

What Is Strong Meat?

by Wilbur A. Berg

Over the years people have expressed not only their appreciation, but sometimes even their dissatisfaction for the spiritual diet they have received from the Church. Based on the old King James wording taken from Hebrews 5:12-14, such negative comments often revolved around what was "milk" and what was "strong meat."

Quite frequently, "strong meat" was thought by some to be any new idea that was intriguing and scintillating, especially if it was a fresh interpretation of a difficult and ambiguous area of doctrine or prophecy. Such information and instruction was construed to be strong and spiritually mature, whereas subjects such as Christian living, personal overcoming and developing godly character were often felt to be the "I've heard it before" milk of the Word.

What they did not realize was that this thinking is not in agreement with the explanation of these terms *milk* and *meat* in the book of Hebrews itself. Tragically, such wrong perception has caused some to become so displeased that they disassociated themselves from God's Church, which shows why having right knowledge about these two expressions is important.

Let's see what the Bible really teaches, so we can properly understand what milk is, and what constitutes meat or solid food.

Milk or Meat?

Hebrews 5:12 admonishes the readers: "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food."

What are these "first principles"? The answer is a few sentences later in chapter 6, verses 1 and 2. They are the basic teachings

that every new Christian needs to learn about when he is first called by God. They consist of "the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."

These fundamental "first principles of the oracles of God" are described as the "milk" of God's Word because, like an infant needs its mother's milk to build a healthy physical body, the new follower of God needs to understand the elementary doctrines and practices of the Bible's instruction to develop a sound spiritual mind.

But notice what it says in chapter 5, verse 13: "For everyone who partakes only of milk [the new covenant's basic doctrines] is *unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe*" (emphasis added throughout).

This explains that the new Christian will not grow further as he needs to if he remains interested in just the foundational knowledge that God has revealed to him. He will not become more spiritually mature and skilled unless he begins to focus on the development of character perfection that Jesus spoke about in Matthew 5:20 and 48.

Hebrews continues, "But solid food [meat] belongs to those who are of full age [spiritually mature], that is, those who by reason of use [practice] have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:14).

This is the opposite of what some have believed. Strong spiritual meat or solid food does not consist of provocative and sometimes questionable new ideas, but rather of becoming skilled in righteousness, by continually using one's mind and God's Spirit to discern and choose between right and wrong.

This is what the Church of God has emphasized for years, but it has not always been what some of its affiliates have wanted

to hear or read. It is far easier to get our minds on something intriguing but nonessential, than it is to concentrate on overcoming our spiritual weaknesses, which is necessary for all followers of Christ. "He who *overcomes* shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son" (Revelation 21:7.)

This is why some have wrongly categorized solid spiritual meat and food as milk. They have not been willing to face the importance and ongoing responsibility of becoming righteous, so they try to minimize its significance by turning the biblical explanations upside down.

Seek Maturity

Once the foundation of basic doctrine is laid in our minds, we need to "go on to perfection" (Hebrews 6:1). This is the same goal that Jesus set when He told His disciples that their righteousness needed to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, and that they were to become perfect, just as their Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:20, 48).

Therefore, while basic doctrinal explanation and exposition (milk) is needed for building the Christian's foundation of knowledge and understanding, the instruction and encouragement to overcome personal sin and spiritual weakness (meat) is very necessary, because it stimulates essential spiritual growth and maturity in the individual.

Never disdain or underestimate its importance when the subject of attaining righteousness is presented for listening, viewing or reading. Be thankful that God's Church and ministry have the faithfulness and wisdom to include both milk and solid food in the spiritual diet they feed the brethren and the world. *UN*

Wilbur Berg has served God's people for 42 years—21 years in special services and letter answering, and 21 years pastoring in California, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana.

Q&A: Three Days and Three Nights

Q. Is the explanation of the Hebrew idiom in Jonah 1:17 by The Companion Bible accurate—that it can *only* mean three full days and three full nights, not parts?

A. We do not know of any corroboration of The Companion Bible's claim that this is the only way the phrase can be understood. However, that does not mean that it's incorrect to view the phrase as meaning a literal period of 72 hours, as we will explain.

Most who write on the subject attempt to correlate Jonah 1:17 with a preconceived view of Matthew 12:40. Assuming the Greek to mean parts of three days and nights, they reason backwards from the Gospel account to interpret the Jonah reference. Adding this to the fact that there is evidence that the Hebrew can mean parts of three days and nights, they conclude that is what it means.

Their reasoning is flawed, because it is based on an erroneous interpretation of Matthew 12:40, as most seek to support the theory of a Friday crucifixion and a Sunday resurrection. Most overlook the fact that there were two Sabbaths during that week. The day after the crucifixion was a Sabbath, an annual Holy Day (Mark 15:42), and two days later was the weekly Sabbath (Luke 23:56).

Christ was laid in the tomb in a hurry, as sunset (the beginning of the Holy Day) was approaching. Without the time to purchase, prepare and apply embalming spices, the women rested through the Holy Day—during which time the markets were closed. The next day, they made their purchases and preparations, resting from their labors again on the weekly Sabbath. That's three full days and three full nights.

Early on the first day of the week, before dawn, they went to the tomb to apply the embalming mixture. They discovered that Christ was already resurrected. The only plausible time line for the events of the crucifixion week is that Christ was in the grave three full days and three full nights, from late on a Wednesday until late on a Saturday.

Now, use Christ's promise that He would be in the grave for the same length of time that Jonah was in the belly of the great fish in conjunction with this historical record. What is the correct way to understand "three days and three nights" in both Matthew 12:40 and Jonah 1:17? It means three literal days and three literal nights—72 full hours.

We invite you to read our brochure titled *Holidays or Holy Days—Does it Matter Which Days We Keep?* for a fuller explanation

United News

March 2000

Vol. 6, No. 2

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. © 2000 United Church of God, an *International Association*. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited. Periodicals Postage paid at Milford, Ohio 45150, and at additional mailing offices. Canada Post publications mail agreement number 1487167.

Editor: Peter W. Eddington

Managing editor: Mike Bennett

United Church of God Council of Elders:
Gary Antion, Aaron Dean, Robert Dick (chairman), Roy Holladay, John A. Jewell, Victor Kubik, Dennis Luker, Les McCullough, Burk McNair, Richard Thompson, 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 7ZE, England. Phone: 020-8386-8467 Fax: 01257-453978

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

FIJI: United Church of God, P.O. Box 10-577, Nadi, Fiji
Phone: 723-678

FRENCH-SPEAKING AREAS: Église de Dieu Unifié—France, B.P. 51254, 45002 Orléans Cedex 1, France

GERMANY: Vereinte Kirche Gottes, Postfach 30 15 09, D-53195 Bonn, Germany
Phone: 0228-9454636 Fax: 0228-9454637
E-mail: gutenachrichten@compuserve.com

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

MAURITIUS: *The Good News*, P.O. Box 53, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius

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

NEW ZEALAND: United Church of God, P.O. Box 22, Auckland, 1015, New Zealand. Phone: 0508-463-763

PHILIPPINES: United Church of God, P.O. Box 4774, MCPO, 1287 Makati City, Philippines
Phone: (+63-82) 241-0733; (+63-2) 728-5952

SOUTHERN AFRICA: United Church of God, Southern Africa, P.O. Box 2209, Beacon Bay, East London 5205, South Africa. Phone/Fax: 043 748-1694

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.ueg.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.ueg.ca> accesses the Church's Canadian Web site, <http://www.ueg.org.au> the Australian Web site, <http://www.labonnanotizia.org> the Italian Web site, <http://www.goodnews.org.uk> the British Isles Web site and <http://www.ueg.org.ph> the Philippines Web site.

tion of the gospel accounts of the events surrounding the crucifixion. You can request a free copy through the home office or through our Internet Web site at www.ueg.org, where you can also read it online.

Cecil E. Maramville

ABC: the First 50 Days

Just six months after the Ambassador Bible Center was first announced August 26, 1999, the first session is well underway. Enthusiastic students are predicting that next year's class will be far larger than the 24 students attending this year.

Pioneers

The year started with an orientation Sunday, January 9, 2000, with the theme, "Pioneering for Future Generations." "The members of this initial class, like pioneers, will show the way and blaze the path for others to follow," said ABC coordinator Gary Antion.

Another of the speakers, Don Ward, expressed the importance of three Cs in the lives of the students: conviction, commitment and courage. Dr. Ward stressed how important it is to not only absorb the information, but to be able to share it with others.

Afterward the students enjoyed a barbecued beef dinner fit for pioneers, with decorations including wagon wheels and iron skillets.

Intensive Classes

Classes began the next day at 8:30 a.m. First semester (January to April) classes are

Fundamentals of Theology, Gospels 1, Doctrines 1, General Epistles, the Pentateuch, Introduction to the Bible, Practical Christianity 1, Former Prophets, Epistles of Paul 1, the Writings 1 and Comparative Religion 1.

