

United News™

News of the UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, *an International Association*

Vol. 4, No. 8
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1998

RPs and Council of Elders In Cincinnati for November Meetings

CONTENTS

<i>November Council Meetings</i>	Page 1
<i>The Life of King Asa</i>	Page 2
<i>What's New on the Web?</i>	Page 3
<i>Feast of Tabernacles 1998 Report</i>	Page 4
<i>Local Church Updates</i>	Page 22
<i>Conflict: What Is It Good For?</i>	Page 25
<i>Local TV Continues Momentum</i>	Page 28
<i>Announcements</i>	Page 30
<i>Camp Woodmen</i>	Page 32

The next issue of *United News* is scheduled to be published on Monday, January 11, 1999.

After several issues of *United News* were published electronically, we are now pleased to resume hard-copy printing with this issue. The change in paper stock has enabled a 50 percent reduction in our printing costs. Thank you for your consideration during the interim period!

United Church of God
P.O. Box 541027
Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027

(513) 576-9796
(513) 576-9795 Fax

by Clyde Kilough

The U.S. regional pastors and the Council of Elders convened the second week in November at the home office in Cincinnati, Ohio, for a very productive series of meetings covering a wide range of issues pertaining to the United Church of God and its future growth.

The four-day regional pastor (RPs) conference began Sunday morning, November 8, overlapping for two combined sessions with the Council on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Chairman Bob Dick, welcoming the RPs to the opening Council meeting, told them, "We are literally moving into a time where the Council works better together...and the general peaceableness of the Church of God—as demonstrated by the Feast reports this year—allows us to put our time to work on things that are forward-looking and constructive."

Sunday's meeting included a tour of the home office, addresses and question and answer sessions by Ministerial Services manager Richard Pinelli, President Les McCullough and Treasurer Tom Kirkpatrick, and regional reports. On Monday they deliberated over Feast and Sabbath services issues, second- and third-tithe administration, use of ministers' time and duties pastoring, concerns regarding those ministers who were recently placed on half-salary, ministerial expense proposals, regional pocket conferences, job descriptions,

employee-performance reviews and yearly reports. The Tuesday morning agenda dealt with maximizing the coordination and work between the Council and RPs, rebuilding morale and creating the best working environment for all facets of the Church, special projects, and a general question and answer session.

In the combined Tuesday meeting the Council heard status updates from RPs on the hymnal project, young adults programs, the youth Sabbath and Feast education programs, and a state-of-the-U.S. churches report. On Wednesday they discussed how to most effectively articulate the Church's vision and what it stands for, plus covered some administrative issues.

The November 10–18 Council sessions covered, as usual, many topics, including: committee work, operation manager's reports, financial planning, several matters about the 1999 General Conference of Elders meeting, the Feast video, doctrinal papers and editorial review, updating bylaws, approving more job descriptions, Rules of Association, international organizational structure, the role of international Council representatives, media plans, Elders Forum (an e-mail communication network for the ministry), the Church's relationship with the press, ministerial education programs, member education programs, budgeting Council church visits, and ministerial

(See "COUNCIL," page 32)

From the Ministry...

The Life of King Asa: Vital Lessons For You and Me

by André van Belkum

There are numerous lessons we can learn when we make a study of certain well-known Old Testament individuals and the events that influenced their lives. In the first book of Corinthians, chapter 10, the Apostle Paul refers to various incidents that occurred in the Old Testament, and points out that they are recorded for our instruction and admonition. For instance, notice verse 6: "Now these things became our examples," and verse 11 "Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition (margin, *instruction*) upon whom the ends of the ages have come."

Let us examine one such example, and observe what important lessons we can discover about the life of a king of Judah. Unlike many rulers before him, King Asa started his reign on a positive note. It is recorded that "Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God" (2 Chronicles 14:2). He removed the altars of foreign gods, and places of pagan worship (verses 3, 5).

Furthermore, he encouraged the inhabitants of Judah to seek God and to keep His laws and commandments (verse 4).

God's Guidance in Asa's Life

These righteous deeds pleased God and as a consequence the nation enjoyed peace for ten years (verses 1, 6). But after this period of tranquility King Asa faced one of his most challenging tests. Zerah, the Ethiopian, marched into Judah with an immense army of one million men and three hundred chariots (verse 9). Asa cried out to God imploring Him for help: "It is nothing for You to help, whether with many or with those who have no power [the few]; help us, O LORD our God, for we rest on You, and in Your name we go

against this multitude" (verse 11). It is evident that Asa was a leader who trusted in God and His power to supernaturally intervene for the people of Judah. As a result God gave Asa a resounding victory (verse 13). After the battle, God sent His prophet Azariah to meet the victorious King, and to convey an important message to him.

In one of the best known verses in the Bible, the prophet gave this message from God: "The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him He will forsake you" (2 Chronicles 15:2). Again Asa and the people responded in a positive way and entered into an agreement with God, "to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul" (verse 12).

The inhabitants of Judah reacted with enthusiasm and confirmed their desire to follow the good example of their king (verse 15). This attitude and desire to please God and wholeheartedly seek Him resulted in more blessings for King Asa and his people. And so the kingdom of Judah enjoyed additional years of peace and prosperity (verse 19).

Individual Lessons

When our ways please God He blesses us in many ways. It is a living, dynamic principle: "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8). Asa, for 35 years, endeavored to please God in the way he conducted his own life and the affairs of his kingdom. He was aware of his utter helplessness without God's assistance, and on His part the Eternal was an ever-present help in times of need.

Now we arrive at the closing years of Asa's life.

Asa's Final Years

The Bible account continues after 35 years of a successful and productive reign. Then an event occurred which had a major impact on the life of the king of Judah. As a result of hostile threats against Judah by Baasha, king of neighboring Israel, Asa sought a military alliance with Ben-Hadad,

United News

November 16, 1998

Vol. 4, No. 8

United News (ISSN 1088-8020) is published bi-monthly by the United Church of God, an *International Association*, 5405 Dupont Circle, Suite A, Milford, OH 45150. © 1998 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.

Managing editor: Peter W. Eddington

United Church of God Council of Elders:

Gary Antion, Aaron Dean, Robert Dick (chairman), Jim Franks, Roy Holladay, Victor Kubik, Dennis Luker, Les McCullough, Burk McNair, Joel Meeker, Leon Walker, Donald Ward

President: Leslie L. McCullough

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 co-workers. 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.

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

International addresses:

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

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

BRITISH ISLES: United Church of God—British Isles,
P.O. Box 4052, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK13 7ZF,
England. Phone: 0181-386-8467

CANADA: United Church of God—Canada, P.O. Box 144,
Station D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1, Canada
Phone: (416) 231-9379, (800) 338-7779 Fax: (416) 231-8238

FRENCH-SPEAKING AREAS: Église de Dieu Unie (Suisse romande), P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A.

GERMANY: Vereinte Kirche Gottes, Postfach 30 15 09,
D-53195 Bonn, Germany
Phone: 0228 - 9454636 Fax: 0228 - 9454637

ITALY: La Buona Notizia, Chiesa di Dio Unita, Casella Postale 187, 24100 Bergamo, Italy
Phone: 0039-035583474 Fax: 0039-035582140

The NETHERLANDS: Verenigde Kerk van God, Postbus 55940, 2505 BA Den Haag, Netherlands

NEW ZEALAND: United Church of God, P.O. Box 22,
Auckland, 1030, New Zealand

SOUTH AFRICA: United Church of God, P.O. Box 4345,
2125 Randburg, South Africa
Phone: 011 886-4650 Fax: 011 886-7610

SPANISH-SPEAKING AREAS: United Church of God,
P.O. Box 458, Big Sandy, TX 75755, U.S.A.
Phone: (903) 636-4928

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.ugc.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.ugc.ca> accesses the Church's Canadian Web site, <http://www.ugc-aus.org.au> the Church's Australian Web site, <http://www.labuonanotizia.org> the Church's Italian Web site, and <http://www.ugc.org.za> the Church's Southern Africa Web site.

King of Syria. In order to secure his favor and support he delivered to the Syrian king gifts of precious treasures from the house of God. As a result of the extra help from the Syrians, the king of Israel was forced to abandon his militant plans (2 Chronicles 16:1–6).

However, Asa's ill-considered and unwise decisions did not please God. As a result a prophet, Hanani, was sent to confront Asa. He strongly condemned the king for relying on the Syrians for protection rather than on God (verse 7), and reminded Asa of the time He intervened for the nation of Judah and defeated the might of the Ethiopian army (verse 8). Hanani the prophet ended his admonition by pointing out to Asa that his conduct had been disloyal to God, and that "in this you have done foolishly" (verse 9).

Asa's Errors

Instead of acknowledging his guilt, Asa's reaction to God's admonition was one of anger and hostility. In a fit of rage he cast Hanani into prison (verse 10). But his outrage and resentment did not end there. In verse 10 we are told that, "Asa oppressed some of the people at that time." The Bible does not tell us why or who they were, but is it possible these were friends or advisors who were trying to show Asa the error of his ways? Whatever the reason, Asa was acting irresponsibly and was in the process of tarnishing the exemplary reputation he had developed as a God-fearing ruler.

Three years later Asa again fell into the same trap of trusting men more than God. Second Chronicles 16:12 states: "And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was severe; yet in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians." The king had not learnt the lesson from his experience three years earlier. He made the mistake of relying on the physicians for healing—to the *exclusion* of God. Asa was condemned for *ignoring God*, not necessarily because he went to a physician. Where was the faith and trust Asa previously showed in God? For two years Asa was afflicted with this disease, but there was no indication that he repented of his wrong-doings. Instead, verse 13 merely states: "So Asa rested with his fathers; he died in the forty-first year of his reign."

It's the End Result That Counts

It is tragic that Asa, after 35 years of living a righteous and upright life, should fall from grace "in the time of his old age" (1 Kings 15:23). Etched in the pages of our Bibles is the life of Asa the king of Judah who in his last few years failed to nurture and maintain the marvelous relationship that had existed between him and God. Yet God gave him a further six years to acknowledge his transgressions and change. It is unfortunate and lamentable that the biblical account does not indicate Asa ever did.

There are repeated warnings in the Word of God about enduring and staying committed to God and His way of life until the end (Matthew 24:13). King Asa is an example of an individual who, even though righteous for most of his life, failed to faithfully endure and serve God until his death.

In Hebrews chapter three verse six we are encouraged to, "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end." And in Hebrews 10:38–39 students of the Bible are admonished: "Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back to perdition [destruction], but of those who believe to the saving of the soul."

There is no reason why anyone should not stay the course and with patience complete the race yet before them (Hebrews 12:1). At times the obstacles seem overwhelming and we can be tempted to give up. At other times we allow the cares of this life to blur the vision of the incredible potential promised to each one of us. Note Hebrews 2:1: "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away." Will we "drift away" like Asa and "neglect so great a salvation"? The choice is ours, but if we do our part God's promises stand sure and steadfast: "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).

Years ago a friend gave me this valuable advice: What is important is not how many storms in life we encounter and successfully negotiate, but whether we bring the ship safely into harbor.

Don't give up, stay the course, finish the race, endure to the end.

Remember Asa. *UN*

- *André van Belkum and his wife, Elise, live in South Africa. He pastors the Durban and Johannesburg congregations there, and also works with the brethren in Zimbabwe and Mauritius.*

What's New on the Web?

- Reports on the Council of Elders November 10–18 Cincinnati, Ohio, meetings are now available.
<http://www.ucg.org/a/council/council.htm>
- Updates have been made to the German, Dutch and Italian *Good News* sections.
<http://www.ucg.org/html/deutsch.shtml>
<http://www.ucg.org/html/nederlands.shtml>
<http://www.ucg.org/html/italiano.shtml>
- Using RealMedia Player, listen to various sermons by Dennis Luker, Doug Horchak and Leslie McCullough. Also, view the 1998 Festival video titled, "A Church On The Move."
<http://www.ucg.org/RealAud/Sermons.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>

If you have any questions or comments, please contact:

webmaster@ucg.org

Feast of Tabernacles 1998 Report...

Australia

Launceston, Tasmania

Although only a small Feast site numbered in the mid 50s, those who attended the Feast in Launceston this year enjoyed an uplifting and positive experience.

The Feast started with an opening message from a member of the Council of Elders, Mr Roy Holladay. Mr. and Mrs. Holladay left Launceston the next morning for Merimbula, the next stop on their trip. The fact that the Holladays took on the strain of extra travel, in their already full itinerary to be with us, was much appreciated by all, and the time spent with them was a highlight of the Feast.

The venue was Archers' Manor, a complex which included various types of accommodation, a meeting hall, and a bistro. Most of those attending took the opportunity to stay in the adjacent accommodation, which was an easy walk to the meeting hall. This, along with refreshments supplied before and after services, helped to promote people getting together. Having visitors from four other States of Australia also added to the enjoyment of the Feast for all the Tasmanians.

River cruises, horse riding, hang gliding, and good restaurants were among the side benefits available to Feastgoers, with many taking the time to visit the beautiful parks and gardens around Launceston.

A variety of speakers delivered uplifting messages which were aimed at keeping our minds firmly locked into the tremendous future which lies ahead. They were supported by a great selection of special music.

The 1998 Feast in Launceston has been tremendous, with everyone working together in a spirit of service.

Barry Williams

Merimbula, New South Wales

Eighty-four Feastgoers arrived at Merimbula, a town situated on the southern New South Wales coast. Merimbula is a very pretty place, as it nestles in the valley of surrounding mountains on a river inlet flowing into the Pacific Ocean.

There was a sense of excitement felt by everyone at the Feast as all members present were determined to do their part to ensure unity was all inclusive as they gathered to hear God's Feast message preached to His firstfruits.

The Feast was opened by Mr. Bill Eddington, a minister from the Melbourne East congregation, soon followed by Mr. Roy Holladay, a member of the Council of Elders, who arrived on the Monday. Mr. Holladay pointed out that God is preparing a group of beings who will not be subject to Satan's influence, a compassionate and caring people prepared as the bride of Christ to be ready to care for those in the World Tomorrow.

The venue for the Feast was the newly completed Sapphire Room in the Merimbula Lawn Bowling Club. This very comfortable room has been rebooked for the 1999 Feast. A feature at the Feast, enjoyed by nearly all of the members, was the Sabbath "brunch" and the Last Great Day lunch held in the Bowling Club bistro.

A smaller number at a Feast site such as we had tends to produce a happy, "big family" atmosphere, and in such a delightful seaside town as Merimbula, people were always meeting at waterside cafes, boardwalks along the riverside, under the bridge fishing, and even on a whale-watch cruise in the deepest natural harbor in the southern hemisphere.

This truly was an enjoyable Feast with our minds being focused on the excitement of God's plan for His people and the for the people of the world as they are brought to salvation within the context of His Holy day plan.

Don Goodger

Nelson Bay, New South Wales

One hundred members, including members from New Zealand, Tonga and U.S.A., attended the Feast in Nelson Bay, Australia. Guest speakers included Council member, Roy Holladay, and Tolu Ha'angana, the pastor in Tonga. Mr Ha'angana was in Sydney receiving treatment for some ailments and was unable to return to Tonga for the Feast.

