



# United News™

News of the United Church of God, an International Association

United Church of God  
P.O. Box 541027,  
Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027  
(513) 576-9796

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February 2005

## News At a Glance

### TV Brings in 3,835 Responses in 2004

In 2004, the *Tomorrow* cable-access television program produced by volunteers in the Portland, Oregon, area drew 2,357 responses.

The *Good News TV* program produced by volunteers in the Beloit, Wisconsin, area brought in 1,478 responses. This was a 185 percent increase over the 518 responses the year before.

### Media Center Project Underway

The treasurer has reported that regular income for the Church is on target, and therefore the Media Center Fund donations can be used over the coming months.

To begin with, the architect who designed the home office building has been contacted to prepare plans. Once plans are in, contractors are hired and the space is enclosed, we will begin the purchasing of equipment, lighting, cameras and set pieces.

We would certainly appreciate your prayers for the success of this building project. A special thanks to all of those who donated above their regular contributions for this project.

Peter Eddington

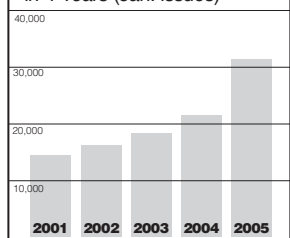
### Members Invited to Help Name New Program

As plans come together to finalize the content and approach of United's video/TV/Internet program and our use of the media center, we'd like to get our

See "News at a Glance," page 2

### United Statistics

World News & Prophecy  
Circulation Up 115 Percent  
in 4 Years (Jan. issues)



## New Feast of Tabernacles Sites Announced

Wildwood, New Jersey, will be the Festival site in the U.S. Northeast replacing Hagerstown for 2005. This will be a one-year-only site as Chesapeake, Virginia, follows for 2006 and 2007.

In Canada, Kingston, Ontario, is being planned as a new Feast site. Costa Rica will also host a new Feast site (see page 3) and Estonia will be accepting international visitors after several years as just a local Feast site. Details on all sites around the world are scheduled to be printed in the March/April issue of *United News*.

### Wildwood, New Jersey

Wildwood, located in the middle of the Wildwoods' Five Mile Island, is known for its beach and boardwalk.

The ultramodern Wildwoods convention center is set directly on the five miles of powdery white beaches. Breathtaking views of the ocean and beach abound from nearly every window of the center.

The convention center is located along a 2½ mile boardwalk. Although many of the amusement activities will be closed for the season, the Wildwoods resorts area was named by the

readers of *Family Fun Magazine* as the "top tourist town in the Northeast."

Recreational options in the area include boating, fishing, marinas and biking. Also popular is the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse, the George F. Boyer Museum (dedicated to the island's history), the Wetlands Institute and nearby golf courses.

Just off the island you'll find Historic Cold Spring Village, a re-created 19th century living history museum that offers insight into the lives of tradesmen. And in nearby Victorian Cape May, there's the Emlen Physic Estate

and the Cape May County Zoo. Cultural and historical activities will be arranged in Philadelphia, which has the Liberty Bell, Betsy Ross House, Independence Hall and Constitution Center. Atlantic City is 44 miles away.

There is an ample variety of restaurants for all price ranges and tastes, including some dockside, overlooking the ocean or inland waterway.

Housing properties fit every budget, including hotels, motels and condominiums. All are within close proximity.

See "Feast," page 2

## Sixth Orientation Welcomes ABC Students



New students: Laurel Krenz, Heather Beyer, Roberta Bauer, Adrienne Wills, Emmanuel Gomez and Miles Wilson

by Gary Antion

Over a hundred individuals came together at the sixth orientation at Ambassador Bible Center Jan. 9. Those in attendance were most of the 41 students who have enrolled for the 2005 program. The students had the opportunity to share the event with faculty, home office staff and family members who had brought the students.

Roy Holladay gave the keynote address in harmony with the theme of "Living the Truth." He urged the students to search their Bibles diligently for the nuggets of gold as they attend ABC. He used the analogy of how the Bible is a lamp and a light to show the way through the darkness that is present in our world.

See "ABC," page 13

## Answering Questions Around the Globe

■ UCG answered more than 4,300 readers' questions in 2004.

As readers are challenged by and become interested in the message the United Church of God proclaims, they naturally have questions. Answering those questions is an important part of the Church's efforts.

As reported last issue, 2,792 letters and e-mails were answered by Cecil Maranville (letters) and 29 other ministers (e-mails). This was a 5 percent increase over the previous year.

The home office also answered 754 requests for the location of the nearest United congregation. Many more readers contact the local pastors directly by finding their telephone numbers on the www.ucg.org Web site.

In addition, the *Vertical Thought* magazine and Web site attracted 841 e-mails answered by a separate team of ministers now being coordinated by Tom Clark.

Offices outside the United States also answer questions from readers. Here are the numbers we received at press time:

Australia	..... 312
Canada	..... approx. 100
Italy	..... 187
Southern Africa	..... approx. 110

### Inside:

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## Managing Editors Meet to Refine Media Efforts

■ New ideas, energizing growth on the agenda.

Managing editors of many of United's media efforts gathered at the home office Jan. 19 and 20 to discuss ways to more effectively fulfill the commission to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Peter Eddington, Media and Communication Services operation manager, introduced public relations expert Michael Snyder, who gave a presentation titled "Communication Blueprint—Building Reputation, Energizing Real Growth." Mr. Snyder had previously given this to the home office administration, and then later to the Council of Elders, and now tailored his presentation and discussion to the applications to the media personnel.

He presented ideas for making the Church's media message more relevant, simple to understand and credible to all the various audience segments we are trying to reach. This involves using a variety of media, and Mr. Snyder highlighted the meteoric rise of the Internet, which is now the top "media of choice" according to Simmons Research.

Mr. Snyder candidly pointed out the challenges of communicating difficult concepts to a society resistant to change. But he mentioned that United is well positioned for growth.

He introduced "the tipping point" strategy for growth from a book by the same name. The "tipping point" involves a simple, compelling message, packaged to be "irresistible," that can rapidly be spread from person to person. One application discussed would be a

"thought for the day" e-mail sent to thousands of people, who might then pass it on to thousands more. The e-mail would provide links to articles and more information.

The group also discussed the Media Philosophy approved by the Council of Elders last year (see November *United News*, page 20). Victor Kubik, chairman of the Council's Media and Communication Committee, and committee member Bob Dick, who helped craft the Media Philosophy, were present to help the assembled media personnel understand the background and intent of the document. This led to initial discussions on how to apply it.

The need to "tailor the message to fit different cultural, national, religious and

See "Media," page 2

## News At a Glance

Continued from page 1

members' input on what to call our program.

We are not necessarily locked into the name *Good News TV*, so if you have any outstanding program name suggestions, please contact John LaBissoniere at [john\\_labissoniere@ucg.org](mailto:john_labissoniere@ucg.org) or call (888) 369-9940 Sunday to Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST and he'll compile the name suggestions. We'd love to have our membership involved as we move forward in this regard!

Peter Eddington

## Beloit Volunteers Appreciated

Since the Council of Elders approved the *GNTV* public-access program in early 1999, volunteer crew members in the Beloit, Wisconsin, area have participated in taping 103 half-hour programs on 26 Sundays. With the beginning of the media center which will make possible home office produced programs, they have chosen to cease their operation.

"Over the past seven years you have seen the program mature and improve, including four distinct studio sets that added to the professionalism of the presentation," wrote Roy Holladay and Peter Eddington in a letter to the volunteers.

"The program has grown from being a small, regional public-access program airing on a handful of stations in the upper Midwest, to programs airing coast to coast on 75 stations as of this year. Telephone calls from viewers have increased from just a few dozen a month to over 250 a month during that time! Thousands of pieces of literature have been ordered and sent out as a result of the *Good News TV* program.

"As we move forward with the Church's television and video efforts, the experience gained by the Beloit team has helped us to define and plan the best ways to proceed in this regard."

## ABC Library Grows

Over the last year, the number of books in the Ambassador Bible Center library has grown from some 200 to about 1,000, as a result of acquisitions from the estates of two deceased ministers.

Last year, we were advised of the opportunity to acquire the entire collection of one minister, comprising some 4,000 volumes. Arrangements were made to ship the collection, boxed and on pallets, to the Church office. We have since sorted the collection twice, and selected the volumes on Church history, Bible commentary and some on ancient history, especially those books that describe the migrations of the "lost tribes of Israel."

See "News at a Glance," page 16

# UCG to Advertise in 750,000 Sunday Newspapers Across the U.S.

For about 4 cents each, 750,000 *Good News* subscription brochures will be printed and inserted in "Smart Source" coupon supplements in newspapers on Sunday, March 20, 2005. Smart Source is the most widely distributed part of the Sunday newspaper, with a weekly circulation of over 68 million.

To capitalize on interest in the death and resurrection of Christ during the "Easter" season, 500,000 newspapers will receive our newly designed *Jesus*

*Christ: The Real Story* bifold subscription brochure. An additional 250,000 newspapers will receive our *Why Does God Allow Suffering?* bifold brochure. These brochures offer potential readers booklets by the same titles and a subscription to *The Good News*.

Newspapers to receive the inserts include: Biloxi-Gulfport, Mississippi, *Sun-Herald*; Columbus, Georgia, *Ledger-Enquirer*; Fredericksburg, Virginia, *Free Lance Star*; Lafayette,



*Why Does God Allow Suffering?* brochure

Louisiana, *Advertiser*; Lake County, Ohio, *News-Herald*; McAllen, Texas, *Monitor*; Oakland, California, *Tribune*; Orland Park, Illinois, *Daily Southtown*; Schenectady, New York, *Gazette*; Spartanburg, South Carolina, *Herald-Journal*; Steven's Point, Wisconsin, *Journal*; Vancouver, Washington, *Columbian*; and Wilmington, North Carolina, *Star-News*.

Your prayers for the success of this advertising test would be appreciated.

John LaBissoniere

## "Feast," continued from page 1

ity of the convention center, with many sitting directly on the beach of the Atlantic Ocean.

Estimated attendance will 1,000 to 1,200.

## Kingston, Ontario

The city of Kingston (population 113,000) is renowned as a major fresh water port for fall color cruises to the

famous Thousand Islands. Situated on the Rideau Canal, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence Seaway, it is also centrally located on Highway 401 halfway between Toronto and Montreal, a three-hour drive from either city and two hours from Ottawa. Access from the United States is easy via the International Bridge at Gananoque from Ogdensburg with a driving time of two hours to Syracuse, New York.

The Kingston area offers scenic

cruises to the Thousand Islands, scuba diving, canoeing, sailing, 17 museums, indoor rock climbing and a wide range of quality restaurants. The city Web site is at [www.cityofkingston.ca](http://www.cityofkingston.ca).

The Festival will be observed at Ambassador Resort, the largest conference facility in Kingston, and one that is superbly presented. It has 251 guest rooms, a restaurant, an indoor water slide and pool, two hot tubs, a steam and sauna room, a splash pool for small chil-

dren, an exercise center, free wireless Internet and quality lounge fellowship areas.

Meetings will be in their chandelied ball room with seating for 900. You can check further at their Web site at [www.ambassadorhotel.com](http://www.ambassadorhotel.com).

Activities will include boat cruises, a family dance and social, seniors' brunch and last day buffet luncheon.

More details on Feast sites around the world will be in the next issue. **UN**

## "Media," continued from page 1

linguistic groups" was discussed at length, including suggestions from the Australian National Council. The limits on free speech in many parts of the world add to the challenge of conveying God's truth.

The group discussed a wide variety of new proposals and "tweaks" to build on the successes of the last 10 years. Some of the ideas discussed include simplifying the UCG home page, directing new people to the Gnmagazine.org site and other new sites, finding and training more writers and editors, upgrading *World News and Prophecy* and adding a new site for the publication, rapidly emerging new ways people are receiving content using RSS through their cell phones and iPods and much more.

"Our meetings were extremely productive—some of the best we've ever had," said Mr. Eddington. "Over the last

10 years we have built a strong foundation upon which we can do much more. We are poised to do a great end-time work.

"With three very fine magazines, five main Web sites, dozens of booklets, the *Bible Study Course* and television and radio programs, the United Church of God is in a very strong position to preach the message of *hope* of the Kingdom of God, the need for *repentance* from sin and a *warning* to those who refuse to turn to God's way of life," he continued. "We believe that over the coming years the Church will increase its effectiveness in preaching the gospel message, reaching around the globe in a greater and greater way!"

Roy Holladay added that he feels the Church is on "the cusp of some breakthroughs . . . I think we are going to start leaping forward."

In addition to those mentioned above, attendees included Scott Ashley (*Good*



Clockwise: Darris McNeely, Gary Petty, Mike Bennett, Scott Ashley, Vic Kubik, Roy Holladay, Tom Robinson and David Treybig (photo by Peter Eddington)

*News* and booklet managing editor), Mike Bennett (*United News* managing editor), Aaron Booth (Internet managing editor), John LaBissoniere (media buying agent), Darris McNeely (*World*

*News and Prophecy* managing editor), Gary Petty (*GN Radio* presenter), Tom Robinson (Bible Reading Program managing editor) and David Treybig (*Vertical Thought* managing editor). **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](mailto: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 8467 Fax: 020 8386 1999

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](mailto:info@ucg.ca)

EAST AFRICA (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda): United Church of

God, Kenya, P.O. Box 75261, Nairobi 00200 Kenya. E-mail: [kenya@ucg.org](mailto:kenya@ucg.org)

FILIPINES: United Church of God, P.O. Box 11081, Laucala Beach Estate, Suva, Fiji.

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

GERMANY: Vereinte Kirche Gottes, Postfach 30 15 09, D-53195 Bonn, Germany. Phone: 0228-9454636 Fax: 0228-9454637 E-mail: [info@queneachristen.org](mailto:info@queneachristen.org)

ITALY: La Buona Notizia, Chiesa di Dio Unita, Casella Postale 187, 24121 Bergamo Centro, Italy. Phone/Fax: (+39) 035 4523573. E-mail: [info@labuonanotizia.org](mailto:info@labuonanotizia.org)

MALAWI: P.O. Box 32257, Chichiri, Blantyre 3, Malawi. E-mail: [malawi@ucg.org](mailto:malawi@ucg.org)

MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 53, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius. E-mail: [mauritiust@ucg.org](mailto:mauritiust@ucg.org)

THE NETHERLANDS: United Church of God Holland, P.O. Box 93, 2800 AB Gouda, The Netherlands.

(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  
NIGERIA: United Church of God—West Africa, P.O. Box 1715, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria. Phone: 234-1-791 8009. E-mail: [info@ucg.org](mailto:info@ucg.org)

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

SCANDINAVIA: Guds Enade Kyrka, P.O. Box 705, Watford, Herts. WD19 6FZ England. E-mail: [sverige@ucg.org](mailto:sverige@ucg.org)  
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SPANISH-SPEAKING AREAS: Iglesia de Dios Unida, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. Phone: (613) 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. Phone: (02) 226076. E-mail: [zambia@ucg.org](mailto:zambia@ucg.org)

ZIMBABWE: United Church of God, Zimbabwe, P.O. Box 928, Causeway, Harare, Zimbabwe. Phone: 011716273 E-mail: [zimbabwe@ucg.org](mailto:zimbabwe@ucg.org)

### Internet access on your computer:

The United Church of God, an International Association, has a home page on the Internet's World Wide Web. The address <http://www.ucg.org> gives you access to general information and news about the Church, issues of *The Good News* and *United News*, as well as our booklets. The address <http://www.ucg.ca> accesses the Church's Canadian Web site. <http://www.ucg.org.au> the Australian Web site, <http://www.labuonanotizia.org> the Italian Web site, <http://www.ucg.org.ph> the Philippines Web site, and <http://www.ucgrsa.org> the Southern Africa Web site.



# News From Around the World

## Australian New Subscribers Up 68.9 Percent

God continues to bless the media and publishing efforts in Australia. The year 2004 ended with an amazing 8,027 (compared to 4,752 in 2003) new subscribers being added to the mailing list. This is the highest number of new subscribers added in one year since the United Church of God began in Australia.