In addition to the three resident faculty members, Mr. Antion, Ralph Levy and Les McCullough, a number of guest instructors have already taught classes, including Dr. Ward, Dick Thompson, Ken Graham II, Bill Jahns, Larry Walker, Jerold Aust and Jim Franks. "Several other guest instructors will add variety to the instruction throughout the year by adding their



Guest instructor Dick Thompson; right, ABC students volunteer to mail Church literature

expertise and individual style to several of the classes," said Mr. Antion.

Student Leaders and Service

After three weeks of classes, students had the opportunity to give their input on who would serve as student leaders for the class of 2000. Mr. Antion said, "Upon discussion among the three resident faculty members, the following individuals were selected: student body representative, Paul Wasilkoff; social activities committee: Greg and Belinda McCloud, Joe Rivers and Stephanie Syltie; service projects, Hansel and Rachelle New; and ABC music coordination, Ken Shoemaker and Vince Thompson.

"We instructors have all been very pleased with the quality of this first class,"

said Mr. Antion. "Our group of 24 is congenial, dedicated and interested, even at the end of a long day of classes."

Students have already been involved in a variety of service projects, such as volunteering to help with home office mailings to international areas and sermon tape mailings, providing special music, visiting shut-ins and sending cards of encouragement.

Cost Estimate Reduced

Although initial estimates placed the net

cost of the ABC program at about a quarter million dollars, "we now estimate that the net annual cost will be about \$157,000," said



Tom Kirkpatrick, Church treasurer. This includes rent and utilities for the facilities, two faculty members whose primary responsibilities are with ABC, the expenses to bring in guest instructors, office supplies, books and equipment.

Advice for Prospective Students

Several enthusiastic students are predicting space problems and waiting lists for future years, so they advise those interested in applying to do it right away. "It's like having the best speakers you've ever heard for five sermons a day, five days a week," said Vince Thompson, from Floresville, Texas. "Actually it's better than that, since it's interactive."

"Anybody who can should go for it!" said Myrna Miller, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. *UN*

learn the joys of giving, and to prepare for further service opportunities. International travel is one of the best educational experience one can have, and especially useful in one's younger years.

"The United Youth Corps seeks to make all these opportunities available to qualified young adults. It's not for everyone, but if you're committed to the values mentioned above, participating in the Youth Corps can be one of the most memorable and formative experiences of your whole life.

Comments From ABC Students

The world population is about six billion people. I was thinking about that and then I thought what a wonderful blessing it is to be one of only 24 people who at this time are able to attend what I think are the most important classes being taught in this world today. What an awesome privilege.

*Ken O'Bryan,
from Cincinnati, Ohio*

In the book of Acts 8:26-40 is the story of a man from Ethiopia who needed help to understand what he was reading from the Word of God.

I came to ABC [because] I also need help to learn and understand more about what God's Word teaches! Knowledge is mentioned almost 200 times in the Bible, but knowledge alone is not enough. Proverbs mentions three very important things over and over again: knowledge, understanding and wisdom.... Knowledge is something you know! Understanding is to grasp the meaning—to know "why" it is so. Wisdom is the ability to make use of what we know and understand—to put it into practice—to benefit from it.

I need help just like the man from Ethiopia did. God provided help for him in the form of Philip. His teacher was Philip.

God makes it possible for me to get help at ABC.... Do you think that the Ethiopian man kept all that he had learned for himself when he came back to his own country? I think not!

To have the truth that leads to eternal life taught to me is like a precious pearl of great value—it is worth all that I have!

*Leonard Nymeyer
from Hamilton, Ontario*

While I don't recommend being away from your family for two to three weeks at a time, as I have chosen to be, I do recommend that anyone who loves God's truth should seriously consider attending ABC at some point in your future! It is worth whatever sacrifice you must make, and I don't say this lightly.... The rewards of the ABC experience are definitely worth the cost!

*Vincent M. Thompson
from Floresville, Texas*

"PROJECTS," (Continued from page 1)

Jordan and Israel—a six-week project in June and July, including working in a summer camp for mentally challenged young people in Amman, Jordan, and participation in a three-week archeological excavation in Ashkelon, Israel.

Chile—a two-week program in December working as staff in a Church summer camp in Chile.

A letter from the Youth Education Committee explains the motivation behind the United Youth Corps:

"In today's increasingly selfish world it is especially striking to see young people with the maturity and commitment to live this way of 'give' rather than 'get.' Such an example makes an important impact on those who observe them in action. At the same time, young adults have the energy and freedom from certain family responsibilities that can allow them to serve in ways that may not be possible later in life.

"Participating in service projects is an excellent way to form character, to

"During the past 30 years, young people in the Church of God have established an excellent track record of service in different regions and nations. The United Youth Corps seeks to continue in this fine tradition."

More details on the goals of the United Youth Corps, fact sheets on each project and application forms will be made available soon through local pastors in the United States and Canada, the UCG Web site at www.ucg.org and directly from the home office in Cincinnati. *UN*

International News...

Southern Africa Council Focuses Efforts for 2000

February 13, the Council of the United Church of God-Southern Africa met in Johannesburg. Discussions covered many subjects, including the development of activities in Zambia, Malawi, Mauritius and Zimbabwe. Chairman André van Belkum has been asked to visit several groups in Malawi who wish to know more about United Church of God. He will combine this with a trip to Zambia during the year ahead.

A growing trend has been that some of the countries served by the ministry in Southern Africa are paying for the tickets needed. This enables more of the funds received in South Africa to be used on additional projects. Members in Mauritius will be funding the visit of a minister later this year. It was resolved to send Peter Hawkins, who served as non-resident pastor in Mauritius 16 years ago. The Zambian brethren will also be able to cover some of André van Belkum's travel later this year.

The Council of UCG-SA made several important decisions this session. Neil Becker, treasurer for the Church here, submitted a budget covering March 2000 to February 2001. It generated healthy discussion and plans for development within the region.

A fund has been established to assist in covering a portion of the travel costs to Ambassador Bible Center for deserving applicants. This was started at the suggestion of a member, Rob Scott, and will be funded by donations specifically earmarked for it and an allocation from the Church budget.

Time was devoted to how we can encourage young people in God's way. Council members Roy Demont and Jorge de Campos were requested to investigate what can be done. An allocation from the budget was made to finance local youth activities, assist one or two campers to travel to the U.S. youth camps and present awards for achievement in sports, academics and service.

Peter Hawkins

Southern Africa Aiming for 4,000 GNs

In the six months ending January 31, the Church office in East London distributed over 5,000 copies of *The Good News*.

Bulk shipments of member copies are couriered to the main church areas, Durban, Johannesburg, East London and Cape Town. A further 1,000 copies are mailed to subscribers, and 500 are distributed by members for the Waiting Room Program (WRP). The current circulation is 1,800.

The number of mailed copies has risen from 325 to 1,000 GNs per issue in one year without any mass media advertising.

Currently, the GN is offered to the South African public through brochure displays at selected outlets, and through members plac-

The financial picture is now clear enough to aim at a *Good News* circulation of 4,000 by the end of February 2001. Currently the circulation level of 1,800 is becoming difficult to manage from Neil Becker's home. So the 1,100 mailed copies will be handled by a mailing company, which will also cut down on the postage expense by using bulk postage costs.

Robert Kading mentioned that the 1998/99 draft audit report has been submitted by our auditors for comment. They are satisfied with the position of our books of accounts. Robert and his wife Brigita were recognized at the meeting for their diligent effort in handling most of the office work during the last two years, prior to the Church office moving to East London. Plans are being made to move the handling of financial books to Neil Becker shortly.

Opportunities to develop the GN mailing list will be limited to low-cost projects, like the Waiting Room Program and Card Holder Program. Members around the country are effective in the distribution and these programs have been bringing good results.

We will also begin using Mr. McCullough's regular coworker letters, along with letters to those requesting literature for the first time, renewal letters and reminders to those who have forgotten to renew. The *Bible Study Course* is seen as an important tool to advertise, too.

The use of radio may be an option. Some medium wave "talk" stations are listened to by a growing number of people. We are investigating what might be available, possibly using a South African voice to introduce the current *World Tomorrow* program produced in the British Isles.

We will also research the use of banner advertising and search engines on the Internet in South Africa.

Peter Hawkins

ing copies in waiting/reading/reception rooms of various institutions. This is done at minimal cost, yet requests are being received via fax, telephone, mail and the Web site at a rate of over 100 per month.

We recently set a circulation goal of 4,000 GN copies per issue by the end of February 2001, more than double the current number. This is feasible since 100 to 150 new readers are being added to the mailing list each month by the existing programs, and we have not yet felt the full impact of requests from the reply cards in the WRP magazines.

Occasional requests for the GN are still being received as a result of an advertisement in the *Reader's Digest* in 1997!

Zambian Brethren Face Challenges

Our brethren who live in the outlying regions of Zambia experience some unique challenges as they endeavor to obey God and stick with the truth. For example, the mystic superstitions that prevail among the people where they live. This is a constant problem they have to contend with.

