his income by cutting pulpwood for many years.

In 1928 he met and married Alice Schroeder. They were married 61 years. She preceded him in death in December 1989. They had two children, Donald, who passed away in 1980, and Lois (Anderson) Evans, a longtime church

member also residing in Spring Hill. Other survivors include four grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Rudy was baptized in June 1973 and saw many changes within the Church. He passed away knowing the Church was once again on the right path and remarked many times that he was awaiting the return of Jesus Christ.

Memorial services were conducted by his grandson, Eric Evans, pastor of the Atlanta and Jefferson, Georgia, con-

gregations, prior to Sabbath services May 10 in Tampa, Florida. Interment was in Bark River, Michigan, beside his beloved wife, Alice.

Bernice Malsahn, 80, of the Canton, Ohio, congregation, died June 17, 2003, following a massive stroke. She had recently found it necessary to move to an assisted care facility, but was still able to attend Sabbath services on a reasonably regular basis. She was in atten-

dance in Canton for services on June 14, just three days before her death, and enjoyed a meal with several Church members and families after the service that day. Members here will recall her gentle kindness and interest in all members of the congregation, young and old. She is survived by her daughter Patti Lewers, and sons Bruce Malsahn and Roger Malsahn, as well as four grandchildren and two stepgrandchildren.

Tribute: Werner W. Krebs

Werner W. Krebs, 74, a longtime elder in God's Church, died unexpectedly of natural causes on May 23, 2003, in his home in Crestview Hills, Kentucky, just south of Cincinnati. He was born on Nov. 3, 1928, in Cincinnati, Ohio, the firstborn son of German immigrant parents. He grew up working in his father's bakeries in Cincinnati. He graduated from Walnut Hills High School in 1946, and entered the University of Cincinnati's College of Engineering in the fall of that year.

Werner met Emily Gilberg of St. Mary's, Ohio, on a blind date in Dayton, Ohio, and they were married on Dec. 17, 1949, in St. Mary's. Werner graduated from the University of Cincinnati with an electrical engineering degree in 1951 and went on to head the engineering departments of several companies over his career.

After 40 years of engineering work, Werner retired at the age of 62, to help Emily care for her aging father who had come to live with them.



Werner Krebs

Werner, Emily and their sons began attending services in the Church of God in July of 1967. He was ordained an elder in the spring of 1973. Werner had been a faithful servant to God and to the church for 30 years. His service was greatly appreciated, and he will be sorely missed by his family and friends.

Werner is survived by his wife, Emily; their two sons, Greg and Ken; a brother, Ralph; a sister, Elsie; and five nieces and nephews.

Tribute: Ray Francis Bloom

Ray Francis Bloom, 72, an elder serving the Bowling Green, Kentucky, congregation, died at home June 14, 2003. He returned home from the General Conference of Elders in Cincinnati May 5 and suffered a massive stroke May 8, sending him to the hospital where he suffered a second stroke. He remained in the hospital 26 days, after which he was sent home to die. He remained 11 days at home.

Ray was born Feb. 4, 1931, in Conneltsville, Pennsylvania, one of 11 children. He is survived by his wife, Patty; three children by his first wife, Kay, who preceded him in death: Randi Bloom and his wife, Debbie; Laura Perrot and her husband, Plyn; and Jeffrey Bloom; two step-children: Jonathan Jett and his wife, Linda; and Gina McCrady and her husband, Rick. Ray also leaves seven grandchildren.

On the Sabbath of June 21, Bowling Green pastor Fred Kellers and elder

Stan Martin conducted a memorial honoring Ray. Gary Evans, a longtime friend and elder in Portsmouth, Ohio, conducted Ray's graveside service in Chillicothe, Ohio, June 28.

Ray traveled extensively during the 18 1/2 years of his Air Force career. At the time God called him, Ray was a year and a half from retirement and chose a discharge as conscientious objector to answer God's calling. He had begun his education while in the military, receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of Omaha in 1964. His master's degree in special education was achieved in 1974 from Ohio University. He retired as education supervisor of Pike County, Ohio, in 1995.