The percentage increase for actual readership of our literature is even higher than that with more than one person reading an issue of *The Good News*, and an ever-increasing number of people accessing our literature through our Web site.

### Lower Cost Per Response

Over the years we have also managed to refine our target audience and for the last four years have managed to reach new subscribers for an ever-decreasing cost per response. In other words, we are managing to get more value for each dollar spent, which is one of the responsi-

bilities we have to our dedicated members who not only tithe faithfully to provide the funds to do a work in Australia, but also strongly support and participate in media efforts throughout the country.

### Low-Cost Programs

In 2004 the Media and Publishing Committee took care to target low-cost, effective programs such as *Reader's Digest* ads and advertising on the Internet. We were also able to further refine our advertising copy as we gained more and more experience about how the Australian public responds to religious advertising.

Considerable time and effort was also put into communicating the best programs to members, and most members have responded to this input.

Letterbox drops, cardholder programs, newsstand programs and stalls in fairs and markets continue to be our most effective, low-cost methods of

distributing our literature in the local areas.

### Subscriber Development Program Produces Results

A large and effective program that operates virtually behind the scenes is the subscriber development program. Once a member of the public makes contact with the Church, a series of ads and special offers are made to them during the 12 months they are on the list before they are renewed.

Many are responding very positively, via phone calls and donations to our efforts—the annual letter to our subscribers is proving particularly effective.

We are looking forward to how God is planning to bless us in 2005 and, as always, a big thank you goes to all the members who labor so diligently to spread the gospel message here in Australia.

Ruth Root

## New Feast Site Planned for Costa Rica

by Herbert Cisneros

The United Church of God in El Salvador is sponsoring a first-time Festival site in San José, Costa Rica, for the 2005 Feast of Tabernacles.

Costa Rica is renowned for its amazing scenery, national parks, biological preserves, pristine beaches and modern conveniences. The capital of Costa Rica, San José, is located just 20 minutes from the Juan Santamaría International Airport. It is a vibrant and cosmopolitan city that boasts excellent dining and nightlife, and is just a short drive away from a myriad of popular tourist attractions.

### Accommodations and Amenities

International guests will be lodged in a first-class hotel with available amenities such as cable TV, air conditioning, hot water, Internet access and a variety of restaurants and bars.

The rate is \$70 per night for single or double rooms (1 to 2 adults), with children under 12 free. This rate includes a 16.33 percent hotel tax and a continental breakfast for each person.

A tennis club will also be available to all guests offering swimming pools, indoor and outdoor tennis and basketball courts, fitness center, spa, squash and handball courts, eight-lane bowling alley, soccer field and game areas for billiards, Ping-Pong and chess.

### Attractions and Activities

San José offers everything from historic to modern museums, local cuisine to fine international dining and typical handcraft markets to modern shopping malls. The National Theater is located in the city center and hosts a variety of cultural events and performances almost

daily throughout the year. Transportation by metered taxi is readily available and inexpensive.

Many activities will be planned during the Feast that will include, but are not limited to, trips to volcano and rainforest national parks, a trip to Puntarenas on the Pacific coast, two dances and a family day at a park. For the adventurous, trips can be arranged to visit nearby villages, coffee plantations, rain or cloud forests, waterfall parks or wildlife preserves or to experience scuba diving, snorkeling, whitewater rafting or aerial cable cars, among other activities. To accommodate the many activities, most services will be held in the evening.

### Travel Information

Costa Rica may be reached by air via any of the major international airlines. Discount airline tickets for most major airlines can be purchased from Traveland.com by calling 1-800-321-6336, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (EST), Monday through Saturday. Use the code "jchurch" before Sept. 15 to receive a discount on their already low fares.

All visitors are required to have a valid passport (a visa is not required). There is no entry fee, but an approximately \$30 per person exit fee (cash only) will be required upon departure from the airport. A taxi from the airport costs approximately \$12. The local currency is the colon, but dollars and all major credit cards are widely accepted. ATM machines are available to withdraw cash.

The official language of Costa Rica is Spanish, but English is widely spoken. Services will be in Spanish, with simul-

aneous translation into English provided by experienced translators. The following Web site contains detailed information about the Feast site, hotels, tourist attractions and very important travel information: [www.unidaelsalvador.org/feast/index.html](http://www.unidaelsalvador.org/feast/index.html).

### Registration

A nonrefundable hotel deposit of \$200 per room is required on registration. This money will be used to confirm your reservation with the hotel, and will be applied to your hotel bill. The deadline for registration and receipt of the hotel deposit is June 12. Anyone who has registered but not paid the deposit by this date will not have a room reservation. Festival coordinators will place guests in respective hotels according to availability and the needs of the guest.

The Church has negotiated prices and amenities with a limited number of hotels in order to obtain the best possible prices and a meeting room for services. Because the Church is responsible and liable for all reservations and payments for rooms, as well as coordinating activities, guests must register with the Festival coordinators and are asked to refrain from making arrangements on their own for lodging with other hotels. Mail payment along with the registration form to the address listed.

Please contact Barbara Parada (English) by e-mail at [jbr\\_parada@hotmail.com](mailto:jbr_parada@hotmail.com) or by phone at (011) 503-228-1099 or Herbert Cisneros (Spanish) by e-mail at [hcvpnj@integra.com.sv](mailto:hcvpnj@integra.com.sv) or by phone at (011) 503-225-4308 for specific questions and concerns. UN

Register online at the Web site [www.unidaelsalvador.org/feast/index.html](http://www.unidaelsalvador.org/feast/index.html), and send your payment promptly. Registration and hotel deposit must be received by June 12.

## International News At a Glance

### 6-Year-Old Tells Truth About Christmas on Portuguese TV

God has a work to do, and He will, if need be, raise up children to do it for us! Indeed out of the mouth of babes God will perfect praise (Matthew 21:16).



David Campos, 6, appeared on television across Portugal

In fact, that is what God did in Lisbon, Portugal, during the Christmas season.

David Campos, the 6-year-old son of Jaime and Maria José Campos, United members in Lisbon, was chosen from his school, along with another half dozen children, to be interviewed about Christmas and Father Christmas on a national Portuguese TV channel.

Jaime Campos, David's father, said: "The TV crew interviewed the children and they said that they liked Christmas, and that Father Christmas would give them many toys, that they liked the Christmas tree, etc., etc." They basically said what all children in the world would probably say. Then Jaime added that "they 'coincidentally' left David to the end of the interviews."

When David's turn finally came, his father related that David took a very serious pose and said: "Yes, but . . . all that they have been saying is a big lie because Jesus was not born on Christmas Day and Father Christmas does not exist!"

The TV crew thought it was so funny how he approached the matter, they did not cut a thing from his interview and broadcast it in full. He is now "the" conversation piece at school, and the teacher has been talking to his father.

Interesting how God used a 6-year-old to witness to the Portuguese nation!

Jorge de Campos

### Canada Breaks Records

UCG in Canada received a record-shattering 13,766 pieces of mail in the

last calendar year. This number is up substantially from the previous record of 9,743 set in 2003.

The biggest jump was in literature and subscription requests from our Web sites. They more than doubled last year as compared to the preceding year and accounted for almost 24 percent of the total amount of mail received in 2004.

During 2004 the Church in Canada sent out 173,266 letters, periodicals, publications, tapes and other items. This is considerably higher than the 141,533 pieces we sent out in 2003! Subscribers to *Bonnes Nouvelles* (French *Good News*) have almost tripled during 2004.

### Torin Archer Helps in Australian Office

The Australian National Council appointed Torin Archer to fill the part-time position of mailing supervisor at the National Office. Mr. Archer began working Dec. 22 with training by David Sandland in the mailing room procedures.

Mr. Archer, an Ambassador College graduate who is completing a master's in counseling, brings a great deal of experience to the job, having previously been employed for a number of years in administrative roles with the Worldwide Church of God in Australia and elsewhere.

Mr. Archer already serves as a member of the National Council's Media and Publishing Committee.

"I am very happy to have the opportunity to be part of God's work once again after so many years," Mr. Archer said. "I look forward to working with Allan Hambleton and Ruth Root whom I have known since my Bricket Wood days in England, and I hope I can provide the same excellent level of service both to the members and general public which David Sandland has provided over the last four years."

Excerpted from the January-March United News Australia

### UCG-British Isles Runs Ad in Daily Mail, Appears on Revelation TV

UCG-British Isles ran an ad in the *Daily Mail* national newspaper Jan. 11 offering *Why Does God Allow Suffering?*, *Does God Exist?* and *The Good News*. As of the last week of January they had received 669 responses to the ad.

There were also 110 responses to the interview on Revelation TV Jan. 10, which offered *How to Understand the Bible, You Can Understand Bible Prophecy and The Good News*.

However, some of the station's controllers visited our Web site and realized we do not teach the Trinity. As a result there may be no further opportunity for UCG ministers to appear on this station.

# Visitors Experience Exciting Work in East Africa

■ East Africa: Just the name conjures up thoughts of wild animals and wild country. How could I turn down an opportunity to visit and serve our young people and brethren there?

by Bob Carlisle

John Elliott called my house and asked if I would like to help out at a summer camp again. I had worked at nearly 20 camps in the past, but there was a little catch to this one. It was to be in Kenya—in Africa!

I excitedly accepted and the adventure began. Oh, by the way, he mentioned that we would be going to as many congregations as possible while there for three weeks. I was exhilarated! What an opportunity! But really, I had no idea!

## Travel and Aid

After over 30 hours of travel spread over two days, we landed in Nairobi, Kenya, and stayed in a quaint little hotel called Roasters. True to the name, we had roast goat for dinner.

The next morning I got up early for my walk, and there were 4-foot tall storks on the roofs, eagles and vultures in the surrounding trees and a dozen birds I had never seen before. I guess I really was in Africa!

LifeNets is an organization that provides humanitarian aid in meaningful ways. Mr. Elliott had bought a wheelchair for a man as the first project for the recently registered LifeNets East

Africa chapter. The recipient, Frederick Otieno, only had a homemade chair, and its size had prevented him from riding on public transportation. He was overjoyed to finally have a real wheelchair that will allow him to pursue a college degree in computing.

The LifeNets East Africa board met later that day and planned future humanitarian aid projects for members and others in the region.

## Preparing for Camp

Mr. Elliott rented a Suzuki 4x4 and we, along with Dean and Mary Kerr of Illinois, headed for Lake Naivasha to prepare for the first annual youth camp in East Africa.

We set up the tents to the roar of hippos just 100 feet away on the other side



Hippos were just 100 feet from the camp site (photo by Bob Carlisle)

of an electric fence. There were screeching fish eagles and monkeys in the trees—what a beautiful place for camp!

A large group of us went by bus to Elburgon to conduct services for the congregation there at Gilbert and Martha's home with about 30 people in

attendance. Mr. Elliott and the Gichurus drove to Bagaria for services and a Q&A. Later in the evening we all were



Elburgon congregation poses for group photo (photo by Rheo Knudson)

reunited again at camp where we would have staff training and complete the set-up.

United Youth Camp East Africa was a blast for the kids and the counselors. Hikes up a mountain took the teens through an authentic Masai Village where we met elders and were invited to a coming-of-age ceremony. (For more on the camp, see the article below.)

We reserved an even better site for next year's camp, which is planned for Dec. 18 to 23, 2005. We all hope to have the blessing of participating again. The kids were truly a joy and extremely appreciative.

## On the Road Again

You almost need a 4x4 to drive on the paved roads. Autos there need to be "Africanized" with beefed-up suspen-

sions. A constant bone-jarring hammering and bouncing is part of driving on the main highways in Kenya. There are potholes in some roads that are big enough to drive a car into. Secondary roads are unpaved and often quite treacherous.

If the roads aren't bad enough, unseen speed humps are built into them at random locations everywhere you go. More than once while I was driving we hit one at 50 miles an hour, and

everyone and everything was tossed around in the car as it kicked like a mule. Mr. Elliott would say, "Your takeoffs are improving, but your landings still need some work."

Our travel took us back and forth across the equator, crossing hot, parched valleys, climbing 8,000-foot escarpments, passing through lush green tea plantations and malaria- and typhoid-infested plains.

## Refreshing People

The people in East Africa are so meek, warm, helpful and hospitable. I have never seen such sincere, pleasant-countenanced people

before. It was so refreshing.

On Friday after camp, the Kerrs and local deacon John Otieno were driven to a Bible study at Sotik where Dean gave a message and conducted a Q&A with John. They would repeat that again on the Sabbath at services in Migori, where the brethren asked questions for over two hours. The people there seem so hungry for God's truth, they want you to stay and preach to them all day and are heartbroken when time runs out and forces you to go.

## New Kitale Congregation

Deacons David Gichuru and Antonio Ndung'u, along with his wife, Christine, accompanied us to the



Michael Wafula, John Elliott and others at Kitale (photo by Bob Carlisle)

northwestern town of Kitale for the start of a new UCG congregation. It was so exciting as 140 adults and countless children came together to

See "East Africa," page 10

# 44 Campers in Kenya Learn Pillars of Character

United Youth Camp East Africa was held from Dec. 26 to 30 on the shore of Lake Naivasha in central Kenya. Forty-four campers from Kenya, Tanzania and Arizona came together for five exciting days of Christian Living classes and sports activities that would impact the lives of our young boys and girls in the region.

The advance party of staffers arrived at the campsite on Dec. 24 to pitch the tents and to bring in a busload of provisions.

Each day of camp began with a Christian Living class by camp director John Elliott, who taught six pillars of character, namely trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Each concept was reinforced throughout the day in activities led by 12 staff members and dorm counselors. For those who did not understand English, translation into Swahili was provided.

Character growth was exemplified



of character in various situations. Other activities at camp includ-



Mr. Ogwen helps teach the sewing class; Bob Carlisle leads a mountain hike to a Masai village; campers and staff take a break

ed auto shop, cycling, basketball, soccer, swimming, sewing, volleyball, hiking, boat trips to Crescent Island (where *Out of Africa* was filmed), personal hygiene, kitchen prep and camp maintenance. All these activities reinforced biblical teachings such as teamwork, winning or losing with humility, fair play and service to one another.

The success of the camp can be seen by the fact that each camper expressed the desire to come back again next year and that they all saw a change in themselves during the period.

Lastly I feel indebted to the international staff, namely Bob Carlisle, Dean and Mary Kerr, and campers Rheo Knudson and Daryn Campbell for their contributions in time and service, which helped make the camp a huge success. Thanks also goes to our senior pastor for ensuring that this camp took off after many years without having a camp in East Africa.

Definitely there are others who have helped us realize our goals by way of equipment and financial contributions. Please do accept our gratitude for this,



Campers in East Africa enjoyed a boat trip to Crescent Island and took a cycling class (photos by Bob Carlisle and Rheo Knudson)



and I wish to let you know that this kind gesture has made a lot of difference in our youth who attended camp. Thanks also go to the local staff whose time, service and teamwork contributed to the success of the camp. You all did a commendable job.

Antonio Thiong'o Ndung'u  
assistant camp director

# Australian Summer Camp 2004—the Biggest Yet!

by Nicole Ryan

The Australian summer camp for 2004 commenced on Friday, Dec. 24, with some team games and some wet weather. Fortunately the weather picked up for the rest of the 10 days of camp, enabling all outdoor activities to be enjoyed in the sun. There were 63 campers and 26 staff in attendance, making this the largest Australian camp yet. This included staff and campers from New Zealand, Tonga and Singapore.

After the sun set, the first Sabbath of camp began with introductions of all first-time campers, followed by dorm Bible studies. Both Sabbath services during the camp were run completely by the campers, with the exception of the sermons, which were given by Steve Clarke and Bruce Dean.

David Archer, 18, from the Gold Coast congregation, gave a captivating sermonette on prayer and trust in God and Joseph Lincoln, 20, from Mackay, Queensland, gave an encouraging sermonette on being consistent with our beliefs.

The typical camp day began with breakfast and a Christian Living class. The theme for this year's camp was the fruits of the Spirit, with each class focusing on one of these fruits: Love, kindness, self-control, peace, goodness, joy, faithfulness, longsuffering and gentleness. As a 15-year-old camper said,

"The fruit of the Spirit theme taught me a lot, especially that we must act as an example to be followed."

