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# United News™

News of the United Church of God, *an International Association*

Vol. 11, No 3

www.ucg.org

March/April 2005

## News At a Glance

### New Feast Sites Set for Jordan, French Riviera

A new Feast site has been announced for Jordan, and the French site will be on the Riviera this year. Listings of the Feast of Tabernacles sites around the world can be found starting on page 9.

### ABC Student Body Leaders Announced

The Ambassador Bible Center student body leaders for 2005 were



ABC leaders: back row, Mark Freeman, Aaron Blue; middle row, Anne Dungan, Jonathon Loo, Leigh Carlson, Alaina Sanders, Jessa Moser, Emmanuel Gomez, Tonia Hamilton, Jennifer Moen; front row., Jerome Stam (treasurer), Caleb Froedge (president) and Heather Beyer (secretary) (photo by Clarissa de Campos)

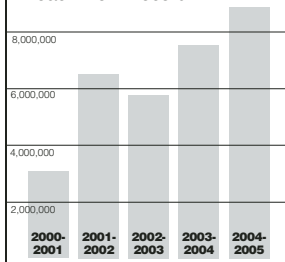
announced Feb. 17 by Roy Holladay. President Holladay reminded the students that these positions were provided so that they might grow in learning how to serve others.

Caleb Froedge was selected as student body president (an office formerly known as student body representative). His job involves leading the student

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### United Statistics

Good News Print Promotions Reach New Record



## Council to Choose New President May 12

During the Council of Elders meetings in San Antonio, Texas, Feb. 28, the Council addressed, as required in the Bylaws, the issue of affirming President Roy Holladay to continue serving for another three years. The Council chose to make a change in that office and implemented a process to select a new president, to be concluded by May 12.

"Now, as we near the 10-year mark in the history of United, we have a prevailing sense that we are at a significant moment, and that we stand on the threshold of 'performing' in a more effective way than ever," wrote Chair-

man Clyde Kilough, on behalf of the Council Feb. 28. "But we also have a sense that rising to that next level will require a certain type of innovation and implementation of fresh ideas.

"As part of our commitment to positive change, we as a Council are redefining what we—and the Church at large—expect of a president in the coming years . . .

"An important task for the Council lies ahead. We must prayerfully consider and select a new president. The challenges facing the president are numerous and the demands are high. We are

not making this decision hastily, and we ask you to join us in heartfelt prayer and fasting for God's guidance and that His will be done," Mr. Kilough wrote.

Mr. Kilough traveled to the home office to hold a staff meeting March 4 and to answer individual questions.

### High Regard for Roy Holladay

The Council expressed appreciation to the current president. "All of us on the Council possess high regard for Mr. Holladay. His integrity, diligent work ethic, humility, dedication to God's peo-

ple and the serving heart of a pastor all speak well of him and his achievements. He has been a steady hand at the helm of United for three years. As a testimony to his character and with our gratitude, Mr. Holladay has gracefully accepted the decision of the Council and will help ensure a smooth transition. We collectively thank God for the dedicated service Mr. Holladay and his wife, Norma, have provided—and will continue to provide—for the people of God."

See page 3 for more reports from the Council of Elders meetings. **UN**

## Youth Corps Announces Five Projects



United Youth Corps volunteers are needed to help at camps like the ones in South Africa (left) and Kenya (right)

by Joel Meeker

The United Youth Corps is pleased to announce international service projects for 2005. Five projects are included in the program this year, offering volunteers the chance to serve at Church youth camps in the Philippines, Jamaica, Ghana, South Africa and Kenya.

The Youth Camp in the Philippines runs from May 22

to June 2. Youth Corps participants would need to arrive on May 20 and leave no earlier than June 3. They will serve on the staff of the camp as counselors or activity instructors.

Camp activities include many of the same kinds of activities offered at other church camps. In addition to Christ-

See "Youth Corps," page 5

## Festival Team Meets at Home Office Feb. 8-9

"I found this Festival Coordinators conference to be one of the best I have ever attended," said Richard Pinelli, Ministerial Services operation manager. "It was very positive."

"The meetings enabled the administration and the coordinators to discuss their respective team roles in bringing the Feast of Tabernacles—the most important convention on earth—to God's people from year to year," said Doug Horchak, coordinator of the Festival team.

"The purpose of the meeting was to bring all U.S. coordinators together, along with others involved in Festival operations, to discuss the details of how we can work together to make the Feast the best possible in each area," said Mr. Horchak. "We discussed the details of organization, activities, Church services and budgeting."

Future planning for U.S. Feast sites was also discussed. Charles Melear, UCG conference planner, updated the group on the site planning for each area over the next two to eight years.

Festival coordinators also volunteered to update the *Festival Coordinator's Manual*, to develop guidelines for Feast site Web sites, to develop a process for assessing the Feast at each site annually and to write articles and update the feature codes for the *Festival*

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## "Seize the Vision: The Next Decade and Beyond" to Be the Theme of GCE Annual Meeting

■ Planning for 10th anniversary Annual Meeting of the General Conference of Elders requires much prayer.

by Larry W. Greider

In Acts 15, the first-century Church held a conference in Jerusalem. This enthusiastic meeting ended with a broader understanding of God's mind and the commission given to the Church.

The UCGIA has a modern version of the ministerial conference, and in our age, hundreds of elders review important documents, budgets and plans and

ballot on participants to serve on our governing council.

In 2005 we have reached our first decade, and we celebrate this renaissance with the theme of "Seize the Vision: The Next Decade and Beyond." May 14 through 16 promises to be another time of great camaraderie and fellowship as hundreds of elders and many of their wives will be traveling to the Holiday Inn Eastgate in Cincinnati, Ohio, to celebrate this milestone.

Delegates from around the world, several with translators, will listen attentively and offer their insights and support to help accomplish the goals and objectives of the Church in the next fiscal year.

Many Church members in the sur-

rounding area, including current ABC students, are expected to crowd the ballroom for the Sabbath sermons, picked up via telephone hookup and cybercast throughout the United States and Canada and anywhere else that can accommodate the time zone.

This year, the president (Roy Holladay) and the new president will give split sermons focusing on the roles and responsibilities of the annual General Conference of Elders and stating the challenges and opportunities we will face during the upcoming year.

Tying the sermons to the purpose and goal of the GCE is new this year, and we expect them to shed more light to

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## News At a Glance

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assembly every Thursday, coordinating the various committees and interfacing with the ABC administration.

Heather Beyer was chosen as secretary and Jerome Stam, as treasurer.

Members of the Social Activities Committee are \*Emmanuel Gomez, Tasha Franke, Anne Dungan, Stella Helterbrand and David Peabody (\* denotes committee chairs).

The Service Projects Committee includes \*Leigh Carlson, Matthew Bates, Bobbie Bauer and Cody Kitts, with \*Alaina Sanders handling the card projects.

Kitchen Care Committee includes \*Tonia Hamilton, \*Anne Dungan, Miles Wilson and Rochelle Boyce.

ABC Message Board is being handled by \*Jennifer Moen, Katrina Beyer and Nancy Fox.

ABC Times will be produced by \*Aaron Blue and Tia Franke, with the ABC Web page assigned to \*Jonathan Loo and Jennifer Stoner.

The ABC music representatives are \*Jessa Moser, Matthew Bates and Danielle Novak.

ABC technical support is being handled by \*Mark Freeman, Matt Lucas, Jessa Moser and Tasha Franke.

## Elders Ordained in San Jose

Two men were ordained as elders in the San Jose, California, congregation on the Sabbath of Feb. 12.

The men and their wives are Fred and Sue Crow and Tim and Maryse Pebworth.

## Twin Cities Plans Families for God Weekend and Teen Prom

The Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, brethren invite you to the eighth annual Families for God Weekend and Teen Prom, March 26 and 27. This special event will be held at the elegant Riverfront Radisson hotel in downtown St. Paul. The Sabbath activities include services, Teen Prom, inspiring seminars to strengthen the family and the Family Variety Show in the evening.

The Teen Dinner and Prom will be Saturday evening, March 26. Come and enjoy an evening of elegance. This exceptional event is offered at \$27 per person or a maximum of \$54 for a family.

Details regarding the weekend, housing, and registration are available on line 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)

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# Good News Television Program Successfully Completes Goal

The *Good News Television* program officially began in February 1999 when the Council of Elders approved its programming as a public-access television program. Earlier versions of the program date back to 1994.

From February 1999 to February 2005, the 18-member crew has participated in taping 103 half-hour programs during 26 Sundays. The program has

been mainly sponsored by the Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation, with additional sponsorship coming from the Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation.

From the beginning, the goal of the *Good News* program has been to contribute to the overall effort by the United Church of God in preaching the gospel about the soon-coming Kingdom of God, via public-access television.

### "Feast," continued from page 1

#### Planning Brochure.

Mr. Horchak was recently named coordinator of the Festival team. "My goal in working with the Feast coordinators is to foster a 'team' approach to what we do in selecting quality, affordable venues for the Feast—coupled with the organization and methodology we use to provide this most important convocation of the year for God's people at those sites.

"This will involve increased communication and involvement from our

coordinators, but I believe it will bring about a more unified approach that reflects the principles of cooperation and spiritual synergy that are foundational to the very government that the Feast announces and points us to."

What is the most important thing members could do to make the Feast coordinator's job easier and help make the Feast better?

"Probably strive to understand the complexity of the role of the coordinator, and communicate," said Mr. Horchak. "Yet, it should be mentioned that the coordinator's role is one of service

The program grew from being a small regional public-access program, which aired on a handful of stations in the upper Midwest in early 1999, to airing programs coast to coast on more than 75 stations, in 21 states, by early 2005.

Telephone calls from viewers have increased from a few dozen a month to the mid-200s a month during this time. Thousands of callers have responded to

request *The Good News* magazine and booklets that have been offered on the programs. Approximately 5,000 pieces of literature have been requested by callers to the *Good News* program.

### Final Taping

The final taping at the Rockford, Illi-

See "GNTV," page 3

and leadership. They are open to the suggestions and comments of the members that will enable them to work with other staff and volunteers to make the Feast experience a more meaningful one for all of God's people."

Plans are to have the Festival team meetings annually. Having the meetings in February works well, Mr. Horchak said, since a few of the coordinators each year attend the RCMA professional conference organization meetings in January. They can then report to the rest of the team what they learn.

Attendees at the conference includ-

ed past and present U.S. Feast coordinators Mike Blackwell, Todd Carey, Mike Hanisko, Dave Myers, Larry Neff, Steve Nutzman, Harold Rhodes, Britt Taylor, David Treybig, Larry Walker (via phone), Robin Webber and Mark Winner. Tony Wasilkoff also attended, representing Canada. In addition to those already mentioned, attending all or portions of the meetings were Dave Evans, Roy Holladay, Tom Kirkpatrick, Gerald Seelig, Peter Eddington, Mike Bennett and Steve Myers (special music coordinator, by telephone). **UN**

### "GCE," continued from page 1

help us all appreciate the importance of the meetings that will begin after the Sabbath has ended.

Delegates can also participate in the Elder's Forum prior to the conference for lively discussions that often center on the upcoming proposed amendments to our documents or discuss other areas of focus. While everyone on the forum doesn't always see things exactly alike, we see the same spirit exhibited in Acts 15:7. In the end, our goal is to achieve peace and harmony and a determined effort to move unitedly forward to accomplish the great commission.

### God's Will Be Done

You also have a vital part to play. We might not all be ordained elders, but we are all a part of the Body of Christ and each one individually should take ownership of the responsibility entrusted to

the Church. Please pray for God's will to be done and that His wisdom and peace will be showered on all. We acknowledge the need for God's blessing in every way to supply the financial and spiritual needs of His work on earth.

### Workshops

This year the GCE task force, which is planning the conference in conjunction with the chairman and the Council of Elders, has suggested a number of workshops for elders and wives to take place on Monday, May 16. These informative sessions will give elders a unique opportunity to sharpen their skills and put new tools in their "tool boxes."

Workshops are designed to be "some assembly required." Questions and challenges will be posed so that elders can work together to suggest solutions or identify potential concerns or focus areas. Skilled facilitators will then help

bring about godly consensus during the meetings.

This year, workshops will include:

- "Communication—a Vital Ingredient for Happy Successful Marriages" by Gary Antion, Jerold Aust and Steve Myers.
- "Working With Young Adults" by James Capo, Darris McNeely and David Treybig.
- "Vision for the Generations" by Doug Horchak, Andy Burnett and Harold Rhodes.
- "Parenting Nuts and Bolts" by Ken Treybig, Larry Salyer and Gerald Hoyer.
- "Culture Warfare and the Church" by Larry Greider, Ralph Levy and David Register.
- "Womanly Friendships—Stirring Up Love and Good Works" by a women's panel coordinated by Judy Servidio.
- "Extreme Makeover: Computer

March/April  
2005  
Vol. 11, No. 3



**United News**  
News of the United Church of God, an International Association

*United News* (ISSN 1088-9020) is published monthly except April and October by the United Church of God, an International Association, 555 Technecenter Drive, Milford, OH 45150. © 2005 United Church of God, an International Association. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited. Periodicals Postage paid at Milford, Ohio 45150, and at additional mailing offices. Canada Post publications mail agreement number 1487167.

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President: Roy Holladay

Scriptural references are from the New King James Version (© 1988 Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers) unless otherwise noted.

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# Council of Elders Prepares for New Fiscal Year

by Doug Johnson

The historic city of San Antonio, Texas, hosted this round of Council of Elders meetings. The first day, Feb. 25, was filled by reports from the president and operation managers and detailed analysis of the 2005-06 Strategic Plan, Operation Plan and Budget.

Chairman Clyde Kilough introduced Church President Roy Holladay to initiate the quarterly operation reports to the Council.

## President's Report

Mr. Holladay's report took a three-year view on progress since his installation in May 2002. He organized the presentation around the eight mandates given to the president by the Council and detailing of accomplishments, projects and events.

The eight mandates are:

- Continue to promote, evaluate and improve the Christ-Centered Servant Leadership Program (since renamed "Godly Leadership Program") throughout the Church. Actions taken include presentations to the home office staff, management discussion on implementation, regular meetings of the Godly Leadership task force, presentations to all three sessions of the Leadership Training Program and Council approval of the task force report and its recommendations.

- Work with the Council, Media/Communications Committee and the media operation manager on implementation of Internet resolutions, developing broadcast media plans and evaluating media effectiveness. Two employees, Aaron Booth and Clay Thornton, work in this area; media output is regularly reviewed; and numerous projects (most notably funding of a new media center at the home office) have

been accomplished or are underway. Bids from architects on the media center project are being solicited, with the intent to see construction finished by this year's Feast of Tabernacles.

- Work with the Council, the Education/Ministerial Services Committee and the Ministerial Services operation manager to develop and execute ministerial policy. DVD and cassette tapes of sermons have been distributed; the Leadership Training Program has been in place for three years; a proposal was submitted to the Eli Lilly Foundation seeking funding for a pastoral excellence program (the request was denied, but internally-funded implementation of portions of its recommendations can proceed); and, a historical first for the United Church of God and its predecessor, the administration developed an employee retirement policy approved by the Council.

- Promote unity within the Church, ministry and home office. This has been emphasized by focusing on humility and other principles of good human relations in regular meetings with staff and the managerial team, "Compass Checks" weekly (taped for Web site distribution) and communication to Church members.

- Build the image of the Church with the general public. Several approaches have been taken here, including various means of proclaiming the gospel message and media training for home office personnel.

- Develop assessment tools for analyzing the effectiveness and efficiency of all Church projects, programs and personnel. Numerous avenues for feedback are in place, including exit surveys for the United Youth Camp program, Feast of Tabernacles and ABC. Annual evaluations for officers, ministers and all employees add to the package.



Council of Elders meets in San Antonio, Texas (photos by Peter Eddington)

- Continue a regular presidential letter regarding the accomplishments of UCGA. Every other week either a president's letter, home office update or letter from the Council chairman is sent out.

- Give a quarterly report and analysis on the state of the Church (to the Council). This has been done regularly.

In addition, Mr. Holladay listed a number of accomplishments or milestones from the last three years. They include:

- Initiation of the Good Works Program.
- First Education Conference for coordinators of major educational programs in UCG.
- Fiscal responsibility and financial reserves policy (the goal of 10 weeks' income operational reserve has been reached).
- Purchase of property adjacent to the home office.

- Substantial increase in number of donors and coworkers (who supply approximately 9 percent of the Church's income).

- Visits to numerous congregations in the United States and six other countries.

- LifeNets connection—developed a pattern to dovetail Church efforts with LifeNets and clear up some misunderstandings about that connection.

- Local church building policy establishment.

- *Vertical Thought* magazine published (changed from *Youth United*, which was an online magazine only).

- Establishment of a Festival planning team. Doug Horchak has been named coordinator.

- Hymnal supplement was developed to use with earlier hymnal.

- Development of procedures manual for home office employees in progress.

- Employee Web site developed.
- ABC library expanded with donations from two estates.

- Updated job descriptions for all home office employees.

- First Challenger II program (focusing on rock climbing) held in Arizona.

Mr. Holladay added his impression that the Church could be on the verge of a breakthrough in accomplishing God's work. The growth of the Internet is an established fact of our world, and the Church is poised to benefit from it. We currently have seven official public Web sites, in addition to two internal ones (employee and ministerial). Plans are to add up to four more within the next fiscal year. A new section in *The Good News* magazine, titled "God, Science and the Bible," is designed to give current information dealing with evolution, proof of the Bible and related topics. Ongoing evaluations of current approaches will add to the efforts to reach this world with the message of the Kingdom of God.

## Treasurer's Report

Overall, current levels of income and expense are within less than one percent variance from budget projections for this fiscal year to date. The contrast to the financial difficulties experienced in the late 1990s is marked. Management of cash reserves has reached the goal of 10 weeks' income. A culture of fiscal restraint has been successfully established in the Church. Proper and balanced support of needs is functioning. Employee remuneration is at reasonable levels, with a new retirement policy in place for the first time ever.

Two developments are worth noting separately. Health-care costs for Church employees have, thankfully, been less

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## "GNTV," continued from page 1

nois, studio occurred on Feb. 13 when programs 100 to 103 were taped. Guest presenters were Darris McNeely and Dave Treybig.

The entire *GNTV* crew and their families gathered together after the final program was taped to enjoy some snacks and memories together. A letter of appreciation from Roy Holladay and Peter Eddington was given to each crew member. Crew members expressed satisfaction and appreciation for the accomplishments over the years.

Some may ask, why end a project that has proven to be so successful? It has always been the intent of those involved with the program that when television production began at the home office, local production would cease.

This will prevent duplication of effort in terms of writing, taping, editing, dubbing tapes and mailing programs. The crew also feels this duplication would not be an efficient use of funds. In addition, the soon-to-be-built media center will make use of a state-of-the-art studio that will provide network quality programs.



Some of the busy *GNTV* crew caught on film (others were missing at the time of the photo) (photo by Joe Jacoby)

## Team of Volunteers

The dedicated team of sponsors and the 75-station network will become a part of the forthcoming home office program. So what has been accomplished over the last six years will continue to be a part of the future!

Some of the larger markets where the *Good News* is currently broadcast include Chicago, Illinois; Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island, New York;

San Francisco, California; Tampa, Florida; Hampton Beach, Virginia; and San Antonio and Dallas, Texas. The cost per response of public-access television is quite low because most stations air the programs free of charge.

In addition to the actual studio crew around a dozen, several brethren have

served in data entry to log the literature requests of callers to the toll-free number. A United member in southern California, Art Michaud, and his staff, have been extremely helpful in dubbing and mailing the program tapes to the sponsors around the country. Video editor Galen Morrison edited all 103 programs. Over 75 sponsors distribute the programs to their local public-access stations. So this truly has been a team effort of brethren around the country, totaling 90 Church members.

Enough *Good News* programs have been taped and edited so distribution of these programs will continue into the summer and fall to all the sponsors. It is anticipated that new television programming at the home office-based media center will begin in early fall. As a result, there will be no lag between the Beloit programs and those from the home office.

Approximately 20 pastors and ministers have appeared on the *Good News* program. They include Darris McNeely, Steve Myers, Jerold Aust, Gary Petty, Melvin Rhodes, Robin Webber, Scott Ashley, Dave Treybig, Don Ward, Aaron Dean, Galen Morrison and Steve Nutzman.

## Sponsors Welcome

If you would like to be a local sponsor (someone who supplies the programs to your local public-access station) of the current *Good News* program or the forthcoming home office-based program, please contact John LaBissoniere at (888) 369-9940 or john\_labissoniere@ucg.org.

The *Good News TV* crew wishes to thank Mr. Eddington, Mr. Holladay, Les McCullough and the Council of Elders for their support in this cooperative effort between the home office and local congregations.

Our deep appreciation is extended to the *Good News* crew for their dedication and to the sponsors who have been so faithful in delivering program tapes.

We all know, brethren, that we can do nothing without God. We give thanks to the Creator God for His blessing and encouragement in this endeavor to preach the gospel. We look forward to the upcoming home office-produced television programs that will be shown on public-access stations around the country in the near future.

Steve Nutzman

**"Council," continued from page 3**

than anticipated and budgeted for in the fiscal year to date. This can change rapidly, of course, but is a welcome development from more than one vantage point.

Secondly, the Good Works Program is at this point fully funded, meaning all requested projects are paid for, with a small surplus awaiting assignment. Thanks are due to all who have responded so generously to the needs of their brethren around the world.

**Media and Communications Report**

Peter Eddington brought an impressive list of statistics to the Council on the achievements in this fiscal year. They include:

- *Good News* circulation remains steady at around 412,000 copies. With ongoing renewals coming in at about 25 percent, this still represents about 100,000 new subscribers every year replacing those who decide not to renew their subscriptions.

- The subscriber development area will soon test an approach new for us: sending a letter to some of our past non-renewed subscribers to see if they would like to receive the magazine once more. This is a common practice for many magazines, but one we have never tried.

- *Bible Study Course* enrollment stands at just under 5,500, with almost 3,300 graduates enrolled in the 12-month sermon tape program. Another 3,200 audiotape "graduates" have requested either a subscription to *World News* and *Prophecy*, regular sermon tapes from the nearest congregation or contact with the nearest UCG pastor or congregation.

- We have passed the 3 million mark in booklets published. *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*, our 21st booklet, will shortly replace *What Is Your Destiny?* (our first booklet) as the most requested piece of literature we offer.

- Over 11,300 responses to *Good News Radio* have been received. We are now on satellite radio—XM 170 on Sundays at 8:30 a.m., immediately following Dr. James Dobson's program.

- The redesigned Internet sites hosted over 330,000 visitors in one recent month (January 2005). The trend is a healthy increase.

- Cable-access TV continues to pull in responses at a favorable cost per response. The Beloit-produced program has recorded its last session, with new programming tapes lasting throughout this year. In Cincinnati, plans are well underway for construction of the new media center, to be located on the second floor above the mail room. A great deal of "in front of the camera" experience by many associated in past years with the Beloit, Wisconsin, and Portland, Oregon, production teams will no doubt prove its worth shortly in the new center in the home office.

- *World News* and *Prophecy* circulation has shot to over 30,000, more than a 46 percent increase in the last year.

- Levels of coworkers and donors have reached the highest levels ever in UCG (6,178 donors and 2,689 coworkers), up 17 percent and 16 percent over last year, respectively. About 9 percent of

the income of the United Church of God comes from these individuals, who are not Church members.

- *Vertical Thought* (the new youth magazine) has reached a print run of 17,000 (the initial run was 5,000) in less than one year. Nearly two thirds of those subscribers have no affiliation with the Church.

**Ministerial Services Report**

Richard Pinelli expressed his appreciation for the "overall positive trend" in the churches in the United States (his direct area of responsibility). While there will always be challenges when dealing with human beings and human nature, the Church level of stability is good. He brought with him a seven-page list of "strengths of the United Church of God," gleaned from U.S. pastors and regional pastors. These range from appreciation for protection of doctrinal purity and Church governance structure, to accountability at all levels, to openness, to increased service opportunities across the board, to focusing on helping youth "catch the vision" of our beliefs, to honesty in financial planning and projections, to accessibility and willingness of Church leadership to listen. Here are a few of the comments:

- "We have established a system for protecting and preserving the doctrinal truths we deeply believe. At the same time, our system allows for sincere questions to be brought forward and honestly considered. The fact that numerous individuals are involved in the process also protects us from one person's ideas being forced upon all of us. We even have a process established for changing a doctrine if the need ever arises. In addition, all of this is done in the bright light of day so every Church member can understand the process."

- "Our governmental structure allows for considerable freedom while maintaining unity and order."

- "There is an increased appreciation for accountability at every level."

- "We get a lot less propaganda and a lot more honesty than we used to get."

- "Administrative checks and balances."

- "Broad base of pastoral and local ministry."

- "Strong/deep foundation of media (booklets, publications, study papers)."

- "Consistent and strong financial base (membership and coworkers)."

- "A balanced spirit."

- "A strong and growing international presence."

- "A willingness to acknowledge weaknesses and mistakes and a desire to correct them."

- "UCG is large enough to have a variety of talents, media efforts, programs and activities—large enough to have effective team efforts and large enough to reach much of the world."

- "We don't have doctrines that cannot be proven from the Bible."

- "Leaders are accessible, approachable and responsive."

- "The commitment of our members. They have been through a lot in the past 10 years . . . We should never take them for granted."

- "We have a core group of elders who love the truth and are passionate to preach the gospel."

- "We have a great core of young adults who see the vision of the Kingdom of God."

Mr. Pinelli noted several updates, among them:

- About seven or eight transfers in the U.S. ministry are expected this year.

- Plans are to hire three new ministers this spring.

- Two pastors have requested retirement within the next two years (both will be 70 by then).

- Some changes have occurred in responsibilities overseen by his office. John Cafourek will replace Dennis Luker as coordinator of the Focused Education module. Larry Greider will coordinate Youth Education, succeeding Doug Horchak. Mr. Horchak will head up the new Festival planning team.

- Two new Feast sites will appear in 2005 in North America—Wildwood, New Jersey (replacing Hagerstown, Maryland); to be replaced in 2006 by a Chesapeake Bay site) and Kingston, Ontario. We hope to offer Anchorage, Alaska, as a site again in 2007.

- A new round of three-day ministerial conferences will begin in March 2005. The theme will be "Developing Spiritual Maturity," and the focus will be on developing greater levels of people skills and speaking skills. Approximately 11 to 12 of these conferences will be conducted across the United States within the next 18 months or so. The sessions will be taped for those international areas that would like to have the material.

- One-day "leadership mini-confer-

presented to all the elders for consideration at this year's General Conference of Elders, to be held May 14 to 16 in Cincinnati.

Aaron Dean (chairman of the Council committee on Strategic Planning and Finance) moderated the discussion on the proposed Strategic Plan for 2005-06. He called the Council's attention to the committee's recommendation that a focus be formally added to the plan regarding a sense of urgency in doing God's work. This will take the form of revised wording, an additional value statement and an additional strategic issue.

Les McCullough compared the current sense of immediacy to past levels in the Church, and agreed this step was needed in the Strategic Plan. Richard Thompson concurred, stating that members have spoken to him about their desire to see an overall sense of excitement in fulfilling our commission, "like it used to be."

There was general agreement on the wisdom of including this concept, and attention turned to hammering out details of wording and placement in the document itself (which will be sent to all elders as part of the "Call and Notice" packet for the General Conference). Mr. Dean will return to the Council Sunday with suggested revisions, based on today's input, for the Council's further consideration.