Highlights included the flower arrangement of Laisa Fungalei, a visiting member from New Zealand, children's Bible lessons conducted by Neil and Lauris Latham, a seniors luncheon where members were led in a singalong by Margaret Manwaring, a dolphin cruise, and plenty of relaxed fellowship at this small site. On the third day members met for an informal Bible study in a park instead of the usual formal worship service. The night before it poured with rain but on the day of the study we had clear skies. Members broke off into small groups to examine questions and scrip-



Launceston and Noosa, Australia: The childrens choir presents special music at the Noosa, Queensland, Feast site; and Fiona Neilson plays hymns for services with son, Eric, at her side in Launceston, Tasmania.

Feast of Tabernacles 1998 Attendance Figures

Australia	
Launceston, Tasmania	55
Merimbula, New South Wales .84	
Nelson Bay, New South Wales	100
Noosa Heads, Queensland	322
Bolivia	16
British Isles	161
Canada	
Kelowna, British Columbia	736
Mont-Orford, Quebec	257
Caribbean	60
Chile	490
Colombia	103
Estonia	42
France	100
Germany	133
Guatemala	649
Israel/Jordan	130
Italy	387
Mexico	330
The Netherlands	73
New Zealand	70
Nigeria	23
Peru	160
Philippines	
Bacolod City, Negros Occidental	44
Davao City, Mindanao	112
La Trinidad, Benguet	52
South Africa	189
Tonga	22
United States	
Branson, Missouri	1,687
Corpus Christi, Texas	835
Jekyll Island, Georgia	1,171
Kauai, Hawaii	464
Louisville, Kentucky	885
Orlando, Florida	1,187
Poconos, Pennsylvania.	855
Redding, California	862
San Diego, California	1,215
Snowmass Village, Colorado .384	
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin .884	
Zimbabwe	17
Shut-ins who received Feast sermon tapes from the home office	451
TOTAL	15,797

Note: The above statistics reflect the *highest actual daily attendance figures* and do not take into account daily absenteeism. *Actual registration figures* at most Feast sites was higher.



Merimbula, Australia: Council member Roy Holladay congratulates newly ordained elder, Don Goodger, in Merimbula, New South Wales, as Bill Eddington, an elder from Melbourne, Victoria, looks on; the youth enjoy a whale-watch tour on Two Fold Bay at Eden, a town adjacent to Merimbula.

tures regarding the kingdom of God. Each group presented a report to the whole group. This was followed by a spit roast of beef and turkey, and relaxed fellowship in the park. The size of our Feast group gave everyone a chance to get to know each other.

Bruce Dean

Noosa Heads, Queensland

Under sub-tropical blue skies along the Sunshine Coast, broaching whales and cavorting dolphins welcomed Noosa Feastgoers to the first Holy day service. This first service had the highest attendance of the Feast at 322.

Uplifting, faith-consolidating sermons, complimented by fine special music, added to UCGs video spirit of "A Church on the Move." The childrens choir, dressed in national costumes, sang "It's a Small, Small World," which was warmly received. The average daily attendance was 282.

A well attended dinner dance provided unexpected testimony of the fine example set by young and old. The caterer had recently been at another social event where the youth were offensive in language and behavior. With that contrast he complimented our dancers as: "A group of very fine young people," and that our girls were "all beautiful young ladies." The vocalist of the band praised our dancers "as people who live up to their name as a church group." This was heart warming coming from complete strangers after just observing one evening of Christian behavior.

Sabbath school explored Millennial Art Forms and scenes from the wonders of encaustic art. A generous act of kindness towards the disadvantaged of the Noosa area was made through a food bank collection for distribution by the Salvation Army welfare office.

Feastgoers from Japan, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and California to New Zealand, added lovely Christian flavor. The final days concluded with encouraging messages from Council of Elders member Roy Holladay, who visited with his wife Norma.

Graemme Marshall

Bolivia

La Paz

A small Feast was prepared for the brethren in Bolivia in La Paz, the capital. Chilean elder Fermín Nain was present during the first half of the Feast. In attendance were 16 brethren. Activities included outings around La Paz, and dinners together.

Mario Seiglie

British Isles

Conwy, North Wales

The Feast of Tabernacles for the United Church of God, an *International Association*, in the British Isles, was a Feast beyond all of our expectations. With the recent philosophical upset in the area,

a Feast site had to be found very quickly and a Feast of Tabernacles organized very much at the last moment to serve those members who did not wish to go elsewhere and who preferred to remain as part of the United Church of God.

Many messages came in from members and ministers in the United States offering support and encouragement. The majority of these messages said that if we had a Feast site then they would come to join with us and help us in any way they could. With such a supportive attitude from our brothers and sisters how could we fail to have a very successful Feast of Tabernacles?

We did! Initially we thought we would have an attendance of around 100. In any event, with close to 60 from the U.S., we found we could expect around 150. In fact, we registered 182 with our highest attendance being 161.

Miraculously, we were able to obtain the Civic Hall for the entire period and for every session we needed it. Not only the hall but the kitchen, lobby and three other rooms were all available—and for a very low price. The Civic Hall is right in the middle of Conwy and very easy to get to. Conwy itself is a very old town and is completely surrounded by the old castle walls, with the mediaeval castle being very much an integral part of the town. Located on the banks of the River Conwy, and right on the edge of the glorious hills, mountains and valleys of North Wales, it is an absolute delight.

We found that self-catering accommodation was both plentiful and inexpensive, so making it possible for brethren to virtually obtain the benefits of everyone being on “one site” even though they weren’t! It was so easy for people to visit with one another and spend time in each other’s temporary homes—so much so that it really wasn’t necessary to lay on a lot of things for people “to do!”

Walking through the town of Conwy one would always be meeting other members—in a large town members tend to get lost somewhat. So this all added to the Feast, making it an absolute joy; it really was a time of peace, unity and a real meeting of the family of God.

A dance was organized for the Monday evening—at the beginning of the

Feast so everyone had a chance to get to know one another earlier rather than later. Teen activities were arranged and there were activities and a party for the younger ones, with a special tea for the senior citizens held in Anna’s Victorian Tearoom just a few yards from the hall! A highspot for everyone was the Feast video—such a positive presentation and just what we all needed.

The Feast speaking schedule provided the meat for us all and also gave opportunity for some who normally only speak in the local churches to be able to have the unique experience of speaking at the Feast. Everyone, however, was delighted to have Mr. and Mrs. Bill Bradford with them and to hear two sermons from Mr. Bradford, plus a couple of Bible studies.

Additionally, Council member Joel Meeker, together with his wife and two daughters, joined us for the last three days from the Feast site in France.

The services had the additional benefit of having a Festival choir and items of special music throughout the period. Some of the items being ably presented by our younger members.

Indeed, from a point just 16 weeks earlier, we had a Feast which truly passed our expectations. A Feast which showed us how much can be achieved when God’s people work together in peace, in unity and with a brotherly co-operation that comes from the indwelling presence of God’s Holy Spirit. A co-operation which transcends all national boundaries and gives us all a glimpse of how it will be in the World Tomorrow.

John A. Jewell



Seniors gathered for a lovely luncheon to the sounds of live music



Kelowna: The Festival choir performs special music; and two happy recipients of a stuffed toy from the “teddy bear extravaganza” listen intently at the Kelowna, British Columbia, site.

Canada

Kelowna, British Columbia

The 736 feastgoers at the Feast of Tabernacles in Kelowna, British Columbia, were greeted with sunny skies and warm weather. Kelowna is situated on Okanagan Lake. It was the best Feast ever.

Young and old, the brethren were a busy bunch this year, attending services, dining, fellowshiping, serving, relaxing, or attending various activities. There was a teen dance. There was a young adult’s hike into the Myra Canyon on the Kettle Valley railbed—a very scenic trail with high trestles and tunnels. Sixteen hearty souls enjoyed this excursion. “I went knowing a couple of people and came back having made fourteen new friends,” said Neil DeLong from Coaldale, Alberta.

Family day was held at Scandia Amusement park where everyone could enjoy miniature golf, video games, or just fellowship and eat piping hot pizza. One is never too old or too young to ski down a virtual mountain or ride a motorcycle up and down dangerous virtual trails.

Another exciting and unusual activity was thought up and prepared by Randy Stiver, a pastor from Oregon. It was a Bible Challenge Riddle. These riddles were geared for youth and based on each day’s sermon scriptures. Teens listened intently to each sermon to discover the answer to the riddle. Becky and Michael Sorby from Sedro Wooley had the most correct answers and were presented a Bible on the Last Great Day for solving these inventive brain twisters.



Mont. Orford: Congregational singing; and Festival youth lessons at the Mont-Orford, Quebec, site.

and entertainment. There was also an opportunity for over 250 Feastgoers to take a boat cruise on the Fintry Queen on Lake Okanagan for dining and dancing. The Kelowna Community Food Bank collection, our special project, was successful once again as a total of \$4,772 worth of food donations were given by the brethren.

Friday was youth day with a “teddy bear extravaganza.” The stage abounded with stuffed animals everyone had brought to the Feast. All children were given a cuddly stuffed toy to take home.

There were also many examples of service. Dan Deininger and Allen Hirst prepared a live cybercast in RealAudio of the services. They scanned pictures of Kelowna, the auditorium, the people and the various activities, and put them on the Web (check it out at: www.cgca.net/cyber-fot98). Then they monitored the service to make sure the sound was okay. Many scattered brethren responded with thanks for the opportunity to hear services. One cyberspace family said: “It’s like being in a different part of the auditorium (like the mother’s room) and knowing services are going on and hearing it piped in.” Up to eleven connections for thirty people were made, and by the Last Great Day the service was upgraded to allow sixty connections.

With so many tiny congregations in outlying areas, any kind of music is hard to come by and so special music, such as the piano, the small orchestral group, the solos and children’s choir, added tremendously to enjoyment at the Feast as did the Festival choral.

Brethren learned through many inspiring and timely sermons. It is through our immersion into the Feast of Tabernacles and through service and sacrifice that God can prepare us for the upcoming year and for the ultimate goal—

the kingdom of God. Thank you, God’s people, for making it the best Feast Ever.

Jean Jantzen

Mont-Orford, Quebec

The 1998 Feast for eastern Canada was held in Mont-Orford, Quebec, for the second year. Mont-Orford is a little more than an hour’s drive from the Montreal airport in the scenic and charming eastern township area of Quebec.

Feastgoers enjoyed the magnificent fall colors, with several varieties of maples and oaks showing their brilliant gold, orange and red leaves against a backdrop of rolling hills.

The messages were inspiring and truly provided meat in due season. With the highest attendance at 257, it didn’t take long to feel like one big happy family. People were quick to volunteer to help out wherever they could. Many were able to stay in chalets and entertain one another with “parties.”

There were two bus tours: one was to Montreal and the other to Quebec City. On another afternoon a chartered boat took members for a cruise on Lake Memphremagog.

Teens were treated to an afternoon of bowling, and on another day hiking. They also had a room set aside for their fellowship three days during the Feast. The younger set enjoyed two days of youth Festival lessons while the young adults had a bowling activity as well as a winery tour. A Sabbath brunch was arranged for the seniors.

Many explored the many quaint villages in the surrounding area or made a short trip into Vermont to visit the Von Trapp (from Sound of Music fame) family homestead. Others chose to golf, go horseback riding, hiking, biking or shopping!

As always, the childrens choir was a highlight of the Feast. This year a very special backdrop picturing Noah’s Ark was prepared especially for the occasion by Marg Cunningham, a member of the Toronto congregation.

Although people in the community speak French, most also speak English. Many restaurants provide English translations of their menus and so even those who can speak no French had little trouble. One lady from the U.S. who was back for her second year said: “We want everyone in the U.S. to know that the Canadians are very friendly...and please don’t hesitate attending the Feast because of the language in Quebec.” In her experience, the French Canadians went out of their way to help non-French speaking people.

A talent show with 16 acts performed by brethren was presented on Saturday night. Mr. Paul Suckling was emcee for the event. There were vocal and instrumental numbers, a ballet, some skits and many jokes. This was all topped off by a lively family dance.

On the Last Great Day, nearly half of the brethren took part in a catered buffet luncheon and so had one last activity together. Thereafter, all left for home feeling well fed not only from the gourmet food the region is known for, but especially from the spiritual gourmet food the area is becoming noted for each autumn.

Anthony Wasilkoff

Caribbean

Christ Church, Barbados

After a year’s hiatus, the Feast was again held on the island of Barbados. Although numbers were down, spirits

were high. A maximum of 60 congregated at the beautiful Accra Beach Hotel and were inspired by messages on vision, the World Tomorrow and endurance. The Holy day offerings were outstanding, giving a much needed boost to the Barbadian account.

Because our numbers were small, it contributed to a family-like atmosphere. Nearly everyone attending participated in all the activities. We sampled Barbadian cuisine and listened to steel pan music on "Bajan Night." We toured the island on family day and we enjoyed a bit of Barbadian history when we attended the musical "1627."

One person commented: "This Feast has been Holy Spirit-filled. We experienced a taste of the world tomorrow family-wise. It was like an oasis in the desert. In short, it was most great with God's bounteous blessings hanging over us. Let us give thanks to God for His marvelous kindness and love." And it was inspiring to hear the traditional comment from an individual observing the Feast for over 30 years, "This was the best Feast ever!"

Arnold Hampton

Chile

Maitencillo

Surrounded by cliffs and a beautiful, rocky seaside, 490 brethren enjoyed a peaceful and loving Feast in Maitencillo, Chile. Besides the 430 Chileans present, brethren from six other countries joined to make it an international Feast. There were forty-eight brethren from Argentina, eight from Ecuador, four from Brazil, four from the U.S., three from Peru, two from Australia and one from England.

The weather was good, with temperatures in the 60s and 70s Fahrenheit and all the activities were carried out without any problems. Outstanding events were the talent show, with over 50 participants, the Tea for the elderly, a Speaker's Club graduation dinner, and a childrens party.

The Feast video was praised by many for giving a broader and more participatory view of God's work—and that the Church truly is "on the move." There was

a spiritual and loving atmosphere of the Feast perhaps best summed up by a note written by the four English-speaking visitors: "We want to thank all of you very much for a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles. It has been an enriching and sometimes overwhelming experience. We want to express to the Church our appreciation for the service, hospitality and kindness offered to us."

There were seven persons baptized.

Mario Seiglie

Colombia

Rodadero, Santa Marta

Christian love and fellowship characterized the Feast of Tabernacles in Colombia. One hundred and three brethren from various parts of Colombia (including Bogota, Barquisimeto, Barranquilla, Codazze and others), from the United States, from Venezuela, and from Mexico, kept the Feast at Rodadero (a sea port on the Colombian Caribbean coast). Eduardo Hernandez, pastor of the churches in Colombia and Feast coordinator, and Pablo Dimakis, visiting minister from Mexico, gave the Feast messages.

The sermons emphasized the importance of keeping focused on the kingdom of God and on the individual responsibility to maintain the sanctity of God's camp (tabernacle) during the Feast in particular and in one's life throughout the year.

Special music was presented during the Sabbath days by Maria Mercedes Hernandez, who accompanied herself on guitar and sang inspiring songs of worship and

praise which she had written specially for God's Feast. The choir from Codazze also sang inspiring compositions directly from the Bible.

Everybody was inspired and motivated by the Feast video, "A Church on the Move," especially since this year the video had a Spanish sound track done a few days before the Feast by Lauro Roybal, a pastor in Mexico.