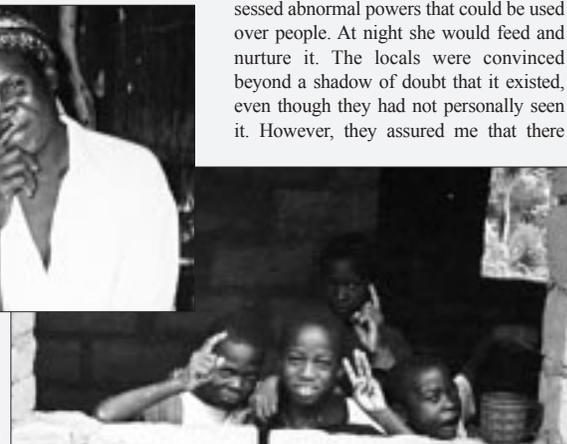
Fortunately our members understand the truth and plan of God, and scriptures such as 1 John 4:4 are a great comfort to them. However, that does not mean that they do not have to deal with the pressure family

the area who blame them if the crop is not good. Sometimes there are reprisals from angry neighbors.

Then there is the aspect of paying to counteract a curse placed on you by someone you may have antagonized. This is done through a medium, or avenging spirit, called a *ngozi*. On my last visit I was told of an old lady who had a mysterious snake that lived in a drain near her home. It was described as a dragon-like snake that she had cultivated from a little worm, and possessed abnormal powers that could be used over people. At night she would feed and nurture it. The locals were convinced beyond a shadow of doubt that it existed, even though they had not personally seen it. However, they assured me that there



Scenes from Zambia: above, Mary Maninga; right, some of the children in the Church in Zambia



members, friends and neighbors exert on them. For example, ancestor worship is very much a part of the tradition and way of life of their community, and they are expected to participate in certain ceremonies that are contrary to what they know is in the Bible, and fall in the realm of witchcraft (called *juju*). These ceremonies deal with the so-called spirits of their ancestors.

When a person dies, an animal (usually an ox) is slaughtered, and family and friends are invited to the post-funeral feast. However, in order to appease the spirit of the departed, the ox is stampeded and then followed by young men with spears. It is slowly speared to death as it runs along. The longer it takes to die, the more the spirit of the dead person is mollified and pacified.

Most of our members are farmers. They are expected to perform certain rituals to appease the spirits before they plant their lands. A trough is dug and filled with various objects obtained from the local witch doctor. Our members refuse to follow this custom, which incurs the wrath of other farmers in

were others who had seen it at night. I offered to put my hand into the hole, but then changed my mind as that may be tempting more than just fate!

So please keep our members in mind who live in different areas of the world, and who face matters and concerns that we do not ourselves encounter. The truth of God is a constant help and encouragement to our people there, and our literature is made available to Zambians.

Following is a letter received on January 5 from Zambia:

"I would like to thank you very much for the wonderful magazine entitled *The Good News* of November/December 1999, with the subject title of 'What Is the Millennium?' The articles are very informative, educational and spiritually nourishing. Kindly send me two recommended readings. I would like to have *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy* and *Managing Your Finances*. Waiting to hear from you soon."

André van Belkum

More recently a sample copy of the GN has been mailed with a covering letter to doctors/dentists for placement in their reception areas. In less than one month, 5 percent of the 340 letters have requested regular copies. This batch is being used to test whether to continue offering it to the rest of the 4,000 we have available. In a month we should

know a more accurate cost per response. Where have the requests for the GN come from in six months? Brochure display—243; "Send to a Friend"—30; GN response card—111; letter/fax (mostly from WRP)—358; Web site—20; WRP—137; booklets mailed out upon request—347.

Peter Hawkins

Pastor Keeps in Touch With Caribbean

January was a hectic month as I tried to make contact with brethren in the Caribbean region. I visited Freeport, Bahamas, starting January 7. We had several guests at services and held our third Family Club meeting. Kevera Tumquest hosted a lively topics session, with participation from all ages.

January 12 I traveled to Jamaica. I met the sales manager at Renaissance Jamaica Grand Resort in Ocho Rios. The Church used this property for the Feast from the early 1980s until recently. We will hold the Feast of Tabernacles at this establishment this year.

I flew to Kingston, Jamaica, Thursday afternoon. Friday I met with Robert Macmillan of Macmillan Advertising

Agency. This company represented the Church during Herbert W. Armstrong's life. I have known Mr. Macmillan since the 1970s and he helped us get started in advertising *The Good News* in the Caribbean. We settled on advertising to use region wide. The ad that we are using is displayed to the right. The first batch of ads was to begin in Jamaica in the newspaper known as *Observer*. They had a special in the month of January: pay for two ads and you get five. We have received about 80 responses so far.

We had an attendance of 20 for services. After a potluck, we had a discussion on the state of the Church in Jamaica and what we need to do—our plans for 2000 and beyond.

On January 17 I flew to Trinidad. The pilot had to change altitudes twice because of high winds in the upper atmosphere.

I had sent letters to a number of *Good News* subscribers, so I spent Tuesday waiting to see if any one would turn up. Mail is slow so no one contacted me. (Next time I will send the letters even earlier.)

Wednesday, January 19, I visited two newspapers and settled on *Newsday*. The ad ran January 23 and January 25. I was quite surprised on February 4 when I found 74 responses to the ad. We have now received 195, bringing our cost per response from the Trinidad ads to \$1.44.

Thursday, I took a cab for a 90-minute drive to meet our one member in Trinidad. I found the cab driver was a very interesting person. We discussed a number of subjects. I ended up giving him a copy of *The Good News* and arranging for him to come back at 4:45 a.m. to take me to the airport.

At the airport he said: "Mr. Mather, I think God brought us together." He wants to be added to the *GN* list and asked that we get together on my next visit.

Then I flew to Dominica. After services January 22 we had a meeting to discuss the Work and Church in Dominica. In St. Kitts on Sunday, January 23, I had several meetings with Mr. and Mrs. Bart.

Kingsley Mather

Elder Visits Brethren in Nigeria

This past December, our oil field consulting business took me to Lagos, Nigeria, to teach a four-day school for a Nigerian company.

Before the trip, I contacted Joel Meeker to find out about the congregation and to obtain travel tips from him. He informed me that the Lagos congregation numbers about 30 and that they would appreciate my speaking to them on the Sabbath.

Mr. Meeker explained that the brethren in Lagos have been experiencing extreme economic and job difficulties due to the poor state of the Nigerian economy. When asked what we could contribute, Mr. Meeker suggested notepads, pencils, paper, etc. Members in Tulsa, Oklahoma, contributed enough notepads, paper, pencils, pens, etc. to fill a good-sized cardboard box, which made the trip safely as luggage. Members in Tulsa and Joplin, Missouri, also contributed to a special fund which I carried with me to give to the brethren in Lagos.

Mr. Meeker also suggested I contact O. Akin-Ogundeji, one of the leaders of the Lagos congregation, to arrange meeting with them on the Sabbath. Dr. Akin-Ogundeji responded by fax asking me to take the sermonette time, in addition to the sermon, to tell the Lagos brethren about the congregations we serve and to introduce myself.

In addition, the inaugural meeting of the Lagos speaking club would be held on Sunday, December 19th, and would I please serve as guest director? It was to be a busy and rewarding weekend.

A business associate and I arrived safely in Lagos December 16. The trip from the airport to the Sheraton was a scary introduction to the aggressive driving habits of the citizens of Lagos.



On Friday evening, Dr. Akin-Ogundeji came by to visit and to make arrangements for us to go to Sabbath services. He came to the Sheraton on Sabbath morning, December 18 and arranged for a taxi to take us to services. The 29 in attendance completely filled the classroom where services were held.

The members have been encouraged by the recent baptisms and the new people attending. On this particular Sabbath, two new people attended for the first time.

The brethren in Lagos were very warm and receptive. Their faithfulness through trials and extreme economic hardships is a humbling example for those of us from more affluent areas of the world. They sang very enthusiastically and were very responsive during services.

On Sunday, it was a thrill for me to serve as guest director for their first club meeting and to hear "This Is My Life" speeches about how these men came into God's truth. How inspiring it was to hear how God had specially worked with and called each one to repentance, conversion and membership in His Church.

Bill Cagle, elder in Tulsa, Oklahoma

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH?

This is one of the great questions of life. What happens when we die? Is death the end of human existence or consciousness, or do we continue on in some other place or state of being? Do we go to a place of everlasting reward or eternal torment? Are we destined to be reincarnated, coming to life again?

When can we go for meaningful, satisfactory answers?

"What Happens After Death?" will help you understand the incredible truth about the great mystery.

Read any Good News Lately?

Have you had about all the bad news you can take? Maybe you could use some good news!

The Good News is a FREE, full-color, bi-monthly magazine that brings you the best news you can hear—and always from a biblical perspective.

It's already FREE and there's no charge or obligation.

Yes! Please send me the "What Happens After Death" booklet also FREE

Yes! Please send me the "Good News" magazine - at no charge!

