

## The Importance of Prayer and Bible Study

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The next issue of *United News* is scheduled to be published on Monday, March 15, 1999.

The March issue will contain Feast of Tabernacles site descriptions for United locations around the globe. It will also provide youth-camp site descriptions and application information for United's 1999 summer camp program.

Additionally, we hope to provide a report on the 1999 General Conference of Elders, which will be held in Cincinnati this year.

With this issue of *United News*, we begin printing a tabloid style newsletter. Using this new size, instead of the magazine size of the past, we are able to eliminate the bindery process, thus saving time and money in production.

We are striving to provide our readers with the information they need, while keeping costs to a minimum.

by Roy Holladay

Why is it absolutely imperative that we study the Bible and pray? What does it accomplish for a Christian? How do we take prayer and Bible study and convert it into spiritual strength and character?

One way that we can understand how the conversion process works is to look at how our physical bodies use food and convert it into energy. Both physically and spiritually we need to be recharged and energized! Physically, our bodies can get into a run-down condition. We need proper food and rest to build our bodies back up. Spiritually, we need to be recharged by the Spirit of God so that we might have the power to overcome.

### Baby Food

We all start out as babes in Christ (Matthew 18:1-6). We are not to remain children, but are to mature spiritually (Hebrews 5:12-14). A baby's diet initially consists of milk from its mother. The first fluid that a nursing baby receives from its mother is called *colostrum*. This fluid is rich in protein and prepares the baby's body to receive milk, by coating the stomach. It also helps to

prevent susceptibility to certain diseases.

When God initially calls us to understand His way of life, the Spirit of God prepares our minds to receive spiritual food. God's Spirit also helps us to fight off spiritually wrong thoughts and ideas. God doesn't want us to stay on milk forever. He wants us to grow up and to go on to perfection (Ephesians 4:13-15; Hebrews 6:1).

### The Analogy of Food

Why do we eat food? What is the purpose of eating? We all like to eat. We realize that food gives us strength and energy. We know that we must sustain our physical life or we die. Romans 12:2 explains that we must spiritually renew our minds. Just as the physical body must be renewed in power and strength, so must our spiritual batteries be recharged. We are to eat, or imbibe, the Word of God. It becomes a part of us. Likewise, when we eat food it becomes a part of the very cells of our bodies (John 6:48-51, 63). Ephesians 3:16 talks about a Christian being "strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man," and verse 20 also talks about "power that works in us." The Spirit of God imparts spiritual power to us. That Spirit is renewed in us

through prayer and Bible study. Children eat a lot when they are going through growth periods. They seem to be an appetite with skin wrapped around it! Do we stop eating spiritually after we have been in the church for awhile? Our spiritual development depends upon constantly eating of God's Word.

How often do most of us eat? We generally eat two or three times a day. We seldom forget to eat because our bodies constantly remind us that we are hungry and have need of food. Notice 2 Corinthians 4:16: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day." The physical is a type of the spiritual. The new man must be renewed on a daily basis. Colossians 3:9-10 also demonstrates that the new man is to be renewed in knowledge. The knowledge and wisdom of God come from the Spirit of God and the holy Scriptures.

In order for food to be properly assimilated into the body it should be digested properly. We chew our food in the mouth to help break it down. Consequently, the acids in the stomach are able to further break down the food. Food has to be digested to be

(See "PRAYER," page 2)

## Follow the Leader

by Aaron Dean

I am writing to you from an altitude of 41,000 feet, traveling 500 miles per hour on route to Bangkok, Thailand. Aside from the fact that I am not on board a Grumman Gulfstream jet, these words might be a quote from many a letter from our past. The letters and articles written all over the world, whether in a plane or in a hotel, are still etched in my mind; not to mention those *Young Ambassador* songs that will forever ring in my ears.

It was a time when things were more clearly defined for me. It was a cause that

I served, still do, and always will, even though God has chosen to define it differently as we enter the final human phase before His divine intervention. Yet, I still look back to learn how I must carry the torch into the future.

I learned a lot from Herbert Armstrong, and a lot because of him. After all, where do you learn protocol for any country, race or religion? Where do you learn how to make a typewriter work when the voltage fluctuates between 150 to 280 volts? How do you repair a typewriter when you don't have a local Smith-Corona dealer, because the country you

are in is barely out of the stone age? Where do you learn the "hupsbah" to go where you have to go, but the sign says "employees only." How do you get permits that are supposed to take weeks, in one day?

There are many things I treasure when I look back on the time with my friend and mentor. I was his child in the spiritual sense, a result of God's efforts through him. He forced me to practice all of the seven laws of success. A saying I grew fond of was: "The difficult we do immediately, the impossible takes a little

(See "LEADER," page 2)

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**“PRAYER,”** (Continued from page 1)

properly used by the body. There is a spiritual analogy to this also. When we study the Scriptures, we need to meditate on what we study. Spiritually speaking, we chew on it, or think about it. We break the Word of God down into understandable parts and apply it to our lives.

**Spiritual Motivation**

Food in the body is converted into energy and strength. It repairs the cells, fuels the body, and imparts the nutrients needed to sustain life. This also compares to the working of God's Spirit. Galatians 5:22 shows that God's Spirit imparts fruit. One of the fruits that it imparts to us is faith.

What is the power that motivates the true servants of God to obey, to overcome, to grow in grace and knowledge? It is faith! Hebrews 11 demonstrates that faith is what motivated the men and women of old to obey God. *Obedience is faith transformed into action*—transformed into another form. James 2:14-20 explains that faith must be used—that “faith without work is dead.” The Spirit is depleted, or used up, through service, works and spiritual overcoming. Hard physical labor innervates us physically. After extensive athletic exertion we become tired. We eat to renew our strength. The *spiritual* power that God gives us is His Spirit (Acts 1:8).

Jesus Christ through good works used up the power of God. As Luke 6:19 says: “For power went out from Him and healed them all.” On another occasion Jesus healed a woman who had a flow of blood for 12 years (Mark 5:25-30). Verse 30 states that power had gone out of Jesus to perform this miracle. When we obey God or serve others we use us a certain amount of the spiritual power that God gives us. It has to be renewed. There is nothing constant about a spiritual mind in a physical body.

Herbert Armstrong stated in the past that the Spirit of God is like water that flows out of a Christian in good works. We must be constantly connected to the source of that water, or God's Spirit.

**Use The Spirit**

Different work-related jobs expend different amounts of energy. A person who has a desk job does not burn as many calories as someone who does hard manual labor. Christ explained to His disciples that different prob-

**“LEADER,”** (Continued from page 1)

longer.” Miracles seem to be the routine. Only as I look back do I really see the magnitude of the lessons I learned.

**The Biggest Lesson**

If I had to pick one, what would be the biggest lesson I learned? Was it perseverance? I witnessed a man who would never give up—a man who was so focussed on

lems require being close to God. The disciples had cast out demons through the Spirit of God. Yet we have an example in Matthew 17:14-21 where they were not able to cast out a violent demon. Why were they not able? Unbelief or lack of faith! Christ went on to explain in verse 21 that “this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” The obvious implication was that Christ had been praying and fasting and the disciples had not. Yet Christ did not indicate that prayer and fasting was necessary for every demon that is cast out—only certain types of demons. None of us know when we will be confronted with a major test that will require a great deal of faith on our part. The first epistle of Peter 1:6-7 shows that our faith will be tried to see how strong we are. We must be close to God at all times and not allow the self to coast spiritually and rest on past laurels or accomplishments. *In a trial our faith is translated into patience.*

Physically speaking you cannot always tell how much endurance and strength a person has by looking at him. There is a spiritual parallel. We all know members that we thought were spiritually strong and rooted



**Norma and Roy Holladay**

firmly in the truth of God. Yet when a major trial confronted the church in the mid-nineties many of them did not pass. Others that you may have thought did not have spiritual depth did remain faithful. *Our character and strength are measured by how we react in a trial.*

**Proper Spiritual Diet**

We have all heard the expression “you are what you eat.” When it comes to our spiritual diet, what do we eat? Lets take a look at four different spiritual diets.

- Starvation—If you stop eating food and

his job that he put everything and anything aside to get it done. There was no time off. Princess Lillian of Belgium once chided him for not giving me a vacation: “Mr. Armstrong, you can't do that to him!” “Oh,” he responded, “Aaron's like me, his work is his life.” (It was only true because I didn't have another life—just ask my wife.)

Of course, we did have some free time. We often played hearts in the

drinking liquids, you will starve to death. The parallel is a lack of prayer and Bible study. Death does not occur immediately on a starvation diet, but if not corrected it will invariably lead to death. The same is true if we seldom study or pray.

- Unbalanced diet—An unbalanced diet can lead to poor health and many physical difficulties. Spiritually, an unbalanced diet would be where we tend to study only one topic in the Bible—such as prophecy or history. The Bible gives us a balanced diet of spiritual food—including Christian living, prophecy, history, doctrine, etc. We may have a favorite section of the Bible that we like to study, but don't neglect the whole Bible (Matthew 4:4).
- Food fanatics—We have all encountered people who become extreme in their eating habits. I remember one gentleman that I encountered who basically just ate bananas. Spiritually, this would be a person who only studies one point of Scripture. This becomes his spiritual “baby.”
- Balanced diet—Our physical diet should consist of a proper balance of foods from all the different food groups—fruits, vegetables, grains, meats, etc. A balanced spiritual diet would be to study the Bible in proper proportions. Sometimes we study according to our spiritual needs. Those needs will vary from time to time.