There was a family day at Granate Beach. The great majority of the brethren were able to participate. They arrived by bus and boat rides. It was very interesting because everybody was provided with snorkels to be able to watch a variety of colored fish and beautiful reef formations. On the way back everybody enjoyed eating fresh fish on another of the nearby islands.

During the other days of the Feast the brethren enjoyed very much the opportunity to fellowship, visit one another, and eat together either at their temporary apartments or in one of the many restaurants that offered a delicious variety of food. One family from the U.S. brought a frozen turkey which they cooked during the Feast and shared with many brethren. The many opportunities of Christian fellowship permeated the Feast atmosphere with warm love and a deep sense of belonging and purpose in keeping the Feast.

Vanessa, a 17-year-old girl from Bucaramanga, who came to the Feast with her mother and sister, commented: "To me the Feast has been very edifying—filled with love and unity."



Chile: The youth provide exciting entertainment (above) during the talent show; and the childrens choir presents special music in Maitencillo, Chile.



Colombia: A group of brethren take a boat ride to Granate Island during the family day activity; and brethren from Colombia, Mexico and the United States enjoy a turkey dinner at the beginning of the Last Great Day in Rodadero, Colombia.



back home to my little town called Sanpues, Sucre, I plan to buy a few chickens to be able to sell eggs and thereby earn some money to help support myself.”

It can truly be said that the Feast at Colombia was very inspiring. It promoted Christian love and fellowship and a deep

was 39. Of that number, 15 were Estonians. Compared to last year we had twice as many Estonians and twice as many visitors who came from Germany, Canada, Lithuania and the United States.

Our theme for all messages was “To Know and to Do the Will of God—Preparing for the Kingdom God.”

Sermons and sermonettes were given in English and Russian. Translation was done simultaneously into Estonian and into German. Since no one language is common to all, we did have communication challenges from time to time.

The weather was beautifully bright and sunny for most of the Feast. We took coach tours to southern Estonia where from the highest point in the Baltics we could view Russia and Latvia, both 12 miles in the distance. Another tour took us to the capital city of Tallinn. The city of Tartu, where the Feast was held, is home to a renowned University founded by King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden.

On the first day of the Festival, Henrikas Klovas was ordained as deacon. He has been making a grueling 16-hour journey by train, bus, a walk across a border town and riding another bus, while crossing two countries, to conduct a Bible study in Tartu once a month. He also has been translating *Good News* articles from Russian into Lithuanian. Henrikas also mentioned that he met with four other interested people in his home town of Kaunas for the Feast of Trumpets. They were from a group who were discovering the Holy days. We may have more growth

It has helped me to know better the right way to live and it has strengthened me spiritually. I have been able to meet new people from Mexico, the U.S.A., Pereira and Codazze. I have learned to be more humble and to keep myself from thinking bad things. I want to return next year and every year until the kingdom comes.”

Orlando Manrique, a 21-year-old young man from Codazze, Cesar, commented: “In this Feast we have been able to share a witness of how we came into the church. The Feast has contributed to unify us one with another. Not having many programmed activities has been a great help because we were able to share more in spiritual fellowship and we focused more on the purpose of the Feast.”

Rosa Usuga Rios, a 69-year-old lady from Sucre, came alone to the Feast. She has eight children. She has attended five Feasts and commented about this one: “To me the Feast has been very edifying, very profitable. I have learned about what I have to do to prepare for the kingdom of God. I have learned to have unity and to pray for one another, to support the work of God. I have met many persons who have inspired me and helped me. This year the Church and my minister have helped me and I know that I must be a column to help other brethren. When I go

sense of commitment to carry on as we all continue to prepare for the coming kingdom of God.

Pablo Dimarkis

Estonia

Tartu

For the second year in a row the United Church of God has kept the Feast of Tabernacles in Tartu, Estonia. Forty-two people attended. Our high attendance



Estonia: The brethren attending the Feast in Tartu gather for a group photograph. They include members from Canada, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania and the United States.

coming in Lithuania and need to have literature produced as quickly as possible.

When we took our tour to Tallinn we played the Festival video "A Church on the Move." There was acclaim from a number of the brethren about how well this year's Festival video reported on so many aspects of how God's work is being done.

Towards the end of the Feast the new attendees were beginning to ask questions and wanted to know more about our beliefs. One invited us to her home for dinner the Saturday evening.

After services and a farewell lunch on the Last Great Day we held a special meeting with the Estonians to discuss the future of the Church in Estonia. Henrikas Klovas, John Lambert, and I expressed our desire for growth and progress. We know that it's difficult because of remoteness, the differences in language and the cost of coming to visit them in order to maintain continuity, but we all expressed our commitment to support one another. Henrikas Klovas will continue to travel to Tartu once a month to conduct services.

Estonia is said to be 92 percent irreligious. This high figure is part of the atheistic Soviet legacy. But, even in independence, the interest level in spiritual matters is abysmally low. Those of us working with the Estonians have asked God to open the hearts and minds of the people here. This prayer is being answered. People are now asking questions about the meaning of life. Some are wanting to know about God and His existence. Some are equating the misery and emptiness of the society they're a part of with godlessness.

Please pray for all those working together to do God's will and preach the gospel in this part of the world.

Victor Kubik

France

Port d'Albret

One hundred members enjoyed the 1998 Feast of Tabernacles in Port d'Albret, France, which is on the Atlantic coast about 50 miles north of the Spanish border. With just a few exceptions, all attendees stayed at the all-inclusive Pinsolle resort. This allowed us to have

our lodgings, three-course meals, church services, and many Feast activities all in the same place, leaving much more time for "tabernacling" together in unity and fellowship.

Lodging in a small family suite with kitchenette, and three meals a day cost only about \$450 U.S. per adult for the entire nine-day stay, reducing the cost of the Feast for those coming in from abroad. The rainy weather did not dampen spirits, as visitors discovered the beauty of the Atlantic coast, the Pyrenees mountain range, and the striking Basque country along the border with Spain.

Services were held alternately in French and English, with a simultaneous translation offered into the other language. Sermons by both French-speaking and English-speaking elders provided encouragement, instruction and exhortation about the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles and the exciting truths it reveals about mankind's marvelous future. Special music was provided by both French and English-speaking members. This included an English-language chorale organized on site.

During the Feast two coach excursions were organized to area sites of interest. The first went to Biarritz, a fashionable turn-of-the-century resort made famous by Napoleon III and his wife Eugénie. The architecture of the city, and the dramatic seaside cliffs and sandy beaches make for breathtaking panoramas. The excursion then went on to the old port of Saint Jean de Luz, the then-fishing village where the Sun King, Louis XIV, married Maria-Theresa, the heir to the Spanish throne.

The second excursion went across the Spanish border to the resort port of San Sebastian. The streets of the old city boast picturesque strolls, souvenir shopping, and hundreds of "tapas bars" (Spanish bistro-café's selling many varied "tapas" appetizers displayed in large platters on the bar, often enjoyed with a glass of sangria). On a high hill overlooking the bay stands a castle unsuccessfully defended by Napoleonic troops when the Duke of Wellington besieged the city in the early 19th century.

Tentative plans for the Feast next year include a site in the Loire valley, the region in which are found many of

France's most beautiful renaissance chateaux. In addition to enjoying an all-inclusive site, excursions would visit such world-famous chateaux as Chambord, Chenonceau, Amboise and Blois. Visitors are welcome! Why not plan to spend the Feast with us next year in France?

Joel Meeker

Germany

Winterberg

Winterberg, nestled in the Sauerland Mountains, was again the Feast site in Germany this year. The accommodations for the 133 Feastgoers were within walking distance of the nice hall used for services and the first-class restaurant where excellent meals were served.

The foggy, rainy weather we had most of the time did not dampen the "Feast spirit" at all. In fact, some commented that it might have added to the fine fellowship we enjoyed. In more than one message brethren were encouraged and reminded that they were keeping the Feast not only because God requires it, but also because we want to keep His Feast. The appreciation and joy of being able to assemble with God's people remained strong throughout the eight days.

We had a spiritual Feast, given by ministers who instructed us to prepare ourselves for the kingdom of God. The sermons were translated simultaneously into English (or German when given in English). We were delighted to have Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Luker join us for the last half.

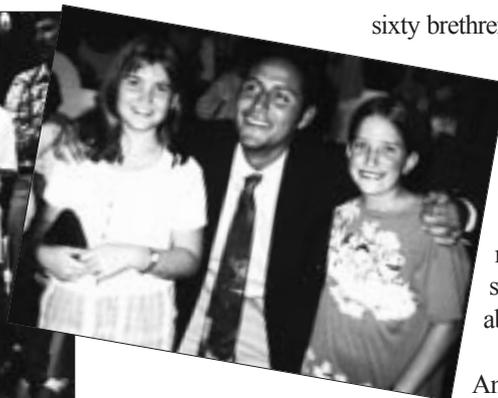
Activities included a welcome reception after the first Holy day, a trip to a nearby town where the seniors could browse through a fall market before enjoying coffee and cake, hiking in the mountains, a family-day treasure hunt, a talent show, and a dance. The highlight for the youth was the new indoor go-cart track next to the hotel! They were excited when the management asked them to perform while a television crew shot footage for commercial productions one afternoon.

The Feast ended with a farewell reception for all on the evening after the Last Great Day.

Susan Miller



Guatemala: The childrens party being enjoyed by Nikki, Felicia, Alex and Anais; and Nikki and Felicia say goodbye to Roberto Parada in Antigua, Guatemala, after the Last Great Day.



For three mornings during the Feast, the men from El Salvador and Guatemala played soccer against each other. An evening of activities was held for

the young people to allow them time to fellowship with one another. The young people reciprocated by preparing entertainment for the couples on another night.

The talent night was a very popular event with near perfect attendance. Acts ranging from skits, vocal ensembles, instrumentals, recitations and traditional dances provided 2½ hours of non-stop uplifting, inspiring and enjoyable entertainment.

Family day was held at Parque Florencia, a national park nearby. Though there was threatening rain, the activity was well attended. The day started off with the annual childrens party where games were played by the youngsters. Cake and drinks were served afterwards, followed by the passing out of gift packages for each child. They each received a small amount of candy, a toy and a handpainted T-shirt. All of the gifts were donated by various church members. Other activities at the family day included soccer, basketball, fellowship, and lunch served by a local restaurant.

A ladies night organized by the Spokesman Club was held with 175 in attendance. Three speeches were given along with table topics. Everyone enthusiastically participated. Piano and vocal selections were provided by Julian Weston and his wife to create a relaxing and uplifting atmosphere.

A choice of day trips was planned for Sunday. Brethren could choose to visit beautiful Lake Atitlan or climb up the towering Agua Volcano near Antigua. Fifty to

sixty brethren partook of each activity. On the way to Lake Atitlan, Latin and United States brethren joined together, singing hymns, with each singing in his own language. Hikers to the volcano were met with severe thunderstorms, but about 20 were still able to make it to the top.

The size of the Central American church grew during the Feast when 10 baptisms occurred. Seeds sown in the past are continuing to bear fruit with a least 20 baptisms occurring in the area this year.

Brethren were especially inspired and uplifted at the Feast from the awesome messages. Instruction was given in how to be united as a church family, how to improve your marriage, how to walk with God, and the kingdom of God. Brethren spent time after services talking about how they could take these vital messages back to their local areas and put them to practice.

Spiritual instruction was given to children ages 3 to 12 through the passing out of Spanish Festival Activity books by the Wisconsin brethren attending in Guatemala. Scissors, crayons and pencils to accompany the books were provided by the Minneapolis brethren, who graciously sent the items with the Americans who attended this Feast site. Georgia Veller handed out handmade scripture books for children ages 9 to 12.

A very fruitful Feast came to a tearful end following a going away party held after the Last Great Day. A marimba band provided music for dancing and brethren provided food for snacking on during the evening. Photos were taken and goodbyes were said after saying, "Hasta la otra fiesta!"—until next year's Feast!

Gayle Hoefker

Guatemala

Antigua

Greetings from beautiful Antigua, Guatemala! Antigua is nestled in the mountains in view of three volcanoes. This ancient capital of Central America has maintained its quaint, peaceful atmosphere through strict regulations. Its old world flair helped Feastgoers to take a step back in time when life was simpler. It helped brethren look forward to the time when God will do away with the hustle and bustle of city life and give them back their families.

The Central American brethren got the Feast off on the right track with warm Latino greetings for everyone; hugs and kisses were the greetings of choice to emphasize love for friends and family. Six hundred forty-nine brethren was the highest attendance for the Feast. Five hundred ninety-seven attended services the opening night with approximately 30 of them from the United States. Many of the visitors have returned again to this Guatemalan Feast site because of the tremendous love the brethren have for one another.

Temperatures were in the 70s with occasional rainshowers that did not interfere with most activities. The annual ladies breakfast was well attended with 201 meals being served. Small gifts made and donated by many women provided door prizes for half of the ladies to take home.

Israel/Jordan

One hundred thirty people celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles while touring the biblical lands of both Israel and Jordan. We tabernacled in four different hotels while visiting sites and lands mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments.

Of course Jerusalem, the future capi-



Italy: The ministry attending in Sabaudia pauses on the lobby steps of the meeting facility; and the choir presents Festival special music at this United Feast site in Italy.

tal of God's kingdom, highlighted the excursion. One woman was baptized in the Jordan River and the blessing of the little children ceremony occurred while on a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee.

Everyone exhibited great stamina and patience at the many sites we visited. Activities included touring Masada, floating on the Dead Sea, hiking into Petra, riding desert jeeps as the sun set at the desolate area of Wadi Rum in Jordan (most likely an area where Moses led the ancient nation of Israel), viewing the Promised Land from Mt. Nebo, visiting for three days in Jerusalem, quick stops in Bethlehem, Jericho and Nazareth, and even sipping wine at Cana where Jesus performed His first recorded miracle.

The Last Great Day was a chance to relax at the Sea of Galilee and to see the area that Christ considered home during His earthly ministry. After the Feast we stopped at Megiddo where the armies gather at Armageddon, and had a sunset tour of Caesarea where Cornelius was the first gentile converted to Christianity.

The abundance of delicious and ethnic food also contributed to a meaningful Feast.

By keeping the Feast in the Bible lands everyone left spiritually uplifted and benefited as the Biblical stories came alive.

Charles Melear

Italy

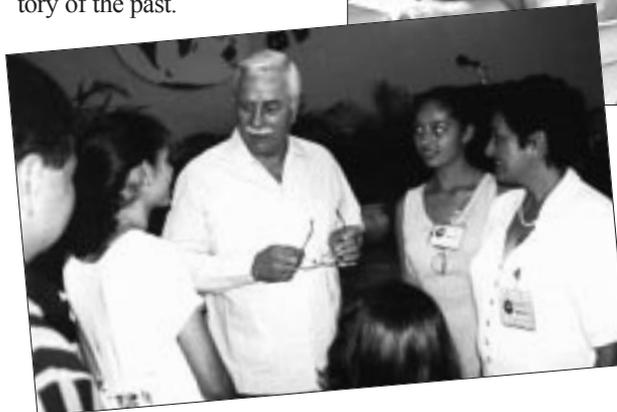
Sabaudia (Latina)

The sunny beaches of Sabaudia, Italy, welcomed an attendance high of 387

this year. Many inspired singles and families from overseas (United States and other countries) had joined in one spiritual family with the Italian brethren to contribute to the highest attendance for an Italian Feast site to date under UCGIA. We are grateful to God for bringing so many of His children in unity.