President Holladay led the discussion on the Operation Plan proposal for the next fiscal year. He stressed that there

hopes to capitalize on the talents and experience of many who have contributed to the Beloit and Portland productions, citing the benefits of their by-now extensive "in front of the camera" experience. Other thoughts include calling in the services of support personnel (such as camera crews, make-up artists, etc.) as needed, without hiring extra staff for these limited purposes. Either volunteer or contracted labor could be used to fill this need. We will also tap into the experience of our own staff in the Northwest (Howard Davis, an employee of the media operation of the Church), particularly in production of commercial-type messages. Mr. Kubik thanked him for his response.

Dr. Kirkpatrick guided discussion of the proposed budget for 2005-06. His suggestion calls for a budget of \$20.3 million for the fiscal year, up from \$19.5 million for the current year (which ends June 30, 2005). This represents a 4.1 percent increase over the previous budget, but only a 3.3 percent increase over expected income for fiscal 2004-05 (which he anticipates will be \$19.65 million, or a surplus of \$150,000).

He called the Council's attention to a few items in walking through the budget. For one, health care costs did not "spike" upwards, as anticipated based on the previous year's costs. This is a welcome change, but one inherently unpredictable. His proposal calls for a 2.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment for all employees, to be given as a 5 percent raise for the second half of the fiscal year on Jan. 1, 2006. *The Good News*, *Vertical Thought*, *World News* and *Prophecy*, *Good News Radio* and the Internet are areas in which he suggests we could spend more in publicly proclaiming the gospel message of God's Kingdom.

Dr. Kirkpatrick took the Council through the budget suggestions, including some details on international subsidies.

Dr. Kirkpatrick also answered a question raised by Mario Seiglie dealing with a subsidy from the home office, specifically what amounts might be available, explicitly (line item amount in the budget) or implicitly (included in other funding), to support the purchase or construction of local church buildings.

The treasurer responded to that question by expressing how rare it is that circumstances come together in such a way that it makes economic sense and is in conformity with the Council's policy for local congregations to own a building. However, when those circumstances do come together, and the provisions of the policy are met, including a demonstration of the financial feasibility of a proposal from a local congregation that is consistent with the overall best interests of the Church, the home office will assist in the financing of the building.

As the discussion proceeded, most of the Council members expressed agreement with the conclusion that a specific line item in the budget earmarked for local church buildings is not necessary or appropriate, but instead, that the existence of an executive reserve in the budget provides the flexibility for the home office management to give funding help when the elements



ences" for local church leaders will be organized in numerous centers across the country in 2006 as finances permit.

- 54 men and their wives have attended the Leadership Training Program in Cincinnati the last three Labor Day weekends.

- Church attendance in the United States dipped nearly 15 percent from its usual long-term average in December and January, reflecting the difficult winter weather much of the country has experienced.

- The trend of "new contacts" of U.S. pastors may be shifting. In the last three months, U.S. church reports show 130 contacts from those with a Sabbatarian background, and 170 from those without one.

- 26 U.S. pastors now help in answering Internet responses and questions, saving perhaps two or three full-time salaries at the home office.

**Proposals for 2005-06 Strategic Plan, Operation Plan and Budget**

The Council then focused on hammering out details in the material to be

were very few changes from the last Operation Plan. Ministerial Services has budgeted for the above-mentioned three-day conferences, intends to move ahead on plans for a hardbound hymnal and proposes hiring up to three new full-time ministers. Financial operations has no changes of any material consequence in view. Media operations has minor changes—such as replacing audiotapes with MP3 format CDs, and replacing VHS with DVD productions. Circulation increases in *World News* and *Prophecy* (to 50,000) and *Vertical Thought* (to 25,000) are the most noticeable, following the construction of the new Media Center (previously mentioned).

Victor Kubik asked for a clarification on the administration's current thinking on TV production, considering the cessation of the Beloit-based cable-access TV programs, the continuation of the Northwest TV production centered in Portland, and the construction of the media center, with its increased capacity for video production on-site in Cincinnati.

Mr. Eddington answered that he

See "Council," page 19



# News From Around the World

## Hall Inaugurated in Jalpa de Mendez, Mexico

by Reba Walker

On the Sabbath of Jan. 29, 2005, we were privileged to see the fulfillment of a dream! Just after United Church of God was initiated in Mexico, a piece of property was purchased in the small town of Jalpa de Mendez in the state of Tabasco with the hope of constructing a building for services. But there were too many other more important things to be done before we could even think about constructing a building.

Finally after about five years, as funds became available, the project was started. The design and plans were drawn up by the pastor of the San Luis Potosi congregation, Adan Langarica, with suggestions from Larry Roybal, the office manager for Mexico.

The members donated their time and abilities, and the construction was under way with the local pastor, Enrique Granados, overseeing the project. Very slowly over the years, little by little the building was added to. Thanks to a very generous donation from the Phoenix, Arizona, congregation, pastored by Randy Schreiber, the project was able to be completed.

There were 87 people in attendance for the inauguration of the hall, with visitors from Mexico City, Monterrey and the United States, as well as the local Jalpa congregation. The event began with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and comments by Leon Walker, regional director for the Spanish area, and Mr. Roybal.

We were then all invited into the hall to see the end result of the years of work. It is a small hall, with tile floors, air conditioning and space for about



The new meeting hall in Jalpa de Mendez, Mexico; right, Larry Roybal and Leon Walker prepare to cut the ribbon (photos by Leon Walker and Ricardo Ortega)

100, plus a kitchen area and the possibility of adding another floor should there be a need. It is also equipped to be able to receive the cybercast that is regularly sent from Monterrey. Ricardo Ortega, an employee of the Church's office in Monterrey, came down to install all the technical equipment and make sure that everything was in working order.

Services began at 11 a.m. with an inspiring song service where the members expressed their praise and thankfulness to God. Pablo Dimakis, pastor of Mexico City, conducted this part of the services. This was followed by a sermonette and announcements from

Mr. Roybal followed by the sermon given by Mr. Walker.

After the formal services were completed, those in charge of lunch, under the direction of Mr. Granados, changed the hall into a dining area by setting up tables so that we could share the delicious meal prepared for us and continue with our fellowshiping.

It was truly a day to remember. It is hoped that with United having ownership of a hall, it will be possible to register the Church here in Jalpa and, by being registered in Tabasco, be able to register all the congregations throughout the country. **UN**

unteers are needed for the staff.

The Youth Camp in Ghana will be held in mid-August in the region of Kumasi in central Ghana. The exact dates have yet to be finalized. Participants will assist as staff in conducting a youth camp for older UCG teens in Ghana. Ministers will be the administrators of the camp. Youth Corps volunteers will serve as activity coordinators and assist as counselors. Local members will also assist in staffing the camp.

Particular attention must be paid to health and hygiene in West Africa. However, if precautions are taken, travel in Ghana is quite safe. Two men and two women volunteers are needed.

The South African Youth Camp will run from Dec. 4 to 11, 2005. Volunteers will need to arrive by Dec. 2 and leave no earlier than Dec. 12. Volunteers will act as group leaders and counselors during the day and be responsible for guys' or girls' sleeping arrangements in the evening.

The camp will be held at Glenmore Ecoventures on the coast of the Indian Ocean, about 100 miles south of Durban. Activities will include snorkeling, surfing (riding the waves in a white-water raft), sea kayaking and swimming.

Other activities include abseiling (rappelling), mountain biking, volleyball and archery. The weather will be warm and humid, since December is the beginning of the summer in the southern hemisphere. Interested volunteers may also include a visit to one of South Africa's famous game parks, for an unforgettable photo safari.

The Kenyan Youth Camp will take place Dec. 18 through 30, 2005, at Lake Naivasha. Activities will include bicycling (beginner), hiking, basketball (beginner), volleyball, soccer, Christian Living, basic auto shop, crafts and sewing, in addition to a wildlife game drive and a course on health and hygiene. Youth Corps participants will act as counselors and activity staff during the camp.

Particular attention must be paid to health and hygiene in East Africa. However, if precautions are taken, travel in Kenya is quite safe. Two men and two women volunteers are needed.

To view and download fact sheets and an application for any of these projects, visit the United Youth Corps Web site at [www.ucgyouth.org/youthcorps/](http://www.ucgyouth.org/youthcorps/). For specific questions, contact Youth Corps Projects Coordinator Joel Meeker at [joel\\_meeker@ucg.org](mailto:joel_meeker@ucg.org). **UN**

## International News At a Glance

### Isle of Man Holds Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting of United Church of God – Isle of Man, a charity registered on the Isle of Man, took place after the Sabbath service Jan. 29.

Due to illness and an accident, only four local members were able to be present. Also attending were David Fenney, the pastor, and his wife, Barbara.

The chairman's report was presented by David Payne, and it highlighted the continued efforts of the congregation to complete the distribution of *Good News* brochures to every address in the Isle of Man phone book.

David Payne was voted in as the new treasurer, Paul Howard takes on the role of chairman and Philip Perry remains secretary. In other business, a budget for 2005 was set and child protection issues were discussed.

Plans for this coming year include the completion of the brochure mail drop and four quarterly open-house Sabbath services to which potentially interested individuals on the *Good News* mailing list could be invited.

Working with the mailing list and developing a closer relationship with interested potential members was identified as the focus for the work of the Church on the Isle of Man for 2005.

Paul Howard

requesting the *Bible Study Course*. Actually, the person requested six copies for a Bible study group he is a part of!

Also 120 letters were sent to subscribers in the Montreal, Quebec, area to let them know about the return visit of Joel Meeker. Mr. Meeker will be in Montreal on March 5 to conduct morning and afternoon services in both English and French. A similar visit was a great success last year.

Incoming Canadian mail for January marked the sixth consecutive month of receiving over 1,000 pieces of mail. Also, 41.7 percent of January's mail was from e-mail or Web site responses.

Anthony Wasilkoff

### Canadian Good News Renewals

One of the major efforts for 2004 was a renewal effort for *The Good News* magazine in Canada. For the first time in our history, we sent renewal letters to subscribers who received the *GN*.

The end result is that of the 5,460 letters sent to nonwaiting room subscribers, the response rate was just over 40 percent. Of that 40 percent, about three quarters renewed and one quarter cancelled. Those who did not respond to the renewal letter (and the follow-up letter sent in November 2004) or whose mail was returned to us, have been dropped.

Edwin van Pelt

### British Isles' Circulation Announced

Highlights from the UCG–British Isles' circulation report for December, which covers all literature distributed by the Church from Britain, include:

- 838 total letters and other responses received.
- 170 new *Good News* requests received, of which 151 came via the Internet. (A total of 2,162 new subscription requests were received during 2004; 1,250 of them via the Internet.)
- 44 new *Bible Study Course* requests received, for a total of 527 requests throughout 2004.
- 238 other requests for 649 further items of literature, for a total of 5,034 requests for 9,243 items of literature throughout 2004.

At the end of 2004 there were:

- 3,677 total current subscribers to *The Good News*, of which 2,763 are within the United Kingdom and the Isle of Man (3,056 and 2,389 respectively at the end of 2003).
- 268 current students of the *Bible Study Course*.
- 366 current subscribers to *United News*.
- 595 current subscribers to *World News and Prophecy*.
- 248 subscribers to *Vertical Thought*.

### "Youth Corps," continued from page 1

ian Living classes, typically the camp includes workshops such as journalism, cooking and baking, paper and flower card making, public speaking, arts and crafts, carpentry and electricity. Sports activities include riflery, cycling, swimming, soccer, volleyball, table tennis, inline skating and softball.

The second part of the camp includes a five-day climb of Mt. Apo. Mt. Apo is the highest mountain in the Philippines at 10,311 feet. Photos, video and descriptions of the 2004 camp can be found at [www.ucg.org/ph/youth/uyc/2004/](http://www.ucg.org/ph/youth/uyc/2004/). The number of volunteers needed is open.

The Youth Camp in Jamaica runs from Aug. 23 through 30. Participants would need to arrive by Aug. 22 and plan to fly home on Aug. 30. Participants will assist as staff in conducting the camp organized for teens in the Caribbean and from abroad. Youth Corps participants will serve as activity coordinators and lead counselors. Local members will also assist in staffing the camp.

Camp activities include the same kinds of activities offered at other church camps. Three men and two women vol-

### German Statistics Announced

Outgoing mail statistics for 2004 show a total of 34,036 pieces of literature distributed in the German language. In addition to the *Gute Nachrichten* magazine, over 3,000 copies of *Intern* (*United News* in German) were mailed to subscribers. The circulation of *Intern* has increased by 300 percent in the last two years. In addition, more than 4,000 booklets were mailed during 2004. The most requested booklets were *Das Geheimnis Ihrer Existenz* (*What Is Your Destiny?*) and the new *Bible Study Course*.

### Canada Mails Subscriber Development Letter

In mid-February, 2,001 subscriber development letters were mailed across Canada. The letters were mailed on a Wednesday afternoon, and already on Thursday night the Canadian National Office had received a fax from someone

# Home Office Staff Member Travels to Ghana

by Richard Kennebeck

On Nov. 29, 2004, I found myself standing on ground that I had only dreamed I would ever stand on. I was stepping off the plane onto African soil in Accra, Ghana.

My first memory of wanting to go to Africa was around the age of 7. Every Sunday evening my family and I would watch *Wild Kingdom*, which often covered various areas of Africa and its animals. My dad also received the *National Geographic* magazine since the time I was a small child, and I would often look at the pictures of all the exotic locations around the world. Africa, with the diversity of animals, unique cultures and aura of mystery, always intrigued me.

Melvin Rhodes and I went out to lunch together in late February of 2004 while he was at the home office to give Ambassador Bible Center lectures. Over the course of the meal, our conversation turned to his responsibilities in Ghana and West Africa, and I mentioned in passing that I had always wanted to take a trip to Africa.

A couple of months later, Melvin offered to allow me to tag along on his trip to Ghana in November and December. After taking a look at the family budget and talking it over with my wife and the family, I decided to take him up on the offer.

On the Sunday after Thanksgiving, I flew from Cincinnati to Detroit, Michigan, where I met Melvin and continued on to Accra, Ghana. The whole trip,

with a change of planes in Detroit and a several-hour layover in Amsterdam, took just over 24 hours.

During our layover in Amsterdam, we chatted for quite some time with several Americans on their way to the Gulf region who seemed very vague about what they were doing or where they were going. One of them was



Left, Accra Bible study group; above, Agona congregation and their new building; right, in the treetops

especially insightful because he was an American who was Muslim and is married to a Saudi woman.

## Soaking in Ghana

The first impression of Ghana occurred immediately as I stepped off the plane at 8:30 in the evening. The air was heavy as if I had just walked out into the middle of a hot, humid southern Florida day. Since Ghana is located just 4 degrees north of the equator, it is very tropical and humid. Since I had just come from freezing weather in Cincinnati, this was a welcome relief.

In Accra, Melvin held several meetings with local members and held a

Bible study in his room on one of the evenings. Eight people from Accra



attended the Bible study. Melvin has known most of those who attended the study for over 25 years. The Bible study covered repentance, but after the main Bible study, Melvin opened up the meeting for a question-and-answer session. The brethren had many questions that covered everything from health laws to the Kingdom of God.

We then drove to the city of Elmina, which is the location of a large fishing village, the Elmina Castle (which is a World Heritage Monument under UNESCO) and the nearby University of Cape Coast.

Elmina is located on the Atlantic Ocean and has areas that are reminis-

cent of Hawaii, with tall coconut palm trees jutting out over beautiful beaches.

## The View From the Treetops

On the first day while Melvin was having meetings, Richard Dua, the office manager for Ghana, took me to the



Kakum National Park for a canopy walk into the rain forest. On this canopy walk you walk on a rope walkway that is suspended from treetops that are over 200 feet above the rain forest.

Later that day, Melvin, Richard Dua and Adonijah Blay-Meizah, who is the Elmina pastor, and I stopped at a local restaurant to eat the local cuisine of *fu-fu* and *red-red*. After the meal we went over to a nearby gas station that has a *Good News* dis-

brethren using money provided by the Good Works program. While we were looking at a van just across the street from a polling location, I walked over to one of the guards at the site and asked if I could take pictures.

After a bit of discussion between the guard and the polling staff, they said that they didn't have information on what to do if someone wanted to take pictures, so I couldn't take any pictures. But they would be happy to walk us through the voting process.

So the local election supervisor patiently took Melvin and me through the voting procedure and explained each step of the process.

Melvin usually plans his trips to Ghana to coincide with the Ghana National Council meetings. While we were in Kumasi, we attended the pastors' and elders' meetings and the National Council meetings that followed.

Several U.S. members have donated laptops to Ghana, which are prepared for the ministers by home office staff prior to being sent to them. Before and after these National Council meetings,



Melvin Rhodes looks at van being provided to the Church in Ghana through the Good Works Program; Melvin Rhodes, *GN* author/celebrity

I spent time fixing and upgrading these computers and also worked on the office computer. I also spent time training some of the pastors on how to more effectively use their computer and its software. I still had much to do when we had to leave Kumasi for our return trip to Accra.

On the last day of our visit to Ghana, we drove back from Kumasi to Accra. Along the way we stopped near the old WCG church farm to visit a church family that Melvin has known for a long time. We reached Accra in time to do some last-minute bargaining for a carved wooden lion and some trinkets.

After 10 days in Ghana, we flew to London, England, to spend four days visiting England and Wales and then back home.

It was a wonderful experience to meet brethren who live in such a different culture but yet are bound by the same Spirit. I found the Ghanaian people in general, and Church brethren in particular, to be very friendly and warm.

My trip to Ghana was a fantastic journey that I will always cherish and treasure.

For information on the Feast sites in Ghana, you can contact Melvin Rhodes at [melvin\\_rhodes@ucg.org](mailto:melvin_rhodes@ucg.org) **UN**

# Charity Begins at (These) Homes

by Melvin Rhodes

One of the greatest joys of my regular visits to Ghana is also one of the most harrowing: a visit to the Kumasi Children's Orphanage.

I was first introduced to the orphanage by Church members in Kumasi, Ghana's second biggest city. They had been visiting the orphanage on a monthly basis for some time, looking to see how they could help the children there. But most Ghanaians are themselves struggling financially—there was little they could do to make a big difference. They needed outside help.

As this need was brought to my attention, members in my Lansing, Michigan, congregation were setting up a charity specifically to help disadvantaged children like these.

The vision of the foundation, All of God's Children, is to make a meaningful difference in the lives of disadvantaged children around the world. Their mission statement reads: "We believe that children are a precious gift from God to be cherished and nurtured. We provide support and resources that help children to flourish physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually."

The members were inspired by James 1:27, which says that pure religion is to help orphans and widows in their afflic-

tion. In this regard, the charity has focused most of its efforts on helping orphaned children in several different countries, one of which is Ghana.

The foundation has ongoing projects in Mexico, Russia and Ghana. In the orphanage in Ghana, about 75 children are housed in conditions that are very meager. The orphanage does receive some support from the government, but still lacks many of the basic necessities. Through the gifts of All of God's Children, the orphanage was recently able to renovate its bathroom facilities. The charity was aided in this project by members of the UCG Youth Corps who went to Ghana last year and helped out at the orphanage. Plans are underway for a new project to begin later this year.

The charity also assists the Alexandrov Infants' Home in Vladimir, Russia. This orphanage is about 300 miles from Moscow and houses roughly 50 children. During a recent visit to this orphanage to adopt a child, All of God's Children decided to donate funds toward plumbing in the bathrooms and kitchens. It is the goal of the charity to continue to improve the quality of life for children at this and other Russian orphanages through continued support.

In Mexico, they are committed to assisting in the development of a new

orphanage facility on a 17-acre parcel that has been donated for that purpose in Matamoros. When completed, the orphanage will serve over 100 children up to age 18. It will seek to provide vocational training, community service programs and spiritual education for the children.

What's amazing is how far small donations can go to improve the lives of deprived children in poor countries. Money goes a lot further in the third world.

All of God's Children received its 501c tax-exempt designation from the Internal Revenue Service on Sept. 29, 2004. This will enable people donating to the charity to receive a tax deduction for their donations. It is hoped that this will encourage further contributions, which will enable the charity to further help the orphanages, contributing greatly to the improved well-being of the children involved.

The members of the charity's board all donate their time, as do those helping out overseas. This ensures that 100 percent of all donated money actually goes to help the children.

If you would like to help, or would like further information, please write: All of God's Children, 511 South Washington Ave., Lansing, MI 48933, or call (517) 346-7998. **UN**



# Pastor Visits French-Speaking Brethren From Togo, Benin, Cameroon and Rwanda

by Joel Meeker

During the months of January and February, I had the opportunity to visit brethren from the French-speaking areas of Africa—Togo, Benin, Cameroon and Rwanda—as well as meeting with old friends in English-speaking Kenya.

## Togo

I arrived in Togo on Thursday, Jan. 20. The crossing between Ghana and Togo at the Aflao border point went smoothly. This is a place where I have several times been the object of attempts at theft or extortion, so I was thankful to make it across without difficulty.

On arrival at my hotel, I was contacted by Kossi Fiaboé, our deacon in Togo, and we made plans for my two-day stay in Togo. Friday evening we had a three-hour Q&A Bible study with brethren from Togo and some from Benin who made the trip over for the Sabbath.

Many of the questions came from young adults who asked about preparing for marriage, what to look for in a mate and how to find a mate in the Church when we are so few in number in certain areas.

I encouraged them to hold to God's promises, specifically two that had encouraged me when I was single: Proverbs 18:22 and Psalm 84:11. Seeking God's will in faith is the way to find the mate God will choose for us. These young adults were encouraged by these and other scriptures we studied, and I was impressed by their desire to be faithful to God's will.

The next morning I checked out of the hotel early in the morning since we had a very full day planned. On our way to services, Mr. Fiaboé took me to the lot that has been purchased for the construction of a local church hall. Not only is the local congregation outgrowing the room in Mr. Fiaboé's home and in need of a larger facility, but often in Africa permanent church halls are a prerequisite to obtaining official state recognition. We hope this will be of assistance in Togo.

Thanks to the United Church of God's Good Works Program, significant funds have been raised to assist the Togolese brethren in constructing the Church hall. Since my last visit, a wall has been constructed around the lot. This is important to finish before beginning the actual construction in order to prevent construction material from being stolen, as well as to protect the completed structure from burglary.

During services I spoke on overcoming worry and having God's peace. Following services we shared a meal prepared by the ladies of the congregation. Then, while they viewed a video of my previous pastoral trip through the area, I had several counseling sessions and anointed a sick child.

Mr. Fiaboé drove me to the airport for my flight, and we said our good-byes as he dropped me off. When I arrived at the

airline desk, I was informed that even though I had confirmed the flight time, the flight had been rescheduled for 10 the next morning. It was the first of several flight cancellations and delays.

I took a taxi back to my usual hotel, but was informed that there was "no room at the inn." After several phone calls I found another hotel that had room. The hotel had definitely seen better days, but at least there was a vacancy.

When I called at 8 the next morning to confirm the departure time, I was informed that it was now noon. We finally left at 3 p.m.

## Cameroon

Upon arrival in Douala, Cameroon, Sunday evening, I was met at the airport by Mr. Mabout who accompanied me to my hotel. We discussed our plans for my

visit and made some decisions.

Cameroon Airways was experiencing regular strikes and work interruptions due to financial difficulties, so we decided not to take the chance

of the orange trees that were planted. Some of the trees were doing well; but many had not grown well. We plan to continue fertilizing and working with the trees to try to improve their growth rate.

From the Church farm we drove to the site of the Church's new hall that is under construction. I was pleased to see the progress in construction: the walls were finished and plastered. As I write this article the roof is now on the building and other construction is ongoing. After viewing the construction site, we drove on to Mr. and Mrs. Mabout's house, where the Douala congregation is currently meeting.

That evening we had part one of an interactive Bible study on the subject of "Why and How to Study the Bible," followed by a Q&A session and some fellowship time.

The next day both Mr. Mabout and I were sick, so I cancelled the Bible study for that evening, so that we could rest and recuperate. Wednesday we had the second half of the Bible study, followed

enough interest to continue on a regular basis.

Friday morning we drove back to Douala. After checking back into my hotel, I took a taxi to the Air Gabon office to reconfirm my flight to Libreville, Gabon, for the following Sunday. I was informed that my reservation had been canceled. I showed the employee my ticket, complete with confirmation number and seat number. She replied that my reservation had been canceled and that the flight was now full, so I could not be on that flight. There was no way I could get to Gabon and Congo while still respecting the flight schedules for the trip to the brethren in Rwanda.

## Sabbath in Douala

Sabbath morning I checked out of the hotel early and took a taxi to the "promised

land" and the progress of United in East Africa.

## Rwanda

The next day I began the next leg of my trip to Rwanda. Mr. Mundeli, our elder in Rwanda, came to my hotel in Kigali on Wednesday and we finalized plans for the Sabbath. We discussed plans for the future work of the Church in Rwanda, the beginning of construction of a church building in the remote village of Giti (financed in large part by United's Good Works Program), and the counseling that was needed with six people who had requested baptism.

With the extra days I had in Kigali I was able to finish on my laptop computer the next issue of the French *Good News* and send the files by express mail to the home office so that Peter Eddington could provide valuable help with the print-preparation steps of publication. Modern technology makes it possible, with a laptop computer and the needed software, to prepare publications on one side of the world and have them printed shortly afterwards on the other side of the world.

On a beautiful sunny Sabbath day about 50 members (some of the children didn't make the trip this time)



Bible study in Togo; right, Church building under construction in Cameroon; far right, Rwandans watching video and singing

of flying, as we had planned, to northern Cameroon to visit the small congregations in Yaoundé, Cameroon, and Bongor in neighboring Chad. Even if we managed to fly north, there was a good chance we would not be able to make it back in time for my ongoing flight to Gabon.

Instead I decided we should contact the subscribers to *Bonnes Nouvelles* (the French edition of *The Good News*) in the area of the Yaoundé, Cameroon's capital city, and invite them to a public Bible lecture later in the week. Mr. Mabout began contacting them immediately.

Monday afternoon, Mr. Mabout and I drove out to the Church farm plot on the outskirts of Douala. We drove as far as we could, and walked the rest of the distance to the field through several patches of thick tropical undergrowth. Vegetation grows so quickly in the tropics, that thick brush must be cut before each growing season, and in some cases fields must be completely burnt off.

Our field had been cleared by hand and was nearly ready for planting. I was especially interested in the progress of

land." The "promised land" is a small restaurant that also caters meals. I picked up the lunch that had been prepared. Members in France and Missouri often like to offer a meal to our brethren in French-Africa, and I was able to pay for this meal with some of the small gifts that were sent along with me.

We had a morning service, during which I gave a sermon on the Hebrews 6 doctrine of "eternal judgment." After services we went over to check on the progress of the church hall construction before having our lunch together and discussing international news, possible prophetic implications, the national news in Cameroon and the rest of Africa.

On my laptop, I showed several hours of video from other visits in Africa, and we spent the rest of the afternoon together fellowshiping. The heat and humidity were quite oppressive. Even though we were seated, we were all soaked with perspiration throughout the day.

The flight to Kenya was to leave at 11 p.m., but as usual there were delays and we didn't finally leave until 1 a.m. for the four-hour flight to Nairobi. After about three hours' sleep, we arrived.

Since I had a day in Nairobi, I contacted the David Gichuru family to see if we could arrange a visit. David Gichuru is a deacon in the Nairobi congregation of which I was pastor for a few years several years ago. They kindly invited me for dinner on short notice. It was a real joy to see their lovely family again and to get caught up on the news of

by several counseling sessions with members and potential members.