What happens when you eat a poor diet? Your resistance is low. As a result you could get a cold, flu, or some disease. When you're sick you don't want to eat, and you become weaker. When our spiritual resistance is low, almost any trial or test could throw us. Paul admonishes us in Galatians 6:10: “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” The more we rely upon God and the closer we are to Him the more God's strength is made perfect in us (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). We receive the power of God when we totally rely upon Him.

Very seldom do we forget to eat. We would not dream of only eating once a week. Yet this is what we do spiritually if the only time we study and pray is on the Sabbath. Every time we sit down to eat it should be a reminder that we need to eat spiritually. We must pray and study regularly for spiritual strength. *U/N*

evening, when he was too tired to work. The challenge for him, because of his eyesight, was distinguishing the spades from the clubs and the diamonds from the hearts. It makes it much easier when you only play two colors. Of course, the object of this game was to “give,” something he gladly practiced. With the night over it was back to work.

The older he got the more he felt he needed to do, yet the less strength he had

to do it and the tougher scheduling became. Technology helped, but only with God's intervention did he do more each year till his life ended. He did endure to the end and encouraged all of us to do the same. Yes, endurance was a part of the routine.

Was it patience? I have often observed that the one common test of all the biblical characters was patience and faith. How

often do we lack one or the other? On so many trips I sat waiting for the call to a meeting, only to hear the foreign staff say: "I don't think you'll have a visit today." Would I be judged if a meeting didn't come about? Should we just sit here, or go on? We logged a lot of hours in hotels and airports. It made me thankful that he wrote so much. He didn't worry about meetings, or notice the passing time when he was working. It gave time to pray for help—boy, did I pray.

Just when I was about to give up thinking perhaps God didn't want us here, a call would come. I would interrupt his work and then we would be off for what usually was scheduled as a 10-minute audience. To my delight, but the dismay of many a foreign secretary who often had other official ambassadors lined up and waiting, we would be there anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours. A visit would end, a new one begin, and with that, another test of patience and faith.



Michelle and Aaron  
Dean

"Stand back and see the glory of God," comes to mind often as I think of those years. Where is the tremendous growth we once knew? Why aren't these same things happening now? Do we have less faith, less desire, less patience? Perhaps, but I pray not, and don't think so. I still want to share the message of the kingdom of God with everyone—always have, always will.

### Follow God

So what lesson do I treasure the most? It is summed up in a saying Mr. Armstrong made many times when forced with a controversy, and often hearing more than one side of an issue. "What does God want?" The lesson is try and follow God, not lead Him. It is then that we find success as measured by God.

We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God. Trying to search out what direction God wants to go is the only sure way to success. If God wants something big, it will be big; something small, it will be small. We are the stones God may use, but He, through Christ, builds it.

The fact that our short history showed a period of sustained growth in truth and facilities is not the 2,000-year norm. The church started with a bang, was torn by heresy, and rose and fell through the centuries, as God saw fit to call and help his servants to *His* glory.

In trying to analyze the future, I return to the thoughts of Herbert W Armstrong when he realized God would not return during his physical life. He knew there would be an apostasy, a falling away from the truth. He felt half the church would depart. He knew many would quit keeping the Sabbath and would pay a dear spiritual price. I have these words

on tape. He knew the love of many would wax cold. He knew there would be a famine of the word.

How did he know? He knew *what* would happen, not *how*. The Bible is the source of truth, the way to live, a true history, and sure prophecy. When I asked him, "How?" he merely said: "The Bible says it will happen." He was right, it has, it is, and it will.

His final orders were to "*prepare the bride of Christ*." Are you prepared to say "I do" and march out to teach *your* people in *your* cities how to practice God's way? If you are not, then you had better pull out the dress, press it, and start putting in on.

### Putting on the Wedding Garment

I will return from Thailand just in time to perform my niece's wedding. Her priorities before have been doing her schooling and working toward her career. But that has changed—now she is focused on the wedding day, her future husband, and a total and complete change in her responsibilities. She has been busy preparing all the details, and this week she is doing the finishing touches. I imagine her husband is ready for her to totally focus on him and their future life. Her immediate life is about to change forever.

How much are you doing your part to be ready as the bride of Christ? We each, as members of the "little flock" and "brides," will get to help educate several billion people that God gives us, and then go onto who knows what else God has in store. It indeed will be the "Wonderful World Tomorrow." The last request of Mr. Armstrong matches what God states in my Bible. Each of us must be ready for that wedding.

Yes, I admired and enjoyed the dynamic work God defined under Mr. Armstrong. It became more impressive once again as I met recently with Queen Sirikit of Thailand. She rehearsed what he had taught her and the king. I heard the same from others in Asia. It was a marvelous time watching God work.

In United we will try, as *God* directs and sends the finances, to do as dynamic a work as possible. But are you also preparing for Christ's return and pressing your wedding garment?

### Follow the Father

Nothing is new, these same things happened in the first century. If you follow the history it seems God is sometimes doing a smaller focussed work *on* his people more than *with* his people. We as a church must learn to be abased and to abound as Paul wrote. God decides which and when, and both have important lessons from God when we follow His lead. When the bride truly is ready, then God may use us to do a more powerful work—perhaps before His Son returns—most assuredly afterward. *Our job is to be ready!*

Yes, the most important lesson I learned was "Follow the Leader." I followed Mr. Armstrong and made allowances for his physical shortcomings, because God did put him there. There are times when men fall short and we follow anyway when it is not a salvation issue. But, the leader of God's church is *Christ*, and His leader is God the Father. The Christ says: "Fill your lamps with oil, and quit sleeping," and also, "I do not do My will, but the will of My Father." Follow that and you never go wrong. *UN*

## What's New on the Web?

- Information on each of the 1999 UCGIA summer youth camps for the United States area, is now available.

<http://www.ucg.org/camp.html>

- The January, 1999, issue of *World News and Prophecy* is now available in PDF (410k) and HTML formats.

<http://www.ucg.org/html/literat.shtml>

- Using RealMedia Player, listen to various sermons by Ray Wright, Ken Martin, Doug Johnson, Burk McNair and Les McCullough.

<http://www.ucg.org/RealAud/Sermons.shtml>

- The January/February, 1999, issue of the Spanish *Las Buenas Noticias* magazine is now available in PDF (1.3MB) format.

[http://www.ucg.org/html/espa\\_ol.shtml](http://www.ucg.org/html/espa_ol.shtml)

- NEW! The United Church of God Web site now has a new section managed by Council member Victor Kubik. The *UCGIA Life & Resources* page provides timely Church updates from various places around the world, as well as valuable resources for our teens and adults.

<http://www.ucg.org/a>

- Also, the first issue of *Virtual Christian Magazine* is now available on the *UCGIA Life & Resources* page. Read the January, 1999, issue of this on-line-only magazine.

<http://www.ucg.org/vcm/>

- The January/February, 1999, issue of the *Good News* magazine is now available in PDF (2.2MB) format. Lesson five of the Bible Study Course is also available in PDF (512K) format.

<http://www.ucg.org/html/literat.shtml>

- The December issue of the Spanish *El Comunicado* is now available in HTML (39K) format.

[http://www.ucg.org/html/espa\\_ol.shtml](http://www.ucg.org/html/espa_ol.shtml)

- The November/December issue of the Italian *La Buona Notizia* is now available in PDF (1.4MB) format. Also, the November/December issue of the Italian *I Difensori della Fede* is now available in PDF (1.2MB) format.

<http://www.ucg.org/html/italiano.shtml>

*If you have any questions or comments, please contact:*

[webmaster@ucg.org](mailto:webmaster@ucg.org)

# International Desk...

• *With this issue of United News we begin a regular section, coordinated by Matthew Fenchel, devoted exclusively to articles and updates from areas outside of the United States*

## Southern Africa

• *André van Belkum, pastor of the congregations in Durban and Johannesburg, South Africa, reviews events and developments in the Church in southern Africa.*

Greetings from Durban, South Africa. By way of introduction, I would first like to give you a statistical overview of the developments in this region during 1998:

Number of baptisms in 1998:	9
Number of members:	154
Number of congregations:	6
Number of elders:	2
Countries served:	South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Mauritius, Madagascar.

(These are the countries where we presently have brethren. The following countries also fall within our region, but there are no members: Swaziland, Botswana, Lesotho.)

In 1998 we were able to place two advertisements in "Reader's Digest" with a total response of about 400. We also increased circulation of *The Good News* by about 50 percent during the last four months of 1998.

Our plans for 1999 call for pursuing the two-fold commission of the Church. Our major focus in spreading the gospel will be on the Brochure Display Program and the Waiting Room Program. Our aim is to at least double our present *GN* circulation of 620 (excluding members) by at least 100 percent.