Campers were put into four teams of mixed ages for activities during the day. These included crafts, drama, dancing, speaking classes, basketball and volleyball, as well as canoeing and fishing from powerboats.

One of the highlights was an adventure hike in the bush, which was both physically and spiritually challenging. Campers were placed in a time frame in the future when they would be challenged over their beliefs. There were nine stations based around the fruits of the Spirit where the campers were tested during the hike.

A special day trip was planned this year. The campers caught the train into the city of Sydney and experienced a cruise through Sydney Harbour on a 90-year-old sailing ship. They also had a chance to climb up one of the Harbour Bridge towers with great views of the city and harbor. They enjoyed lunch on the steps of the Opera House and

were entertained by street theatre. The evening activities varied each



Scenes from the Australian summer camp (clockwise from left): team one goes fishing, activity team three poses for a picture and volleyball instruction is given



night and included dancing and games, a formal speech night, a "have-a-go show" where a lot of talent was discovered, a question-and-answer time and discussions on manners and respect, which were practical themes to go alongside the fruits of the Spirit.

The final night of camp was topped off with the traditional dinner dance,

where male campers were given the opportunity to escort a girl to the dinner. The evening was given a tropical theme this year, complete with palm trees,

fairly lights and a nonalcoholic cocktail bar.

Toward the end of the evening a 30-minute slide show of video and photo memories of the camp was played, reminding the campers of the fun and lessons that were shared during the past 10 days.

A 17-year-old camper summarized the feelings of many, saying, "Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed this year. I say this after every camp, but I had the best time ever!" UN

# God Answers Prayers at the Chilean Summer Camp

by Erin Roscoe

The summer camp in Chile this year was truly a gift from God. We had planned to hold camp in a facility in Paine, a small town outside of Santiago. About a week and a half before camp was to start, this facility was unexpectedly closed due to legal issues. With so little time before the start of camp, the decision was made to hold camp in Santiago with activities in the city during the day and everyone returning to members' homes at night.

Needless to say, this was not what everyone wanted for camp. Spirits fell, but everyone continued to pray that God would provide a better solution. Many of the youth prayed and fasted, and two days before camp was to start, we were told that we were welcome to use the facility we had originally planned to rent in Paine. God truly answered our prayers!

Many of us had not been overly excited to hold camp in Paine, due to its proximity to Santiago, but we all learned a lesson in being thankful for what we have and trusting in God to work situations out for the best.

Camp itself was a huge success. This year 74 young people representing Chile, Argentina, Bolivia and the United States, along with six adults and two younger children, attended. We had



The summer camp in Chile included short talks from the campers sharing lessons from their lives, sports such as volleyball, time in the pool and much more

the entire camp facility to ourselves, which allowed us to spend seven days away from the world, surrounded by others of like mind.

Each day began with breakfast at 9. All 82 of us ate our meals together at one long table, adding to the feeling of being one big family. The next hour was called "Remember Your Creator," a time set aside for prayer and personal and small group Bible study. A Bible study led by one of the ministers in

attendance followed. We discussed topics such as making the most of your youth and making wise decisions in order to stay in the Church and reach the Kingdom of God.

After the Bible study we had an hour of short talks given by the young people. They shared experiences and lessons from their lives and addressed topics of importance for the youth of God's Church as they strive to live God's way of life in the middle of a

very corrupt world. The depth of understanding shown in their talks clearly demonstrated that God is working with the youth of His Church.

Lunch and a siesta time started off the afternoons, and at 3 p.m. we all came back together for sports. We formed four teams and everyone participated in *fútbol* (soccer), basketball and volleyball. The remainder of the afternoons were spent in the pool and social-

izing. In the evenings we had various activities, including a dance, an evening of group games and a mini-talent show to finish off the last day of camp.

While all of the activities were enjoyable and successful, even more important were the relationships we were able to develop and the instruction we received. Though we were all very sad when camp came to an end, we left



with our spiritual batteries recharged, ready to face the world again and knowing that we have both God and our spiritual family to support us and help keep us moving toward the Kingdom of God. UN

# Young Adults Pioneer New Challenger II Program

by Mary Ann Miller and the Challenger II team

Conviction. Commitment. Courage. These words defined the new Challenger II Young Adult Leadership Training camp. This year the camp was a weeklong rock climbing experience at Mount Lemmon, Arizona, during the last week of December 2004.

Ten of us, ranging in age from 18 to 26, gathered from across the country to pioneer a new style of camp. The Youth Education Team created this camp to take the teen Challenger Camp concept to a new level.

The Challenger II program focuses on deepening our Christian commitment and developing leadership skills. This year the camp revolved around rock climbing. With this focus, we spent the week climbing many beautiful and challenging cliffs on Mount Lemmon's plentiful rock faces. The climbs ranged in height from 33 feet to 90 feet, and varied in difficulty from easy beginner climbs of 5.5 to the more difficult climbs of 5.10+.

However, this camp took us a step beyond just climbing. We were treated as fellow staff-in-training and not as "campers." We were challenged and expected to take ownership of all



Staff\* and campers, back: Brad King,\* David Beattie, Andrew Beattie, Russ Smith,\* Matthew Bates, Nathan Ekama, Mark Mickelson.\* Middle: Nancy Capo,\* James Capo\* (director), Ryan Orosz, Mary Ann Miller, Peter Ekama, Joshua Reynolds, Tamara Crow. Front row: Denise King,\* Michal Lisa Capo,\* Jackie Capo,\* Daniel Miller, David Capo (\*staff in training!) (photo by Joe Anderson; others, James Capo)

aspects of the program. We took responsibility for the lives and safety of our fellow climbers as well as the staff by learning to belay each other and maintain the rock climbing equipment.

Even duties such as cooking meals and running the base camp were part of

our responsibilities. By the end of the camp, we gained a greater appreciation for what it takes to be not only staff at United Youth Camps summer camps,

but also leaders in other aspects of our daily lives.

While rock climbing was the main activity of the camp, it was only incidental to the main goal of camp—fostering a deeper commitment to God's way of life. We began every morning with a Compass Check given by one of the ministers who served on staff: camp director James Capo, Mark Mickelson or Randy Schreiber. These Compass Checks used a biblical topic to help us align our spiritual compasses to "true north."

After a full day on the rocks, we would end our day by discussing inspirational stories illustrating Chris-

sions, so in this sense rock climbing was not the primary goal of the camp, but merely the means to a greater end—drawing closer to God.

We pushed ourselves to our individual



limits on the rock and literally put our lives into each other's hands when we belayed one another. Each of us could go home with stories of that dramatic "catch" while belaying, or the seemingly impossible climb with the bruises and scrapes to prove it.

But hopefully we also returned with a renewed zeal for God's truth and a greater understanding of what it takes to be a leader of character. **UN**

## 10th Year of Winter Camp Proves Successful

by Steve Nutzman

Winter Camp, a part of the United Youth Camp (UYC) program, recently held its 10th annual camp in southern Wisconsin. This is quite a milestone for all the staff and campers.

The 78 campers from 14 states and 39 staff members enjoyed and benefited from the Christian Living classes and activities during the four days together, from Dec. 22 to 26. It was a trouble-free camp where campers and staff appreciated the opportunity to learn and grow together.

One camper felt this way about the camp experience: "I've grown in my knowledge of how to follow/lead/work as a team. I've learned more of how I should live my life and how it relates to God's plan."

Other campers added that camp helps campers "to stand up for what you believe in because God is coming and we need to be ready for what is ahead," and "I feel that it has helped me refocus my life on God and given me a change to look at my past and my future and helped to direct my compass towards God."

The 10th annual Winter Camp was our coldest on record. The high one day was 9 above zero Fahrenheit and the

low one night was minus 4. We did cancel some outdoor activities as a result of the cold. But both campers and staff alike made the most of the cold and proved once again, "many are cold but few are frozen." The staff exercised great caution in making sure all campers were dressed warmly before going outside.

Camp activities included the ever-popular dance class, outdoor and indoor team challenge, speedway, flag football, floor hockey, a camp dance, capture the flag and various mixer games.

The daily Christian Living classes continue to be very helpful and a mainstay of the camp experience. In addition to a two-hour question-and-answer session, where campers had their questions answered by the ministry, there were two Compass Checks (a half-hour Bible class first thing in the morning), a class on masculinity for the boys, a class on femininity for the girls, a Sabbath morning video and Bible study on Africa by Joel Meeker and Sabbath services. There was also an

opportunity Sabbath morning for campers to take turns leading the camp in singing hymns.

Special guests were UYC coordinator Larry Greider and his wife, Bonnie. Mr. Greider made the exciting announcement that Winter Camp 2005 will be held at the same location Dec. 21 to 26.

A special computer slide show of



Dancing and floor hockey were two of the activities at Winter Camp this year



several hundred photographs of campers and staff taken during camp activities made for a special conclusion at the end-of-camp dance.

One camper wrote, "If we were struggling with anything, the staff helped us, and we were able to ask about anything we wanted to without feeling stupid."

"The campers had such positive attitudes and were a joy to be with," said

camp director Steve Nutzman. "I also wish to thank the entire staff for their many hours of service and for their dedication."

We certainly see evidence that the United Youth Camps are training, mentoring and inspiring the next generation of servants for service in God's Church. This truly is exciting! **UN**



## From the Word

# Is a Christian Required to Use the Sacred Name?

by Ken Graham

Some people believe that humans must use only one name when addressing God—the Hebrew word *YHWH*. This is known as the tetragrammaton, Greek for “the four letters” or “the four characters.” However, there are many other names and titles of God in the pages of the Bible.

Some people still insist that this name is unique. Yet it can be clearly demonstrated that other names for God are also identified as unique, and identified by God as such, in Scripture.

In Matthew 1 we find the story of Joseph and Mary. An angel appears to Joseph to tell him that he need not fear to take Mary as his wife, for she has become pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Then in Matthew 1:21 the angel says, “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

God could have easily allowed Joseph to name Jesus with whatever name struck Joseph and Mary as desirable. Yet we see God deliberately intervened and chose the name to be given to His Son. So we see the name of God in the flesh—Jesus the Christ—was significant and warranted direct intervention by God.

In Acts 4:12 the apostle Peter tells us just how unique and special this name Jesus Christ truly is: “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Certainly, this name is more important and significant than any other. But God makes it clear that He can be called by many names in the Scriptures. After all, it is God who first confounded the languages at Babel in Genesis 11:9. If He had not wished for the correct pronunciation and usage of the name *YHWH* to be lost in history, He could have seen to it that the word remained the same in all the languages of the peoples leaving Babel. Yet the all-powerful God did not choose to do so.

Yes, names are important. The Bible places great significance on names. And we find God changing the names of individuals whom He chose. Abram’s name was changed in Hebrew to Abraham, which meant “a father of many nations.” Jacob’s name, which meant “supplanter,” was changed to Israel, meaning “prevailer with God.” But both were changed within their native tongue, not into another language.

The Son, Jesus Christ, came in His Father’s name (John 5:43). What is that name? Unless you, too, bear the name of your Heavenly Father, you are not His son and heir. Jesus refers to Him as “My Father” in the Greek language throughout the New Testament. And that Greek word is *pater* or Father.

Just as the Old Testament books were almost all written in Hebrew, the New Testament books were preserved in Greek. God inspired the Greek version to be preserved and canonized for us today.

We find much evidence today that the

most common language of the people of the Roman Empire of Jesus and Paul’s day was Greek. Greek was the language of commerce and common to almost everyone. In John 1:41, we find that the Greek-speaking audience was not generally familiar with the meaning of the Hebrew word *Meschiach*, which means “the anointed.” *Messias* is the Greek spelling of the Hebrew word *Meschiach*. Most Greeks were not familiar with that word, so John translates it into the Greek word *Christos* here, which means “the anointed one.”

### Names for God Other Than YHWH

Both Testaments of the Bible contain many names for God. Some people use the argument that the Creator’s only true name is the tetragrammaton *YHWH* in the Hebrew, and that it is the only name we must use in referring to Him. This argument focuses on the English word “LORD” used in the Old Testament to translate *YHWH*.

However, the other names for God that occur in the Old Testament and New Testament are not just titles, as is sometimes alleged. God was also known by another “name” before Exodus 3:15, when He revealed Himself as *YHWH* to Moses. And it was a “name,” according to the Bible, not a title. Notice Exodus 6:3. God tells Moses that He was not known by the name *YHWH* to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but by the name *El Shaddai* or *El Shaddae*.

Those who insist that Christians today use the name *YHWH* in reference to God do not, for whatever reason, insist that we must use the earlier name, the covenant name by which He made Himself known to our covenant father Abraham. It is, after all, through Abraham (ultimately through Christ, of course) that our blessings flow.

If we are only to address God by *YHWH*, then apparently Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will not be saved, because the name *YHWH* had not been revealed to them! They knew God not only as *El Shaddai*, but also by the name *Elohim*, as is proven in Exodus 3:15, when we look at the verse word by word in Hebrew. The name for God in this verse is *Elohim* throughout (although the word *LORD* in the King James Version is the Hebrew word *YHWH* by which Moses knew God).

(*YHWH* is used in the book of Genesis, but this is apparently because Moses, who wrote the book, was inspired by God to use it in relating the stories of the patriarchs.)

### Aramaic

In the later books of the Old Testament (like Ezra and Nehemiah), we do not find God referred to by the name *YHWH* at all. We find that by this time the language of the Israelite peoples was Aramaic. And so the Aramaic names *Elah*, *Eloah* or *Elaw* are used and no longer *Elohim* or *YHWH*.

Again, in the New Testament we have many passages like Mark 9:38, where John told Jesus of “someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name.” It is likely that the spoken language was Aramaic much of the time. And Jesus does say that they did these miracles in *His* name.

Someone who verbalized the name *YHWH* at this time would have been arrested, tried and perhaps stoned by order of the Sanhedrin (backed up and supported by the Romans).

How is it possible that God would perform miracles in this (undoubtedly Aramaic) name if He only honors the name *YHWH*? Would Christ have allowed such a thing in a name of His, other than *YHWH*, or would His Father back up and support such a thing if God the Father did not want to be honored and called by any name other than *YHWH*? This example is repeated many times in the New Testament.

### Hebrew Pronunciation Lost

The Old Testament text was preserved for centuries with only consonants. The exact pronunciation of the words, with their vowels, was preserved only by oral usage. They were passed down from one generation to the next.

These vowel sounds were not written down until sometime around the sixth or seventh century. At that time, the Jewish scholars of the day, known as Masoretes, created symbols to represent the vowels that they were using by oral tradition. They added these symbols or *points* to the text of the Old Testament, which had only contained consonants up to that time.

Unfortunately, the tetragrammaton *YHWH*, the name of the Creator, considered too sacred to be uttered, ceased to be pronounced by the Jews long before the Masoretes.

Whenever the Jews recited the text of the Hebrew Old Testament orally, they substituted the word *Adonai* (“Lord” in English). (The King James Version uses *LORD* in small caps for *YHWH*.)

Later on the Masoretes, whenever they encountered the word *YHWH*, inserted the vowel points for *Adonai* or *Elohim* into the word *YHWH*. Hence, the original vowel points for *YHWH* are not found in any text.

This gave the synagogue ruler or reader of the text the cue to pronounce either *Adonai* or *Elohim* instead of *YHWH*. Most Hebrew scholars today admit that the exact vowel sounds and pronunciation of *YHWH* are not certain. Even the consonants are uncertain and *YHVH* or *JHVH* could be possible. If people tell you that they know how to pronounce it, they are only making a random decision. Most feel that *Yah-weh* is a close approximation of the way the word was probably pronounced. Other scholars disagree and feel it is pronounced *Yaho*, *Yahwo* or *Yahu*. There is no way to be certain, unless God reveals it.

The Jews in Jeremiah’s time under-

stood the pronunciation of *YHWH*. But the dreams of their false teachers misled them into believing that *YHWH* should not be pronounced! Thinking that it was too holy a word to be uttered, they stopped using it. And after the centuries its true pronunciation was lost.

If it were essential that we know the exact pronunciation, we would need to know exactly how the Creator pronounced it to Moses when He introduced Himself to him. Even Ezra, who later edited and compiled Moses’ writings, would have only had tradition as his source for pronouncing the word Moses wrote (which contained no vowels).

