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United News™

News of the United Church of God, an International Association

Vol. 11, No 4

www.ucg.org

May 2005

News At a Glance

Ministerial Transfers Announced

Ministerial Services announced the following transfers for this summer:

- Roy Holladay from home office to Cleveland, Tennessee.
- Bill Winner from Athens and Marietta, Ohio, and Morgantown, West Virginia, to Birmingham, Alabama, helping in Rome, Georgia, and Houston, Mississippi.
- Tim Waddle from Colorado Springs, Colorado, to Athens and Marietta, Ohio, and Morgantown, West Virginia.
- Rick Beam from Cleveland, Tennessee, to Gadsden, Alabama (continuing to serve Huntsville, Alabama).

Program Airs on Internet Radio Free

The *Good News* radio program has begun airing on an Internet radio station associated with www.live365.com called "Baby Boomer Music." They have agreed to air our program twice every Sunday at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. PDT.

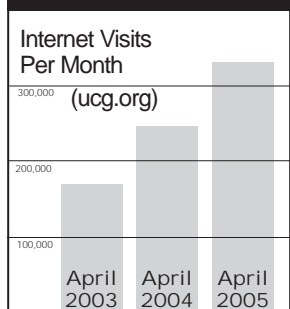


Listening to a *Good News* radio ad on an Internet radio station

The URL for the station is www.live365.com/stations/user8262?play. They will provide us with promotional advertising during the week to announce the program, and also to invite users to visit our Web sites. The cost is free for

See "News at a Glance," page 2

United Statistics



World News and Prophecy Adds Online Presence

Now with wnponline.org, *World News and Prophecy* has a threefold approach to help preach the gospel and prepare a people.

by Les Booth, Darris McNeely and Robin Webber

First came *World News and Prophecy* in printed form, then the weekend seminars (see sidebar, page 2). Now in 2005, a third phase has been launched with wnponline.org.

During meetings in January with the managing editors of the Church publications, two exciting new technologies were discussed: blogs and podcasting. Both are now being used by the Church.

New Technologies

Blog is short for weblog. A weblog is a Web page that displays, in chronological order, the postings by one or more individuals and usually has links to comments on specific postings. Blogs are being used in a growing number of ways by businesses and individuals to publish and obtain information via the Web.

Breaking news can be gathered quickly. News items can be referenced with related hyperlinks, personalized with related commentary, then posted to the blog. For all the power the technology has, it is relatively easy to use.

A *podcast* is simply a short audio program, 5- to 15-minutes long, with a specifically focused message. A podcast can be produced from any location: a professional studio, a home office studio or a remote



GN advertises wnponline.org

location. With a broadband connection, the podcast audio file can be uploaded to an Internet site and instantly made available to anyone with an Internet connection—anywhere in the world. The potential for preaching the gospel is enormous.

Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is a powerful technology that lets readers

See "wnponline.org," page 2

U.S. Ministry Holds Three-Day Conferences



Tom McCrady, Steve Moody, Bonnie and Larry Greider listen; Larry Salyer speaks in St. Louis (photos by Vic Kubik)

by Ken Giese

"Developing Spiritual Maturity" is the theme for the current series of ministerial conferences being held in each region of the United States over the next few months. Elders and wives in each region are being invited to attend the conferences, each of which begins on a Sunday and concludes on a Tuesday.

Depending on the size and demographics of each region, some will have a single conference for all elders and wives in the region while others will have two separate conferences.

David Register and the Southwest Region started the ball rolling with their regionwide conference on March

See "Conferences," page 12

Church to Launch New E-mail Project

The United Church of God is in the process of developing a daily e-mail program titled "This Is the Way" to be launched after the GCE meetings. It will eventually have a corresponding Web site as well.

Many companies have found it effective to use daily messages to help their customers begin their day on the right footing (and perhaps even sell some of their product). United plans to begin with about three "This Is the Way" messages a week to roll out the program. Eventually they will be sent out at least five days a week.

United has about 20,000 e-mail addresses on file to start with. If the material provided to our e-mail recipients is truly helpful and beneficial to them, they will be encouraged to forward it "to a friend" and to have others also sign up for the service. The initial list of 20,000 addresses can quickly blossom to many times that.

It is our goal to have short, biblically based messages that help our readers deal with events in their daily lives, including their search for meaning in life and subjects of current interest and value. Further links will be provided on similar subjects so that readers can delve more deeply into the material. We hope this will become a vehicle for subscriptions reaching around the world.

See "E-mail," page 2

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Process to Pick New President Nears Completion

by Robert Dick

On March 1, the Council of Elders began the process of selecting a new president. All elders were invited to submit recommendations, offering their views on individuals they felt would serve well in that position, qualities they would like to see or issues the next president should consider as priorities during the years ahead.

Three weeks were set aside for elder input and another week for Council review. All elder input was forwarded to each member of the Council and on April 4, after reviewing the recommendations, each Council member was allowed to put forward two nominees.

On April 6 Gerald Seelig, secretary of the Council, notified each nominee of his selection, sending him a copy of

the president's job description, an offer from the Council to answer questions and a request to confirm his willingness to continue as a nominee by April 13.

On April 15 the secretary announced the nominees: Bill Bradford, Aaron Dean, Jim Franks, Clyde Kilough and Les McCullough. Each nominee was given two weeks to return a questionnaire and vita sheet to be used by Council members in their initial assessment.

The next step is to reduce the number of nominees to a maximum of four men who will be invited to Cincinnati for face-to-face interviews with the whole Council. On May 2, each Council member is to submit the names of four candidates in order of preference. The secretary will return the results in order of weighted averages to the Council. The final candidates will be determined

from this list in a teleconference May 4.

The final nominees will gather May 10 for interviews. Two days are set aside for discussion with the candidates and private conferring by the Council about candidates' merits. It is the Council's desire to come to a broad agreement before the actual balloting on May 12.

May 12, according to bylaw requirements, the president will be selected by blind ballot. United's new president will be introduced to the General Conference of Elders the following weekend at their annual meeting and have the opportunity to address the churches connected by telephone hook-up May 14.

Please join all of us on the Council of Elders in prayer and fasting that God will guide our selection and bless the new president's years of service. UN

News At a Glance

Continued from page 1

everything. We will air right after Billy Graham's *Hour of Decision*.

Peter Eddington

Print Advertising Campaign Brings Excellent Results

During the first seven months of this fiscal year, *Good News* print advertising produced excellent results. Throughout that time, card packs and co-op mailers were the foundation of our promotional efforts. Over 5.2 million cards were sent to individual households throughout the United States. As a result, almost 42,000 new subscriptions were generated at a cost per response of only \$3.15.

In that period, seven newly designed inserts were tested. These cards advertised various booklets and a subscription to *The Good News*. Response was highest to our offers of *Jesus Christ: The Real Story*, *Why Does God Allow Suffering?* and *Heaven and Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach?*

Later in the fiscal year, an additional 3.7 million inserts and "take-one" cards were mailed or distributed. Responses to these efforts are currently being tabulated. When our print advertising campaign for the 2004-2005 fiscal year is completed at the end of June, we should expect to have added close to 70,000 new subscribers.

John LaBissoniere

Columnist Plugs Good News Again

The "Ask Herb" consumer Q&A column in the Reading, Pennsylvania, *Eagle*, again told readers how to receive *The Good News* free, this time also mentioning the free booklets and *Bible Study Course*. This was previously reported in the February 2004 *United News*.

New Hire Announced

Carole Gholson began work April 25 as the newest employee in the International English area of Mail Processing at the home office. Carole has been hired to help with the ever-increasing workload that has swamped the two original employees in this section. Responses to the Church's Web site and the related increase in postal correspondence have shown steady growth during the past couple of years.

Carole lives in Florence, Kentucky, and attends the Cincinnati East congregation with her husband, Lloyd.

Alec Surratt

See "News at a Glance," page 15

Youth Education Team Meets at Home Office

by Larry W. Greider

United's Youth Education Team (YET) met March 14 to 16 at the home office in Milford, Ohio, to review programs and to discuss goals for 2005. Members of the team include Larry Greider (chairman), Doug Horchak,

Joel Meeker, Jim Servidio and David Treybig.

The YET began in 1997 and today continues to oversee the Church's Sabbath school curriculum, preteen, teen and young adult camps, the Youth Corps projects and *Vertical Thought* magazine. The team also produces educational

material including "Teen Bible Study Discussion Guides" and special sermons/presentations such as "Are Our Children Called?" "Modesty" and "Passing on Our Faith to Our Children."

The YET is working to integrate our desired outcomes within all areas of youth education. This year a new Chal-

lenger II concept was implemented near Tucson, Arizona, for 10 young adults and several full-time ministers. Coordinated by James Capo, this beta test used group discussions to provide insight into God's truth. The venue was a climb-

See "YET," page 12

"E-mail," continued from page 1

Robert Berendt, pastor in Edmonton, Alberta (plus several other congregations), will be coordinating the material with the help of the home office. Dozens

of Church members in the introductory writing class have written messages that will help "This Is the Way" get underway.

If you would like to be involved, make sure you are on the Church's e-mail

update list (see www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm). Once the program is launched you'll see the type of items we will be using. Please forward submissions to robert_berendt@ucg.org. We reserve the right to edit submis-

sions and to keep them anonymous.

The potential will be great if this program is done right. Please keep this in your prayers as we prepare to launch "This Is the Way!"

Peter Eddington/Robert Berendt

"wnponline.org," continued from page 1

subscribe to online content and receive notification of new postings within as little as 15 minutes of being published. Subscription is free and is available when a reader first enters a Web site or blog or reads an e-mail offer.

Through these new technologies, content can be published, promoted and accessed by millions of new readers around the world at little or no cost. This audience can be developed and rapidly drawn to the content of a blog or Web site.

Longitude Blog

The wnponline.org site is a dynamic site with news, short commentary and special features. Plans are for fresh content to be posted daily. The blog format allows rapid posting of breaking news stories and commentary. Posted entries carry related and timely hyperlinks to other articles from news sources providing further information and background.

The blog is called Longitude, and it is designed to help chart a proper course in today's world, always knowing where one is—and where one is going.

The Longitude blog also employs the technology of podcasting. Computer users can use special programs to automatically search the Internet for audio broadcasts—podcasts—that match

specified interests. These can then be listened to on a computer or transferred to a portable MP3 player so they can be listened to anywhere.

How Do I Access the Blog and Podcasts?

To read the Longitude Blog, go to www.wnponline.org/longitude. Postings are ordered newest to oldest, from the top, down.

To listen to a podcast, look for the PodCast-WNPonline logo in a blog posting. If you click the logo, the audio file will begin playing on your computer. Or, if you have an MP3 device con-

nected to your computer, you can click to download the MP3 file to the device for later listening.

For your convenience, you will also find on the left side of the wnponline.org opening page a complete list of current and archived Longitude podcasts.

RSS subscription software allows you to subscribe to blogs and podcasts and receive notification of new postings. For complete information on the software available and how to use it, go to the wnponline.org and click the "How to Use" icon.

As mobile bandwidth increases, it will become easier to also download

MP3 podcasts to mobile phones and other new portable technologies. It is our goal to be positioned to provide content to this rapidly expanding audience for these new media—around the world—via the Web. The costs are minimal and the opportunity for maximum exposure is very high, making this a very smart investment in future media delivery.

The wnponline.org site will provide access to the archives of past issues of *World News* and *Prophecy* as well as the current one. The initial design and construction of the site has been done by Les Booth, a United Church of God member living in West Lafayette, Indiana. UN

Phases One and Two: Printed Publication and Seminars

World News and Prophecy was inaugurated in 1998 as a publication for United members and others who had a desire to understand world events in the light of Bible prophecy.

Over the last seven years the writings and perspectives of this journal's writers has reached not only our members and coworkers, but is actively read by many in the greater Church of God community. Readers gain information and perspectives about the future based upon today's events that are offered in a balanced, well-researched manner.

Content has been continually added to provide a balanced perspective on

world events. The most recent addition is a feature titled "A Page on the World," which gives the audience a book review on literature of note.

The last column of the magazine is titled "This Is the Way," based on Isaiah 30:21. The goal of this column is to take note of people, organizations and nations that truly are making a difference in the here and now; and mark their example as seeds of what will bloom in the Kingdom of God.

WNP Weekend Seminars

Two years ago, the editorial staff decided to take *World News and*

Prophecy on the road to local churches in special weekend seminars. The goal is to give a congregation a focus on prophecy and world events in a special Sabbath format. Congregations have the option to invite *Good News* subscribers to the seminars.

The staff strives to reach two or three congregations a year. These seminars allow the audience to meet the writers and allow the writers to understand the makeup and needs of the audience.

Pastors whose congregations would like to host a seminar can contact Darris McNeely, the managing editor, at darris_mcneely@ucg.org. UN

May 2005
Vol. 11, No. 4



United News
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United News (ISSN 1088-8020) is published monthly except April and October by the United Church of God, an International Association, 555 Technocenter 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.

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

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

Subscriptions: *United News* is sent automatically to members of the United Church of God and is free to all who request it. Your subscription is provided by the generous, voluntary contributions of members of the United Church of God, an International Association, and their coworkers. Donations are gratefully accepted and are tax-deductible. To request a subscription, write to *United News*, United Church of God, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, or to one of the international addresses below.

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Internet access on your computer:

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



News From **Around the World**

New Mailing Office Opens in Malawi

by Bill Jahns

The United Church of God now has an operating office in Malawi. E.E. Salawila has graciously taken a room of his home and put our booklets and *Good News* magazines in this space.

The *Good News* now has over 250 readers in Malawi. Unfortunately, the post office of Malawi increased the rates by 50 percent recently. In order to keep the numbers of subscribers receiving *The Good News* under control, a renewal letter was sent out.

Malawi is a poor country, and we often receive requests for financial help. Some have access to the Internet, and we receive many requests for *The Good News* through that source. Some of our members are also putting *The Good News* in libraries and schools in Malawi.

Recently we had the first new attendee come to the United Church of God in Lilongwe through reading *The Good News* magazine and other literature.

During my last trip to Malawi, we had a record attendance of 54 in Blantyre. It is encouraging to see the growth, since



A room in E.E. Salawila's home has been converted to serve as the Malawi mailing office for *The Good News* and United Church of God booklets

just a few years ago we had only one family, the Chondes, attending in Malawi. The members in Malawi are encouraged to see the Church grow and to finally have *The Good News* mailed from their own country.

The brethren there are also excited about Peter Eddington and Clay Thornton visiting Malawi and taping segments for the Feast video there. A combined church service in Blantyre is planned for June 4. UN

Canadian Council, National Conference Meet

Calgary, Alberta, was the setting for the March 2 to 4 Canadian Council meeting. Edwin van Pelt gave the office update. Income continues to come in above budget and the amount of mail continues to break records. The number of requests received by e-mail has doubled in the past year. Mr. van Pelt mentioned that the office is purchasing equipment to produce DVDs.

David Palmer gave a media update. Five ads are running on the Internet. These change from time to time and are an inexpensive form of advertising. The national Web site has just undergone a major upgrade.

Larry DeLong gave an overview of the work of the Conflict Resolution Task Force, and the Council gave them the go-ahead to continue with their work.

A proposed Annual Council Review was formally adopted.

The Governance/Ethics/Pastoral

Committee submitted several policies that were approved.

Friday afternoon was reserved for Council education. Bill Stephaniuk, a human resource specialist, presented an overview of human resource policy and procedure. After his presentation, the Council approved having the director of operations work with Mr. Stephaniuk to conduct an audit of the National Office Human Resources documents.

Dr. Richard Berendt then gave a presentation titled "Cancer—A Primer With Perspectives and Information to Assist Elders in Counseling."

National Conference

The National Conference of Canada held its annual meeting March 6 in Calgary. Fifteen conference members were either present or connected by phone for this occasion. All 23 members of the conference took part in the balloting.

Mr. DeLong presented the Strategic Plan; Anthony Wasilkoff, the Operations Plan; and Mr. van Pelt, the budget, all of which were approved.

Three Council members' terms ended March 31. Mr. DeLong, Dennis Horlick and Graemme Marshall were chosen.

Chairman Rainer Salomaa reviewed his 40 years as a member of the Church. He compared some of our current struggles to those experienced in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Director of Operations Anthony Wasilkoff talked about how the success of our plans depends on the "Faith Factor." Years ago Canada was able to subsidize other countries. Will we be able to do this again? He is convinced we can, if we start praying more earnestly about the direction of our efforts.