As with any part of the world, we have our challenges to face. One of the major challenges which we faced during 1998 was the departure of two of our ministers and some members. It is certainly not easy to stabilize the Church when these divisions occur. Another challenge is servicing the outlying areas. For instance, there are eight members in Zimbabwe who are scattered over a vast area, from Bulawayo in the west to Mutare in the east. There are two in the south and three in the capital Harare. In Zambia there is a family in the north, another family in the capital Lusaka, and the majority live in a remote area of the country. They are difficult to reach, especially during the rainy season as the only road becomes impassable.

Please also keep our two members in

Malawi in your prayers: Mr. and Mrs. Chonde and their children who run a clinic in Blantyre. To a large extent they have managed to survive because of shipments of medicine, basic food, blankets etc., sent with the help of Mr. & Mrs. Victor Kubik.

Then there are two lonely brethren on the small island of Mauritius, and two equally lonely people on Madagascar. Those on Madagascar have not met a minister or member in the last four years, but we keep in contact by writing to each other.

Another challenge in southern Africa is the extremely high level of crime. Most of our members have been the victims of some sort of criminal activity. Even while I was compiling this report one of our members here in Durban telephoned to report that his motor car was stolen from his driveway at 1:30 a.m. this morning. Our brethren in Lusaka, Zambia, Kambani and Shirley Banda have had three of their vehicles stolen at gun point these past three years. Every evening Kambani takes his two vehicles to the local police station for safe keeping. The major reason is not so much the possible loss of the vehicles, but to secure their own safety during the night. Very recently ten thieves climbed over a 10-foot high wall surrounding his house, overpowered two guards (one guard died), and stole his pick-up truck. Most were armed, at least one had an AK-47 rifle.

Last week one of our members here in Durban, Izak Bosman, was standing in line at a bank when a group of armed men stormed in and made him and other clients lie on the floor while the bank was robbed. I could give you many more examples.

So, as with all of our brethren around the world, the Church and members in southern Africa need God's protection and blessings. With His guidance, we look forward to 1999 being a time of increased stability and growth for the congregations in this region.

*André van Belkum*

## Pastor Travels to Zambia and Zimbabwe

• *In November of 1998, Mr. van Belkum took a trip to Zambia and Zimbabwe to visit with members and prospective members.*

On Sunday, November 8, I arrived at the International airport in Zambia where I was met by Kambani Banda, one of our members who lives with his wife, Shirley, and their two children, Tina and

Joseph, in the capital city, Lusaka. Within an hour of leaving the airport we were travelling in Mr. Banda's pick-up truck to visit a group of members and prospective members living in a remote area located in the western province of Mumbwa. In the back of the pick-up we had packed two mattresses, a tool box, extra motor spares, food, and our personal belongings. Our destination was the town of Nalubanda where most of the members lived. Along the way we stopped to pick up a few members and their friends. The progress was slow as the dirt road was badly pot-holed, and at times we could only proceed at a walking pace. As darkness descended it became even more difficult to dodge and weave between enormous crater-like potholes. Then we became concerned, as a huge thunderstorm formed directly in front of us. Our members sitting in the back were exposed to the elements, plus a heavy downpour would turn the road into an impassable quagmire.

An hour later, with raindrops beginning to splatter on our windshield, we arrived at our destination. There, silhouetted in the headlights of our pick-up were the beaming, happy faces of our members. There were handshakes and hugs all around. Quickly we unloaded and rushed into a nearby house, as minutes later the heavens opened, unloading sheets of rain over the area. The 137 kilometers (about 86 miles) to Nalubanda had taken four hours. We arrived just in time to beat the storm. We then all congregated in the living room where I was asked numerous questions about what was happening in the Church. That night we slept in the home of the local school principal, and Kambani and I were pleased that we had brought along mosquito nets. The heavy downpour had dislodged hordes of green bugs that descended on us in droves! I was concerned that our members may have regarded me as the bringer of bad things, like bugs! Despite the bugs crawling all over our mosquito nets we slept soundly.

Incidentally, the Nglubanda school hall was used as a meeting place for the 1998 Feast of Tabernacles. The cost for the eight days was the princely sum of U.S. \$2.25, probably the cheapest Feast venue in the world! Of course we need to understand that the dollar conversion to the Zambian currency (kwacha) would be a sizeable sum.

The next morning was filled with a Bible study on repentance, followed by one counseling session after another. By mid-afternoon there were seven individuals ready for baptism. These and anyone else who could find a place, clambered on board Kambani's pick-up, and we headed for a river about an hour's drive away. Once there we took some time to find a suitable place to perform the baptisms. Tall reeds along the bank made access to the water virtually impossible. Then we came across a spot where fishermen had carved an access path through the reeds for their boats. Nearby, an old, gray-headed fisherman was sitting in the shade of a giant tree. After giving us permission to use a fishing spot, we asked him if there were crocodiles and hippos in the river. "Oh yes, he said, but they are shy and probably won't harm you." The word "probably" did not give us much assurance!

While we were all changing into suitable clothing for the baptisms, I spotted an old dugout canoe. As I figured I would be in the water for quite a while I dragged the canoe out and together with help we patched up the holes with thick mud. Most people in Africa are terrified of deep water. But they were able to cling to the canoe until deep enough to be baptized. While keen eyes scoured the water for crocodiles, I baptized the seven people. After the laying on of hands the group broke out into a harmonious song. The words were in the local dialect, but I did hear the words "united Church." The singing continued all the way back to the village, where we enjoyed a meal of braised chicken, maize meal, lechwe (a local wild antelope), and vegetables. You can imagine the atmosphere of rejoicing now that they were finally baptized in God's church.

After the meal, Kambani and I returned to Lusaka along the same rough and uneven road, having to stop once in order to change a punctured tire. It was an emotional farewell for the group who had enjoyed two days of fellowship in a spirit of unity and brotherly concern. The members of Nalubanda are truly a delightful bunch of people.

The following morning I traveled a distance of 250 kilometers (156 miles), to a town called Monze, in the south-



André and Elize  
van Belkum

western region. There I met with one of our members, Gibbson Simalyata, his wife, Mary (a prospective member), as well as Patrick Langamu, who teaches higher grade mathematics at the local high school. Mary was keen to be baptized as she had been counseled several times during the last seven years. I spoke with her at length and did not see any reason why she should not be. The Simalyata family have a larger than usual bath tub in their home, but when we turned on the faucet there was no water. But they know of a stream close by. Arriving there we walked a short distance from the road where we found a suitable pool.

The return journey to Lusaka was uneventful, even though we were stopped and questioned a number of times at police road blocks.

Wednesday morning, November 11, I visited with members Festone and Gloria Kamaloni. Mr. Kamaloni is the registrar at the largest agricultural college in Zambia. At midday I was collected in Lusaka by two members, Derrick and Cherry Pringle, who live in the north of the country. The journey to their home town, Kitwe, took about six hours. It was an opportunity to spend valuable time with them and their two sons, Macki and Rod.

Friday morning I left Zambia by air to travel to Bulawayo in neighboring Zimbabwe to visit our only member there, Stephen Tshabalala. That evening Stephen and I spent about four hours in conversation. Early the next morning (Sabbath), I caught a flight to Harare, where I was met at the airport by Roy and Gill Heathcote. Later I was elated to find that every member in the area was present at a Bible study, followed by a meal and opportunity to fellowship. The mutual feelings of being knit together in brotherly love was very much evident among us. Again, not easy to say our farewells.

On Monday, November 16, I returned to Durban, South Africa, feeling satisfied that the mission of the trip had been accomplished. I had visited with every member in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and baptized eight others who had been waiting for a number of years.

*André van Belkum*

## British Isles

• *John A. Jewell, an elder in England, gives an update about the Church in Britain, since a number of ministers and members left United in the spring of 1998.*

As we enter what is generally accepted as the last year of the 19th millennium since the birth of Jesus Christ, the United Church of God in the British Isles looks forward to it as being one of

opportunity! An opportunity for growth and development in both the spiritual and the material sense.



**Tina and John Jewell**

From the birth of the United Church of God, *an International Association*, in 1995, it seems there has been quite a sorting out going on. Around the world this has occurred, but perhaps no where so dramatically as in the United Kingdom.

At the beginning of 1998 there were roughly 20 churches meeting regularly every Sabbath. They were served by 15 ministers of whom 9 were in the paid ministry; of these, 6 were paid full-time, the other 3 being paid part salary. Now as we end 1998 the United Church of God has 4 churches meeting regularly served by 2 non-salaried ministers: John Jewell and Gerhard Marx, assisted by John Schroeder and deacon, David Fenney. Others are now coming onto the speaking schedule: Will McLoughlin, Frank Jarvis and David McDermott.

The four current congregations are located in Bricket Wood (just north of London), Gloucester (in the west of England), Preston (in the northwest of England), and the Isle of Man. From a membership of over 400 at the beginning of 1998 we now have around 120 meeting on the Sabbath.

But, we look on 1999 as a year of opportunity. A number of people are now carrying church responsibilities they have never carried before—serving with the various office functions, speaking, and serving in the local congregations. This past year several had the opportunity of speaking at the Feast of Tabernacles, something they had never done before. In 1999, one or two will be needed to officiate at the Passover for the first time. Each church also has a full social program. For the first time in this country, the Church now operates with a national council selected at an annual general meeting of the church members and working with the ministry. We already have in place a regular newsletter of our own, the *United News Brief*.