Ray began attending the Church of God in 1966 in California. He was baptized Aug. 13, 1966. He was ordained a deacon in April 1984 and an elder May 26, 1985. Ray attended church in Pennsylvania from 1966 to 1972. In 1972 he moved to Ohio and served there until 1995. From then until his death he served the Nashville, Tennessee, and Bowling Green congrega-



Ray Francis Bloom

tions. Ray dedicated his life to God and to the congregations he served. He deeply loved and cared for his brothers and sisters in Christ. He will be greatly missed by family and the many friends who truly loved him.

Ray took very seriously the admonition to follow God diligently and carefully. He was steadfast to the truth once delivered and remained true to the end. He died in the faith and now awaits the resurrection.

Letters

"Treasure Digest"

A member just called and asked me to pass on a message concerning an article entitled, "The Ultimate Father" (June, page 5). She would like you to let Dawn Wayne know how much this article helped her. The article has been so helpful to her that she is cutting it out to keep.

Australia

I really appreciate the "Treasure Digest" section, as the information is short and sweet and to the point, thus enabling us to more readily remember.

Also, please send my deepest thanks to the woman who submitted the article on "Myths About Dating Outside the Church" (May, page 16). Let her know that there are many people who applaud her efforts in crying aloud and daring to speak the truth.

Arizona

I would like to add to Jay Turner's article about Bible study ("I Know All That Stuff, So Why Do I Still Need to Study?" May, page 18). I think that he overlooked one of the best methods of Bible study, and that's the *Good News Bible Reading Program*. I can't say enough about it. It's the best Bible study the Church has had in the 35 years I have been in the Church.

Oregon

Bible Reading Program

My wife and I would like to thank you and your team for the superb effort you are putting in to producing the BRP. We attended the first year of ABC and found that an eye-opening and excellent year to say the least, and we still carry very, very fond memories of the experience and learning that we took back to Australia.

But both Sue and I are so grateful for the information and conclusions and lessons that you and your team tease out of the Scriptures. We have extensive notes from ABC in our Bibles, but your BRP "fills in the gaps" and goes on from where ABC was. It is not as though ABC didn't complete the picture, but that the BRP adds to the picture and the two are so complementary.

Sue and I sit down most mornings and work through the BRP for quite a while before breakfast. We find it almost compulsive reading and, like a good book, can hardly wait to get to the next section.

Please express our gratitude to your team and yourself of course for putting together such a fine publication that is jam packed with gems of information and lessons.

Australia

The Bible Reading Program is so absolutely wonderful for personal main-

tenance and church unity. The fruition of it is evidence of God's blessing. I am exceedingly happy that my tithes are not empty and that they go to a priesthood that works for God.

Oregon

I can't begin to tell you how much I enjoy the BRP and how much I have learned.

I have thought for years that what we needed was a program that would teach the Bible. One that would take a "stand back," so to speak, approach and let the Bible speak for itself. I envisioned a program where the Bible would be examined in context with history, archaeology, science, etc., along with commentary and references to Church literature. One that would be a "nondenominational," objective program that someone, anyone, could read and say, "Why that's interesting—I never knew that." In other words, the Bible Reading Program is a dream come true and an answer to prayer.

I really believe that this program will bear a lot of fruit. In addition you might like to know that the members that I have talked to, who are active in the program, feel the same way. I feel very sorry for those who haven't taken advantage of this opportunity.

Oregon

Wife of a Clergyman Writes

Thank you for the subscription to *The Good News* and the pamphlets: *Time of the End*, *The United States and Britain* and *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*.

I can't begin to tell you how much I have appreciated reading these and the information that they gave to me. I was the wife of a clergyman for 35 years, until his death, and have never read and learned what I received from these commentaries. I had found a copy of the *Good News* magazine in a beauty shop and then sent in the enclosed card.

I would appreciate receiving a copy of the literature listed in the enclosed order blank and also the *Bible Study Course*.

I am enclosing a small gift. Thank you and may God bless you as you continue to serve Him and His Kingdom.

Illinois

"Your Magazine Is Our Church"

Many, many thanks for a lovely informative magazine. I also thank you for allowing us to receive it free of charge and with no pressure for a donation.