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name _____

P.O. Box _____

Address _____

To order your FREE subscription to the Good News magazine, and "What Happens After Death" booklet, simply fill in the above form, cut it out and mail it to:

United Church of God - P.O. Box 391, Bridgetown, Barbados
Or visit our website site at <http://www.ucg.org>

GN List Up 128 Percent in Canada

On January 1, 1999, the Canadian *Good News* subscriber list amounted to 3,427 names, but by January 1, 2000, it had grown to 7,832. That's a whopping increase of 128.5 percent! We can be very inspired by that significant leap forward.

Altogether, with the Waiting Room Program copies, we had about 13,000—130 boxes—of the January/February issue of *The Good News* to distribute this year.

There's a lot of work involved in sending out nearly 13,000 magazines, so Saturday night, February 5, 16 people from the Toronto, Ontario, congregation (including some of the young people) participated in a work party. The work involved stuffing, sealing and bundling the copies for waiting rooms, thus readying them for shipment. In a little over two hours, 30 containers were completed and an additional 18 containers that had been started earlier were finished.

Canadian office staff member Wayne Lue did an admirable job by himself, but without the help of the members of the Toronto congregation, it would have taken him an additional two or three days to complete the task. The savings in postage for the Waiting Room Program editions amounted to about \$3,000 Canadian. To send these magazines by regular letter mail would have cost over \$4,500.

An additional 11 containers stuffed with over 1,000 *Good News* magazines for new

waiting rooms across Canada were mailed February 17.

We placed the following order for the March/April issue: 7,000 for the Waiting Room Program, 5,100 non-expanded editions and 1,400 expanded editions, for a grand total of 13,500. This is up 500 from the previous issue.

19 Percent Response to Letter

Requests for the booklet *Understanding Bible Prophecy* continue to come in. To date we've received a most encouraging 19 percent response to the January 3 subscriber letter written by Gary Antion offering this booklet. We are also seeing an increase in the number of people requesting the *Bible Study Course*.

Canadian Staff Visits U.S.

In January all three members of the Canadian office staff were missing for a few days. Ed Van Pelt, Kevin Ford and Wayne Lue had not been to the home office in Cincinnati, so it was an opportune time for them to visit their counterparts south of the border. The Antion residence functioned as their motel—their hospitality is hard to beat!

The Canadian staff toured the facility and ABC, and were able to spend time with key personnel discussing various aspects of what it takes to keep a Church office running smoothly and economically.

Anthony Wasilkoff



At services in Estonia, 10 people sang in three languages. Right, Henrikas Klovas with Victor Kubik

Visit Encourages Estonian Brethren

For the last three years I've been going to Estonia to visit with our brethren in either January or February. I feel it's important to come at this time because it's the coldest, darkest and most depressing time of the year, when the people need a lift the most. This year I spent five days with our friends and brethren. We held Sabbath services, a Sunday Bible study, plenty of personal time that included counseling and socializing with most of the brethren and prospective members. Also, I was able to finalize arrangements for the Feast of Tabernacles.

It was an ordeal getting to Estonia this time. My flight from Atlanta to Vienna, Austria, arrived late and I missed my flight that goes only four times a week to Tallinn. So, I was rerouted from Vienna to Vilnius, Lithuania, and then on to Tallinn. To get to my destination I needed to take four flights on four different airlines passing through three countries. When I got to Tallinn, I took a taxi to the bus station and caught the 2½-hour bus ride to Tartu arriving at 11:15 p.m. From the bus station I walked to the hotel.

While in Vilnius an airline official told me, "Your luggage is lost!"

"Great," I thought. But we later discovered that it was sent through Copenhagen, Denmark, and it finally got to me the next day. I was a bit concerned because I had packed a laptop computer to deliver to an individual in Tallinn. Also, I had two sets of Estonian to English tapes and lots of CDs from a member in Florida to take to the brethren. But, everything eventually got to where it needed to get to.

On Friday Henrikas Klovas arrived from Lithuania. He had traveled to Estonia on three trains and was visibly exhausted. He had left the night before at 11:30 p.m., arrived in Riga, Latvia, at about 5:30 a.m., then waited four hours for the train to Valga, Estonia. There he changed trains again and finally arrived in Tartu at 3:30 p.m.

On the Sabbath, January 15, 10 of us gathered in the kitchen of Luule Lepik's apartment. Henrikas Klovas arranged for the group to sing a hymn at the start and end of services by printing the hymns out and bringing cassette tapes for accompaniment. We all

sang simultaneously and enthusiastically in three languages: Estonian, Russian and English. The language barrier is always a hindrance, but not while singing!

Then we gave our messages. Henrikas' was about the contrast between good news and bad news, and he used the story of the Israelite spies going into the Promised Land. In my opening prayer I had thanked God for Henrikas' sacrifice. He corrected me afterwards saying that this is not sacrifice, but a joy to be able to serve this way.

I spoke about the need to make a renewed commitment to Christ and the Church and to build a foundation on a rock and bear fruit as Christians. I passed out a survey for the brethren to fill out about their expectations for the future of the Church. I was pleased with the responses, which showed an understanding for our mission.

On Sunday we had a meeting at Koidu Üprus's apartment. We had lots more group discussion. My subject was on building a strong foundation. I gave a study on prayer.

During the trip I made arrangements for the Feast. A new convention center opened last November. Both the hotel where we will stay and the convention center are owned by the same person, Verni Loodmaa. I visited with him a few times and was able to arrange for a favorable rate for the meeting room for the Feast. The room looks out over the Emajõe and the old city of Tartu.

I spent Monday afternoon at the Emajõe Kool, the only handicapped children's school in Estonia. At the Feast last year we had some of the children come on a nature outing. Three of our ladies work at the school.

Henrikas Klovas now meets with a small group in Lithuania. We discussed ways of promoting our literature through his advertising contacts. We have made good progress in literature translation with Margit Kaljas and her mother translating 75 pages of literature since the Feast into Estonian.

Though we can't always be there, we try to stay in touch. Every Saturday (6:30 a.m. Eastern, 1:30 p.m. in Estonia) we hold a telephone Bible study with the Estonians. I alternate with elder John Lambert in New York.

Victor Kubik

Work Moves Forward in British Isles

The Church in the British Isles has now been registered by the Charity Commission, a U.K. government agency. The application for registration, which can often take a considerable time, went through in around five weeks with only two minor alterations requested to our draft Constitution. They are allowing us to make these alterations at our next Annual General Meeting at the time of the Feast, and did not delay approval of registration.

The process for registration in the U.K. is very demanding and subject to an intense scrutiny. The tax advantages are very valuable and registration gives the organization credibility and status. As a result, as the Commission told us, they have many thousands of dubious applicants each year. We are now proceeding to register with the Inland Revenue (the tax authorities) as a registered charity and thereby claim the tax advantages.

The Church itself remains an unincorporated association. But we have now registered the name World Tomorrow Media with the Registrar of Companies. This secures the name and also gives us a corporate arm with which to do business when appropriate.

Radio Luxembourg

The CEO of the company handling the English service of Radio Luxembourg has told us that everything is still on track, that the funding is now almost all in place and that final approval for the launch of the service should be given by the Luxembourg government at the beginning of March.

For our part we have already recorded the broadcast we want to begin with and have selected the first 20 programs from our library. So if our Eternal Father approves then hopefully it won't be too long before *The World Tomorrow* is back on 208 meters.

"MEDIA," (Continued from page 1)

Jesus Christ and the good news of the promise of eternal life for the world, while preaching a message of repentance and warning—all with the authority and gravity of scriptural backing.

- Make disciples in as many nations as possible.
 - Provide nourishment and teaching to the flock God provides.
 - Encourage the initiative and involvement of Church members in the mission of UCGA.
 - Follow societal media advertising patterns that produce results, without excessive cost.
 - Improve the effectiveness of all proclamation efforts on a regular basis.
 - Assess the effectiveness of all proclamation efforts on a regular basis.
 - Give special thought and attention to, and encourage participation by, young married and Generation X demographics.
- Radio proclamation efforts will be stepped up. President Les McCullough

Manx Radio, where we are broadcasting on the AM channel, has now offered to carry the broadcast on the FM channel as well for only 15 pounds extra per broadcast (about \$25) We didn't say no!

Subscriber Development

We had an excellent 20 percent (so far) response to our semiannual letter to the general list, most of whom requested the *Bible Study Course*. We have generated test papers to go with each lesson with test cards to



Isle of Man: Joy Taylor, Paul Spenser, Steven Green and David Payne

return—the British people do enjoy quizzes. So we felt this would help to make the course a bit more effective in the U.K.

Isle of Man

Finally, the Church in the Isle of Man has just had its Annual General Meeting as a charity registered in the Isle of Man. Paul Spenser was reappointed chairman of the council, Steven Green was reappointed treasurer and David Payne was appointed as secretary in succession to Joy Taylor. Joy has done a great job over the past several years and we appreciate that very much indeed.

The Church has placed 12 quarter-page ads for *The Good News* and booklets in a local free paper, which has resulted in the mailing list for the Isle of Man growing to 50.

John A. Jewell

outlined plans for a centrally produced weekly broadcast radio program. The Council agreed with Mr. McCullough's suggestion of one individual to prepare a series of 13 weekly radio broadcasts, to be ready by August 2000. The Church will spot-buy radio time and test this avenue for public proclamation.