Along with the inspiring messages of this year's Feast, the eagerness in all of the brethren's willingness to serve was the ever determining factor of the Feast's great success to God's glory. A warm zeal was also apparent in two delightful evenings of an entertaining talent show and an evening dance, along with a beautiful and invigorating family day of fun and games on the beach.

This year's Festival was also enriched by day visits to the historical sites of the ruins of Pompeii, the abbey and fortress of Monticassino, the allies cemetery of Anzio, and two days in the ancient city of Rome, exploring its marvelous monuments and awesome history of the past.



Average highs in temperature were 23 degrees Celsius (73 Fahrenheit), but didn't compare to the greater atmosphere that was being set in love, generosity, and involvement by all multinational Feast participants and their desire to contribute in creating, in Italy, the

presence of the wonderful foreshadowing of the kingdom of God—a presence encouraging us to look forward to next year's Feast.

Carmelo Anastasi

Mexico

Acapulco

This Feast of Tabernacles in Acapulco was truly "our best Feast ever!" Only with God's help can things get better and better each year. The weather was great and only in the evening, as the Last Great day started, did we get a rain storm—which only added to the significance and meaning of that day.

More than 330 brethren from Mexico, United States, Canada, Guatemala and France gave the Feast a truly international flavor. The warmth and brotherly love



Mexico: Enjoying a meal together; and chatting with President McCullough at the Acapulco Feast site.

among the brethren was felt throughout the different activities and church services. Brethren were encouraged to see more than 10 people keeping the Feast for the first time. Their happiness and appreciation for the growth God has given to us was demonstrated by their faithful, continued participation and involvement in all church activities, Holy day offerings and church services. The average attendance was 300. Five baptisms were also performed during the Feast, bringing our yearly average to new record breaking heights.

Inspired sermons focused mostly on the meaning of the Feast and the reality of the kingdom of God, the tremendous blessings and responsibility that we as the firstfruits have, our part in bringing these blessings to the whole world in the soon coming kingdom of God, the importance of building character, and the hope of the resurrection.

The brethren enjoyed special music presented both in English and in Spanish. The Latin flavor combined with the graceful talent of our English speaking brethren just added to the quality and inspiration of the Feast this year. The brethren commented that they were truly moved by the wonderful and inspiring special music.

Members were very happy to have the opportunity to meet Mr. Leslie McCullough and his wife, Marion, during the second part of the Feast. They had the opportunity to speak with them on several occasions especially after the Feast video, "A Church on the Move" and also at the "Noche Mexicana" (Mexican Fiesta night), where everyone enjoyed deliciously typical food, drink, dance and brotherly conversation. Our English speaking brethren said that they had enjoyed the flavor of both the brethren and the food. A taste of Tequila (without the typical worm) was also enjoyed, as well as the variety of the Mexican buffet provided by the hotel kitchen who taught a few English speak-

ing brethren to say "Viva la Fiesta" (may the Feast live on).

The hotel staff and Mexican Fiesta coordinator, Dolly Baay, said that they had been impressed to see such a happy and yet well behaved, respectful and organized group. Some of the hotel staff requested and were given copies of "Las Buenas Noticias" (*The Good News* in Spanish) by the brethren, who in this occasion had truly been a light to them. In total, about five new subscribers in Acapulco were added to our subscriber



The Netherlands: The entire congregation gathers for a photograph at the Wezuperbrug Feast site in the Netherlands.

list because of this event and about six people asked if they could attend services with us during the Feast to observe and find out more about us and the Feast of Tabernacles.

Other activities included a formal dinner sponsored by the international brethren which included a delicious chicken dinner with fine wine and deserts for everyone, a yacht trip in the Acapulco port with dancing on two levels, a day at the Cici water park, a lunch and beach party with water sports, a tour to the Acapulco diver's show, and plenty of shopping and eating out at restaurants with beautiful views.

All in all, Acapulco's hot sun was dimmed this year by the light displayed by the brethren of the United Church of God, truly a Church on the move towards the real Feast in the soon coming Millennium.

Next year—1999—Acapulco will again host the Feast of Tabernacles, which will surely once again become our best Feast ever!

Larry Roybal

The Netherlands

Wezuperbrug, Drenthe

This year's Feast of Tabernacles was once again held at the Kuierpadien, a bungalow park situated in the "heel mooii" (very beautiful) rural region of Drenthe, and was well attended by approximately 80 members from the United States, Belgium and Holland.

The park had all of the amenities

needed to make the Feast successful: a lovely meeting hall, a full-service restaurant, a swimming pool, beautiful walking paths, a lake, forested areas, a ski slope, and much more.

Just like last year, several families made use of the park's "temporary dwellings," by renting either caravans (small, fully-equipped trailers) or bungalows (small houses). Others stayed in off-site bungalows or in bed-and-breakfast hotels just a few kilometers away from the Feast site. Overall, since most resided so closely together, it was very easy for everyone to get acquainted.

On the opening evening of the Feast, the Dutch church hosted an opening reception, with delicious hors d'oeuvres served by the park's catering staff. And, as most Dutch people speak some English (actually, several are quite fluent), the American visitors felt very welcomed and the conversation flourished.

During the Feast all brethren were sumptuously fed with beautiful special music and by sermonettes, sermons and

split-sermons, delivered by either the Dutch Pastor, Bram De Bree, or by members of the Dutch congregation. And, gratefully, all messages were clearly translated into English for the visitors by a tireless group of Dutch church brethren.

One of the outstanding and yet sobering highlights of the Feast was a group tour of the former Camp Westerbork, situated in the province of Drenthe. Between July of 1942 and September of 1944, from this camp, 93 trains departed more than a hundred-thousand people to the concentration and extermination camps in Germany and Poland during WWII, namely Auschwitz and Sobibor. To use the words from one of the museum pamphlets: "The camp has a disturbing history: it was not built by the Germans, but on the order of the Dutch government even before the war. Its original function was to provide temporary shelter for Jewish refugees from Germany before they emigrated because they were not allowed to stay in the Netherlands. However, when the war broke out they were trapped. The camp was taken over by the Germans who used it as a transit camp from which they could deport Jews to the east." (As a side note, Camp Westerbork was the initial camp Anne Frank and her family were transported to in 1944. Shortly thereafter, they were sent to the extermination camps at Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen.)

The weather at the Feast (as is usual this time of year) was very blustery, damp and sometimes a bit cold, but the sun always came out for the important events. In addition to the Camp Westerbork tour, there was a "heel lekker" (very delicious) all you can eat barbecue, two afternoons for the children's games of capture the flag and soccer, an enjoyable seniors dinner, evening shopping in either the town of Assen or the town of Emmen, as well as an evening of delightful music presented by Scope, a quartet which included the talents of an exceptional piano player, a multi-talented flutist, a gentleman on percussion, and a rhythmic bass player. On the

Last Great Day a lovely brunch was catered by the on-site restaurant.

Just like last year, there were also two scheduled "downhill skiing" opportunities that were well attended. Skiing, you might ask? In the relatively flat farmland of Holland? One must never underestimate Dutch ingenuity. All participants donned ski boots, skis, and poles and ventured up, via a rope tow, a very large manmade slope and had a wonderful time. The children, just like last year, especially loved the experience.

At the end of the Feast, all were able to leave inspired and spiritually fed with new and precious memories to cherish.

Heidi D. Arendsen-Korthuis

New Zealand

Taupo

Sixty-five to seventy people from New Zealand, Australia, the United States and South Africa met in Taupo for the third Feast of Tabernacles to be held in New Zealand by the United Church of God.

Lake Taupo is famous for its trout fishing, and the natural beauty of its remote bays. To the south are the giant mountains of the volcanic range. To the north we see the natural thermal activity of Wairakei and the forest extending to Rotorua, over 80 km (50 miles) away.

Visiting ministers were Leon Walker, John Cafourek, Harry Travis and Ken Skorseth, all from the U.S.A. Bruce Dean, the Australian based pastor responsible for

the N.Z. Church was unable to attend because of commitments in Australia. Eleven services were held, including two services on the Sabbath and the Last Great Day. The messages focused on the need to have a vision for the days depicted in the future, and our responsibilities now.

Leisure activities included a jet boat trip on the Waikato River, a dinner buffet, a family day and much time fellowshiping.

During the Feast a meeting was held with the New Zealand brethren to explain about the selection of new members to serve on the New Zealand Church board. The new members of the board will be announced by pastor Bruce Dean following the Feast, after the counting of absentee votes.

A presentation was made to the visiting ministers and their wives by Mr. and Mrs. Marcel Morrell, the New Zealand deacon and deaconess. The Feast was a great success, promoting unity and enhancing God's work in the country.

Peter Boyes

Nigeria

Lagos

The RG Motel, nestled in a verdant area of the Lagos International Trade Fair Complex, located about 40 km (25 miles) southwest of Lagos, was the site of this year's Feast of Tabernacles for 23 members of the United Church of God in Nigeria.

With a rich supply of crisp air, calm



New Zealand: Members gather for a photograph as Taupo once again provides a splendid location for Feastgoers in New Zealand.



Nigeria: Twenty-three members assembled for the Feast in Lagos for the Feast in Nigeria this year.

breezes, melodious chirping of birds, and unhurried ambiance, the site was truly welcoming. Feastgoers experienced eight days of peace, serenity, happiness, and camaraderie. The weather was favorable for all outdoor activities. Both the physical and the spiritual sides of a good Feast were well taken care of. On the physical side, we had communal meals, excursions to some historic places, sports, social activities, and Feast mementos and refreshments.

On the spiritual side, we were well nourished with splendid sermons delivered by leading pastors on a variety of well-focused topics through the audio and videotapes supplied by the home office. A good number of the sermons were greeted with applause or positive reactions by appreciative brethren. When they watched the Feast video, Feastgoers were emotionally touched by, and appreciative of, the level of reorganization and rebuilding that has taken place in the church. A high point of the Feast was the inauguration of a new board of trustees for the church in Nigeria with O. Akin-Ogundeji as chairman.

This has been a rewarding and scintillating Feast for brethren here. But how could a materially impoverished people have had such a good Feast? God fulfilled His promise: "The just shall live by faith." They waited on God, and our Father in heaven fulfilled His promise by using our brethren in the U.S. to assist us. Members were so happy that they freely expressed how grateful they are to God to be able to

hold the Feast this year, given the circumstances prevailing even four days before the Feast. It was like a miracle occurred.

I wish to conclude this report by expressing the heartfelt gratitude of all of us here for the generous financial support provided by our brethren in the U.S. Their generosity paid for all Feast expenses, including the purchase of a color TV set and a VCR for us to watch the sermons. We also appreciate the moral support of the Council of Elders and other pastors. Thank you very much for allowing God to use you so that we could truly have a good and happy Feast.

O. Akin-Ogundeji

Peru Trujillo

Warm greetings from Peru! We celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in Trujillo, which is the third largest city in Peru. Trujillo is located 350 miles north of Lima, the capital. We had very nice weather during the whole eight-day period. All the brethren were staying in the same hotel and services were held in the auditorium of the hotel. We were also provided with a dinner room to seat all the brethren at the same time. All this created a family environment, which was appreciated by all of us.

We had eight days full of activities oriented to all age groups. We had very inspiring sermons dealing with the meaning of the Feast and our Christian living. Activities included an afternoon where

people of all ages gathered together to practice their favorite sport. Another afternoon was dedicated to our children, where they received Feast gifts provided by the ladies of the congregation. We had an evening where everybody gathered together for dancing, and an evening for a lively talent show. It was very nice to see three-year old children participating in this evening. We spent an evening in an activity for married people where we received instruction on how to improve our relationships, which was followed by games oriented to couples, and a dance. We had also an afternoon activity for singles.

A whole afternoon was spent with the teenagers of the congregations. In this afternoon activity we had a question and answer session. Questions were posed regarding the problems they face in living *in* the world without being part *of* it. Manuel Quijano commented how impressed he was to see how the young people are working hard to please God and how attached they are to God's way of life. Mr. Quijano, at the request of the young people, offered to look into the possibility of having a camp for them by the end of this year.

Some people who were attending the Feast for the first time commented on how impressed they were to hear the Word of God in a very coherent way, and appreciated the family oriented environment the Church was providing for them.

We had our highest attendance during the Sabbath service, at which 160 attended.

Two of the highlights of the Feast were, one, a donation we received from our brethren in Germany (this donation consisted of Bibles for our children, and they were very happy and thankful for them), and two, we had three baptisms during the Feast. At the end of the Feast we were all sad to have to say good bye, but determined, with God's help, to see each other next year wherever God wants to place His name.

Juan Cornejo and Efraín Espinoza

Philippines

Davao City, Mindanao

One hundred twelve of the members (including children) on Mindanao island were able to attend a wonderful Feast at

the GSP Training Camp in Toril, Davao City, this year. Even if most in Central Mindanao suffered the effects of drought for about ten months recently; God still blessed them by providing through the home office the needs to be able to keep the Feast this year in a site with better facilities.

Two visiting speakers from the U.S. also gave inspiring and spiritually nourishing messages. Coming with their respective wives, the festival guest speakers this year were, Mr. Jim Servidio (a regional pastor in the U.S.), and Mr. David Evans (a ministerial services employee). Brethren who are not conversant with the English language benefited from the messages through simultaneous translation using FM audio equipment.

Already blessed with good weather throughout; other physical blessings received included donated used clothing, shoes, and other items. Children had an added bonus consisting of Festival coloring books specially produced by brethren from the U.S., plus toys.

Festival activities such as a variety show, family day, and tours were enjoyed and participated in by most. Members were unanimous in declaring this Feast as their best yet!

Edmond D. Macaraeg

Bacolod City, Negros, Occidental

This year, 44 people kept the Feast of Tabernacles in Bacolod City, Philippines. They enjoyed God's blessings and experiences in an abundance of spiritual food through the sermons and sermonettes, which made them stronger in their conviction and faith. It was made even more memorable and meaningful with the presence of two visiting ministers from the U.S., Mr. David Evans and Mr. Jim Servidio, along with their wives, to which the brethren were very grateful and thankful.

Feastgoers were able to enjoy eating lunch together for the whole Feast, which added to their closeness and rejoicing. Activities which were blessed with wonderful weather included youth day at the Pavilion's Children's Paradise where the youth were treated with rides and snacks; family day at Santa Fe Resort; and a Church outing at the beach. Young and old alike attended all activities.

The Festival video titled "A Church on the Move" was very inspiring to the brethren. Truly we can see God is moving His church forward. He blesses His work and His people.

This was indeed a wonderful and

uplifting Feast for all of us and we look forward to another great one next year.

Florante D. Siopan

La Trinidad, Benguet

The assigned Feast site this year for the Manila, Philippine, brethren was the training hall of the National Irrigations Authority (NIA) in La Trinidad, Benguet, some 279 kilometers (174 miles) north of Manila. It was attended by some 52 brethren from Luzon and foreign guests from the United States including Mr. and Mrs. Jim Servidio and Mr. and Mrs. David Evans.

The Feast began with Mr. Servidio giving the opening night message, as well as the main messages for the first and second days. Mrs. Judy Servidio played the keyboard to accompany the hymn singing as well as the special music during their stay in La Trinidad.