For full reports, see www.ucg.ca/resources/updates/council/.

Linda Wasilkoff

British Isles Letter Blessed With Good Response

Some unusual "coincidences" have brought a good response to April's semi-annual letter sent out by UCG—British Isles.

In discussions late last year we decided that it would be good to offer the *Good News* mailing list the booklet *The Church Jesus Built*. In February we penciled in a date for mailing the letter by April 8 to enable us to handle the response by the Passover season.

The death of Pope John Paul II on Saturday, April 2, brought a massive out-

flow of praise from around the world and an intense focus of the media on the Roman Catholic Church and the selection of the next pope.

This was an ideal moment to send a letter asking, "How did Jesus describe the Church He was building?" We comment, "The worldwide influence of Roman Catholicism and those churches that have sprung from it presents a set of significant anomalies to students of the Bible." Jesus said His Church would not be "of this world" or

a major player on the world scene.

In eight days the British Isles office received 580 requests for the booklet *The Church Jesus Built*. Of those, 54 readers included donations.

The response from the United Kingdom is 15 percent of the 3,873 posted. An additional 973 letters were sent to Europe, Scandinavia and the Middle East (4,846 in total). Responses from Europe are beginning to arrive. UN

This appeared in the *UCG—British Isles National Announcements* April 23.

International News At a Glance

Brethren Spreading Seeds in Sweden

The scattered brethren in Sweden meet in Mjölby every four to six weeks and this year for the second consecutive year met for the Passover in Karlskoga.

This year the Church has opened a P.O. box, a bank account, a fax line and an e-mail address to help with literature requests and donations.

The members in Sweden, with the help of Lennart Fransson, a Swedish-speaker who lives in Spokane, Washington, are working on translations of booklets and the *Bible Study Course*. Two booklets are nearly ready for printing in Swedish and a third, along with the first six lessons of the course, are in review.

The *Good News* mailing list, which is maintained by the British Isles office, is currently 130. A number of subscribers have been receiving the magazine and requesting booklets for several years. Now there is a growing number of readers receiving *United News*, *World News and Prophecy*, the *Bible Study Course* and *Vertical Thought* youth magazine.

In March, two quarter-page ads were placed in a free newspaper with 71,500 copies distributed in Stockholm. *Good News* magazines are also placed around the city. Although the number of responses was small, we will continue to test which methods bring the best results. There are plans to continue to spread the gospel through local efforts in Stockholm and Mjölby, putting out *GNs* and brochures. We also want to offer readers our Swedish booklets. Prayers are requested for the work in Sweden.

There are plans also for the members in Scandinavia, along with those from the Baltics, to meet for the Feast of Tabernacles in Estonia this year to further discuss the work in this region.

Paul Spenser, Kira Engholm-Spenser and Solveig Hammar

Canadian Camp Set for July 15 to 19

The Canadian Summer Camp is planned for July 15 to 19 at Charleston Lake Provincial Park. The park is about 50 kilometers (30 miles) northeast of Kingston, Ontario. The tuition cost is \$75 Canadian.

There is rail, bus and air service to Kingston from both Toronto, Ontario, and Montreal, Quebec. Transportation from Kingston can be arranged.

Further information and application forms can be obtained from Graemme Marshall at (613) 448-9077 or by e-mail at graeemme_marshall@ucg.org. Or contact Edwin van Pelt at (800) 338-7779 within Canada or (905) 876-0569 from

outside Canada or by e-mail at ed_van_pelt@ucg.ca. The application deadline is June 8.

Edwin van Pelt

Costa Rica Feast Clarification

The Festival planners for San José, Costa Rica, wish to clarify a statement in the February *United News*. The statement, "To accommodate the many activities, most services will be held in the evening," should have been, "Some services may be held in the evening."

Minister Herbert Cisneros said, "The Festival announcement was intended to give a general panorama of the Feast. A detailed Feast program has not been completed, much less approved by the director of the Spanish work, Leon Walker. We regret this inconvenient wording that may have been caused by our enthusiasm to overemphasize the wide range of activities offered at this Feast site, which will allow the brethren to fellowship."

"Possibly only one or two services may be held in the late afternoon due to weather concerns . . . All events will be balanced throughout the Feast to allow all of the members time to fellowship and time to worship and learn."

Canadian Letter Gets High Response

In February, a new subscriber development letter was sent to 2,001 *GN* subscribers in Canada. The results have been encouraging. By March 24, over 350 responses had been received, a response rate of 17.6 percent. That's one of the highest rates we've seen recently. The letter offered three publications—*Why Does God Allow Suffering? What Is Your Destiny?* and the *Bible Study Course*.

Edwin van Pelt

Ministerial Trainee Chosen in Canada

Anthony Wasilkoff announced that Dennis and Paula Horlick of the Toronto, Ontario, congregation will enter a ministerial candidate training program half-time beginning June 1.

Members Provide Tsunami Relief

UCG members Kevin and Sonali Fiske arrived in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on March 20 and have begun the LifeNets Tsunami Reconstruction Project. They are building a 36-foot boat that will benefit 10 fishing families, along with five homes. A log of their reports is at www.lifenets.org/tsunami/blog.htm.

Roy Holladay: The Heart of a Pastor

by Gary E. Antion

Three years ago the former chairman of the Council of Elders, Roy Holladay, was selected to be the president of the United Church of God, an International Association. He and his wife, Norma, moved from Big Sandy, Texas, to Cincinnati, Ohio, to assume his new responsibility as the president of the Church in the early summer of 2002.

Now, after three years as president, Mr. Holladay will be leaving the home office and returning to what he also loves, being a pastor. As he departs, we wanted you to know what kind of a servant he and his wife have been to the Church during these last three years. A major part of his character is sincere humility, and he would be the first to express his gratitude to God and other people for being given the opportunity to serve.

Over 40 Years of Pastoral Service

When Mr. and Mrs. Holladay moved to the home office, they immediately continued the attitude that they had developed while pastoring 24 congregations in the states of West Virginia, Texas, Virginia, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Florida. Mr. Holladay has also coordinated the Feast of Tabernacles in several areas. In addition to those responsibilities, he served as a regional pastor for five years.

His leadership was honed as a member of the Council of Elders, where he chaired a number of committees over the years. His service as chairman of the Council of Elders was a good preparation for his role as president since it familiarized him with the total activities of the work.

He and Norma came to Cincinnati to be servants to the brethren of the United Church of God and to all whom God would call into His way of life. They began getting to know all the staff members by taking them to lunch or dinner. Mr. Holladay stopped by each area of the office and talked with each employee to learn how the various tasks were performed.

He met regularly with the manage-

ment team and others to try to create a pleasant and unified working environment at the home office. He was appreciative of the efforts of the staff and gave individuals on the staff many opportunities to develop and grow in their various areas of responsibility.

Mr. Holladay brought an approach to the presidency that was much appreciated because he brought with him the heart of a pastor. Mr. and Mrs. Holladay drew upon the experiences they gained through their over 40 years of serving as pastor and wife. Mr. Holladay used those experiences to help him fulfill his new role as Church president. He and his wife also made dozens of visits to congregations in the United States and other countries to gain insight into the lives and hopes of the brethren so that he might better serve them.

Another area in which Mr. Holladay has shown the attitude of a caring servant was his instituting of sending out get-well and condolence cards to those whose names and ailments came to the attention of the home office staff. The cards gave encouragement and comfort to hundreds to whom they were sent. Congratulation letters to welcome new members of United were also sent to each individual who was baptized or had made commitments to be members of United.

Mr. and Mrs. Holladay brought the quality of humility to his area of responsibility. In addition to being humble and appreciative, Mr. Holladay was not afraid to launch new, innovative programs and make every effort to see those projects were accomplished. He also gave credit to those who brought those ideas when they were not his own.

Accomplishments

When Mr. Holladay became president, he was given a list of mandates to accomplish by the Council. With God's help, here's some of what he has accomplished in his three-year term.

Godly Leadership Program: Mr. Holladay actively led the development and presentation of material about Christ-centered Servant Leadership, which was renamed the Godly Leadership Program. He initiated sessions in the home

office and with the management team, and was an active advisor to the task force responsible for developing this curriculum. Presentations on godly leadership have been given at the Ambassador Bible Center and Leadership Training Workshops.

Media Development: During Mr. Holladay's tenure, focus was placed on developing our Internet potential and improving our video capabilities. New employees were hired who brought in their expertise and improved our efforts in those areas. The *Good News* and *Tomorrow* television programs expanded their coverage. New video editing equipment was purchased, and a new media center is being built to accomplish even more in these areas.

The Church's main Web sites at www.ucg.org and www.gnmagazine.org were given a fresh design and have increased their traffic and visitor throughput severalfold in the last three years. Combined monthly visitors for the two sites for March 2005 topped 392,000. The number of new subscribers to our publications



Roy Holladay on trip to Ghana; Norma and Roy Holladay celebrate 40th anniversary; top, ABC graduation (photos by Andy Lausted and Janet Treadway)

received through the Internet continues to break records each month, and the number of print promotion pieces for the 2004-2005 fiscal year broke all records.

At the encouragement of the Council, the administration also began working with an outside consultant on how to more effectively communicate with the public.

Pastoral Care for the Brethren: With decades of pastoral experience, Mr. Hol-

laday was deeply interested in making sure that the members of the Church were being well cared for with interesting educational materials and pastors in every area. This includes preparing new pastors for the future. To this end, the following programs were initiated:

- A proposal for Pastoral Excellence and Renewal was created.

- The Leadership Training Program has been in place for three years. This is providing leadership training for individuals in local congregations—including some who may have potential as elders or pastors in the future.

- The Church began a DVD and audiotape program of sermons that are sent to all congregations about key doctrinal and Christian Living topics. These

have included the Sabbath, modesty and child rearing.

- Mr. Holladay conducted the first-ever education conference for the coordinators of some of our major educational programs in United. They developed philosophy and mission statements, and addressed how we

could more effectively and efficiently coordinate our efforts in order to better serve the brethren and to improve the use of our resources.

- The Challenger II camp program for young adults was started in December 2004.

Employee Development: Mr. Holladay has shown the same "heart of a pastor" toward those working for United.

- Perhaps for the first time in the history of the Church, a formal, written retirement program was developed for all employees.

- An employee Web site was created to access a wide variety of employment documents—including health and life insurance information, 403(b) plans, a human resource manual, safety guidelines, the retirement policy, etc.

- Job descriptions for all home office employees were updated, something



that had not been done for years.

- For the first time, a description of all job functions for each employee is being developed, to help all departments operate more effectively and to better enable transition of employees.

- An employee job assessment process was started for home office employees.

Good Works Program: Mr. Holladay initiated the "Good Works" program, which was approved by the Council in August 2003. This program allows brethren (through collective fundraising efforts) to support projects and brethren in developing countries. Congregations in Ghana, the Philippines, Kenya, Cameroon, Togo, Rwanda and other countries have been helped.

Financial Reserves Policy: During the past three years, expenses have been kept within budgeted parameters. The administration also developed a policy, approved by the Council, to establish the level of annual reserves to be maintained and how to use funds if this level should be exceeded.

Vertical Thought: During the last couple of years, the United Church of God began producing a hard-copy youth magazine. Although originally sent only to young people in United, we now have more than 17,000 subscribers—most of whom are outside of United.

Festival Planning Team: This team has now been created under the coordination of Doug Horchak. The team will meet at least once annually to discuss planning for the Feast of Tabernacles, to make this highlight of the year the best it can be.

We wish Roy and Norma Holladay every success and blessing as they continue to help God's people as a pastor in the Cleveland, Tennessee, congregation. We're confident that he will continue to be . . . Roy Holladay—with the heart of a pastor. UN

Quotable Qualities

Here are some quotes from the home office staff about qualities they saw in the Holladays:

- "To describe Roy in a few words would be hard. For me his example of honesty, love, humility and caring motivated me every day to want to live God's way. I was always inspired by his messages in the staff meetings. He was gentle and always took the time to come around and talk with us on an individual basis. His office was an open door for all of us. I still remember the long trip he and his wife, Norma, took to come to my mother-in-law's funeral and offer our family much needed support. He was an encourager and great at building people up."

- "Roy clearly demonstrated—not just in word, but in how he did everything—that every person's contribution to the work of the Church was important, valued and appreciated. On any given issue, he would solicit input from multiple individuals. He would carefully listen and acknowledge recommendations when offered to him, regardless of who gave them. A number of his initiatives promoted getting brethren and employees involved in more effective ways. His gratitude was constant. You always knew that Roy was not only thankful for what you had done, but for who you were as a member of the Body of Christ."

- "My first impression upon first coming to the home office was how peaceful it was here. And I know much of that atmosphere was created by our president, Mr. Holladay. My second impression, since it was near the Days of Unleavened Bread, was that he was a wonderful example of being unleavened. It has been very refreshing and inspiring to see in Mr. Holladay the fruit of the Spirit in word and deed. His kindness will always stand out to me as a hallmark of his leadership. These traits proved to be genuine when it was announced that there would be a change in the presidency. I didn't hear from him any backbiting or malicious words. He took the announcement with grace and is optimistically moving on to serve God's people in whatever way he will be led."

- "Mr. Holladay will be a blessing to whatever area he serves."
- "Roy Holladay is approachable. He actually hears and listens to what you have to say."

- "Roy Holladay brought everyone in the home office (who would participate) into the discussion on Christ-centered Servant Leadership. This was probably one of the most rewarding projects I have ever participated in and it was truly fun to interact with all the others."

- "Roy Holladay has been a joy to have around the home office as president. He always has time to talk when employees have a need, and he spends time on the telephone with those who call. Mr.

Holladay instituted a regular Monday morning meeting for the staff titled Compass Check. It is a great way to start the week off as we prepare for the work ahead. Mr. Holladay has served here as president with dignity and integrity. He is a man of very high principles and very converted."

- "It's been an absolute pleasure working with Mr. Roy Holladay. There are many things that just touch my heart about him, but one in particular that I'll always remember is the excellent example he continued to set for the love of God's people. He also always made time for the employees and showed us that he beyond doubt cared. In the mornings, he would take the time to stop over at each employee's workplace and greet each and every one of us."

- "Mr. Holladay was a great asset to this office. His door was always open for anyone who wanted to talk with him. He would come around to our office area and greet us and ask how we were doing. It has been a pleasure working under him, and he and his wife will be greatly missed."

- The Council of Elders expressed its appreciation in the following quote from their Feb. 28 letter: "All of us on the Council possess high regard for Mr. Holladay. His integrity, diligent work ethic, humility, dedication to God's people 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."



From the Word

How to Keep the Sabbath Day Holy

■ Sabbath-keeping reflects our relationship with God. How can we recapture positive principles and grow in this area?

by Richard Pinelli

Exodus 19 and 20 talk about how God, when He gave the Ten Commandments, caused the earth to tremble and shake—the manifestations were absolutely awesome. God said He came to test them “that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin” (Exodus 20:20).

How do we respond to these words? In this article we are not talking about proving the Sabbath. We are really talking about what we need to do as members of God’s Church in keeping this particular day.

A Test Commandment

We have talked for many, many years about the fact that the Sabbath is a test commandment. God measures the Church by what it does with His law. And we have come to realize that judgment begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). Many times people think of this judgment as condemnation. But it’s a process of evaluation, of learning, of growing, of walking with God. We are the people of God and He is showing us how to observe this day and to keep His laws in the way that He intends so that we can be prepared to enter His family.

One of the most important things that we can understand about this subject is that our job is to continually expand our understanding of God’s law concerning the Sabbath.

So how we keep the Sabbath says something about us. God wants to learn something about our character, what we are going to do with this command. It is important for us to continue to grow in understanding not only the letter of the law, but the spirit.

God made a very special Sabbath covenant with His people back in Exodus 31. We see from that chapter that the Sabbath is an identifying sign of God’s people. It identifies people, not agreements. And so the Sabbath day is a very important day, not greater than the other nine commandments, but a part of the Ten Commandments and a sign between us and our Creator. As we serve Him on this day, there is something special that we learn about the Sabbath.

Ezekiel wrote about the severe consequences when the people defiled God’s Sabbaths (Ezekiel 20:11-13). God was very serious about the Sabbath being a test commandment. How we keep God’s Sabbath tells God something about how much we really want to be in His family.

The Jews were convinced that the Sabbath was the primary reason they

went into captivity. So they proceeded to make rules for their Sabbath. But they went into the other ditch, becoming so “pharisaical” that they developed 39 categories of activities that comprised “work”—everything from swatting a fly to helping an injured man. No wonder Christ condemned the Pharisees. But if that ditch is wrong, the other ditch is wrong as well. There is a balance.