The proposed budget for the next fiscal year includes television advertising of the *Good News* magazine, as has been done for the past two years. Commercials may well be our most effective use of television airtime for the near future.

The Comprehensive Media Strategy outlines expanding ministerial and member involvement in public lectures and congregation open house meetings and a formal plan should be ready by September 2000.

By December, we plan to gather congregational and ministerial input on specific ways and methods the Church membership can be more effective in preaching the gospel in their areas. *UN*

Australian Campers Learn God's Way

The Australian Summer Camp was held December 20 to 27, 1999, in a beautiful setting in the little town of Bundeena. The site is inside a national park area overlooking Port Hacking, south of Sydney. We had 56 young people attend from throughout Australia, with one camper coming from New Zealand and another from the United States.



Australian campers sang at a retirement village among other activities

The majority of campers arrived on Monday morning and the activities got under way almost immediately. The weather was ideal for the camp, with not too many forgetting the constant admonition to slap on the sunscreen. Our day started with a Bible study with the campers divided into three age groups: 11 to 14; 15 to 17; and 18 to 25. Elders Barry Williams, Don Goodger and Bruce Dean took these studies at camp while Ken Murray conducted biblical discussions during the

overnight hikes for the older campers. The Bible study topics included: Who is God?; respect and honor your parents; relationships;

what is living faith?; what is the Church?; what do you do when no one is watching?; and the give way of life versus the get way of life.

A group of talented young people went to a senior citizens' retirement village and sang songs, played the piano and per-



formed for about 30 residents with three over 100 years old. The young people then moved around and spoke to the older residents and shared a cup of tea with them.

This year we had a speaking club for the older campers. We had topics, speeches and finished with a speech banquet. The outcome was remarkable with four excellent speeches.

The duty of planning and providing food for the hungry hordes was ably handled by Sue Williams and Dawn Goodger, assisted in the kitchen by Neil Latham and Ray Urquhart. Who ever heard of a camp where the menu included roast lamb and apricot chicken?

The atmosphere was one of cooperation and helpfulness to all. It became apparent that one of the campers' main objectives was their spiritual development and to have the opportunity to learn the way of life offered to us by God.

Barry Williams and Bruce Dean

British Summer Camp Set for August 18 to 27

This year's British Isles Summer Camp for our young people and their families will be held in a designated area of Outstanding Natural Beauty just outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park from Friday, August 18, until Sunday, August 27, 2000. Campers will stay in a Tourist Board-inspected self-catering bunkhouse overlooking a reservoir, in the moorland countryside between the Yorkshire towns of Skipton and Harrogate.

The bunkhouse will sleep 30 people in nine bedrooms with bunk beds. The kitchen is fully equipped and the dining room will seat 30 plus and will be suitable for Sabbath services and other activities.

The site is totally self-contained and we will have sole use of all its facilities. Outside the building, which is a converted chapel, there is a large grassy area, which can be used for tents if required. We have permission from the farmer to use an adjacent field for ball games—it's not exactly flat, but the variation in bounce should improve the campers' reflexes!

We anticipate costs will be similar to last year, which was 60 pounds per person. Further information will be made available shortly. Activities are in the planning stage.

As last year, this will be more of a family camp than purely for teenagers, so there can be some flexibility in the ages of children attending. For further details, or to reserve your place, please contact David and Barbara Fenney, 98 Severn Road, Culcheth, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 5EB, England. Telephone 01925 764604 (domestic call) or +44 1925 764604 (international call) or send an e-mail to 100557.1765@compuserve.com.

David and Barbara Fenney

Guatemala Hosts 140 Campers

About 140 teens from Guatemala, El Salvador and Mexico gathered for camp in Guatemala in December. They enjoyed six days of fun, sports and biblical instruction on topics such as alcoholism, sex and marriage, dating and honoring parents. Other activities included a campfire, talent show, games night, soccer, volleyball and basketball.

Saul Langarica, camp coordinator, said this was the best camp ever. Four ministers and many volunteers were needed to serve this large eager group of enthusiastic youths.

Many of the campers commented that they had enjoyed meeting and getting together with friends they had not seen since the Feast. They said they had been inspired and uplifted by the Bible studies given especially for them. As one girl from El Salvador said, "It was like having a mini Feast just for us."

God's blessings and protection was obvious in an accident-free camp. One inci-

dent did, however, stand out as extraordinary. On the way to camp, a 15-year-old boy was pulled under a bus by the rear tire and trapped beneath. When the bus advanced, the tire ran over his leg once again with the bus's entire weight. When he was helped up, although a little hurt and shocked, no broken bones or major complications were found. He got on the bus and continued his trip.

Upon his arrival, he was taken to the hospital where several tests and X-rays were performed on him. After a few hours, he was released because he was found well. He was able to continue his trip and go to camp and participate in most of the activities with the other youth. The doctors at the hospital commented that this had been very rare for him to be so untouched with such a heavy bus pressing upon his leg and hip. God truly was with His youth in Guatemala.

Saul Langarica

30 Enjoy Camping in Chile

The eight-day youth camp at La Serena, Chile, hosted 30 campers ages 13 to 23 from all parts of Chile. The camp is patterned according to Chilean culture, with an emphasis on the social more than sports. Young people in Chile love to talk for hours and become more united around the Church.

Each morning there was a Christian Living class, and there were beach, handcraft and sports activities. The overwhelming majority of the campers are very supportive of this type of camp and not only stay in the Church, but most end up being baptized. Currently in Chile there are 12 young people going to universities, and several others have graduated, two as engineers and one with a

business degree. They will provide much of the future Church leadership in this part of the world.

Campers participate in serving at camp by taking turns serving the meals, cleaning up and looking out for the smaller children. Caty Seiglie prepared meals with the help of three ladies. The campers learned surfing with body boards, played volleyball and had three soccer matches. They also learned baseball on the beach using a tennis ball and no gloves. They had a blast as the ball went so far and was harmless to catch.

At night the campers had a dance and saw two movies.

Mario Seiglie

Winter Camp "Not Long Enough"

The fifth year for Winter Camp in southern Wisconsin took place from December 26 to 30, 1999, with 56 campers and 34 staff in attendance. Activities included snow flag football, floor hockey, snow golf, Christian Living, dance class, volleyball, bonfire, game night, capture the flag, preparing for adulthood class and Web page class.

Some much-needed snow arrived the second day of camp, especially to the delight of two campers from the state of Texas. Gary Black, assistant camp director, put together a special computer slide show of 200 photographs of campers and staff taken during camp activities. It made for a special conclusion after the variety show and end-of-camp dance.

Our experienced staff came from throughout the upper Midwest, but two staff members came all the way from California.

We also had three salaried ministers and several wives serving in various capacities, including visiting Camp Woodmen director, David Dobson.



Campers seemed to begin their journey into "the Zone" quickly and it paid rich dividends with tremendous cooperation among campers and staff. The Zone pictures the way of life that will be a part of all nations in the coming kingdom of God. It is the way of cooperation, of giving and of encouragement. It is the environment where character is built in young people.

The major complaint was that it is not long enough. Take note! Winter Camp 2000 will be five days long, December 26 to 31.

Steve Nutzman

“COUNCIL.” (Continued from page 1)
perhaps half the groups joined together. They came into contact with us through the *GN*.

There are concerns to address. How should the ministry of the group be recognized? Should they be credentialed, or simply ordained by United? In the meantime, the Council gave its approval to Mr. Meeker's request to rent a house in Kumasi to use as a base for visits by several United elders in the next few months. The cost for one month's rent would be less than one night's stay in a suitable hotel, and the cost of the entire "Ghana project" is less than \$40,000 from the current year's budget.

Doctrine Committee

Doctrine Committee chairman Leon Walker filled the Council in on recent activity in this area. The task force on prophecy — Scott Ashley, Wilbur Berg, Jim Franks (chairman), Roger Foster, Tom Kirkpatrick and Darris McNeely—met at the home office in conjunction with the Council meetings. Work on a proposed booklet on Revelation was their first priority. The task force made excellent progress, Mr. Walker said. Of 13 issues

to address from the draft of the Revelation booklet, for example, 11 were resolved.

Mr. Walker also presented the Council with a list of ongoing research into doctrinal concerns submitted by individuals asking the Church to review current teaching. These include research on: the covenants, born again, nature of God and divinity of Christ, Church government, tithing, voting, Hebrew calendar, what is the Church?, the resurrections, the role of the ministry, racial questions, prophecy questions, sacred names, gambling, abortion and military service.

Outreach

Gary Antion led initial discussion of a Church Outreach program. He said misconceptions about us as a group of people can often be cleared up by simply living a way of give to others. Mr. Antion recently surveyed U.S. pastors about the concept, and approximately 30 responded. Roughly two-thirds of those who answered either had programs in operation, or were interested in some type of centrally designed approach. Others felt their congregations were too scattered or small.