In the afternoon of the second day, I drove the Servidios to Manila to catch their flight early next morning to Davao City. I then picked up the Evans, who arrived from the Bacolod site, to drive them to La Trinidad for their second leg of the Feast.

The Evans arrived in La Trinidad in time for the afternoon youth day activity,



Davao City: A group photograph is taken of the brethren meeting in Davao City, Philippines. Guest speaker Jim Servidio and his wife, Judy, are front row center.



La Trinidad: The brethren attending in La Trinidad, Philippines, join guest speaker David Evans (standing left of center in last row), and his wife, Marguerite, for a photograph.

where families attending the Feast enjoyed fun and games with the youth in God's Church.

Mr. Evans gave the main message, accompanied the hymn singing on the keyboard, and sang for the special music during services on the fourth day of the Feast. In the afternoon we had a city tour which brought us to some scenic spots in Baguio City. In the evening we had the family dance night where song and dance numbers were presented for the enjoyment of everyone present.

Friday morning Mr. Evans again gave the main message before leaving for Davao City for the remainder of the Feast.

Indeed, our guest speakers substantially contributed in making this the best Feast yet for us. They have really gone out of their way to serve God's people here in the Philippines and we will always be grateful to all those who have made this possible. Thanks as well to our president, Mr. Leslie McCullough.

Almost everyone attending participated and contributed in making this a joyful Feast for every one. The spirit of unity and cooperation was very evident throughout all the activities. The people were encouraged and inspired to hear again the meaning of these Feast days expounded day after day during the Feast and the Last Great Day! The video, "A Church on the Move," was equally very inspiring and encouraging.

All of us are again looking forward to the Feast of Tabernacles next year!

Rey M. Evasco

South Africa

Uvongo

This Feast was characterized by an overall spirit of appreciation for the opportunity to meet together in an atmosphere of joy, brotherly affection and peace. The eight days went by with hardly a hitch, largely due to the outstanding attitude of cooperation among Feastgoers.

Bob Fahey was our guest speaker, and it was a pleasure to have him and his wife, Evelyne, visit with us again after spending nine years in Southern Africa as regional director from 1969 to 1978.

Sermons focused on the serious times we are living in, and especially the biblical warnings about the sobering events that will still have to occur. There was also strong emphasis on the need for each member to be ready and prepared for our roles of teaching and assisting people once Christ returns. The positive hope and expectation for the future as children of God was a further theme in sermons.

Various activities were scheduled, including a family day filled with fun, fellowship and a typical South African "braai" (barbecue), where the men give the ladies a chance to relax by preparing

the meat. Vegetables, salads and dessert were prepared by a catering company.

Other activities arranged included a senior citizens luncheon at a local bistro attended by about 25 seniors. As in the past, it turned out to be a fun event with much conversation, laughter and a tasty selection of foods.

The young people decided they wanted to experience go-carting. There was the expected challenge to see who could negotiate the circuit in the fastest time. In all, it turned out to be an enjoyable occasion for our young people from various countries and areas throughout Southern Africa to get together.

The Feast of 1998, with a high attendance of 189, was an occasion where Feastgoers certainly did rejoice before the Lord their God!

André van Belkum

Tonga

Nuku'alofa

Greetings from the island Kingdom of Tonga in the South Pacific Ocean. Twenty-two brethren, including three from the United States, celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles.

Daily services were conducted in the Church-owned building on its grounds at Mu'a, about 17 km (11 miles) from the capital, Nuku'alofa.

We were very blessed with inspiring and uplifting sermons each day, by video or audiotape, and live sermonettes. Every message was related to the coming kingdom of God.

The offerings were very encouraging and we had sunny days throughout the eight days of the Feast. We also had the opportunity to enjoy special music contributed by the children. The Feast ended with a farewell barbecue for all after the afternoon service on the Last Great Day.

This Feast will be long remembered by the local brethren and our friends from the United States—Ray and Francis Fabry and Sheri Fogelxon. They commented that, "The Tongan Feast of Tabernacles was like coming home to a loving family. What lovely sisters and brothers in Christ we have. We give thanks to our heavenly Father for them all."

Hamasi Ta'ufu'ou



Tonga: The twenty-two members attending the Feast in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, shown outside the Church's meeting facilities.

United States

Branson, Missouri

About 1,700 United Church of God members rejoiced in a wonderful spiritual Feast of Tabernacles in Branson. The Feast started off on a wet note, with rain and storms all the first day. Satan tried to disrupt services, as lightning caused a power failure in the theater during the afternoon service on the first day. However, in about two minutes the theater's emergency diesel generator kicked in and services continued without a hitch. The rest of the Feast the weather was beautiful.

Members were treated to a superb spiritual Feast as sermons focused on the kingdom of God and what our job will be, as well as what we need to be doing now to prepare for that job. Members were inspired, given hope, and encouraged to get on with the job God has called us to do. The general feeling seemed to be a sense of rededication to our calling.

The youth enjoyed a cook-out, activities, and boating at a lakeside park. Others enjoyed fellowship in a beautiful park beside a clear stream at family day (where we were joined by members of other groups keeping the Feast in Branson). On the Sabbath afternoon many enjoyed fellowship in two area parks with fellow members from United and some

from the Global Church of God, also keeping the Feast in Branson.

Michael Blackwell

Corpus Christi, Texas

This year the 1998 Feast of Tabernacles was held once again in beautiful Corpus Christi. This popular seaside vacation destination on the Gulf of Mexico is known as the Texas Riviera. God richly poured out His blessing on every aspect of the Festival. The sermons were outstanding. At each service the congregation was given the names of the speakers for the next day and were asked to pray that God would inspire their messages. He did answer those prayers! Mr. Richard Pinelli, operation manager for Ministerial Services, remarked how uplifting and inspiring the sermons were.

The special music was indeed special. Knowing that many of our local congregations do not have the opportunity to hear special music on a regular basis, an additional selection of music was performed each day before services began. Our opening night service had an extended musical presentation where young people from each of the Texas congregations presented the flags of the 28 countries where God had chosen to place His name through the United Church of God.

The weather could not have been better—bright sun-shiny skies with temperatures in the mid-to upper 70s most of the

time. Our highest attendance was 835. We thank God and give Him the credit for making this year's Feast of Tabernacles a most rewarding and inspiring Festival.

See you next year in Corpus Christi!

Britton Taylor

Jekyll Island, Georgia

Again this year, almost 1,200 (1,171) of God's people enjoyed a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day in beautiful Jekyll Island, Georgia. Jekyll is a very lovely, peaceful, secluded site—"almost" millennial. It is safer and more crime-free than most sites. It is not highly developed commercially so there is a lot of natural beauty, including the beach on the Atlantic Ocean. Wildlife abounds on the island. The Historic District tour is quite interesting. There is almost no traffic on the island.

The weather this year was ideal. Days were sunny and bright. As we have done for the past several years, we, as a group, donated non-perishable paper goods and other items to two charitable organizations in Brunswick, Georgia.

The Feast in Jekyll Island was first and foremost a deeply enriching spiritual Feast. The messages were all very well prepared and inspiringly presented. At least two of them were directed especially toward the youth. The brethren were asked daily to pray for the speakers and for the success and protection and inspiration of all the brethren around the world. It seemed obvious that they were doing so because God truly blessed us in Jekyll with a very lovely spiritual experience.

Bob Jones

Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii

The Feast went exceptionally well this year in Hawaii, with a high attendance of 464. The messages were timely, poignant, and were filled with good, solid scriptural content. The coming kingdom of God was the focus of almost all the messages. Our continuing need to prepare for the kingdom was stressed also.

We utilized housing facilities, including vacation rental homes, all over the island. This offers a wide range of choices for the members, from hotel rooms to condos to private homes. We were able to

offer lower-priced units and also high end properties—and everything inbetween.

The Kauai War Memorial Convention Hall was very adequate for our needs and so we have our dates reserved for the next seven years in the event it is decided to hold the Feast here again!

Earl Roemer

Louisville, Kentucky

Eight hundred eighty five enjoyed a most memorable Feast in Louisville, Kentucky, this year. With only one day of rain and the remainder of the Feast with sunshine and in the 70s to 80s, it was unusually warm—but it was even warmer inside the hearts of so many as they listened to outstanding spiritual food! The fellowship of all was a real highlight as well.

The Feast got off to a rousing start with the opening message brought to us by Mr. Bill Winner. And the high that began that evening was carried through to the last sermon given by Dr. Don Ward. Many of the comments were along the lines of, “this was the most spiritually uplifting Feast I have ever been to.”

With Louisville boasting the most restaurants per capita than any other city in the U.S., the brethren ate to their hearts content. Many people said they planned to come back next year and bring friends.

Family day was spent at Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom for half the Feastgoers. The weather that day was sunny and almost 80 degrees—perfect for a day out.

The special young adults presentation was also a highlight for some as we look to help teach God’s truth to those who will be, and are becoming, the leaders in the Church. Much discussion ensued after the presentation and on throughout the remainder of the Feast. It was very encouraging to see so many young people look to learn to practice God’s way of life.

With so many areas to volunteer your time, most of those attending seemed to be completely engrossed in what the Feast is all about. It proved to be rewarding for all as we prepare for the return of Jesus Christ to this earth and the establishment of His instruction to all the world.

What a magnificent opportunity we have been given to participate in such a wonderful environment as we had at the

Festival Cruise for 1999

Holland America and the United Church of God are offering a Fall Colors Festival Cruise in 1999. The 10-day cruise will begin September 21 in New York City and end in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. In Montreal, cruisers will be able to fellowship with members keeping the Feast in Mont-Orford, Quebec.

The sailing will be on Holland America’s newest cruise ship—the MS Volendam. The itinerary includes New England’s charming Eastern Seaboard (Newport, Boston and Bar Harbor), Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, the Saguenay Fjord, the St. Lawrence Seaway, Quebec City and Montreal.

The Church will not occupy the entire ship, however, private meeting space will be provided for our church services. A minimum number of members need to make deposits for the cruise to occur.

To order a complete information package please call Travel Gallery toll-free at (800) 858-6999 or e-mail them at info@travelgallery.com

Feast this year. To top this one next year, we really have our work cut out for us!

Mark Winner

Orlando, Florida

Orlando, Florida, proved to be a popular site for the Feast of Tabernacles again this year! Excellent Florida weather, with temperatures in the middle to high eighties, clear to partly cloudy skies, and gentle breezes provided a pleasant Festival setting. The 1,187 brethren (the highest attendance on the opening day), enjoyed the newly refurbished theater in the Tupperware Center, our host for the fourth year.

The daily messages focused our minds on the reality of the kingdom of God, how we are to be preparing for entrance into that kingdom, and how that kingdom will restore all things. Many brethren commented on how inspiring and helpful the messages were.

Orlando is world-famous for its popular attractions. Many brethren, especially those with small children, took advantage of the excellent weather and free time in the afternoons to enjoy the wide variety of entertainment. One of these attractions, Wet N’ Wild water theme park, hosted the family day where 436 brethren enjoyed the activities, complimentary meal and fellowship.

One hundred eighty nine seniors, guests, ministers and wives enjoyed an excellent full-course meal, warm fellowship and music during the seniors luncheon at the Hyatt Hotel. Gary Antion addressed the group, reminding the seniors of their vital role in the church and how they can make positive contributions to their congregations. Everyone appreciated his warmth and personal comments about his family.

More than 100 children, kindergarten through fifth grade, participated in the Festival youth classes provided twice during the Feast. The children were very excited to have something special just for them.

Other activities included a trip to the Kennedy Space Center on the Atlantic coast, a video presentation to the young adults, and a singles’ hospitality hour three times during the Festival. One of the delights of the Feast was the performance by the childrens choir.

God’s blessings were apparent this year in Orlando. The fellowship was warm and relaxed, we were emergency-free, and the weather was delightful.

Don Waterhouse

Poconos, Pennsylvania

Eight hundred fifty five brethren enjoyed a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles

and a foretaste of the World Tomorrow in the beautiful Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. The overall impact of the Feast fostered a unity and joy that inspired and encouraged the brethren. The messages were solid and strengthening.

The brethren enjoyed such activities as youth day, family day, a young adults presentation, a family dinner dance, a seniors brunch, a golf tournament, and the children participated in Festival youth instruction lessons. In addition, 250 participants boarded buses, dined in New Jersey, and then went on to New York City to see the acclaimed performance of Riverdance at the famous Radio City Music Hall. This activity proved to be a Feast highlight for those who attended.

Another unique activity that proved to be very successful was a self-funded hospitality room for "Singles in the Middle"—singles aged 30 to 55. It was very well received and well attended.

It is most rewarding to see the positive impact that the godly lives of the brethren have on the people we come into contact with at the Feast. One hotel

employee said, "These are the best people I have ever seen! You are the best group we have ever had here."

Dave Myers

Redding, California

Feastgoers enjoyed a truly wonderful time this year in Redding. Weather was perfect every day and attitudes supportive and appreciative.

One of the nicest things noticed this year, was the many acts of kindness. Individual congregations, teens, couples, seniors, singles and families, were all observed spending time and money to make the Feast more pleasant for someone else. Over \$1,600 was also donated to the local homeless shelter, again showing the giving attitude of the attendees.

The attendance was 862 and all of the planned functions were well attended. The messages were strong, timely and well received. The music presented by the Festival chorale and the childrens chorale, as well as the soloists, was beautiful and moving. We all felt blessed to have been able to keep such a meaningful Feast.

Jim Chapman

San Diego (Escondido), California

Over 1,215 enjoyed a peaceful, relaxing Feast of Tabernacles in Escondido, California. Services were held at the California Center for the Performing Arts. The concert hall on the Performing Arts Center campus provided an ideal setting for messages which were powerful, informational and encouraging.

The weather was perfect for the entire Feast and well suited for the members to take advantage of the many attractions in the local San Diego area, such as the San Diego Zoo, Sea World, Wild Animal Park and the beaches of San Diego county.

Moving the site from the immediate San Diego metropolitan area to the less congested North County area of Escondido contributed to the peaceful, slower pace.

Many members felt this was the best Feast of Tabernacles the United Church of God has kept since its inception in 1995, and expressed their appre-

Young Adult Feast Presentation a Success

In an ongoing attempt to meet the needs of young adults in the Church, over 500 young singles and married couples at 12 Feast sites in the United States and Canada viewed a 40-minute computerized video presentation and participated in follow-up discussions.

Larry Greider, regional pastor for the St. Louis area, conceived the idea during a teleconference with Doug Horchak, who oversees the Church's Youth Education Committee. In meetings at many of last year's Feast sites, many young adults filled out questionnaires and had similar group discussions. Mr. Greider felt the urgency to continue to address the Church's younger adults—the future gap in Church leadership when the present ministry and older membership mature beyond service. Preparing the present generation for future service in God's church is paramount to the vital need of preaching the gospel and feeding God's flock in the years to come.

In preparation, Mr. Greider coordinated a team of ministers from around the United States, along with members in his local church area, to generate a CD-ROM video production which illuminated four areas: service, education, family, and our relationship with God. Twelve men were then chosen to introduce and chair the meetings at each Feast site. Results from the presentations and the

questionnaire revealed a serious group of young men and women with whom God is no doubt well pleased.