I am not trying to create some kind of yardstick religion. But over the last few years many of our ministers have asked for a little bit more information on Sabbath-keeping, because in the early ‘90s it was watered down. The observance of the Sabbath became in many cases something different than it was years before. People began to dress inappropriately. People treated the Sabbath as simply another day rather than a feast day, a special day. They didn’t get involved as they used to in preparing for it and looking forward to it. And so all I am trying to do is to reemphasize some of these areas to help us better understand how we should keep the Sabbath.

I think the most interesting thing that happened after I gave a sermon on this subject was how many young people from age 18 to 30 came up and said they had never heard things like that before. And that was shocking to me because it made me realize that we haven’t spoken on this topic for a long time.

I am not here to judge the intent of your heart. I am here, like you, to try to better understand how to keep God’s law every Sabbath.

Four Primary Principles

There are four primary principles of Sabbath-keeping. First, the commandment tells us *not to work*. This means not to make a productive increase from working—receiving pay and so on.

Second, the commandment tells us *to rest*. This does not mean that we stay in bed all day. Rest means to change the overall approach that we have from the six days of go, go, go and work, work, work, to being able to just stop and enjoy the day.

Third, we are told *to assemble with others for worship*. We are required to congregate. It is a part of true Christianity. You really can’t just be a living room Christian. A great part of keeping God’s law has to do with interaction and involvement with the people of God on a regular basis.

Leviticus 23:3 says that it is a holy *convocation*. The word implies the product of official summons to worship. To put it another way, God said *be there*. When we receive a summons to appear in court, what do we do? We take it seriously. Similarly, God has said to us that we should respond by being here.

There was a man in one of the churches a few years ago who brought a portable dialysis machine in his truck so he could be at church! And there are

many wonderful examples of people who desperately want to be at church.

The fourth point is that we are here *to fellowship*. Hebrews 10:25 says we need to be gathering ourselves together so much more as we “see the Day approaching.” We are here to learn from the other members, to hear the sermon and sermonette. Apostasy sets in when Christian fellowship becomes lukewarm.

It is very important that we gather together to help and encourage the brethren, and to allow them to give us encouragement when we have need after a bad week. We receive prayer updates and find ways we can serve the brethren.

The Sabbath was designed to serve mankind (Mark 2:27). On it we learn about life’s purposes, why we’re here, where we’re headed. Most important, we learn how to live.

Proper Sabbath observance allows us to develop and maintain a personal relationship with both the human family and the spiritual family of God.

Reverencing God’s Sanctuary

Part of properly keeping the Sabbath is reverencing God’s sanctuary

(Leviticus 19:30). This includes respect in the way we dress and the way we get to church on time. We need to be in our seats, ready to be a part of the song service, the sermonette and the sermon.

We need to have our “wedding garment” on (Matthew 22:11-14). We need to be properly attired, wearing the best we have. It’s like the high priest who on the Day of Atonement wore a special garment to show respect and reverence (Leviticus 16:4).

The Preparation Day

Exodus 20:8 says, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” It is interesting that the word *remember* is used. The *Soncino* commentary says this means we should always keep the Sabbath in mind during the week. If we are thinking about the Sabbath, then we will begin to make some of the modern-day preparations that are needed.

Instead of running for six days and coming to an abrupt stop all of a sudden when the sun goes down, we can take the opportunity to begin to switch gears early enough to think about what we are going to do. For example, shining our shoes, pressing our clothes,

preparing foods and thinking about what we are going to do with our children.

One of the most enjoyable times for my wife and me was when we had Friday nights together as a family. Every Friday night we would have one of our favorite meals. The first time it would be my daughter’s choice, the second time my son’s, the third time my wife’s and last of all the old man’s.

We shut everything down and it became our time. Sometimes we would go downstairs and play a game. Sometimes we would sit in front of the fireplace and talk and have our dessert there. It was very special.

The Dos

Now, with the principles of Sabbath-keeping that we have gone through, we must individually grow in proper judgment, continually expanding our understanding of God’s laws concerning the Sabbath. In this article, rather than giving you the don’ts, I want to give you the dos. I want to show you some very positive things you can do based on the teachings of Isaiah 58.

Isaiah 58:13-14 says, “If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from

What About Ox-in-the-Ditch Situations?

What about the ox in the ditch (Luke 14:1-6)? Sometimes people look at their job or their situation as an ox in the ditch. The Bible shows that emergencies, ox-in-the-ditch situations, justify work. When one has a legitimate emergency, a life-or-death illness or accident, he or she is not condemned for doing what is necessary to meet the challenge of the emergency.

Dealing With Legitimate Emergencies

The Second Narrows Bridge between North Vancouver, British Columbia, and the mainland collapsed. Hundreds of people were thrown into the water from this high bridge. Many died and some were badly injured. A member of the Church in Vancouver—a nurse at a hospital—was asked to come to work. She worked an entire shift during that time because there was death, mayhem and confusion. There was an emergency where they needed to have trained people there. This lady had always told her boss that she could not come in from Friday night sunset until Saturday night sunset, and they honored that. But they said to her, “We have an emergency that we have never had before. Will you come?” And she said, “Yes, I will.”

We had a man in the Church who used to work on high power lines. He made sure his boss knew that he would not be there to work on the Sabbath. But one Friday night there was a terrible, terrible storm. He had to spend eight hours taking care of lines that had fallen across roads and would have injured people.

Now, he let his boss know. The nurse let her boss know. These people recognized that if their bosses were to continue time after time asking them to come to work, then they would have to face the question, What is a legitimate emergency and what is created by the boss?

Someone asked the question, How do you handle situations when responsibilities considered critical by your company keep encroaching into Friday evening? I think the answer is that we have to begin to plan ahead to avoid foreseeable “emergencies.” If they continue to encroach upon the Sabbath, you may need to find another place to work.

But in most cases—I would say in 99 percent of cases—when people plan ahead and talk to their employer and explain their needs, it all works out. And then there may be a legitimate emergency that requires you to make a judgment.

Is the Sabbath Worth Dying For?

Someone asked another question: If you could not find a way to survive because every occupation required you to work on Saturdays, is the Sabbath worth dying for?

Strong question, isn’t it? But there’s a scripture that addresses it. It’s found in the context of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego and the fiery furnace. They, too, faced this question of faith. They refused to bow down to the image, to break one of the Ten Commandments, and the king said he would throw them in the furnace.

They responded, “If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand . . . But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up” (Daniel 3:17-18). It comes down to a matter of faith.

We have found over the past 45 to 50 years that most people who have held their ground and obeyed God’s Sabbath command have found a way to make it through the problem and actually be blessed! But you must understand, this is not an ox in the ditch. It comes down to a matter of a choice about God’s Word and God’s law. Now some people, if they are weak in faith, may give in to something. But you will find that over a period of time you will be convicted, and you will be finding yourself having to either decide to justify or to realize that you are going to have to carry out that command regardless of what men say or think or do.

doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD honorable, and shall honor Him, nor doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, then you shall delight yourself in the LORD; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father."

In the context of the right kind of fasting and the wrong kind of fasting mentioned earlier in Isaiah 58, God then addresses the Sabbath. As with fasting, God contrasts the right approach to His holy time and the wrong approach. The right approach will cause God to take notice, enhance our relationship and cause us to take delight in the things that are eternal.

We have to be careful that our Sabbath does not degenerate into a meaningless weekly ritual. There is more to the Sabbath than simply acknowledging that it is Saturday and not Sunday, and not working, and of course going to church. The Sabbath is set apart for a particular purpose, and this is the positive side of understanding what we should be doing with the Sabbath.

So let's start with a question that many people raise. How do I use my television set? What about my computer? What about a radio? What about printed material such as books and magazines and newspapers?

The world we live in comes into our home through many vehicles. How we use these vehicles on the Sabbath will depend on our interpretation of Isaiah 58:13-14. Do we use these vehicles for personal entertainment? Do we use these vehicles for information?

The Sabbath turns out to be a day of highly positive import. It liberates man for meeting God. Do these vehicles help you do that? This is what you have to evaluate. These are some of the questions we must judge in our Sabbath-keeping.

Now let me give you two sides to the

story. Let's say that there are some people who spend seven hours watching television on the Sabbath. They might decide to watch an R-rated movie on Friday night. Now to me that is one ditch. The other side of that might be simply turning it off and never using it at all, when there are some things that can be used in a proper way.

Sabbath observance is not a burden. It liberates man for meeting God. It is a day of joy. It is a day of delight. The person who calls the Sabbath a delight is one who delights in the Lord. Our thinking begins to shift. We worship God and find enjoyment through and in Him and in what He provides, both spiritually and physically.

Our Ways Vs. God's Ways

Isaiah 58 contrasts our ways versus God's ways. God claims the Sabbath day as His, and I think the Sabbath is to be a pleasurable and an enjoyable day. It is to be a day of happiness and cheerfulness.

What makes us happy? Not the same thing that makes the world around us "happy"—not just physical pleasures. We focus on the spiritual aspects of the day, thinking about God, getting closer to God, learning about His ways. In essence God says, "Pay attention to Me on the Sabbath. Treat the Sabbath as an honor to Me." When you begin to do that, you find that television, radio and the computer all find their proper place. But their place is not in spending hours watching R-rated movies on the Sabbath. That just doesn't seem to be the ditch the Christian should be in.

In verse 14 God shows that we are going to be a part of His Kingdom. Thinking about those things on the Sabbath day and the life we have chosen becomes a very important thing.

Isaiah 58:13-14 tell us to focus on God and not self. Secondly, they tell us to focus on the eternal things and not the trivial. That is basically God and the big picture. It is not saying it would be

wrong to think about other things, more mundane things, but the big picture should take center stage.

The Sabbath pictures the Millennium. The Sabbath pictures the coming of Christ to bring God's government. And so from the concept of, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also," we recognize that if our thoughts are only on our own interests, our own pursuits and our own pleasures, then our focus will be on the self.

In Isaiah 58:13, "your own ways" means the course of life, your employment, your enterprises, your finances, the serious business of making a living that we have to do six days a week. We

The Sabbath is a wonderful gift that God has given us in worshipping Him . . . Can we assume that if God held a whole nation accountable for breaking the Sabbath, that He would spare one individual? We as a Church need to take the Sabbath more seriously. I think we need to understand that perhaps we've let some things slip.

don't involve ourselves in working at that on the Sabbath day. We do that the rest of the week. Those things by which you feed, clothe and care for yourself physically, you put away. You remove yourself from that and you begin to think about those areas that are important spiritually.

Forsaking "your own pleasure" does not mean the Sabbath is a rigorous day of abstinence. I found that those Friday nights with my children were a wonderful time. I found that being with the brethren after church services or being able to enjoy a picnic or a walk in nature was very much a part of having our mind and our energies taken up in that Sabbath attitude.

"Nor speaking your words": I think this is a spiritual application of the first two principles. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34). What we talk about, what we are thinking is known every Sabbath day when we talk with the brethren.

Making the Sabbath a Delight

Now let's look at some ideas about making the Sabbath a delight. I told

you about one that my family did for many years when my children were at home.

The Sabbath can also be a chance to visit the sick and the widows. When we begin to reach outside of ourselves, wonderful relationships can be established.

Many people have used the time to write a letter or a card of encouragement to someone. It's wonderful to know someone was thinking about you and cared enough to send you a card.

Studying the Word of God and reviewing God's plan is another important use of the Sabbath. It is a crazy world we live in right now. Find escape

prophecy. Talk about the problems of the world and the solutions that God is going to bring.

Special family time at meals is very important. I found one of the most enjoyable things was having a picnic in the park after Sabbath services, where you just sit down, take off your tie and visit with a group of brethren. Or have a potluck at home. Have special friends over Friday evening.

So considering all these things, how much would you get involved with the world coming into your house during the Sabbath? Probably a whole lot less.

Taking the Sabbath More Seriously

The Sabbath is a wonderful gift that God has given us in worshipping Him. Generally today the tendency is to take the Sabbath for granted. More people seem to be too liberal with the Sabbath than those who are too strict. I hope we will get back to remembering these important things.

Notice what the prophet Ezekiel says to us. "I gave them My statutes and showed them My judgments, 'which, if a man does, he shall live by them.' Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them" (Ezekiel 20:11-12). The Sabbath is a sign between God and His people. Israel forsook God and the holy time that He set aside. They paid the price for it, a very dear price to pay.

Can we assume that if God held a whole nation accountable for breaking the Sabbath, that He would spare one individual? We as a Church need to take the Sabbath more seriously. I think we need to understand that perhaps we've let some things slip.

We must keep the Sabbath holy because our salvation depends on it. I hope you will bring these basic principles back to your Sabbath-keeping and allow it to make your Sabbath day most enjoyable and most delightful. UN

This article is based on two sermons given in the Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation Feb. 7 and March 6, 2004. The full transcripts are available at www.ugc.org/sermons/transcripts.htm.

Eating Out on the Sabbath

The question of eating out on the Sabbath sometimes comes up. We have a paper, "Principles of Sabbath Observance, Eating Out on the Sabbath." It is on the Web site at www.ugc.org/papers if you wish to get a copy. It goes through all of the scriptures and all of the principles that have to do with eating out on the Sabbath. The Church has never taught that it was wrong or a violation of the Sabbath to eat in a restaurant on the Sabbath. Clearly Christianity involves an individual choice as to what you do. It is a judgment that individuals have to make.

Paul took certain positions about not eating meat if it made someone stumble. But the act itself of going out to eat is not a matter of sin. It is the view of the Church that it is not a violation of the Scriptures if one chooses to eat out.

Those who object to purchasing a meal on the Sabbath usually base their argument from two principles—causing someone else to work on the Sabbath or exchanging money on the Sabbath. There are two scriptures they use, one in Nehemiah 13, and the other in Amos.

If you look at these two scriptures with this particular paper, I think you will see why the Church teaches what it teaches. The prohibition that you find in both places is against setting up a market on the Sabbath or a Holy Day. The Jews had become a people that made the Sabbath a secular day where it was acceptable to go to a market. The principle expressed in these scriptures is, don't make the Sabbath a market day or a day to do your weekly shopping.

Nehemiah 13 has nothing to do with eating out in a restaurant. After you look at the scriptures on the subject, if you as an individual feel compelled not to eat out at a restaurant on the Sabbath, so be it. No one should look down, no one should criticize, no one should judge. We simply ask that individuals keep that as a personal decision and not make efforts to persuade others, because this is a teaching of the Church. We must understand that attempts to persuade others is divisive, and that behavior simply cannot be tolerated in the Church of God. We call that sowing discord.

Rediscovering the Sabbath

Nan Chase, a writer of Jewish background, wrote an interesting article about rediscovering the Sabbath. Here are excerpts: "In a moment of divine inspiration I decided to try an old-fashioned cure for my space-age blues. It is called the Sabbath. And it's a mental health tool that works as well today as it did 3,200 years ago . . .

"Now if someone told you that there was a way to stop the onslaught of everyday obligations, improve your social life, keep the house clean, revive your tired marriage, elevate spiritual awareness, improve productivity at work, all overnight without cost, you would probably say the claim was absurd. I certainly did, but I was willing to see if some cosmic miracle cure might really work . . .

"No shopping or paying bills, no pulling weeds or pruning shrubs, nor cleaning or repairing the house. Not even talking about or thinking about work and the office. The Sabbath is a day without labor, a time to savor the sweetness of life with a delicious meal, wine and lovemaking, napping, reading and strolling. My personal life, my professional life, my family life have all improved, and I plan to go on celebrating the Sabbath, the most powerful and illuminating discovery for me because of the sudden understanding of how an ancient edict can have such thoroughly modern applications . . .

"My quest began at a marriage counselor's office. After 22 fruitful years of marriage my husband, Saul, and I found ourselves deadlocked over crises of time management, of growth and change . . .

"The first Sabbath I took Friday afternoon off from work to clean the house from top to bottom. If a family with three teenagers is going to get a day without work, we should start with everything extra clean. This practice proved to be an instant winner, and I have permanently changed my workweek to the benefit of our home life . . .

"Saul came home from work Friday afternoon, cleared away a stack of bills, and before the sun went down finished all that he had to do. What next? We felt duty bound to try the wine. And the lovemaking rules. And yes, even romance took on a profound and delightful new aspect. How marvelous to be told to make time to enjoy the physical and emotional pleasures of a mature relationship."