We are on a disability pension and find it hard to go to church, so your magazine is our church. We have so much faith and we thank God every day for

what he has given us: our eyesight, food, water, children, etc. Even when things get really tough and I pray to God, not long after my prayers are answered, and it's not luck, it's faith.

Thank you, and God bless all involved in the magazine. Also thank you to those who do send in donations to allow this magazine to be printed and sent to people like us who can't afford it and otherwise would miss out on such a great magazine.

Australia (reprinted from *United News Australia*, April-June 2003)

Best He's Read

Please accept this small contribution. I enjoy your magazine so much every two months. I'm 83 and so thankful to God for being blessed by Him. Your magazine is the best (very best) denominational publication I've ever read.

Louisiana

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Comments and suggestions to improve *United News* are welcome. Please let us know if you would like your name printed. Mail to: *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, or E-mail mike_bennett@ucg.org.

News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

some challenging problems that prompted us to take a look at the feasibility to run an effective camp at Madge Saunders this summer," he wrote to applicants.

Pentecost Offering Up 2.8 Percent

Gerald Seelig, United's cash manager, announced preliminary U.S. Pentecost Holy Day offering information June 18. The reported offering of \$687,807.13 is a 2.8 percent increase over last year. The reported attendance of 12,105 is a 2.2 percent increase.

"Once the offerings that are mailed by individuals who could not attend a congregation are banked, this figure will reach \$700,000+," Mr. Seelig said.

Attention Jamaica Feastgoers

We have added additional information on the Feast in Jamaica to the Feast link on the Caribbean Web pages. You can download a letter describing Feast activities, a schedule of services and activities, a registration form and a serving questionnaire.

Visit the site at ucgcaribbean.org and look for the Feast link.

Kingsley O. Mather

Family Weekend Set for Florida Aug. 9 and 10

The Tampa and St. Petersburg, Florida, congregations will host a family weekend Aug. 9 and 10. The weekend will begin on Saturday with services, which will be followed by a potluck meal provided by local brethren. The evening will conclude with a Bible Bowl cover-



What's New on the Web?

On www.ucg.org

■ UCG Commentary on This Week's News

Weekly commentaries by the United Church of God written on world news and trends, from a biblical perspective. Read these recent commentaries and more: "There's More Than a Crack on the Bell" "What's Behind the Troubling Rise in Anti-Semitism?" "What's Behind the Rising European Superstate?" "America the Ugly?"

www.ucg.org/commentary/

■ Current World News & Trends

Browse up-to-date world news events by subject categories!

www.ucg.org/worldnews/

■ E-mail Updates and UCG eNews

Receive E-mail updates relevant to UCG members and weekly HTML newsletters with ucg.org updates. Sign up today!

www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm

On vcmagazine.org

■ The July *Virtual Christian Magazine* includes "Archaeology in Acts, Part 1," "One Nation Under God?," "You Are Free" and more.

vcmagazine.org

On youthmagazine.org

■ The July-September *Youth United* has articles on friendship, such as "The Most Powerful Friend," "Making Peace," "Ending a Friendship," "A Special Friend," careers, "News for Youth" and the ever-popular Q&As.

youthmagazine.org

Other Helpful Links

■ **Youth** and young adults' Web site. ucgyouth.org

■ **Singles'** Web site for singles in the Church. www.ucgsingles.org

■ **Good News Bible Reading Program.** www.ucg.org/brp

■ **Good News Web site.** gngmagazine.org

■ **UCG News pages** with Council meeting reports, letters, Home Office Updates, etc.

www.ucg.org/about/council

www.ucg.org/about/homeoffice

If you have any questions or comments, please contact: webmaster@ucg.org

ing the Gospels and a family dance. The fellowship and fun will continue Sunday with a beach party at Fort Desoto Park, one of the nation's top beaches. Food and drinks will be provided at a cost of \$25 per person or \$15 per family.

More information can be found at web.tampabay.rr.com/ucgstp/ or by contacting Michael or Nancy Fike at (813) 788-4709 or michaelfike@hotmail.com.