These future leaders showed a great desire for continuing education to enable them to fill Church responsibilities. Topics of great interest were serving, developing leadership qualities, becoming successful in all aspects of life, enhancing church relationships, and spiritual development. The men and women alike wanted to be more involved in local, summer camp, and regional church activities. A majority showed enthusiasm over the plans to have local and regional leadership seminars. There was some concern about whether or not the older members would accept the idea of mentoring young adults. Over 100 of those attending desired to explore the possibility of an international youth corps which would serve at venues both in the United States and abroad.

Almost 100 percent of those polled desired a monitored Internet Web site which would function as a source for uplifting interchange and spiritual education by the Church. They furnished many ideas for a variety of uses for such a young adult Web site.

In a teleconference shortly after the Feast, the team members and presenters gave summaries of their experiences. The main concern voiced by all was how to properly execute a viable program. Organizational and structural ideas are to be formulated by the first week of November in order to quickly employ the many exceptional proposals formed at the young adults presentations.

Greg Sargent

ciation to God for pouring out His blessings on His people.

Steve Buchanan

Snowmass Village, Colorado

The weather was beautiful, the scenery spectacular, and the messages inspiring. This describes the Feast of Tabernacles scene at Snowmass Village, Colorado, for the 384 Church attendees. Some snow fell just before the Feast giving the mountains a beautiful white cover, then the weather got warmer and the sun came out.

Sermons at Snowmass included subjects on the economics of the kingdom of God, the big picture, goals, and our Christian duty. We heard inspiring stories of those who had overcome gigantic obstacles to achieve their goals.

The mountains provided plenty of opportunities for activities like hiking and biking. The special presentation for the young adults was appreciated and the family dance was a popular event. Music for all ages was played and those who attended enjoyed the musical variety. The very young seemed to enjoy it the most.

Choir performances and special music were indeed inspiring and special. There was a spirit of peace and cooperation evident at Snowmass Village. The brethren appreciated the company and opportunity to see Church members from all around the country. Indeed the Feast at Snowmass Village was special and spectacular!!

Bill Jahns



Orlando: Youth classes underway at the Florida Feast site!

Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

Spectacular Fall foliage greeted over 884 attendees from at least 22 states and two Canadian provinces as they attended the Feast of Tabernacles at Wisconsin Dells this year. The Feast could be summarized as peaceful, positive and enriching. The spirit of cooperation was extremely high among the Feastgoers as everyone pitched in to serve in various areas to make it a trouble-free Feast.

Council of Elder's member, Dr. Don Ward, and his wife, Wanda, spent the first half of the Feast at the Dells site. The messages focused on a variety of subjects, including the culture of God and how it relates to being God's ambassadors today, godly communication, the rule of law, what is the kingdom of heaven?, "gather the people—prepare the food—tell the story," and how the Feast pictures hope.

The inspiring messages were complemented by outstanding special music by the Festival choir, festival orchestra, and childrens choir. Many Feastgoers commented on how inspiring and beautiful the special music was at this year's Feast in the Dells. The Festival video, "A Church on the Move," included details about the home office move, youth summer camps, overseas updates, and media efforts.

A family dance was added to the schedule this year with around 300 people of all ages enjoying live music played by their brethren. A teen dance, a senior citizens luncheon, and special family day amusement activities were also organized this year. A special young adults audiovisual presentation was attended by 58 brethren where they heard about opportunities for service and leadership in the Church.

Festival youth instruction was offered to children from level K through the fifth grade. Lessons included the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, songs, Bible stories, skits, and hands-on activities.

We are all very grateful to God for His protection and encouragement during the Feast. God's inspiration was felt in the lives of those who assembled together to observe His Holy days.

Steve Nutzman

Zimbabwe

Harare

Seventeen brethren enjoyed the Feast of Tabernacles together in Harare this year. Further reports were unavailable at press time.

British Isles Readers' Digest Advertisement Bearing Fruit!

The first responses in the British Isles to the Church's *Reader's Digest* advertisement are now coming in for *Good News* magazine subscriptions!

This is the first ad to be run in the area since United's inception, and therefore the first responses that we've had! It's exciting to see the Word of God once again going forth!

John A. Jewell



Local Church Updates...

A Miraculous Bike Ride

The Feast of Tabernacles is a joyous time for the Church membership. For Judy Read of the Toronto congregation, the prospect of spending the Feast of Tabernacles in Italy was shaping up to be an especially exciting event! She only found out in August that she would be able to go, and busily began to make her arrangements. The excitement for her would be traveling abroad with friends and visiting the homeland of some of her ancestors—she is part Italian.

As the days and weeks seemingly slowed to a crawl prior to the Festival, she diligently accumulated and packed all her necessities and clothing. The big day finally came and she was off with a friend, Trish Romeo, for what was to be the time of her life! Judy welcomed the travel experience, but most of all looked forward to sharing the Feast with the Italian brethren and those visitors in attendance at the Italian site.

Sunday before the last Holy day, Judy and some friends (Tim and Elizabeth Rule), decided to go biking in the nearby mountains. The hotel where they stayed provided bicycles for them. They set off mid-afternoon for what was to become a *miraculous bike ride*. Judy, 24, was experienced in bicycling. As they began their journey it became apparent to Elizabeth that her brakes were not functioning as they should. Being a more experienced cyclist, Judy offered to switch bikes for the downward journey. The brakes on her bike were less than they should have been. While on their descent from the mountain they came to a steep decline in the road. Judy could see straight down and was not worried, as she was not aware of a hairpin turn near the bottom of the grade.

As she came closer to the hairpin turn she realized that the turn was going to be too sharp for her to make at the speed the bike was going. The brakes were faulty and would not stop her. She made a decision to propel herself from her bike before continuing and crashing at an even greater speed. She jumped off the bike into what she thought was the side of the road. She blanked out before she landed into an area covered with trees and rough terrain. She rolled down the embankment nearly 75 feet and her head struck a rock, which stopped her. She awoke a few seconds later with her face and head covered with blood. Her friends, Tim and Elizabeth, quickly made their way to her

to see if she was all right. A car “happened” to be in the area and the driver saw the whole thing. The driver also “happened” to have a cell phone and immediately phoned for an ambulance.

To extricate Judy from her position the paramedics had to carry her *down* the 70-degree decline, rather than take her up from where she had left the road. All were amazed she was still alive after such a fall. They immediately took her to a hospital. She was examined for her injuries and received ten stitches to close the cuts on her forehead. When those gathered at the Feast were notified, several of the Italian brethren came to the hospital to comfort her and to translate for her what was being done to treat her injuries. The brethren were asked to pray about her situation. She later requested to be anointed by Mr. Carmelo Anastasi when she returned to services on the Last Great Day.

In reconstructing the accident it was discovered that there was a small path between the trees and the rugged terrain. The narrow path was the area on which Judy miraculously landed saving her from greater injuries. The rock on which she bumped her head turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Banging into the rock finally brought her downward momentum to a halt and saved her from crashing into sheer rock farther down the mountain with possible life-threatening injuries. Several commented she was fortunate to be alive after such an accident!

Judy was asked by the hospital personnel to remain in the Italian hospital for several more days, but opted to sign a release after spending Sunday night there. She wanted to return home on Tuesday with her friend Trish Romero. Despite her pain, she managed to attend the final service on the Last Great Day (Monday afternoon), to the surprise and joy of many of the brethren. She was, and is, very grateful for their prayers and kindness to her in her ordeal.

Judy returned to the Toronto area to the comforting and loving arms of her parents, Pat and Joanne Read, and her brother Tony. She has been examined by her family physician. Though she has some abrasions, bruises and a slight concussion, she is now on the mend and hopes to be back to her normal routine shortly. I spoke with Judy and she said she is grateful to be alive! She is very thankful to God for His protection and for the loving care of her brethren. She will remember her *miraculous bike ride* for a very long time.

Gary E. Antion, Toronto, Ontario, pastor

Gemueticlichkeit

UCG–Milwaukee, Wisconsin, invites all singles to Gemuetlichkeit, Thursday, December 24 through Sunday, December 27, 1998. Activities will include Bible studies, dancing, volleyball, bowling, and lots of fun and fellowship! Also, new this year will be a Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Personality Workshop. This workshop, in addition to being a great ice-breaker, will also help us to understand ourselves and others better. For more information, contact Cathy Folker at cfolker@globaldialog.com or Dona Schaller at pearl@nconnect.net. Or register by sending \$50 (cost for meals and activities) made payable to: Milwaukee UCG-Singles to: Cathy Folker, 247 N. Main #12, Dousman, WI 53118.

Cathy Folker

Singles at Camp Minikani

Singles from Wisconsin and Illinois enjoyed a weekend of fun August 28–30, 1998, at the UCG Singles' Campout at Camp Minikani, just north of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The fun, fellowship, and activities included Bible studies (discussion type), canoeing, hiking, rowing, frisbee, archery (including the first annual women versus men contest!), volleyball, basketball, the climbing wall, spoons, wink, and other games. Singles plan to attend next year at the same time—it will be the last weekend in August, 1999. Mark your calendar!

Cathy Folker



Camp Minikani: The group relaxes after an invigorating game of volleyball, and Mark Mincy tackles the climbing wall.



Learn to Play!

by Mark Graham

Have you ever wished you could serve your congregation better, and have fun at the same time? There's a way that almost anyone in the church of God, man or woman, young or old, can contribute directly to worship services and other church activities, and help their brothers and sisters praise God—learn to play the piano.

I just returned from the Feast of Tabernacles. We had almost 900 people at our site, and it was a splendid eight days. Nevertheless, for the first half of the Feast, I was the only piano player. I love to play, and it really isn't work, but after a few days I came down with a bad cold and I wished that there was someone to fill in for me. (Actually, in a crowd that size, I'm sure someone could have done it, but I didn't know whom to call on.) Thankfully, after a few days, a woman volunteered to help out, and we shared duties for the rest of the Feast.

Because I write hymns, I have received many messages from congregations pleading for hymns recorded on tape or CDs—because there is no pianist in the congregation. There really is a need for this kind of service.

Years ago there seemed to be more hymn-players in the church. I think this is symptomatic of the world in general—when I was a kid there was a piano teacher on every block, and many of my friends took lessons. Today, in our congregation of 140, I know of only one child studying piano. Who is going to play the piano in services for the next-generation church of God? It used to be a kind of stereotypical joke that ministers' wives were expected to be able to play hymns. Today it's no joke—some of the best hymn-players I know are ministers' wives, and their services are needed now more than ever, par-

ticularly since their husbands now take care of multiple congregations.

You don't have to be young to learn to play the piano. Adults are actually some of the most motivated students because they usually have a strong desire to learn. The piano is one of the easiest instruments to play at a basic skill level, and hymns are really not all that difficult.

Anyone with a modest amount of talent and a will to learn could be playing hymns in two years, and probably much quicker than that. Even if you can't play every hymn in the book, most songleaders will be happy to tailor the selections to your abilities. Of course, you can spend a lifetime learning how to make the hymns even better, by improvising or filling in the harmonies with chords and connecting notes, but that is the kind of thing best learned gradually by listening to accomplished players. You will find that church hymn players will gladly let you in on their secrets, both about playing hymns and dealing with songleaders! Although most churches are understandably very selective about who does the preaching, they will usually use any willing pianist who comes along!

I have seen young children accompany hymns, and I have seen at least one woman in her 80s play for services. Besides experiencing the joy of making music for our God, you will also make many friends over the years. If you are confident enough to be able to play at Feast sites, or for choirs or talents shows, you will meet all kinds of talented, giving people. We know that God himself has music in His heavenly home, and it is humbling and thrilling at the same time to be able to serve Him on earth in a way we know He enjoys.

If you have ever wished you could learn to play the piano, or if you have always meant to brush up on long-neglected skills, there has never been a greater need for serving God and his people with music. *UN*

Georges Attacks While God Protects!

Many of you will remember the devastating hurricane that swept through the Caribbean before the Feast of Tabernacles. Here is an update on how our brethren fared in this killer storm.

Kingsley Mather

Bahamas

God has been merciful to the Bahamas. The hurricane passed close to several of the islands in the southeastern Bahamas. The only report of a possible disaster is that four men went on a fishing trip early in the week and they have not been found. A construction worker in Nassau died when a large section of concrete wall collapsed during strong winds on Thursday. Several islands also suffered from falling trees and heavy rains. This caused some electrical power cuts. In Nassau we had heavy rain and strong wind but no major damage.

The brethren in the Bahamas did not experience any problems.

I do not have any information about members in Puerto Rico, Martinique and the other non-English speaking islands. Please thank the brethren for their prayers.

—KM

Dominica

Dominica was completely spared from the hurricane last weekend. Just at the moment it appeared we were going to get

hit hard, part of the hurricane dissipated right over the top of Dominica. I have satellite images that I downloaded from the Internet and it seems to me God intervened on our behalf.

All of the brethren here are fine and feel that the Almighty took a bit of special care of us. Thank you very much for your prayers. Sorry it took me so long to let you know we were all right but we had torn our office completely apart in preparation for the storm. We just got it put back together today since Monday was a Holy day. Thank you again for your prayers. It was obvious God was listening and acting upon our collective petitions.

Rick Daniel

St. Kitts and Nevis

The islands of St. Kitts and Nevis were devastated. Billions of E.C. dollars of damage were done to the infrastructure of the country, homes and businesses. News reports from the region indicate that 85 percent of the homes were damaged. There was also massive damage to the airport tower, loss of the roof of the main hospital, and damage to a new tourist center.

I telephoned our two members—Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Bart. The Barts are retired and in their 70s. Mr. Bart said “Mr. Mather I have never experienced such a vicious storm. The sound that accompanied the wind was piercing. Many of the roofs of our neighbors have been damaged. God protected us. We did not suffer any damage. We have a lot of leaves on the porch but thanks to God our property did not suffer any damage.” They would like to thank the brethren for their prayers during this trying time.

—KM

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 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

Personal Growth...

Conflict: What Is It Good For?

by Linda G. Schreiber

Most of us learned as we grew up to avoid conflict. What if we could change our thinking about conflict? What if we began to see conflict as an opportunity to build relationships.

We interact with other people at various levels ranging from one-time brief encounters to life-long relationships. Conflict is almost always a part of every relationship we have. If we say we do not have conflict in our life we are fooling ourselves. Most of us have been so conditioned to feeling negative about conflict that we don't even like to admit it exists in our lives. What if we learned to look at conflict as an opportunity to grow personally and to understand other people better? What if we made a decision to always try to resolve conflict in our life?

Why is this such an important subject? When the lawyer asked in Matthew 22:36-40: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" [cited from Deuteronomy 6:5]. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" [cited from Leviticus 19:18]. On these two commandments hang all the Law and Prophets."

Jesus said that the second great command was "like" the first. Loving others as much as we love ourselves is what God the Father and Jesus require of us. Do we really contemplate what that means? It means we treat others the way we want to be treated, *no matter what*.

Reconciliation With Our Father

When conflict arises with another person we should seek reconciliation so we can fulfill love to our neighbor as to

ourselves. Webster defines reconciliation as the renewing of friendship; harmonizing of apparently opposed ideas, etc.; expiation. Jesus Christ reconciled us to the Father (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18). Because of sin we were in conflict with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Christ died for our sins making it possible for us to be reconciled to the Father. We have been given the "ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). What does this mean? It means that we are to help others to come into that same relationship with God and Jesus Christ. To serve their need, to have their conflict with God resolved through the sacrifice of Christ and a changed life.