Even today, Jews in different parts of the world have different pronunciations for the Hebrew vowels and even some consonants. Judges 12:6 indicates that there were variations in dialect at the time in the area between the Nile and the Euphrates.

### Names for God in Languages of the Day

Nowhere in the Bible are we commanded to use only the Hebrew form of His name. In fact, we are given many positive examples of these names and titles being translated into other languages. There are portions of the Old Testament where Aramaic is the original language rather than Hebrew (Daniel 2:4 through 7:28; Ezra 4:8 through 6:18; 7:12-26). Nowhere in these portions of Aramaic do we find the Hebrew words for the Deity, but instead we find the Aramaic form *Elah*.

If we examine the New Testament, we find a similar story. No Hebrew names are to be found.

The Greek terms *Theos* (God) and *Kurios* (Lord) are used. When passages from the Old Testament are quoted in the New Testament, the word *Kurios* is substituted for what would have been *YHWH* in the Old Testament. An example would be Matthew 3:3, quoted from Isaiah 40:3.

Unfortunately, there are some who present impressive-sounding arguments that the New Testament is corrupted (and therefore unreliable) and that the Old Testament Hebrew name of God (*YHWH*) has been removed from all 5,500 or more manuscripts of the Greek New Testament (not to mention more than 8,000 manuscripts of the New Testament in Latin). This would have been a greater task than was humanly possible. The editors would have had to gather all of these manuscripts from all over the civilized world and carefully remove all trace of the Hebrew tetragrammaton, substituting the Greek *Kurios* or *Theos* in its place.

*Kurios* occurs 665 times in the New Testament and *Theos* occurs 1,345 times.

The editing necessary is beyond the realm of possibility, especially without leaving behind any evidence of edits having been made anywhere.

Jesus said, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away” (Matthew 24:35). If the name

*YHWH* had been used, it would have remained in the texts of the New Testament.

Although the apostle Paul spoke Hebrew, he didn’t use the Hebrew *YHWH* in any of his 14 letters. The apostle Peter uses the Greek form *Yesous Christos* for Jesus Christ in Acts 4:10. *Salvation is only through the name Jesus Christ!* The Hebrew word *Yehoshua* or *Yahshua* is not used here at all. The Holy Spirit inspired these words to be written in Greek, not Hebrew.

God’s Word nowhere says that it is wrong for people to read the Bible, which includes His name, in their own language.

Nor is it wrong for them to refer to their Creator in their own language in preaching or prayer. Salvation is not based upon a secret or mysterious word or pronunciation.

There is authority and power in the name of Jesus Christ. Whether the name is in Greek or English or any other language does not matter. People were healed and demons were cast out in His name.

Jesus said that He came to reveal the Father to His followers (John 1:18; 17:6, 26). Yet in all that the apostles wrote of Jesus in the New Testament, we find no trace of any reference to the Hebrew word *YHWH*. Jesus revealed to His disciples the way of life that the Father would have been pleased for them to lead: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

### The Name in Other Languages

Perhaps the strongest evidence against the sacred name theory in the New Testament is the fact that on the Day of Pentecost, everyone understood the preaching in his own language. So when Peter spoke and used the name of God, everyone heard it in his own language.

Getting the name “just right” seems to have been very important in paganism. If we study the Bible carefully, we find that the Creator has many names and titles and provides no restriction or command not to translate those names and titles into other languages.

Jesus prayed that the Father would keep those whom He had given to Jesus, in the Father’s name. The Father’s family name is *God* in English. In Greek, it is *Theos*. Twelve times in the New Testament the name of the Church is stated to be the Church of *God* (*Theos*). Jesus called Himself the Son of *God* (*Theos*) numerous times in the New Testament. Many times He said He came in His Father’s name.

Before we accept the theories of some that it is wrong to use anything but the Hebrew word *YHWH*, or that salvation is only possible through the correct use of one name, we need to recognize the overwhelming evidence that is contained in the New Testament to the contrary. **UN**

# Tear Down This Wall!

■ Nearly 18 years ago President Reagan challenged the Soviets to tear down the infamous Berlin Wall. But the apostle Paul talked about the tearing down of an even more important wall that separates people.

by Kevin Epps

“General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, *tear down this wall!*” (Ronald Reagan, June 12, 1987, at the Brandenburg Gate, West Berlin, Germany).

In perhaps his most memorable speech, President Reagan helped change the course of history (in ways still to be seen, prophetically). From 1961 to 1989, an estimated 1,000 people died trying to cross the Berlin Wall from East Germany to West Germany. One man reportedly “bled to death after being shot during a 1962 escape attempt . . .” (“Berlin Wall Stirs Emotions,” Aug. 13, 2002, [cnn.com/world](http://cnn.com/world)). Walls can carry tremendous significance, both good and bad.

## Death Penalty and Wall Removed

The Bible speaks of the removal of a wall, resulting in a far more profound change to the course of history. Christ broke down the wall that divided Jews and gentiles—people of every ethnic group:

“For He Himself is our *peace*, who has made both one, and has *broken down the middle wall of separation*, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself *one new man from the two*, thus making *peace*” (Ephesians 2:14-15, emphasis added throughout).

The “law of commandments contained in ordinances” alludes to a *man-made law* (not God’s law) that was posted on a temple wall, separating the Jewish inner courts from the court of the gentiles.

“These two courts were separated by a low wall, as Josephus states, some 4½ feet high . . . a stone was discovered by M. Ganneau in 1871, built into the wall, bearing the following inscription . . . ‘No stranger is to enter within the partition wall and enclosure around the sanctuary. *Whoever is caught will be responsible to himself for his death, which will ensue*’” (*Easton’s Bible Dictionary*).

It’s interesting that a low wall, only 4½ feet high, could sustain such intense segregation. Yet this placed the threatening sign at about eye-level.

Paul, a former Pharisee, had to *unlearn* this man-made practice before he could be the apostle to the gentiles. He experienced what it’s like

to be on the *other side* of this law: “. . . For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple . . . Now as they were seeking to kill him . . . all Jerusalem was in an uproar” (Acts 21:29-31).

It’s not that Jews and gentiles were committing hate crimes against one another. There was peace, as long as the gentiles didn’t get *too close*. Yet the Jews’ definition of “too close” did not reflect God’s definition.

Such deeply rooted viewpoints did not vanish instantaneously when Jews and gentiles entered God’s Church. Likewise, it’s possible for the lingering effects of man-made social norms to skew our perspective of “godly” boundaries between members in God’s Church.

In Ephesians 2, was Paul “digging up” racial issues from the past? What relevance could this predominately gentile congregation glean from a temple wall analogy? Actually there were many gentiles, known as “God-fearers,” who regularly worshipped in this gentile court before converting to Christianity. Paul and Barnabas targeted this group.

“Their policy was to visit the Jewish synagogue in each place . . . because there they could usually be sure of finding a group of ‘God-fearing’ Gentiles who might become the nucleus of a Christian church” (F.F. Bruce, *New Testament History*, 1969, page 272).

Former God-fearers were probably keen about the idea of being “neither Jew nor Greek” (Galatians 3:28). Their spiritual status would no longer be restricted by their ethnic identity.

While some walls maintain God-ordained barriers, the “middle wall” is absent from diagrams of the first temple, which Solomon built. But Herod’s motives for building the second temple were geared more toward gaining favor from the Jews.

## A House for All People

Though gentiles were barred from the Jewish inner courts, many Jews regularly visited in the court of the gentiles. Jesus displayed a zealous concern for the activities within this court:

“Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. Then He taught, saying to them, ‘Is it not written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for *all nations*”? But you have made it a “den of thieves”’ (Mark 11:15-17).

Money changers made excessive profits while exchanging currency and doing business with foreign Jews. But Jesus’ outrage was not limited to this materialism. Christ quoted Isaiah 56:7, which describes the conversion of gentiles from “all nations.” *Expositor’s Bible Commentary* discusses this significance:



“The first passage quoted by Jesus is Isaiah 56:7, a prediction that *non-Jews* who worship God will be allowed to *worship in the temple*. By allowing the Court of the Gentiles, the only place in the temple area where Gentiles were allowed to worship God, to become a noisy, smelly public market, the Jewish religious leaders were preventing Gentiles from exercising the spiritual privilege promised them. How could a Gentile pray amid all that noise and stench? And God’s house was supposed to be ‘a house of prayer for all nations.’”

Similarly, God intends for the climate in His spiritual house to be cleansed of things that are counterproductive to it being a unified and spiritual dwelling for all ethnic groups.

## Unlearning Biases

Ironically, even relationships between Jews had ethnic challenges in the first century. A mental obstacle developed internally between Judean Jews and Galilean Jews. *Fausset’s Bible Dictionary* notes:

“The northern part of Naphtali . . . was inhabited by a mixed race of Jews and Gentiles . . . Hence called (Isa 9:1) ‘Galilee of the nations,’ or ‘Gentiles’ (Matt 4:13, 15-16) . . . Galilee’s Gentile character caused the southern Jews of purer blood to despise it (John 1:46; 7:52) . . . Galilee’s debasement made its people feel their need of the Savior, a feeling unknown to the self-right . . . its freedom from priestly and pharisaic prejudice, were additional grounds for its receiving the larger share of His ministry” (“Galilee,” 1998).

Pride always leads to division. Physical Jews had to unlearn biases even against one another. Spiritual Jews are also capable of rebuilding arm’s-length approaches within our fellowship. If, or when, we fall short in this area, we should ask God to give us wisdom concerning the best way to encourage one another, “. . . in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1).

By the end of the first century, the apostle John resided in the predominantly gentile city of Ephesus. The Church’s overall demographic had transitioned from being all Jewish to heavily gentile. God’s calling had

worked out differently than most anticipated (John 6:44; 1 Corinthians 1:26; Romans 11).

This would have been a major challenge had mental barriers been sustained in God’s Church. Such a mindset would have been inclined to “keep score” regarding the Church’s ethnic identity, as is done in today’s society. The potential results of this type of quota mentality were documented by a Swedish sociologist, Gunnar Myrdal, in his detailed 1944 study of race relations, *An American Dilemma*:

“It is also true that many white churches in the North have a few Negro members, and that they rarely would turn away Negro visitors . . . But usually they cannot afford to let the Negro membership grow too large . . . A prominent white church leader explained . . . ‘I for one would like to have them stay. I believe it is in accordance with the doctrine of Christ, but the proportion is growing so large that white people are drifting away from us . . . Our organization is expensive to keep up . . . If we allow the Negroes to attend freely it means that eventually all of the white people will leave . . .’ (pages 869-870, vol. II, 1996 edition).

The primary issue here was not behavioral—morality, sin or righteousness. Instead they stumbled at fellowshiping across ethnic lines and money issues. Diversity was a good thing, until it exceeded unwritten quotas and disturbed comfort zones. This same mistake could occur in a congregation that’s predominantly African-American or any other race.

Gunnar Myrdal used a term, “moral overstrain,” to describe one who “believes in and aspires to something much higher than its plane of actual life” (page 21, vol. I). That which is in accordance with the doctrine of Christ should not succumb to the actual life of our society. To some degree, all Christians are confronted with a moral overstrain in some aspect of life (Romans 7:14-25; 1 John 1:8-9).

Globally, there are many walls, even between people of similar ethnic background. Consider this report about Sudan: “It may seem strange that here in the middle of Africa, one type of black person—they call themselves Arabs—would drive another blacker type of per-

son from their homes. But then remember, the Hutus massacred the Tutsis in Rwanda. And whites ethnically cleansed whites in Bosnia. Ethnic cleansing always seems to be rooted in dark historical feuds and it is the same here” ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/from\\_our\\_own\\_correspondent/3752871.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/3752871.stm)).

Thankfully, God’s Church today has experienced progress in regard to fellowship and unity among members from diverse racial backgrounds. The Church’s international efforts today have certainly been positive steps toward this end. However, as long as there’s room for growth, biblical standards will continually point us toward overcoming. “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

We, as firstfruits, have an awesome task ahead of us in the Millennium. It will take a miracle for people to overcome the “historical feuds” that have embittered them. However, we have already received the type of miracle needed to rise above these obstacles—the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the more we are lights to the world in this regard, the more God can use us to bring ethnic enemies together after Christ returns.

## Tear Down This Wall, Repeatedly

Can you imagine one trying to rebuild the Berlin Wall? Actually plans are already underway!

“They spent 40 years trying to tear [it] down, but a German artist now wants to rebuild the entire Berlin Wall for its 45th anniversary in 2006, coinciding with the city holding the football World Cup . . .

“Mr. Blaesius said: ‘The World Cup shows all nations can communicate and cooperate with each other while the wall separates. Today there are still several divided nations, such as the Koreans, Israel and Ireland, and we want to remind people of both the past and the future in a meaningful way. *Walls are not just physical, but also exist in your head*’” (*Guardian Newspapers*, Aug. 13, 2003, “Artist Aims to Rebuild Berlin Wall,” [www.buzzle.com/editors/8-13-2003-44166.asp](http://www.buzzle.com/editors/8-13-2003-44166.asp)).

Walls exist in your head? Not if we don’t let them! **UN**

# Breaking Free From Sexual Addictions

■ Sexual addiction occurs in many forms and can be very destructive spiritually. How can it be overcome?

by John W. Cafourek

“When Dan’s therapist told him that he was sexually addicted, he was outraged! He thought his therapist was exaggerating. Dan was certain his real problem was depression. He was simply down all the time, and he wanted to be happier. True, his life had left a trail of broken relationships and he had some sexual problems, but that was because he was so down all the time” (*Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction*, page 177).

Denial is an all-too-common human defense mechanism. Patrick Carnes, an acknowledged expert on sexual addictions and author of about a dozen books on this topic, lists denial as symptomatic of the initial stage of progressive sexual addiction. The addicted person refuses to admit, even to himself, that he needs help. He thinks he can handle his own problems.

## What Is Sexual Addiction?

Obviously, not every person who has some difficulty or problem involving sex and sexual relationships is sexually addicted. However, since sexual addiction is progressive, it is possible for difficulties or problems to become exacerbated and to ultimately develop into addictions.

In his book *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction*, Dr. Carnes provides some important insight into identifying some of the common symptoms indicative of sexual addiction. “A way to understand sexual addicts . . . is to compare them with other types of addicts. A common definition of alcoholism or drug dependency is that a person has a pathological relationship with a mood-altering chemical. The alcoholic’s relationship with alcohol becomes more important than family, friends, and work. The relationship progresses to the point where alcohol is necessary to feel normal. To feel ‘normal’ for the alcoholic is also to feel isolated and lonely, since the primary relationship he depends upon to feel adequate is with a chemical, not other people.

“Sexual addiction is parallel. The addict substitutes a sick relationship to an event or a process for a healthy relationship with others. The addict’s relationship with a mood-altering experience becomes central to his life . . .

“Addicts progressively go through stages in which they retreat further from the reality of friends, family, and work. Their secret lives become more real than their public lives. What other people know is a false identity. Only the individual addict knows the shame of living a double life—the real world and the addict’s world” (pages 14-15).

## The Anatomy of Addiction

How does addiction actually begin? Perhaps not surprisingly, it starts with

the acceptance of delusional thought processes about oneself, allowing them to become rooted in one’s personal belief system. As a consequence, addiction stems from faulty core beliefs about oneself that affect how we perceive reality.

Each person develops a belief system that is the sum of the assumptions, judgments and ideas that he or she holds to be true. This belief system contains potent family messages about such things as one’s value or worth, relationships, needs and sexuality. When these core beliefs become inaccurate or faulty, they have the potential to provide fundamental momentum necessary for the development of sexual addictions.

What are some of these irrational beliefs? Perhaps the most common is the perception of not being a worthwhile person. Addicts believe that other people would not value them as a person if everything about themselves was known, including their addiction. They also believe that sex is their most important need. Sex is viewed as the only thing that makes their isolation bearable. Consequently, faulty personal core beliefs become the anchor points for sexual addiction.