Members are involved with the placing of advertisements in the media. We have just had the first ad in *Reader's Digest* in many, many years. A second is planned for March. Ads are being placed in local-area newspapers and the Church is working with John

LaBissoniere and Gerry Russell to launch our Waiting Room Program. We have already begun a brochure and brochure-holder program and the first replies have come in. The mailing list is once again growing. We look forward to nurturing that mailing list, feeding it with semi-annual letters, offering booklets as they are published, and offering the *Bible Study Course*. We look forward to public meetings a little further down the line—probably not in 1999, but hopefully in 2000.

It is also not beyond the realm of possibility that radio and spot ads on TV could open to us. Something we have not done, again, in many years. Three of the members, Brian Greaves, Bob Harper and Nathan Schroeder, are working on establishing a Web site for the Church in this country. We are anticipating a full interactive site whereby people can ask for booklets, a subscription to *The Good News*, or ask questions. There are so many opportunities opening up to us. The prospect is exciting.

This summer, several are going to be organizing a summer camp for the youth of the Church. Already young people from other areas have indicated their desire to attend. We already have a site selected in the southwest of England located very close to Widdecombe in Devon. Young people from other organizations have also indicated a desire to come. The Feast of Tabernacles will again be a highlight. We have reserved the Civic Hall in Conwy in North Wales once again. At the 1998 Feast, we had an attendance then of 182, far beyond what we anticipated. Part of this was due to the tremendous outpouring of help and encouragement from members and ministers alike in the United States, just when we needed it.

This year, 1999, is truly going to be an exciting year!—year of discovery and growth, both individually and collectively. Here in Britain, we look forward to 1999 as a year of opportunity.

*John A. Jewell*

## Canada

Greetings from Canada! Following are some of the letters we have received here at the Canadian office about the *Good News* magazine and other publications.

*Gary Antion*

“Thank you so much for the latest copy of *The Good News* and *United News Canada*. I have only been attending United Church of God for about a year-and-a-half, and the 1998 Feast of Tabernacles was my second Feast ever. I attended in Kelowna, British Columbia,...and had a wonderful time meeting some great new friends and understanding more and more about

God's plan through the sermons [and] sermonettes....

“I sincerely thank you for your support, the ministry, the United Church of God, and ultimately God Himself for all that has been done in the organization and I look forward to a copy of the *Fundamental Beliefs* booklet. Keep up the outstanding work as my prayers and thoughts are with you.”

Alberta

“Please accept the enclosed to help you continue sending me this excellent magazine. I look forward to it coming in the mail for the articles are so interesting and so well researched. I also want you to know that I think the previous articles on evolution should be of eye opening quality to many who can't see that the only way life could ever be is by creation.”

Manitoba

“We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation for the sermon tapes that you send us. We are most grateful. We devour *The Good News* and pray that the new *Bible Study Course* will be used to call many to God's Truth. Enclosed is an offering which requires no receipt.... Thank you, sir, for the tapes.”

New Brunswick

“I thank your for sending your magazine. I find it very informative and feel God is doing good things in your ministry. Enclosed is an offering to help in the work you are doing for Christ. I wish it was more. Also, I will pray to Almighty God that He bless the work you are doing.”

Nova Scotia

“I send my warmest greetings to all of the brethren in the UCG. I want to thank you for the fine booklets and magazine that you have been providing me, and to also let you know that they have been a benefit to me in my struggle to overcome.

“...I just wanted to drop you these few lines to thank you and to let you know that I do appreciate the love and kindness that you have shown toward me. My prayers go out for you all”

New Brunswick



**Gary and Barbara Antion**

# Focused Education Material...

## Understanding Abuse

by Larry and Vicki Scher  
and John Cafourek

The Focused Education Program will be presenting four quarterly articles on the subject of abuse. They are intended to inform, educate, and provide understanding of abuse issues. Our first article is on understanding abuse.

Abuse, in its myriad forms, is a problem of astronomical proportions in our world today. Community educator, Ellie Kimaro, of Seattle Rape Relief, confirms that in the U.S. one in four girls and one in six boys will have been sexually assaulted by age 16. In addition, other types of abuse such as verbal, emotional, and physical battering wreak havoc in the lives of millions.

Broadly defined, abuse is any pattern of behavior that threatens the physical, mental, or emotional well-being of another. Abuse is detrimental to the human spirit. The nature of abuse, as in all sin, is progressive if allowed to continue (James 1:13-15). The following behaviors illustrate how abuse progresses.

### Attitudes Behind Abuse

To enhance our understanding of abuse, we must begin with its origin. Abuse began with the corrupting of God's truth and the breaking of His laws by Satan, the originator of all abuse. Genesis 1:2 describes the end result of abuse perpetrated by Satan against God's creation. In his rage and quest for power and control, coupled with his inability to direct it at God himself, Satan lashed out at God's creation, His entire plan, and the future home of mankind. The Bible begins with the end result of all abuse—confusion, ruin, destruction, loss, and emptiness.

### Improper Treatment

Our present world groans and travails under the weight of its continued abuse. Satan has replaced truth with his principles of power, force, greed, lust, self-centeredness, selfish ambition, deceit, and pleasure-seeking, to the point of hedonism. He has successfully convinced the world to pursue these principles. Although we live in the world, we are not to accept its principles and practice its abusive methods. Paul warns the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 7:31 that while they must live in the world, they are not to abuse,

overuse, or be controlled by the things in the world. Abusing the earth results in disease-causing and life-threatening environmental pollution.

Mankind has long fought personal battles against alcohol and other substance abuse. God encourages temperance and control in Proverbs 16:32. It states: "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he who rules his spirit, than he who takes a city."

### A Deceitful Act

Deceit and manipulation are chief ingredients used by an abuser, resulting in the emotional abuse of the victim. Emotional abuse is the cruelest and longest lasting of any abuse. It scars the heart and crushes the human spirit, leaving the victim traumatically affected for life. Where trust and hope once flourished, there remains only a sense of dread, uncertainty, confusion, hopelessness and helplessness. Misplaced guilt and deep sadness shatter the victim's bond with the abuser.

The pain created from childhood experiences doesn't stop in adulthood. For some it worsens, turning into anger and imploding on itself. Abuse becomes repetitive and cumulative. It is very easily learned and imitated, perpetuating the cycle from one generation to the next (Exodus 34:7). It is only through education that the truth about abuse can be understood and the healing process begin.

If deceit in the abuse cycle fails to accomplish what the abuser intends, the means of persuasion intensifies and gives rise to the next behavior.

### Verbal Abuse

Verbal abuse is vehemently expressed language that unjustly blames the other person. Verbal abusers squelch, put down, correct, criticize, belittle, trivialize, snub, sneer at, and when all else fails, put on displays of rage in order to dominate and control others. Verbal abuse always lowers self-esteem. The victim believes, at least on some level, what they are told, robbing them of self-worth. The abuser is often so good at control that he or she can turn his or her intimidating displays on and off so they continue to "look good" to the outside world.

Verbal abusers often use the following techniques.

- Cruel joking and teasing, insisting such comments are humorous.
- Accusing and blaming the victim for pain the abuser has inflicted upon them.

- Judging and criticizing which sends the message, "I will tell you what is wrong with your thoughts and actions, and I will thereby maintain control."
- Trivializing, to make the victim feel insignificant.
- Purposefully undermining to erode confidence and determination.
- Threatening and name-calling to imply the imminence of physical harm.
- Convenient forgetting to maintain control over the victim and waste the victim's time and energy.
- Denial of the inappropriateness of their abusive behavior.
- Angry outbursts used in a scary and threatening manner to help the abuser get his or her own way.

After all the verbal abuser's techniques have been exhausted, he or she intensifies the quest for control and proceeds to the final phase.

### Physical Abuse

This aspect of abuse often includes sexual abuse, battering, and the deliberate deprivation of human needs such as food and emergency medical care. If the abuser doesn't get his or her way, the result can be the death of the victim.

In God's Word, we find an example of sexual abuse occurring centuries ago, yet containing all the ramifications experienced by today's victims. Like today, the abuse begins in the family. Second Samuel 13:1-32 describes the incident and the consequences that follow. In verse two we see Amnon so consumed with his lust for Tamar, it results in his physical illness. Please notice Tamar is a virgin—completely inexperienced.

A plan is devised (deceit) for Amnon to be alone with Tamar (verses 3-10). Amnon then asks for her cooperation (verses 11, 14). When Tamar refuses and resists, she is raped. Notice the long-term effects she suffers as a result of the sexual abuse. Victims today suffer the same traumas. She is in shock and disbelief at Amnon's actions (verses 15-17, 19) which leads to feelings of undeserved humiliation, embarrassment, and self-blame.

As Tamar's emotional depression intensifies, she becomes regressively fearful, clinging, and needy—desperately looking for help, support, and understanding. Instead of encouraging her to talk about it, her brother, Absalom, insists she tell no-one. Tamar's fear and despair seize control of her life and render her desolate,

lonely and emotionally damaged. Without a concerted effort to overcome the affects of incest, Tamar is to be robbed in her youth of ever experiencing a healthy male-female relationship.