Reconciliation With Our Brother

The ministry of reconciliation not only applies to our relationship with God, but equally to our relationship to other people. Matthew 5:23-24 makes this clear: "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." We need to have any conflict we may have with others resolved before God can accept our offerings.

When we were baptized we were given a clean slate, so to speak, and every time we go to God in prayer to ask for forgiveness He continually keeps that slate clean. We need to keep our slate clean with other people as well. We know that if we do not forgive other's offenses God will not forgive ours (Matthew 6:14-15). To live in reconciliation with God and others requires constant dedication and diligence.

The same scriptural principles that are given for seeking reconciliation with your brother after he has sinned against you can be applied in resolving interpersonal conflicts. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he

shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matthew 18:15 KJV). First of all, the Scripture says "tell him his fault between you and him alone." Often a problem occurs when we engage in something I've learned to call triangulation. What is triangulation? It's when we violate the rule by telling or complaining to a third party about the offense. Now we have brought another person into the equation that most likely doesn't need to be, and probably shouldn't be there. What compels us to do this? Most often we want sympathy regarding the wrong we feel has been done to us. We also want someone to validate our feelings in regard to the situation. The problem with all of this is it doesn't reconcile the conflict.

The Way We Want to Be Treated

Our first thought should be to give the person the benefit of the doubt. Believe that if they had known they would be hurting or offending us they would not have done what they did. Our second thought should be that we don't have all the facts and we can't read someone's intentions. Now we are treating our brother or sister the way we would want to be treated.

Our next thought will probably be about how hard it will be to go to the other person to talk about the situation. We may find it hard because usually we have fears about doing this. We fear we will hurt their feelings. We fear that they will not be understanding of our feelings. We fear they will think we are being overly sensitive, or misjudging them. We fear they will not take ownership for their actions or words. We fear they will escalate the situation by blaming us. All these are real fears because we have all had people react in these ways. Until we become accustomed to dealing with conflict, and dealing with it properly, we will have fear regarding it. It takes courage to go to our brother.

We must overcome our fears about conflict in order to have the courage it

takes to maintain right relationships with other people. We cannot control another person's response. We *can* control how we respond. We can decide ahead of time that no matter what happens we will stay centered and not get off track.

One of the most effective ways to stay on track is to listen to understand. Most of the time while we listen to someone else we are thinking about what we will say in response. What if our whole reason for listening was to understand the other person's viewpoint? What if we did not give our viewpoint until we were certain we understood the other person's feelings, thoughts, and intentions? Have you ever heard someone shouting at another person? The reason people shout is very simple. When someone raises their voice it is because they feel they are not being heard. They feel the other person doesn't understand their viewpoint or isn't interested in their viewpoint. Have you ever felt this way?

Seek to Understand

If we seek first to understand we will find others will be more open to understand our feelings and views. Stephen Covey in his book *The Seven Habits Of Highly Effective People*, states: "Empathic listening gets inside another person's frame of reference. You look out through it, you see the world the way they see the world, you understand their paradigm, you understand how they feel. The essence of empathic listening is not that you agree with someone; it's that you fully, deeply understand that person, emotionally as well as intellectually" (Simon and Shuster Publishers, copyright 1989, Fireside edition 1990, page 240).

Listening must come from a sincere desire to have a better relationship with the other person. It must come from love for our neighbor. We should think more highly of others than ourselves (Philippians 2:3-4). This is difficult to do when we are feeling angry or hurt.

Our best asset in dealing with conflict is to go to God in prayer and ask Him to help us to be reconciled with our brother or sister. If the problem is small, and has just come up, we may want to address it immediately. We can quickly ask God to help us in our own mind. If it is a more

difficult matter, then thinking about it and praying about it at home for a short time may be wise. Sometimes it's good to sort through our own feelings before we try to understand someone else's. God can help us with this.

Step By Step

The first thing we can do is to clarify what we want to accomplish by bringing up the problem. Let the person know you value the relationship you have with them. Tell them, in your own words, that you have something you feel is important for the two of you to discuss. If the person is already aware there is a problem let them know you're concerned because you don't like things that hurt the relationship. Let them know you want to resolve the problem because you don't want anything to come between you.

Next, agree to discuss the situation with them at a good time for you both. If now is not a good time, ask them to help you decide when you will discuss it. Try to find a private place you both feel comfortable with. If complete privacy isn't available go to a place where others won't hear your conversation. If the other person doesn't seem ready to discuss the problem give them some more time and then ask again.

Once you have the time and place decided someone would need to go first. You may begin by using what I have learned to call "I" messages. Use statements that describe how you feel about the situation. You can give a brief description of the behavior that you feel is the problem. Take ownership of your feelings. Realize they are your feelings and not the other person's. Share your feelings honestly and accountably.

Describe how the incident or incidents impacted you. Phrases such as "I feel," or "I sense," or "It seems like" are good things to help you talk about your feelings. Do not put yourself in the position of blaming the other person. People have a tendency to become defensive about conflict. When the other person is feeling defensive it will become much more difficult to communicate. If the other person is defensive, try to use listening and understanding before you go on with your own feelings. When you are

talking about your feelings, acknowledge your part (if appropriate) in helping create the problem.

Next, let the other person communicate their views and feelings about the problem to you. Listen respectfully while they share their feelings and perspective with you. Be sure you understand them by asking questions about how they feel and see the problem. Do not interrupt them or make comments until you are sure you understand. Try to remember that you both have a valid perspective even if you do not agree with the other person. Acknowledge that you appreciate them sharing their point of view.

When we communicate, our feelings are always playing a part no matter how strongly we would like them to go away. Temperance is the trait used in exercising control over our emotions. We are created in the similitude of God. God looks on our heart, which is the seat of all our emotions and our intentions (1 Samuel 16:7). We need to seek to use our emotions as a valid means of communication, but with the kind of temperance Jesus Christ used. Jesus used emotions when He communicated, but they were always appropriate to the situation. Jesus used his emotions wisely.

After you understand each other you will need to ask for what you want. Identify what you will do in the future to try to prevent misunderstandings. Ask what the other person needs or wants to resolve the situation. Share what you need or want to resolve the situation. You will want to remember to think win/win. What is *win/win*? Once again I would like to quote from Stephen Covey's book: "Win/Win is a frame of mind and heart that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions. Win/Win means that agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial, mutually satisfying. With a Win/Win solution, all parties feel good about the decision and feel committed to the action plan. Win/Win sees life as a cooperative, not competitive arena. Most people tend to think in terms of dichotomies: strong or weak, hardball or softball, win or lose. But that kind of thinking is fundamentally flawed. It's based on power and position rather than principle. Win/Win is based on the paradigm that there is plenty for everybody,

that one person's success is not achieved at the expense or exclusion of the success of others" (page 207).

On the Receiving End!

What if you are the person who caused the offense and your brother or sister comes to you? Try to remember to respond the way you would want another person to respond to you. Galatians 6:1-3 says this: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (KJV).

Why is it so difficult for us to go to our brethren and say "I'm deeply sorry," or "I made a mistake," or "I'm so sorry I hurt you"? Why are we so afraid to admit we were wrong or made a mistake? Often we are afraid the person will think less of us or see we aren't perfect. We may not be aware of how much respect others usually have for people who can admit their faults. Others will usually think more of us if we ask for forgiveness. More importantly, what does God think of us? We shouldn't care if someone thinks badly of us if we have done what was right. We want more love, more trust, more respect in *UCGIA*. Reconciling relationships begins with each of us and is the way to establishing these things we long for.

Sometimes our egos get in our way of opening our hearts and minds to other people. In his book, *The People Skills Of Jesus*, William Beausay II has this to say: "Being egoless greases the rails of work and home life. How often has a work project been muddled by the tension of conflicting personalities (egos)? How often has someone been more interested in being right than being successful? How often have silly differences meant the end of a worthwhile effort and the beginning of open hostility? Way too often. On the flip side, how many successful projects have changed the world because many people submitted themselves (lost egos)? You can answer this easily: Think of any outstanding event. Egoless looks very different. You won't see this trait very

often.... Egoless people give other people room to speak and express themselves. They don't think too highly of themselves. They actually try to make themselves servants of other people, even strangers. If they do something good, they don't rejoice over their own personal greatness; they rejoice because something good has been done" (Thomas Nelson Publishers, copyright 1997, pages 47-48). We should all lose our egos!

Seeking Help

The question, "What if my brother doesn't hear me?" may come to mind. If the other person doesn't see there is a problem or isn't interested in resolving the conflict what should we do? How should we handle it? We are faced with several choices. We may simply decide that the offense was small and it's not worth pursuing. We may decide that we value the other person and will choose to forget the offense. In doing this we must realize we must be able to completely forgive the other person and not hold any unresolved anger or feelings towards them. You must own this decision and realize you may be taking a risk. You may be risking having to deal with the same kind of conflict at some point in the future if something else occurs. You need to decide if you are willing to deal with it in the future if necessary or if dealing with it now is best.

If you decide you need to resolve it now what's the rule? Matthew 18:16: "But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.'" What should be the motivation to do this? The motivation is to restore the relationship. The motivation is love for the other person and a desire to have the conflict resolved. How do we decide who should help us with this situation?

First, you may want to let the other person know that if they won't talk privately about the situation then you will need to involve someone else. Let them know you do not want to do this, but you care enough about the relationship to have the courage to ask for help. This may be enough to help them see you are taking the situation seriously and how much it means to you. They may at this

point decide to resolve it privately. If not, ask them if there is someone they feel comfortable including as a facilitator.

A facilitator is someone who helps others communicate with each other in a mutually beneficial way. A facilitator will help keep the conversation on track and aid in the listening process. This should be someone both individuals feel comfortable with and respect. The other person may not be receptive to involving someone else and in rare cases refuse to talk. If this is the case you will need to enlist the aid of someone you know is in a good relationship with both of you, or is a completely impartial person. You should never take someone you know will want to take your side. The person you have the conflict with will most likely see through this tactic and feel as if you are "ganging up on them." You probably won't get very far if this happens. We can't at this time go into all the aspects of facilitation, but if you need a facilitator be very careful whom you choose.

The next step if the facilitation process fails, is a very serious one. This would only involve very serious matters that would effect the whole church. Matthew 18:17 states: "And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church." It isn't my purpose here to try and resolve conflict of this magnitude. My purpose is to help us see we have a responsibility to ourselves and to God to maintain a right relationship with God and other people. My purpose is also to help get us on the right track in regards to how we go about it.

Loving our neighbor goes much deeper than the last six of the Ten Commandments. It involves the kind of love Christ had for us when He died so we could be reconciled to our Father. We have a responsibility to hold ourselves accountable to maintain godly relationships with others. Conflict: What is it good for? Unlike war, it is good for something. *UN*

- *Linda Schreiber attends the Austin, Minnesota, congregation with her husband, Todd, and sons Jonathan (18) and Christopher (16). Mrs. Schreiber works as treatment coordinator in a team-based orthodontic practice dedicated to excelling in the area of communications.*

Local TV Continues Momentum...

“America Tomorrow” Community Television Continues Success

Originating in Portland, Oregon, *America Tomorrow* television achieves remarkable results while airing on only a few of the 1,000 cable television access stations using free or low-cost air times in U.S. communities. With exposure in about one percent of cable-connected households in the United States, *America Tomorrow* has been blessed with 2,400 calls requesting *Good News* subscriptions, plus approximately 4,500 pieces of literature since the first *Good News* was published in November 1995. Thirty-five people have attended services in Olympia and Spokane, Washington; Portland, Oregon; and Idaho Falls, Idaho. There have been two baptisms.

The quality of response is very good, because when people call for advertised literature within the program they have watched a program with already heavy biblical content. They already know what sort of publication or booklet they will receive. Some say they have watched several hours of programming by their first call to our toll-free line. Remarkably, many more scores of people have asked for specific information about how to attend



America Tomorrow: Randy Stiver discusses the issue of Halloween in one of the more recent programs presented on cable access television in the northwestern United States.

church services, although only a small proportion of these have actually attended.

Providential Circumstances

Portland has more advanced facilities for creation and airing of free community television than any other city in the United States. Multnomah Community Television (MCTV), where members of the United Church of God produce *America Tomorrow*, has had annual budgets of \$1,000,000 for many years and offers elaborate studio and technical facilities for producing outstanding television. Since only God can provide the truly “open doors” like He promised the church in Philadelphia (Revelation 3:10), we have had one significant criteria, beside the abundant talent of Church members and ministry: God would have to provide, at minimal cost, airtime, as well the technical facilities with free training and support.

Behold, use of these facilities are free! The three-camera studio and control room have been recently converted to digital format. And to our astonishment, MCTV has just purchased three of the most advanced digital non-linear post production editing systems appropriate for our kind of programming in the world, worth \$250,000. These brand new Sony ES-7 systems are being installed this month and our brethren are now being trained. No other free facilities currently exist in the United States, or the world, with these capabilities. We will be able to continuously produce the most advanced graphics like PBS, CNN, and the major American networks do, which would cost hundreds of dollars per hour if purchased commercially.

But it is apparent that *America*



Tomorrow has developed with providential guidance from the beginning. In my first experience with producing television I filmed and wrote a documentary in 1993, *And Still Climbing*, about autism, to help parents and professionals with lessons we had learned with our son Benjamin. After being aired many times in Portland, it was awarded first place in the American Film Institute’s national award for locally originated documentary television. After I attended the award ceremony with Benjamin in Hollywood, California, in February 1994, I suggested to Victor Kubik, then assistant director of Church Administration, that community television could offer Christ’s ministry an opportunity to preach the gospel. It would be a way for God to reach more people as the cost of commercial television skyrocketed in the early 1990s. Victor Kubik, now chairman of the Communications Committee of the Council of Elders, obtained permission for us to use cable access in Portland Oregon one year before United’s founding.

Our experience under Worldwide Church of God was a preparation to God’s work with *America Tomorrow* now. Although no doctrinal heresy was allowed, as I functioned as executive producer, we then had a vast array of literature to offer and our responses on free cable access channels outperformed the CBS network affiliate airing *The World Tomorrow* in it’s last year. Under United we are only now developing a significant literature base which generates greater responses as our internal television ads develop within *America Tomorrow* programming.

Contemporary Style Presenting New Testament Approach

With a backdrop of the history of the *World Tomorrow* program for 50 years, *America Tomorrow* is a weekly one-hour PBS/CNN *Charlie Rose* and *Crossfire* interview-format television program used to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God in a 1990s style. Each hour has six segments of seven minutes each, with advertising of *The Good News* and booklets between segments. We also have 30-minute programs produced from the one

hour content and format. Typically, programs will have a topical opening and segment montages to heighten and maintain interest.

The outstanding volunteer production staff of 25 church members from the Portland and Olympia congregations work together with the pastoral ministry from various church areas in an approach to challenge the public with Christ's original New Testament gospel. We intentionally use the same current events, biblical doctrine, prophecy, and Christian living approach toward content that Jesus Christ and the apostles used in their ministry.

Taking our cues from Christ's example in using a variety of Christ-trained individuals with the calling and gifts to preach the gospel in the New Testament, I and several ministers, including fellow UCGIA pastors Randy Stiver and Noel Honor, met to develop program content and approach along with brethren in Portland. Since the program's beginning, many pastors in United have appeared as guests of *America Tomorrow* including Bill Bradford, Bill Jacobs, Glen White, Melvin Rhodes, Matthew Fenchel, David

Treybig, Dr. Donald Ward, Robert Dick, Larry Walker and John Cafourek. John Cafourek and Randy Stiver often serve as hosts as well as guests of the program.