## Impaired Thinking

Interacting faulty beliefs produce distorted views of reality. Denial leads the list. Ignoring the problem, blaming others and minimizing the behaviors become part of a defensive repertoire. Arguments, excuses, justifications and circular reasoning abound amidst impaired thinking patterns. Amazingly, even consequences such as venereal disease, unwanted pregnancy, lost jobs, arrests and broken relationships are either overlooked or attributed to factors other than the addiction.

Slicing through this mental fog to both recognize and deal with denial and self-deception is essential to recovery and the overcoming of this juggernaut. “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and

enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren” (James 1:14-16).

## The Addiction Cycle

Addictive experiences tend to progress through a four-step cycle, intensifying with each repetition:

1. *Preoccupation* is the mood or trance in which the mind becomes completely engrossed with thoughts of sex. This mental state creates an obsessive search for sexual stimulation.

2. *Ritualization* is the formation of special routines leading up to sexual behavior. The ritual intensifies the preoccupation, adding arousal and excitement.

3. *Compulsive sexual behavior* is doing the actual sexual act, the end goal of the preoccupation and ritualization.

4. *Despair* is the feeling of utter hopelessness and sense of powerlessness that results from once again having engaged in sexually addictive behavior.

## A Self-Perpetuating Cycle

Since the end result is very disappointing and very painful, why would anyone repeat this addiction cycle? The reason is that the cycle becomes self-perpetuating. Ironically, much of the pain felt at the end of the cycle can be numbed or obscured through sexual preoccupation. This reengages the addiction cycle all over again. Hence, sexual addicts become hostages and slaves to their own preoccupations. Jesus Christ gave this concise warning about the enslaving potential of all sin: “Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin” (John 8:34).

## God’s Revealed Purpose for Sex

We live in a society that presents “the joy of sex” as the rightful pursuit of everyone. It seems, in fact, suspicion may likely be attached to anyone who refrains from engaging in sexual activity. The so-called sexual revolution insists

that we discard any “inhibitions” and “sexual hang-ups.” This preoccupation with sex pervades many facets of life.

The great Creator God has designed human sexuality to be a wonderful blessing. God revealed His intent and purpose for sex when human civilization began. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). This is a reference to the union of the sexual organs of husband and wife and implies that marriage is intended to be an intimate relationship.

This understanding is confirmed by Paul in 1 Corinthians, where he calls sexual intercourse becoming “one flesh” (1 Corinthians 6:16). In the same context, Paul wrote, “Flee sexual immorality” (1 Corinthians 6:18), explaining that sex outside of marriage is sin and that it brings penalties on the sinner. In contrast, in Hebrews 13:4, Paul affirms that the sexual union between a husband and

wife is the lawful function of human sexuality. The marriage bed is undefiled, he explained. Paul then immediately warned that other sexual acts outside of marriage do defile a person spiritually.

Christ’s statements in Matthew 5:27-30 explain how it is possible to commit sexual sin in our mind alone—apart from any action whatsoever. We are commanded to guard and control our thoughts as well as our actions. Jesus Christ later also inspired Paul to write about our thoughts as the battlefield on which we win or lose the struggle: “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

## Levels of Addiction

Sexual addiction is generally catego-

## Tools of Recovery

A. Michael Johnson, Ph.D., lists the following tools and more on his Web site [www.sexual-addict.com/tools\\_of\\_recovery.htm](http://www.sexual-addict.com/tools_of_recovery.htm):

- **Accountability Partners and Agreements:** Being accountable to someone is an important anchor for sobriety. Make an agreement with someone to check in daily if at all possible. That person should have a list of questions—very specific questions—to ask you and that you have agreed to answer honestly. Your partner may be a member of your group, a friend in recovery, your therapist or a good friend. An accountability partner must be someone you trust and with whom you feel safe. It is not recommended that you ask your life partner to be your accountability partner. Related tools include sponsors and a support network.

- **Avoid Triggering Situations:** You don’t have to go to business meetings at nude bars. You can tell the others that going to such places interferes with your spiritual growth. If you can’t avoid some triggers such as working on a computer, make it safe for yourself. Install blocking software (so that you don’t know the password), keep your door open, turn the screen toward the door, put the computer at home in a public area and never go online when you are alone.

- **Balance Your Life and Service.**
- **Carry Recovery With You at All Times:** That may be reminders, cues, instructions or anything else that will help. Those things might include:

- Phone numbers of recovery friends.

- Photographs of loved ones.

- Cost Card (add up the costs of your addiction).

- **Combat Physical Inactivity:** Spend time doing fun activities and getting involved in sports, exercise and other physical activities. This is useful for all addicts and particularly important for those who became sedentary with their addictions such as cybersex addicts.

- **Combat Isolation:** Spend time with people. Isolation is a part of your disease. Find ways to be in contact with people.

- **Interrupt Your Acting Out:** Develop and memorize a set of strategies to help you avoid acting out. Use these daily.

- **Meetings:** In these meetings you learn valuable information about your disease and how the 12-step program works. Members give and receive support, work the steps and share experience, strength and hope in a safe environment. At first, attend as many meetings as you can. If possible, attend meetings daily for the first 90 days and practice abstinence to the best of your ability.

- **One Day at a Time.**

- **Prayer and Meditation.**

- **Professional Help:** Your addiction may have been a subconscious way of self-medicating yourself for wounds you carry from your earlier life. It is important to work with a professional who understands sexual addiction or is willing to learn. This is another way to keep yourself on the path of recovery. Remember that recovery is much more than abstinence from sexually addictive behaviors. You may want to seek out group therapy, individual therapy or both. If possible, including your spouse in therapy, both individually and as a couple, can be a great benefit to the recovery of both and to your relationship.

- **Set Boundaries.**

- **Telephone:** The telephone is your lifeline between meetings. Get phone numbers from other members in your program. Get used to calling someone daily. It is an important way to break out of the isolation that is so strongly a part of the disease. You may be shy and hesitant at first, but by training yourself to call someone, it will be easy to place that call when that moment of crisis arises. And it will!

## The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous Adapted for Sexual Addicts

1. We admitted we were powerless over our sexual addiction—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs. From *Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction*, page 170.

ized into three levels. The presence of one or more of these sexual behaviors does not always involve addiction. Various sexual crimes, for example, may or may not be addictive behaviors. The behaviors designated as level one have in common general cultural acceptance. Some are regarded as illegal, but the reality is that widespread practice conveys a public tolerance. Though often considered by society to be less destructive, each of these can be devastating when done compulsively. Level one addictions generally include masturbation, compulsive relationships, pornography, prostitution and anonymous sex.

Level two addictions include exhibitionism, voyeurism, indecent phone calls and indecent liberties. These behaviors are deemed sufficiently intrusive to warrant stiff legal sanctions. They are all punished when actively prosecuted. Both prosecutors and the general public, however, often view these acts as nuisance offenses. The commonality of all of these addictive behaviors is the fact that someone is victimized.

Level three sexual addictions share in common the violation of some of our most significant boundaries. Rape, incest and child molestation entail basic transgressions of laws designed to protect the vulnerable. A number of additional detestable behaviors and addictions are intentionally not being mentioned in this listing.

### Breaking Free

Breaking the hold of sexual addiction is very difficult to do. All forms of addiction are vicious because they further the inability to trust others. However, without help from others, the addict often fails to regain control because the addiction feeds itself. Also, few forms of fixation or excitement are as supercharged with social judgment, ridicule or fear. This makes seeking help especially difficult for the sexual addict.

One of the best-proven paths to recovery is the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, but adapted to a particular sexual addiction. The 12-step program helps members restore their network of human relationships, especially in their family. Members are taught how to live the program, leaving behind their double life and its delusion and pain.

### Battling a Pornography Addiction

Sex sells! Pornography, one of the greatest sexual scourges afflicting human society today, is a \$7 billion industry. Porn revenue is larger than the combined revenues of all professional football, baseball and basketball franchises! It also exceeds the combined revenues of ABC, CBS and NBC television networks.

Overcoming an addiction to Internet pornography may necessitate the use of some special computer safeguards. For

example, various software programs filter Internet content but still allow normal Web surfing. They can be used to block out offensive Web sites.

If you install this type of program yourself, you will easily know how to get around it. Therefore, it would be better to have your spouse or some other trustworthy adult set up the software on your computer.

Three good ones are CyberPatrol, CyberSitter and NetNanny. They cost less than \$40. All have free trials, so you can take each for a test drive before you buy. You'll find them at, respectively:

- [www.cyberpatrol.com/](http://www.cyberpatrol.com/)
- [www.cybersitter.com/](http://www.cybersitter.com/)
- [www.netnanny.com/](http://www.netnanny.com/)

Both America Online and MSN offer ways to limit access to the Internet's darker side. Like the filtering software, you might want to have your spouse or other trustworthy adult set up the account. This way, you do not have any of the passwords. While these controls are meant primarily for children, they can help adults avoid problem Web sites.

You could also use an Internet Service Provider that does filtering. Below are links to three such companies:

- [www.characterlink.net](http://www.characterlink.net)
- [www.bsafefhome.com](http://www.bsafefhome.com)
- [www.mayberryamerica.net](http://www.mayberryamerica.net)

If you need something more adult, check out accountability software. One such program is X3watch, which is

offered by XXXchurch.com, a ministry that battles online pornography. With this program, you designate an accountability partner. X3watch makes a record of any questionable sites you visit, and e-mails the list to your accountability partner. It also makes a note if you close the program. X3watch is free. You can get it at [www.x3watch.com/](http://www.x3watch.com/).

Here are some additional Web sites that may prove to be helpful in recovery from an addiction to pornography:

- Sex Addicts Anonymous: [www.sexaa.org/](http://www.sexaa.org/).
- Dr. Patrick Carnes, author and expert on this topic: [www.sexhelp.com](http://www.sexhelp.com).

### Overcoming Sexual Addictions

The process of overcoming sexual addictions is neither simple nor easy. Spiritual freedom, however, is made available to us through Jesus Christ. "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). The first step in the process of attaining this freedom is to recognize and acknowledge our sins. Remember King David's example of repentance. "For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me" (Psalm 51:3).

The next step involves changing direction in our life, turning away from sin and toward obedience to God. Deep, heartfelt repentance before God can provide a marvelous cleansing process, a

spiritual catharsis that releases the guilt and shame induced by sin. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

The struggle against sin is a long and difficult process. It is not only essential that we continue to "put to death" (Colossians 3:5) the old sinful carnal nature within us, but that we also allow Christ to transform us through the power of the Holy Spirit, the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2). Sinful habits must be rooted out and replaced with habits of obedience to God. As Paul expressed it, "And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness" (Romans 6:18).

It is possible to break the bonds of sexual addiction. If you need help in this area, ask God to give you the courage to honestly face the problem. Be willing to seek counsel from the ministry and, if recommended, to obtain specialized professional help as well.

Most importantly, beseech Almighty God to accomplish His will in your life.

"But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life" (Romans 6:22). UN

*John W. Cafourek is pastor of the Salem, Oregon, congregation and has a master's degree in psychological counseling.*

### "East Africa," continued from page 4

witness a new congregation start.

Twenty-five other pastors representing over 1,000 members of congregations from as far away as Somalia and Uganda were present, all deeply desiring to unite their congregations with UCG Kenya.

Mr. Elliott told them that all good things take time and while we wish to retain a relationship with them and will supply them with literature, this is our first congregation in the region. He encouraged them to continue to study our beliefs and observe what God does in this new UCG congregation as they contemplate their future.

Forming the Kitale congregation is another exciting step with obvious potential in the region. Mr. Elliott named Michael Wafula as their local leader, which drew unanimous applause from those present.

It is inspiring to see how God has provided a leader in most of these remote areas who is capable of leading and helping the congregation. Our five deacons each already oversee five or more remote congregations and the new growth is stretching manpower and the budget very thin. The harvest is truly great and the laborers are few.

Leaving Kitale in the late Sabbath afternoon, we drove through the magnificent Kakamega rain forest that is now protected by the government. Its massive beauty and dark secrets were inspiring to us as the sun set in the west.

### Meetings in Migori

We overnights in Kisumu and drove to Migori Sunday morning. There, national council meetings took

all day and Mr. Elliott had additional staff meetings until 11 p.m. that were extremely insightful and productive.

While at Migori, we visited the plots of land that the Church recently purchased through a Good Works project for building an office and meeting hall.



Seven new members are baptized at Kosele (photo by Bob Carlisle)

There are already hundreds of bricks being made and fired in preparation for construction. A 35-foot hand-dug well was 90 percent finished, and it was so exciting to see it all coming together.

Mr. Elliott baptized a man in the big muddy river there. Finding water to baptize in can be very challenging in East Africa, but is always well worth the effort.

### Tanzania

After spending two hours crossing the border, we entered into Tanzania. The main highway heading southward had a potential death trap for any nighttime drivers. A main bridge had washed away and a replacement was being prepared. However, on the highway there were no barriers, no markers, no indication of any kind that the bridge had been removed and that a 25-foot plunge

into the dry riverbed lay in the path ahead. There was just smooth, black road and then a dark 100-foot gap. The locals knew to drive off the road and down through the riverbed and back up the other bank, a route we followed in daylight.

At Nyanjage we held a Bible study and Q&A with 40 energetic brethren of the congregation there, and a few hundred mosquitoes. Afterwards, Mr. Elliott again found suitable water and another man was baptized.

Crossing back into Kenya and heading northward, we held a Bible study with 41 people of the Kosele congregation. There, seven more men and women were baptized in a tiny 3-foot-wide creek with a small dip in it that was barely deep enough.

It is so exciting to see the Church just exploding there!

### New Dar es Salaam Congregation

We also flew to Dar es Salaam, the capital city of Tanzania, for another



Bob Carlisle preaches to new congregation formed in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Above, Mary and Dean Kerr beside a termite mound in Tanzania (photo by John Elliott)

first-ever service for a new UCG congregation. A jubilant group of 30 greeted us with open arms. The leader, Jerome Chembe, was baptized in the pool at our hotel and Mr. Elliott made



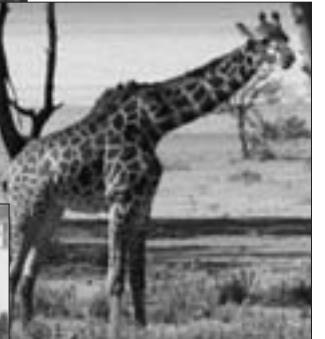
him the official leader of that congregation.

God continues to have the right people in the right place over and over. Jerome Chembe had at one time 1,600 people in a Pentecostal congregation he pastored on full

salary. Gradually, however, God began to reveal biblical truths to him that he felt compelled to communicate to his parishioners.

After teaching that the traditional holidays were unbiblical, 1,300 departed along with his salaried position. Later he taught the truth about the seventh-day Sabbath, after which only 30 adults remained. Yet he has a beautiful attitude and is determined to keep God's truth and teach it. What an inspiring example he is in the Dar es Salaam congregation!

Our trip ended with two glorious days on safari in the Lake Nakuru State Preserve. We stayed in bungalows inside the park. We saw everything



from rhinos to lions and leopards. More types of gazelles than I knew existed and over 150 species of birds inhabit the park. God's creation is truly awesome and inspiring proof of God's love for us.

I hope this article will encourage you to put a little place in your prayers for this exciting, exploding work in Africa! UN

# Treasure Digest

## Living Between the Lines

Recently I drove on an old familiar highway that had just been resurfaced and widened, but had not yet been striped and marked for direction. The drive across the lanes was smooth and easy, almost like riding on air.

It was fun at first, but very quickly that feeling turned to fear. Traffic was coming toward me and suddenly I realized I didn't know where the center turn lanes began or ended. Within a moment I became very confused and disoriented with this massive, unmarked black expanse that lay ahead of me. Familiarity had quickly changed to uncertainty, and without the guidelines, I lost my bearings.

In the midst of all this confusion, I couldn't help but see the parallel with our Christian lives today. So often we hear people exclaim, "No one is going to tell me what to do!" Few are willing to submit to rules and guidelines, without which there is chaos and confusion. The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 14:33 that God is not the author of confusion, but of order and peace.

When we say we don't want to be told how to live, we are rejecting what God set in motion as a way for mankind to live. Everything in life is governed by a law of some sort. When we throw a ball in the air, it comes back down because it is governed by God's law of gravity.