Mr. Antion proposed making available a

list of many programs that could fit different congregations' needs and abilities. He acknowledged some of the activities already being done, such as food bank donations at Feast sites. The Council agreed to pursue the idea of an Outreach program. Mr. Antion will work with the Education Committee on research and making a formal proposal.

General Conference of Elders

Planning for the GCE meeting, May 6 to 8 in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky, incorporated many proposals made by GCE members. Some of these were requests for more time for fellowship, continuation of international reports, fewer but longer "breakout" seminar sessions and more time to hear from the keynote speaker. As in past years, the official business portion of the meetings will be between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. EDT on Sunday, May 7. Phone hook-ups will be arranged for those elders not able to attend in person.

Church Identity

Some have requested the Council make a statement of its understanding on this subject. The Council issued this statement:

"The Church consists of individuals called and chosen by God the Father, who have accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, repented of sin, been baptized into Jesus Christ and set apart through the Holy Spirit (John 6:44; Acts 2:38-39; Romans 6:3; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

"The Church is a spiritual organism consisting of all those who have received the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9). The Church is built upon Jesus Christ, the apostles and prophets (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:20). Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18). The biblical name of the Church is the Church of God (1 Corinthians 1:2; 11:22).

"The members of the Church are enjoined to work together to fulfill His will (Ephesians 4:2-6; 1 Corinthians 1:10) and to do His Work (Matthew 28:18-20). Christ promised to be with the Church even until the end of the age. He also prayed for the unity of the people of God (John 17:20-23). In that light, all members of the Church have the responsibility of fulfilling the mandates of Jesus Christ."

For full Council reports, see www.ugc.org/a/council/council.htm. *UN*

2000 Festival Fund

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

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

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

2000 Festival Registration

United States and Canadian head-of-household members should clip out or copy this form and take it to services on April 8, 15 or 22, 2000. It should be filled out and given to the Festival advisor in the local congregation.

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

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

Name _____					
Address _____		City _____		State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____	
Home Telephone () _____	Work Telephone () _____	<i>How many in your household will attend?</i>	Number of Adults (over 20) _____	Number of Teens (13 to 19) _____	Number of Children (age 12 and under) _____
<i>Where are you planning to attend?</i>	Assigned Site [] _____	Transfer [] _____	Choice of Site _____	(Automatic transfer approval is expected for all U.S. and Canadian sites except for Panama City Beach. Pastors will receive transfer notification by May 13.)	
Number of Single Adults _____		Number of Seniors (60 and over; include spouse even if under 60) _____			
<i>Special Needs:</i>	Disabled [] _____	Wheelchair [] _____	Deaf [] _____	Hard of Hearing [] _____	Need Translation (specify) [] _____

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

2000 Feast of Tabernacles Sites

- Argentina**
- Australia**
Hobart, Tasmania
Merimbula, New South Wales
Noosa Heads, Queensland
- British Isles**
- Cameroon**
- Canada**
Kelowna, British Columbia
Mont Sainte Anne, Quebec
- Caribbean**
Barbados
Jamaica
- Chile**
- Estonia**
- France**
- Germany**
- Guatemala**
- Italy**
- Jordan**
- Kenya**
- Mexico**
- New Zealand**
- Nigeria**
- Peru**
- Philippines**
Davao City
Iloilo City
- Southern Africa**
Uvongo, South Africa
Mumbwa, Zambia
Harare, Zimbabwe
- United States**
Bend, Oregon
Branson, Missouri
Corpus Christi, Texas
Escondido (San Diego), California
Estes Park, Colorado
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
Jekyll Island, Georgia
Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii
Louisville, Kentucky
Panama City Beach, Florida
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

Feast of Tabernacles 2000...

In this special supplement are descriptions of Feast sites in alphabetical order by country. More sites may be added, but sufficient information was not available to print in this issue. Information for any additional areas will be printed in *United News* as it becomes available.

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

On the following pages, the + sign at the beginning of international phone numbers signifies the country code. Dollar amounts are in U.S. currency unless noted otherwise.

Argentina

Sierra de la Ventana

The Feast in Argentina will be at the same beautiful place as last year, the Silver Golf Hotel in Sierra de la Ventana. This scenic mountain resort is an hour's drive from Bahia Blanca, the main city in that area.

Expected daytime temperatures will be in the 60s and 70s Fahrenheit. It is a good idea to bring sweaters for evening wear, since it becomes cool. The expected attendance is 70, and no translations will be available.

The approximate cost for housing and food is US\$270 per adult and US\$250 per child under 14. The cost includes the hotel room and three meals for the eight days, which will be paid at the Feast site. Since the Feast ends on Saturday, most will leave on Sunday, October 22, and the additional cost for the extra day is US\$30.

There are many activities planned for the wooded areas around the Feast site. Volleyball and soccer games will be held. Horseback riding is available, and bicycles can be rented.

There are no additional local taxes. Transportation is additional, about \$30 round-trip from Bahia Blanca.

Location of Services: Hotel Silver Golf.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, for an evening service. The first full service will be on Saturday, October 14, at 3 p.m.

Reservations: Those who would like to attend this site should contact Mario Seiglie,

Casilla 10384, Central Casillas, Santiago, Chile; telephone +562 555-2004, +562 556-0761; or by e-mail at seiglie@unete.cl.

Mario Seiglie

Australia

Frederick Henry Bay, Hobart, Tasmania

The 2000 Tasmanian Feast site is at the Pines Resort, situated in a bushland setting on the shores of Frederick Henry Bay, 10 minutes from the airport and 20 minutes from Hobart, Australia's second oldest capital city.

Prices for on-site chalet accommodations range from A\$40 per person per night for double occupancy, to \$30 per person per night with four people sharing. Other types of accommodations are available within 20 minutes' drive. On-site facilities include a spa, sauna, licensed bistro, heated pool, tennis court, BMX bike track and a games room. Golf, horse riding and seven miles of sheltered ocean beach are close by. Within easy driving distance are historic Port Arthur and Richmond Village, which have associations with Tasmania's convict past. Weather at Feast time should be fine and cool.

Reservations: Those who would like to attend this site should contact David Evans, 1 Marvan Place, East Devonport, Tasmania 7310, Australia. He may be contacted by telephone at +61 6427 8764 or by e-mail at src@tassie.net.au.

Barry Williams

Merimbula, New South Wales

Merimbula is a pretty seaside tourist town on the southern New South Wales coast of Australia, aptly named the Sapphire Coast. Services will be held in the well-appointed Sapphire Room of the Merimbula-Imlay Bowling Club.

Quality accommodations are reasonably priced with a two-bedroom apartment averaging A\$300 to A\$400 per week.

Many of the accommodations overlook the lake with its entrance to the ocean flanked by cliffs on one side and beach on the other. All of this is within a pleasant walking distance from the hall. You may prefer a view of the ocean and a round of golf in your free time and for you Tura Beach may be ideal—it's a 10-minute drive north. A 12-minute drive south brings you to the smaller township of Pambula, where families of kangaroos are regularly seen feeding in the early mornings and late afternoons.

One of the larger towns along the coast, Merimbula has a population of around 4,300. The attractions for tourists are many and varied, including boardwalks along the river, whale watching, boat cruises, fishing, golf, Australian native animal parks and cafes, coffee shops and restaurants. Many enjoy a trip to the historic whaling town of Eden.

An added incentive for a visit to Australia is the favorable exchange rate, currently A\$1 for US63 cents or UK38 pence.

Reservations: Accommodations at Merimbula can be organized through:

Fiske and Nagle Real Estate, P.O. Box 55, Merimbula NSW, Australia 2548; telephone +61 64 95 3222.

LJ Hooker, P.O. Box 1, Merimbula NSW, Australia 2548; telephone +61 2 6495 1026.

For further Feast information contact Don Goodger by e-mail at dongoodger@c031.aone.net.au or by telephone at +61 3 9436 1359.

Don Goodger

Key Dates to Remember

April 8, 15, 22 U.S. and Canadian head-of-household members should clip out their completed 2000 Festival Registration form (see page 8) and give it to their local Festival advisor at Sabbath services.

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

May 13 Notification at services if any sites cannot accept all transfer requests (Panama City Beach is a restricted site and there may be some denials).

May 21 Members attending a U.S. or Canadian Feast site may begin making reservations from the list of accommodations supplied in the *Festival Housing Brochure*.

Noosa Heads, Queensland

A place of outstanding beauty, Noosa is located just 90 minutes drive north of Queensland's capital, Brisbane. It is only 25 minutes from Maroochydoore airport serviced daily by flights from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

The tranquil blue waters of Laguna Bay, spectacular ocean beaches and the surrounding National Parks and forests blend easily with all the comforts of a modern resort. Noosa is a declared fauna and flora sanctuary. The picturesque bays and coves of Noosa National Park offer year-round swimming, surfing and walks.

Average temperatures for spring are 18 to 24 degrees Celsius (63 to 75 Fahrenheit), with a water temperature of 21 degrees Celsius (70 Fahrenheit). Noosa is ideal for boating, fishing, swimming, scuba diving, camel treks, whale watching and four-wheel driving. Close by is the largest sand island in the world, Heritage-listed Fraser Island.