Her brother, Absalom, as with family members of rape victims today, finds himself dealing not only with his own reactions to the assault on a loved one, but also forced to witness the psychological and behavioral changes he sees in the victim. For over two years Absalom witnesses the emotional decline of his sister and plots his retaliation (verses 23 and 32). As in many occurrences of sexual and physical abuse, death is the result.

Physical battering is the last desperate attempt by the abuser to gain control of the victim. The progressive nature and pattern of abuse requires an abuser and a victim. You may not be able to change the abuser, but *you can quit being the victim*. Here are fourteen suggestions to end the cycle of abuse.

1. Don't accept abuse. The longer the pattern continues, the harder it will be to stop.
2. Report any sexual or physical abuse to the police or to other authorities.
3. Take abuse seriously. It is life-threatening. One reason abuse is accepted is because the victim's life has been devalued by self and others. Fear is another reason abuse is accepted.
4. Take emotional abuse as seriously as physical abuse. Physical abuse can cause death, and emotional abuse can result in suicide.
5. Don't believe it is your fault. No-one deserves abuse. Abuse is a statement about the abuser, not the victim.
6. Don't accept excuses. This gives the abuser permission to abuse you under those circumstances.
7. Don't confuse *love* with *abuse*. If you are loved, you will not be abused. If you are being abused, you are not being loved.
8. Don't deal with conflicts when they are hot. When one or both of you is emotionally inflamed, judgment and reason are impaired. This is no time to attempt to solve problems. *Calm down first.*
9. Don't use abuse to stop abuse. Countering abuse with abuse will guarantee a dysfunctional relationship. It will mess up your life and the lives of your children.
10. Insist on professional help. The very first time abuse occurs tell

- your partner in no uncertain manner the abuse must stop. Talk out your problems, learn conflict resolution techniques, and get communication training from a professional who specializes in abuse issues.
11. Consider the damage to your children. Many abused women who will not take action to protect themselves will at least take action to protect their children. If your children are not already being abused, the odds are they soon will be. An abuser invariably turns his abuse on his children. The damage is psychological and spiritual as well as physical.
  12. Consider the damage to the abuser. Abuse also harms the abuser. If you don't stop the abuse, neither of you

- will have a healthy relationship.
13. Be prepared to leave. If you are an emotional or financial hostage, you and the others who depend on you for protection are vulnerable to continued abuse.
  14. Seek God's help and guidance through the power of prayer.

God's Word offers a clear perspective on godly friendships and marriages in which each partner submits to the other in love (Ephesians 5:21). It shows it is His will that all people do their part to live in peace (1 Corinthians 7:15, Romans 12:18). First Peter 2:17 and Philippians 2:3 emphasize treating one another with respect. Galatians 6:2 reminds us to bear one another's burdens.

The next article will discuss how preventing child abuse is an important step in the development of an emotional and spiritually healthy person. *UN*



John and Sandy Cafourek



Larry and Vicki Scher

- *Larry and Vicki Scher live in Columbia, Missouri, where Larry is an elder. John Cafourek lives in Olympia, Washington, with his wife, Sandy; where John pastors.*

## Feast of Tabernacles...

### Zimbabwe Harare

- *Following is a 1998 Festival report received from our Zimbabwe brethren.*

We have all settled down after the Feast. We know you received your usual reports, but thought it would be nice to say hello from all of us in Zimbabwe and to let you know how the Feast went.

There were 15 of us altogether, four from Zambia, one from Eiffel Stars, one from Kwekwe, three from Malawi, two from Murare, three from Harare, and a visitor from Port Elizabeth. It was one of the warmest and closest Feasts we have had for a long time.

We were able to hire a TV set and we had our own VCR, so we were able to watch videotapes that came to Mike

Mukovati from Murare. Each one of us was so thankful to our God for the way He took care of us and how He provided for us. The venue in which we met was just right and not too distant from anyone.

Mr. Bob Fahey and his wife arrived to spend one-and-a-half days with us, and we experienced an extra blessing from him and someone from the States. They paid for us all to have a lunch together at the place where Mr. and Mrs. Fahey were staying. They too had a blessing—our dollar to the U.S. dollar at the time was about 30 to one!

We were all interested in the sermon tape of Mr. McCullough where he mentioned that Zimbabwe's tax was about 60 percent. It is much higher than that. For a loaf of bread now we pay \$8.80, and remember we only earn Zimbabwe dollars. People always change the money—I suspect it is to give them a better idea of the value—

but our earnings in Zimbabwe dollars are now coming to nothing. People generally are becoming restless. Only God's kingdom and Christ can sort out these problems.

Please forward our very sincere thanks to all those involved in sending us tapes and everything else that comes our way. We thoroughly enjoyed the Feast videotape on the "work" around the world and were very surprised to see the scope of it. Up to then we have not had much information. Our love to all at the home office and may God richly bless what comes from there.

*Win Ross  
Zimbabwe*

### 1999 Sites for the U.S. and Canada

The following Festival sites have

been confirmed for the United States and Canada. Full details of all of United's sites around the world will be in the March issue of *United News*, and the *Festival Housing Brochure* will once again be sent to each household in May.

#### Canada:

Kelowna, British Columbia  
Mont-Orford, Quebec

#### United States:

Bend, Oregon  
Branson, Missouri  
Corpus Christi, Texas  
Escondido (San Diego), California  
Estes Park, Colorado  
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania  
Jekyll Island, Georgia  
Lihue, Hawaii  
Louisville, Kentucky  
Orlando, Florida  
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

## New Booklet is On the Press!

The latest of United's new booklets is being printed this month! The title is, *The Church Jesus Built*. Copies will automatically be mailed to member households, so a special request for it is not necessary.

To spark your reading appetite, here is the opening text:

Jesus Christ proclaimed, almost 2,000 years ago, "I will build My church." He declared that His Church

would never die out, promising that "the gates of Hades [the grave] shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). He assured His disciples that He would guide and preserve His Church until His return, promising them, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

What happened to the Church Jesus built? An eye-witness tells us that, immediately after Christ ascended into heaven after His resurrection, His apostles "went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and



confirming the word through the accompanying signs" (Mark 16:20). The Church had a powerful beginning.

Millions of people profess Christianity; they claim to be members of the Church Jesus founded. But Christianity is a divided religion, composed of hundreds of denominations and schisms. Through the centuries, most of Christianity's branches have assimilated many nonbiblical traditions—philosophical, cultural and religious—into their teachings and practices, spawning even more variations....

# Personal Growth...

## Not a Story or a By-word

by Valerie Berendt

In his now famous “We shall be a city upon the hill” sermon, given aboard the *Arabella* as it sailed the Atlantic to New England in 1630, the Puritan, John Winthrop, set out his vision of government in the new world.

He discussed how, as a people, he and those accompanying him were to discharge their duty and work before God as he conceived it to be. “For,” he spoke, “we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. If we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word throughout the world.”

The work of God in and through our collective and individual lives is the light in this world. It would appear from the Scriptures that in the lives and circumstances of the called and chosen people and servants of God, there have been times when they have known occasion to wonder whether or not such a heritage—“to have become a story and a by-word”—was to have been theirs.

However, the Scriptures also reassure us otherwise in this respect. The work of God is not done in vain. For example, when the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. and the followers of Jesus Christ were dispersed, the Truth of God did not vanish, rather it took root in different places, to be accomplished in differ-

ent ways and times. Perhaps the following will help to exemplify this.

Below is an extract from a book titled “For God’s Sake...Give Him a Chance,” authored by A.T. Irvine, written in 1979, and though out of print it is available in many libraries in England. Mr. Irvine was in the navy throughout World War II, serving in the Fleet Air Arm as an officer in submarines and, finally, in command of a frigate. During the post war years he worked in Fleet Street, London. He was a director of the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Sketch* and managing director of the *London Evening News*. Over many years his hobbies have included the study of religious teachings, reading philosophy and sailing. In his book, Mr. Irvine takes an experiential approach to religion. While discussing the anomalies that exist in this world, he writes:

One well known evangelist, Herbert Armstrong, puts the matter simply in an editorial: “The living, but invisible, spiritual law is simply the ONE WAY OF LIFE that is diametrically contrary to the way humanity has been travelling. It is the way of love instead of lust, the way of giving, sharing, serving and helping, instead of the way of taking and accumulating in lust and greed. It is the way of outgoing concern instead of selfish desire. The way of courtesy and consideration instead of envy, jealousy, resentment, bitterness, hatred. The way of cooperation instead of competition. The way of humility and exalting God, instead of vanity and exalting self.”

This extract is from *Plain Truth*,

the magazine of the “Worldwide Church of God,” which has an influence far exceeding its comparatively small membership. The magazine has a circulation of over 5 million throughout the world, and its message is broadcast to a worldwide television and radio audience. In the current issue it is stated that in the Pasadena (U.S.A.) headquarters—one of many offices worldwide—3,300,000 letters were received in twelve months; and during that period 48,000,000 pieces of literature were dispatched to United States addresses alone. As their literature is sent on request only, this is some measure of the hunger that exists for a new way of life.

My husband and I had occasion to meet Mr. Irvine earlier this year whilst in England. He is a sailing friend of my uncle’s, and because my uncle had both read his book and knew that we were associated with Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, the two of them had agreed, unbeknownst to us, that Mr. Irvine would like to meet and talk with us. Later we were to hear that he found our discussion “most pleasing.”