When we reject authority over us, we are putting ourselves on a very dangerous spiritual highway. We are opening ourselves up to the wavelengths of our adversary, the devil. I am not

suggesting that we not question things, because in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 we are told to prove all things. However, to prove all things does not mean to reject authority. How can God work with us if we are not willing to submit to the guidelines that He has set in motion for us?

Just as our highways are governed by laws for our physical safety and well-being, so are we to be governed by the laws of God for our spiritual safety and well-being. If we follow the physical guidelines, we have a better chance of living a longer life on this earth. How much greater is our reward if we obey the laws that govern the journey on our spiritual highway?

*Sandy Letellier  
Covington, Louisiana, congregation*

## Good Bible Study Resources Available Online

It is quite true that there is a special atmosphere to sitting down with 10 books at the dining table and dwelling on the Scriptures, and certainly the printed study aids you already have on your shelves are useful when power outages occur. But we can be even more effective servants of our Almighty God if we also make use of the technology at our disposal.

You might want to check a scripture when you are not at home and are using a different comput-

er. You will be happy to hear that Bibles are also available online through your Internet browser.

In English there is the Blue Letter Bible Web site ([www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)) and Bible.com offers an online service that also serves non-English-speaking people at [www.bible.com/bible\\_read.html](http://www.bible.com/bible_read.html).

You also might benefit from visiting the e-Sword home page found at [www.e-sword.net](http://www.e-sword.net) to find free Bible study software. The e-Sword project follows in the tradition of Johannes Gutenberg, who originally made the Scriptures widely available through the printing press. E-Sword offers you numerous dictionaries, commentaries and so on that you can access on your computer.

This is highly useful for personal Bible studies. Searches are performed much faster using a computer.

Making good use of technology is good stewardship of the talents given to us.

I wish you a good study experience!

*Henrik V. Blunck  
a member in Slagelse, Denmark*

## What Is Leaven?

The United Church of God

Council of Elders approved the following last year, which comes to the same conclusion but gives a more technically accurate answer than the one given in the February 2002 *United News*:

During Unleavened Bread we are to have no leaven or leavened products in our home (Exodus 12:15; 13:7). This includes yeast, a biological leavening agent that produces fermentation, and chemical leavening agents such as baking powder, baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) and potassium bicarbonate. These are ingredients to look for on labels.

Items such as bread, cake, crackers, cookies, prepared cereals and pies that contain leavening must be put out. Doing this is symbolic of putting both the visible and hidden sins out of our lives.

Although the following ingredients are associated with leavening products, they are not by themselves leavening agents: brewer's yeast, yeast extract (a flavoring), cornstarch and cream of tartar (a dry acid). Cream of tartar, being an acid,

merely neutralizes the alkaline nature of baking soda and does not, by itself, cause dough to rise.

## The Prayer of Hannah: a Fine Example Prayer

Although we know Hannah prayed many times before asking God for something she desired greatly, the example prayer that God had recorded for us to contemplate in 1 Samuel 2 was one of gratitude and praise, acknowledging God's providence.

Notice that Hannah's prayer starts with joy, because of personal experience. Then she generalizes that great truth: Nothing can compete in any way with God (1 Samuel 2:1-2)!

When we rightly view God, we are humbled again and again. What do we know? What can we do? Virtually nothing by ourselves. But with God's power and grace, any one of us can succeed (1 Samuel 2:3-4).

Every good "break" comes from God—our daily bread, the ability to enjoy anything, even life itself (or death with the hope of the resurrection)—every good proceeds from God. And God writes the script that we heroically or tragically enact. He is the great writer.

If we play our part wittingly, whether star or support cast, we will share in the final applause. God has set the stage perfectly (1 Samuel 2:5-8).

Finally Hannah acknowledges again that God loves His own. They, too, are human, but they are His! Arrogance and pride seem to be the hallmark of wickedness. God's people may need to wait, to suffer, but they will be vindicated. Thank God (1 Samuel 2:9-10).

Hannah's prayer is beautiful.

*Skip Miller  
an elder in San Diego, California*

## Share Your Word 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](mailto:mike_bennett@ucg.org).



## Turning the Hearts It Takes Two, Part 2

Last issue we introduced the subject of how two become one in marriage. We looked at Ephesians 5:22-25, which describes the close teamwork involved in this wonderful relationship. Husbands are commanded to exercise loving leadership, not to be selfish and inconsiderate.

In the beginning of marriage in Genesis 2, God made it clear that Eve, the first wife, was to be a "helper comparable" to her husband and not merely a maid, housekeeper, sexual partner, dishwasher, laundry woman (Genesis 2:18). Please notice other translations of "helper comparable": "a helper—as his counterpart" (Young's Literal Translation), "a companion who will help him" (New Living Translation), "a helper meet (suitable, adapted, complementary)" (Amplified), "suitable companion" (Today's English Version) and "a helper as his partner" (New Revised Standard). The wife is called a companion in Malachi 2:14.

All of these translations imply working together or "together" in marriage. In Proverbs 31 we read of a woman who is very capable of exercising her mind and talents, and her husband praises her for her contributions. The apostle Peter speaks of the need of the husband to know his wife's needs and value her (1 Peter 3:7). One way to honor or value another is to seek that person's advice on various issues or plans.

Together, the husband and wife are to be one! They need to work together as a loving team to do what is best for the marriage and the family. A wise husband will solicit input from his wife. He will realize that plans and activities that involve both of them need to be discussed. For example, just because the husband likes watching sports, it would be inconsiderate for him to assume his wife (and family) would like to do so as their family day together.

Major issues that affect the family need to be discussed and agreed upon by both the husband and the wife. When planning major purchases or family outings, couples need to discuss the arrangements or activity and agree on the plan. A wife who feels a part of the "twosome" and included in the decision-making process, will contribute to and enjoy the marriage. The importance of this key is that the husband creates an atmosphere to make his wife feel welcome to offer her input and suggestions. Marriage is a joint venture. It takes two people to make a marriage. Why would one want to do something that the other would not want them to do?

Being aware of and applying this vital principle will help build the marriage relationship and bring satisfying results. So, remember, "it takes two" for a marriage to be happy and successful. May God help us all to build teamwork and cooperation into our marriages.

*Gary E. Antion*

## Be Ready to Give an Answer: Why Do You Believe in the "Laying on of Hands"?

Last month we answered why we believe baptism is necessary. Biblically "baptism is followed by the ceremony of the laying on of hands by one or more of God's faithful elders for the purpose of receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17).

"The laying on of hands is described in the Scriptures as part of the foundation of a believer's beliefs and actions (Hebrews 6:1-2). This ceremony, like baptism, represents an important step in the conversion process. Why? Because most examples in the New Testament show that it is through the laying on of hands of Christ's ministry that God imparts His Spirit to new converts.

"Like baptism, the practice of laying on of hands has its historical roots in the Old Testament. In ancient times this practice, often accompanied by anointing with oil, was used to set men apart to serve God in the offices of king or priest. It was also sometimes invoked in setting apart sacrifices or other things for holy use. Similarly, laying on of hands after baptism signifies that the newly baptized person has now been set apart for God.

"Since the days of the apostles the laying on of hands after baptism has signified the actual moment of the receiving of the Holy Spirit and the setting apart of a convert as a child of God. It is only through the gift of God's Spirit that we can develop the godly attitude of obedience and faith. The practice of laying on of hands for the receiving of God's Spirit is mentioned in Acts 8:17, 19:6 and 2 Timothy 1:6." (*Transforming Your Life: The Process of Conversion*, pages 40-41).

Laying on of hands is also part of anointing the sick (Mark 6:5; Acts 28:8; James 5:14), ordination (Acts 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:22) and blessing little children (Matthew 19:13).

**For More Information**, read or request our free booklets *Transforming Your Life: The Process of Conversion* and *The Road to Eternal Life* ([www.ucg.org/booklets](http://www.ucg.org/booklets)).



## Local Church Updates

### Tacoma and Seattle Youth Serve

On the weekend of Nov. 20 and 21, 2004, the Tacoma and Seattle, Washington, teens and young adults took



Teens and young adults from the Tacoma and Seattle, Washington, congregations filled two pickups with donations they collected for a women's shelter; inset, Eric Pate and Nathan Wetmore dump a load of bark chips at the facility where the Tacoma congregation meets (photos by Cheryl Reeves)

part in two community service projects.

One was for the new facility in which the Tacoma congregation meets, The Lighthouse Christian School in Gig Harbor. It is a new school and they had several loads of bark chips delivered to the playground. On the evening of Nov. 20 after a delicious potluck, the youth as well as many of the men took wheelbarrows and shovels and made short work of the huge pile of bark chips, spreading them all over the playground.

After they were finished, everyone enjoyed a game of basketball or volleyball in the gym.

On Nov. 21 many of the young people met for breakfast at the home of Jerry and Jeanette Berg in Seabeck, Washington. They were divided up into two groups and were given maps to two housing developments where flyers had been left the weekend before. The flyers let people know that a church youth group would be in their area picking up clothing and other needed items for a local women's shelter.

The young people were full of ambition and ran from house to house, knocking on doors and collecting two pickup loads of items. They met back at the Bergs' home and had a wonderful lunch with lots of desserts. They then took the two pickup loads to the shelter and filled an entire living room with the bags. The women's shelter was most appreciative.

Cheryl Reeves

### UCG Members Celebrate Barbados' 38th Anniversary

On Nov. 30, 2004, Barbadians breathed a sigh of relief after two weeks

of heavy showers. The clear sky with bright sunshine allowed over 50 persons bedecked in the national colors to converge at Sagcor Sports' Club to celebrate the 38th anniversary of nationhood. The participants included United brethren and invited guests from Living and Worldwide Churches of God.

Seniors and youth alike reenacted and conversed about aspects of life in pre-and postindependence Barbados.

The brethren and visitors participated in several enjoyable activities. Steve Holland exposed the youth to some improvised rollers and scooters that were part of the lifestyle of Barbadian youth prior to 1966. The youth took an active part and had much fun in using them.

The seniors displayed such items as ragged dolls, mats and a "jucking board" (used in laundering clothes).

Mr. Holland formed an impromptu folk group comprised mostly of young people. They gave a creditable performance of some classic Bajan folk songs like: "Sweet, Sweet Flying Fish and Cou-Cou," "Lead Man Holler," "Sugar-cane Growing on My Native Land," "Coconut Woman," "De Ice House Song" and "Beautiful, Beautiful Barbados."

The songs drew loud applause from the appreciative audience as the group demonstrated their musical talent on the stage.

Other striking features of the day witnessed:

- Mayverne Benn, a senior member of United Church of God, eloquently reading some of her poems related to Barbados. She also sang a jingle as part of her contribution to the day's activities.

- Allison Holland presented a dramatic poetic piece entitled "My Life." Her attire depicted an agricultural laborer in the field at work.

Both ladies' performances were warmly received by the audience.

Jeff and Natasha Weatherhead and Hayden Evelyn were remarkable in the karaoke segment. Though the day was highlighting aspects of our Barbadian culture, Mrs. Weatherhead and her daughter, Lena, gave sterling renditions of Russian songs, using the karaoke device.

The highlight of the day's social activity was when Marjorie Ashby, a septuagenarian, defeated two youth and another senior "six-love" (6-0) in a game of dominoes. Mrs. Ashby is the oldest member in Barbados and is a long-standing member of God's Church. She was presented with an award during the Feast of Tabernacles 2004 for being the most consistent and punctual member in United Church of God. This award was presented by the pastor, Arnold Hampton.

During the celebration everyone mingled and munched on a tasty selection

of local Bajan foods such as fish cakes, pumpkin fritters, *conkies*, steam pudding, commel bakes and commel pone. Everyone also refreshed himself or herself with some locally made drinks such as *mauby*, golden apple, sorrel and ginger beer.

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Holland, Daphne Licorish, Wesley Holland, Carolyn Scantlebury and their team must be complimented for a superb and delightful day.

Osmonde C. Douglas

### Akron Sponsors Monthly Food Bank

For two years the Akron congregation has been sponsoring a food bank on the last Sabbath of each month. Members bring miscellaneous foodstuffs and household products to Sabbath services where they are collected on tables and later distributed the same day to our own brethren who can benefit from this helping hand.

This program was started in 2002 by Akron member Karen Edwards after she visited the Pittsburgh congregation and saw that they were doing a similar food bank program. She later presented the idea to the Akron Women's Club, and it was accepted enthusiastically. After the Women's Club decided to go ahead with the new program, Akron pastor Dave Myers announced to the congregation that a monthly program would be instituted to help the needy of the congregation and asked the members who were able to contribute.



Akron, Ohio's, food bank was started by Akron member Karen Edwards in 2002 (photo by Erik Jones)

After the program had been operating for a few months, Mrs. Edwards came up with an idea to help the program grow and be more cost-effective. She decided to try to take advantage of grocery store coupons for the benefit of the program. Mrs. Edwards would meticulously scan weekly ads for coupons.

Since this was a relatively easy and successful way to make the food bank more effective, it was decided to enlist more brethren in the hunt for great deals through coupons. Members were asked to cut out coupons and drop them on the information table. Mrs. Edwards gathers the coupons every week, sorts and files them, and makes a weekly shopping trip to pick up the discounted items. Some members, instead of donating actual items, donate money to be used to buy the discounted items.

The fourth Sabbath of the month is

designated as the food bank Sabbath. After all the food is collected, it is divided up in bags and given to the families to take home. About 10 families are regularly served by the program. Some of the food is also given to families in surrounding congregations. The program regularly serves about 50 people and is divided according to the family's needs.

According to Mrs. Edwards, most of the brethren who receive donations only receive them temporarily (for example, if someone is temporarily unemployed or there are other hardships) and tend to be consistent givers to the food bank when they no longer need the donations.

"The food bank program allows the congregation to have a stronger sense of community and somewhat experience the oneness described in Acts 4:32," Mrs. Edwards said. "Many people want to give, but really don't know all the needs that are among us. The food bank provides us an organized method of allowing the able to serve those in need."

Here are a few points the Akron congregation has learned that may be of help to congregations with the ability, need and desire to start a similar program:

1. Make use of coupons found in advertisements. Did you know that only 5 percent of the coupons released by stores are redeemed?
2. Don't just donate canned goods. Though they are helpful, other products like toilet paper, paper towels, cereals, pastas and other disposable household items are good items to donate.
3. Investigate and pray for inspiration in choosing products that will be the most useful to the recipients of the program.

Erik Jones

### 117 Attend Garden Grove Women's Enrichment Weekend

From Friday evening, Jan. 14, through Sunday afternoon, Jan. 16, 117 enthusiastic ladies attended the fourth annual Women's Enrichment Weekend sponsored by the Women's Club of UCG-Garden Grove. Attendees learned and benefited from the theme "Enriching Life's Relationships."

Most of the ladies were from Southern California, but about a quarter came from northern California, Arizona and other states. The special weekend was held at the beautiful Embassy Suites in Santa Ana, California, an outstanding facility that featured all two-room suites and a relaxing indoor atrium area.

The weekend began Friday evening with an optional dinner at a nearby restaurant, followed by a get-acquainted mixer at the hotel. On Sabbath morning, after two inspiring special music selections, Dennis Luker, pastor of the Seattle area, set the tone of the weekend with a message based on Mark 12:30-31—

serving God with our heart, soul and mind.

After lunch we heard from Dianne Clark about use of the tongue in godly communication, a vital aspect in building harmonious relationships with others. Our keynote speaker, LeeAnn Luker, inspired us with "Fill My Cup, Lord," showing us that our relationships follow from our relationship with God, and only God can fill our deep and true needs.

After a wonderful meal, the evening began with a moving presentation by Valerie Curcuro as she shared the importance of the right relationship with oneself. The bulk of the evening was an interactive discussion by table, sharing thoughts on how to overcome common barriers affecting prayer and Bible study.