Source: Nan Chase, "Ancient Wisdom," *Hemispheres*, July 1997.

Unconditional Surrender

■ Nearly 60 years ago World War II ended with unconditional surrender. But unconditional surrender is not just for the history books, as it plays a vital part in our relationship with our Savior and conquering King.

by James D. Cannon

On May 7, 1945, in Reims, France (and a few hours later in Berlin), Admiral von Friedeburg, General Jodl, Field Marshall Keitel and General Stumpff, representatives of the German High Command, signed the instrument of unconditional surrender in the presence of the British, Soviet, French and American Allied Forces High Command.

Later that same year, on Sept. 2, 1945, on the deck of the USS *Missouri* before the Supreme Allied Command, on behalf of Emperor Hirohito of the Japanese Empire, Mamoru Shigemitsu attached his signature to the instrument of unconditional surrender. Yoshijiro Umezu, chief of the General Staff of the Imperial Japanese Army, subsequently countersigned it.

The Axis Powers and the Japanese Empire absolutely and unconditionally surrendered themselves and yielded themselves to the mercy and judgment of the Allied Forces who had conquered them.

Unconditional surrender is not an easy state of mind to bring into being. Someone must come to really see that he (or she) has been totally and absolutely conquered and that his only choices are unconditional surrender, imprisonment or death.

Members of the Body of Jesus Christ, or those who are in the process of coming to conversion and baptism, understand or are coming to understand that they have been conquered, bought and paid for, and have become a bond slave of Jesus Christ.

Of course, Jesus Christ is our Elder Brother, our High Priest, our Healer, our Chief Shepherd, our Friend, our Hiding Place and our Savior.

However, Jesus Christ is also our Master, our Lord and the soon-coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords to whom we, at baptism, have unconditionally surrendered, placing our individual lives into His loving, capable and merciful hands. He has bought and paid for us—ransomed us from the death penalty that we have earned and deserve—by giving His very life through His sacrifice for all of mankind.

We have been defeated—God let Satan test us to see if we would sin, and we lost. We earned the penalty of death. When we realized that, we truly saw that we were conquered, but have we truly and unconditionally surrendered to God, Jesus Christ, God's government, God's laws and God's way of life?

This is a question we must be asking ourselves every day for as long as we live.

Our Surrender

What is the ultimate purpose and result of our unconditional surrender?

God requires the unconditional surrender of those He calls. Remember, before our calling and repentance we were enemies of God and God's way of life (Romans 5:6-10). Bear in mind as well that our human nature is exactly opposite and opposed to God and His way (Romans 8:1-8). The Greek word translated "enmity" in verse 7 is *echthra*, and means hostility, opposition and hatred.

After God the Father calls a person out of this world, each individual must come to a point that he is willing to do anything and everything required by God in order to obey Him. When God the Father initially called us out of this world, we studied and prayed daily for forgiveness and asked God to grant us repentance and baptism. We counseled with God's ministers. We began the process of unconditional surrender to God and God's government as outlined in His Word—the Bible. We were then baptized.

We must now continue to live a life of unconditional surrender to God with the same zeal and commitment we had when God first called us. And, as we shall see, there is a very great reason and purpose that He is working out in each one of us (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Also, God does not expect any more of us than He has expected from all of those He has called out of this world from the beginning.

Abraham Proves His Surrender

Let's first look at Abraham. When God called him out of his native land to move his entire estate to the foreign land of Canaan, he simply obeyed with no "yes, buts," "whys" or "do I have tos." Abraham simply obeyed (Genesis 12:1-9).

Later, when God tested Abraham, asking him to offer up his son Isaac—the one who had been miraculously conceived with his beloved wife Sarah—again Abraham obeyed (Genesis 22:1-19). Abraham obeyed because he was unconditionally surrendered to God. Of course, God spared the life of Isaac and provided a proper animal sacrifice for Abraham to offer. However, before God told Abraham not to slay Isaac, Isaac was as good as sacrificed in Abraham's mind.

Abraham also knew that God's promises were to be fulfilled through Isaac and his offspring, and that God would be able to resurrect Isaac in order to fulfill His promises. Abraham's mind's eye was focused on the future, the Kingdom of God, where the promises would ultimately be fulfilled (Hebrews 11:17-19).

Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego

Daniel's friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego are another example of individuals who were unconditionally surrendered to God. When King Nebuchadnezzar had a 90-foot-tall golden

image erected in the middle of Babylon and required all to bow down and worship the image whenever they heard all the instruments play, they absolutely disobeyed. By rejecting the king's command, they incurred the death penalty in a fiery furnace.

When the political yes-men brought Daniel's friends before the king and accused them of not bowing down to the idol, the king was outraged. His veins began enlarging around his neck and his face began to turn red in anger. When the king asked Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego if the accusations were true, they answered the king in this way: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up" (Daniel 3:16-18).

At that, the king became outraged beyond comprehension, his face now turned to a shade of purple and the veins on his neck and forehead bulged out. He commanded that the fiery furnace be heated seven times hotter than normal. The king then ordered some of his mightiest men to throw Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego into the fiery furnace. The furnace now was so hot that it killed these mighty men as they threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego into the furnace.

However, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego did not burn up at all. In fact, when the king was able to look into the furnace he saw four men, not three, with the fourth looking "like the Son of God" (Daniel 3:25).

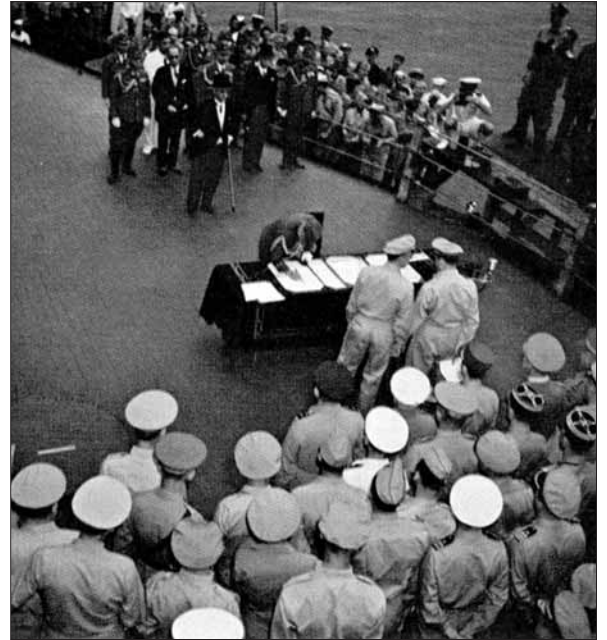
The king then promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego to high governmental positions in Babylon and gave praise and honor, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!" (Daniel 3:28).

Beyond showing their faith, obedience and giving the king a tremendous witness of God's power, there was a much greater purpose and goal for Daniel's three friends. Their hearts were firmly fixed on the Kingdom of God and their future positions as spirit beings, servant leaders in the Kingdom (Revelation 1:6).

The Ultimate Example

Finally, we have the example of our Savior and soon-coming King, Jesus Christ.

Just before His arrest, which led to His ultimate sacrifice for all of mankind, Jesus and His disciples went to the garden to pray. And Jesus Christ went off by Himself and prayed for guidance and for the strength He would need to go through the trial He would face during the remainder of His life on earth as a human being.



On Sept. 2, 1945, on the deck of the USS *Missouri* before the Supreme Allied Command, on behalf of Emperor Hirohito of the Japanese Empire, Mamoru Shigemitsu attached his signature to the instrument of unconditional surrender. Yoshijiro Umezu, chief of the General Staff of the Imperial Japanese Army, subsequently countersigned it.

He asked God that if it were possible, if the Father were willing, that the trial He faced could be removed from Him. He prayed so fervently to God the Father that His sweat was as "great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44). Yet Jesus Christ prayed, "Not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:41-42).

Jesus Christ was unconditionally surrendered to God the Father and the Father's will. Jesus Christ was not only surrendered, He was totally obedient to God the Father: "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). Because of His commitment to being unconditionally surrendered to God, He has become our Savior, High Priest and the soon-coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

"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).

A Higher Purpose

What then is the purpose for your and my unconditional surrender to God? Is it just so we will be good and obedient children while we are here as human beings? Or is our unconditional surrender for a much higher purpose?

After Jesus Christ was baptized, and following His battle with Satan the devil, the first thing He did was preach the good news of the Kingdom of God. He came saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

He explained to His disciples that after His sacrifice and death He was going to prepare a place, offices of servant leadership, for those who would be called to follow Him and His way of

life. "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:1-3).

Certainly Jesus Christ, our Savior, paid the penalty of death earned by every member of the human race since creation. And through this sacrifice, those God the Father calls and who then truly repent and are baptized are granted the free gift of unmerited pardon and eternal life.

However, the ultimate purpose—the end result of our unconditional surrender—is to be of the greatest service to God and humanity in the Kingdom of God as members of the family of God.

The apostle Paul fought hard battles daily, as we must, against the pulls of human nature, the temptations in the world and the darts of Satan the devil (Philippians 3:8-15). Paul further tells us to look to things on a much higher plane than what we currently see on earth. "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:1-2).

Let's continue to strive daily to remain unconditionally surrendered to God and His way of life so we will receive the awesome potential God has set aside and prepared for you and for me in the Kingdom of God. UN

This article previously appeared in the April/May 2004 issue of *Virtual Christian Magazine* (on the Web at www.vcmagazine.org).

Treasure Digest

Pillars of Wisdom: Skillful in Life

Everyone has heard stories about someone finding a genie in a bottle who offers to fulfill the finder's greatest wish. What would you do if God actually granted you your deepest desire? Three thousand years ago Solomon was crowned king over the kingdom of Israel. God appeared to him in a dream and declared, "Ask! What shall I give to you?"

Solomon praised God for the mercy shown to both his father David and himself. He was humbled by the task of ruling Israel and prayed, "... I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil." Solomon's request pleased God and He gave Solomon special wisdom (1 Kings 3:5-12).

The Hebrew word *chokmah*, translated "wisdom" in the English Old Testament, was used in a secular sense to denote someone as a skillful craftsman. It was used in a religious sense to denote someone who was skillful at using God's Word to live a practical life of obedience.

Points to Build On

The practical art of living is built on three foundational steps:

1. *Gathering knowledge*, which is the learning of information.
2. *Developing understanding*, which is the ability to discern what is true and important.
3. *Growing in wisdom*, which is the ability to practically apply knowledge and understanding.

A person can memorize a great deal of knowledge and not understand how that knowledge relates to others or specific situations. A person

can have understanding, but not have the ability to practically apply what they understand.

Solomon, in the book of Proverbs, admonishes his son to seek wisdom as if it is great treasure. Wisdom isn't inherited through genetic code. It is learned through biblical study, personal experience and the observation of others.

It is ultimately expressed in the daily choices we make in our relationship with God and neighbor.

Application

Since wisdom isn't an inborn trait, but is developed over time, a person must be dedicated to becoming wise.

First, *pray for wisdom*. In the New Testament the apostle James writes, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5).

Secondly, *seek wisdom through knowledge*. This includes daily Bible study, and a lifelong dedication to continued education in science, history, creative activities and the arts.

Thirdly, *observe and analyze both your life and the lives of others to learn effective decision-making*.

Gary Petty

Pastor of the Austin, San Antonio and Waco, Texas, congregations



10 Daily Questions

"Hey, how are you doing?"

"Well, I'm doing great! How about yourself?"

"Couldn't be better!"

Funny—we live in a superficial age; some of the phrases we use are clichés. We say them to be pleasant. But as Christians, we need to ask ourselves: How am I *really* doing?

1. Did I awake spiritual, in a happy prayerful attitude, and was I watchful to keep my mind

from wandering this morning?

2. Have I this day kept my mind clean, my thoughts and contemplations on "the things above," in a continuous happy, positive, prayerful attitude?

3. Have I partaken three times today of spiritual food, by submissive Bible study and earnest prayer alone with God? Have I grown closer to God? Have I grown today in grace and knowledge?

4. Have I walked by faith, asking God for wisdom and guidance in all things, committing every little problem to Him, trusting Him with it?

5. Have I exercised self-discipline, denying impulse, doing what God's Word shows I ought to do instead of what I wanted to do?

6. Was my speech and conversation today kind, cheerful, soft?

7. Have I exercised patience today?

Have I been charitable toward others, showing tolerance and love, or resentment, jealousy, anger?

8. Have I, while putting spiritual interests first, been diligent in performing regular material duties today, doing my very best?

9. Have I made the most of my time, or have I been weakened by unwatchfulness?

10. What have I done for God's work and for others?

Have I spent anything today to please self that might have been saved for God's cause?

These 10 daily questions were taken from an old coworker bulletin of the Radio Church of God (published by the late Herbert W. Armstrong), dated Feb. 14, 1941—over 64 years ago! But the questions remain as practical and as timeless as ever.

Daniel Roy Macaraeg

Davao City, Philippines, congregation

Why?

This is one of several items received in the

days after the shooting at a Living Church of God service March 12.

In this time of sorrow and unexplained death that took place in a suburban Milwaukee town, many are asking God, "Why?"

This is one of the most puzzling occurrences that has happened to a group of believers, and it has left so many traumatized. We do not have the answers as to why a man attending a church for many years would gun down the very people who loved and supported him. We must take comfort in the Scripture, knowing that God is in control.

I am reminded of Isaiah 55:9: "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

God has not said we will be without pain or discomfort in this life. That is why He says: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:19-21).

We may not have the immediate answers to this brutal slaying, but we can rest in the fact that God will see us through. Our thoughts and prayers go out to every person touched by this terrible tragedy.

Lori Bryant

Joplin, Missouri, congregation

Share Your Word Treasures!

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

Turning the Hearts Problem Solver or Mound Maker?

A major key to happiness in marriage is the ability to deal with difficult issues that arise in a family. Some react to a difficult issue by denying there is a problem, while others "sweep it under the carpet" so they cannot see it. Whatever method one employs to avoid the obvious, the problem doesn't normally "just go away."

The effective way to handle difficulties or problems is to face them and work on them. This is what the problem solver will do in a relationship.

A mound maker on the other hand may buy some time by sweeping problems under the carpet, but eventually there will be a mound of problems that will find their way through the carpet.

The principle for problem solving is found in the instruction that Paul gave to the Ephesians regarding the armor of God. We are told to stand, not run or hide in the face of difficulty. (One exception is fornication, which we are advised to flee.) We are told to wrestle with difficulties also (Ephesians 6:12-16).

Jesus Christ taught us to take action as soon as possible in the account in Matthew 18:15. We are instructed to go to our brother if there is a difficulty (sin against us) so that we may resolve the matter. Inaction does not solve the problem, but action does.

So, how may we be problem solvers in our marriages and families?

1. Make sure you have the facts concerning the problem (Proverbs 18:17).
2. Pray for wisdom and understanding of the problem (James 1:5).
3. Try to put yourself in the other person's shoes (1 Corinthians 9:19-22).
4. Approach the situation with humility (Galatians 6:1).
5. Be willing to see any fault of your own in the matter and be willing to change (Matthew 7:1-4).
6. Be gracious and receptive to the views and responses of the other side (Colossians 4:6).
7. Be bold enough to seek to resolve the matter in a way that is acceptable and truthful (Acts 15:13-19).

Remember, to maintain happy, successful relationships, marriages and families, we must become problem solvers not mound makers.

Gary Antion



Be Ready to Give an Answer: Didn't Christ Make All Meats Clean?

An often-misunderstood passage is Mark 7:18-19. Here Jesus said: "Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?" The subject here—made obvious from verses 2-5—was ceremonially unwashed hands, not which meats could be eaten. The purification of food referred to the way the body's digestive process eliminates minor impurities such as those that might be present from eating with unwashed hands.

The Pharisees, like Jesus and His disciples, ate only meat the Scriptures specified as clean. They objected, however, when Jesus and His disciples did not go through the Pharisees' customary ritual of meticulously washing their hands before eating.

Jesus, whose hands were sufficiently clean for eating even if not clean enough to meet the Pharisees' humanly devised standards, explained that the human body was designed to handle any small particles of dust or dirt that might enter it due to handling food with hands that hadn't been ritually washed.

He further suggested that, if the Pharisees were serious about wanting to obey God, they needed to revise their priorities. Cleansing one's thoughts, He said, is eminently more spiritually important than washing one's hands (verses 20-23).