## Yaoundé Public Lecture

Thursday, Mr. Mabout and I started out early in a taxi for the four-hour drive to Yaoundé. Once in Yaoundé, we checked into our hotel and arranged for the meeting room for the public Bible lecture.

Then I had an African-style adventure, getting stuck between floors in the elevator, though thankfully nothing really bad happened.

Four enthusiastic readers attended the lecture. I gave a PowerPoint presentation about the work of the United Church of God around the world and explained the resources that were available in French. I took questions on a number of topics, and we discussed their request to have a church service in Yaoundé. We plan to have Mr. Mabout supervise a trial Sabbath service with a sermon on cassette to see if there is

gathered for services on the shore of Lake Muhazi about an hour's drive out of Kigali. During the genocide of 1994, this now tranquil lake was choked with bodies dumped into it. Now it is the backdrop for services.

Mr. Mundeli translated my sermon from French in Kinyarwanda for the brethren who don't understand French. After services we had several counseling sessions with members for various reasons, including preparation for baptism. We shared a meal prepared by Mrs. Mundeli and other ladies, and then watched the video on my laptop of my previous visit in Rwanda.

Sunday some of the young people from the Church who live in Kigali accompanied me out to the airport, so we had the chance to talk and fellowship a bit more before my flight back to Nairobi.

Before returning home, I traveled four hours by bus from Nairobi to Arusha in Tanzania. This is the location of the United Nations' criminal tribunal for the Rwandan genocide. I was able to get a pass to sit in on two of the ongoing trials (one military and one civilian) of people accused of horrible crimes during the murderous violence of 1994. I hope to use this experience and information in articles in our Church publications. **UN**

# The Road to Huanchaco

■ Have you dreamed of traveling to an exotic, far-off spot for the Feast? A longtime member shares his once-in-a-lifetime experience.

by Jim Smith

In my local church area I have a long-time friend whom we will call "Larry," since that is his name. Every year he keeps the Feast in some new and exotic place far, far away. He invited me to go with him in 2004 and, since I had been to Jekyll Island 28 times, I accepted his offer. We decided to keep the Feast at Huanchaco, Peru.

Have you ever thought about going abroad once in your lifetime to keep the Feast of Tabernacles? This was an unforgettable event for me, and now that I am older and my family has grown up and moved away, I was able to afford to see and feel and hear my brethren who speak another language.

Maybe you, too, will select the most

exciting place you can imagine for the Feast of Tabernacles 2005!

Here are a few guidelines that should make the trip a fond memory for the rest of your life and beyond:

1. *Choose a place that seems to be relatively safe.*

We felt very secure in the village of Huanchaco, where the Festival was held. The place we stayed was a hostel reserved for Church brethren only. It had a high wall all around the compound with barbed wire on top, a restaurant within the walls and a swimming pool and beautiful flower gardens. The place we met for services was also inside the area.

However, the village was safe enough to walk to the beach or to a restaurant at night without any fear. In Peru there was the same feel and look as I had in Escondido, California, when I was there for the Feast of 2003.

2. *Don't rush right home after the Feast is over.* Go to a country that has something special to see and take lots of pictures. Peru has the Pacific Ocean on its western side, just like California does,

and very high mountains on its eastern side.

Larry and I wanted to experience some of the culture of the Incas who ruled South America until the Spaniards swept through the continent in the 16th century. So we made a short flight from Lima to the ancient Inca capital of Cuzco.

Cuzco is 10,500 feet above sea level, so flatlanders need to move slowly at first. From Cuzco we took a train to Machu Pichu, a 600-year-old village on a plateau. Its buildings were all of rocks cemented together with locally made cement long, long ago. This is a world-famous tourist attraction we would have been foolish to have missed.

There were a lot of very fine museums in Lima so we spent several days seeing them. And most fulfilling for me, we attended Sabbath services with the Lima congregation. They recognized us because we were with them at the Feast only a few days earlier.

One family there asked if I have a copy of the supplemental hymnal, and when I said yes, they wanted me to sing one of the hymns for special music. The

people in Peru, no matter what their age, are centered around music in everything they do. Even the little children 4 and 5 years old learn to dance and sing. Everything these people did had to include songs and the children and the adults were so very well behaved! I was proud to be a Christian beside these Christians.

3. *Plan ahead.* Make a plan and have everything happen just as planned. In some foreign countries you need a passport and a visa but in Peru all we had to have was a passport. You can get a passport at a U.S. Post Office and it costs \$85 (see <http://travel.state.gov> for information). I spent one year teaching myself Spanish, and that helped me feel more comfortable because I knew I could order food in a restaurant and ask where the bathroom is.

I brought home Peruvian-made replicas of Inca pottery and paintings of the beach and pier and fishermen at Huanchaco. I bought a photo album when I arrived home and filled it with my favorite pictures of Peru. I have a picture



of a lady in Cuzco who looks to be about 100 years old giving me a kiss on the cheek while I was resting in the main square and that is a treasure to me.

One couple in the Lima congregation took most of Sunday to show us all the special sites in Lima that we could not have known about otherwise. This couple are dear friends to Larry and me now and we use the Internet to continue our friendship with them and their extended family there.

This was a once-in-a-lifetime Feast for me and I now have a special love for my brethren in Peru.

Maybe this has whetted your appetite for keeping a Feast that will give you a new perspective on how our brothers and sisters in Christ live and praise the same God as us. **UN**

## 2005 Festival Fund

To meet Festival expenses throughout the world, U.S. members are asked to send in a 10 percent donation from their expected second tithe total (a tithe of the tithe). **Canadian** members may make a similar donation to the Canadian office.

- Please indicate the amount you are sending in the spaces below.
- Include your personal identification number (PIN) from your latest *United News* or *Good News* label.
- Make your check payable to *United Church of God* and label it "Festival Fund."
- Clip out and enclose the completed form, along with your check, in one of the labeled reply envelopes mailed to you recently from the home office.
- Affix postage and mail.

Your PIN: <b>U</b> _____	Donation Amount Enclosed: \$ _____
Name _____	
Address _____	City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

## 2005 Festival Registration

**United States and Canadian head-of-household members should clip out or copy this form and take it to services on April 9, 16 or 23, 2005.** It should be filled out and given to the Festival advisor in the local congregation.

Members wishing to transfer to a U.S. or Canadian site *from another country* will automatically be accepted; however, please have your pastor contact the home office via e-mail at [USFestival@ucg.org](mailto:USFestival@ucg.org). The information should include the requester's name, the Feast site requested, the number of adults age 20 and over, number of teens and the number of those age 12 and under.

Any member wishing to transfer to a site *outside the United States or Canada* should contact the Festival coordinator of that site directly. Some additional information may be in the *Festival Planning Brochure* to be mailed at the end of April.

Name _____	Home Telephone ( ) _____	Work Telephone ( ) _____			
Address _____	City _____	State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____			
<b>How many in your household will attend?</b>	Number of Adults (over age 20) _____	Number of Teens (ages 13 to 19) _____	Number of Children (ages 12 and under) _____	For those attending FYI classes, please indicate: Kindergarten (ages 5-6) ___ 1st grade (ages 6-7) ___ 2nd & 3rd (ages 7-9) ___ 4th & 5th (ages 9-11) ___	
<b>Where are you planning to attend?</b>	Name of Site (including those transferring internationally) _____			(Automatic transfer approval is expected for all U.S. and Canadian sites except Panama City Beach. Pastors will receive transfer notification by May 28.)	
Number of Single Adults _____	Number of Seniors (age 60 and over; include spouse even if under 60) _____				
<b>Special Needs:</b>	Handicapped Parking [ ] (driver only)	Wheelchair [ ]	Deaf [ ]	Hard of Hearing [ ]	Need Translation (specify) _____

\*\*\*Do Not Mail to Home Office—Contact Local Festival Advisor or Pastor for Registration\*\*\*

## 2005 Feast Sites

- Argentina**  
**Australia**  
Frederick Henry Bay, Tasmania  
Merimbula, New South Wales  
Noosa, Queensland
- Bolivia**  
**British Isles**  
**Cameroon**  
**Canada**  
Kelowna, British Columbia  
Kingston, Ontario  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
St. John's, Newfoundland
- Chile**  
**Costa Rica**  
**Estonia**  
**France**  
**Germany**  
**Ghana**  
**Guatemala**  
**Italy**  
**Ivory Coast**  
**Jordan**  
**Kenya**  
**Malawi**  
**Malaysia**  
**Mexico**  
**New Zealand**  
**Peru**  
**Philippines**  
Baguio City  
Davao City  
Iloilo City
- Portugal**  
**Rwanda**  
**St. Lucia**  
**South Africa**  
George  
Uvongo
- Togo**  
**Tonga**  
**Trinidad & Tobago**  
**United States**  
Bend-Redmond, Oregon  
Branson, Missouri  
Escondido (San Diego), California  
Jekyll Island, Georgia  
Kerrville, Texas  
Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii  
Lexington, Kentucky  
Panama City Beach, Florida  
Steamboat Springs, Colorado  
Wildwood, New Jersey  
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

Additional sites are planned, but most will not encourage transfers.



# The Feast of Tabernacles

In this special supplement are descriptions of Feast sites in alphabetical order by country. More sites may be added, but sufficient information was not available to print in this issue.

The *Festival Planning Brochure* will be mailed at the end of April. It will contain additional site information; a list of housing establishments for U.S., Canadian and some other sites; helpful tips for planning your Feast; and articles on the meaning of the Feast.

On the following pages, the + sign at the beginning of international phone numbers signifies the country code. Dollar amounts are in U.S. currency unless noted otherwise. The Web site [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com) provides up-to-date currency conversion information.

## Argentina

### Mendoza

We again are planning to have the Feast of Tabernacles for Argentina and northern Chile in the beautiful city of Mendoza, Argentina.

Mendoza is in the foothills of the Andes, in the western part of Argentina. It is actually closer to Santiago, Chile, than to Buenos Aires, Argentina. It is about 240 miles from Santiago and can be reached by plane either from Buenos Aires or from Santiago.

We advise brethren from other parts of the world to fly directly to Mendoza.

The members in Chile and Argentina will be housed in the Hotel Ejercito de los Andes, which will also be the location for services. Unfortunately, this hotel is not large enough to accommodate our visitors. However, we have located a four-star hotel nearby, the Hotel Ibis. The cost is \$30 per day for single occupancy or \$15 per day per person for double occupancy. These prices include breakfast.

The rest of the meals you can choose to have with the rest of the local brethren in the Hotel Ejercito de los Andes at very reasonable prices. Lunch or dinner will be just the equivalent of \$4.

You can also choose to stay in other hotels of the same or higher category in the vicinity. However, we recommend the Hotel Ibis because of its nice quality and its closeness to the main hotel where we will have services. All of the brethren who have stayed in this hotel have been very pleased.

To get more information about the hotels, you can contact the Hotel Ejercito

de los Andes at [hotelejercito@nysnet.com.ar](mailto:hotelejercito@nysnet.com.ar) and the Hotel Ibis at [h2161@accor-hotels.com](mailto:h2161@accor-hotels.com).

Temperatures in Mendoza for that time of the year are in the 70s and normally there is no rain during Feast time. Nice summer clothing will be appropriate.

Those of you who choose to attend the Feast in Mendoza will not regret your decision. You will have the opportunity to meet hundreds of your brethren from this part of the world and at the same time enjoy the beautiful surroundings. We will help you as much as possible with your reservations.

We look forward to receiving our visitors. We know this will be a great opportunity for all of us to be together in this part of the world and strengthen one another in God's Festival. There will be translation into English for all of the services.

**Location of Services:** Auditorium of the Hotel Ejercito de los Andes, Mendoza, Argentina.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 8 p.m.

**Reservations:** You do not need to send money for your reservations now, but please confirm that you are coming as soon as you decide. You can e-mail us at [slangarica@unidachile.org](mailto:slangarica@unidachile.org) or write to us at Casilla 10384, Santiago, Chile.

*Saul Langarica*

## Australia

### Frederick Henry Bay, Hobart, Tasmania

The Feast site in Tasmania for 2005

will again be at the Pines Resort, situated on the tranquil shores of Frederick Henry Bay. The resort is located 20 minutes from Hobart, Australia's second oldest capital city, and 10 minutes from Hobart Airport.

Prices for on-site chalet accommodations are \$A90 per night twin share (one bedroom); \$A100 two bedroom two share; \$A120 two bedroom three share; and \$A140 two bedroom four share. Other types of accommodations are available within a 20-minute drive from the venue.

On-site facilities include a spa, sauna, licensed bistro, heated pool, tennis court, BMX bike track and a games room. Golf, horse riding and seven miles of sheltered ocean beach are close by. Within easy driving distance are historic Port Arthur and Richmond Village, both of which have associations with Tasmania's convict past. Weather at Feast time should be fine and cool.

**Location of Services:** The Pines Resort, Surf Road, Seven Mile Beach.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** For those deciding on accommodations at the Pines Resort, bookings can be made by contacting: The Pines Resort, Surf Road, Seven Mile Beach, Tasmania 7170; telephone +61 3 6248 6222; Web site [www.pines-resort.com.au](http://www.pines-resort.com.au).

For further information, contact Barry Williams by e-mail at [bjsmwilliams@bigpond.com](mailto:bjsmwilliams@bigpond.com) or by telephone at +61 3 9743 4341.

*Barry Williams*

### Merimbula, New South Wales

The Feast for New South Wales and Victoria will once again be held in Merimbula but at the newly renovated RSL Club. Merimbula is on the south coast of New South Wales. It is approximately a six-hour drive from Sydney and a seven-hour drive from Melbourne.

Merimbula is an unspoiled township with apartment buildings no higher than three floors. It is situated on a picturesque inlet and offers a relaxed time with delightful boardwalk cafes, restaurants and clubs. There are beaches, tours,

fishing trips, secondhand shops, whale-watching trips, amusement centers for the young, first-class golf courses and sailing. The weather is usually mild and sunny with temperatures in the 20s Celsius (70s and even low 80s Fahrenheit)—great for walks and sightseeing!

Costs for accommodations are very reasonable, with plenty to choose from. Check the following Web site for more information on the area: [www.sapphire-coast.com.au](http://www.sapphire-coast.com.au).

Activities will include a family dance; a family day at a golf center with a par 3 course and miniature golf, bike rental and a driving range; a seniors' activity; children's lessons; a youth study; and a luncheon on the Last Great Day. As Merimbula is a small site, members host many other friends in homes for meals.

**Location of Services:** Merimbula RSL, 52-54 Main Street, Merimbula.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** Accommodations at Merimbula can be organized through:

The Sapphire Coast Tourist Information Centre, phone +61 2 6497 4901.

Fisk & Nagle Real Estate, Market St., Merimbula, NSW 2548, Australia; phone +61 2 6495 3222; fax +61 2 6495 3154; Web [www.fisknagle.com.au](http://www.fisknagle.com.au).

Ray White Real Estate, 4 Merimbula Dr., Merimbula, NSW 2548, Australia; phone +61 2 6495 3200; fax +61 2 6495 3633; Web [www.raywhite.com/nsw/merimbula](http://www.raywhite.com/nsw/merimbula).

Merimbula Lake Accommodation Centre, Market St., Merimbula, NSW 2548, Australia; phone +61 2 6495 3144; Web [www.merimbulalake.com.au](http://www.merimbulalake.com.au).

For further information and to apply to come, contact Bruce Dean by e-mail at [bruce\\_dean@ucg.org](mailto:bruce_dean@ucg.org) or by phone at +61 2 9545 5384 or fax at +61 2 9545 5385.

*Bruce Dean*

### Noosa, Queensland

Feast 2005 will be the 10th year we have been located at beautiful Noosa, in Queensland, Australia, where the weather is beautiful one day and perfect the next!

Noosa has it all. It is a semitropical paradise with long white sandy beaches, invitingly cool rolling blue surf, one of the most spectacular coastal walks in Australia and a relaxed riverfront where one can have coffee and just watch the world go by. Noosa combines international sophistication with the laid-back, carefree ways of a small seaside town.

Beautiful Noosa is situated just one hour's drive from the Brisbane International Airport. Noosa, considered the hub of the beaches north of Brisbane, offers year-round swimming and surfing, fishing and boating, scuba diving, parasailing and whale watching.

Average temperatures for this time of the year are 18 to 27 degrees Celsius (63 to 82 Fahrenheit), with water temperatures a very pleasant 21 degrees Celsius (70 Fahrenheit).

Noosa is a very modern beach resort of international standards. There is a

## Key Dates to Remember

**April 9, 16, 23** U.S. and Canadian head-of-household members should clip out their completed 2005 Festival Registration form (see page 8) and give it to their local Festival advisor at Sabbath services.

**Late April** *Festival Planning Brochure* to be mailed to member households.

**May 28** Notification at services if any sites cannot accept all transfer requests (automatic transfer approval is expected for all U.S. and Canadian sites except Panama City Beach, Florida).

**June 5** Members attending a U.S. or Canadian Feast site may begin making reservations from the list of accommodations supplied in the *Festival Planning Brochure*.

range of accommodations, ranging from one- to three-bedroom condominiums and holiday apartments, many situated on the beach or waterfront, to five-star hotels.

With Noosa as your base, you can visit Steve Irwin's Australia Zoo and watch the croc feeding, drive to the lovely hinterland behind Noosa with its quaint craft villages, take a boat cruise through the "Everglades" and take a four-wheel drive on never-ending beaches.

Organized activities will include youth Bible studies, a young adults' get-acquainted activity, a dance, a seniors' outing and a family games afternoon in the park.

**Location of Services:** The Bicentennial Community Centre, Bicentennial Dr., Noosa.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** You may contact specific establishments through the Web by searching for Noosa at [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com). If you would like assistance, contact Bill Bradford at 26 St. John Close, Parkinson, Queensland 4115, Australia. The phone number is +61 7 3711 5599 and the e-mail address is [billbradford@bigpond.com.au](mailto:billbradford@bigpond.com.au). We will send you a guide with information about the area and also a listing of various ranges of accommodations.

*Bill Bradford*

## Bolivia

This year we are planning to have a Feast site in Bolivia. After facing the political unrest around the capital in 2003, last year we chose the expense of traveling to Argentina. However, right after the Feast last year we began to investigate a possible Feast site within Bolivia. We prayed for an appropriate and peaceful place for the brethren and for the visitors. We believe God answered our prayers when we found the Achira Sierra Resort, close to the city

## If You Want to Transfer to a Site Other Than Your Assigned Site...

### Transferring Within the United States or Canada

- U.S. and Canadian head-of-household members should fill out the 2005 Festival Registration form found on the previous page of this issue of *United News*.

- Indicate your preferred transfer site on the registration form.

- This form is to be given to the Festival advisor in your local congregation on **April 9, 16 or 23, 2005**.

- Automatic transfer approval is expected for all U.S. and Canadian sites except Panama City Beach, Florida. Pastors will receive transfer notification by May 28.

### Transferring to a Site Outside the United States or Canada

- Please fill out the registration form.
- Any member wishing to transfer to a site outside the U.S. or Canada should contact the Festival coordinator of that site directly. Some contact information is provided in this supplement, with site descriptions, and some additional housing information may be provided in the *Festival Planning Brochure* that will be mailed late April.

- Please do not make non-refundable travel arrangements until you receive an acceptance letter for that site.

- Further information and housing lists will be made available to those accepted for transfer.

### Transferring Into the United States or Canada From Other Areas

- Brethren wishing to transfer to a U.S. or Canadian site from another country will automatically be accepted.

However, please have your minister contact the home office via e-mail at [USFestival@ucg.org](mailto:USFestival@ucg.org). The information provided should include the requester's name, number of adults age 20 and over, number of teens, number of those 12 and under and the Feast site requested.

- The home office will forward pertinent information to the respective Festival site coordinators.

of Santa Cruz. Santa Cruz has traditionally been a peaceful and prosperous city that invites locals and visitors to enjoy life and get to know more of Bolivia.

The Achira Sierra Resort ([www.achira-resort.com](http://www.achira-resort.com)) is located in the middle of the mountains surrounded by vegetation, birds and flowers. The facility has comfortable cabins, tennis, soccer and volleyball courts and a swimming pool. It also has a restaurant where everybody attending the Feast site will have their meals. This will allow the family environment that characterizes the Latin American warmth of the brethren.

Only six miles from the Feast site there are the archeological ruins of Samaipata, where you will have the chance to see firsthand some ruins of one of the original civilizations of South America.

The facility has room for 100 people, so, most probably Church brethren will occupy the whole facility. Our Bolivian brethren would be delighted for have visitors from other countries!

The cost of the Feast will be US\$96 per person, which includes nine nights of hotel and the economic menu at the restaurant. The cost would be US\$141 for the same nine nights of hotel and the buffet menu. Bolivia does not require a visa for most countries; however, it would be advisable to check with the Bolivian Embassy in your country. A valid passport is required.

We advise you to fly to the city of Santa Cruz and let us know your itinerary as soon as you have it in order to help you as much as possible. More details will be given to you personally when you send your questions.

Unfortunately we are not offering translation of services into English this year.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 8 p.m.

**Reservations:** If you are interested in attending this Feast site, you do not have to send any money for reservations. We trust your word that when you say you will be coming, you will. You can make your payments upon arrival. You can send your questions or reservation to Saul Langarica at [slangarica@unidachile.org](mailto:slangarica@unidachile.org) or write to Casilla 10384, Santiago, Chile.

We will be delighted to have you in Bolivia for this Feast of Tabernacles!

*Saul Langarica*

## British Isles

### Winchester, England

The beautiful cathedral town of Winchester in southern England will for a second year running be the site for the 2005 Feast of Tabernacles in the United Kingdom. Winchester is a historically rich city, once the capital of medieval England and the royal seat of King Alfred the Great over 1,100 years ago.

Because of its popularity with local and European visitors, we are encouraging early booking of accommodations to ensure Feastgoers are not disappointed.

Services for the Feast will be held in the appropriately named King Alfred Hall, part of the Victorian-built Guildhall, which can hold over 500 people. It is located in the downtown area of this

architecturally beautiful and unspoiled English city. Catered lunches will be available for Holy Days and the Sabbath. Winchester is a small and well-looked-after city with much of the city center designated a pedestrian area. This makes it easy to enjoy the popular shopping streets. A variety of cafés and restaurants is also close by.

Accommodations (hotel, bed-and-breakfast and self-catering) and covered parking are available a few minutes' walk from the hall.

The Norman-era Winchester Cathedral, over 550 feet long, is a mere five-minute walk from the meeting hall. Queen Mary Tudor was married to Philip II of Spain here 450 years ago. The medieval banqueting hall called King Arthur's Hall, with its famous round table dating to pre-Tudor times, is a 10-minute walk away.

Popular sites like Salisbury, Stonehenge, Southampton and Portsmouth (home of Nelson's flagship, the *Victory*, and remains of Henry VIII's warship, the *Mary Rose*) are all within short distances by car or bus. Also within striking distance by car or bus are the 3,000-year-old fortress site of Old Sarum, Salisbury Cathedral, Bath with its Roman baths, Windsor Castle and the New Forest.

Bus tours will be arranged throughout the Feast to a number of the area's tourist attractions. For more information, please see [www.ucg.org.uk/festival/feast\\_2005.htm](http://www.ucg.org.uk/festival/feast_2005.htm).

There are good train services from both London Heathrow and Gatwick airports.

**Location of Services:** King Alfred Hall, part of the Guildhall, Winchester, England.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 8 p.m.

**Taxes:** 17.5 percent V.A.T. is included in prices quoted by hotels and shops. V.A.T. may be claimed back from stores displaying the "Tax Free for Tourists" logo. Please ask the shop for details.

**Reservations:** Please register with the United Church of God—British Isles Festival Office without delay, seeing that we expect a high response to the opportunity to have the Feast in Winchester. You can do this by e-mailing us at [feast@ucg.org.uk](mailto:feast@ucg.org.uk) or by using our registration form at [www.ucg.org.uk/feastreg.htm](http://www.ucg.org.uk/feastreg.htm). We look forward to welcoming you as one of our guests!

You can obtain further information about Winchester by visiting the Tourist Information Centre Web site at [www.visitwinchester.co.uk](http://www.visitwinchester.co.uk). They can be contacted by phoning them at +44 (0)1962 840500 or e-mailing them at [tourism@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@winchester.gov.uk).

*Peter Hawkins*

## Cameroon

### Douala

Douala, the principal port city of Cameroon in central Africa, will host the Feast of Tabernacles in 2005. Lodging is available at a number of hotels in the city including the Meridien, the Akwa Palace and the Ibis.

Approximately 50 people are expected to attend this site. This site is French-speaking only, so any brethren wishing

to transfer in need to be fluent in the language. Services will be held at the Church hall in Douala. Activities will include a family games day and a talent show. A visa and a yellow fever vaccination are required for entry into Cameroon.

**Reservations:** More information and registration forms may be received by contacting Joel Meeker at [joel\\_meeker@ucg.org](mailto:joel_meeker@ucg.org) or (636) 561-4026 or by writing to 926 Ampere Place, Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367, USA.

*Joel Meeker*

## Canada

### Kelowna, British Columbia

Among the many vacation destinations a visitor can consider in British Columbia, there is one travel constant that never fails to memorably reward visitors. It's a place where, regardless of season, world-class amenities are always available to enjoy. It's a place where the climate is mild and sunshine is something to be expected.

Kelowna is located in the beautiful Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. This is a major fruit-growing region and has lots of vineyards producing world-class wines. The settled area lies in the valley along the shores of Lake Okanagan, which is about 120 miles (nearly 200 kilometers) long and between 3 to 6 miles (5 to 10 kilometers) wide.

Kelowna has a metropolitan population of about 100,000. It offers a variety of recreational activities, has many fine restaurants and lots of shopping. There are unending miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking, trail riding and family walks. There are about 18 golf courses within a short drive, and most will be open until the end of October. There are centers for family outings, mini-golf and kids' attractions.

For Internet users, a local Web site ([www.castanet.net](http://www.castanet.net)) provides current news, weather and local happenings. The climate in autumn is usually still fairly warm with crisp nights. Rain is not normally a problem as the area is arid. It is a good idea to bring clothing that is suitable for weather in the 50s and 60s Fahrenheit (13 to 18 Celsius).

Motel prices are reasonable, with a selection to meet all budgets. There is a provincial sales tax of 7 percent (8 percent on hotels) as well as GST, which is 7 percent. Visitors from outside of Canada can apply for a GST rebate. An international airport just north of town serves the area with direct flights from Seattle.

**Location of Services:** Kelowna Community Theatre, 1375 Water St., Kelowna, B.C.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m. The following day's service will be at 1 p.m.

*Rainer Salomaa*

### 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.

Kingston is a VIA Rail Express train stop and has Air Canada air service to Syracuse, Toronto and Montreal.

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

Guests may bring their own microwave, and refrigerators are available on request (no toasters are permitted). Executive rooms with hot tubs are available.

Meetings will be in their chandeliered 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 Great Day buffet luncheon.

Please note: Visitors should verify travel requirements such as passports, photo ID or birth certificates for flying or driving across the border.

**Location of Services:** Ambassador Resort, 1550 Princess Street, Kingston, Ontario, K7M 9E3.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** 15 percent. Part is refundable to Feastgoers from outside Canada.

*Graemne Marshall*

### Regina, Saskatchewan

The Queen City of Regina, Saskatchewan, is pleased to again host God's annual Feast of Tabernacles. This is our fifth year to serve those traveling to this great location.