Of this effort and approach used by God’s servants during those years, Mr. Irvine writes:

No one can deny that his organization is making a tremendous contribution to the understanding of the Christian way of life and the need actually to live the Christian teaching as

opposed to paying just lip service to it.

The reason for sharing this is to encourage patience and vision. Although Mr. Irvine quoted from an article written more than 15 years ago, he is still mindful, today, of what he heard and read then. How God’s work is accomplished changes and will continue to change. It will not be its portion or lot to become a “story or a by-word.” Perhaps such a vision exists, in part, in the short sightedness of human beings. It invites comparison with the experience of Elijah (1 Kings 19:14–18). Elijah did not know of the 7,000 faithful in Israel, but we can be sure they knew about him.

We too are known. However for some, both they and we must wait, perhaps until the World Tomorrow or the second resurrection, for “the witness” and “the hope” that they have heard about today or yesterday, or have yet to hear.

In the meantime, I am reminded of a comment by Jim Whittaker who led an expedition up Mount Everest. He said: “It is difficult to lead others further than we have gone ourselves.” Such a concept encourages that heed be given to the counsel of Paul (1 Corinthians 12:31; 13:1–13), concerning how we ought to try to live our lives now.

God’s plan for us individually, His Word through us individually and collectively, and His Word are ongoing and have a future (Isaiah 55:11). *UV*

• Valerie Berendt and her husband, Bob, live in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Bob pastors the Kelowna and Penticton, British Columbia; and North Battleford, Saskatchewan, churches.

# Perspective on Youth...

## He’s My Hero

by Alan Dean

On Australian television recently, an anguished father who had lost his son who had mysteriously fallen from a bridge, told the interviewer that his son was his hero. He admired his son and obviously felt a great loss over his tragic death. His words were an echo of the words of a very famous father, Bill Cosby, who also lost his only son when he was murdered after his car had broken down on a California freeway. Bill Cosby said with deep emotion that his son was his hero.

This year I was given a Bill Cosby book titled simply, *Fatherhood*, by my eldest son on Fathers Day. It is a very amusing book with some very good

insights. The book was first copyrighted in 1986. It is obvious from reading the book that Cosby has a great love for his children and a very soft spot for his only son, which makes for very poignant reading when we realize that in just over ten years that beloved son would be dead. On page 159 Cosby finishes the book with these words: “Like all parents since Adam and Eve (who never quite seemed to understand sibling rivalry), we have made mistakes: but we’ve learned from them, we’ve learned from the *kids*, and we’ve all grown together.” It is an interesting statement “we have learned from the kids.”

As a parent of four boys ranging from age six to twenty three years, I can identify with the words of those grieving fathers. I don’t think it is too strong to say my boys are my heroes. I respect them

highly. Today young people are in a very complex and insecure world and they battle with issues that not only did many of us not have to face, but frankly did not even know existed. From my experiences with 23 years of pastoring, fatherhood, and currently teaching in high school, our children cope very well. They make mistakes and they drop the ball (who doesn’t), but overall they handle life well. The book of Proverbs comments: “Even a child is known by his deeds, by whether what he does is pure and right.” History and daily life is filled with the heroics of young people who courageously stand up for right principles and set compelling examples.

Joseph was 17 when he was standing up for God’s values while in captivity in Egypt. King David was only a teenager when he volunteered to fight against

Goliath. Joan of Arc was also a teenager when she led the French army to free the city of Orleans from the British in 1429. Anne Frank was a young Jewish girl who courageously recorded her feelings in her now famous diary while stoically enduring hiding under Nazi occupation.

Every day, in every country, young people accomplish and courageously deal with the challenges of life. In 1998, Queensland bravery awards were given out for exceptional acts of heroism. Of the fifty-six awards, five were received by children under ten years of age. One recipient, Daniel Frew, was only six at the time when he made a one-hour trek to get help for his father and 12-month old brother trapped in a car wrapped against a tree. Daniel had a cut mouth and a bruised sternum! One of my sons works in a pediatrics

hospital where sick children suffer from life threatening diseases. He tells me that he would rather care for children than adults. They complain less and are more grateful.

Christ told the people of His time a rather shocking statement. He told them to become as little children. It was shocking, as children had very little status in that society. Telling adults to become like these lowly children must have really upset some of the adults. What Christ was telling them was the kingdom of God was to be filled with people that had an uncluttered, guileless, humble outlook.

I remember an episode many years ago when one of my sons was running in his first school cross-country race at age

eight. My wife and I had experienced a little athletic success at school and so were anticipating our son finishing well up. All the runners came in and still no son. Then appeared two runners, one with a sore leg and our son. I must admit I was feeling a little disappointed, until I heard him say to the other boy: "Well done, you finished, and that's the main thing." Eat humble pie and have a hard look at my adult outlook. As the old saying goes "out of the mouths of babes." In case that son reads this article, he later did reasonably well in teenage years in sprints!

The apostle Paul gave an instruction to a young minister and all young people, and adults alike should heed this advice. He said, "Let no one despise your youth,

but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." In effect, Paul is saying to young people, Don't put yourself down in your own eyes. Realize you have abilities and a position that can be an example to others. Don't have the cop-out attitude of "I'll do it right when I grow up." Why devalue the importance of your example and character? You can impact positively on peoples' lives by your example. Paul is also saying indirectly to adults that we should learn from them.

The church needs the dynamics and power that its youthful members can give. A balanced congregation needs the courageous example of young members who face life with gusto and who know what is

right and live it to the full. A church full of young people really has personality and life, and stimulates and motivates the whole congregation. There is nothing more exciting to be around youth that love life, have goals, and who reflect true values.

It is tough today for young people, but with the strength of God a young person can reach great heights and have an impact on the lives of so many people. The church has always needed its young heroes. *UN*

• *Alan Dean has been an elder in God's church in Australia for many years. He currently attends the United congregation in Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia.*

## WWJD — What Would Jesus Do?

by Dan Berendt

Across North America and the world, the youth of many churches who profess Christianity are wearing bracelets, necklaces, and other paraphernalia with the acronym *WWJD*. It is an excellent question for youth and adult alike to ask, especially when they come across compromising situations in their lives where peer pressures or other forces suggest they compromise their Christian values. But just how does the Christian answer the question, "What would Jesus do?"

Millions of dollars have been made by marketing the acronym *WWJD* by Christian bookstores and sales shops, but do the people promoting the question, offer the answer? Christian consumerism has sold the idea, but has left the question

without an answer. There is a way, however, to answer the question, "What would Jesus do?"

First, the Bible gives guidelines as to the nature of Jesus in Malachi 3:6-7, where we are assured that God and Jesus are always the same—always perfect. Also, in Hebrews 13:8 we are assured that Jesus Christ would be the same today as He was yesterday. The Bible clearly points out that what was important to God and Christ is still important because He does not change.

You may be surprised to know that some people who consider themselves to be Christian would not agree with that concept because they say Jesus Christ has changed from when He walked on the earth as a human and that His Jewishness got in the way of His perfect Godliness. But if in fact Jesus changed at His own death and did away with the law—the principles that He lived His life by—then the question, "What would Jesus do?" would be up for debate. It would make

Christians have to start guessing the answer—perhaps settling on one's own interpretation or trusting one's own conscience. That clearly is not what the Bible says. In 1 Peter 2:21 we are told that Jesus Christ left us an example to follow—to follow in His footsteps. The word "left" is past tense and it applies to us today. Clearly we must know what He left for us (His life example), in order to follow it.

It becomes clear to the Christian who reads his or her Bible that the way to answer the question is to ask another question, and that is, "What *did* Jesus do?"

For some young people in the United Church of God it may be a little hard to understand why their parents do what they do in their pattern of worship. Their parents keep a Sabbath and Holy Days. They wash the feet of other people and pray in a certain way. They eat unleavened bread and clean their homes of leavening, and they avoid eating pork and other unclean foods, etc. However, it may help to under-

stand that the reason their parents do choose to do these things is precisely because they did ask the question: "What *would* Jesus do?" The way they answered the question was to ask the other necessary question, "What *did* Jesus do?"

They studied to know what Jesus did while He lived as a human on earth and are now willingly following the footsteps that He left for them to follow as instructed by the only written Word of God that we have—the Bible.

So when you are faced with a potentially compromising situation in your life it may help to remember the acronym *WWJD* and know that the question is answered by remembering what our Savior *did* in His perfect life on earth. *UN*

• *Dan Berendt attends the Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, congregation with his wife, Fern, and five children. Dan attended Ambassador College in the late 70s and is a medical doctor in family medicine.*

## Summer Education Courses

Continuing education is a key to growing in grace and knowledge. To help members achieve their godly potential, the United Church of God will begin sponsoring a series of education courses.

The first one will be held the week of July 19 to 23, 1999, in Indianapolis, Indiana. The session will be open to students of all ages. Gary Antion and Don Ward, along with at least one other teacher, will serve as instructors. The Indianapolis congregation will host the event in the facility where they hold Sabbath services.

A block of motel rooms will be reserved near the facility. The average motel room rate will be about \$50 per day for two people. Tuition for the entire session will run about \$50 per person. Some financial aid will be available for those who need help for travel, lodging, food and tuition. So, even though your funds for such an opportunity may be limited, you may still be able to attend.