The New International Version of the Bible renders the latter part of verse 19: "(In saying this, Jesus declared all foods 'clean.')" The New American Standard Bible similarly offers: "(Thus He declared all foods clean.*)" These translations stand in stark contrast to the King James and New King James versions, which indicate that the bodily digestive process purifies food as opposed to Jesus making a pronouncement reversing God's laws on which meats to eat. The New King James Version says that whatever comes into a man's body from outside "does not enter his heart, but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods" (verse 19). Which interpretation is correct?

The King James and New King James renditions best fit the context, which concerns eating with ceremonially unwashed hands rather than deciding which kind of flesh is suitable to be eaten. They also best fit the New Testament culture wherein Jews and Christians ate only clean meats.

In the original Greek the words "In saying this, Jesus declared" (NIV) and "Thus He declared" (NASB) are not present; translators have added them to explain what they think Mark intended and as a result have placed their own preconceived and mistaken interpretations on Jesus' words.

For More Information, see *What Does the Bible Teach About Clean and Unclean Meats?*



Local Church Updates

Cambridge Honors Its Seniors

On March 5, the Cambridge, Ohio, congregation honored its senior members with dinner, special music and games that everybody could participate in. A wide variety of Italian-style food was served for dinner, followed by an ice cream sundae bar, cakes, cookies, fresh fruit and brownies.

Pictures of the seniors when they



Cambridge, Ohio, seniors from left: Leon Wilkey, Doreen Rinehart, Leonard Rinehart, Larry Long, Litazelle Long, Molly Sexton, Lee Christopher, Betty Rogers, Naomi Noss, Linda Montgomery, Isabelle Dawson, Paul Coleman, Lynn Coleman, Bob Galreath and Bob Lee

were younger were obtained and set on a table for people to guess who was who. Prizes were given to those who guessed all of them correctly.

Lacy Feiock, one of the teens in the Cambridge congregation, sang "L.O.V.E.—Love" as a special recognition of the seniors. Afterward, younger and older couples played the "oldie wed" game (a version of the Newly Wed game), which at times was hilarious.

The master of ceremonies for the game, Ron Kelley, an elder in the Cambridge congregation, asked the youngest couple a question and while he was waiting for their response, he asked their 4-month-old baby daughter, Natalie, what she thought. Natalie replied with a sneeze into the microphone!

It was a memorable evening for all—especially our wonderful seniors!

Joe Horchak II

CGI and UCG Meet in Combined Sabbath Service in Knoxville

After having enjoyed fine fellowship at combined summer church picnics over the past few years, the



CGI and UCG congregations in Knoxville have combined services; inset, CGI pastor Orville Bumgardner and UCG pastor Dave Dobson

Knoxville, Tennessee, members of the Church of God—International and United Church of God met together on Feb. 12, 2005, in a combined Sabbath service.

After obtaining permission from church administrators, UCG pastor David Dobson worked with CGI pastor Orville Bumgardner to plan the event. On that day, each pastor gave a split sermon.

Afterwards, all 50 attendees enjoyed a potluck meal and a talent show, fea-

turing entertainment from members of both congregations.

John LaBissoniere

Dallas Hosts Women's Enrichment Day

With a theme of "Ties That Bind," the Dallas, Texas, congregation hosted a Women's Enrichment Day on Sunday, Feb. 13, 2005. From teens to every age group beyond, 95 ladies participated in the day's events. Hours of preparation showed in the way the theme echoed through table decorations, handouts and speeches.

Doug Horchak, Dallas pastor, brought the morning's main message, focusing on Titus 2:3-5. "Women need other women to nurture and mentor them," Mr. Horchak exhorted.

Before and after lunch, five presenters introduced 40 ladies who had started attending, moved or returned to the UCG Dallas congregation in the past two years. A slide show of photos and brief introductions helped the audience get to know a little more about the newcomers.

The keynote message of the afternoon encouraged attendees to tend the "gardens of their minds." Along with a humorous slide show, Tanya Horchak explained that this requires valuing people, keeping a balanced perspective and maintaining a sense of humor.

The day wrapped up with activities designed to help participants get to know each other better. Each table discussed lively topics and presented their decisions to the whole group.

As a follow-up to the day, attendees



Dora Jennings and Lisa Burkett, members of the Dallas, Texas, congregation helped with the Women's Enrichment Day (photo by Dara Vaughn)

will receive albums with photos of all participants.

Heather Wine

Women's Weekend Held in Phoenix

On Feb. 26 in beautiful and sunny Phoenix, Arizona, 140 enthusiastic women from six states came together for our first United Women's Weekend. "Bloom Where You Were Planted" was the theme of this event. Many expressed that this was a long-awaited event.

Sabbath services began the weekend with split sermons. John Elliott spoke on true friendships, showing the close relationship between Jesus and Mary. Vernon Hargrove from Hammond, Indiana, gave a little insight on what he had learned from his wife, DeLee. Special music was sung by Jodi Cox, with a lovely song titled "Artist of My Soul."

After services the men left the ladies to enjoy a self-catered Italian meal and fellowship. The welcome address was given by our hostess, Merrie Elliott. She encouraged all of the ladies to grow close in their relationships with each other and to become a family. DeLee Hargrove, our keynote speaker, had previously lived in Phoenix. She gave a little insight on what has happened to her and her family in the last 30 years.

This was followed by a lively presentation titled "From the Inside Out" given by Sylvia Kennedy. She taught us all how to recognize our different personalities. In this presentation she related our personality to a color. We enjoyed learning a little more about ourselves as well as our friends. Conversations about this would arise for the rest of the weekend.

The evening ended around 9 p.m. with many going to the Dodson Ranch Inn to share rooms, while the others returned to their own homes.

On Sunday, after an opening prayer, the Phoenix East Women's Ensemble sang "There's a Hero."

Our keynote address was given by DeLee Hargrove. Her address was titled "God Can't Direct Your Steps If You Aren't Taking Any." She spoke on the need to thrive where you are planted in life—even if you're planted in hard or weedy soil, make something of yourself.

RaeAnn Dowd then encouraged us to take time for ourselves so that we are able to serve others. She spoke on taking

time to pray first thing in the morning before we get caught up in our day. She also gave us tips on diet, exercise and having a hobby. If we have a better self-image, we are better equipped to not dwell on ourselves but to think of others.

Marian Burbeck took us from discomfort, to comfort and then to joy. She shared with us the premature death of her first husband at age 41. She told us of her two helpers in life, comfort and joy—the comfort that others bring and the joy that God brings.

Everyone was then treated to a tasty banquet lunch. Some were seated indoors, while others sat under olive trees on the outdoor patio. There was a special treat on everyone's chair at lunch. A gift bag had been prepared for all.

The afternoon began with a very appropriate vocal solo by Kelli Demers called "Seeds." That was followed by Merrie Elliott who shared some of her experiences in East Africa. She took us through a visual and verbal presentation of a day in the life of a Kikuyu woman, one of the 40 tribes in Kenya.

Bettie McCord shared some emotional and trying stories from her life. She spoke on "Conquering That Which Challenges Us." She gave us personal examples of life's challenges, from hav-



Presenters at Phoenix Women's Weekend: Bettie McCord, RaeAnn Dowd, Nancy Capo, Marian Burbeck, Sylvia Kennedy, (sitting) DeLee Hargrove and Merrie Elliott (photo by Lynne Columbia)

ing her home burn down, to her husband having Alzheimer's then passing away. She said, "The road is rough, the ride is bumpy, but with the help of God and each other we can make it."

"Fearless Females, Dauntless Dames and the Rest of Us" was given by Nancy Capo, the final speaker of the day. She spoke of overcoming our deepest fears, using examples of ladies in the Bible that we could relate to. She helped us to see that in pushing beyond our comfort zone, we could overcome some of those fears. We were then treated to a piano solo of "Wind Beneath My Wings" played by Marion Burbeck.

Merrie Elliott wrapped things up by thanking everyone for coming, thanking the presenters for a job well done and giving a special thanks to the committee for all their heartfelt work and service to the women of God's Church. The afternoon ended with a very inspiring prayer.

The weekend provided a wonderful opportunity to unite with like-minded women, meet new friends, expand relationships and sow the seeds of spiritual and personal growth.

Sylvia Kennedy and Merrie Elliott

Member Receives Excellence Award

Tim Franke of the Nashville, Tennessee, congregation received the Chairman's Award for Excellence from his employer, Juris, Incorporated.

The award was given Jan. 14, 2005, at a company breakfast held in Brentwood, Tennessee. This award is bestowed on the individual who demonstrates the



Tim Franke

characteristics of the company's Model of Excellence, which states that "excellence must be earned through the client's eyes." The individual must show innovation, lead the company and bring change, thus helping the company achieve excellence. The recipient is chosen by the chairman of the company.

Tim also finished as a finalist in the Team Leadership Award, which signifies the individual who exemplifies quality leadership by example. The recipient is selected by a peer vote.

Phoenix Keeps the Dance Floor Full

The Phoenix East, Arizona, congregation hosted a family dinner and dance for 135 area attendees after Sabbath services on March 26.

The night began at the Embassy Suites ballroom with a lovely chicken dinner and some time to socialize. After dinner everyone danced to a mix of oldies, swing, country, disco and light rock. There was music for every age group and the dance floor stayed full.



The dance floor stayed full with dancers like Jacqueline Querns and Bill Lovett at the Phoenix East dance (photo by Kathy Earls)

There was a special dance just for the children and their parents and many enjoyed line dancing, while some of us just attempted to follow along. While

everyone was dressed semiformal, some of the women had beautiful sparkling dresses that twinkled with the changing lights. Joe Anderson's disco montage included sound-synchronized color lights, a bubble machine and a mirror ball, all of which added to the atmosphere on the dance floor.

The evening ended about 10 p.m. with the heartiest dancers still on the dance floor wishing for more. A big thank you to coordinator Terry Hoffman, event manager RaeAnn Dowd, deejay Ed Dowd and all who helped them make the evening such a success. Some said it was the best church dance ever!

Lorelei Nettles

Mena, Arkansas, Celebrates 25th Anniversary

In an old log building heated by a fireplace, the Mena, Arkansas, congregation began 25 years ago, after Dr. Lynn Torrance had held Bible studies in the same building. On March 12, 2005, the anniversary was celebrated with 28 attending, about half as many as had been present at that first service. Mena's first pastor, John Elliott, sent a taped message and an update on congregations in East Africa.

The celebration included recognition of two who had listened to XELO and XEG and requested baptism in the 1940s, Doice Hedge and Marie Wann, mother of current pastor Roger West's wife, Andrea. Old-timers Jack and Wilma Williams and Dorothy Putman who have connections to the Church since the early 1950s also were recognized. Burk McNair sent greetings for the occasion, as he had baptized several in this area during a baptizing tour with Rod Meredith in 1952.

Reminiscences were given by Dale Henry on the 25 years since the congregation was established, and by Bob Hedge on the 25 years before it started. All enjoyed a potluck meal and an anniversary cake made and decorated by Rachelle (Henry) McGowan.

Bob Hedge

Member Turns 95

Feb. 14 was a day for flowers and love, but not as those around us were celebrating. It was a day to honor a lovely lady on her 95th birthday.



Louise Moore turns 95

Louise Moore was surprised and delighted to discover a group of family and friends gathered at the assisted living facility where she lives, to share cake, fellowship and memories.

Louise, a longtime member of God's Church residing in Vancouver, Washington, reminisced about her calling and expressed her longing for the brethren now that she is no longer able to attend services. She is a gracious lady in the truest sense of the word and a shining example of friendliness and love.

Sharon Browning

Forty Couples Participate in Southern California Marriage Workshop

Forty couples in the Southern California region participated in the Marriage Enrichment and Renewal Workshop Feb. 19 and 20 in Fullerton, California. The workshop, sponsored by the Bakersfield, Los Angeles, Garden Grove and San Diego churches, was facilitated by Frank and Sonja McCrady, who pastor in Dayton, Ohio.

The workshop was spread over two



Frank and Sonja McCrady, presenters of the Marriage Enrichment and Renewal Workshop (photo by Linda Register)

days, including the Sabbath, and participants were encouraged to stay overnight at the hotel to provide both a "getaway" experience and to allow couples to focus and complete the homework given on the first day.

Said one of the attendees, "My wife and I found the marriage workshop especially helpful because after over 30 years of marriage, we found out that there were aspects about each of our wants and needs that we really didn't understand and now we can work on achieving a better relationship and marriage. I especially appreciated the focused questionnaires and class interaction between spouses. They were eye-opening."

Based on the nationally recognized Intimate Encounters program, the workshop emphasizes building intimacy in marriage. The program has provided scripturally sound, insightful and effective workshops in hundreds of churches and communities across the United States. The program and materials were developed through the collaboration of multiple professional, licensed marriage counselors with thousands of hours of collective experience.

The workshop included tangible ways to go beyond theory, and was organized in the following seven sections:

1. Marriage intimacy: How are we doing?
2. What do we really need from each other?
3. What is filling your emotional cup?

4. Healing emotional hurts through confession and forgiveness.

5. Blending four ingredients for marital closeness.

6. Being free for emotional closeness.

7. Deadly habits of relationships.

During the sessions, participants were given opportunities for discussion with the presenters, as well as with each participant's respective mate or fiancé(e).

"The concepts presented at the marriage seminar weekend are good reminders of where we need to be growing individually and together in our marriage," said Debbie Scheid, who attended the weekend with her husband, Michael. "We really appreciated the McCradys sharing so many concrete examples and tools of how to do this. It's a worthwhile seminar regardless of how many years you've been married."

Over the past two years, the McCradys have conducted nine workshops for United congregations in California, Ohio and Texas. They will do two more this year in San Antonio and Phoenix.

"It was good to get away from the everyday life and to really have the opportunity to concentrate on the ways we can keep our marriage the loving relationship that God designed marriage to be. It is always good to be reminded of how we can keep the spark in marriage—by being aware of the needs of each other and of doing it together, lovingly—for at least another 30 years," commented Elaine Carlisle.

Linda Register

Texas Regional Young Adults Weekend

From Feb. 18 to 20, 2005, the Houston church area had the pleasure of hosting the annual Texas Regional President's Day Weekend for young adults. This year's event was held at the Del Lago Conference Center and Resort on Lake Conroe, a few miles outside of Houston.

The event turned out to be another wonderful opportunity for many young adults from across the country, from Arkansas to Wisconsin, to come together. Attendees learned about the history of the Church and what our role in the future of the Church is, and how to prepare for the responsibilities and challenges we face. These inspirational messages were delivered by Ken Giese, Aaron Dean, Jim Franks and Gary Petty.

In between the messages, everyone had a chance to build new friendships and reestablish old ones during the dinner/dance held on Saturday evening, as well as at the day of fun and games held at Main Event on Sunday afternoon.

Liz Ryan

Fort Myers Celebrates 10th Anniversary

After Sabbath services on March 19, 2005, the Fort Myers, Florida, congre-



The Fort Myers, Florida, congregation (with a few missing); inset, Judy and Richard Rand (photos by Emerson Kidder and Jim Robbins)

gation celebrated its 10th anniversary with a potluck luncheon topped off with a slice of the special anniversary cake.

The actual start-up date was March 25, 1995, making Fort Myers the first United Church of God congregation in Florida. Forty-three people attended that first service under the pastorate of Roy Holladay.

Jim Robbins

Houston Holds Deacons/Elders Appreciation Service

On the Sabbath of March 12, 2005, the Houston North/Huntsville congregation had a service honoring deacons, deaconesses, widows of elders and deacons, elders and a special recognition for elders who have served over 40 years. The service was followed by a special potluck coordinated by the Social Committee under the chairmanship of Kevin and Jeanine Burt.

Pastor of the congregation Jim Franks conducted an emotional presentation



Houston North honors deacons, elders and their widows March 12

portion of the service, which was followed by a short video presentation featuring an assortment of old and recent photos of the honorees. During his comments Mr. Franks mentioned, "It is appropriate to give honor to those who serve the membership..." He also mentioned that the first Houston congregation was founded in 1956, and that Harold and Jeanette Treybig were among the founding members. Mr. Franks also gave some current statistics:

- Houston North is currently the single largest congregation in United. (Growth has been steady over the past 10 years.)
- Houston North has averaged between 5 and 10 percent increase over the last two years.

Those in attendance were reminded that "this all was a miracle of God and that it is God that gave the increase." Mr. Franks then read 1 Timothy 3:13 and 5:3, 17 to set the tone for the presentation.

The deacons and wives honored were: Mr. and Mrs. Delmar Berger (ordained 2002), Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Caudle (ordained 1986), Mr. and Mrs.