Regina is in the center of Canada's vast prairie, where crystal blue skies meet the endless horizons of autumn golden wheat fields. A highlight is the magnificent parliament buildings (surrounded by the 2,300-acre Wascana Park) and its palatial manicured landscape.

Activities are plentiful and varied, from glow bowling to the Saskatchewan Science Centre with the IMAX theater and its Power House of Discovery, where hands-on makes science fun for young and old. There is also a fine selection of restaurants and fun eating locations within a short driving distance.

The international airport is located on the western outskirts of Regina and is but a short drive to the center of the city. With the recent currency exchange, those coming from the United States also receive about 18 percent more in their spending dollars.

Regina supports multiple housing combinations. We will list our main motel below, but if there are special needs, one can go to the Internet and look up additional accommodations on

<http://bestlodging.com>. We also suggest contacting Regina Tourism for a visitor's guide through its toll-free number (800) 661-5099, extension 299, and its Web site [www.tourismregina.com](http://www.tourismregina.com). If additional help is needed, contact Lloyd Tee-taert at (306) 545-4448 or e-mail at [ltee-taert@sasktel.net](mailto:ltee-taert@sasktel.net).

We have reserved a block of rooms at the newly constructed Holiday Inn Hotel and will host services at the same location. The hotel has a Perkins restaurant, as well as a sports bar located on site.

The Holiday Inn features computer availability, high-speed access, radios, coffeemakers, hair dryers, microwaves and small refrigerators in the rooms. The hotel/motel further offers free fitness facilities, with wide range of exercise equipment. The health spa has an attractive pool and an inviting Jacuzzi. For the kids or young at heart, a waterslide adds to your excitement and pleasure. For those requiring wheelchair access, the Holiday Inn has this feature designed into the facility.

At present room accommodations are priced at \$89 and up, however, these prices are presently under negotiations for a weekly rate. There is a wide selection of accommodations — rooms with sitting areas, suites with hot tubs or conference areas.

**Location of Services:** Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites, 1800 Prince of Wales Drive, Regina, Saskatchewan S4Z 1A4.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** 14 percent—7 percent provincial and 7 percent GST. Visitors coming from outside Canada can apply for a rebate of their GST tax.

*Glen V. White*

### St. John's, Newfoundland

We invite you to come share in the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in the beautiful city of St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Newfoundland was first discovered by John Cabot in 1497 and claimed for the British Empire in 1583, by Sir Humphrey Gilbert. St. John's is the oldest and most easterly port city in North America, and today is the capital of Newfoundland and Labrador.

St. John's has a rich and colorful history, unmatched by any other Canadian city. With a population of 175,000, St. John's is a thriving modern-day city with first-class facilities and services. St. John's offers an enticing combination of old world charm, unique architectural and historic landmarks, fine cuisine and access to spectacular coastlines, wildlife and many other choice attractions.

Shop or just stroll on Water Street, the oldest commercial street in North America or Visit Signal Hill for a panoramic view of the harbor and the city.

Take a boat tour from St. John's harbor, or one of the numerous boat tours from other villages minutes from the city, to watch whales and seabirds, and view the spectacular coastal scenery.

The people of Newfoundland and Labrador are among the most friendly and hospitable in the world and have retained many aspects of their European heritage, including their accents and humor.

For those who love to walk, St. John's has many scenic walking trails. If you

love to eat, we have numerous fine restaurants. If you like to visit scenic or historic sites, you won't be disappointed.

Because of the small number of people at this site, St. John's tends to be a very family-type Feast. With only 80 people in attendance it is easy to get to know each other.

Rooms at the Best Western are \$79 Canadian for a double. Other accommodations are available as well.

For more information about this site, contact David Smith at dave\_smith@ucg.org, or visit the Newfoundland and Labrador government home page at [www.gov.nf.ca/](http://www.gov.nf.ca/).

**Location of Services:** Best Western Traveller's Inn on Kenmount Road.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** Newfoundland has a HST (Harmonized Sales Tax) of 15 percent. Hotels and motels also charge a 3 percent accommodation tax. For those who are not Canadian citizens, a rebate of 7 percent on purchases is available.

David Smith

## Chile

### Trailanqui

For a second consecutive year we are planning to have the Feast of Tabernacles for the brethren of southern Chile in the idyllic facility of Trailanqui.

Trailanqui is located 500 miles to the south of Santiago. You can travel to Temuco—the closest city to Trailanqui—by bus or plane.

Trailanqui is located in the middle of an exuberant natural beauty, among the vegetation and on the side of a beautiful river that is born in the Cordillera de los Andes.

Last year we had an attendance of 91. This year we think there will be a bit more than that in attendance. Unfortunately we are not planning to have English translations for services or activities.

The cost of the rooms, double occupancy, including breakfast, will be US\$40 per day. The rest of the meals could be taken with the brethren, who normally get together to eat the food they themselves make in their cabins.

You can get more information about Trailanqui at [www.trailanqui.cl](http://www.trailanqui.cl).

**Location of Services:** Hotel Trailanqui.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 8 p.m.

**Reservations:** If you are planning to attend this Feast site, please write to Saul Langarica at [slangarica@unidachile.org](mailto:slangarica@unidachile.org) or through normal mail to: Casilla 10384, Santiago, Chile.

We are looking forward to receiving visitors and enjoying together this Feast of God.

Saul Langarica

## Costa Rica

### San José

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.

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.

Many activities will be planned during the Feast that will include, but are not limited to, trips to volcano and rain-forest 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.

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 "jichurch" 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 colón, 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 simultaneous 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).

**Reservations:** 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 possi-

ble 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 [hcwpnj@integra.com.sv](mailto:hcwpnj@integra.com.sv) or by phone at (011) 503-225-4308 for specific questions and concerns.

Herbert Cisneros

## Estonia

### Tartu

After five years of holding small local Festivals, we are once again planning a larger Feast of Tabernacles in historic Tartu, Estonia's second largest city. Estonia is nestled between Russia, the Baltic Republics and Scandinavia. We hope to bring brethren together from these areas along with transfers from the United States and Europe.

Our first meeting will be Monday evening, Oct. 17. The meetings will be held at the Atlantis Club on the Emajõe River, which is only a 10-minute walk from the hotel. You will not need to rent a car as many restaurants and sights are within walking distance. Taxis are plentiful and inexpensive.

Median coach airfare cost from the United States to Tallinn, Estonia, is about \$1,000 to \$1,100 per person. After arriving in the capital city, there is an easy 2½-hour bus ride to Tartu. The hotel is a little more than a block from the bus station.

We have reserved 35 rooms at the Pallas Hotel in Tartu with more available at the London Hotel.

The daily rates are as follows: single, \$65; double, \$84; deluxe suite, \$120.

In the past several years we have been building our *Good News* subscription list and sending out the *Bible Study Course* and some booklets in the Estonian language. We are preparing to send out literature soon in the Russian language. We are reaching many people who just a little more than a decade ago were part of the Soviet Union. We want to make the Feast a time when we can make ourselves available to our subscribers as well as our brethren.

We plan a number of excursions into the countryside along with a trip to the island of Saaremaa and the capital city of Tallinn. Also, we especially encourage young adults to come and visit us this year. We are planning a number of activities and service opportunities.

**Reservations:** To attend, you must send for an application by e-mailing Festival coordinator Victor Kubik at [estonia@kubik.org](mailto:estonia@kubik.org) or by writing to 3707 Turfway Court, Indianapolis, IN 46228-2095 or calling (317) 216-0802. We will be posting more information for the Feast at [www.kubik.org/estonia](http://www.kubik.org/estonia) that gives much more information. Come join us for a memorable time.

Victor Kubik

## France

### La Colle sur Loup

La Colle sur Loup is a village a short distance from the famous artistic center of St. Paul de Vence, about eight miles from Nice on the French Riviera. Services will be in French and English with simultaneous translation. We anticipate an attendance of 120 people.

The Feast will be held at the VVF (Village Vacances Familiales) Canterelle La Bergerie ("sheepfold village"). This is an all-inclusive site: lodging, meals, church services and many leisure activities will all be at the VVF. The VVF is designed to resemble a typical provençal village. Prices are inexpensive, but rooms are rather simple since this is a family-oriented establishment, and there is no maid service.

La Colle sur Loup is a small village in the foothills above the coast of the French Riviera on the Mediterranean Sea. This is one of the most picturesque areas of France and is a favorite European vacation destination. The fashionable seaside resort of Nice is eight miles distant. Cannes, famous for its film festival and its beaches, is 15 miles away. The principality of Monaco is six miles beyond Nice.

This region of France is known for its exquisite gardens, colorful outdoor markets and its many museums of modern art (among others, there are nearby museums specializing in Picasso, Renoir and Chagall). Coach excursions to some of these sites will be organized for those interested.

Easiest access for international visitors will be through the Nice airport.

Leisure activity facilities at the VVF include a children's playground, a large outdoor pool (weather may or may not permit swimming), three tennis courts, a volleyball court, a small archery range, a miniature golf game, ping-pong tables and a pétanque court. (Pétanque is a typically southern-French outdoor game for people of all ages, easy to learn and fun to play.)

Off the site but within 15 miles there are many other activities offered. These include marked hiking trails, beaches, horseback riding, mountain biking, an 18-hole golf course, parasailing and motorized water sports.

Autumn is a pleasant season in this part of France. This can be a rainy season (bring an umbrella), but daytime temperatures are usually between 60 and 75 degrees. Evenings can be cooler, so a jacket or sweater is advisable.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 9 p.m.

**Reservations:** For more information and/or a Festival application, please contact Joel Meeker, 926 Ampere Place, Lake St Louis, MO 63367 or call (636) 561-4026 or e-mail [joel\\_meeker@ucg.org](mailto:joel_meeker@ucg.org).

Joel Meeker

## Germany

### Schluchsee

Set on Lake Schluchsee in southern Germany, in a beautiful area just 10 miles (16 kilometers) from the Black

Forest's highest mountain, the Feldberg (1,493 meters, 4,860 feet), is the picturesque town of Schluchsee.

Lake Titisee, with its scenic town of Titisee, is a 20-minute drive from Schluchsee, and the famous Rhine river waterfall in Schaffhausen/Neuhausen, Switzerland, is about 60 minutes by car.

Temperatures in October can still be mild, but the evenings can be chilly because of Schluchsee's altitude (900 meters, approximately 3,000 feet).

Accommodations for transfer guests are available in selected hotels and vacation apartments. Vacation apartments offer kitchenettes. Half-board arrangements are available in most hotels. Lodging costs range from \$50 to \$100 for a vacation apartment and from \$40 upwards per person for hotel accommodations, which includes breakfast.

Transfer guests can make their own reservations if they wish; lodging information is available via the Schluchsee Web site, [www.schluchsee.de](http://www.schluchsee.de).

The hall where services will be held is within walking distance of most lodging units within the main village area.

Direct German federal railway (Bundesbahn) service is available via Freiburg to Schluchsee. However, car rental is recommended for ease of transportation and sightseeing. Schluchsee is located approximately 180 miles (300 kilometers) south of the Frankfurt International Airport, or 50 miles (80 kilometers) northwest of the Zurich International Airport.

Expected attendance is approximately 200. Most services will be held in German, with a simultaneous translation into English.

**Location of Services:** Grosser Kur-saal, Kurhaus Schluchsee (next to the Rathaus, behind the tourism office).

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** Visitors wishing to attend should register on the UCG-Germany Web site at [www.vkg.org/fof.php](http://www.vkg.org/fof.php) (an e-mail address is required for registration).

Paul Kieffer

## Ghana

For information on the Feast sites in Ghana, you can contact Melvin Rhodes at [melvin\\_rhodes@ucg.org](mailto:melvin_rhodes@ucg.org).

## Guatemala

### Antigua

The Feast for 2005 will again be held in Antigua, Guatemala, known as the country of "eternal spring" for its warm, pleasant climate. Antigua was once Guatemala's capital city and is about 30 kilometers (19 miles) from the current capital, Guatemala City. Its principal attractiveness is that it has beautiful colonial architecture, and its streets are made of stone. It is a peaceful city that attracts many foreign visitors from all around the world: Europeans, Americans and Asians.

The city has many tourist places, among them the churches from the colonial period. And it has a large number of restaurants, cafeterias and many hotel options.

We have hotels starting from US\$40 per night, double room, to US\$120 and more. Please ask the Festival coordinator, Luis Mundo, about the options.

Most activities will be held at the beautiful auditorium where services will be held, which is generally within walking distance.

The program for this year includes daily services, a family day, a dance for youth, a luncheon for the ladies, a very animated talent show (contact us if you would like to participate) and a seniors' breakfast (if you are 60 years or older it is very important for us to know it).

If you decide to visit us, remember that there are many people here who want to meet you and spend a magnificent Feast of Tabernacles 2005 with you. Welcome!

**Location of Services:** Salón César Brañas, 5ª Calle poniente #44-A, Antigua, Guatemala.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7 p.m.

**Taxes:** US\$2.50 (airport departure tax).

**Reservations:** You can make your reservations by e-mail at drmundtello@hotmail.com. The phone number is 00-502-256-1341.

Luis Mundo Tello

## Italy

### Sabaudia

This year we'll again celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in the beautiful seaside town of Sabaudia near Rome, since this four-star hotel has kept prices as low as last year. Also, shuttle pickups and transportation from/to Rome's Leonardo Da Vinci International Airport will be provided before and after the Feast.

Church services will be held alternately in English and Italian, with simultaneous translation. Headphones will be provided on site. To give the overseas brethren the opportunity to rest on their arrival, there will be no services on the evening of Oct. 17, but two services will be held on the first high day, Oct. 18. English is spoken and understood by a good number of Italian brethren who are looking forward to meeting and fellowshiping with you.

Our Feast hotel has its own private beach with sun umbrellas and sun beds, as it is located right on a golden sandy beach, facing one of the most limpid and uncontaminated stretches of water in the Tyrrhenian Sea. This means that in your spare time, and especially during the Family Day, you can enjoy swimming, beach volleyball and table tennis at no extra cost.

The hotel is offering us a very special price of 58 euros (approximately \$72) per night, per adult, including full board (three meals a day.) Various discounts are offered for children who will be sharing a room with their parents or relatives: 50 percent discount for children 3 to 6 years old; 30 percent off for children 7 to 12 years old. There is no cost for children under 2.

All hotel rooms are equipped with telephone, TV, air conditioner and shower.

In regard to food, the Italian cuisine is one of the richest, most delicious and exquisite in the world. The hotel staff can

speak English and its restaurant can host a large group of brethren so that we can enjoy our meals all together in Christian fellowship. The chef knows the distinction between clean and unclean foods.

Our Feast site is surrounded by sunny dunes, lakes and the national park of Circeo. Its climate is very mild: night and day temperatures may be 65 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit.

The Feast site is located only an hour's drive from the fascinating and historical city of Rome and approximately one and a half hours from the city of Naples. This makes our Feast site especially suitable for cultural tours to various important historical places like Pompeii (which was destroyed by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 B.C.), World War II sites such as Montecassino, Anzio (with the Allies cemetery) and, of course, the famous Roman historical sites. These include the Coliseum, Imperial Forum, Paul's prison and tomb, Christian catacombs, the Vatican museums and several other places and monuments that are a witness to the persecutions of true Christianity. It is history coming alive before our eyes.

Our Italian young brethren plan to offer a Family Day on the beach, an evening dance and a talent show. If you can either sing or play the piano or any other musical instrument, or if you have any other artistic talent that may entertain the brethren at the Feast, your talent will be very welcome. This is true, also, if you are a choir singer or if you can play the piano to accompany church songs. We also need an experienced choir coordinator or director for the English-speaking choir singers. Your involvement in making the Feast a greater success to God's glory will be very much appreciated.

The small group of Italian brethren hope that you and your family can make it to Italy this year.

**Reservations:** Your Feast application/registration should be submitted as soon as possible, through the Italian Web site ([www.labuonanotizia.org](http://www.labuonanotizia.org)). From outside Italy you may also contact us by phone/fax (+39 35.452.35.73) or by e-mail ([carmelo.anastasi@tin.it](mailto:carmelo.anastasi@tin.it)).

Carmelo Anastasi

## Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire)

### Lamé

For the first time, this year there will be a United Church of God Feast of Tabernacles site in the West African nation of Côte d'Ivoire. The site will be in the rural village of Lamé about one hour's drive out of the commercial capital of Abidjan. All services will be in French. Lamé has a rustic inn capable of receiving visitors.

There is an unresolved civil-war situation in Côte d'Ivoire (at the time of writing there is a ceasefire and the situation is calm, but there have been periodic outbreaks of civil unrest and occasional combat situations). Any potential visitors should take this situation into account before planning to attend the Feast in Côte d'Ivoire.

No visa is currently required from most Western countries for entry into

Côte d'Ivoire. A yellow fever vaccination is required for entry.

**Reservations:** More information and registration forms may be received by contacting Joel Meeker at [joel\\_meeker@ucg.org](mailto:joel_meeker@ucg.org) or (636) 561-4026 or by writing to 926 Ampere Place, Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367, USA.

Joel Meeker

## Jordan

### Amman

The United Church of God is pleased to announce that it is reinvigorating the preaching of the gospel in the Middle East by reopening its Feast site in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 2005. Come join us in reestablishing our historical relationship with the hospitable nation of Jordan under the theme "Ambassadors for Peace." This signals our desire to demonstrate both respect for the Jordanian people and for God's awesome future plan for peace.

The Feast in Jordan will include a presentation to the group by a member of the Jordanian Royal Family that will outline the importance of restoring our historical relationship. In addition, the group will visit centers for the mentally and physically challenged and perform a service project to demonstrate our renewed commitment to service to the Jordanian people. Jordan is noted as a reservoir of stability and security in the Middle East.

The Jordan Feast also includes fascinating and inspiring visits to historical and biblical sites, including Petra, Jarash, Bethany, Mount Nebo, Pella and the Dead Sea. In addition, exciting visits to both Israel and Egypt will be offered as extension tours.

One hundred seats have already been reserved on Royal Jordanian Airlines in anticipation of a strong turnout from the UCG brethren. The all-inclusive rates are as follows:

The net price for the Jordan Feast is \$1,995 per adult, \$1,645 per child (2 to 12 years) and \$845 per infant (12 to 24 months).

Included in the above cost:

- Transatlantic transportation via Royal Jordanian Airlines.
- Accommodations in deluxe room at Le Meridien Hotel.
- Breakfast and dinner daily plus brunches on Oct. 18, 22 and 25.
- Touring in deluxe air-conditioned buses.

- English-speaking guides and all entrance fees.
- Tips to hotel staff, guides, drivers, etc.
- Airport departure tax.

The net price for the **Israel Extension** is \$620 per adult, \$420 per child (2 to 12 years) and \$220 per infant (12 to 24 months).

The net price for the **Egypt Extension** is \$755 per adult \$600 per child (2 to 12 years) and \$300 per infant (12 to 24 months).

**Location of Services:** Residence and all services will be held at the exquisite conference center of the Meridien Hotel in Amman.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17.

**Reservations:** To attend, you must send for an application by calling Festi-

val coordinators Cory and Colene Erickson at (651) 714-4054 or e-mailing at [ccerickson@visi.com](mailto:ccerickson@visi.com). You can also write to 818 Spring Hill Court, Woodbury, MN 55125.

Cory and Colene Erickson

## Kenya

### Kisumu

Karibu from hundreds of your brethren in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda who warmly welcome you to join us as we attend the Feast of Tabernacles in Kenya. This year's Feast site is located in Kenya's third largest city, Kisumu on the eastern shores of Lake Victoria, the headwaters of the Nile River, and the world's second largest freshwater lake.

Kisumu is located near the equator at 3,700 feet above sea level and is surrounded by valleys and hills. UCG



Feast in Kenya

members will travel from all over the region to attend the annual combined services. The meeting venue is an aging city hotel that overlooks a finger of the Winam Gulf.

Translation will be provided in English, Swahili and Luo. Feast activities for around 300 people will include a trip to the Kisumu Museum, and a guided walking safari into the Kakamega Rain Forest.

The brethren greatly appreciate international visitors and welcome you to join us for the Feast this year. International visitors will stay at a pleasant garden hotel with air-conditioned rooms and a sunset view of Lake Victoria, all at affordable rates.

After the Feast, this year's annual post-Feast safari will take visitors on a photo safari through world-renowned Lake Nakuru National Park. The plethora of African animals that will challenge your camera skills include rhinoceros, giraffe, gazelle, impala, waterbuck, lion, cheetah, leopard, cape buffalo, ostrich, eagle, vulture, warthog, zebra, jackal, eland, hippopotamus, baboon, monkey, hyena, mongoose, etc.

Safari to East Africa for a Feast that will change your life!

**Reservations:** For Festival information, please send an e-mail to [kenya@ucg.org](mailto:kenya@ucg.org), and check our Web site at [www.ucgastafrica.org](http://www.ucgastafrica.org).

John Elliott

## Malawi

### Lake Malawi

Many countries in Africa are blessed with a mild climate, beautiful scenery and a wide variety of animals. Malawi may be the place for you to keep the Feast if you are looking for a change of

pace and a wonderful African experience. The Feast will be held on beautiful Lake Malawi, which is the third largest lake in Africa. Lake Malawi is about 362 miles long and 10 to 50 miles wide.

Malawi is a peaceful country with very friendly people. There are plenty of activities that you can participate in like safaris to game parks, sailing, kayaking and snorkeling. Malawi is a landlocked country in Africa bordered by Tanzania to the north and Zambia to the west.

The climate is mild with high temperatures around 27 degrees Celsius (80 degrees Fahrenheit) at that time of year. Entry to Malawi is easy, as an American passport is all that is necessary and visas are not required. An airport fee (\$30 at the present time) must be paid before leaving the country.

Access by air is available to the lodge from Lilongwe, which is about 170 miles from the Feast site. British Airways and South African Airways have many flights to Malawi. Keep in mind that Malawi is in a malaria area and precautions should be taken. The Feast occurs during the dry season, which reduces the risk.

Housing is available at Nkopola Lodge in Malawi. All rooms at the lodge have air-conditioning and digital satellite television. The lodge has gear available for the water sport of your choice, including waterskiing, snorkeling, windsurfing or canoeing. Rates are about \$90 per day per couple at the present exchange rate. This includes breakfast. Other accommodations at a reduced price are also available in the area. The lodge is located within walking distance of the hall where services are held.

**Reservations:** Lake Malawi offers the opportunity for a unique African experience. If you are interested, call Bill Jahns (+27 11 868 1838) or send an e-mail to [bill\\_jahns@ucg.org](mailto:bill_jahns@ucg.org).

Bill Jahns

## Malaysia

### Malacca

Southeast Asia's newest Feast site is located in Malacca, on the eastern shore of the Strait of Malacca. Thankfully Malacca was unaffected by the tragic earthquake and tsunami in December 2004.

Malacca is a historical city, bearing a fascinating mixture of Chinese, Islamic and European culture. Portuguese, Dutch, Islamic, Chinese and British architectural styles influence city structures. It was one of Asia's greatest trading ports and is still a major tourist destination in Malaysia. The area also highlights delicious Straits Chinese cooking, as well as chicken and beef *satay*, which originated in Malay cuisine.

Just a few of the local attractions include the Malacca Sultanate Palace, Malacca Reptile Park, Crocodile and Butterfly Farms, Malaysia-in-Miniature and a wide variety of historical sites and landmarks. Group activities are being organized for members.

Brethren from Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, along with international visitors, will meet for services at the Riviera Bay Resort on the seafont. We

expect about 40 brethren from surrounding Asian nations. All services will be conducted in English.

Most brethren plan to stay together at the Riviera Bay Resort. The resort has offered us the following preliminary rates:

- Executive room (two persons, with breakfast) 160 Malaysian ringgits (US\$42 including taxes) per room per night.
- Family suite (four persons, with breakfast) 280 Malaysian ringgits (US\$74) per night.
- Three bedroom suites are also available.

Please contact Jeff Caudle first regarding your accommodation needs at the Riviera Bay Resort, rather than contacting the hotel directly. A block booking has already been arranged, which benefits the whole group. We also hope to improve upon the accommodation pricing if sufficient interest is shown in this site. The Riviera Bay Resort can be found on [www.meritus-hotels.com](http://www.meritus-hotels.com).

The resort offers three restaurants (Chinese, European and Italian), two lounges, tennis and squash courts, swimming pool and whirlpool, exercise gym, sauna and water sports. The resort is a short 15-minute taxi ride from Malacca where you will find shopping malls, bazaars, restaurants and many landmarks.

International visitors are advised to fly into Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, or Singapore. Taxis can be hired directly from Kuala Lumpur International Airport and reach the resort in about two hours. Brethren traveling by taxi from Singapore arrive at the resort in about 2½ hours' time. Group transportation by coach may be arranged from Singapore if desired, in conjunction with the Singaporean brethren.

A wide variety of tourism information is available on Tourism Malaysia's Web site [www.tourism.gov.my](http://www.tourism.gov.my). If you are interested in joining us in Malacca this year, please contact us as soon as possible.

**Location of Services:** Riviera Bay Resort, Jalan Tanjung Kling, Malacca, Malaysia. Phone ++60-6-315 1111.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** To register for the Feast and for further information about accommodations and this site, please contact Jeff Caudle, P.O. Box 22, Auckland 1015, New Zealand; e-mail [jeff\\_caudle@ucg.org](mailto:jeff_caudle@ucg.org); phone +64-9-817 5496.

*Jeff Caudle*

## Mexico

### San Miguel de Allende

Beautiful San Miguel de Allende, one of the most important historical and cultural colonial cities of Mexico and the world, will host the Feast this year once again (it was the Mexican Feast site in 2001). As always, the Mexican Feast will be celebrated with the hospitality and warmth of the Latin brethren.

San Miguel de Allende is 180 miles northwest of Mexico City; 75 miles east of Guanajuato; 40 miles northwest of Queretaro. This picturesque city mixes the best aspects of small-town life with

the cosmopolitan attractions of a big city. It offers a wide variety of restaurants, shops and galleries. Most of the buildings in the central part of the town date from the colonial era of the 19th century.

Having been designated a "World Heritage Zone," the law requires newer buildings to conform to existing architecture, and the town has gone to some lengths to retain its cobblestone streets.

On the spiritual side, which is the most important aspect of the Feast, we will have, besides daily services, several Bible studies throughout the week. Other Feast activities will include a children's party, fun activities for our young people and a Mexican Night with dinner and dance. Once again this year we are going to have a typical night stroll and music show through the streets of San Miguel.

The five-star hotel Real de Minas will be host hotel for the Feast. The Real de Minas Hotel is situated close to the main plaza, where most of the commercial and tourist activities of the city take place. It is located 10 minutes from downtown, and about one hour by car from the Leon, Guanajuato international airport. We recommend taking the airport transportation to the hotel.

We will be holding services and Bible studies in the largest and most comfortable hall in the hotel. We will provide simultaneous translation from Spanish to English.

Standard hotel room costs for internationals will be 600 pesos per night for double or triple occupancy. The cost of a junior suite (king-size bed, living room and table for four) is 1,170 pesos per night. (The exchange rate as of Feb. 27 is 10.99 pesos per U.S. dollar.) The hotel will provide optional meals at affordable prices.

San Miguel's climate is very pleasant, with temperatures from 53 to 76 degrees Fahrenheit. The area is about 2,050 feet above sea level, and nights and early mornings can be chilly enough for a sweater.

San Miguel is near the famous cities of Guanajuato and Dolores Hidalgo. Tours are available daily.