Sunday morning began with a thought-provoking presentation on "The Art of Forgiving"



The Garden Grove Women's Enrichment Weekend presenters (photo by Kris Talbott); inset, LeeAnn Luker, keynote speaker, with Karen dela Fuente, an attendee from Arizona (photo by Jean Updegraff)

by Carol Wallauch. Afterward, five ladies shared experiences and suggestions for "Bridging the Gaps" in relationships: age (Sheryl Nakashima), gender (Suzanne Miller), community (Anna Moore), culture (Amparo Jara) and mentoring (Linda Register).

After a delicious lunch, Sylvia Kennedy opened the afternoon session with a presentation on five love languages, showing how we feel loved in different ways and giving tips on expressing our love to others in their preferred love language.

The weekend ended on a very high note, with an outstanding, inspiring presentation, "Open My Eyes, Lord" by LeeAnn Luker that helped us envision our future in the Kingdom, bringing in analogies, complete with film clips from the movie *Cinderella*—showing that we will one day marry our Prince. At the conclusion Ingrid Helge transported us in song to that future with the emotionally moving "New Jerusalem."

Evaluation forms were completed and the results were very positive, with numerous comments on just how much these women's weekends are needed and appreciated. Some comments were: "I did not expect the poignancy, the incredible depth of the presentations;" and "Each year, God is developing us, molding us into His image, and the excavation gets deeper and more personal and intense."

Jean Updegraff

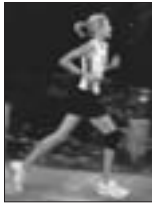
## Teen Wins Coach's Award

Lacee Hilgen, a 15-year-old 10th grader at Cypress High School in Southern California was awarded the Coach's Award at her cross-country banquet, Dec. 3, 2004. The coach explained how Lacee trained from June until November knowing she would only compete in one race. All of the preceding races were on the Sabbath and she had made the decision not to run.

Lacee showed a lot of character and a great attitude all season and earned second place at the league finals—her first, last and only race.

Lacee attends UCG-Garden Grove with her parents Greg and Randi Hilgen and brothers Aaron and Brennan.

*Greg and Randi Hilgen and Jean Updegraff*



Lacee Hilgen

## Cleveland Raises Funds With "Safari"

On Dec. 18, 2004, the Cleveland, Ohio, congregation held its first post-Feast social of the year. The event was intended to be a fund-raiser for the Good Works project of raising money to build church buildings in French African countries. As the planning progressed, this became a multifaceted social.

A theme of an African safari was decided upon early. The Cleveland church is blessed to have skilled people who are able to use plants, animals, native fabrics and photos to transform our meeting hall into a more African setting. Besides a pride of lions and a herd of giraffes, we had snakes slithering up trees.

Many people volunteered to create baskets for a silent auction. We had beauty and accessory baskets, food baskets (yes, one was specially designed to cater to the fifth food group—chocolate), a movie night basket containing a DVD player and 10 movies, a travel basket, a handyman's basket, a basket aimed specifically for boys and one for girls and many baskets aimed at specific hobbies (cook's delight, bird lovers, scrapbooking and rubber stamping, gardening, horse lovers, zoo and rainforest tickets).

Additionally, we had three professional services baskets—two donated by attorneys and one by an interior design professional. Five baskets that generated special interest were those with tickets to the Carousel Dinner Theater, a basket containing gift certificates to Borders

Bookstore and the Olive Garden Restaurant, a wine and cheese basket, a special "no time to cook" basket that held gift certificates to several area restaurants, and—the most unusual and sought after of all—the "lighter than air" basket, which held, among other things, two tickets for a ride on the Goodyear Blimp.

From there, the auction idea became contagious, and we added a household goods auction. The Cleveland church has a number of ladies who are highly skilled quilters, and quilts made specifically for this occasion showed up in baskets and in the auction. We drafted a gentleman in the congregation who attends many auctions to be our auctioneer. We knew he was a man with a well-developed sense of humor. We learned he was a skilled auctioneer. We also learned it was not a good idea to scratch your ear, because you just might end up buying the item up for bid!

As planning continued, it became clear we had many talented people who wished to donate smaller craft items they



The Cleveland, Ohio, meeting hall was transformed into an African safari for a fund-raiser

had made, things not so readily suitable to the auction format. So a table for the sale of craft items and smaller donated items was added to the agenda.

By now, we were running out of space to potentially put things—but not out of ideas. It had been decided this was to be a potluck meal, but since the entrepreneurial spirit lives on, it was decided the meal would not include dessert. So an announcement was made, and desserts poured in for two additional events: a dessert auction and a bake sale.

At the first mention of "bake sale," a group of teen girls volunteered to have a "bake night" and produce great numbers of cookies for the sale. Their cookies were delicious, and the cash box went "cha-ching."

The evening was a success on all fronts: God held off the forecast snow until all visitors and brethren were safely home. The brethren enjoyed an evening of laughter and outstanding fellowship. And \$3,335 was raised for the Good Works program.

*Diane Webber*

## Dayton Youth Chosen to Attend International Camp

Gregory Joseph, son of Brian and Angela Joseph, who attends the Dayton, Ohio, congregation, was chosen to



Gregory Joseph

receive a scholarship to attend the Children's International Summer Village (CISV).

CISV is an organization that began 50 years ago with the dream of Doris Allen to help children live and work together in peace and friendship. Gregory is one of four children chosen to represent the United States at the summer village in Springfield, Massachusetts, in July 2005. He has the opportunity to spend four weeks with 11-year-olds from 12 countries around the world. Emphasis is on activities that encourage creative expression and close relationships among children. CISV seeks to prepare individuals for effective leadership roles in creating peaceful societies.

Gregory is very excited to be able to attend the summer village, meet new friends from around the world and be a shining example of how God's way is working in his life.

## Mansfield Enjoys Sabbath in the Woods

The Mansfield, Ohio, congregation enjoyed what has become an annual tradition. On Oct. 23, 2004, the congregation met at the historic Malabar Farm for our "Sabbath in the woods" at Pugh Cabin. Malabar Farm has outdoor trails for the young and young at heart to



Rilla and Art Morris and Janel and Doug Johnson were honored with cake and gifts at Pugh Cabin; inset, Joe and Marsha Horton and Julie and Len Martin were honored in November

leisurely explore and enjoy God's beautiful creation in the colorful season of late autumn.

After Bible study, Sabbath services and presentation of clergy appreciation gifts, we had a potluck meal and games night. Two rotating elders and spouses were not present at Pugh Cabin; therefore, we had a clergy appreciation gift presentation in November when these two families were scheduled to serve our congregation once again.

*Regina Wilson*

## Queensland Holds Women's Weekend

On the late afternoon of Nov. 26, 58 ladies assembled for the much-anticipated women's weekend in Queensland, Australia.

The joy of getting together for those who live so far away (ladies attended from Clermont; Bundaberg; Toowoomba; Devonport, Tasmania; and Sydney) and spending time with their sisters from Brisbane and the Gold Coast is a special time each year. We had a total of 70 ladies, with visitors for the day on the Sabbath.

After Friday dinner we spent the remainder of the evening getting to know everyone and welcoming those who were with us for the first time.

Sabbath morning breakfast was more leisurely than other meals, with time for talking, laughter, visiting and enjoying each other, especially with the food prepared for us and no clean-up to worry about. Services began at 10 a.m. with hymns led by Brad Huthnance, followed by three beautifully performed pieces of special music by Lea Evans from Tasmania, Jemima Robertson from Brisbane and Joan Wright from the Gold Coast.

Bill Bradford gave the sermon based on our theme for the weekend, "Growing in Grace and Knowledge." He explained how we many times grow in knowledge and asked if we also knew how to grow in grace—meaning to grow in our capacity to extend grace to others as we appreciate the grace that has been extended to us by God.

Later in the day, Mistress of Ceremonies Debbie Elifimov introduced two presentations. The special guest speaker from Dallas, Texas, Tina Engelbart, gave a moving presentation on "Growing in Grace and Knowledge" during the trials she faced as a minister's wife and then becoming a widow and how her life has changed as a result.

Jenny Bradford's topic was "Thinking for a Change." This was a subject on developing the mind of Christ through analyzing what we think. We need to believe what God tells us about how to think and how to govern our thoughts. A small journal was given to each of the

ladies encouraging them to capture their thoughts.

Following afternoon tea, a panel of ladies (Clare Michelson, Brenda Shillock, Bernadette Marozza, Ileana Robertson, Judy Nelson and Ethne Kinsela) shared their individual journeys through some of their trials and experiences and what they have learned of "Grace and Knowledge" along the way. An open discussion followed in which everyone was invited to participate.

The evening program included a demonstration on how to place *Good News* newsstands in stores by Belinda Leihn, assisted by Marcia Torcetti and Pat Finley, showing how to overcome a store owner's objections.

Ruth Root then had the ladies do a personality test followed by a video of Gary Smalley discussing the four personality types in a humorous way that everyone enjoyed.

Following a good night's rest and a hearty breakfast, we began the day with a very stimulating PowerPoint presentation by Jenny Huthnance on several difficult and misunderstood scriptures regarding women in the Bible. One scripture, for example, referring to women as the "weaker vessel," really means to be highly valued and greatly treasured, like fine porcelain. Florence Bellamy then read a poem demonstrating some of the special gifts God created in women.

The second presentation by Tina Engelbart clarified how Christ valued women. For example, Jesus went against all the Jewish customs by conversing with women in public. Tina explained how the Mary/Martha incident in the Bible showed Jesus was encouraging women to study and learn just as the men. She also referred to several other examples where Jesus refused to follow the customs of the day, but rather accorded women the respect due them according to the Word of God.

Morning tea meant, once again, lots of fellowship, after which we gathered in the conference room for break-out sessions led by Jeannette Dean on various subjects. Subjects included: talking with God, talking with children and talking with the sick, just to name a few. Jeannette preceded the break-out sessions with a discussion about how we can use language and communication to help others to grow in grace and knowledge. Each break-out group reported back to everyone their conclusions and input.

After lunch we all packed up and said farewell to our friends with whom we had become much closer from sharing this wonderful weekend together. Everyone eagerly looks forward to next year's Women's Weekend. Our theme next year will be "Women After God's Own Heart."

*Jenny Bradford and Tina Engelbart*

## "ABC," continued from page 1

The students received basic information about the program from ABC coordinator Gary Antion. Ralph Levy was unable to be present since he was in California purchasing some books

for the ABC library.

One of the highlights of the day was having an alumnus from each of the previous five graduating classes give his or her experiences and some valuable tips for how to be successful at ABC. Paul Wasilkoff (2000), Stephen

Warren (2001), Clarissa de Campos (2002), Taylor Tootle (2003) and Dan and Alix Fitzpatrick (2004) all spoke to the new class of 2005.

Refreshments were beautifully prepared and served amidst tastefully decorated tables and special lighting to add

to the elegance of the day. Terri Eddington and Lisa Fenchel spearheaded the reception presentation.

Home office staff and students were able to mingle with one another and get to know each other a little better since they will be sharing the home office for

the next seven months.

Classes began promptly at 8:30 a.m. on Monday morning, Jan. 10. Richard Thompson was on hand to conduct the first class on the Gospels as he has done most years. We are looking forward to another exciting year at ABC. **UN**

# Announcements

## Births

Kurt and Jennifer (Cox) Hoyer of Nicosia, Cyprus, are pleased to announce the arrival of their third son Brandon Spencer Hoyer. He arrived on Oct. 27, 2004, weighing 7½ pounds and



Brandon Spencer Hoyer

was 20 inches long. Grandparents are Gerald and Kathy Hoyer of Prescott, Arizona, and Floyd and Judy Cox of Lafayette, Indiana. Khavren and Dylan are thrilled to have a little brother even though they prayed for a baby sister. "Don't worry, Mom, you can have a girl next time!"

Troy and Cindy (Maskrid) Harris are pleased to announce the birth of their first child, Cody Lee Harris, born May 4, 2004, in Kansas City, Kansas. He



Cody Lee Harris

was 6 pounds 14 ounces and 19½ inches long. Grandparents are Ray and Penny Harris of Columbia, Missouri, and John and Nita Maskrid of Wichita, Kansas. Cody is the fifth grandchild for both sets of grandparents. We are all thrilled to add a "new member" to the Church and God's way of life.

Randy and Kori McKeegan of Bakersfield, California, are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Aaron Mark, who was born on Oct. 27, 2004, weighing 6 pounds 5 ounces and mea-



Aaron Mark McKeegan

suring 18½ inches. Sister Emily is, of course, thrilled with the new addition to the family. The proud grandparents are Fran Brosky, Don Brosky, Cynthia Alipio and Craig Jackson of Bakersfield.

Aaron and Linda (Aguilar) Farnon of the Stockton, California, congregation are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter Dalcyce Bennita Farnon. Dalcyce was born on her father's birthday Sept. 4, 2004, and weighed 7 pounds 11 ounces and was 20½ inches



Dalcyce Bennita Farnon

long. Her family includes grandparents Joe and Bennie Aguilar of San Antonio, Texas, Paul Farnon of Bellingham, Washington, and Christine Farnon of Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada. Baby Dalcyce has her mother's dimples and her dad's love of music.

Stephen and Melissa (Weinbrenner) Taylor are pleased to announce the arrival of their third son, Eric Russell. He was born on Father's Day, June 20, 2004, and weighed 8 pounds 2 ounces and was 19½ inches long. Big brothers Brian and Arthur are delighted, as are



Eric Russell Taylor with big brothers Brian and Arthur

grandparents Alison Taylor of Cornwall, England, and Loren and Jan Weinbrenner of Big Sandy, Texas.

## Engagements

Maurice and Josie Drewniak of the Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, congregation are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Jolene Lizette Drewniak, to Andrew Gonzales of the Akron, Ohio, congregation. Andrew is the son of Randy and Gayle Gonzales of Akron and Chris Gonzales of North Canton, Ohio.

Andrew will be graduating from Stark State College in the spring of



Andrew Gonzales and Jolene Lizette Drewniak

2005 with a degree in accounting. Andrew and Jolene will then get married in Jolene's hometown, Steinbach, Manitoba, on May 22, 2005. They are planning to reside in Ohio.

## Weddings

Jim and Joy VanSchuyver of Houston, Texas, are happy to announce the marriage of Jonathan Howe to Elizabeth Ludtke. The groom is the son of Joy VanSchuyver and the late Ron Howe of



Elizabeth and Jonathan Howe

Detroit, Michigan, and grandson of John and Lorraine Beresford of Victoria, British Columbia, and Peggy Krueger of Fairmont, Minnesota. The bride is the daughter of Lloyd and Kay Ludtke, and granddaughter of Anita Kettel and Arlie Roberson all of Bellingham, Washington.

Attendants to the bride were matron of honor, Kim Laguardia; and bridesmaids, Rhonda Smith (sister of the groom), Emilie Wood, Emily Pate, and nieces Alexis and Alyssa Ludtke. Best man was Marty LaFluer of Petaluma, California. The bride's brothers, Lex and Lance Ludtke; nephews, Mitch and Max Ludtke; Jack Pate and Jordan Wood were the groomsmen. Eric Wood was the ringbearer.

The wedding took place in Bellingham on Feb. 7, 2004, with the ceremony performed by Clyde Kilough, long-time friend of the Howe family, and Carl Fischer, minister of the Ludtke family. Jon and Liz are living in Castro Valley, California.

## Anniversaries

On June 5, 2004, Jim and Emily Dewyer were given a surprise reception

in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary. The Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, congregation presented them with kind words for their 30 years of service as deacon and deaconess, beautiful gifts and a lovely wedding cake.

The Dewyers have been members of



Jim and Emily Dewyer

the Pittsburgh congregation since 1971. They have three children, Pam and Dave Myers of Akron, Ohio; Jim and Judy Dewyer of Bermuda Dunes, California; and Jonathan and JoAnn Dewyer of Big Sandy, Texas; and four grandchildren, Melissa and Philip Myers and Brandon and Morgan Dewyer.

## Obituaries

Bert Clinton Diamond, 74, of Floyd, Virginia, formerly of Pikeville, Kentucky, died Sunday, Jan. 9, 2005. He was a member of the Roanoke congregation and was baptized in 1968. His wife, Bertha, who also is a longtime member of the Church, survives him.

Also surviving him are his nine children, Linda Ray, John Diamond, George Diamond, Addie Smith, David Dia-



Bert Diamond

mond, James Diamond, Ruth Collins, Abraham Diamond and Joe Diamond; 15 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a brother, George Diamond; and many nieces and nephews.