David DeHart (ordained 1990), Mr. and Mrs. Richard Haughee (ordained 2002), Mr. and Mrs. Bill Hudson (ordained 1973), Mr. and Mrs. O.D. Jones (ordained 1990), Mr. and Mrs. John Perry (ordained 1986), Mr. and Mrs. Mark Sappington (ordained 2002).

The widows honored were: Patricia Bell (Bob Bell, ordained 1974, died 1996), Shirley Henn (Earl Henn, ordained 1966, died 1997), Lucy Laney (Lin Laney, ordained 1965, died 1999).

The elders and wives honored were: Mr. and Mrs. James "Bud" Beymer (ordained 1969), Mr. and Mrs. Glen Doig (ordained 1975), Mr. Mrs. Behrman Doucet (ordained 1974; wife, Effie, 1968 as deaconess).

The elders and wives serving 40-plus years honored were: Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Marrs (ordained 1963), Arthur Roesler (ordained 1963; wife, Jacque, died 2003), Mr. and Mrs. Harold Treybig (ordained 1964).

A card and plaque were presented to those with 40-plus years of service. The plaque read: "Presented to [the elder and wife by name] in Grateful Recognition of over Forty Years of Service in the Ministry of Jesus Christ, United Church of God, Houston North Congregation, March 12, 2005."

After the presentation and video we were blessed with special music by the Treybig family ensemble. The sermon followed, with guest speaker David Treybig (pastor of Tampa/St. Petersburg,

Florida, congregations) discussing the same theme of honoring the elders of the Church. Mr. Treybig took the congregation through several passages in the Bible, showing examples of the honoring of elders, deacons/deaconesses and older persons/serving in the Church.

At the conclusion of services, there was the cutting of a special cake provided for the honorees. As we moved into the evening, many participated in a congregational potluck dinner to cap off a wonderful Sabbath day!

Peter M. Gabriel

ABC and Cincinnati Host Creation Seminars

March 15 to 20, Arnold and Janie Mendez, both longtime members of God's Church from Corpus Christi, Texas, visited Cincinnati, Ohio. Mr. Mendez was invited to guest lecture at Ambassador Bible Center and present Bible study/seminars to the Cincinnati East and North congregations.

For the last 35 years Mr. Mendez has been studying the Genesis account of the Noachian Flood and how the fossil record of early man supports the creation account as outlined in the Bible and not evolution. Mr. Mendez holds master's

and bachelor's of science degrees in biology (with a minor in chemistry). He is the general chemistry lab instructor and coordinator at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi.

Arnold and Janie Mendez treated the ABC class to a traditional Mexican luncheon on Thursday afternoon.

On Thursday and Friday



Arnold Mendez presents lectures to the Cincinnati congregations and Ambassador Bible Center on early man and on Noah's ark and the Flood

Mr. Mendez lectured to the ABC class of 2005. He covered the subject of early man and the Genesis account. Biblical subjects covered included the cranial evidence for biblical longevity, the fossil evidence for the wickedness of early man and how the burial practices of many of the excavated fossils dovetails with the burial practices of the patriarchs.

He also integrated other general subjects about how the fossil record has been misinterpreted and the bias of evolutionary science. Replicas of fossils that had been misidentified and incorrectly dated were examined.

"The seminar was very thought-provoking, and we all appreciated Mr. Mendez's hard work with the research and the insight that he gave with the different topics," said Caleb Froedge, ABC student body president.

Another ABC student, Katrina Beyer, said, "Evolutionists use a very irrational and biased approach to disprove the Bible. I appreciate Mr. Mendez's insight and logical explanation of the biblical events to correlate science with the truth."

Friday evening, March 18, Mr. Mendez presented a Bible study to the Cincinnati East congregation. Once again the subject of early man was discussed.

Some of the questions asked were on carbon dating, pre-Adamic man, who were the giants in Genesis 6, dinosaurs and various other topics.

On the Sabbath of March 19, Mr. Mendez presented a morning seminar on the subject of Noah's ark and the Genesis Flood to the Cincinnati East congregation. On display were several models of Noah's ark that he had constructed. These included a 1/75-scale model that was almost 6 feet long. Other models included a 1/32-scale model of a cross-section of the ark. This model displayed the three decks, and an interior view of the caging systems and the various animals.

Topics covered included the geologic evidence of the Flood, possible Flood models and scenarios and how God reveals Himself through His creation (Romans 1:18-20).

Later that afternoon he traveled to Cincinnati North to present the same topic. The presentation to both churches was followed by a question-and-answer session.

Before introducing Mr. Mendez, Matthew Fenchel, the pastor of the North congregation, introduced the ABC choir for their first performance of the year, directed by Ken Shoemaker. The North congregation had an overflow attendance

of more than 120 people. After Sabbath services there was a covered-dish social.

On display during the various seminars were eight large tables filled with posters, models, fossils, sedimentary rock specimens and cranial replicas of *Homo erectus*, Neanderthal man and other fossil men. Another table contained articles from Mr. Mendez's Web site, www.amendez.com. Mr. Mendez has presented seminars to more than 85 UCG congregations in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Clarissa de Campos and Arnold Mendez

Jacksonville Has International Night and Talent Revue

Feb. 5, 2005, the Jacksonville, Florida, congregation showcased the abilities of many of its members during an evening billed as their Annual Talent Revue.

Early that evening the theme of international cuisine was displayed with potluck foods and decorative flags from around the world. Everyone was impressed with the creative dishes the brethren prepared.

Following the meal the fun began. Several members proved



Kay Krick, age 90, proves she can still tickle the ivories during the Jacksonville, Florida, talent show; brethren enjoy a sampling of foods from around the world before the show (photos by Vicki Harr)

that our Heavenly Father had not shorted them when it came to the ability to entertain. The brethren and guests enjoyed music and songs ranging from jazz to pop to country. There were also two humorous skits and a performance on the history and science of flight.

All agreed that the evening was a rousing success and expect this to become an annual event. Church activities like these do a great deal to build a bond between the members, drawing them even closer as a spiritual family.

Teddy H. Rudd

Columbus Has Hawaiian Sabbath and Party

The Columbus, Ohio, congregation donned colorful Hawaiian clothing on Feb. 12 for its Second Annual Hawaiian Sabbath to worship and fellowship island style. What better way to beat the winter blahs!

Upon arrival at church, members and guests were greeted by children and teens with aloha greetings, hugs and bright-colored leis. The stage for services was set with beautiful Hawaiian-theme decorations designed by Diana Orlemann and Connie Seifert. The decorations included a bright island back-



Hula lessons at the Columbus Hawaiian Party

drop, a palm tree and hibiscus flowers.

Following services, the members and guests enjoyed a beautiful Hawaiian potluck buffet with scrumptious Hawaiian dishes and desserts in the fellowship hall. A delicious volcano punch with dry ice was served.

The fellowship hall was decorated with bright metallic palm trees, fish, birds and flowers. The tables were covered with bright pink covers and centerpieces of volcanoes laden with bright flowers. There was a special children's island with dozens of balloons and all kinds of toys and prizes.

At sunset, the games began! We had musical chairs, limbo, a cakewalk and hula hoop contests. For most of the games, the participants were put into three groups: children 10 and under, those 11 to 18 and those over 18. Prizes were awarded for all games.

Jerry Shallenberger was the emcee for musical chairs. Jimmy Guy served as emcee for the limbo contests. Joe McIntyre and Mark Galli hosted the cakewalk and Scott Kelley was emcee for the hula hoop contest.

We also had a dance at the end of the evening, featuring such old favorites as the Chicken Dance, the Electric Slide and the Hokey Pokey. Those not wishing to dance participated in "Aloha Bingo" hosted by John Seifert.

There were prizes for Best Hawaiian Outfits, Best Cake, Best Hawaiian Dish and Best Surfboards. (The children and teens each decorated a poster board surfboard and brought them to display.)

The highlight of the evening, however, was the hula lessons. Frank Dunkle and Trisha Dobbins hosted the activity. The lovely hula instructors were Sue Dunkle, Teri Haney, Jennifer Heesch and Sarah Zevchak.

After many participants learned the hula dance, the instructors sought out some men to come up and perform.

Alan Gunn, Larry Haney, Jim Hopkins, Ron Hosier, Ron Kelley, Jerry Shallenberger and, of course, our pastor, Joe Horchak, performed the hula in grass skirts to the sheer delight of everyone.

The Hawaiian Party was an evening full of activities, fellowship, music, joy and laughter. We look forward to next year's Hawaiian Sabbath and Party, when we will once again greet one another with "Aloha!"

Bev Galli

Ordinations Highlight the Day: Oakland and San Jose Enjoy Dance and Cake Auction

A special combined Sabbath service was held Feb. 12 in Oakland, California. Altogether 171 brethren from Oakland and San Jose gathered together to witness the ordination of Fred Crow and Tim Pebworth, who serve the San Jose congregation. David Register, Southwest regional pastor, and Jim Tuck, pastor of the Oakland and San Jose congregations, conducted the ceremony. Mr. Register delivered the main message of the day about the importance of the doctrine of laying on of hands in relation to Church unity.

After services, the Mexican Fiesta began, featuring a sumptuous buffet of many types of Mexican food. Immedi-



Newly ordained: Tim and Maryse Pebworth and Sue and Fred Crow serve the San Jose, California, congregation

ately following dinner, Mark Rorem, Dan Taylor, Tim Pebworth and Fred Crow joined together for a classic rendition of the humorous Monty Python skit "The Four Yorkshire Men" complete with "authentic" accents.

The emcee for the rest of the evening, including the family dance, was Brett Washington. He introduced Fred Crow to begin the cake auction. It was truly an enjoyable event with cake bids seemingly reaching a plateau in the \$30 to \$40 range, but this was only the beginning.

One three-layer German chocolate cake baked by Joan Tuck sold for \$311. Ned and Pam Pinzini bid against each other over a large, red stuffed animal. When the bidding was finally over, Pam Pinzini had made the highest bid of the day, \$325!

Over \$1,800 was raised at the auction. All proceeds went toward the Ghana summer camp program.

The final event of the day was a family dance with lots of fun music for young and old. Many commented how much they enjoyed the experience of a family atmosphere and unity.

Jim Paterson

Member Named Employee of the Year



Debbie Wilsdorf, a member in the Geneva, Alabama, congregation, was named 2004 Employee of the Year by Bay Medical Center where she works as cardiovascular and telemetry supervisor.

Debbie Wilsdorf

"Debbie is a shining example for the Cardiovascular Service line and Bay Medical Center," said Gaye Burnham, R.N., manager of the Cardiovascular Nursing Unit. "She is always looking out for the good of patient care and the employees."

Columbia Teen Earns Eagle Scout

The Boy Scouts of America awarded Brett Diggins the rank of Eagle Scout on Feb. 21. Brett attends the Columbia, Maryland, congregation with his parents, Steven and Rhonda Diggins.

An Eagle Court of Honor ceremony was held on April 3 by Boy Scout Troop 433 to recognize Brett for his accomplishment. Arnold Hampton, pastor of the Columbia congregation, opened the ceremony with prayer.

Brett worked hard for six years to advance through the ranks to Eagle Scout. He had to do much of the work on his own because he kept the Sabbath and the other scouts completed many of their merit badge requirements on Saturdays.

Brett still attended most of the troop's weekend camping trips, but did not



Brett Diggins achieves the rank of Eagle Scout

arrive until the Sabbath ended. This practice generated many questions, but did not prevent Brett from achieving his goal and earning the respect of his fellow scouts.

Steven and Rhonda Diggins

Los Angeles Goes Cycling in Solvang

About 150 Los Angeles, California, Church members and family participated in the Solvang bike trip and pic-



nic on April 3. Solvang, a quaint town about 45 miles

going," said Katelyn Roybal, age 17. "Solvang is one of prettiest cities in California, and seeing the brethren in such a beautiful setting



Los Angeles cyclists take on 12-mile ride near Solvang; inset, Katelyn Roybal (photos by Jesse Api and Francesca Nixon)

north of Santa Barbara, is a popular California tourist destination that was founded by Danish immigrants in 1911. The architecture, streets and many features of the town are all reminiscent of Denmark.

About 90 people, ranging in age from 9 months to 65 years old, went on the 12-mile bike ride that winds through the beautiful green hills and farmland surrounding the village.

Along the route, the riders passed by the famous Old Mission Santa Inés, farms raising Shetland ponies and a picturesque country school. The hills and valleys made for some challenging pedaling along the way, but the riders were rewarded with spectacular views of vineyards and farmland with cattle, horses, bison and deer.

After the ride, the cyclists, along with those who decided to walk and shop in town rather than ride, met in Hans Christian Andersen Park and shared lunch and fellowship for the rest of the afternoon. The weather was very favorable for those who made the trip, partly sunny and in the low 70s.

A tradition since 1996, the event has become a favorite of the Los Angeles brethren, and the turnout increases by 20 to 30 people each year. Young and old, the participants look forward to the trip all year.

"I have gone to Solvang for four years now, and I plan to continue

makes for a great weekend."

Francesca Nixon

Asheboro Holds Pinewood Derby

On Jan. 2 the Asheboro, North Carolina, brethren hosted their annual Pinewood Derby. More than 40 brethren came to enjoy a day of fun and fellowship as they raced their cars down a 50-foot track. Brethren had four weeks to build a car from a block of wood.

The winners were Shirley Hester, first place women and first place overall; Alfred Burns, first place men; Brandon Burrow, first place youth; Kaley Rodriguez, best looking; and Amber



Asheboro Pinewood Derby winners: back row, Tyler Mabry, Julie Burrow, Shirley Hester, Alfred Burns, Stella Burns, Tom Burrow; front row, Cory Bortree, Brandon Burrow, Kaley Rodriguez and Amber Newsom (not pictured, Jay Burns) (photo by Sadie Parks)

Newsome, most original.

Second and third place winners were Julie Burrow, second place women; Jay Burns, second place men; Tyler Mabry, second place youth; Stella Burns, third place women; Tom Burrow, third place men; and Cory Bortree, third place youth.

After the first heat of races, the brethren enjoyed a soup and salad lunch. Alfred Burns came all the way from Georgia to enjoy the race.

Julie Burrow

Meadville Ski Weekend Gets Bigger and Bigger

The Meadville, Pennsylvania, congregation held its annual ski weekend



Meadville ski weekend participants pose for the camera

Feb. 19, 2005. The day began with a teen Bible study, followed by services and a pizza dinner. The evening began with skiing, snowboarding and tubing at the Mountainview Ski Resort in Edinboro, Pennsylvania.

Each year this activity gets bigger and bigger! Brethren came from all over the region, from Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland, New York and even one young woman who recently moved to Pittsburgh from the Bahamas! It was her first time to see snow!

After the skiing, everyone went to the Edinboro YMCA for a lock-in. Teens then stayed up all night playing basketball, card games and dodge ball. (Many adults stayed up all night too!)

Mary Tobin

ment for leadership development. She was granted her request and Alcoa paid for her travel expenses.

Overall, the team noted that responses to the educational efforts for youth have been very well received and that young people within the Church seem eager to embrace their calling and con-

tributions will essentially be the same. Here is a sampling of the topics to be covered: "Spiritual Encouragement," "Ephesians 4 and Godly Leadership," "Developing People Skills," "Improving Speaking Skills," "Women Mentoring Women," "Effecting Change in Peoples' Lives" and "Lessons Learned in the Past Ten Years."

Costumes Adorn Dayton Party

Following a potluck after services, the evening of Feb. 5 saw the Dayton,



Posing in costume: Kaitlyn Preston and Elizabeth Joseph (back) and Meaghann Joseph and Lillie Barker (front) (photo by Carolyn Pacleb)

Ohio, church hall teeming with pirates, bees, jailbirds and assorted other characters.

No, they weren't part of a Disney movie brought in for entertainment. They were participants in the congregation's costume party.

Winners for best costume were selected in four divisions: children, teenagers, adults and families.

The evening was topped off with table games, dancing and just enjoying the costumes.

Nicolas Nick

Collinsville Teen Cleans Cemetery; Attains Eagle Scout

Michael Barbeau was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout Oct. 17, 2004.

To achieve this, Michael earned a total of 44 merit badges over the course of his scouting career. He also completed a major project, organizing a group to clean 49 tombstones in the veterans' section of the Walnut Hill Cemetery.

Michael attends the Collinsville, Illinois, congregation with his parents and his sister, Angela. Michael has been very



Michael Barbeau becomes an Eagle Scout

active in the local youth programs, has attended a United Youth Camp every year and feels that the Church has helped him serve more in his community. Michael asked his pastor, Larry W. Greider, who had received his Eagle Scout award 40 years earlier, to give the invocation at his Court of Honor.