**Reservations:** For hotel reservations contact the hotel at Srita. Ana Castillo, Groups and Conventions, Departamento de Reservations (Reservations Department), Hotel Real de Minas San Miguel de Allende, Av. Ancha a San Antonio s/n, San Miguel de Allende, GTO 37700; telephone: 011-52 415-152-2626 and 011-52 415-152-2838; fax: 011-52 415-152-1727; e-mail: [realdeminasventas@hotmail.com](mailto:realdeminasventas@hotmail.com).

*Lauro Roybal*

## New Zealand

### Napier

The seaport city of Napier overlooks the Pacific Ocean in the Hawke's Bay region of New Zealand's North Island. This eastern seacoast area is well known for its warm Mediterranean climate, fine wineries and world famous art deco and Spanish mission architecture. There are some 40 vineyards and wineries in the Hawke's Bay region, a number with restaurants on their premises. Napier is a popular seaside tourist

destination for Kiwis and international visitors of all ages.

Direct domestic air service is available from major international airports in Auckland and Wellington. Car rentals and coach service are also offered around the country. Napier is about six hours' drive by car from Auckland, and four hours' drive from Wellington.

Services will be held in the Napier War Memorial Centre, located on the oceanfront in downtown Napier. The main meeting room enjoys a panoramic view of Hawke's Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Details, photos and webcam shots of the War Memorial Centre can be found at [www.venues.co.nz](http://www.venues.co.nz).

A wide range of accommodations are available near the War Memorial Centre, on or near Marine Parade—some within walking distance. Napier and neighboring towns offer establishments ranging from four-star hotels to motels, lodges, homes and camping grounds. Prices range from NZ\$40-200 per night. Other less expensive accommodations are also available.

Two good accommodations Web sites are [www.aatravel.co.nz](http://www.aatravel.co.nz) and [www.jasons.com](http://www.jasons.com).

Local activities in Napier and the Hawke's Bay region include deep-sea fishing, windsurfing, kayaking, parasailing, land yachting, jet boating and tandem skydiving. A large, inexpensive hot saltwater pool facility has just been completed next to the War Memorial Centre itself.

The National Aquarium of New Zealand and the Splash Planet water park are located in or near Napier. Some visitors might enjoy a visit to a gannet colony along the coast, or a swim with dolphins at Marineland of New Zealand. A wide variety of tourist information and activities is available on the Hawke's Bay Web site at [www.hawkesbaynz.com](http://www.hawkesbaynz.com).

**Location of Services:** Napier War Memorial Conference Centre, 48 Marine Parade, Napier.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** For further information, please contact Jeff Caudle, P.O. Box 22, Auckland 1015, New Zealand; e-mail [jeff\\_caudle@ucg.org](mailto:jeff_caudle@ucg.org); phone +64-9-817 5496.

*Jeff Caudle*

## Peru

### Huanchaco

Once again we will be celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles in Huanchaco, a small town near Trujillo, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Trujillo is located 348 miles north from Lima. You can get to Trujillo either by bus or by plane. It takes eight hours by bus and 50 minutes by plane. A round-trip bus ticket is about US\$50 per person and a round-trip plane ticket is about \$300.

We expect warm weather during the days and a little windy weather during the evenings.

Hotel prices vary from \$20 to \$50 a night for a double bed room in Huanchaco. If you prefer to stay in Trujillo, prices vary from \$30 to \$80 a night. Also if you stay in Trujillo you will have to consider transportation expenditures.

Food is not expensive, and in Huanchaco there are several places where you can enjoy good meals.

We will be providing English translations this year, but have limited space for transfers.

**Reservations:** For further details or to request an application form, contact Manuel Quijano, Apartado 18-0766, Lima, Peru; by e-mail at [smquija@terra.com.pe](mailto:smquija@terra.com.pe); or by phone at +51-14-486004.

*Manuel Quijano*

## Philippines

### Baguio City

Baguio is a city in the northern mountains of Luzon some 260 kilometers (160 miles) north of Manila. Being a temperate place in this predominantly warm and humid tropical country, it has been known as the summer capital of the Philippines.

As in the past four consecutive years, services will again be held at the conference hall of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP) Ang Ating Tahanan grounds. The hall where services will be held can easily accommodate as many as 150 Feastgoers.

The GSP grounds have cottages and dormitory-type accommodations where Feastgoers can lodge within walking distance from the meeting hall. But for those who are more adventurous and prefer to stay outside the Festival grounds, nearby hotels and inns are also available. Costs of accommodations range from US\$4 per person per day for dormitory-type accommodations to US\$60 per night for hotel room accommodations.

We are expecting some 100 to 120 Feastgoers, mainly brethren coming from the Luzon region of the country. But we are always looking forward to as many international brethren as possible coming to enjoy and celebrate the Feast with us.

**Location of Services:** Conference hall of the Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP) Ang Ating Tahanan grounds, along South Drive, Baguio City, Philippines.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 6:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** Those interested may get in touch with Rey Evasco by e-mail at [ucgmnl@pacific.net.ph](mailto:ucgmnl@pacific.net.ph) or by phone at +63 (917) 814 7826 or by mail at MCPO Box 4774, Makati City 1287, Philippines.

*Rey Evasco*

### Davao City

Davao City is located just 1½ hours by jet south of Manila (about \$60 airfare, one way), and is blessed to be outside the typhoon belt affecting most of the country yearly. Breezy and mild temperatures range from 26 to 32 Celsius at that time of the year.

As the "fruit basket of the country," it has a wide assortment of fruits, including exotic ones. In addition, rare and beautiful tropical flowering plants flourish.

Beautiful white sand beaches lined with coconut trees abound along the shores, lapped by clear waters reflecting warm blue skies. Most resorts maintain

international standards.

Davao international airport connects directly with flights to and from Singapore and other south Asian countries. Davao also connects to the rest of the country by land, sea and air transport. Most of Davao City's approximately 2,000 taxi units use two-way radio transceivers.

The Festival venue this year will again be at the GSP Regional Training Camp in Toril, Davao City. It is about 15 kilometers southwest of downtown Davao and about a kilometer from the coast. All housing facilities have screened windows. In addition some rooms are air-conditioned. Meals will be served in the screened dining hall as well. Three meals plus accommodation is about \$5.50 per day. The camp facilities and ambience enhance fellowship and our being called out of this world.

A beach resort one kilometer from the GSP Camp is also available. A room or cottage with six beds costs \$16 to \$20 per day. It has cold and hot water with private toilet and bath.

The cost of meals will depend on the type of order. Downtown five-star buffets costs about \$9 per person. Rates such as this already include taxes. Tips are not customary.

Services will be conducted in English (with translation into Cebuano).

**Location of Services:** The main GSP convention hall.

**First Service:** Wednesday, Sept. 29, at 7 p.m.

**Reservations:** For more details or reservations, please contact Davao Festival coordinator Edmond D. Macaraeg through any of these means: P.O. Box 81840, 8000 Davao City, Philippines; telephone +63-82 241-0733; fax/phone: +63-82 241-0150; mobile phone +63-918-904-4444; or e-mail: [ed\\_macaraeg@ucg.org](mailto:ed_macaraeg@ucg.org). Or you may also check our Web site: [www.ucg.org.ph](http://www.ucg.org.ph) for application forms and updates. Hope to see you there!

*Edmond D. Macaraeg*

### Iloilo City

One of the three Feast sites for UCG Philippines will be held once again in Punta Villa Beach Resort in Iloilo City, which is located in the Visayas Islands in the central part of the Philippines. About 283 miles from Manila, it is the gateway to the flourishing Western Visayas region. Iloilo's climate is tropical. The temperature ranges from 27 to 32 degrees Celsius (82 to 90 Fahrenheit) throughout the year. It has two main seasons—rainy (June to September) and dry (October to May).

You can travel to Iloilo from other parts of the Philippines in style. By air, there are jets daily from Manila, which take about an hour for a one-way fare ranging from US\$45 to US\$50. By sea, sailing time is about 20 hours from Manila for a one-way fare ranging from US\$18 to US\$30. Passenger jeepneys, metered taxis, buses and private cars regularly ply the city's road networks.

A visit to Iloilo is a trip back to the past, without losing touch with the present. One can still find scores of neoclassical structures dotting the streets. Most of these are ancestral homes, mansions built during the Spanish era; reminiscent of a glorious past. Within the

city, one can find a few surviving century-old homes and churches in the city and nearby municipalities, another facet of Iloilo's rich heritage.

Iloilo has stretches of seaside communities and beach resorts. Scuba diving, swimming and snorkeling can be done in Guimaras islands, a 15-minute ride on a motorized boat (banca). The underwater seascapes are some of the most undisturbed in the country.

Above all, you'll experience the love, warmth and hospitality of the wonderful brethren. Expected attendance is 130 or more.

Room rates are as follows: Executive rooms with hot/cold bath, TV and refrigerator—US\$25; double queen-sized bed rooms with hot/cold bath, TV and refrigerator—US\$20; standard double bed rooms with hot/cold bath and TV—US\$16.

Morning services are a daily feature, balanced by a variety of afternoon social activities and sports except on the Holy Days. If anyone would like to take a side-trip to one of the best beaches in the world, Boracay Island Resort is highly recommended.

**Location of Services:** Coral Ballroom, Punta Villa Resort (fully-air conditioned).

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** For more details, bookings or reservations, contact Florante G. Siopan, P.O. Box 713, 6100 Bacolod City, Philippines; by telephone +63-34 708-3005 and +63-34 435-3231 and (cell phone) +63-9187571349; or by e-mail florante\_siopan@ucg.org.

*Florante Siopan*

## Portugal

### Costa de Caparica

The fishing village of Costa de Caparica, just outside Lisbon, will once again be the site for the United Church of God Feast in Portugal.

Services will be held mainly in English with translation into Portuguese. There will be some sermonettes in Portuguese, which will be translated into English.

Services will be held at the Hotel Costa da Caparica ([www.hotelcostacaparica.pt/](http://www.hotelcostacaparica.pt/)), which is a four-star hotel on the seafont. It is serviced by restaurants and eating facilities with continental esplanades on the wide sidewalk just outside the hotel. The hotel is easily reached from Lisbon airport in about half an hour's drive by taxi.

Costa de Caparica is a pleasant fishing village with a market literally around the corner and various shops on the fisherman's street within walking distance from the hotel. The region where Costa de Caparica is situated is called Almada in the "Costa Azul" (Blue Coast) and is a popular tourist destination.

Costa de Caparica is well known for its extensive sandy beaches (more than 25 kilometers—about 16 miles) with fine white sand.

The river Tagus separates Lisbon downtown (in the north) from Almada (in the south). A large suspension bridge joins the two areas. There are frequent buses between Costa de Caparica and downtown Lisbon. Other means of

transportation are also available, such as ferries and taxis. Taxis are very popular in Portugal and well priced.

The proximity to Lisbon allows visits to historic sites, such as where the first navigators left to find the New World, castles, museums, etc. Special group tours with English-speaking tour guides will be organized during the Feast. Please use the following Web sites to get more information about the hotel and places to visit in Lisbon:

- [www.hotelcostacaparica.pt/](http://www.hotelcostacaparica.pt/) for a view of the hotel and conference room where the Feast will be held.
- [www.atl-turismolisboa.pt](http://www.atl-turismolisboa.pt) for Lisbon tourist information.
- [www.portugalinside.pt](http://www.portugalinside.pt) for general information about Portugal.

**Location of Services:** 8th Floor, Hotel Costa da Caparica, Av. General Humberto Delgado, 47; 2829-506 Costa de Caparica, Portugal.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 8 p.m. Services will be held every day in the morning at 10:30 a.m. On the Holy Days and Sabbath there will also be an afternoon service at 3 p.m.

**Reservations:** To register for the Feast, please download the "2005 Festival Registration—Portugal" form from the UCG Feast Web site (Portuguese pages) and submit your registration by either:

- E-mailing the registration form to the Festival coordinator at [jorge\\_decampost@ucg.org](mailto:jorge_decampost@ucg.org) or
- Faxing the registration form to (513) 576-9795 to Jorge de Campos' attention.

Please be sure to complete the information in the registration form with details about all the people who will make up your group, and for whom you will be paying.

Please do not assume that you are registered to attend the Feast in Portugal by simply e-mailing or faxing the registration form. Please make sure you get confirmation of registration from the Festival coordinator.

Accommodations are available at the hotel where the Feast will be held. Very special rates have been negotiated. To get these special rates you need to book through the Festival coordinator upon registration. Instructions regarding a deposit will be issued about a month before the Feast.

- The accommodation rates are:
- Single room: 55.50 euros/night (or 66 euros if sea view requested).
  - Double room: 66 euros/night (that is, 33 euros per person if you share), including two breakfasts.
  - Double room with sea view: 78.50 euros/night (that is, 39.25 euros per person if you share), including two breakfasts.
  - Children 3 years old and under: free, if sharing a room with two adults.
  - Children 4 to 11 years old: 15 euros/night, including breakfast, if sharing room with two adults.
  - Children in separate room: 25 percent discount over adult price.

*Jorge de Campos*

## Rwanda

### Muhazi

Beautiful Lake Muhazi in north cen-

tral Rwanda will be the site of the Feast of Tabernacles for 2005. Attendance at this French- and Kinyarwanda-speaking site is expected to be about 60. Lodging, meals and services will be in a house and on its grounds on the lakeshore. Meals will be prepared by those attending this site. Visitors would need to stay in Kigali and commute to the site each day via a one-hour taxi ride.

Activities will include a family activity day, a talent show and Bible studies.

At the time of writing no visa was required for U.S. and most European citizens. Nationals of other countries should check with the Rwandan Embassy in their country. A yellow fever vaccination may be required for entry.

**Reservations:** More information and registration forms may be received by contacting Joel Meeker at [joel\\_meeker@ucg.org](mailto:joel_meeker@ucg.org) or (636) 561-4026 or by writing to 926 Ampere Place, Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367, USA.

*Joel Meeker*

## St. Lucia

### Rodney Bay

The island of St. Lucia is 238 square miles with a population of over 150,000. The St. Lucian people are renowned for their friendliness, warmth and welcoming approach that can shine as brightly as the Caribbean sun.

The island is lush and tropical. The famed Piton Mountains are the signature of St. Lucia. These volcanic peaks are named Gros and Petit and rise 2,620 feet and 2,460 feet, respectively. Beyond their sheer size, these natural skyscrapers symbolize the island: pristine and dramatically beautiful.

Other attractions are Diamond Falls and Mineral Baths, along with the "Drive-In Volcano." The falls come down through sulfur springs, turning the water to a brilliant variety of yellows, greens and purples. The adjacent Mineral Baths are built among the ruins of an original 18th-century structure commissioned by Louis XIV. The "Drive-In Volcano" is the world's only such attraction, with bubbling pools that shoot forth 50-foot high clouds of steam.

The Feast this year will be at the elegant Rex St. Lucian Hotel in Rodney Bay. The hotel has long been renowned for its relaxed atmosphere, spacious rooms and Edenic grounds. Located on beachfront property, one can stroll along Reduit Beach, one of the finest in St. Lucia. Or browse in elegant boutiques in the hotel arcade. Or feast in one of the restaurants on property—from the 24 different ice cream selections in the Quarterdeck Café, to the standard selections in the Mariner's Restaurant, to the exotic tastes and flavors of the Oriental Restaurant.

We look forward to you joining us this year at the Rex.

The rates are as follows: single occupancy, US\$180 per room per night; double occupancy, US\$230 per room per night; two adults with a child, US\$260; and triple occupancy, US\$315 per room per night.

The all-inclusive rates include:

- Room accommodations.
- All meals and afternoon tea.
- A wide variety of cocktails.

• House wines, local beers and soft drinks.

- All on-property activities.
- All applicable taxes and tips.

**Reservations and Registration:** Hotel reservations can be made by calling the hotel's direct line 1-758-452-8351 and mentioning that you are with the United Church of God conference.

To register for the Feast, which is different from the hotel reservation, contact Arnold Hampton, P.O. Box 75, Randallstown, MD 21133, (410) 655-6265, fax (410) 655-9027 or e-mail [arnold\\_hampton@ucg.org](mailto:arnold_hampton@ucg.org).

*Arnold Hampton*

## South Africa

### George

Situated along the beautiful Garden Route between the Outeniqua Mountains and the Indian Ocean, George is a truly worthy environment to celebrate the wonderful world tomorrow.

Visitors can enjoy the scenic beauty of a warm sea, natural lakes and forests. Just over the mountains are the famous Cango caves, Highgate Ostrich Show Farm, crocodile farms and other animal parks.

There are many hiking trails to be enjoyed by the more physically inclined. George also has a very popular railway museum and steam train that winds its way over lakes and rivers, through forests and sections alongside the sea to the ever-popular town of Knysna approximately 50 kilometers from George.

The town of George has an airport and is 450 kilometers from Cape Town International airport.

**Location of Services:** The banquet hall of the George Civic Centre. Last year Feastgoers met in the conference centre, which could only seat 90 people. The banquet hall is more spacious and more conducive to fellowshiping.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Information/Reservations:** For further information, please contact the Festival elder, Stan Botha, at [stanbotha@xsinet.co.za](mailto:stanbotha@xsinet.co.za) or visit the following Web sites:

- [www.georgetourism.co.za](http://www.georgetourism.co.za).
- [www.sacape.co.za](http://www.sacape.co.za).
- [info@georgetourism.co.za](mailto:info@georgetourism.co.za).
- [reservations@georgetourism.co.za](mailto:reservations@georgetourism.co.za).

Most brethren enjoyed staying at Victoria Bay Lodge last year. It is 8 kilometers from the hall. Early booking is essential because there are only 20 units available. Their Web site is [www.vbl.co.za](http://www.vbl.co.za) and their e-mail is [cyboo792@mweb.co.za](mailto:cyboo792@mweb.co.za).

*Stan Botha*

### Uvongo

Africa is a continent blessed with a wide variety of animals and wildlife found in no other part of the world. South Africa has many miles of beautiful beaches and a mild climate that will enhance your Festival experience. Uvongo is located near the Indian Ocean

and is a wonderful place to enjoy God's creation. The brethren are friendly and the atmosphere is relaxing. Situated about 120 kilometers (80 miles) south of Durban, on the edge of the Indian Ocean, the area is well known for its subtropical climate. The United Church of God has celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles here each year since 1995.

Visitors will enjoy the small-town atmosphere that means you often meet other members by chance. If you have access to the Internet, check out the photos of the 2004 Festival activities and the Festival schedule at [www.ucgrsa.org](http://www.ucgrsa.org), which also has links to other South African sites. Links include Web sites of the South African Tourism Board; a local Uvongo Web site and several others to help plan your visit and make your stay memorable.

Overseas visitors will find that excellent quality hotel accommodations and meals are very affordable. Lush tropical vegetation surrounds the area. Sugar-cane fields and tea plantations are a few kilometers inland. A steam train takes passengers to a nearby restaurant for a cream tea after chugging an hour or so through the countryside. Youngsters paddle down the river that runs into the sea near St. Michael's, a few minutes drive from the hall.

Because there are so many areas to visit and enjoy, it is worthwhile for visitors arriving by plane to hire a car from the Dur-



Scenes from the Feast in George and Uvongo, South Africa

ban airport. However, the Festival activities are all close to Uvongo, so if you can arrange transportation to the Feast site, a rental car is not absolutely essential.

Temperatures are from the lower 70s Fahrenheit (lower 20s Celsius) with a 10-degree variation. Feastgoers should take note that the Feast falls during the rainy season, though we often have just the right weather for activities!

Accommodations are mostly self-catering, with a wide variety of two- or three-bedroom holiday apartments available. The area is a premier tourist attraction, so there are many restaurants as well as shopping centers that cater to most needs.

Accommodation costs will range from \$30 to \$60 per day for self-catering units. Hotel rates fall into the same price range per person per day, inclusive of dinner, bed and breakfast. Uvongo is situated close to a golf course and other sporting activities such as tennis, horse riding, swimming and surfing (the area enjoys a warm sea current).

There are also a number of scenic drives, such as the well-known Oribi

Gorge. Another place of interest, especially for overseas visitors, is the Zulu village near Durban. Attendance is expected to be about 220.

**Location of Services:** Uvongo Town Hall.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** There is a 14 percent VAT. Visitors may request a refund for the tax on souvenirs, etc., at the point of departure if they have receipts.

**Reservations:** Visitors interested in attending or who need more information, should contact André van Belkum by e-mail at [andre\\_van\\_belkum@ucg.org](mailto:andre_van_belkum@ucg.org) or by telephone at +27 (31) 267-1109. If dialing from within South Africa the area code is 031. Festival accommodations are described in the Festival Brochure on [www.ucgrsa.org](http://www.ucgrsa.org).

André van Belkum

## Togo

### Kpalimé

Members from Togo and Benin will celebrate the Feast at a private school complex in the town of Kpalimé, about 75 miles north of the capital city of Lomé. About 50 people are expected to attend this French-speaking site. As this site is French-speaking only, anyone wishing to transfer in needs to be fluent in the language. Lodging, meals and services will be at the site and those attending the Feast will prepare the meals.

Activities will include hikes, a family games day, soccer matches and a talent show. A visa and a yellow fever vaccination are required for entry into Togo.

**Reservations:** More information and registration forms may be received by contacting Joel Meeker at [joel\\_meeker@ucg.org](mailto:joel_meeker@ucg.org) or (636) 561-4026 or by writing to 926 Ampere Place, Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367, USA.

Joel Meeker

## Tonga

### Mu'a

If you like a relaxing, enjoyable and friendly environment, Tonga will be one of the best Feast sites for you. The Feast will be held again in Mu'a, which is 12 miles from Nuku'alofa, the capital.

This year the attractions include scenic tours with wonderful views, as well as visits to historic sites. Coral reef tours and snorkeling will be available. In addition, traditional dancing and dinner at the Tonga National Cultural Center would also be interesting for visitors. There is a lot of beautiful beach that is safe for swimming, picnics or coastal walks.

The temperature usually ranges between 20 and 25 degrees Celsius (68 and 77 Fahrenheit).

Nuku'alofa, the capital, offers a variety of good hotels and motels. The prices range from T\$65 to around T\$150 per night.

Accommodations available include: International Dateline Hotel, telephone +676 23-411, fax +675 23-410; Harbour View Motel, telephone +676 25-488, fax +675 25-490; Nuku'alofa Hotel, telephone +676 24-244, fax +675 23-154;

and Seaview Lodge, telephone +676 23-709, fax +675 26-906.

**Location of Services:** The Church Building, Mu'a, Tonga.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Reservations:** Visitors interested in attending or who need further information, please contact Heamasi Ta'ufo'ou by e-mail at [htaufou@kalianet.to](mailto:htaufou@kalianet.to), by telephone at +676 29165 or by mail at P.O. Box 2617, Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

Heamasi Ta'ufo'ou

## Trinidad & Tobago

### San Fernando

The 2005 Feast of Tabernacles will be held at the Tradewinds Hotel, San Fernando, Trinidad. The city of San Fernando is in the southern part of the island. The hotel is about an hour's drive from Piarco International Airport, Trinidad.

The Tradewinds Hotel is a four-star hotel. The rooms are decorated with a beautiful Caribbean flair, and are air-conditioned. They have direct international telephone dialing and cable television. They are also equipped with mini-bars and safes and most rooms have free Internet access. Some executive rooms are equipped with kitchenettes. All guests are guaranteed 24-hour security and automatically become complimentary members of Tradewinds Membership Club.

The hotel rates are as follows:

- Single occupancy is US\$99 per night plus 10 percent tax.
- Double occupancy US\$109 is per night plus 10 percent tax. Add \$10 for extra persons up to a total of four. The rates include breakfast.

The hotel will extend a 15 percent discount to all UCG members. Space is limited and will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Treehouse Restaurant definitely favors the Caribbean warmth, with a family atmosphere. It is built around a tree, and live entertainment can be heard on most nights, from steel pan to local vocalists and keyboard players. The cuisine ranges from Mexican to Italian to Cajun, and even includes some local dishes.

The Tradewinds Hotel offers guests free access to the gym facilities, swimming pool, sports bar and the Internet. For more information, visit its Web site at [www.tradewindshotel.net](http://www.tradewindshotel.net).

There are three other hotels with similar prices within 20 minutes of Tradewinds. Contact Steve Basant for more information.

Activities planned for this year's Feast include a Family Day at La Vega Estate—a beautiful area nestled in the central mountain range where one can find exotic flowering plants and fruits, beautiful picnic areas and nature trails. Visits to other eco-sites, like the Asa Wright Nature Center in the northern range, are also planned.

**Location of Services:** In the conference room at the Tradewinds Hotel, San Fernando, Trinidad.

**First Service:** Tuesday, Oct. 18, at 10 a.m.

**Registration and Information:** For further information, please contact

Kingsley Mather at [kingsley\\_mather@ucg.org](mailto:kingsley_mather@ucg.org) or Steve Basant at [steve\\_marsha@yahoo.com](mailto:steve_marsha@yahoo.com). Since space in the meeting room is limited, visitors should contact Mr. Basant or Mr. Mather before making travel arrangements.

Kingsley Mather

## United States

### Bend-Redmond, Oregon

The Bend-Redmond area is pleased to host the Feast of Tabernacles again in 2005. Nestled in the pines of Central Oregon, Bend is the hub of the resort area in the Cascade Mountains. The beautiful scenery of snow-capped mountains, towering Ponderosa pines, sparkling lakes and mountain streams with spectacular waterfalls provides a millennial setting. Warm, sunny days and crisp, cool nights offer typical autumn weather for the Fall Festival season.

All types of housing are available from low-cost motel rooms (some with kitchenettes) to resort homes and condominiums with full kitchens, fireplaces and hot tubs near the meeting facility. Other scenic resort housing accommodations are available in Bend and Sunriver.

Central Oregon offers a wide range of family-oriented activities—far more than could possibly be crammed into eight days. The nationally acclaimed High Desert Museum features impressive indoor natural history exhibits and live animal programs in an outdoor setting. Newberry National Volcanic Monument offers views of interesting features of the area's volcanic past. Crater Lake is another well-known nearby scenic attraction.

Outdoor activities include hiking or biking your choice of many miles of trails, horseback riding, hay rides, rock climbing, rock hounding, fishing, canoeing, boating and whitewater rafting on the world-famous Deschutes River. Golfers will enjoy some of the nation's best courses with reasonable green fees. Other facilities include art galleries, nature centers, observatories and lava caves. We are also looking forward to some exciting new family entertainment activities this year. Check our Web site ([www.ucgbend.org](http://www.ucgbend.org)) for more details as they become available.

Bend has three shopping malls, including a factory outlet mall as well as the new award-winning Old Mill District on the banks of the Deschutes River. The small tourist town of Sisters is a must for window-shopping and souvenirs. Sunriver Resort offers a full range of activities, shopping, dining and housing.

**Location of Services:** Deschutes County Fair and Expo Center, Middle Sister conference hall, 3800 SW Airport Way, Redmond (less than a mile from the Bend-Redmond airport).

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

Larry J. Walker

### Branson, Missouri

Branson will once again host the Feast of Tabernacles for 2005. Located in the beautiful hardwood-forested hills of the Ozarks, Branson is a beautiful area

for the Feast. It sits astride two lakes, and is surrounded by clear flowing springs in one of the most beautiful areas of the Midwest. During the Feast the fall colors of the hardwood forests can be spectacular.

The area has something for everyone. It has plenty of first-class accommodations as well as an abundance of things to do. If you want to sit back and enjoy the beauty of God's creation, the area is great. If you are more energetic and want to shop the outlet malls, go to some of the more than 60 live music shows, play golf on one of the many golf courses, take the kids to the lake or one of several amusement areas or simply "get lost" on the miles of hiking trails, you'll find it at Branson. Branson has been one of the favorite "transfer" sites over the years, so you can visit with many brethren from around the country and the world.