Just before his death, he was able to hold his newest grandson, 5-day-old Ethan Diamond, son of Joe and Kelly (Good) Diamond, who also attend the Roanoke congregation.

Bert Diamond served in the army during the Korean War and was a professional artist and craftsman for over 50 years. He was retired from being a self-employed welder. Bert was very personable and enjoyed fellowshiping.

The Roanoke congregation will miss him. The funeral service was conducted by his pastor, John Foster.

Loraine C. Heehs, 85, died Oct. 31, 2004. Loraine was born March 6, 1919,



Loraine C. Heehs

in Haywood County, Tennessee, and then in 1929 moved to Memphis. Memphis was her home for most of her life. Loraine was baptized during a baptism tour early 1958.

She loved her Church "family" and entertained and served as much as her health would allow. For several years she "hosted" the Memphis congregation in her home each Sabbath.

In May 2002 she moved to St. Louis, Missouri, to be near her only son and his family. She had three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. She is survived by her brother, Curtis Cowan of Crossville, Tennessee, and niece and nephew, Norma Holladay and Bill Cowan.

Her husband and son preceded her in death. She had a zest and love for life and God that will truly be missed by all those who knew and loved her.

Mrs. (M.R.) Kathleen Myers, 89, died Sept. 18, 2004, in Crossville, Tennessee, from a ruptured aneurysm. Kathleen had been a member of God's Church since



Kathleen Myers

1967. She attended in Dallas and Waco, Texas. The last several years of her life, she was troubled with very painful back problems and couldn't get around without experiencing a lot of pain. As a result she spent a great deal of time at home. She loved the Church and spent much time reading the Bible and Church literature.

Her husband preceded her in death in 2001. She is survived by her sister, Frances Cowan, of Crossville, Tennessee. She will be missed by all those

### Tribute: Will L. Johnson

Willie Larcie Johnson, respected elder and member of God's Church for 25 years, loving father and husband for 51 years and doting grandfather for every minute of his two grandchildren's young lives, died of cancer Jan. 9, 2005, surrounded by his family.

Born March 19, 1932, the eldest of 12 children, Will learned the value of hard work and perseverance at a young age. These served him well as he acquired his degree from A&M College and then excelled in a long and storied military career.

Will, with his wife Betty and their three children, came into God's Church in 1980. It wasn't long before Will's leadership and teaching skills were recognized and put to good use as he was ordained, first as a deacon and then as an elder.

His booming voice gave his Sabbath messages special impact and



Will L. Johnson

were always well received by the San Antonio, Texas, congregations he served.

His beaming smile, quiet dignity and unwavering enthusiasm will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved Will Johnson.

Laura Thompson

### Tribute: Dean Wilson

Dean Wilson, widely known for pioneering the work of the Church of God in Canada, died at home in Portland, Oregon, on Jan. 12, 2005. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in late 1999 and had been retired from the active ministry since that time. He is survived by his wife, Marolyn; their three children, Linda, Douglas and Matthew; and by 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Dean was born in Osceola, Iowa, July 10, 1929. His family moved in 1936 to the Portland area where Dean grew up. It was here he met and married Marolyn. Dean served in the U.S. Air Force in Korea, Japan and North Africa, during which time his wife first heard *The World Tomorrow* broadcast. They were both later baptized, Marolyn in 1954 and Dean in 1955. Following separation from the Air Force, Dean was accepted to Ambassador College in 1958.

The week following graduation Dean was ordained and given the task of overseeing the fledgling Canadian mailing office in Vancouver, British Columbia, and pastoring the newly formed Vancouver congregation. His

zeal and optimism for the growth of the Church were obvious to all. Growth and development were the hallmarks of his career.

During his 14 years overseeing the work in Canada, the Church flourished. Dean was known as Mr. Canada and jokingly referred to as the representative for the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce. Under his watch Canada grew from a single congregation of 53 in Vancouver to a nationwide church with 61 congregations attended by 8,796 members and served by 101 ministers and assistants according to a July 1975 census of the Church in Canada. Canada also became a significant financial contributor to the work of the Church in other international areas.

Following his service in Canada, Dean took over the regional directorship of the Austral-Asian area. After two international assignments—Canada and Australia—Dean returned to the United States, pastoring churches in Portland and San Diego, California, before being returned to Portland in 1994 where he was retired.

In 1995 at the founding meeting of the United Church of God in Indianapolis, Indiana, Dean was one of the featured speakers. In his Indianapolis presentation Dean made a telling



Dean Wilson

observation. He recounted how friends had told him that now that he was retired, he could do what he wanted. Dean's response was as follows: "I reflected on that statement. All I can say was, the last 35 years that's exactly what I have been doing. Exactly what I want. I was a minister in God's Church, I was pastoring a flock, I was dealing with people, and helping them, encouraging them, and helping them along to salvation."

Dean Wilson will be remembered for his excellence in all these responsibilities.

Robert Dick

who knew and loved her.

Thelma O. Park, 90, of Prescott, Arizona, died Jan. 17. She is survived by three sons, James (Pam) Park, David

Park and Douglas (Jan) Park; four grandchildren, Kimberly (Damon) Stelly, Professor Trevor, Allison and Neal Park. Tee, as she was known, attended the Church of God for many years.

## Letters

### Pastor Convinced of the Sabbath

We have just started attending the United Church of God . . . I am a pastor of a small church . . . and I am fully convinced that we must honor God's true Sabbath. If our doing so means that I must resign and step from behind the pulpit, then that is what I must do. I cannot turn back from doing what I sincerely feel that God has convicted me to do! Would you please submit my daughter's name for a subscription to *Vertical Thought* magazine?

Georgia

### Snowed in, Treasures to Read

This Sabbath (Jan. 22) we are snowed in here in Chicago, as you also may be there in Cincinnati. This week I received the *United News* and *World News and Prophecy* and also am still reading *The Good News* magazine. So thankfully there is plenty to read this Sabbath!

But just wanted to let you know how helpful the "Treasure Digest" is. Those short stories usually touch on something I can closely relate to in my weekly living and show me how to apply biblical wisdom to situations encountered. I hope the "Treasure Digest" continues on in each issue.

Illinois

### "Cheering Good News"

Thank you so very much for the latest (December) *United News*. It was full of interesting, upbeat, educational

and cheering good news. It seems that every issue is better than the one before, and the format and layout is so balanced with amazingly clear, well-printed photographs. I especially appreciated all those beautiful, innocent little happy babies and joyful newlyweds, as well as the thoughtful minibiographies of our courageous, enduring mature brothers and sisters who have fallen asleep recently. Well done! You show the Church in a good light as the happy family of our great and wonderful God. Thank you so much.

England

### Around the World

I really appreciated the December issue of *United News*. From "News From Around the World," I am able to update 3-by-5-inch cards that I write for each country. (Sometimes I cut out a picture of the congregations so I can see the people as well as list their needs.) It's easy to keep their progress by dating the cards by year. Individuals can be listed for special prayers as well.

It is very exciting to see the growth, buildings being built, aid with education or small businesses, etc.

I also enjoy the "Announcements" section very much, keeping up with our families worldwide. Thank you for these very helpful details.

Texas

### "An Extreme Contrast"

How thankful I am to be a part of this Church. The local newspaper has been filled with violence and corruption late-

ly. It was a great joy to read the *United News* this week. I am so elated to hear of the brethren in other parts of the world, and the progress of God's work. Thank you to all those God has called to lead this Church.

The *United News* is an extreme contrast to the news of the world, and I have benefited from it. I'm hopeful there will be more papers like the *United News* when Jesus Christ returns to this earth.

Internet

### Perfumes and Aftershaves in Church

After reading the letter from a member published in the recent (November 2004) *United News* about members not leaving off their perfumes, colognes and aftershaves when they attend church, I felt I must write to support the writer's statements. The writer's statement "people aren't getting it" is exactly on target.

I live with a family member who has multiple chemical sensitivities (MCS). She, as a result, can only come to church, with great effort and careful planning, about once every month or every other month. Truthfully, she shouldn't even be coming that often. Church is probably the most toxic environment she goes into year-round. It takes days for her to "recover" (and for her, recovery is only relative) afterwards. The chemicals affect her central nervous system.

There are cases where we may feel helpless to help other church members. But in this case, ironically, all that is

required is to actually do nothing at all—just don't wear the stuff! It won't cost any time or money.

The writer of the article published in *United News* mentioned an MCS sufferer who, after attending services, throws up for the rest of the day. How much worse does it have to get before we have the resolve to do something about it?

What would Jesus say? Didn't He essentially say that if you've done it to them, you've done it to Him?

Internet

### MP3 Files

We would like to thank you for making the sermons available online for download in MP3 format. That makes it very easy for us to listen to sermons during the week. Once the download is completed each time, it is a cinch to get it on a CD-RW and listen to it on the run or in the living room. Keep up the good work.

Florida

### "A Real Bible-Believing Church"

I am a new believer, and I have read the Bible for the first time. From what I have read, most Christian churches fall short of the commandments of God. Yours is the first and only church I have found that agrees with all I have read and believe to be the truth. I am looking for a church here in the Colorado area I might attend. Can you help me find a real Bible-believing church here?

Internet

### "Fantastic Radio Broadcasts"

Thank you for the fantastic radio broadcasts (WBEN/930 AM). The United Church of God certainly has been given the gift to teach. You never compromise the message, but you never offend either, and the presentation makes the subject matter so interesting.

Buffalo is predominantly Catholic and your quoting from the *Catholic Encyclopedia* is a real attention getter. As a matter of fact, our program comes immediately after theirs on Sunday mornings. Thank you again for all your hard work and the great broadcasts. I am learning from them too!

New York

### "Helping Me Understand the Bible More"

I'm 19 years old and from Kentucky, and I've been reading your *Good News* magazine and books for a little while. I've really enjoyed reading them, and they're helping me understand the Bible more. I would appreciate it if you would send me this book: *Why Does God Allow Suffering?*

Kentucky

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

Late in 2004 we were again given the unusual opportunity to purchase selected books from the estate of another deceased minister. We shipped just over 200 volumes to the office, and are now in the process of sorting and shelving them. These additions are mostly in the areas of commentary, chronology and the development of the doctrine of the Sabbath-keeping churches.

The ABC library is available for reference and research. Though the library doesn't lend the books, we invite Church members to come and browse when they are visiting Cincinnati.

Ralph Levy

## Elders Ordained

On Jan. 8, two elders were ordained. Michael Joseph and his wife, Barbara, and Fred Nance and his wife, Lidia, serve in the Lansing, Michigan, area.

## Atlanta Prom Set for March 26

The Atlanta, Georgia, congregation is pleased to announce the sixth annual Atlanta Prom on March 26. The event will be held at the same location as last year, the Grand Ballroom of the Gainesville Civic Center, near Atlanta.

Information about hotels, prepayment discount, senior recognition and directions are available on the Web at [www.ucgatanta.org](http://www.ucgatanta.org).

## Twin Cities Families for God Weekend March 26-27

The Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, brethren invite you to the eighth annual Families for God Weekend and Teen Prom, March 26 and 27 in St. Paul.

The theme is "A House That Can't Be Shaken," taken from Luke 6:48.

Sabbath activities will include Sabbath services, seminars relating to strengthening the family, a potluck and the Family Fun Show.

The Teen Dinner and Prom will be Saturday evening, March 26. Please register for the Teen Prom by March 5.

Sunday activities will include a family gym and swim day. Players and spectators can enjoy volleyball, basketball and racquetball games. There will be a pool available for swimming and even an opportunity to relax in the whirlpool. An exercise area and special kid's area are available. Organized games will be played as well.

Details regarding seminars and speakers for the weekend will be forthcoming.

Housing with brethren will be offered. Reasonable hotel rates are also available.

More information will be available at [www.ucgmpls.org/ffg](http://www.ucgmpls.org/ffg) or contact Gary and Gale Black at [gary\\_black@ucg.org](mailto:gary_black@ucg.org) or call (651) 769-8802.

## More Members Needed to Distribute Brochures

Since three new brochures were made

available to brethren in the United States in the December *United News*, 75 new brethren have joined the brochure display program. Altogether 25,730 brochures have been sent to brethren involved in the program, along with 462 display units.

These eye-catching "take-one" advertisements contain the following themes: *Why Does God Allow Suffering?*, *Are We Living in the Time of the End?* and *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*. These brochures offer potential readers booklets by the same titles and a subscription to *The Good News*.

Over the years, brochure distribution has proved to be a cost-effective means to reach new people with the message of the gospel. You are welcome to get involved in this distribution effort!

How does the program work? You will be sent a supply of brochures and small, attractive, clear acrylic display units. All you need to do is locate stores and shops in your community willing to display the units on countertops, vending machines or other locations as a free customer service.

Once a display is placed, just return to the store periodically to restock. That's all there is to it! You can order additional supplies anytime. If you're interested, just use the coupon below or contact John LaBissoniere at [john\\_labissoniere@ucg.org](mailto:john_labissoniere@ucg.org)

or [soniere@ucg.org](mailto:soniere@ucg.org) or toll-free at (888) 369-9940 Sunday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time.

John LaBissoniere

## Seminars Announced for Kansas City Young Adults Memorial Day Weekend

The speakers and seminar topics have been announced for the May 27 to 30 Kansas City Young Adults "Extreme Makeover—Christian Edition" event:

- Keynote Address: Doug Horchak, "Raising the Standards for the Next Generation of the Church of God."
- Single Women's Seminar: Marian Sargent and panel, "Female Makeover 101."
- Single Men's Seminar: Doug Horchak and panel, "Male Makeover 101."
- Married Couples Seminar: Dave Johnson, "How to Keep the Romance Alive and Maintain a Healthy Marriage."
- Split Sermons: Dave Johnson and Joel Meeker.
- Final Seminar: Joel Meeker.

## On [verticalthought.org](http://verticalthought.org)

■ New articles posted for February include: "The Nature of Sorrow" by a 15-year-old, "Watch Your Step" and Youth Lesson #9. [verticalthought.org](http://verticalthought.org)

## Featured Links of the Month

■ **Good News Web site.**

[www.gnmagazine.org](http://www.gnmagazine.org)

■ **Anchor:** *A message of hope for those struggling with homosexuality.*

[www.anchorhelp.com](http://www.anchorhelp.com)

If you have any questions or comments, please contact: [webmaster@ucg.org](mailto:webmaster@ucg.org)



# What's New on the Web?

## On [www.ucg.org](http://www.ucg.org)

■ **Compass Check**

See video of home office weekly meeting.

[www.ucg.org/about/homeoffice/compasscheck.htm](http://www.ucg.org/about/homeoffice/compasscheck.htm)

■ **UCG Commentary on This Week's News**

Weekly commentaries by UCG written on world news and trends, from a biblical perspective. Read these and more: "Britain's Binge Drinking—a Mirror of European Culture!"

"God Has a Purpose for Allowing Disasters"

"Why Does God Allow Deadly Disasters?"

"U.S. Supreme Court's Impact on Morality"

[www.ucg.org/commentary/](http://www.ucg.org/commentary/)

■ **Current World News & Trends**

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

[www.ucg.org/worldnews/](http://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](http://ucg.org) updates. Sign up today!

[www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm](http://www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm)

## On [vcmagazine.org](http://vcmagazine.org)

■ The February *VCM* includes "John: An Apostle of Godly Love," "Cliff-Hanger," "Never Let Your Guard Down!" and "Faith."

[vcmagazine.org](http://vcmagazine.org)



**Periodicals Postage Paid** at Milford, Ohio, and at additional mailing offices

## I Want to Be Part of the Brochure Display Program!

New brochures have been added to the Brochure Display Program in the United States. If you would like to be involved in distribution in your community, just mail this coupon to John LaBissoniere, brochure program coordinator, or e-mail him at [john\\_labissoniere@ucg.org](mailto:john_labissoniere@ucg.org) or call toll-free at (888) 369-9940 Sunday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern time.

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 Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Return to:**  
 GN Brochure Program, c/o John LaBissoniere, 198 McDeerman Road, Jacksboro, TN 37757