Larry W. Greider

Wheeling Plans Bluegrass Family Fun Weekend for July 28-31

The Wheeling, West Virginia, congregation invites members and families to a Bluegrass Family Fun Weekend July 28 to 31 at Sally Buffalo Park near Cadiz, Ohio.

Jam sessions, parking lot pickin' and entertainment programs will highlight activities on Thursday, Friday, Saturday night and Sunday. Sabbath activities will include studies for adults, teens and children, as well as Sabbath services.

Camping and nearby motels are available. Whether you're a musician and want to be part of the program or just want to tap your foot to the music, the organizers say, "Y'all come for a weekend of fun and fellowship."

To facilitate planning, please register by contacting Bob Miller at (740) 968-3106 or Jesse Earles at (276) 650-2224.

A registration form and additional information are also available on the Internet at www.ucgnet.org/bluegrass.

Don Henson

"YET," continued from page 2

ing/camping program that encouraged participants to work as a team. Because of Mr. Capo's involvement with the Challenger II program, he was invited to the meetings to share his observations.

Another guest at the meetings was

Julie Zutz, a young adult attending in Chicago, Illinois. She was recently given an assignment by her employer, Alcoa, to help promote leadership development. Miss Zutz requested time from her employer to assist the YET in providing evidence of how adventure/challenger programs can provide a rich envi-

"Conferences," continued from page 1

13 to 15. Paul Suckling followed with a conference for the southern half of the Northeast Region on March 20 to 22. Three regions held conferences April 3 to 5 (Dennis Luker—Northwest, Ken Giese—South Central and Bruce Gore—Southeast). Richard

Pinelli and members of the Ministerial Services Team send a representative to each of the conferences.

Plans currently call for most of these regional conferences to be held during the current fiscal year, with the balance scheduled for the next fiscal year.

Although there will be a variety of presenters at the various conferences,

time than ever for those kinds of activities.

The feedback on these conferences to date has been very positive. One elder summed it up this way: "My wife and I wish to express our deep appreciation for making it possible for us to attend what we feel was the best conference we have ever attended!" UN

Announcements

Births

Shawn and Sandie Marshall would like to announce the birth of their second child, Robert Stephen Marshall. Robert was born Feb. 9, 2005, at 10:23 p.m. in Liberal, Kansas. Rusty, 7, is



Robert Stephen Marshall

proud to be a big brother, and is a great help with Robert. Maternal grandparents are Guy and Barbara Burke and maternal great-grandfather is Elmer Conley.

George and Rita Burnette of Springfield, Tennessee, are pleased to announce the birth of their great-grandson Kason Thomas Burnette. He was born Jan. 27, 2005. He weighed 7 pounds 3 ounces. He was 21¼ inches long. This is the fifth generation son to



Kason Thomas Burnette

be given the middle name "Thomas." The beaming parents are Joshua and Kaleigh Norrod Burnette, also of Springfield.

Filled with utmost joy and thanksgiving, David and Stephanie (Randle) Mörker would like to announce the



Benjamin Earl Mörker

birth of their perfect little firstborn son Benjamin Earl Mörker. Benjamin Earl was born on Dec. 7, 2004, in Saint

Louis Park, Minnesota, weighing 7 pounds 10 ounces (3.454 kilograms) and measuring 20½ inches (52 centimeters). The proud grandparents are: (the late) Jakob Mörker and Rose-Marie Lörtscher-Mörker of Seftigen BE, Switzerland, and Earl and Betty Randle of Eden Prairie, Minnesota. The Mörkers reside in Plymouth, Minnesota, and are part of the Minneapolis congregation.

Bill and Jackie (Mullen) Kyle would like to announce the birth of their second daughter, Megan Michelle Kyle, born on Feb. 16, 2005. She weighed 7 pounds 2 ounces and was 20 inches long. Sister Elizabeth is very pleased with the new addition to the family.



Megan Michelle Kyle

Grandparents are Bill and Patty Kyle Sr. and Ronald and Wilma Mullen.

I am my daddy's joy, just like my name means. I am Abigail Linda Mor-



Abigail Linda Morgan

gan, and I came into this world on Jan. 28, 2005. I weighed in at 7 pounds even and was 20 inches tall. My parents are Brian and Suzanne (Bowen) Morgan. My sister, Tabitha, just turned 11. I love to hear her play the clarinet. My brother, Jared, will be 5 soon and he loves to sing to me and hold me all the time.

Javier and Cheryl (Howell) Riquelme of Dayton, Ohio, are delighted to announce the birth of their second daughter, Jennifer Nicole. Jennifer was born on Jan. 25, 2005. She weighed 8 pounds 6 ounces and was 20 inches long. Big sister Kimberly is excited, as are grandparents Clyde and Donna Howell of West Milton, Ohio,



Jennifer Nicole Riquelme

and Luis and Sonia Riquelme of Santiago, Chile.

Michael and Alexandra (Rhodes) Kubik are pleased to announce the arrival of their first child, Alyssa Victoria Kubik. She was born March 28, 2005, weighed 7 pounds 9 ounces and



Alyssa Victoria Kubik

was 20 inches long. The proud grandparents are Victor and Beverly Kubik of Indianapolis, Indiana, and Melvin and Diane Rhodes of East Lansing, Michigan.

Lucas and Julie McDuffie are happy to announce the birth of their first child, Lucas Matthew McDuffie Jr., born May 22, 2004. He weighed in at 6 pounds 10 ounces and was 20 inches long. Dun-



Lucas Matthew McDuffie Jr.

woodie and Cheryl McDuffie, the proud grandparents, are members of the New Orleans, Louisiana, congregation.

Nathan and Lori (Higgs) Schroeder of Athens, Georgia, are very pleased to announce the birth of their first child, Darren Albert Schroeder, born March 27, 2005. Darren weighed in at 7 pounds 13 ounces and was 21 inches

long. Very proud grandparents are Larry and Virginia Higgs of Norwood,



Darren Albert Schroeder

Georgia and John and Jan Schroeder of Watford, England.

Weddings

Colleen Gray and Nolan Paul Richter of the Johannesburg, South Africa, congregation, were united in marriage in East London, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, on Jan. 29, 2005, by Jorge



Nolan and Colleen Richter

de Campos, elder from Johannesburg. The couple will reside in Johannesburg.

Mario and Caty Seiglie are very happy to announce the wedding of their oldest daughter Natalia to Dr. Omar Anguiano, on Feb. 6, 2005. The ceremony and reception took place aboard the yacht *Destiny* in Newport Beach, California. Bridesmaids were Debbie, Beckie and Jackie Seiglie. The ceremony was performed by the bride's father.

The groom is a graduate of the University of Kansas and Cleveland School of Chiropractic. The bride will receive



Omar and Natalia Anguiano

her graduate degree from the same school in August of this year. They reside in Poway, California, where they currently have their clinic, and attend the San Diego congregation.

Connie (Avara) Turnblad and Mark Vreeland were united in marriage Jan. 15, 2005, in Rochester, Minnesota, by Steve Myers. The groom's children, Andy and Rachel, were best man and



Mark and Connie Vreeland

maid of honor. The Vreelands live in Chelsea, Michigan, and attend the Ann Arbor, Michigan, congregation.

Ken and Kathy Treybig are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter, Kamie, to Jonathan Stoner, son of Larry and Joyce Stoner.

The bride's attendants were matron of honor, Sharon Babcock; bridesmaids Cindy Harper, Kelly Baudoin and Amy Dutsch; and flower girl, Katie Stoner. Best man, Ron Stoner; groomsmen Jim Stoner, Tim Foster and David Treybig; and ring bearer, Donnie Stoner, completed the wedding party.

The ceremony took place on Aug. 22, 2004, in Tyler, Texas, and was per-



Jonathan and Kamie Stoner

formed by the bride's father. The happy couple now resides in Dayton, Ohio.

Toby and Jean Shipman and George and Rhonda Allen are pleased to announce the marriage of their children Andrea Shipman and George Allen III. The couple was married on June 6, 2004, in Big Sandy, Texas. The ceremony was performed by Aaron Dean.

Bridal attendants were: matron of honor, Elissa Eaton; bridesmaids,

Tribute: Mary Katherine Whetson

Mary Katherine Whetson, beloved wife and mother, died Oct. 12, 2004, following a lengthy illness. Mary was a member of the Youngstown, Ohio, congregation.

She is survived by her husband, Charles; daughters, Sue (and her husband, George) Henderson, Margon Chabot, Gail (and her husband, Bob) Iacobucci; and daughter-in-law, Judith Whetson. Also surviving are six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, three sisters and two brothers. Mary was preceded in death by a son, John; son-in law, Leo Chabot; and three sisters and five brothers.

Charles and Mary began attending the Akron, Ohio, congregation in 1960 and were baptized in 1961. The two of them served the Youngstown congregation for many years as local church elder and deaconess. They were married for 61 years, and their example of unconditional commitment and love to each other was an inspiration.

Mary served as a tremendous example of hospitality by opening her home to many from all around the world, giving them a warm and welcoming place to go on the Sabbath. She was a shining example of love and dedication to her family. She enjoyed crocheting and making gifts for others. Her kitchen was always filled with pastries ready for that unexpected guest. She was known for



Mary Katherine Whetson

her warm smile, her unpredictable wit and her fabulous cinnamon rolls.

Mary will be sadly missed by all those who have been blessed to be a part of her life. We look forward to the family reunion at Christ's return. Here are a few comments from brethren:

"Mary was loving and devoted to her husband and family. She will always be remembered for her delicious meals so their home was always a social place for the brethren and any brethren who would be passing through Youngstown on the Sabbath. Her love for God and serving His people was outstanding."

Jan Noel

"Mary Whetson lived to serve others. Her example as a servant to God and God's Church was exemplary as a member, a deaconess and wife of a

local church elder. Mary Whetson lived to serve. She baked pies and her cinnamon rolls were scrumptiously delicious. Her husband and children were the major focal point of her life, topped only by her grandchildren and then came all the rest of us in the Youngstown church as a very close second. She was Grandma and babysitter to our children and Mom to all the rest of us.

"Even though she was basically blind for most of her adult life, she saw the best in everyone she grew to know and she extended her love to all. We look forward to seeing her again in God's Kingdom in the near future, and in the meantime we will miss her loving ways and gentle joy she expressed to all who had the privilege to know her."

Jim, RoseAnn, Scott, Rebekah and Elizabeth Cannon

"I got to know Mrs. Mary Whetson as a young girl first coming into the Church. You could say she was my "Mom" in the Church. She always made you feel so welcome at her home. After dinner we would all sit around and talk and laugh. Mrs. Whetson's laughter was very infectious as well.

"What I remember Mrs. Whetson for is the kindness she showed everyone. Through her many health trials, she always had a smile on her face. Her encouragement was always reassuring . . . she just seemed to know what to say to make you feel better.

Kathy de Campos

Rachel Summy, Sarah Hicks and Crescina Shipman; and flower girl, Hannah Shipman. Groom's attendants were: best man, Loren Beam; groomsmen,



George and Andrea Allen

Chad Hawks, Benjamin Schantz and James Allen.

The couple now resides in Springville, Alabama, and are members of the Gadsden congregation.

Anniversaries

On Oct. 23, 2004, the Cincinnati, Ohio, area churches honored Edward and Angie Smith for their 60th wedding anniversary, which had taken place on Oct. 8.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith grew up in southern Oklahoma and met at school while both were yet teenagers. They discovered their love for each other in their senior year and married shortly after their graduation.

Not long after their wedding, Mr. Smith was drafted into the army. Mrs. Smith traveled with him from base to base as she could, but the dreadful day came when he was given his orders to go to Germany and she had to return home to her family in Oklahoma. Mr. Smith served as a military guard at the Nuremberg trials and got a firsthand account of history in the making.

After 19 long months, he was finally able to return home to the love of his life. They made a promise to each other when he returned that they would do everything in their power to never be apart. To this day, you rarely see one without the other.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith became acquainted with God's truth in the early 1950s and attended the first spring



Angie and Edward Smith

Holy Day season when Mr. Armstrong came Big Sandy, Texas. They were

baptized shortly thereafter and have served God and His people faithfully for many years.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith lived in Oklahoma where Mr. Smith was an employee of Halliburton until Mr. Smith was hired to work for the Church fulltime. He and Angie have served congregations in California, Texas, Ohio and Michigan. Mr. and Mrs. Smith moved back to Cincinnati in 1980 and have made it their home since then.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith have two daughters, Linda Smith and Debbie Kieviet; one son-in-law, Bruce Kieviet; one granddaughter, Angela Whitaker, and her husband Robert; and the light of all their lives these days, one great-granddaughter, Ragan Whitaker.

The one word that sums the Smiths' lives is *love*—love for God, love for His people, love for their family and, of course, love for each other. They are a great example to all.

Lee and Peggy Stolley celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Jan. 8, 2005. Their children surprised them with a celebration weekend in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, on the actual anniversary date!

On the Sabbath of Jan. 22 the East Texas congregation honored the couple with a reception following Sabbath services. Lee and Peggy were presented with two dozen yellow roses and a beautiful individually created card. An anniversary cake, punch and snacks were served to those attending.

Lee and Peggy have three children: Steve and Terri Buchanan; Daniel and

Tribute: Sherry Koon

Sherry Koon, the wife of elder Steve Koon, mother of Jeremy and Jim, sister of Steve Stout, a good friend to all and my very best friend, died suddenly on June 25, 2004, from a severe brain hemorrhage.

Sherry was born on Aug. 24, 1948, in Onawa, Iowa and grew up in the Seattle, Washington, area with her parents, Lawrence and Dorothy Stout, and brother Steve.

Her mother was baptized into the Church in 1954. Sherry attended services in the Seattle congregation where she was baptized in 1971. She met Steve who also attended the Seattle congregation and they were married on Sept. 16, 1972. They recently celebrated their 31st wedding with a trip to Maui, Hawaii in February 2004.

Sherry was a devoted wife, mom and friend to all. Her quiet servant leadership was noticed by all who knew her. She always had a smile, a hug, a card or a gift to give, whether it would be for a happy occasion or a sad occasion. Sherry always had a shoulder to lean on.

Sherry had a real gentleness about



Sherry Koon

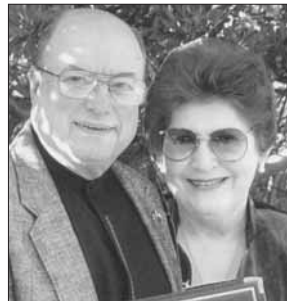
her, and if you were one of the fortunate ones to have met her, you were truly blessed by it. She loved the Church and her many friends. She and Steve loved to go on weekend getaways with their friends and family.

Sherry loved her home and the beautiful backyard that she and Steve worked so hard on to make into their home for their family for over 22 years.

She is greatly missed, and we all look forward to the great reunion when Jesus Christ returns.

Hazel Larson

Rebekah Stolley; and Clint and Vicki Ditto; and seven grandchildren: Steven, James, Lindsey, Danielle, Victoria, Jason and Preston.



Lee and Peggy Stolley

Lee has a background of over 40 years in law enforcement, including 14 years as head of security at Ambassador College. Although he is officially retired, he has a busy schedule volunteering services to the community.

Charles and Pollye Waggoner celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary



Charles and Pollye Waggoner

on Feb. 11, 2005. After Sabbath services on Feb. 19 the Munster, Indiana, congregation surprised them with a reception. A delicious almond-coated carrot cake and various appetizers were enjoyed by everyone.

Charles and Pollye were baptized in 1966. They have three children, one grandchild and are enjoying retirement.

Obituaries

Howard D. Brennecke, 79, of Millersville, Missouri, died peacefully on March 14, 2005, at his home. Howard was baptized July 24, 1963,



Howard D. Brennecke

along with his wife Geraldine. He attended the Cape Girardeau, Missouri, congregation since its inception, Aug. 6, 1966.

By vocation Howard was a farmer, raising hay, cattle and other livestock. While he profited from farming, he excelled at being a people person. There doubtless was never a person he didn't try to like. Faithful and in good spirits to the end, he will be remembered for his unfailing smile, the twin-

kle in his eye, his positive outlook and his visits to the sick.

He was preceded in death by a daughter, Greta Gillam. Loving survivors include his wife of 57 years; a son, Roger, and three daughters, Brenda Wilcox, Rhonda Hornbuckle and Anita Vanover.