Accommodations range from kitchenettes to first-class hotels, most of which include a deluxe continental breakfast. If you prefer more space, you can enjoy a beautiful condominium overlooking the hills and lakes. Prices are all reasonable. Weather during the Feast is usually mild, with normal lows in the 50s and highs in the 70s. Services will be held in a beautiful modern theater with plush theater seating for 1,600. We do have an allergy-free room for those who need it!

**Location of Services:** Baldknobbers Theater, 76 Country Blvd., Branson, Missouri.

**First Service:** Tuesday, Oct. 18, at 10 a.m.

**Taxes:** Vary from 6 to 12 percent.

Michael Blackwell

### Escondido (San Diego North County), California

For the eighth consecutive year, the San Diego area will host the 2005 Feast at the California Center for the Arts in Escondido, California, a beautiful concert auditorium with an adjoining museum and park.

Escondido is a northern suburb of San Diego, about 35 minutes' drive north of downtown and San Diego's Lindbergh International Airport. The airports in Ontario and Orange County are about one and a half hours away. Los Angeles International Airport is approximately two and a half hours away.

The Escondido area offers less traffic congestion than the busier downtown areas of San Diego. North San Diego County also offers a variety of housing options from homes and condos on the beach (25 to 30 minutes away) to economy properties near the meeting facility.

Available optional activities in the San Diego area include the world-famous San Diego Zoo and Balboa Park, the maritime exhibitions in San Diego's harbor, Old Town San Diego, Sea World, the Wild Animal Park outside Escondido, Lego Land in nearby Carlsbad and the beautiful wine country of nearby Temecula.

We will host a number of special activities for all age groups, including a Family Day, teen activities, young adult activities, seniors' lunch and possibly a dinner-concert. We are expecting about 1,100 to attend. Average temperatures

range from highs in the 80s to lows in the 60s.

For more information, see the Escondido Feast site Web page at [www.ucgsd.net](http://www.ucgsd.net) (the San Diego congregation's Web page).

**Location of Services:** California Center for the Arts Escondido, 340 North Escondido Blvd., Escondido, California.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** 10 percent room tax and 8 percent sales tax.

Robin Webber

### Jekyll Island, Georgia

Located in the Atlantic Ocean, just off the southern coast of Georgia, Jekyll Island was once an exclusive resort area for American millionaires in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The state of Georgia now owns the island and has opened it to everyone. Visitors come from around the world to enjoy the peaceful environment offering beautiful beaches, hiking, fishing (requires a license), golfing, tennis and wildlife viewing (65 percent of the island is a nature preserve). A tour of Millionaires' Village is one of the highlight attractions. Horseback riding is available on Jekyll Island and nearby St. Simons Island.

We plan to offer bus tours to the Okefenokee Swamp and to Savannah, Georgia. A special Sabbath buffet brunch is being arranged at the Jekyll Island Club Hotel.

For more information on this world-renowned location, go to the Web site [www.jekyllisland.com/index.html](http://www.jekyllisland.com/index.html).

Temperatures range from 60 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit (16 to 24 degrees Celsius), with the possibility of rain. Major airports for arrival and departure are Savannah, Georgia; Brunswick, Georgia; and Jacksonville, Florida. A rental car is advised. There is a \$3 toll per vehicle every time one enters the island; one-week passes may also be purchased.

Expected attendance is 1,100.

**Location of Services:** Hartley Auditorium, 1 Beachview Drive, Jekyll Island, Georgia.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** Local tax is 5 percent; state tax is 6 percent.

David Treybig

### Kerrville, Texas

Kerrville has proven to be a most popular Festival site for our Texan brethren and for those who have transferred in from across the nation. This year promises to be equally rewarding.

Kerrville offers a wonderful taste of the Texas hill country. The accommodations are first-rate, the scenery is bucolic and the people are friendly. The Festival site is located in the heart of the area, where sparkling spring-fed creeks meander through the rugged terrain and rolling hills of the Guadalupe River Valley.

We have reserved the Inn of the Hills Conference and Resort ([www.innofthehills.com](http://www.innofthehills.com)). Having exclusive use of the conference resort will give us unlimited opportunities for intimate fellowship and activities. Most of the additional housing is available

within three miles of the site. With most of our members staying on property or within a short drive, and our exclusive use of the meeting rooms, we plan to offer special venues for teens, singles, young adults and senior citizens. Services will be held in the newly completed 1,100-seat ballroom.

San Antonio is only one hour away via direct interstate highway. A trip to San Antonio will give our brethren the opportunity to visit the famous "River Walk," River Walk Mall, the Alamo and other popular sites. The Kerrville area offers 16 wineries that are located within an hour's drive of the resort. Historic Fredericksburg, with its German heritage and over 150 shops and boutiques, is only a few miles away.

Kerrville's riverfront location lends itself to a variety of water-oriented recreational activities, such as canoeing, kayaking, tubing, fishing, swimming or waterside family picnicking. Numerous antique shops, contemporary art galleries and boutiques, as well as two challenging golf courses, add to Kerrville's appeal.

The Inn of the Hills Conference Resort has a beautiful courtyard with pool and spa. Its on-site restaurant, the Alpine Lodge, has seating for 160, with the Inn Pub open nightly offering live entertainment.

Complimentary membership to the Family Sports Center located just across the street, is available to those staying on property. This facility has an indoor pool, lap pool, basketball, racquetball and volleyball courts, weightlifting center, sauna, a 16-lane bowling alley and other amenities. There is a six-screen public movie theater adjacent to the resort.

The elevation is 1,645 feet with mild climate and temperatures averaging a high of 80 and a low of 52.

Make plans now to experience God's Feast in the Texas hill country!

**Location of Services:** Inn of the Hills, 1001 Junction Hwy., Kerrville, Texas.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** Room tax is 12 percent; local sales tax is 8.25 percent.

*Britton M. Taylor*

### Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii

Once again, beautiful Lahaina, Maui will host the Feast this year. Lahaina provides an ideal setting for people of all ages. Services will again be provided at the elegant Maui Theatre, a modern, air-conditioned auditorium, seating close to 700 people.

There will be plenty of activities available for young and old. Among these are a traditional luau by the oceanfront, a children's party, a seniors' luncheon, singles' and teens' hospitality get-togethers, a family dance and snorkeling. Tourist attractions include dinner cruises, deep-sea fishing, dozens of shops and numerous restaurants a block away from the meeting place, a large aquarium facility, golf, snorkeling, surfing and helicopter rides around the island.

There is a varied range of prices for housing, with many types of hotels and condominiums available at the famous Kaanapali beach area. All housing is within the range of 20 min-

utes from the meeting place.

The island of Maui is located about 80 miles south of Honolulu, Oahu, the capital of Hawaii. There are numerous direct flights to Maui from the U.S. mainland. Check with your travel agent or go online. Daily temperatures should be in the 80s Fahrenheit (26 to 31 Celsius).

**Location of Services:** Maui Theatre, 878 Front St., Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii.

**First Service:** Tuesday morning, Oct. 18, at 10 a.m.

**Taxes:** 11.5 percent.

*Mario Seigle*

### Lexington, Kentucky

Make plans to come join us for the final year of keeping the Feast in Lexington, Kentucky. Lexington is in the heart of the Bluegrass State. When most people think of Lexington they think of two things—horses and basketball. Although the locals are proud of both, there certainly is much more to offer in the Lexington area. With the University of Kentucky in Lexington, it has a strong college flavor that brings with it many amenities ranging from wonderful and numerous restaurants to small quaint shops, many parks to walk in and easy access to a variety of sightseeing favorites.

One of the more popular tourist destinations during the Feast in Lexington is the world-famous Kentucky Horse Park, training, breeding and burial site of many famous thoroughbred horses. It is also the location of several shows pertaining to horses.

In Harrodsburg (within a short distance) is "Shaker Town," home of the Shakers, where you can shop and eat in a most unique setting. And Lexington has mall shopping for those who just can't live without one or more trips to the mall during the week.

We are planning an evening on the Kentucky Dinner Train (an elegant evening of dining while riding on a train) and Lexington additionally boasts some very nice facilities in which to hold family and teen activities. There will be something for everyone.

Although Lexington is not a site that offers much in the way of condominiums, there will be several facilities featuring kitchenettes as in previous years.

**Location of Services:** Heritage Hall East, a part of Lexington Center, attached to Rupp Arena at 430 West Vine Street in Lexington. It is on the ground floor, so there are no steps where we are meeting. There will be some housing available attached to the facility that is handicapped accessible.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** The hotel/motel tax rate is 12.36 percent.

*Mark Wimmer*

### Panama City Beach, Florida

The Edgewater Beach Resort along the coastline of Panama City Beach will again host the Feast of Tabernacles in Florida for 2005.

Edgewater's 110-acre gated community incorporates an array of activities and amenities sure to make a successful Feast with 11 swimming pools, 12 tennis courts, 11 shuffleboard courts, four hot tubs, a tanning salon, gift shop, game

arcade and full-service restaurant.

A complimentary tram service is available for transportation across the resort and to the meeting facility if needed. Part of the resort rests along the Gulf of Mexico. Step back a few yards from the ocean, and you'll find yourself on the deck surrounding Edgewater's famous Lagoon Pool. Landscaped islands and several flowing waterfalls find their way into this 11,000-square-foot Polynesian-style, free-form pool, while several whirlpools and reflecting ponds make this tropical area complete.

The other part of the resort, across the street connected by a 10-foot wide pedestrian walkway, houses the meeting facility and a cluster of luxurious golf villas; a nine-hole, par-three executive golf course with nine lakes and several island greens.

**Housing:** Approximately 70 percent of the units are oceanfront, which includes studios, one-, two- and three-bedroom condominiums. The remaining condos surround the meeting facility and golf course. Prices per night throughout Edgewater Resort will range from: studios, at \$77; one bedroom, \$92 to \$118; two bedrooms, \$102 to \$141; and three bedrooms, \$122 to \$185.

Long Beach Resort, a mile away and a part of Edgewater Resort, provides studios at \$70, one-bedroom at \$98, two-bedrooms at \$124 and three-bedrooms at \$151.

Additional housing accommodations will also be available nearby, some oceanfront. These properties will range from \$35 to \$150 per night. Some of these properties offer efficiencies, and some have full kitchens.

The long-term success of this site depends on members only using the housing listed in our housing brochure. The low price for the meeting facility saves the Church thousands of dollars each year and Edgewater Resort trusts the cooperation of our members to use the housing listed in our brochure. Some condos in the area may be less expensive, but the rates at Edgewater are comparable and of dependable quality.

For more information, check out the resort's Web page at [www.edgewater-beachresort.com](http://www.edgewater-beachresort.com).

**Location of Services:** Edgewater Beach Resort, 11212 Front Beach Road, Panama City Beach, Florida.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** 11.1 percent at Edgewater.

*Harold Rhodes*

### Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Interest in this site in north-central Colorado remained high in 2004, probably due to the quality and convenience of the host Steamboat Grand Resort. The elevation of 6,710 feet provides for great mountain views, but low-elevation dwellers might still notice the altitude gain. It's hard to predict, but there should be some remaining "aspen gold" in the area.

Our host hotel, the Steamboat Grand, has been awarded a AAA four-diamond award. It is one of the biggest places at this site, especially for those who are able to arrange for their accommodations in the hotel. Accommodations are mostly condominium style and range

from parlors to very spacious three-bedroom units.

Rates remain at last year's prices (starting at \$79). Three-bedroom units will be in short supply, but a two-bedroom unit will sleep as many as a lot of three-bedroom condos. For a "virtual tour" check [www.steamboatgrand.com](http://www.steamboatgrand.com).

Nearby housing, including some moderately priced properties, will also be listed in the housing planner. There are ample fine restaurants, many of them rated in both Mobil Guide and AAA. Many of the types of mountain activities available at previous Colorado sites are also available, including golfing, mountain biking, hiking, fishing, helicopter rides and horseback riding.

The town of Steamboat Springs has a distinct Western atmosphere. Its name derives from early settlers who thought a geyser at a hot spring on the river sounded like the intermittent puffing of a steamboat. There are several hot springs in the area, the most prominent being at the Steamboat Springs Health and Recreation Center. This has an array of features, including mineral pools and saunas.

There are 157 mineral springs in the vicinity, and seven can be visited on a 2-mile walking tour. Other attractions include Fish Creek Falls, museums, art galleries, Stagecoach Reservoir and Steamboat Lake.

**Location of Services:** Priest Creek Ballroom, Steamboat Grand Resort Hotel, 2300 Mt. Werner Circle, Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Coming into town from the south on Hwy. 40, turn right onto Mt. Werner Road, then left on Mt. Werner Circle.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17 at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** Tax and resort fees are 16 percent as of this writing.

*Larry Neff*

### Wildwood, New Jersey

Wildwood, New Jersey, will be hosting the Feast of Tabernacles for the first time this year. This island is actually three separate vacation resorts with three separate personalities: North Wildwood, Wildwood and Wildwood Crest. 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. It is a brand-new, state-of-the-art facility, completed in February 2002, with flexible seating capacity for up to 7,000 in the main hall. The convention center has ample parking on site.

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 resort 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. This Victorian gothic lighthouse was designed by the same architect who built the Library of Congress. Built in 1874, it has a two-story living quarters and a three-story watch

tower, and tours are given daily.

Other popular sites are 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, where the entire town is a National Historic Landmark, is the second largest fishing port on the Atlantic Ocean. There's also the Emlen Physic Estate and the Cape May County Zoo.

Cultural and historical tours will be arranged in Philadelphia and New York City as well as several local tours being planned for Feastgoers this year.

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 of the convention center, with many sitting directly on the beach of the Atlantic Ocean. Anyone wanting a kitchen unit will have no problem finding one. Expected attendance will be 1,000 to 1,200.

**Location of Services:** Wildwoods Convention Center, 4501 Boardwalk, Wildwood, NJ 08260.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** Sales and hotel tax combined is 13 percent.

*Todd Carey*

### Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

Spectacular autumn colors, unique sandstone formations, enormous indoor water parks, go-cart racing, hiking, riding the famous amphibious "Ducks"—all this and more is what makes the Wisconsin Dells a great Festival site for the entire family.

The Dells offers a large variety of housing including ultra-modern theme resorts with elaborate indoor water parks. There are also homes, cottages and condominiums for rent on lakes, rivers, golf courses or in the woods. Traditional style motels offer an exceptional value. Several facilities offer large indoor water parks and whirlpool suites, so ask about them when making reservations.

Wisconsin Dells is a unique site in its family atmosphere and accessibility. Most accommodations are within a few minutes' drive of the Crystal Grand Music Theater as well as many attractions and quaint shops.

The Madison, Wisconsin, airport is an hour away from the Dells, the Milwaukee airport is two hours away and Chicago's O'Hare airport is a three-hour drive. The weather at Wisconsin Dells can vary from beautiful autumn weather to crisper temperatures.

Additional information can be found on the Web at [www.ucg-beloit/dells](http://www.ucg-beloit/dells). Expected attendance is 1,200.

**Location of Services:** Crystal Grand Music Theater, Rt. 23 (one-half mile east of I-90), Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin.

**First Service:** Monday, Oct. 17, at 7:30 p.m.

**Taxes:** Local tax is 5.5 percent; hotel tax is 11 percent.

*Steve Nutzman*



## From the Word

# Preparing for Passover: A Seasonal and Yearlong Process

■ As we approach the Passover season, it is traditional to go through a preparation process. Entering the cycle of God's annual festivals should prod us to reflect on the meaning and significance of each of the seven festivals and seven steps in God's master plan.

by Herb Teitgen

As participants in the New Covenant relationship with our heavenly Father, we recognize the central role that His Son and our Savior and coming King plays in each of the seven festivals. The symbolism of the Passover lamb slaughtered by the heads of household in ancient Israel is one of the most clearly understood and expounded ceremonies in the New Testament Scriptures.

### Symbolism of Passover Lamb

The apostle Paul affirms the ongoing celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread for Christians and recites the understanding of the symbolism of the Passover lamb in 1 Corinthians 5:7, "Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."

The killing and shedding of the blood of the Passover lamb foreshadowed the death and shed blood of the Man prophesied to be born in Bethlehem and known as Jesus of Nazareth. Through

His death and shed blood, human beings can receive redemption and forgiveness of sin (1 Peter 1:18-19; John 1:29). This powerful gift and accomplishment of Christ was possible because of who He was and how He lived His human life. The enormous price He paid was not for His sins, but for the sins of you and me and all mankind.

We in the Church of God do not celebrate as such the birth of Jesus, but we recognize the event as an intrinsic part of the process by which the Eternal, the Word of God, became a human being for the purpose of living a sinless life and then dying to become the Lamb of God and our Passover. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:14). "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29). The Word surrendered His God-level position and eternal spirit existence and was killed and remained dead for three days and three nights to pay the eternal death penalty for our sins.

### Christ Is a Sinless Passover and a Merciful High Priest for Sinners

Just as the Passover lamb killed in ancient Israel had to be without blemish (Exodus 12:5), so Christ was without the blemish of sin (1 Peter 1:19; 2:22). The book of Hebrews reminds us of the sinless character of the Jesus, the Word made human. We are also given encouragement concerning His present position as our High Priest and Advocate. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we

are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). "Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17).

Christ resisted sin and suffered as He struggled to keep in subjection the human side of His nature. Through this experience He was prepared to aid and help us who are struggling to do the same. "For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted" (Hebrews 2:18).

### Humble Repentance and Overcoming Sin Continues Yearlong and Lifelong

We humbly accept His gift of forgiveness and mercy with thankfulness and repentance. We value our cleansed condition by endeavoring to stay clean. We follow His example by dying to sins through repentance and baptism (1 Peter 2:21, 24; Romans 6:3) and then rising from the dead figuratively to live in newness of life to practice righteousness (Romans 6:4-13) and love God and live His commandments (1 John 5:3).

When we realize why Christ died and how we are personally pardoned by His sacrifice, we need to have a humble and thankful response toward God and a merciful and forgiving response toward others. This attitude and approach is not one we have only at the Passover season but all year long and in fact all of our lives as imperfect human beings. The apostle Paul, as spiritually strong as he was, still acknowledged that he fell short in doing as he should (Romans 7:14-23). He then had to trust in Christ to deliver

him from sin and its consequences (Romans 7:24-25).

We all fall short of God's perfect standards as we encounter temptations and challenges. We must be honest with ourselves throughout the year and admit and confess these lapses and sins. We don't wait until the Passover season to practice repentance and seek God's forgiveness and cleansing. We should deal with our sins and shortcomings in a timely manner—as we see them. Christ warns the churches in Revelation 2:5, 16 that He will come quickly if they don't repent. This implies that they need to quickly turn from error and sin when they are confronted by it.

The apostle John gives us both a warning and great encouragement in dealing with our sins and mistakes. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9).

### Individual Repentance and Overcoming Unifies Body of Christ

With an attitude of humility and thankfulness and appreciation of God's mercy, we are expected to extend that to other members of Christ's Body, the Church. By walking in the light of God's Word, we set an example for others to encourage them. We all are brought closer to God and to one another. "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). We walk in the light by living by God's com-

mandments and also by repenting and changing when we fail to.

Jesus expounded on this principle in His model prayer. Following His instruction to pray for our "daily" bread, He also instructed us to ask God to "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matthew 6:11-12). Jesus reinforced this point in His next comments. "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15).

The apostle Paul also instructed us in this important lesson that is a part of preparing for Passover. "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Paul addressed the serious mistake of observing Passover "in an unworthy manner." He encouraged the Corinthians and all of us to examine ourselves before we partake of the Passover symbols. We should review the importance of Christ's sacrifice just before the Passover season and also throughout the year. We both discern the pain that Christ suffered in His human body and also discern our relationship to His Body, the Church (1 Corinthians 11:27-29).

The preparation before the Passover season, when accompanied by a yearlong practice of humble repentance, is then a positive, unifying and encouraging experience that reminds us of God's mercy and His desire to prepare us as a body of believers for His Kingdom. We then partake of the Passover with joyful thanksgiving and love for one another. ☩

*This article first appeared in the current issue of United News Canada.*

# Blotted Out and Nailed to the Cross

■ An age-old question has been: What was nailed to the cross? What was the "handwriting of requirements that was against us"? Sometimes it's easier to know what this doesn't mean than it is to explain what it does mean.

by Kevin T. Epps

Most of us live near roads that are notorious "ticket zones," where police officers are known to hide out and catch speeders. For those who are caught speeding, their only hope is that the officer would give them a break and not write a ticket.

It helps if the person speeding says, "Officer, you're right, I was speeding. I'll pay closer attention to the speed limit

and try not to speed anymore." If the officer feels that the person is sincere, then he might only issue a warning.

But what if the driver were to follow up with: "Officer, not having to pay the penalty for my traffic violation isn't enough. I expect you to take down the speed limit sign so that I won't ever be guilty of speeding again!" The officer would most likely respond to such brashness by issuing the maximum penalty for speeding.

### The Antinomian View of Colossians 2:14

As far-fetched as the driver's reasoning may sound, many of us applied this type of logic to the Scriptures before our conversion. We defined God's mercy as both the forgiveness of our transgressions and the removal of the law that we transgressed. We probably used Colossians 2:14 to support this conclusion.

"... having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us,

which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (emphasis added throughout).

Antinomian religious teachers typically interpret this verse to say that God's law is the "handwriting" that has been "wiped out" and "nailed to the cross." The elimination of the written law is sufficient for most antinomians. However, there are extreme cases where people also attempt to abolish the alleged instinctive law within the conscience.

Notice *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*: "A handwriting is a certificate of debt . . . and presumably refers to the written Mosaic law. For Gentiles it may include also the law to which their consciences assent (cf. Rom. 2:14-15; Ex. 24:3; Eph. 2:15). This obligation which, unfulfilled, stood against us was discharged on his cross" (notes on Colossians 2:14, 1962, BibleSoft).

It's as if they insist that a Christian should view the law in any form as abol-

ished. Yet, *Wycliffe* elsewhere speaks of God's law in a positive light, thus contradicting its comment on Colossians 2:14: "Gentiles reacting correctly to this standard are thus not altogether without law. They are obedient doers of the law which God put in their hearts" (notes on Romans 2:12-16). So the most popular definitions of Colossians 2:14 leave no clear standard to live by, except for an alleged instinctive law or just raw instincts alone.

But if we let Scripture interpret itself, we come to a different conclusion. The previous verse specifies what Christ's death blotted out: "And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Colossians 2:13).

"Our trespasses" are the problem that's addressed here—not the laws that were being transgressed. Paul did not suddenly change the subject in the next verse.

### Wiped Out

The Greek for "wiped out" (*exaleipho*) means, "to smear completely . . . to obliterate" (W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Logos Library System, 1997, "blot out"). This Greek word was used in Acts 3:19—"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out [exaleipho]."

God hates our sins, the transgression of the law. Therefore He provided a means by which they can be obliterated. Conversely, mankind generally abhors God's law, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). That is why many man-made religious beliefs, which seek to obliterate the law, exist. Yet why would one need to repent (Acts 3:19) of transgressing a law that God "wiped away," which is therefore nonexistent?

Paul was not introducing new terminology when he mentioned the wiping out of transgressions (not canceling the law that we transgressed). The Old Testament also associates the Hebrew for “wiped out, blotted out, abolished,” *machah*, with trespasses.

Isaiah 43:25 says, “I, even I, am He who blots out [machah] your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins.”

David writes in Psalm 51:1, 9: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out [machah] my transgressions. . . Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out [machah] all my iniquities.”

He wrote this song/prayer after his sin with Bathsheba. He wasn’t saying, “Have mercy, O God, and abolish the law against adultery, so I can never be condemned for this sin again.”

There’s a unique ceremony in the Bible that illustrates what God blotted out. It’s the ceremony for a woman suspected of infidelity.

The priest says, “But if you have gone astray while under your husband’s authority, and if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has lain with you. . . God continues, “Then the priest shall put the woman under the oath of the curse, and he shall say to the woman—‘the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your thigh rot and your belly swell; and may this water that causes the curse go into your stomach, and make your belly swell and your thigh rot.’ Then the woman shall say, ‘Amen, so be it.’ Then the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall scrape them off [machah] into the bitter water. And he shall make the woman drink the bitter water that brings a curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her to become bitter” (Numbers 5:20-24).

The New American Standard Bible says, “Write these curses on a scroll, and he shall wash them off” (verse 23).

Notice that the priest didn’t wipe away the law that the adulterer transgressed. Similarly our High Priest, Jesus Christ, blotted out the curses against His wife, who was guilty of spiritual adultery. However, unlike the priest in the Old Testament, Christ drank the bitter water. He knew that the bitter water of these curses would indict us and bring a curse upon us. Therefore, He drank it for us.

God inspired the Hebrew word for “blot out” to be used in association with unrepentant sinners.

“So the LORD said, ‘I will destroy [machah] man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them’” (Genesis 6:7).

“Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, ‘Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out [machah] of Your book which You have written.’ And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out [machah] of My book’” (Exodus 32:31-33).

“Furthermore the LORD spoke to me, saying, ‘I have seen this people, and indeed they are a stiff-necked people. Let Me alone, that I may destroy them and blot out [machah] their name from under heaven; and I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they’” (Deuteronomy 9:13-14).

The expression “blot out” speaks to the removal of sin or sinners, not the removal of the law. God wants everyone to experience freedom from the “curse of the law” (Galatians 3:10, 13), the curse for transgressing the law—i.e., death. However, God will ultimately “blot out” those who refuse to repent.

### Handwriting

Now let’s consider another key word in Colossians 2:14, “handwriting.” This has also led many to assume that God’s law is the subject here. God wrote the law out with His own hand (Deuteronomy

9:10), so is it His law Paul refers to in this verse as being wiped out?

The Greek word for “handwriting,” *cheirographon* (khi-rog’-raf-on), refers to a handwritten “legal document or bond” (James Strong, *New Strong’s Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words*, 1997, the Logos Library System). Interestingly, the New Testament writers did not use this Greek word anywhere else.

*Vine’s* dictionary includes a very good write-up on it:

“In illustration of this, look at Col. 2:14, which has several words which are found in the papyri; and take one of these, *Cheirographon*, ‘handwriting.’ This means a memorandum of debt, ‘a writing by hand’ used in public and private contracts, and it is a technical word in the Greek papyri. A large number of ancient notes of hand have been published and of these Dr. Deissmann says, ‘a stereotyped formula in these documents is the promise to pay back the borrowed money, ‘I will repay’; and they all are in the debtor’s own hand, or, if he could not write, in the handwriting of another acting for him, with the express remark, ‘I have written for him’ . . .

“In the famous Florentine papyrus of A.D. 85, the governor of Egypt gives this order in the course of a trial,—‘Let the hand-writing be crossed out,’ which corresponds to the ‘blotting out the handwriting’ of Col. 2:14. Many such illustrations might be given, from which we see that the papyri have a distinct expository value.

“In Lexicons previous to this discovery are to be found lists of what are called *hapax legomena*, words which occur only once, and many of which, it was supposed, were created by the Holy Spirit for the conveyance of Christian truth, but now all or nearly all such words have been found in the papyri. The Holy Spirit did not create a special language for Christianity, but used the colloquial tongue of the time; He employed the cosmopolitan Greek” (W. Graham Scroggie, D.D., Forward to *Vine’s*).