Organized activities include Sabbath school and teen Bible studies, a teen boat cruise, a family picnic, a formal dance and a collection for a food bank.

Accommodations are plentiful, ranging from budget to Sheraton Hotel class. This year off-season and weekly rates may range from A\$400 to A\$700+.

Location of Services: Bicentennial Community Centre, Bicentennial Drive, Noosa.

First Service: Friday evening, October 13, at 7:30 p.m.

Reservations: Visitors wishing any assistance are welcome to contact Graemme Marshall, P.O. Box 929, Beenleigh, Queensland, Australia 4207; by e-mail at gmarshall@b022.aone.net.au or by telephone at +61 7 3807-6087.

Graemme Marshall

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

Transferring Within the United States or Canada

- U.S. and Canadian head-of-household members should fill out the 2000 Festival Registration Form found on page 8 of this issue of *United News*.
- Indicate your preferred transfer site on the Registration Form.
- This form is to be given to the Festival advisor in your local congregation on April 8, 15 or 22, 2000.
- Automatic transfer approval is expected for all U.S. and Canadian sites except for Panama City Beach. Pastors will receive transfer notification by May 13.

Transferring to a Site Outside the United States and Canada

- Any member wishing to transfer to a site outside the U.S. or Canada should contact the Festival coordinator of that site directly. Some contact information is provided in this supplement, with site descriptions, and some additional housing information may be provided in the *Festival Housing Brochure* that will be mailed late April.
- Please do not make non-refundable travel arrangements until you receive an acceptance letter for that site.
- Further information and housing lists will be made available to those accepted for transfer.

Transferring Into the United States or Canada From Other Areas

- Brethren wishing to transfer to a U.S. or Canadian site from another country will automatically be accepted. However, please have your minister contact the home office via e-mail at USFestival@ucg.org. The information provided should include the requester's name, number of adults age 20 and over, number of teens, number of those 12 and under and the Feast site requested.
- The home office will forward pertinent information to the respective Festival site coordinators.

British Isles

York, North East England

After two successful years of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles in Conwy, North Wales, the United Church of God in the British Isles is returning to the ancient city of York for Year 2000! We previously kept the Feast there in 1996 and 1997.

York has a history of almost 2,000 years as a city, having been a Roman military post located, as it is, at the confluence of two rivers, the Ouse and the Fosse. Both can be appreciated by taking one of the many river cruises. At one point the entire Roman Empire was ruled from York. It is also the place where Constantine I was declared Emperor in AD 306 while he was in the city. To walk along the top of the mile and a half city wall, and to visit the Viking Museum and the Roman Bath pub with its archaeological excavations in the basement, is to rub shoulders with those who lived and worked here 2,000 years ago.

York is located in the largest of the English counties and on the edge of two national parks, the North York Moors and the Yorkshire Dales, both with wonderful countryside within which the TV series *All Creatures Great and Small* was made. A number of stately homes, such as Castle Howard where *Brideshead Revisited* was filmed, may be visited.

The city is easily reached from all parts of the United Kingdom by road via the motorway system; by rail with frequent fast trains from London's Kings Cross station; or by air using Leeds-Bradford airport. This airport does provide international service to and from the United States, but most probably route through Heathrow. Manchester airport has a number of daily direct flights to several U.S. cities and is only an hour and a half drive from York. There is also very good train service direct from Manchester airport to York.

Daytime temperatures will normally average in the high 50s Fahrenheit (15 Celsius) and evenings will drop to the low 50s (10 Celsius). It's generally a good idea to bring something warm for the evenings.

Rental cars are useful, but not strictly necessary, with most accommodations within walking distance and taxis easily available. Taking a bus tour is probably the best way to see the surrounding areas. But for anyone with a car there is good parking about a five-minute walk from the hall.

All major credit cards are accepted virtually everywhere and there are several Bureaux de Change available in the city, including an American Express office. However, if you bring traveler's checks, be sure they are in pounds sterling. They are easy and quickly cashed in any bank.

There are plenty of accommodations of all kinds located within or in the immediate vicinity of the city. Many places are within a 15-minute walk of the hall; some are only five minutes away! Prices for accommodations vary from around US\$200 per week for self-catering apartments to US\$35 per person

per day at bed-and-breakfast guest houses or small hotels. A top hotel may well cost around US\$100 per person per day (including breakfast).

Location of Services: We plan to hold services at the Yorkshire Museum, which is in a 10-acre park right by the city center.

Reservations: Festival attendance is strictly limited because of the seating capacity of the hall, so approvals for the site must be on a first-come, first-served basis. Requests for approval for the York site should be sent to the York Feast Coordinator: David Fenney, 98 Severn Road, Culcheth, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 5EB, England. His telephone number is +44 1925-764604 (from outside the U.K.) and his e-mail address is: 100557.1765@compuserve.com. Faxes may be sent to +44 1257-453978.

The national council and members of the United Church of God—British Isles join me in looking forward to welcoming you to York.

John A. Jewell

Cameroon

Douala

Bonjour! The Feast of Tabernacles 2000 in Cameroon will be celebrated in the port city of Douala. Temperatures will be about 30 degrees Celsius (85 Fahrenheit), with very high humidity.

About 60 people are expected to attend this French-speaking site. Some will travel three days by bush taxi from the far north of the country to attend the Feast.

We are not able to provide a translation service, so you would need to speak French to attend this site. There are several hotels in Douala where visitors could stay while attending the Feast. Festival activities will include an excursion to Mount Cameroon (an active volcano) or a trip to the beach.

Reservations: For more information you may contact: Joel Meeker, 926 Ampere Place, Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367-2227; telephone (636) 561-4026; fax (636) 625-1691; or e-mail joel_meeker@ucg.org.

Joel Meeker

Canada

Kelowna, British Columbia

Among the many destinations a visitor can consider in British Columbia, there is one that never fails to memorably reward visitors. It's a place where the climate is mild and sunshine is something to be expected. It's a spot blessed with spectacular mountain scenery, where nature cradles pristine lakes and trims them with sandy beaches and blossom-dusted hillsides. It's a haven for recreation all year round—whether golfing, boating, windsurfing, swimming, fishing, hiking, camping or skiing. It's Kelowna B.C., often referred to as the Hawaii of Canada.

Kelowna is located in the beautiful Okanagan Valley. This is a major fruit-growing region and has lots of vineyards. The settled area lies in the valley along the shores of

Lake Okanagan, which is about 120 miles (nearly 200 kilometers) long and between 3 to 6 miles (5 to 10 kilometers) wide.

Kelowna has a metropolitan population of about 100,000, with many smaller cities within an hour's drive. It offers a variety of recreational activities, has many fine restaurants and lots of shopping. There are unending miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking, trail riding and family walks. There are about 18 golf courses within a short drive, and most will be open until the end of October. There are centers for family outings, mini-golf and kids' attractions. For Internet users, a local Web site www.silk.net provides current news, weather and local happenings. The Chamber of Commerce Web site www.kelownachamber.org/kelowna_tourism/index.htm is also excellent for getting more detailed information about the area.

The climate in October is usually cool but not cold. Rain is usually not a problem as the area is arid. One can expect cool evenings with some nice afternoons. It is a good idea to bring clothing that is suitable for weather in the 50s and 60s Fahrenheit (13 to 18 Celsius).

Motel prices are reasonable, with a selection to meet all budgets. The Canadian dollar has been low against the American dollar and this has provided an extra financial benefit for our visitors.

An international airport, just north of town, has direct flights from Seattle.

Location of Services: Kelowna Community Theatre, 1375 Water Street. This year, the local symphony has preempted us on the last two days of the Feast since they are putting on a gala performance at that time. Because of that, services for the last two days will be moved to Vernon, which is about 35 minutes north of Kelowna. They will be held in the Vernon Recreation Complex Auditorium, 3310 - 37 Avenue in Vernon.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m. The following day's service will be at 2 p.m.

Taxes: There is a provincial tax of 7 percent as well as GST, which is also 7 percent. Visitors from outside of Canada can apply for a GST rebate.

Rainer Salomaa



Mont Sainte Anne

Mont Sainte Anne, Quebec

You are cordially invited to sample a taste of Europe with a distinctive French flavor without leaving North America. Our new Feast site, Mont Sainte Anne, lies a mere half-hour drive east of Quebec City, capital of the province of Quebec. A hotel named Domaine Val des Neiges (Valley of the Snows) will serve as our main center for meetings and lodging. It sits at the base of magnificent Mont Sainte Anne, which has a sweeping panorama of the St. Lawrence River. A variety of condos and villas will also be available at Chalets Montmorency about a mile away. Another unique feature of the site is that almost all units have phones, laundry facilities, kitch-

ettes and fireplaces. For information about the area, see www.quebecweb.com or www.mont-sainte-anne.com.