3.7 Million GN Card Pack Promotions to Be Distributed

For the past several years, the United Church of God has used "card pack" print promotions to reach potential *Good News* subscribers in the United States. Through this inexpensive yet effective advertising method, our insert cards, along with promotional materials from other advertisers, are bundled in cellophane packages and mailed to individual households.

This budget year (July 1, 2003, to

June 30, 2004), card packs are again central to our print advertising efforts. Using the services of four commercial publishers, over 3.7 million *GN* inserts will be produced. Our inserts, which cost less than 2 cents each to print and distribute, will feature a photo of a lion and a lamb and asks the question: "Looking for Some Good News?" This year we expect to add over 27,000 new subscribers at under \$2 each.

John LaBissoniere

ABC Mini-Samplers Announced

Ambassador Bible Center Mini-Samplers are being planned for the following areas:

- Sept. 6-7 in Cambridge, Ohio (instructors Ralph Levy and Matthew Fenchel).
- Sept. 13-14 in Boston, Massachusetts (Gary Antion and Don Ward).
- Nov. 15-16 in Seattle, Washington (Mr. Antion and Roy Holladay).
- Nov. 15-16 in Jefferson City, Missouri (Dr. Levy and Melvin Rhodes).



ABC Sampler Set for Aug. 18 to 22 in Cincinnati

Have you ever wished you could attend Ambassador so you could receive the biblical instruction offered there? Perhaps time and costs were a factor. Now you may experience a taste of the Ambassador Bible Center program and see why the ABC students are so enthusiastic about the school.

The fourth ABC Sampler seminar will be held at the ABC Lecture Hall in the new home office building in Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug. 18 to 22. Gary Antion, Roy Holladay and Ralph Levy will present material from some of their classes—all for the low cost of \$50 per person.

Mr. Antion will bring instruction from Joel, the "Pentecost Prophet," and from the lead-

ing apostle of Christ's day, Peter, in the book of 1 Peter. Mr. Holladay will bring material from the Epistles of Paul—the book of Galatians, which contains many seemingly difficult sections regarding justification and the law. Dr. Levy will present the book of Job and the lessons that we may glean from it.

Sampler students are responsible for their own housing and meals. There is reasonable lodging in the vicinity.

To hold a seat, please send a letter of intent to ABC, P.O. Box 54992, Cincinnati, OH 45254-0992 or E-mail gary_antion@ucg.org or call (513) 576-9796. Please give your name, address and phone number.

Gary Antion/Ralph Levy

Please contact the respective pastors for further details.

Gary Antion

New Ontario Site Open to Transfers

Still unsure about where to go for the Feast this fall? Horseshoe Valley Resort has opened its doors to us. It is located just north of Toronto, approximately a 1 1/2-hour drive from the Toronto airport.

Nestled among ski hills, it has much to offer: golf, hiking, biking, tennis, squash, in/outdoor swimming pools, sauna, hot tub and horseback riding.

The resort has four restaurants and a spa on site and even though it is in a quiet country setting, shopping is just minutes away in Barrie or Orillia.

To view the resort's Web site, go to: www.horseshoeresort.com.

Costs (Canadian funds) plus applicable taxes: \$79 for regular room; \$95 for a parlour room (bedroom with sitting area and fireplace); \$129 for a loft suite (room plus upstairs bedroom, 1 1/2 bath).

Only a limited number of kitchenettes are available, but a price break has been

arranged for those needing more than one room.

For this year, the maximum hall capacity is 140. There is still space available. To book a room, call (800) 461-5627 and mention you are with the United Church of God. A credit card deposit of \$100 Canadian will be required (refundable less \$25 plus GST up to seven days prior to arrival).

Anthony Wasilkoff

Women's Twin Cities Conference Set for Nov. 2

"Fulfilling Your Life With Joy" is the theme for a women's conference scheduled for Nov. 2, 2003. Discussions will focus on growing the fruit of joy in our lives. The day will feature the keynote speaker, Tanya Horchak; a lively symposium, delicious luncheon and several break-out sessions. It will be held in the beautiful Radisson Hotel located in Plymouth, Minnesota. For more details, please contact Colene Erickson at (651) 714-4054 or ccerickson@visi.com.



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