*Cheirographon* in Colossians 2:14 is not a new word inspired by the Holy Spirit for unique use here. Neither did God inspire the common interpretations of Colossians 2:14, for they are wrong. The language of Paul’s time associates this word with a handwritten legal debt or a penalty owed, much like a sentence for a transgression.

### Requirements

The last word that we’ll examine is “requirements,” as in “handwriting of requirements.” This comes from the Greek word, *dogma*, which denotes, “an opinion, (a public) decree” (Robert L. Thomas, Th.D., *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries, Updated Edition*, 1999). The New Living Translation paraphrase says, “He canceled the record that contained the charges against us.”

In Greek society, this expression often denoted an official handwritten sentence or charge against someone for breaking a law. This helps crystallize the principle of Colossians 2:14.

Note how the Contemporary English Translation has this verse: “God wiped out the charges that were against us for disobeying the Law of Moses. He took them away and nailed them to the cross.”

And the New Testament in Modern English: “Christ has utterly wiped out the damning evidence of broken laws and commandments which always hung over our heads, and has completely annulled it by nailing it over His own head on the cross.”

### Consider the Gospel Account of the Crucifixion

Have you ever thought to read the Gospel account of the crucifixion while addressing the question of what was nailed to the cross? Obviously, Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross on our behalf. But is that all we can learn from the expression, “nailed to the cross”? The New American Bible footnote says, “The offense of a person condemned to death by crucifixion was written on a

tablet that was displayed on his cross.”

Remember Matthew 27:37, “And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

The Amplified New Testament has, “They put the accusation against Him (the cause of His death).”

The New Living Translation paraphrase has, “announcing the charge against him.”

And the Contemporary English Version says, “They put a sign that told why he was nailed there.”

The handwriting against Jesus displayed the accusation against Him. Pilate had previously demanded to know, “Are You the King of the Jews?” (Matthew 27:11). Of course, Jesus really is the King of the Jews, and all mankind, but the Jewish religious leaders used this accusation to trap Pilate into crucifying Christ: “Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar” (John 19:12). So Pilate wrote a public decree of the charge against Him.

“Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, ‘Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘He said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’” Pilate answered, ‘What I have written, I have written’ (John 19:19-22).

This account ties in with Colossians 2:14, though a different Greek word, *grapho*, is used for “writing.”

Pilate, the Romans and the Jews were unaware of the fact that Jesus took the charges that were “against us” and nailed them to the cross above His own head. They couldn’t see the “spiritual inscription” that was nailed to the cross, the charges against all mankind. Perhaps Colossians 2:14 would be more understandable if the inscription read, “. . . having wiped out the death penalty for your sins, not His.” UN

## Is Your Lamp Going Out?

■ Events on the world scene indicate growing trouble ahead. This is no time for us to slumber and sleep.

by Jack Elliott

When God the Father called us into the Body of Christ, our eyes were opened to a much greater purpose for life than we had ever imagined. It was obvious that the way we had been going was in the wrong direction. God granted us repentance so that we could be reconciled to Him and a new way of life was opened to us.

We saw that our sins, of which we were mostly unaware or thought trivial, had a claim on our eternal life and that only Christ’s sacrifice could pay the penalty and allow reconciliation to the Father after we repented and turned from sinning. We were baptized, burying the “old man” of our vanity and selfish desires in a watery grave. Then,

being symbolically washed clean, we were raised up out of the waters to start on the new life that God gives us with Christ in us—the hope of glory.

We were being given the opportunity to repent and change to an entirely new way of life that we had never known before. Jesus stood as our Redeemer, and His sacrifice covered our past sins, as well as mistakes of the future when we again asked for forgiveness. Now we were on the path toward eternal life.

We came to see that there was more to salvation than we first realized—such as keeping the Ten Commandments—all of them. We saw that we should not eat some of our once favorite foods, so we quit eating pork, oysters, shrimp, catfish, rabbits, etc. Our friends and family thought we had lost our minds.

We quit keeping Christmas, Easter and Halloween, and they were sure we had lost our minds. Then we added insult to injury by keeping what they

called the Jewish Sabbath and Holy Days—but they were wrong. Those were really God’s Sabbaths and God’s Holy Days.

We packed up our children and went off to distant locations each year to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, and people in the churches we used to attend thought maybe we went there to sacrifice animals or get drunk and indulge in orgies. But we did not. We were faithfully keeping the commandments of God Almighty according to the New Testament.

We weathered all these rumors and insults. The most frustrating was when friends and family distanced themselves from us because we were an embarrassment to them, as we turned from their way of life.

So we go to church faithfully every Saturday as people turn their faces the other way because they think us odd. We keep God’s laws as obedient children and we look forward to the resurrection, with faith and hope of reigning

with Jesus Christ forever.

Surely with all we have done and are doing, we will go into the Kingdom of God—won’t we?

### Are We Ready?

What if we suddenly hear the cry, “Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!” (Matthew 25:6), and find that we are not ready?

What are we to do if our oil supplies are so low that our lamps are going out? That is to say, what if we have so little of the Holy Spirit working in our lives that we are not ready for the Kingdom of God?

What if we suddenly see within ourselves how we have not kept our lamps full and burning brightly? At God’s rebuke, wouldn’t we be shocked and filled with great fear?

Turning to those whose cups are full of the oil of the Holy Spirit, we might cry out, “Quick, share some of your oil with us!”

“Go to the sellers and buy for your-

self, we have none to spare,” they say.

“But, who are the sellers?” “Where are they?” “We don’t have time!” “We thought our lamps were full.” “You elders, do something for us!”

“We can’t. You must go to God: fast and pray. He is the only one who can give you the Holy Spirit. You must draw near Him with your whole heart and soul.”

We know the end of the story—don’t we? It is in Matthew 25:10-12: “While they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

“Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’”

### “I Do Not Know You”

Why would He say that? If you were one of these, what would you do? Would you justify yourself saying, “Have we not obeyed Your

word for many years? Have we not prophesied in Your name? Cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" (see Matthew 7:22-23).

The sinking feeling in the pit of your stomach would grow deeper as Jesus would begin to explain, "I never knew you, because you did not open to Me when I knocked at your door to come in and fellowship with you. I would have brought the Holy Spirit to you on a regular basis to keep your lamp burning brightly so you could have grown in grace and knowledge and overcoming. You did not walk together with Me as intimate, loving, joyful brothers and sisters. The Father and I expected you to come to Us with your whole being—I in the Father and you in Me—all of one mind and one heart" (compare with John 17:20-23).

The Father's purpose is to change you from being human to being divine—a member of His own family (Hebrews 2:10-11). For this to happen, Jesus says, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:30-31).

### Examining Our Hearts

"Well, didn't we do that?" Jesus might say, "Not really. You were never close to Me nor to the

Father. You stood afar off and just performed for us. You only talked to us occasionally in formal prayer. True love is not trying to impress someone. That is self-love. True love is outgoing. It is comfortably intimate—endearing. When you love someone, you show it by your actions, your words, your attention. We always knew your heart was not that way."

Brethren, have you ever tried to work up this kind of love? It is not possible. Love must come from God. God gives true love. He also gives us repentance, understanding, wisdom, faith, hope and outgoing charitableness through His Holy Spirit. We cannot work it up by ourselves, no matter how hard we try. It is an unearned gift. It comes through grace—a free gift of God to those who truly love and obey Him (Ephesians 2:8). We have nothing that God has not given us. But He does not give the Holy Spirit to those who do not know Him (1 John 2:4-6).

To know God, we need to come to Him often with a whole heart, adoringly, in the close and loving way that true holy families come together. The Holy Spirit must circulate in our hearts and minds, somewhat like the blood circulates in our veins. That is what life's purpose is all about!

### The Holy Spirit in Our Veins

We have many, many examples in the Bible that show the necessity of

having the Holy Spirit to accomplish God's will.

- Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.
- Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied.
- Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, from His mother's womb.
- Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit to overcome the devil's temptation in the wilderness.
- The disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance for their first time at Pentecost.
- When the apostles prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.
- Ananias went to Saul so Saul could receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

### By Prayer and Fasting

Isn't being filled with the Holy Spirit what Jesus meant when He answered the disciples who could not cast out the demon for lack of faith? Jesus said, "This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21). That is how you get close to God in order to have the necessary faith. But it must be heartfelt prayer, not just routine prayer.

Fasting should be done frequently to keep us spiritually strong enough to

withstand temptations that suddenly come upon us. Once or twice a month is not too often for those who are in good health. (Diabetics and others with life-threatening ailments are cautioned by their doctors against fasting.)

Prayer and Bible study are obviously necessary for all, if they want to be near to God. Our busy schedules often intrude, but the old adage applies here: "Where there is a will, there is a way."

We do not fast to impress God with how righteous we are trying to be. We fast to draw close to Him and be led by the Holy Spirit in His ways. We fast for help in putting down the old self and to surrender entirely to Him—holding nothing back. Fasting also makes us realize how persistent the pulls of the flesh can be.

Jesus might also say, "I stood at the door of your heart and knocked, but you never opened to Me. You labored and were weary and heavily laden so I invited you to come to Me so I could give you rest, but you never came. If you had taken My yoke upon you and learned from Me, you would have found Me gentle and lowly in heart, and found rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. You are mine, because I not only created you and all you have, but when you were dead in trespasses and sin, I bought you with a price. I died in your place for you. Turn to Me with all your heart. You are Mine but you act like you are your own! What must I do for you to love

Me?" (based on Revelation 3:20; Matthew 11:29-30; 1 Corinthians 6:20; Isaiah 5:3-4).

### In Need of Nothing?

Brethren, are we content to believe we are rich, righteous and in need of nothing, when all the time we are living according to our own understanding, comfortable in our own way, thinking our own thoughts, keeping the Sabbath in a way that seems right to us and feeling we are in need of nothing?

Isn't this what Jesus meant when He said, "You are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked [of the Holy Spirit]—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments [which picture holy spiritual righteousness], that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve [the Holy Spirit], that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne" (Revelation 3:17-21).

"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming" (Matthew 25:13). **UN**

### "Council," continued from page 4

of the Council's policy are met.

Victor Kubik asked the treasurer if he knew how many areas had funds set aside in local accounts for their own buildings, and Dr. Kirkpatrick stated that he has not requested this information from the local congregations. He stated that "less than a handful" had communicated to him that their local accounts included amounts earmarked for local church buildings.

The discussion concluded, as Mr. Kilough summarized that no Council member was opposed to seeing the construction of local church buildings when there is a genuine need, and no Council member supported it when there is not a need. All concurred. The item is not listed as a separate line item in the proposed 2005-06 budget.

### Feast Plans

Focus next turned to the 2005 Feast of Tabernacles. Mr. Kilough attempted to ascertain Festival locations and speaking assignments for all the Council members, but some have not yet made firm plans. A number were open to go where needed. Ministerial Services staff member Dave Evans coordinates the meeting of Festival manpower needs, and will receive the updated information from this day's meeting.

Media and Communications operation manager Peter Eddington next outlined plans for this year's Feast video production. He proposes the title "The Next Decade and Beyond," capitalizing on the United Church of God's 10th anniversary this year. The international focus will be on the brethren in South

Africa and Malawi, with the possibility of the main Feast message being filmed on location in Malawi. As in the 2004 production, there will be a message from the president detailing accomplishments in the Church's efforts to do God's work in the past year. After inquiring about the possibility of also showing elements of the life of God's people in neighboring countries, Mr. Kubik proposed accepting the outlines of the production as outlined by Mr. Eddington. His motion was seconded by Les McCullough and the Council voted unanimously to adopt the motion.

### Strategic Plan, Operation Plan, Budget Accepted

After briefly discussing some wording modifications, the Council balloted unanimously to accept the Strategic Plan proposal. They then moved to unanimously approve the Operation Plan as presented by the administration. The ballot to approve the Budget proposal was 11 in favor, with Aaron Dean opposed. In discussion prior to the ballot, Mr. Dean observed that the cost of living adjustment for employees in the budget would also impact the 2006-07 budget by an identical 2.5 percent figure due to being phased in on Jan. 1, 2006, as a 5 percent adjustment.

The Council then moved to executive session to cover several miscellaneous items of church business for the remainder of Sunday's session.

On Monday, Feb. 28, the Council met in executive session to discuss several items of business carried over from Sunday, as well as the affirmation of the president. The result of that deliberation has been communicated directly by the

chairman of the Council (see page 1).

Tuesday's agenda was changed consequent to the decision made on Monday, with the Council working to finalize and unanimously adopt its own internal timeline and procedures to use in the nomination process for the office of president. According to Article 9.1 of the Bylaws of the United Church of God, it is the responsibility of the Council of Elders to choose the president. However, the Council values and is soliciting the input of the General Conference of Elders to this process in a manner to be communicated by e-mail to its members.

The entire process is intended to culminate with the Council's selection of the president on May 12, just prior to the annual meeting of the General Conference of Elders in Cincinnati, May 14 to 16, 2005.

The Council reviewed several doctrinal papers and statements Wednesday, continued its work on the process of selecting a president and concluded the day with a brief executive session.

### Doctrine Committee

Doctrine Committee chairman Jim Franks informed the Council of the committee's work since the Council's last face-to-face meetings in December 2004.

He sketched in some of the details of a response to be sent to the Philippines on a question dealing with a specific



local diet practice, then explained an answer he will forward to Senior Pastor (for the Philippines) Dave Baker on a paper dealing with the nature of God submitted by a former elder of the Worldwide Church of God in that country.

Mr. Franks discussed with the Council the committee's proposed answer for an American elder dealing with certain calendar issues (not yet sent). The committee will answer one request from South Africa to consider changing the wording of the Church's Fundamental Beliefs with an explanation of the process for amending them.

After discussion and suggested minor edits, the 10 Council members present unanimously voted to accept the study papers "Interracial Marriage—Biblical Study and Statement" and "The Nature of God and Christ—Study Paper." Next step for these papers is to be edited for

style, then to be posted on the ministerial Web site for 30 days in order to allow for ministerial input and comment before final Council approval as official Church understanding and teaching.

As the morning session ended, Mr. Franks explained what action was needed by the Council on "The Role of Women in the Church—Doctrinal Study Paper." The Council's Doctrine Committee has suggested certain edits to the original paper as submitted by the committee presenting it. The entire Council needs to review these suggested edits and decide which to accept before posting this paper on the ministerial Web site.

### Presidential Selection Process

During the afternoon session, the Council revisited the procedures to be used for selection of the president. They worked carefully to fine-tune, then unanimously approve a questionnaire for prospective presidential candidates, designed to elicit each one's perspectives and perceptions of the tasks and challenges facing the next president of the Church. The Council is proceeding deliberately, in order to devote the attention this important process deserves. The timeline approved in Tuesday's meeting outlines clearly the intervening steps leading up to interviewing potential candidates in Cincinnati preceding the May 12 selection of the president.

The day's meeting concluded with an executive session.

Complete Council of Elders reports are posted to the Web site at [www.ucg.org/about/council/updates.htm](http://www.ucg.org/about/council/updates.htm).

# Treasure Digest

## Let's Be Zealous!

When it comes to world events, are we still as zealous about watching things unfold as we were in years past? Or, after all these years, do we subconsciously feel, "I've watched for so long, and I've gotten so excited only to be let down. I just don't have the energy to get excited again?"

Matthew 24:42-44 says: "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Thieves usually come in the middle of the night when people are sleeping. Christ tells us that our state of mind is to be one of watchfulness, and we are to stay ready so we won't be caught off-guard.

So, then, what are some things we can do to make sure we're awake and watching and staying zealous as we see prophetic events unfold?

### 1. Be watchful.

Today the resources are readily available to help us stay on top of what's going on throughout the world. The Church has resources available such as *World News and Prophecy* and the "Current World News & Trends" section on our Web site that is

updated regularly ([www.ucg.org/worldnews/](http://www.ucg.org/worldnews/)).

### 2. Ask God for zeal.

The principle found in James 1:5 applies. If we don't feel we're as zealous as we should be, we can go to God and ask Him for zeal. And He'll give it to us.

### 3. Be involved in the work.



When we're involved in helping the Church to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom to this world, our minds are less focused on ourselves. We get excited about seeing the work grow, and that in turn helps generate zeal.

Every day we're closer than ever to the glorious return of Jesus Christ and the time when He'll end all the problems that are just going to get worse from here. What a wonderful future God has in store for us and the entire world! So let's be watchful, ask God for the zeal we need and continue to do our part in the Church's commission.

Let's be zealous!

*Dave PerMar  
Ocala, Florida, congregation*

## Keep Praying!

Twelve years ago, I endured a painful trial that turned into one of the highlights of my life. There is a valuable lesson we need to embrace: When life brings discouragements, keep praying!

Having recently married, I was suddenly laid off. Devastated, I quickly found an opening. Yet it paid

far less than my previous job. Then driving home from the interview, my car's electrical system went haywire. "Why now?!" went racing through my mind. The engine died, and I coasted off the pavement and stopped. This was the final straw: I slumped on the steering wheel and prayed in desperation, "God, I need help, and I need it *now!*"

Just then, I noticed a white car pulling around mine. Rolling down his window, the driver asked, "Do you need help?" Having just uttered these exact words, I exclaimed, "Are you an angel?" This truly was one of the most dramatic answers to prayer I have ever received, and surely the fastest! God answers, *if we keep praying.*

When life comes fast and furious, stress seems overwhelming! Bad things *do* happen to God's people. And while we should be wise and avoid trials, time and chance happen to all, as Solomon wrote (Ecclesiastes 9:11). Frankly, troubles are a natural part of life for mankind (Job 5:7), as well as for Christians (John 16:33). It is all too easy to lose faith and give in to discouragement, as I had done.

And yet, we have this promise in Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you!" Jesus also promised us, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). And when life feels like that final heavy straw that forces our heads down in despair, God promises to help us bear our trials by providing us a "way of escape" (1 Corinthians 10:13). Have we prayed for that way of escape for others, as well as for ourselves?

Since 1993, I have passed that exit hundreds of times driving to church. And I always smile . . . for I remember that July day when God answered my prayer so dramatically. I know God has not changed. He is the same today, yesterday and forever! (Hebrews 13:8). He reigns on His throne. He waits to hear from you and me . . . and He will answer!

Please be encouraged . . . and *keep praying!*

*John Fox  
Salt Lake City, Utah, congregation*

## The Night Watches

There were two ways of observing the nighttime (watches) described in the Bible. In the New Testament under the Roman rule, the dark time was divided into four periods, as in Mark 13:35:

"Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning."

First watch: in the evening (sunset until 9 p.m.).

Second watch: at midnight (9 until midnight).

Third watch: at the crowing of the rooster (midnight until 3 a.m.).

Fourth watch: in the morning (3 until 6 a.m.).

So when Matthew 14:25 and Mark 6:48 describe Jesus as walking on the sea in "the fourth watch of the night," we know it was early morning.

And when we are admonished to be watching for the master's return in Luke 12:38, "if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch," we see it could be anywhere from 9 p.m. until 3 a.m. And when Christ told Peter he would deny Him "before the rooster crows" in Matthew 26:34, it seems it was sometime after midnight and before 3 a.m. (It must have been a long night for Peter.)

But in the Old Testament there were only three divisions of the night of four hours each:

Lamentations 2:19: "At the beginning of the watches" (sunset to 10 p.m.).

Judges 7:19 mentions "the beginning of the middle watch" (10 p.m. to 2 a.m.).

Exodus 14:24 and 1 Samuel 11:11 mention "the morning watch" (2 a.m. to sunrise).

In Psalm 90:4 David wrote: "For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night." And if for some reason we lie awake during the night, our thoughts need to be focused on God and not our problems. David's example in Psalm 63:6 is "I meditate on You in the night watches."

*Frieda Iiams*

*Coeur d'Alene, Idaho/Spokane, Washington congregation*

## Turning the Hearts "Oh, You're Backpackers!"

Recently I received a letter with an article about turning the hearts of family members to each other. I felt the article offers some tips for family bonding and would like to share it with you.

*Gary E. Antion*

Several years ago I was sitting in the bleachers watching a Church youth sporting event in which my children were participating. The lady sitting next to me turned and said, "I just love your children! How come you have such neat kids?" I sat in stunned silence, not knowing how to answer. Then she said, "Oh, you're backpackers!" and turned her attention back to the game.

Shortly after that an article appeared in a Church publication that focused on our youth. The article decried the overemphasis on winning in sports. It said that there should be activities that everyone could win. But it failed to mention just what that might be. Backpacking could be an answer.

For over a quarter century, our family has been involved in such activities as backpacking, bike touring, canoeing and cross-country skiing. We can see many benefits to human-powered vacations.

The first thing that comes to mind is seeing and appreciating the beauty, intricacy and interdependence in God's creation. Backpacking takes us through wilderness areas slowly and allows us to take time to really see things that we might only glance at in our normal routines.

If we spend the Sabbath on the trail, we stay in camp and talk of God's creation. We look at the symbiotic relationship of the plants and insects we see. It is easy to talk of God's creation and debunk evolution while on such excursions.

Backpacking also teaches personal involvement and teamwork. Everyone is involved in every aspect of the endeavor. Each must carry his or her own backpack. There is no place for negative teasing or bickering. Boredom is nonexistent. We learn to help and count on each other. Nobody is too proud to accept a helping hand. It is a team effort.

In setting up camp or breaking down the camp, all are involved. We all help in the food preparation. When the whole family is involved, rapport is developed. This time away from our usual routine is a golden opportunity to bond. Being around each other on these outings allows us to teach our children about proper health and nutrition so they can have the energy to climb those hills with their packs on their backs. In that beautiful pristine environment, it is easy to teach against the negative effects of smoking, excessive alcohol and drugs.

Children develop a sense of confidence and self-worth. They learn to shoulder their responsibilities in facing the many challenges of the outdoors. Being with their parents on such outings allows children to relate and helps bridge the generation gap. We learn to appreciate each other's uniqueness and contributions to the success of the outing.

One grandson felt how important he was because he was carrying the evening meal for the family in his backpack. Another enjoyed his father's company on the hike back to the car after the trip. Then they both turned around and went back up the trail to help the rest of the family.

I see nothing but blessings from such experiences. Maybe it is a tradition your family should try.

*Gregory and Nancy Czech, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho/Spokane, Washington, congregation*



## Be Ready to Give an Answer: Why Do You Talk So Much About Israel? Doesn't God Love Gentiles?

Yes, God does love gentiles, and He offers salvation to all nations (Galatians 3:8; 1 Timothy 2:4). The United Church of God takes the commission to preach to all nations seriously (Matthew 28:19), for example sending *Good News* magazines into 178 countries and territories and establishing congregations in 46 countries where God has called people to us.

Interestingly, the Bible talks a lot about both the promise of grace and about promises of national greatness that were to come through God's servant Abraham. We believe God fulfills all of His promises, and we try to take seriously all of His warnings.

The physical promises to Abraham involved physical greatness for his descendants: "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great" (Genesis 12:1-2). These physical promises were eventually passed on to Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as birthright tribes of the nation of Israel (Genesis 48:15-19).

But because of Israel's sins, the blessings were withheld. There were only brief periods of greatness under a few righteous kings. But because of God's faithfulness, He eventually would bless Abraham's descendants with greatness. The descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh (who can be traced to Britain and the United States) have received the blessing of ascendancy to national greatness. Ephraim has become a company of nations, and Manasseh has become a great nation. It is through these two that the prophecies of the Bible concerning Israel are being fulfilled (Genesis 48:16; 49:22-26). These prophecies include warnings to these nations.

Contained in the promises to Abraham was the promise of salvation to all men who would become Abraham's seed (his descendants). Paul understood that salvation was not just for Jews or Israelites, but for all humanity. He was shown that the "Seed" being referred to was Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:8, 14-16).

Paul also records that Jesus Christ came to confirm the promises made to the fathers and to cause the gentiles to glorify God (Romans 15:8-12).

The promise of salvation is not based on race, but on God's calling and individual repentance, regardless of race or national origin (Galatians 3:28).

**For More Information**, read or request our free booklets *Fundamental Beliefs* (chapter on "Promises to Abraham") and *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy* ([www.ucg.org/booklets](http://www.ucg.org/booklets)).

# Setting Limits for Your Child—Maintaining the Balance

■ The spectrum of parenting runs from very permissive to super authoritarian. How can we find the biblical balance that will benefit our children the most?

by Andy Burnett

We've witnessed both extremes: the 4-year-old boy grabbing all the candy he can get his hands on in the check-out line of the grocery store when his mother turns her back on him.

"Bobby, put that back!"  
 "But Mommy, I want some candy."  
 "No!"  
 "Mommy, PLEASE!"  
 "You heard what I said!"  
 "I'll take just this one then. Look, it's just a little piece."  
 "Well, all right. You can have one piece."

It's a sad situation to have to witness. And then there's the other extreme: the 8-year-old girl (Jenny) pushing the grocery cart behind her mother, dutifully staying close to her striving to anticipate her mother's every need while keeping her baby brother entertained in the cart. Her mother barks orders at her, never thanking her, deriding her for her every perceived misstep: "Jenny, what do you think you're doing? Stay closer to me! Watch out . . . you just about hit that other cart!"

Jenny drops her head in submission, the life being drained right out of her. It's also a sad situation to witness.

Are you establishing proper behavior guidelines for your child now? How would you rate your parenting techniques? Permissive? Balanced? Borderline tyrannical?

## Teaching and Following Through

As parents we yearn to see our children grow up possessing a strong sense of right and wrong, coupled with the ability to exercise self-discipline—eventually developing their own sense of how to establish appropriate limits in their lives.

God holds us accountable for fostering in them this aspect of character. We must both *teach* and *follow through*—two traits comprising the essence of *training*.

Remember the story of Eli the prophet? Eli's inability to restrain his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, resulted in the slaughter of 30,000 Israelite soldiers, the death of his sons, the capture of the ark and ultimately his own death (1 Samuel 2:12 through 4:18).

There is evidence of Eli's instructing his sons, albeit apparently sporadically: "So he said to them, 'Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD's people transgress' . . . Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father" (1 Samuel 2:23-25).

Eli's account offers us a prime exam-

ple of the end result of *teaching* with no *follow through* (think of Bobby with his candy).

Jenny's story illustrates instruction found in Ephesians 6:4: "And you, fathers [this principle, by extension, applies to mothers too!], do not provoke your children to wrath . . ." At some point, probably in her teens, but maybe not even until adulthood, she most likely will rebel against not only her parents, but against many of the beneficial principles of her upbringing.

## Neither Permissive Nor Oppressive

How do we, then, maintain the balance of establishing appropriate boundaries for behavior that are neither permissive nor oppressive? Let's address four principles that bear consideration.

**1. Clearly define and consistently enforce guidelines and boundaries for acceptable behavior.** When we play any game, it's not fun if we can't figure out the rules. Our children need to comprehend the rules—what behavior *is* and *isn't* acceptable.

When the boundary lines are in a constant state of flux, most (not all) children will continue seeking to find them. It gives the children an insecure feeling: "I never know what's going to cause Dad to lose his temper! One day he's laughing at me and the next he's yelling at me for the same thing!"

When clear boundaries are set, our children gain a great sense of comfort and security. Because just as sure as they know they'll be disciplined every time they cross that line, they also realize that as long as they stay within those boundaries, they will accordingly gain parental approval.

Consistently enforcing these limits requires parental diligence and teamwork. Parents must strive to discuss daily the status of each of their children's lives. Dad and Mom must be on the same page. If they're not, they must set aside private time away from the presence of the children to resolve their differences of opinion, and return as a united front. Otherwise children will play one against the other, creating again unclear boundaries.