The March issue of *United News* will provide further information. It will provide a list of courses, instructors and instructions on how to register for this exciting educational opportunity. Please mark your calendars and make plans to attend!

# Letters From Our Readers...

## Feast Reports Inspiring

"I just wanted to thank you for the new *United News* and I think the paper quality is great! It was so exciting to read all the Feast accounts from all over the world. It is really inspiring to hear from the Feast sites where the material blessings are less than we are accustomed to in the U.S.A.—to read of the great joy the people have for things we take for granted is a sobering, yet thrilling joy."

Tennessee

## Give As You Are Able

"I am writing this letter to say 'thank you' for sending me the *Good News* magazine. I really enjoy it and I know I am blessed to be able to read this magazine.

"Because you send it out free to those who cannot afford it, and others, that shows that you all are about God's work. It reminds me of a couple of verses in the Bible: 'Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God' (Deuteronomy 16:17), and 'give, and it will be given to you' (Luke 6:38a)."

Georgia

## On the Internet

"Hello! I have been a member since 1985 and was not able to attend this year's Feast. I travel the United States in my job and therefore it is important to me to be able to contact ministers and attend services all over the country. I needed a list, and my husband suggested the Internet—"Yeah," I exclaimed, "I've heard we have a Web page."

"I didn't know much about the Internet, but now I have viewed virtually every picture and report available on the Feast. I even heard (and saw!) two of Mr. McCullough's sermons this Sabbath evening. Tomorrow I will hear another Internet sermon, as the closest church service is over 75 miles away.

"For this I want to thank all of you responsible for creating and updating the Web page. How delightful to feel close to brethren when one cannot attend! So again, thank you to all!"

Internet

"To the good people who sent me the magazine: thank you so much, your magazine truly depicts every aspect of the good news! Thank Him for this wonderful blessing!"

Internet

"Hi, I just wish to thank you for your good efforts in providing the sermons on the 'Net. I have them all on file and listen to them several times, sitting in my chair in comfort with a Bible font of 12, for very easy reading and with a click I have the NKJV to read the Scriptures and listen at the same time—and all at home! I know that the One above is helping you to do this and thank Him for that, and it clearly shows that United is doing a great work."

Internet, Alberta, Canada

"Please thank the home office folks for

creating such a useful Web site. I use it several times a week to keep up with Church news and to read publications like *The Good News* and *World News and Prophecy* as soon as they are posted. I wish I had speakers for my computer (I'd listen to every sermon posted). I got my Feast housing information off the Web site when my *Festival Housing Brochure* came late.

"For those of us in the plugged-in generation, it's a great tool. I'm sure the Church will serve many people it might never have reached, because it offers a good Web site."

Internet, California

## New Booklet, *The Ten Commandments*

"Thank you so much for the sensitivity and care that went into writing the *Ten Commandments* booklet. I was impressed with the positive tone throughout and the emphasis on the right relationship with God and our neighbor. If we shall be known by outsiders as God's people because we have love one for another, we must continue to emphasize the Royal Law of Love.

"I must say that one of the things that continues to endear me to United is the tone of our literature and Sabbath services. Keep up the good work. It doesn't go unnoticed."

California

"Just a note to let you all know you are doing a great job. Especially for those of us who are homebound for the most part. It is wonderful to receive such beautiful, quality publications, and the wonderful sermon tapes!"

"I just received *The Ten Commandments* booklet and it is superbly done, and so *inspiring!* I can't say enough about how I appreciate the quality of your publications and especially your adhering to God's precious word of truth! Thank you, and keep up the good work!"

Washington

## *Good News Sows the Seed*

"Your November/December, 1998, issue of *The Good News* is excellent! I'll quote from the article about moral leadership in my messages to my church, giving proper credit to your magazine.

"Thanks!"

Texas

"I have been receiving your magazine for a few months. I have found most of the articles interesting and helpful. I do not know how I got on your mailing list, but I am glad I did!"

"I would also be interested in receiving your booklet, *Sunset to Sunset, God's Sabbath Rest*, mentioned in the September/October issue. Thank you very much."

Ohio

"Aloha. I have recently begun receiving your expanded *Good News* edition and would like the back issues of the *Bible Study Course* lessons please.

"Please don't worry about the magazine going to waste. I can give my regular *Good News* to a friend or allow someone else to be blessed like I have been. You see, someone left your magazine and subscription form in the condo's lobby and lounge area. If it were not for the person who left *The Good News* there, I would not have been blessed like I am now—so you see I am not going to waste my issue, and will make it available for someone else."

Hawaii

"I wish to express my sincere thanks to you for sending me the booklet, *God's Holy Day Plan* and the back issue of *The Good News* containing the article, *The Battle For Your Mind*. I look forward to receiving the other booklets I requested.

"Continue doing God's work. I look forward to more from you!"

Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies

"I am writing you to tell you of the joy I have in my heart because questions and doubts I have housed in my mind have been answered by your magazine. Your magazine showed me that creation according to the world is false, and creation according to the Bible, is truth.

"I have never found a magazine that presented both scientific reasoning and Biblical truth to be unbiased. It is left to the reader to see what the plain truth is and that worldly thinking is wrong. You show the Bible to be current and up-to-date, as it was meant to be, pure truth.

"I thank you for your kindness in bringing light into a dark prison-cell for me."

Missouri

I received your magazine, *The Good News*, the other day. I was a little skeptical at first because I had never heard of your ministry before, but I could hardly put it down once I started reading it. Unfortunately, I disposed of the envelope before I could retrieve the service number from it. I enjoyed the articles very much and look forward to more in following issues in the future. I would also like to request contact from a minister or pastor from your organization to write me and perhaps aid me along in my spiritual growth.

Oklahoma

"I am still rejoicing over the packet of material you recently sent me. I have become so discouraged with today's literature and sermons, which seem to have no depth or even truth to them. When I received your material, I was so overjoyed that I sat down and wept with happiness.

"I have been a Bible student of many years. All these years God has pointed out to me many of the errors taught in our churches and Sunday schools (Sabbath schools also), and has shown me the true answers. It has been a tremendous experience. Now at last I have found your *Good News*.

"I do not know how I got your first magazine, but praise the Lord I did. I rejoice. Enclosed is a small check—I wish it were ten

times greater, but as time goes on I want to give as I am able each month."

Nevada

## Getting On With the Job

"I am so uplifted and encouraged from reading *The Good News*. We are receiving what we need to grow more Christ-like and to help us toward the kingdom of God, especially in the expanded section.

"Also, the sermons we are receiving from our ministers are so, so good. It seems like we are really getting down to business. I know the past three or four years have been so hard and I appreciate us getting through it with only a few bruises.

"I really feel a new urgency in the Church now to 'get on and get the job done.' Thank you!"

Arizona

## King Asa in *United News*

"I was very pleased to see the article, 'The Life of King Asa: Vital Lessons For You and Me' by André van Belkum—a sad story but edifying.

"As a nation, spiritual Israel, the ekklesia, God's holy nation, has an incredibly precious and exceedingly valuable heritage of history. It is the most accurate ancient history and encompasses an enormous span of time; the most significant history for anyone to know, but most especially for us, the history of God's holy nation to its very roots."

Texas

## *Bible Study Course* making a difference

"Thank you so much! I have just downloaded the first four correspondence course lessons and a copy of the Adobe Acrobat reader, and printed them. I have been attending United services in New Zealand for 18 months having left WCG. I was recently baptized by Mr. Bruce Dean and thanks to lots of prayer and positive support from United, I have been making leaps and bounds.

"Thanks again, and keep up the good work!"

Internet, New Zealand

## A Tune-up in the Waiting Room!

"I read my very first issue of *The Good News* last November, while sitting in a waiting room of Precision Tune having my car tuned. You have no idea how excited I was to know I was not alone in my convictions. I immediately phoned to start my subscription and have enjoyed every issue. I got a copy of your *Sunset to Sunset* booklet, which I so much appreciated and became quite upset when my husband gave it away. I would appreciate it so much if you would send my friend a copy too, along with a back issue of *The Good News*.

Florida

## *World News and Prophecy*

"Enclosed is a small contribution to help in getting the truth out.

(See "LETTERS," page 11)

# Announcements...

## Births

Byron and Cris Bolan are pleased to announce the birth of their son, Britton Lamar Bolan, born on September 4, 1998. He weighed 7 pounds 2 ounces and was 18½ inches long.



Britton Lamar Bolan

Shawn and Beth Cortelyou of La Harpe, Illinois, are happy to announce the birth of their first child, Megan Ruth, born on Saturday, May 30, 1998, at 2:38 p.m. Megan weighed 8 pounds and was 20½ inches long.

Her proud grandparents are Larry and Terri Cortelyou of La Harpe, and Ed and Patti Corbitt of Knoxville, Tennessee. (Picture)



Megan Ruth Cortelyou

Alan and Sheryl (Miller) Haight of Tampa, Florida, are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Dylan Alexander, born on December 23, 1998.

He weighed 7 pounds 1 ounce and was 20 inches long. Big brother, Chad, is thrilled with his baby brother.