Program content is developed, delivered and evaluated by a team of ministers, with an annual plan for programming. We use seasonal emphasis and quick response to major news stories which dominate public awareness to keep the topics regarding the kingdom of God relevant in a way similar to the *Good News* magazine editorial approach. Pastors develop working discussion outlines by e-mail before the programs and deliver them in a spontaneous, but highly planned, discussion delivery formula. Content is now periodically reviewed by the Media Committee of the Council of Elders.

Internet Broadcasting

Recently, computer professional and Portland deacon, Chip Chiprinko, implemented *America Tomorrow* to be seen on the Worldwide Web via the Internet. Our full programming can be viewed anywhere in the world on the Web, in video and audio, by using the URL www.tomorrow-ucg.org

Media Committee Oversight

America Tomorrow has never been asked by the United Church of God home office and the Council of Elders to disband, as has been rumored. It has encouraged the Council to develop collaborative oversight and this has now been achieved through the Media Committee under Dr. Donald Ward's chairmanship and Victor Kubik's co-chairmanship. Program input from the United Council of Elders is facilitated though this means.

The design of the program is based on an "open architecture" format, allowing Christ's ministry with the talents to preach to the public, and ministers from throughout the United States, to participate. The quality standards have always been high within the context of older equipment and newly trained volunteers. Standards are now going to get much higher as the facilities and experience now allow.

As part of God's work, the program has aired in a few cities in the Northwest, Michigan and the Southwest. For a short time it aired in the San Francisco area with

good results. The Media Committee of the Council of Elders has asked *America Tomorrow* and a group of midwest ministers to develop a common "wrap-around" identity for United, which will introduce locally produced programming. This programming can then be disseminated throughout the United States under Media Committee oversight. The "wrap-around" will be presented in the November Council of Elders meeting.

Local Distribution

Local distribution and airing of *America Tomorrow*, like other locally originated programming, anywhere in the United States, is possible through the modest local sponsorship by individuals and congregations within communities with free community television airtime.

Beloit, Wisconsin, is now developing locally originated programming. Although some other areas could begin locally originated programming, it takes a certain level of production talent and ministerial coordination to use television effectively. Many areas do not have facilities or large enough congregations to support production. We ask the brethren to pray that we will be effective in using these open doors Christ has given.

Howard Davis

"CAMP," (Continued from page 32)

ment and employees of Woodmen are looking forward to our return. They are currently overseeing the construction of the new ropes course, which we will be able to enjoy next summer.

Our week at Camp Woodmen was blessed with superb staff workers who are dedicated to serving the youth of God's church. Some traveled hundreds of miles at their own expense to serve. We were honored to host 144 youth between the ages of 9 and 17 at camp. It was abundantly apparent that so many parents are taking to heart the instruction "to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." If these young people are representative of the way God's people are living all over the world, the future of God's church and God's work is secure.

David E. Dobson
camp director

America Tomorrow is operating under the guidelines of the Media Committee, having submitted several copies of its programs to the Committee for review, and is able to continue broadcasting in its local area pending final Council review.

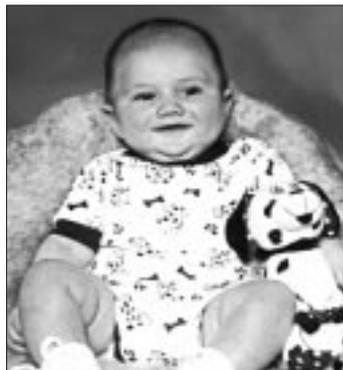
Following is a quote from the Media Policy for the United Church of God, *an International Association*, that was ratified by the Council of Elders on Tuesday April 28, 1998:

6) Any media efforts which are produced in a local area shall not be spread beyond the local area without the approval of the Media Committee....

Those currently involved in media efforts which were not produced by or initiated by the home office shall submit their program plans to the Media Committee no later than August 1, 1998 for review and approval. Such current efforts may continue to operate pending Media Committee approval.

Announcements...

Births



Luke Anthony Barker

Ron and Janet (Preston) Barker of Dayton, Ohio, are happy to announce the birth of their first child, Luke Anthony. Luke was born on April 29, 1998, at 1:51 p.m. He weighed 7 pounds 6½ ounces and was 21½ inches long.

Proud grandparents are Charles and Betty Preston of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Ron and Nancy Barker of Cleveland, Ohio.

Cliff and Susan (Thomas) Demarest of Pasadena, California, are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Derek Michael, born May 31, 1998. He weighed 7 pounds 13 ounces and was 21¼ inches long. Proud grandparents are Don and Edwina Thomas of Mobile, Alabama, and Roy and Pauline Demarest of Orlando, Florida.



Derek Michael Demarest

Steve and Linda Martens of Pasadena, California, are very pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Kimberly Marie, born on Labor Day, September 7, 1998.

Kimberly weighed 8 pounds 5 ounces and was 21 inches long. Big sister Stephanie is thrilled to have a little sister. Proud grandparents are Peggy Blosser of the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, congregation and Don and Beverly Martens of Hutchinson, Minnesota.



Justin Michael Napier

After more than 54 years of marriage, Ron and Norma Hosier of the Columbus, Ohio, congregation, are proud to announce the birth of their first grandchild, Justin M. Napier. He was born March 30, 1998, to their daughter, Rhonda, and her husband, Michael Napier.



Sarah Christine Smith

Tim and Melodie (Powell) Smith of Pasadena, California, and brother Chas, were excited at the arrival of little Sarah Christine Smith on June 20, 1998, at 5:01 a.m. Sarah weighed 6 pounds 10 ounces.

50th Anniversaries

Paul Jr. and Tina Arman, of St. Louis, Missouri, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary August 28, 1998. The St. Louis congregation honored the couple with a cake on the Sabbath before their anniversary. On their special day the family invited friends to rejoice at their gala affair. The festive occasion included a remembrance of their vows in which Greg Sargent officiated.

The Armans have been blessed with a large wonderful family: eight children, Pat, Bill, Paul III, Chris, Edward, Anna (Mathes), Theresa (Sikorski), Tonya (LaPierre); 20 grandchildren; and 9 great-grandchildren. Both Paul and Tina have been long-time members of the church.



Paul and Tina Arman

On October 23, 1998, Sidney and Laura Hitchin celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. After services on October 24 the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation honored the occasion with a cake, card and refreshments. The St. Petersburg congregation also presented

the Hitchins with a beautiful crystal temple jar.



Sidney and Laura Hitchin

Mr. Hitchin was baptized in 1970, and Mrs. Hitchin in 1972. They have one son, Robert, in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area. They also have three daughters, Linda Browning and Deborah Haffner also in the Cincinnati area, and Rebecca Spencer in Wisconsin. They have twelve grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

This year they attended the Feast in Jekyll Island, Georgia, and were able to celebrate and share this special occasion with their daughter Rebecca, their son-in-law, and two of their grandchildren from Wisconsin.

Obituaries

It is with much sympathy that we acknowledge the death of Colin Adair, a long-time minister of Jesus Christ, who died suddenly on Sunday, November 15, 1998, after a short illness.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret, and son, Andrew. Please remember Margaret and Andrew in your prayers. Cards and letters may be sent to: Margaret Adair, c/o Global Church of God, 16935 W. Bernardo Drive, San Diego, CA 92127.

Gail Farrar Hughes, 57, died August 3, 1998, at her home in Farmerville, Louisiana. Funeral services for Mrs. Hughes were conducted Wednesday, August 5, at Farrar Funeral Home Chapel in Farmerville, with Donald Ward officiating. Interment fol-

lowed at Hughes Chapel Cemetery in Beekman, Louisiana.

Survivors include her husband, Ray Hughes; daughters, Terrill Coggins and Johna Kelley; grandchildren, Khaki Coggins, Jordan Spells and Connor Kelley; and brother, Jerry Farrar.

Pallbearers were Jeff Farrar, Daniel Farrar, Tracy Farrar, Jeffery Cooper and Chad Harper. Gail was a member of the Monroe, Louisiana, congregation.

Elizabeth R. Greiner, 86, formerly of Pottsville, Pennsylvania, died Saturday, October 17, 1998. The funeral, held at the Schlitzer-Allen-Pugh Funeral Home in Pottsville, was conducted by Richard Fenstermacher. Interment was at the Schuylkill Memorial Park in Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania.

Elizabeth was born in Annville, Pennsylvania, March 28, 1912. She attended Jonestown, Pennsylvania, schools and graduated from Empire Beauty School. She was the owner of Rembrandt Beauty School in Pottsville. She was a member of the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, congregation of United.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, William D. Gillespie; and her second husband, Robert W. Greiner.

Mrs. Greiner is survived by a son, David Gillespie; three daughters, Verna Donmoyer, Jeanne Miller and Dianne Cooper; a sister, Hilda Sealer; 16 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.



Salvador Mora

Salvador Mora, 46, of Woodland, California, died at home on October 2, 1998, of cancer. Salvador had been a member of the Church for 25 years, most

of that time in Guadalajara, Mexico.

He is survived by his wife, Francis; daughters Elizabeth and Angelica; his mother; four brothers; and one sister.

It was fitting that the October 7 funeral service fell during the Feast of Tabernacles, since Salvador, during his illness, spoke often with great faith and expectation of the coming kingdom of God. Clyde Kilough officiated and Lionel Marquez, a Spanish-speaking member from Hood River, Oregon, provided translation.

Prayer Updates:

Russell Decker

Due to the kind efforts of a member in Vermont, Mr. Russell Decker was able to attend the Feast of Tabernacles this year at Mont-Orford, Quebec. He writes: "I wish to thank all the brethren who have sent me cards and those who have been praying for me. It is really heartwarming to know that people all over the world, and in far away places, people that I will never meet in this life, are concerned about my welfare and include me in their prayers."

Paul Suckling

Berg Family

On behalf of our entire family, Mrs. Berg and I want to thank all of you who offered prayers and sent cards and letters when I became sick with Guillain-Barre Syndrome a year ago, and when our son Geoffrey died of leukemia a few months ago. It has been a hard year for us, but your encouragement and support helped us get through it.

With the exception of my eyes that are still weakened and not yet totally normal, my health has greatly improved and I am able to get around and function almost like my old self.

Growing older sometimes has its trials, but it is made much easier by the heartfelt outpouring of love and concern of God's people. We gratefully thank all of you very much for your efforts to help us during these periods of severe distress and grief.

In sincere appreciation,
Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur A. Berg and family

United Youth Camps...

Camp Woodmen June 28–July 5, 1998

This summer marked the opening of a new regional summer camp in the Southeast—Camp Woodmen! Located about 50 miles northeast of Birmingham, Alabama, this camp has been used for youth camps by the Woodmen of the World insurance organization since 1959. One hundred forty-four campers and forty staff members were in attendance. Campers represented eighteen U.S. states.

Each day began with a Christian living class. Six UCGIA pastors covered a variety of subjects of relevance to the youth of God's church. The morning class was followed by a variety of activities. These included the traditional camp fare of swimming, riflery, archery, softball, initiatives course, sand volleyball, canoeing, basketball, and the 280 foot water slide. Also, during the course of the week, each dorm unit had the opportunity to go on a

nature trail hike where one of the Woodmen personnel gave instruction on various trees and plants of the region.

Though we had hot weather, everyone was thankful for the air-conditioned dorms and main buildings. On one especially hot afternoon, activities were cancelled for one hour so that everyone could come into the shade and enjoy a feast of ice-cold watermelon!

Throughout the week, campers participated in a variety of evening events. These included a get-acquainted mixer dance, scavenger hunt, tug-of-war, open activities, a "fashion-less" show, and Bible charades on Friday evening.

On the weekly Sabbath, morning brunch was served by the boys dorms.

Dorm pictures and fellowship time followed. Sabbath notes which had been prepared during the week were distributed for everyone to enjoy. During afternoon Sabbath services, Ken Martin and Fred Kellers gave messages specifically directed toward the youth.

Saturday evening was our final evening at camp, so we had our closing dance and awards presentation. Since this day also coincided with the U.S. Independence Day holiday, we all went out by the lake and enjoyed a fireworks display at 11:30 p.m., which was put on by Woodmen personnel.

Camp Woodmen is booked for our use in the summer of 1999. The management (See "CAMP," page 29)

United News

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

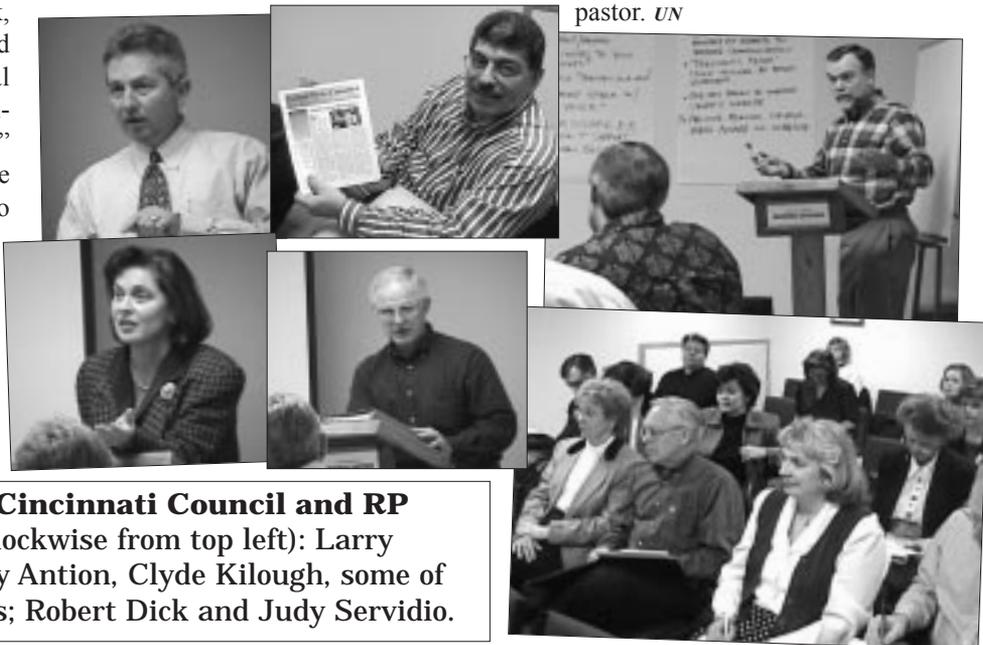
"COUNCIL," (Continued from page 1)
personnel issues (ordinations, credentialings and removals).

Dennis Luker and Victor Kubik, who are both Council members and RPs, commented on the relational value of this meeting. "There is nothing like face-to-face communication," said Mr. Luker. "Good relationships are top priority because everything you do gets done a lot better." Mr. Kubik added, "Many of the RPs were involved in the formation of United and there is a sense of brotherhood and common thought. I felt we put together a product based on a lot of experience that resulted in covering a lot of positive items with the Council in the role of setting policy, and with the regional pas-

tors in implementation and making it work."

Full reports on all days of the

Council and regional pastors meetings are available on our Web site at <http://www.ucg.org> or from your local pastor. *UN*



Snapshot—Cincinnati Council and RP meetings (clockwise from top left): Larry Greider, Gary Antion, Clyde Kilough, some of the attendees; Robert Dick and Judy Servidio.