Does Mom give in a bit easier than Dad, or vice versa? Does Dad tend to weaken his stance on guidelines when he's tired at the end of the day or when Mom's not around? Does Mom let up and let us get away with more when she's in a good mood? All of these factors represent a lack of consistency resulting ultimately in a feeling of insecurity with the child.

**2. Discern the difference between an act of rebellion and a lack of education or misunderstanding of the boundaries.** I remember on one occasion correcting my daughter before explaining her misbehavior. She had this surprised and hurt look on her face as I disciplined her. I realized in talking with her afterwards that she had no idea that what she had done was wrong. (I apologized and she forgave me.) I would have figured this out if I had talked with her first.

Education/instruction comes first.

Discipline/correction occurs when the child comprehends the instruction but chooses not to heed it.

**3. Establish age-appropriate limits.** Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo in their book titled *Along the Virtuous Way—Growing Kids God's Way* discuss this concept:

"In an attempt to be gracious to their children, many parents unknowingly promote conflict by allowing their children freedoms that are not age-appropriate. These can be too many choices in decision-making, too many verbal freedoms, and too many physical freedoms. What do these freedoms accomplish? They cause a child to be 'wise in his own eyes' [Proverbs 3:5-7; 26:4-5, 12]. Being 'wise in his own eyes' means that a child thinks he has a self-sufficient wisdom that he does not possess" (page 243).

How do we know if our child is demonstrating characteristics of "being wise in his own eyes"? One example is demonstrated in *decision making* situations, where the parents, in an effort to be accommodating and selfless, allow the child to always dictate where the family will eat, what he will eat and what activity the family will do together afterward. The child develops a feeling of preeminence in decision making matters (becoming addicted to choice) instead of realizing his place in the family. This phenomenon tends to surface more frequently in single-child families.

The apostle Paul wrote it clearly, "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child" (1 Corinthians 13:11). We must not put our children in charge or encourage them to think that they are.

Secondly, in the area of exemplifying *premature physical freedoms*, the child will simply go where he wants to without asking permission. Thirdly, regarding showing signs of *premature verbal freedoms*, the child will make statements such as "I am going to . . ." instead of asking if he may do something (Ezzo, pages 247, 251).

As the Ezzos state, "If your child cannot handle *not* having a choice, it is time to remove choices from him. When he can handle *not* having a choice, he is ready for choices" (page 247, emphasis added).

We need to ensure that the amount of freedom and the choices our child can make gradually increase as he or she matures physically and emotionally toward eventual complete freedom of choice at adulthood. Stifling a child's age-appropriate decision-making abilities as he or she matures can be extremely frustrating for a child, damaging an otherwise healthy parent-child relationship.

Recall the Jenny scenario: She showed signs of exercising both diligence and responsibility. Had her mother recognized, valued and commended her for those strengths, expanding her boundaries and allowing her to take on more responsibilities in decision making, the little girl would have blossomed.

But still, as with young children, we



can give our teens too much freedom verbally, physically and in decision making as well. I'm reminded of many parents who decided to allow their teens who had grown up in the church to decide for themselves whether or not they would participate in school athletic contests on the Sabbath. In some cases, the teens chose wisely. In other situations, they did not. The parents were then faced with the fact that they were allowing their child living under their roof to blatantly break God's law, one of the Ten Commandments.

Since we are responsible to God for how we raise our children (as Eli was), how can we allow this to happen? Do we say to our children, "It's your decision whether or not you want to lie, steal, kill, commit adultery, honor us as your parents, take God's name in vain or make idols"? God holds us accountable.

**4. Be there for your children as your role changes.** In the often-quoted parenting passage of Deuteronomy 6:1-9, the unwritten "given" is that the parents are constantly in the *presence* of their children. We cannot teach our children God's ways in the house, while we're walking by the way, when we're going to sleep at night, and when we're awoken in the morning, unless we're right there with them.

The greater amount of time we spend with our children, the greater number of opportunities we have to share *teaching moments* with them—situations that occur with our children or with others around them from which lessons can be drawn, instances providing perfect illustrations to teach biblical principles. How many teaching moments do we let slip by that would have presented powerful examples of *why* we've established various boundaries in their lives?

I liked the way the Ezzos describe how our parenting roles change as our children mature. Notice how the boundaries change throughout the four roles or phases:

The *Discipline Phase* continues approximately until age 5. In this phase the parents' main objective is to lead the child's life—to gain control. Tight boundaries exist, but they are widened

slightly as the little child follows his or her parents' directives. In this phase, "your task is to get control of the child so you can effectively train him. If you cannot train your child, you cannot train him to his full potential, nor will anyone else be able to do so" (Ezzo, page 285). At what age is it advisable to begin establishing boundaries? As soon as he or she understands the meaning of "no."

Secondly, the *Training Phase* continues to age 12. The authors analogize this phase to that of a sports trainer—one who works with a player in practice sessions, preparing him for competition, running him through drills and exercises, stopping play frequently to give further instruction, all prior to entering the game of life (page 285).

During the teen years through age 19, he or she progresses to the *Coaching Phase*. The coaching and instruction continues, but from the sidelines and only between plays and during timeouts.

"How well you coach your children determines how well they run through the plays of life. What kind of trainer you are determines how they respond to your coaching. The type of disciplinarian you are determines your ability to train your children. How well you have established your right to rule determines what type of disciplinarian you are" (page 285).

When the teen reaches adulthood, as each progressive stage has been successfully built upon the other, the parents enter the *Friendship Phase* with their son or daughter. Ultimately, that's the relational goal we desire with our children. "Although the parent-child relationship does not cease, both parent and child enter into a new season of life . . . The process began with tight boundaries, which gave way to responsible behavior leading to freedom" (page 286).

Maintain the balance as you set and enforce appropriate boundaries for your children. As your children follow those guidelines, may they come to understand the peace, comfort and security you and I experience as we walk within the boundaries established by our Father in heaven. **UN**



## Local Church Updates

### New Congregation Started in Liberal, Kansas

A new congregation of the United Church of God was inaugurated on the Sabbath of Feb. 5 in Liberal, Kansas. A total of 19 people gathered at the 4-H building in Liberal for a Bible study,



New congregation meets in Liberal, Kansas

potluck meal and Sabbath services.

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Neff drove down from Denver, Colorado, for the occasion. Mr. Neff, the regional pastor for the Mountain Region, gave both the Bible study and the sermon. The excitement and enthusiasm of seeing God's hand in action was evident to all.

An outlying Bible study group was started in Liberal following the Feast of Tabernacles 2003. Because of the distances and manpower concerns, they were not able to meet on the Sabbath. Therefore these Bible studies were always conducted on a Sunday afternoon. However, after several requests from the members for Sabbath services in the area, and after discussions with Mr. Neff, Richard Pinelli and the Ministerial Services team, it was decided the time was right to begin a regular congregation. For the time being it is expected that services will be held twice a month in Liberal, normally on the first and third Sabbaths of each month.

This new congregation will serve portions of southwest Kansas, southeast Colorado and the Oklahoma panhandle. It will be pastored by Tom Clark, who also pastors Wichita and Salina, Kansas.

Tom Clark

### Staff Gives Fifth World News and Prophecy Seminar

The Redlands and San Diego, California, congregations hosted a *World News and Prophecy* seminar on Jan. 29 in Temecula, California. This was the fifth such seminar presented by members of the magazine's editorial staff.

The presenters were Darris McNeely, managing editor, and Melvin Rhodes and Robin Webber, both senior editors of the magazine. The topics included "The Book That Changed the World"; "Insights on Jeremiah, the Patriotic Prophet"; "Understanding the

Ramifications of 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin'; "The Rise and Fall of Nations"; "Outlooks on 2005"; and "The Mark of the Beast."

Of the 125 who attended, 12 were *World News and Prophecy* subscribers, along with a number of people in the overall Church of God community.

Such seminars put a human face on the magazine, as members of the editorial staff and the audience have an opportunity to become acquainted with one another face to face. It also gives an opportunity to assess what our members and magazine readers need as far as information and resources.

The next seminar is tentatively slated for December in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona. To inquire about having such a seminar for your area, pastors can contact Darris McNeely at [darris\\_mcneely@ucg.org](mailto:darris_mcneely@ucg.org).

Robin Webber

### Member Turns 90 in Fort Myers

Charles Edward McQueary, a member of the Fort Myers, Florida, congregation, turned 90 on Feb. 16. The previous Sabbath, the congregation



Ed and Marge McQueary

surprised him with a cake and a specially designed card picturing some of the highlights of his life. Melvin McQueary gave a moving tribute in honor of his father.

Ed was baptized in 1964 and was ordained a deacon some years later. He and his wife, Marge, enjoy the Florida sunshine for six months of each year. The other six they spend at their home in New Albany, Indiana.

Jim Robbins

### Cincinnati Holds Winter Family Dance

On Feb. 12 the Cincinnati, Ohio, East and North congregations hosted a Winter Family Dance in Milford, Ohio. Members of the congregations, ABC students and many visitors from several states came in their formal wear for

an evening of dancing and socializing!

The winter theme of the dance was reflected in the blue, silver and white decorations and ice sculptures that served as candleholders on each table. A special table was set up for the children in attendance with crayons and coloring books—but the children were mostly interested in all



Scenes from the Cincinnati Winter Family Dance (photos by Clarissa de Campos and Janet Treadway)

the dancing going on!

Randy Curran, the deejay for the evening, did a wonderful job of providing a variety of music that was enjoyed by all. Thanks to those who attended, there was a bountiful assortment of snacks and appetizers. Several members volunteered some time to serve wine and soft drinks from the bar.

The members of the East and North social committees and several volunteers and home office staff worked very diligently to make the evening a success, and their efforts were most appreciated!

Comments made included: "a full dance floor, a good sign!" "best church dance I have ever been to," "wonderful opportunity for families to spend an evening together" and "can't wait for next year!"

Amy Stephens

### Wheeling Celebrates 40th

The Wheeling, West Virginia, congregation celebrated its 40th anniversary



Wheeling, West Virginia, members who were at first service 40 years ago: front row, Audrey Plants, Shirley Peterson, Sandra Feiock, Susan Kocher, Mary Ann Gable, Kay Hadley; back row, Raymond Plants, Earl Peterson, Jeanne Summy, Mark Sloat, Pamela Sutton, James Kocher, Jerry McCracken, Arthur Gable and William Hadley (photo by Val Maurer)

sary on the Sabbath of Feb. 5. The theme of the service was "God's

Church." Dan Summy delivered the sermonette titled "Past, Present and Future of God's Church." William Hadley gave the sermon on "I Will Build My Church."

Following the service, the brethren enjoyed finger foods, an anniversary cake, ice cream and lots of fond reminiscing.

The first service of the Wheeling congregation was Feb. 6, 1965, and was conducted by James Friddle.

Roy Holladay was handed the responsibility of pastoring the congregation in June of that year. The first Sabbath there were 179 in attendance, and of those, 16 are still part of the Wheeling congregation. Emma Rimel is unable to attend due to ill health.

William Hadley

### Family's Loss Featured in Dallas Morning News

A year after the death of Richard and Rachel Averett's 10-month-old daughter, Hallie, the *Dallas Morning News* ran a touching feature article on them.

The article, "What a Year Will Do: Families Reflect on Loss and on New Life for Boy Who Received Heart," was by staff writer Linda Stewart Ball. She wrote:

"Some say the Lord works in mysterious ways. The Averetts, who are people of faith, might believe that more strongly than most.

"Last year, their daughter provided a gift to another family: her heart. The families, who live hundreds of miles apart, did not realize at the time that they were connected in more ways than one.

"Hallie has a twin brother named Micah. The night she died, Micah was also ill, and he could not be consoled.

"Once he returned to health, Micah would crawl through his Plano home looking for his sister.

"That hurt almost as much as losing her," said Mr. Averett, 29, a software architect. "Even though they were fraternal, they were always connected."

The article went on to describe the connection with a family in Kentucky.

"Donating an organ was the last thing on their minds. But when they were asked to consider it, they agreed.

"At first it was a matter of, we wanted to do it to help another family," Mr. Averett said. "This could help someone else not have to go through this.

"Then it became a solace to us to know that a part of her lived on. That her passing wasn't completely in vain."

"Last Dec. 19th, Hallie's heart was transplanted into a baby boy who lives in Kentucky. Months later the Averetts learned his name: Micah . . .

"Both families are strong Christians. The Averetts are United Church of God members while the Wagers are Inde-

pendent Baptists. They chose the name Micah from the Bible."

The article ended:

"It just makes you realize how fragile life is," Ms. Averett said.

"We're trying to keep living," she said. "That's what Hallie would want us to do."

Afterward, the Averetts shared their thoughts about being interviewed.

Rachel Averett said, "It was a very humbling experience overall. Humbling to once again see the frailty of life and how God is always in control. To relive the moments that led to her death was incredible emotional, but healing. I personally felt very honored that the paper would want to print an article about Hallie and our family. It made me realize how special she was.

"Many people at church came up to me and told me how beautiful the arti-



Little Hallie Averett who died at age 10 months

cle was and how they are continuing to pray for our family. I love the fact that Hallie was honored in this way. I am humbled that God chose me to be her mother."

Richard Averett said, "People always comment on how strong we are in the face of this happening. Ironically I feel that there is nothing farther from the truth. After going through this trial I would say that strength is the last thing that I feel. Something like this really shows you who is in charge and that God is in control.

"Having the knowledge that we have of God's plan is the only thing that has gotten us through this trial. I am more thankful now than ever for God choosing to show His truth to my family and me. Otherwise, I am not sure how I could go on believing that 10 months is all that Hallie was given, and that her existence is over. I can bear it knowing that she is not missing out on anything; we are. And we can make it through that with God's help as a family."

Rachel Averett said, "I would love to have shared the incredible blessings God has promised us—that we will see our loved ones again. He will breathe life into them again. It made me really appreciate the incredible knowledge that God has so abundantly blessed us with.

"I so look forward to the day when Micah [Wagers'] family meets Hallie face-to-face. They will see, with their own eyes, the awesome promises of our Father come to fruition! I have vivid pictures of that awe-inspiring day in my mind. I can't wait until those dreams become a reality and I am holding Hallie once again."

# Announcements

## Births

Marianna Osuna Langarica was born on Dec. 28, 2004, in the city of Monterrey, Mexico. She is the daughter of Guillermo Osuna and Fanny Langarica.



Marianna Osuna Langarica

Fanny is the sister of the minister in Chile, Saul Langarica, and the minister in the area of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, Adan Langarica. Marianna weighed 3.25 kilograms (7 pounds 2 ounces) and measured 49 centimeters (19 inches) long. She is the second child; her brother Emiliano Osuna is 1 year old.

Michael and Carolyn Bostic of Columbus, Ohio, are pleased to announce the birth of their first daughter, a gift from God and daddy's little girl,



Colleen Kelly Rose Bostic with proud grandpa, Hassel Bostic

Colleen Kelly Rose Bostic on Feb. 11, 2005. She weighed 8 pounds 6 ounces and was 20 inches long.

She is pictured with her very proud grandpa, Hassel Bostic, a member of the United Church of God in Columbus, Ohio.

Marc and Jennifer (Walker) Dominguez of the Denver, Colorado, congregation are delighted to



Annalise Sophia Dominguez

announce the birth of their daughter, Annalise Sophia Dominguez. She was born on April 1, 2004, weighing 8 pounds 14½ ounces and measuring 20½ inches long. Her grandparents are Jimmie and Judy Walker of Shreveport, Louisiana, and Tony and Sharon Dominguez of Denver. Big sisters Sydney and Brittany are thrilled to have a little sister.

Joe and Kelly (Good) Diamond of the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation are



Ethan David Diamond

excited to announce the birth of their first child, Ethan David. He was born on Jan. 5, 2005, weighing 6 pounds 9 ounces and measuring 19½ inches long. Grandparents are Dan and Peggy Good of Max Meadows, Virginia; Edith Diamond of Floyd, Virginia; and the late Bert Diamond.

## Engagements

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Earles of the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation are pleased to announce the engagement of



Johnathon Steven Nelson Arnold and Chancy Paige Earles

their daughter Chancy Paige Earles to Johnathon Steven Nelson Arnold, son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Arnold of the Bloomington, Illinois, congregation. Plans are being made for a Dec. 17, 2005, wedding in Virginia.

## Weddings

Beverly Floyd and Scott Smith were united in marriage on July 18, 2004, by Richard Thompson. The couple resides



Scott and Beverly Smith

in Palm Bay, Florida, and attends the Orlando congregation.

## Obituaries

Cathy Cunningham, daughter of Merle and Wanda Cunningham, was born on Sept. 16, 1956, in Dallas, Texas. She died Feb. 23, 2005, from complications of pneumonia coupled with the last stages of Alzheimer's.

Cathy had attended the Church of God since she was 8 years old. This past year was her 40th year to attend the Feast of Tabernacles.

She is survived also by her sister, Vicki Salcedo, from Atlanta, Georgia,

and her brother, Kelly Cunningham, from Dallas.

A memorial service was held for Cathy at Serenity Gardens in Milton, Florida, Friday, Feb. 25, 2005. She had



Cathy Cunningham

resided in Milton with her parents since moving from Dallas in 1998.

Ivan B. Renfro, 94, died peacefully in his sleep Jan. 4, 2005. He was born March 12, 1910, in Yancey County, North Carolina. His parents were Jackson and Maggie Randolph Renfro.

He is survived by his wife, Macie Deyton Renfro, of 69 years. They were married June 12, 1935. They moved to Limestone, Tennessee, in 1961. He was

a dairy farmer and loved farming very much.

They were faithful members of God's Church for many years, she being baptized in 1960, he in 1967. They listened to Mr. Herbert Armstrong's Radio Church of God broadcast on radio in the late 1950s. They attended the Asheville, North Carolina, and Kingsport, Tennessee, churches.

They have four sons, Virdan, Dean and Darrell of Limestone and Terry of Marietta, Georgia; 13 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted Jan. 7 by



Ivan B. Renfro

David Dobson, pastor of the Kingsport and Knoxville, Tennessee, and London, Kentucky, congregations.

## Tribute: Mary McCarble

Mary McCarble, beloved wife of elder David McCarble of the Houston South, Texas, congregation, died on Sunday, Nov. 28, 2004, and was buried at Forest Park Lawndale on Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2004.

Mary Lucille McCarble was a native Houstonian, born Sept. 8, 1935, to parents William and Edna Darnell. Mary had two sisters—Betsy Sellman (deceased) and Ethel Foeh; and three brothers—Lawrence Darnell (deceased), William Darnell Jr. and Patrick Darnell. Due to health difficulties experienced by her father, Mary worked during her teen years to help support her family and graduated from Ellen McCarter School. She reflected a level of tenacity and responsibility in her early years, and those qualities remained with her for the rest of her life.

Her husband-to-be, David McCarble, was also born in Houston. They were separated by just two months in age and their families lived only three blocks apart. They first met when they were both about 16, and began their courtship about five years later. While dating Mary, David recalls telling himself that regardless of any and all obstacles that they might confront, Mary's undying love for God would pave the way and see them through anything life could throw at them—and he was right.

They were married on Oct. 13, 1957, honeymooned in Estes Park, Colorado, and were sweethearts for 47 happy years.

David and Mary had four children: one daughter, Therese Ranzau, and three sons, David, Anthony and Timothy. Mary was a devoted wife and mother whose life revolved around her family. Their safety and success were her primary concerns.

Her relationship with God grew along with her family and she was baptized Jan. 9, 1969. A few days following her baptism, Mary suffered a heart attack. At that time, the children were 10, 8, 7 and 5. Her faith and determination saw her through a lengthy recovery period of about one year. As a consequence, she became an ardent advocate for those who were vulnerable or hurting.

As the years went by, her children married and gave her 10 grandchildren: Taelor Ranzau, Brittany, Cara, Angela and Timothy II, David III and Isabella, Jessica, Anthony II and Garrett McCarble. As testimony to the love her children had for her, the middle name "Marie" is absolutely prolific throughout the family—extending even to daughters-in-law!

In the years following her heart attack, Mary experienced other health issues and consistently displayed an attitude of hope and cheerfulness. Her faith in God and dedication to family



Mary McCarble

were constant and consistent. When diagnosed with terminal cancer, her family stood by her side as she endured severe pain, yet continued to exhibit amazing courage.

During this time, she was amazed, uplifted and comforted by the hundreds of cards she received from brethren all over the world—a marvelous gesture for which Mary and her husband David were most grateful.

Mary will be remembered as an avid reader, a lover of children and flowers, a passionate supporter of biblical principles regarding health and nutrition and a wonderful friend. Her smile and zest for life—her uncompromising faith and determination—set a wonderful example for us all.

## News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

or call (651) 769-8802.

*Gary and Gale Black*

### Indianapolis 10th Anniversary Dinner/Dance Set for April 30

The Indianapolis, Indiana, United Church of God congregation will host a 10th anniversary formal dinner/dance on Saturday evening April 30. This dance will celebrate the anniversary of the Indianapolis congregation as well as the beginning of the United Church of God, an International Association. There are commemorative activities planned for the Last Day of Unleavened Bread services as well as the dinner/dance.

The dance will be held at Primo West-Banquet/Conference Center beginning at 7:30 p.m. The dinner/dance is open to anyone 12 years of age and older.

The meal will be served buffet style and the cost per person is \$24.50. This cost includes tax, gratuity and dessert. Checks should be made payable to UCG, Indianapolis, 850 North Bluff Rd., Greenwood, IN 46247. The deadline for making your reservation is April 20. A list of hotels, directions and maps is available on the Web at [www.ucgindy.org](http://www.ucgindy.org).

*Freda Carlson*

### Family Weekend Planned for Florida June 4-5

The Tampa and St. Petersburg, Florida, congregations of the United Church of God "warmly invite our spiritual family to a Family Weekend on June 4-5, 2005." The events on the Sabbath and Saturday evening take place at the Largo



## 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: "Fence Mending That Will Last" "Balancing Rights With Responsibilities" "A Wedding for Charles and Camilla" "Germany's Record Unemployment and Ultra-Right Politics"  
[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 March VCM includes "Christ's Passion Toward You and Me!" "Hope for Unbelieving Loved Ones" and "Pluck Out the Eye."  
[vcmagazine.org](http://vcmagazine.org)

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

■ New article posted for March: "Pop Culture Delicacies: Is This the Right Ride?" New issue on habits due in April.  
[verticalthought.org](http://verticalthought.org)

### Featured Links of the Month

■ **Good News/Tomorrow TV station listings.**  
[www.ucg.org/multimedia/gntv.htm](http://www.ucg.org/multimedia/gntv.htm)

#### ■ Good Works Program.

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

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



Cultural Center, which is one of Tampa Bay's premier cultural facilities. It is located at 105 Central Park Drive, Largo, Florida 33771.

Sabbath services begin at 2:30 p.m., followed by fellowship, a potluck meal and biblically based activities. On Saturday evening, a disc jockey will play a variety of music, and while the adults are dancing the night away, activities will be provided for children.

On Sunday, participants will enjoy a beach party at the award-winning Fort De Soto Park. Dr. Stephen Leatherman, who is known as "Dr. Beach," ranked the beach at Fort De Soto Park as the second-best beach in the United States in 2004. Fort De Soto is located at the entrance to Tampa Bay at 3500 Pinellas Bayway South (State Highway 679), Tierra Verde, Florida 33715.

The park has almost three miles of the finest sand beach on Florida's West Coast. The park also offers nature trails, paved bike trails, swimming, fishing, boating, picnic facilities and camping.

For additional information or assistance with housing, contact Michael Fike (813) 714-1098 or e-mail him at [michaelfike@hotmail.com](mailto:michaelfike@hotmail.com). For continuing updates, please consult our Web site <http://web.tampabay.fl.com/ucgstp/>.

*Alan D. Campbell*

### Salem and Eugene Singles Plan Memorial Day Weekend

Attention singles! Be sure to mark your calendars for Memorial Day Weekend (May 28 to 29) as the Salem and Eugene, Oregon, area singles host an exciting weekend filled with fellowship, Bible-focused instruction and outdoor fun.

Sabbath services will be at Marion Miller Elementary School in Salem, Oregon, beginning at 1 p.m. Saturday evening's activities include a Bible study, potluck meal and game night. Sunday's schedule includes a guided mountain bike ride (bring your own bike), continental breakfast with morning campfire-style Bible study, scavenger hunt, barbecue, volleyball, horse-shoes and a nature hike all at the beautiful Willamette Mission State park just north of town.

When making lodging arrangements, look for accommodations in the North Salem/Keizer area. Sunday's activities are all outdoors and will take place rain or shine, so please come prepared for all weather conditions.

Cost for the weekend is \$10 per per-

son payable at the time of the event, plus a \$3 per vehicle park entrance fee for Sunday's activities.

To assist in meal planning, please send RSVP e-mail by May 15 to [hnew@hotmail.com](mailto:hnew@hotmail.com) (reference Singles' Memorial Weekend in the subject line) or call Hansel and Rachelle New at (541) 998-1381.

*Hansel and Rachelle New*

### Sacramento Plans Women's Weekend for Aug. 19 to 21

A special women's weekend is planned for Sacramento, California, Aug. 19 to 21 at the Hilton, Sacramento Arden West. The theme this year will be "Encouraging One Another to Love and Good Works."

For more information and registration, please contact Susan Crow at (408) 238-5324 or [suecrow@gmail.com](mailto:suecrow@gmail.com).

*Susan Crow*

### New Promotion Milestone Reached

With the latest card pack additions,

we have reached a new *Good News* print promotions milestone. Our 2004-2005 *GN* print promotion impressions have reached 8,839,600. This is 1,276,500 higher than even last year's record-breaking level!

Here are the figures for the past five years:

Fiscal Year	GN Print Promotions
2000-2001	3,045,252
2001-2002	6,493,170
2002-2003	5,750,000
2003-2004	7,563,100
2004-2005	8,839,600

*John LaBissoniere*

### Calendar of Events

March 26: Atlanta Prom ([www.ucgatlanta.org](http://www.ucgatlanta.org)).  
March 26-27: Families for God Weekend and Teen Prom, St. Paul, Minnesota ([www.ucgmpls.org/fig](http://www.ucgmpls.org/fig)).  
March 26-27: Great Lakes Regional Prom.  
April 23: Passover (service the previous evening).  
April 24-30: Feast of Unleavened Bread.  
April 30: Jubilee: "A Time to Dance," 50th anniversary of the Church of God in the Chicago, Illinois, area.  
April 30: Indianapolis, Indiana, 10th anniversary dinner/dance ([www.ucgindy.org](http://www.ucgindy.org)).

### Did You Miss Getting a Copy of the Cookbook?

There was such a high demand for the *Savoring the Sabbaths* cookbook, edited by members of the Cincinnati East congregation, that we are thinking of ordering a second printing if there is truly sufficient interest. All of the net proceeds of the first print run were contributed to the Good Works Program. If there is a second printing, all of the net proceeds will again be donated to the Good Works Program.

If you would like to order a cookbook, please contact the person in your congregation who is collecting orders, or ask your pastor. The price for cookbooks ordered and bulk delivered through congregations is \$16.

If you cannot make an order through a local congregation, individual orders may be placed. However, the price will be \$20 to cover postage.

All orders/checks must be postmarked sometime between April 11 and April 15, 2005. Only orders thus postmarked can be accepted. This is quite important for tax reasons.

If there are enough orders to justify a second printing, we will cash the checks and place the order. If not, we will return the checks uncashed.

*Tom Kirkpatrick, Good Works Program Coordinator*



**UnitedNews**  
News of the United Church of God, an International Association

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