## Wedding

Betty and Earl Randle of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, and Rose-Marie Lörtscher-Mörker of Seftigen, Switzerland, are very pleased to announce the wedding of their children, Stephanie Michelle Randle and David Werner



Stephanie and David Mörker

Mörker, on July 5, 1998, in Eden Prairie. Jim Servidio, pastor of the Minneapolis, Minnesota, congregation performed the ceremony. John Miller, an elder from Sugarcreek, Ohio, translated into German.

The matron of honor was Lydia Maynard and the bridesmaids were Candice Smith and Caroline Jablonski. The best man was Walter Perez and the groomsmen were Stephan Mörker and John Miller. The couple reside in Eden Prairie.

## 60th Anniversary

On September 17, 1998, William and Helen Lear, residents of Lake Forest, California, and members of the Garden Grove congregation, observed their 60th wedding anniversary.

A dinner in their honor was held at the home of Dan and Esther Salcedo on the previous Sabbath after services. About 75 brethren were in attendance, providing the Lears with numerous cards and gifts. The congregation also presented them a beautiful porcelain figurine of two white doves.

The Lears have three children, five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. They celebrated the occasion with a stay on Catalina Island.



Helen and William Lear

## Obituaries

Doris Hughes of West Alexander,

Pennsylvania, died December 29, 1998, after suffering for several years with heart problems and diabetes.

She and her husband, Jim, have been longtime members of the church of God. Doris was known for the beautiful flower arrangements she did for the five church congregations in Pasadena, California, and hundreds of weddings and special events that took place through the years in the Pasadena area.

The funeral was held in West Alexander on January 2, 1999.

Doris is survived by her husband, Jim; four sons, Tim Hughes, James Hughes, Fred Martin of Pasadena, and Dan Martin of Australia; two daughters, Penny Moon and Lonna Hughes; and six grandchildren.

Ralph Wilford Ivie, 77, of Kimberly, Idaho, died Sunday, December 27, 1998, at his home.

He was born May 12, 1921, in Sandpoint, Idaho. He married Grace Human on July 21, 1940, and later served in the U.S. Navy. He attended the Twin Falls, Idaho, congregation of United and was baptized in September of 1975.

Ralph is survived by his wife of 58 years, Grace; four children, Karen Kerbs, Roger Ivie, Randy Ivie, and Robert Ivie; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild; and two sisters. He was preceded in death by two infant children, Carmen and Michael; two brothers, Kenneth and Donald; and one sister, Edith.

The funeral was held December 30, 1998, in Twin Falls, and was officiated by Bill Jahns.

Anthony van Doorn, 78, of Maple Ridge, British Columbia, Canada, died in his sleep at home on November 9, 1998.

He is survived by his wife, Tina, of 52 years; three sons; two daughters, four grandsons; and two granddaughters.

Graveside services were held November 16 at Maple Ridge Cemetery, officiated by Paul Tarnen of Abbotsford, British Columbia.

Dr. Ned Moses Ross, 70, of Jonesborough, Tennessee, died October 15, 1998, from complications due to congestive heart failure.

He is survived by his wife of 42 years, Muriel Foster Ross; three daughters, Elaine Gualtieri of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Debra Ross, of Hendersonville, Tennessee, and Sandra Ross of New York, New York; a son-in-law, Robert Gualtieri, Sr.; and two grandchildren, Rachael and Robert Gualtieri, Jr.

Funeral services were conducted in Telford, Tennessee, on October 18, 1998,

by David Dobson, pastor of the Kingsport, Tennessee, congregation.

Margaret Yow, 77, died December 5, 1998, at her home near Seagrove, North Carolina. She was a faithful member of the church for many years, starting in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1966. Since 1995 she has attended with the Asheboro, North Carolina, congregation.

Mrs. Yow lived an active and full life and she was greatly loved and respected by her family and the church, and among her many friends. On Monday night, December 7, several hundred people came to pay their respect at the family reception at the funeral home.

Graveside services were conducted on December 8, with David Mills officiating. Mrs. Yow is survived by eight children, 21 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, three great-great-grandchildren, one brother, and one sister.

"LETTERS," (Continued from page <None>)

"I especially wanted to comment on *World News and Prophecy*. It looks like United is getting it together and putting out something we really need at this time. Please don't stop this publication. I will be looking forward to it each month. I have already read it twice. Even *The Good News* seems to be stronger and more confident. Keep up the good work!"

New Mexico

"Just a note to say we really appreciate having the 'hard copy' *WNP*, with enough copies for everyone in our group. The 'newsprint' quality is fine with us—it's the content that matters, and that's great. Thanks a lot to all concerned."

Tasmania, Australia

## United's sermon-tape program

"I would like to express my and our congregation's appreciation for the home office tape distribution program. Most of our congregation is on a permanent list to receive tapes each week from our tape library, and they eagerly look forward to each one. We make home office tapes available for all who ask by keeping the original (master) in our tape library and making copies. Although we are receiving very good sermons and sermonettes in our local congregation, it would be a great loss if the home office program was discontinued.

Maybe it would be helpful for something to be put in *United News* reminding members that these tapes are available from their local congregation tape library. We are doing what we can to make sure they are made available to our congregation and that they know when new tapes are in.

Indiana

*Editor's Note:* The letters in this section may be edited for length and clarity.

# Local Church Updates...

## Greater New Orleans, Louisiana, Area 1999 Spring Holy Day Activity — March 31 to April 4, 1999

Attention “singles in the middle” (ages 30 to 55): You’re invited to join singles from across the globe in a Spring Holy Day activity in the greater New Orleans, Louisiana, area!

### Activities March 31 to April 4, 1999, include:

- Four-night stay at Holiday Inn Hammond Atrium & Conference Center. Cost is \$65 plus tax per room, with four persons per room. Complimentary hot-breakfast buffet each morning. (Your cost for four nights is therefore \$65 plus tax if you allow us to assign four to a room.)
- Night to Be Much Observed Dinner at Holiday Inn at 7 p.m., featuring lamb, cornish game hens, vegetables, salad, drinks, unleavened bread, and unleavened fresh strawberry cake. (Cost is approximately \$20.)
- First Day of Unleavened Bread afternoon service featuring United Church of God chairman, Robert Dick, as guest speaker.
- “Getting to Know You” social Thursday night with a “clean” Cajun jambalaya dinner. (Cost is \$8.)
- New Orleans Riverboat Cruise (\$18 including lunch) and tour of Vieux Carré. (Dinner at an area restaurant, Dutch treat.)
- Sabbath Activities will all be at the Holiday Inn Hammond
- Sabbath morning seminars geared to singles’ concerns from 10 a.m. to noon.
- On your own for lunch at area restaurants or at Holiday Inn.
- Sabbath services at 3 p.m.
- Dinner dance (approximately \$15 each) with live music — 7 p.m. (Cash bar available.)

*Reminder:* This is the Easter weekend so book flights *early* and remember daylight savings time begins Sunday morning, April 4. For further details either call Ina McLemore at (504) 386-7774 or e-mail her at [InaMac@juno.com](mailto:InaMac@juno.com). A deposit of \$75 is required by January 31, 1999. Please make your check payable to UCG-Covington and mail the attached form to: Ina McLemore, 42477 Richard Rd, Ponchatoula, LA 70454. Additionally, pastor Ken Treybig can provide information by e-mail at [ktreybig@ucg.org](mailto:ktreybig@ucg.org) and you can find this information on his personal Web page at <http://members.aol.com/kentreybig/singles/index.html>.

### Greater New Orleans — Singles Activity Registration Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Arrival Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Mode of Travel: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Departure Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Willing to Share a Room? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please check all items you plan to participate in:

- Night to Be Much Observed meal (approx. \$20)       “Getting to Know You” social and jambalaya dinner (\$8)  
 New Orleans riverboat cruise (\$18)                       Dinner dance (approx. \$15)

### Attention Skiers!

The Salt Lake City Congregation is sponsoring a ski weekend to be held on the weekend of February 13, 14 and 15, 1999. We will be skiing at Solitude, one of the finest ski resorts in the area. The cost will be \$36 (not including ski rental) per day. If you are interested, or have questions, be sure to contact Bill Jahns ([bjahns@ucg.org](mailto:bjahns@ucg.org) or call 801-943-6786) or write to United Church of God, Salt Lake City, P.O. Box 933, Sandy, UT 84091.

Plans are being made for a special guest speaker for Sabbath services. Don’t miss this exciting event! Some housing with brethren in the area will be available. Lessons for beginners will be available. Rental for skis will be around \$10 per day.

If you would like to attend, please return this form to: Bill Jahns, United Church of God Salt Lake City, P.O. Box 933, Sandy Utah 84091.

#### 1999 SKI WEEKEND Salt Lake City, February 13, 14 and 15, 1999

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Number attending: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Skiing level: Beginner \_\_\_ Intermediate \_\_\_ Advanced \_\_\_

### Words to Live By

- Instead of counting the days, make the days count.
- Before repeating anything “a little bird” told you, be sure it wasn’t a cuckoo.
- No day is complete until you’ve heard the laughter of a child.
- A true friend is someone who is there for you when he’d rather be anywhere else.
- Tact is the ability to hold your tongue until it’s under control.

*Ernie McBratney, British Columbia, Canada*

### United News

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