The funeral was conducted on March 18 by David Johnson, pastor of the Cape Girardeau and Poplar Bluff, Missouri, and Paducah, Kentucky, congregations.

Robert Alan Roller, son of Glen A. Roller and Roberta J. Bowles Roller, was born on May 23, 1961, in Olathe, Kansas. He died March 31, 2005, at Memorial Hospital, Lawrence, Kansas, of a pulmonary embolism.

Robert began attending Church of God services when he was 4 years old with his family.

He graduated from Lawrence High School in 1979 and attended Kansas University for two years studying engineering. He served in the U.S. Air Force, after which he returned to Lawrence. Robert worked in the Lawrence area as a general handyman, dishwasher, cook and school bus driver.

Robert is survived by his mother, Roberta Cord; brothers, Gregory and John Roller; two sisters, Glenna and Ruth Roller; all of Lawrence. He was preceded in death by his father, Glen Roller, who died Jan. 8, 1984. Other survivors include his stepfather, Frank Cord Sr.; a stepbrother, Frank Cord Jr.; and two stepsisters, Karen Grubb and Elizabeth Coulter.

Graveside services were conducted by Dwaine Hudson at Oak Hill Cemetery, Lawrence, on April 5, 2005

Tribute: Rosene Hegna

Ethel Rosene Klepfer Hegna, age 61, was born on Sept. 30, 1943, in Princeville, Illinois, to parents Walter and Ethel Klepfer. She was the fifth child in a family of three brothers and two sisters. Her father was a farmer and her mother a homemaker. In 1949, her family moved to Texas, where her father continued to farm. Rosene graduated from Pharr-San Juan-Alamo High School in Pharr, Texas, in 1961.

Following graduation, she worked briefly for Dick's Produce in McAllen, Texas, before deciding to attend Ambassador College in Big Sandy, arriving on campus in the fall of 1964. It was at Ambassador that she met her future husband, Richard Hegna, who attended Ambassador from 1966-1969.

After her graduation in 1968, Dick and Rosene were married that same year, on July 21. Their daughter Karin was born on Jan. 21, 1972. Dick was ordained an elder in April of 1981.

Over the years, both of them were employed by Ambassador College in several capacities, and it quickly became clear that Dick and Rosene were a team. They enthusiastically volunteered their time and energy in organizing youth activities, speech clubs, church dances and socials, youth sports events and a host of other activities and events too numerous to mention.

They were truly tireless and dedicated servants, displaying a level of hospitality and kindness that was contagious. Saturday nights at the Hegnas' often involved potluck meals with fam-



Rosene Hegna

ily and friends, along with table games and fellowship.

Following the closure of Ambassador, Rosene worked for several employers, ending her working career with the Redman Pipe and Supply Company. She also served as secretary to the Tyler Community Concert Association, testifying to her love of music. She was a wonderful example of a Christian woman.

After bravely battling cancer for more than seven months, Rosene died peacefully on Sunday, April 3, 2005, at Home Place Hospice Care in Tyler, surrounded by her family. She was buried at Gladewater Memorial Park.

Rosene is survived by her husband of 36 years, Richard Hegna, of Gladewater; one daughter and son-in-law, Karin and Mike Danapas of Tyler; three brothers, Don Klepfer of Athens, Dean Klepfer of Big Sandy and Tom Klepfer of Wimberly; two sisters, Gladys Tysdale of Bisby, Arizona, and Mary Stephens of Rockport, Texas; and many nieces and nephews.

News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

Press Release About Unleavened Bread Sent Out

A press release was sent to 20 U.S. newspapers about United's observance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—just as Christ, the New Testament Church and the apostles observed. Each release was personalized with the e-mail address and phone number of the local pastor.

Members Distribute More GN Brochures

Since four new *Good News* "take-one" subscription brochures were made available for member distribution in December 2004, 57,278 brochures and 1,079 displays have been ordered and are being placed in stores and other locations by our brethren. Currently, 246 members, including 154 new participants, are active in this effort.

Brethren are welcome to order brochures and displays by contacting John LaBissoniere at 198 McDeerman Road, Jacksboro, TN 37757 or by toll-free telephone at (888) 369-9940 or e-mail at john_labissoniere@ucg.org.

John LaBissoniere

Media Center Contractor Chosen

Progress is continuing toward construction of the Church's new media center at the home office. A contractor was finalized for the work to enclose the studio space the week of April 25. Three bids were submitted, and the construction company of Kramer and Feldman Incorporated (KFI) was chosen.

KFI will be responsible for enclosing the open space on the second floor directly above the mailing center. This will be the location of the new media center. A video-recording studio, plus three small offices for future general office needs and expansion, will be enclosed in the 42-foot by 32-foot area.

KFI will install walls containing soundproofing materials, install doors and frames, spray acoustic insulation on the ceiling, paint as required and oversee installation of electrical wiring and additional transformers for studio lighting needs and air conditioning. The three offices will be similar in appearance to existing rooms at the home office.

We anticipate construction beginning around the first week of June after local permits are secured. The construction project will then take about eight weeks. After that point, the procurement of the actual studio equipment, lighting gear, cameras, editing equipment and the on-camera set can begin in earnest.

Peter Eddington spent three days at the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention and trade show in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 19 to 22 to evaluate the latest technology. It is encouraging to see the cost of video production to be a fraction of what it once was, and the plan is to outfit the Church's studio wherever possible with digital equipment that is upgradable to high-definition video to keep pace with the industry.

The prayers and support of the brethren have been very much appreciated as the media center dream begins to become a reality. This video-recording area will be invaluable to United. Plans are underway to begin recording sometime in September.

Peter Eddington

Ordinations Announced

Blaney Sproul was ordained an elder April 9. He and his wife, Linda Marie, serve the Morgantown, West Virginia, congregation.

Mike Bennett was ordained April 24. He and his wife, Becky, serve the Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation.

2006 Young Adults Cruise Planned

Based on the overwhelming positive feedback from everyone who attended

See "News at a Glance," page 16

Letters

Correction

I appreciate the many good articles in *United News*—good job!

I agree with the article by Ken Graham on use of the sacred name (February, page 7). But the statement under "Aramaic" that says, "In the later books of the Old Testament (like Ezra and Nehemiah), we do not find God referred to by the name *YHWH* at all. We find that by this time the language of the Israelite peoples was Aramaic. And so the Aramaic names *Eloah*, *Eloah* or *Elaw* are used and no longer *Elohim* or *YHWH*" is not correct. According to *The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament*, *Elohim* is used in Ezra about 54 times and in Nehemiah about 68 times. And *YHWH* is used about 34 times in Ezra and about 15 times in Nehemiah according to *Zodhiates' Complete Word Study Old Testament*.

Internet
We regret the error based on an inaccurate source. The following replacement paragraph is being added to the reprint article on the subject:

"There are portions of the *Old Testament* where Aramaic is the original language rather than Hebrew (*Daniel 2:4 through 7:28; Ezra 4:8 through 6:18; and 7:12-26*). Nowhere in these portions of Aramaic do we find the Hebrew words

for the deity, but instead we find the Aramaic form *Elah*."

Sexual Addictions

I grew up and married in the Church. The recent article in *United News* about struggling with sex addiction (February, page 9) really struck a chord with me since it is something my husband has been battling with. I have been through a couple of hard years as the "victim" of his addiction to Internet porn.

A while back I started to write an article about my experience in the hopes that young people (I guess mostly young men) who are heading down that path can see just how much damage it can cause. For a while I have been putting off sending in the article, because it is obviously very personal, but reading the article in the *UN* decided me—so here it is. I know it is not a topic most people want to read about. But I truly hope that you will give it some thought in the hope that it might spare someone else the agony I have been through.

[Excerpts from "Nightmare"]

This is really hard for me to write, but I hope with all my heart that by speaking out I can spare at least one person the pain I have been suffering.

My nightmare started when my husband was just 12 years old. It started with

what many people call a "girlie" magazine—pornography . . .

Even though Andrew (obviously not his real name) knew in his heart that looking at porn was wrong, he didn't think it would hurt anyone. I wish that someone could have told him then how much it would hurt me now . . .

Words can't begin to describe how worthless this makes me feel. Even though logic tells me that this is Andrew's problem and not mine, I feel like I'm less than a prostitute . . . This is a very lonely road for me. Andrew has me here to help him fight this battle. I have no one (no human being, that is) . . .

Even the words "I love you" are an insult. My inner voice asks, "Then how can you hurt me so much?"

Please, don't do this to your future husband or wife. And *don't* tell yourself you're not hurting anyone . . .

Several months later: The good news is that now Andrew is finally not just regretting the hurt he has caused, but has repented and is taking real steps every day to overcome his addiction to porn. He has reclaimed his mind . . . The battle is far from over, but seeing the miracle that God's Spirit has worked in our lives, I have absolute confidence that it will be won in time.

Internet

Viewing Literature Online? Save Us Some Paper

Some people are eager to read the latest *Good News*, *United News*, *World News and Prophecy* or *Vertical Thought* issue. So, when a new copy is published, they go to one of our Web sites to read the latest issue before their printed copy arrives in the mail. If you are one of these people and you no longer need to receive your printed copy of one or all of these publications, please let us know by e-mail at info@ucg.org.

Readers who want to opt out of receiving hard-copy versions of publications in the mail can easily do so in the United States and some other countries. Please note: if readers opt out of receiving *United News* in the mail, they will also not receive the *Festival Planning Brochure* or *United Youth Camps Magazine*.

You can read *World News and Prophecy* online at www.ucg.org/wnp and *United News* at www.ucg.org/un. *The Good News* is available at www.gnmagazine.org and *Vertical Thought* at www.verticalthought.org. Or simply sign up for United's regular e-mail updates at www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm to receive an alert when new material is available online.

Media and Communications Services

News At a Glance

Continued from page 15

the 2005 Young Adults Cruise, the UCG Chicago Young Adults are planning another four-day cruise for 2006.

The cruise dates will be Thursday, Jan. 26, 2006, through Monday, Jan. 30, 2006. The cruise will be leaving from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, and will be on the newly refurbished and upgraded ship, *Enchantment of the Seas*. This Royal Caribbean cruise ship has many standard cruise amenities, but in 2006 it will have added 75 feet, which will allow for bungee trampolines, added pool and spa space and new suspension bridges and walkways.

The cruise will be similar to the 2005 cruise, with specially prepared biblically based seminars, Sabbath church services on board the ship and opportunities to catch up with old friends and meet many new friends.

The 2005 cruise had over 90 attending and in 2006 we expect more. To reserve your space, a \$25 refundable deposit is required by June 1 and full payment by the end of November 2005.

The \$503 per person cruise price includes room, all meals, most entertainment and port and tax fees (\$340 base price, \$124 for port fees and taxes and \$39 for prepaid tips). To reserve your space, contact Anneliese, our cruise travel agent, by phone at (631) 427-0500 or by e-mail at aklthreeharbortravel@yahoo.com.

For more cruise information, e-mail ucgcruise@hotmail.com.

Bill Bradford

Feast Updates

Several changes were made after the March/April *United News* went to press. See the *Festival Planning Brochure*, mailed in mid-April, for details.

Jamaica: A site was added in Montego Bay.

Kenya: The site was changed to Mosocho.

Bolivia: English translation of services has been added.



What's New on the Web?

On www.ucg.org

■ Compass Check

See video of home office weekly meeting.

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: "Challenges Facing Pope Benedict XVI" "U.S. Facing Identity Crisis" "New Pope Faces a Changed World" "From Iraq: Good News About Local Government"

www.ucg.org/commentary/

■ Current World News & Trends

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

www.ucg.org/worldnews/

■ E-mail Updates and UCG eNews

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

www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm

On vcmagazine.org

■ The April/May *VCM* includes "Psalm 22—An Awe-Inspiring Prophecy," "Don't Miss the Mark" and "Living Between the Lines."

vcmagazine.org

On verticalthought.org

■ The April-June issue includes "The Power of Habits," "Do You Choose Happiness?" "Eating Choices" and "How Do You Think?" verticalthought.org

Featured Links of the Month

■ *World News and Prophecy Online* with blogs on the day's news, podcasts and more.

www.wnponline.org

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

www.ucg.org/about/council

www.ucg.org/about/homeoffice

If you have questions, contact: webmaster@ucg.org

Good Works Fund-Raiser: Recycling Inkjet Cartridges

Here's an opportunity to raise some funds for the Good Works Program.

Empties4Cash provides a fund-raiser that is easy, effortless and environmentally beneficial. The program involves recycling used inkjet cartridges. The program has been going in the Ocala/Orlando/Jacksonville, Florida, congregations for the last few months and it's been working out great.

Here's how the program works: Most of us have inkjet printers at home or work. The next time you have an empty cartridge, don't throw it away! Put the cartridge in a Ziploc bag or the original cartridge box to be recycled and bring it to Church. Please do not put scotch tape over the print head! Please give the cartridges to the person who will be heading up the program in your area. That person in turn will send the cartridges to Empties4Cash using the postage-paid FedEx boxes that Empties4Cash provides for free. They give up to \$4 for each good cartridge with a print head.

For more details and information on how to get the program started in your area, contact Dave PerMar at davepermar@yahoo.com. More

information can also be found at www.empties4cash.com

Dave PerMar

Hawaii Plans Pentecost Fellowship Weekend

Aloha! The Hawaiian brethren are hosting a Pentecost Fellowship Weekend in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii, from June 10 to 12.

Services on Sabbath, June 11, and Pentecost, June 12, will be held at the King Kamehameha Beach Hotel.

Room rates are \$99 per night. Reservations can be made directly with the hotel at (800) 367-6060. Be sure to mention the United Church of God for these special rates. Reservations should be made by May 10 for guaranteed rates and space.

Activities will kick off with a barbecue and Bible study at Kahaluu State Beach Park on Friday, June 10, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Between services on Pentecost, we will enjoy the King Kamehameha's award-winning Sunday brunch.

For additional information and to confirm your attendance (we need a head count), contact Brad or Sherry

Ellis in Kona at (808) 329-5409 or by e-mail at konasherry@juno.com.

Brad and Sherry Ellis

Toronto Weekend: "Taking Your Calling Seriously"

Toronto, Ontario, is once again hosting a weekend event July 2 and 3, 2005. However, this year it is not exclusively a "singles" event. It is for all adults, age 20 and over.

Our theme is "Taking Your Calling Seriously—Being Ready to Lead in God's Kingdom." The seminars and sermons will be sure to motivate and stir participants to action toward spiritual growth and character building. It will be a weekend of serious reflection that forces us to take a sober look at ourselves and the profound responsibility we have as firstfruits. To complement the spiritual menu, there will be opportunities to develop and strengthen friendships with like-minded people.

Deadline for registration is June 3. The cost is \$35 Canadian if you register by May 20. After that, the cost increases. The registration fee covers all seminars, the welcome reception, Sabbath lunch and potluck evening

meal, Sunday lunch and administrative costs. Optional activities are being planned for Sunday afternoon and evening.

A block of rooms has been set aside at the Radisson Hotel for this weekend event. To get the special low rate of \$79 Canadian per room per night, you must reserve your room by June 1.

Information can be found at www.ucg-toronto.org/Seminars2005.asp.

Denise Masse

Seattle Sponsors Ladies' Seminar

The Seattle, Washington, congregation is sponsoring a Ladies' Education Seminar June 24 to 26, 2005. The theme of the weekend is "Joy and Gladness." Bob Dick will be the guest speaker for Sabbath services.

The seminar will be held in a beautiful, wooded retreat about 30 minutes from Sea-Tac International Airport. The presentations will explore how to grow in joy and have a merry heart.

For more information, write to Bev Pronishan at bev@coaching-advantage.com or check Seattle's Web site at www.ucg-seattle.org.

LeeAnn Luker

Attention Graduating Seniors and Parents!

Congratulations! We would like to feature the 2005 high school graduates in a special section of the July *United News*. Please take a few minutes to answer these questions and send a photograph by June 13, 2005.

1. Graduate's Name
2. Parents' Names
3. Congregation
4. High School Accomplishments
5. Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests (tell a little bit about yourself)
6. Plans After Graduation
7. Additional Comments (favorite quote, favorite scripture, motto, advice, etc. Please identify which it is, so we don't think your advice is your motto, etc.)

Phone number or e-mail address to confirm spellings, etc. (*Will Not Be Printed*)

Please send with a recent photo of the graduate by June 13.

By e-mail to: Mike.Bennett@ucg.org

By mail to: *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027

We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length; 300-word maximum length. Thanks!



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