The hardwoods native to this area provide a spectacular backdrop for playing golf, hiking, horseback riding and many other recreational activities. Situated at the edge of the Laurentian mountain range, the area is dotted with breathtaking waterfalls. From the Mont Morency Falls (one and a half times the height of Niagara Falls) you can see a sweeping view of the skyline of Quebec City. At Sainte Anne Canyon Falls, there are also several panoramic viewpoints. Just east of Mont Sainte Anne is Cap Tourment National Wildlife Reserve. Each autumn thousands of migratory great white snow geese feed off the muddy banks of the St. Lawrence. A bilingual interpretation center explains their migratory patterns and habits and is perfect for a family outing. Other popular spots are the zoo and the aquarium in Quebec City.

About an hour's drive further east, at the junction of the Saguenay and St. Lawrence Rivers, where fresh water and salt water mix, live six different species of migratory whales. Consider a cruise with the possibility of viewing these majestic mammals.

History buffs will enjoy exploring Quebec City, a half-hour drive to the west. The historical part of the city is the only urban area to be registered on the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage list. No visit would be complete without touring the Plains of Abraham, Battlefield Park and the Citadel of Quebec. The walls of Old Quebec constitute the largest fortifications still in use in North America.

Close to the site unique dining experiences await you. The quality of Quebec's many fine restaurants have made the region and the city internationally renowned. It has the greatest number of world-class restaurants per capita in North America. There are restaurants to suit every taste and budget.

With more than four million tourists visiting the area annually, language is not a problem. Most people in the service and hospitality industries speak English. The site has room for 300. With a favorable exchange rate of approximately C\$1.50 to US\$1, Americans will see their dollars stretch significantly.

We invite you to enjoy this unique region of Canada, get to know some of your Canadian brethren and experience the warm, sincere hospitality of the Canadian people.

Location of Services: Domaine Val des Neiges, 203 rue Val des Neiges, Beauport, Quebec.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

Taxes: 15 percent (nonresident tax refunds available on accommodations).

Carol Livermore and Anthony Wasilkoff

Caribbean

St. Philip, Barbados

Barbados is the most easterly of the Caribbean islands. Its beauty lies not only in its exotic West Indian climate, sun-drenched

sands and turquoise waters, but a relaxed hospitality of the "Bajans" who cheerfully share their home with visitors from all over.

The Feast this year will be held at Sam Lord's Castle Resort. The castle was built in 1820 by Sam Lord, an alleged pirate.

The resort is located just 20 minutes from the Grantley Adams International Airport. It is situated on 72 acres on the southeastern coast of Barbados and features 11 spectacular acres of palm-fringed beach, the largest resort beach on the island.

The resort also offers three swimming pools, an exercise room, six tennis courts, shuffleboard and castle tours. There will be daily entertainment activities including a Bajan fiesta and a pirate's shipwreck party.

The rates are on a per person basis and are as follows: US\$99 per person per night (12 and older); US\$20 per child 4 to 11 years old. Children under 4 are free. The all-inclusive rates include:

- room accommodations
- breakfast, lunch and dinner
- all house-brand beverages by the glass
- all applicable taxes
- all on-property activities.

Reservations can be made by calling the resort's direct line 246-423-7350 and mentioning that you are with the United Church of God convention.

Reservations: To register for the Feast, contact Arnold Hampton, P.O. Box 75, Randallstown, MD 21133; telephone (410) 655-6265; fax (410) 655-9027; e-mail ajhamp@flash.net.

Arnold Hampton

Ocho Rios, Jamaica

Jamaica, one of the Caribbean's brightest tropical jewels, is an island of intoxicating natural beauty—from lush rainforest and mountainous terrain to spectacular waterfalls, sun-drenched beaches and turquoise waters.

This year's Feast will be held at the Renaissance Jamaica Grande Resort in Ocho Rios. Known for its stunning coastline, Ocho Rios is the island's premier resort location offering breathtaking sites and attractions, including the world famous Dunn's River Falls, lush botanical gardens, two nearby championship golf courses and the Chukka Cove Equestrian and Polo Center.

The beachfront Renaissance Jamaica Grande is the largest and most complete resort on the island. Its exquisitely landscaped grounds, coupled with its spectacular open-air lobby with waterfalls flowing into the one-of-a-kind Fantasy Pool, create a lasting first impression. The genuine warmth and friendliness of its people coupled with professional service will make your Feast experience one that will be long remembered!

The resort is about 90 minutes from Sangster International Airport, Montego Bay. Round-trip airport transfers can be arranged through the hotel for US\$25 per person.

The resort has five restaurants, plus a beach grill for surfside burgers and refreshments; a 1,350-foot white sand beach with volleyball nets and private docking; and three

swimming pools including the magnificent Fantasy Pool with waterfalls, swinging bridge, jacuzzi and pool volleyball. The resort also features a health club/fitness center, two tennis courts, scuba diving, wave runners, snorkeling, deep-sea fishing, glass-bottom boat, windsurfing and other water activities. Club Mongoose, a fully supervised children's activity center, provides programs for kids aged 2 to 12 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The costs are: single occupancy, US\$160 per room per night; double occupancy, US\$200 per room, per night. A child 12 years and under sharing with one adult is free, and two children 12 years and under sharing with two adults are free.

The above rates include the following:

- accommodations (air-conditioned room, private balcony and view of ocean)
- full buffet breakfast daily
- lunch daily, choice of three restaurants
- dinner with a choice of restaurants
- unlimited beverages
- non-motorized watersports
- day and night tennis
- fun-filled daily activity program
- nightly live entertainment
- all taxes and gratuities.

Reservations: Contact Kingsley O. Mather at e-mail king@batelnet.bs, telephone (242) 324-3169, fax (242) 364-5566 or write him at P.O. Box N-8873, Nassau, Bahamas.

Kingsley O. Mather

Chile

Maitencillo

We will again hold the Feast in the popular beach site of Maitencillo, Chile. There is a main hotel, Centro Javiera Carrera, and many beach homes will be used for lodging. The cost for housing and three meals a day for the eight days is US\$260 per adult and US\$240 per child, which will be paid at the Feast site. Included in the cost is the transportation round-trip to the Feast site from Santiago, the capital, a three hour's drive. No local taxes are added to this price. Since the Feast ends on a Saturday, most Feastgoers will leave on Sunday, October 22, and the additional cost for the extra day is US\$30.

The expected daytime and evening temperatures are between 60 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit. It is a good idea to bring sweaters for evening wear, since it becomes cool.

There are many activities planned around the beach area. Sports activities include volleyball, horseback riding and soccer matches. This site is famous for its talent shows and the area is a delight for nature lovers. Trips are planned to a nearby island that has many penguins and to the city of Viña del Mar for touring and shopping.

The expected attendance is 440, and translation into English will be available.

Location of Services: Centro Javiera Carrera.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, for an evening introductory service. The first full service will be October 14, at 3 p.m.

Reservations: Contact Mario Seiglie, Casilla 10384, Central Casillas, Santiago, Chile; telephone +562 555-2004, +562 556-0761; or by e-mail at seiglie@unete.cl.

Mario Seiglie



Estonia

Tartu

The Feast will be held for the fourth year in the charming city of Tartu, Estonia's second largest city situated along the picturesque banks of the river Emajogi. Tartu was an important Hanseatic town linking Western Europe with Russia in the 13th to 15th centuries.

Temperatures will range in the 45 to 65 Fahrenheit range during the day and drop to 30 to 40 in the evening. For those who have gone to Wisconsin Dells, Saratoga Springs or the Poconos, the climate is quite similar.

We will be staying at the Pallas Hotel in the center of town. Services will be about a 10-minute walk away. The approximate cost for housing is \$55 for a single room, \$65 per night double/twin. Three double deluxe rooms are available for \$85 per night. The cost for food is very reasonable.

There is no need to rent a car as taxis are plentiful and inexpensive.

The closest airport is at the capital, Tallinn, 120 miles to the northwest. A comfortable coach costing about \$6 takes you to within 200 yards of the Pallas Hotel. Cost of travel from North America will be in the \$800 to \$1,000 per person range. For some non-US citizens there will be a \$50 visa fee.

During the Feast we plan to make a full-day visit to the capital of Tallinn. We will also plan an afternoon activity with the Emajõe School for Handicapped Children.

We again plan to have a 21-piece Estonian folk singing and dancing ensemble perform for us one afternoon or evening.

A highlight is getting to know the brethren from Estonia and Lithuania. Services will be in English with simultaneous Estonian translation. Our attendance will be limited to about 50 people this year.

Location of Services: In the center of Tartu at the Atlantis Conference Center.

Reservations: Contact Victor Kubik at (317) 216-0802, write to him at 3707 Turfway Court, Indianapolis, IN 46228. Or you can also e-mail him at estonia2000@kubik.org. More information can also be found on the Web at www.kubik.org/estonia/2000fot.htm.

Victor Kubik

France

Bonjour les amis! The beautiful Riviera region will host the Feast 2000 in France. Specific details will be available shortly. Famous sites along this coast include Nice, Cannes, Saint-Tropez, Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat and the principality of Monaco. Autumn temperatures are very pleasant, often staying in the 55 to 70 degree Fahrenheit range.

Some services will be in French and some in English, with simultaneous translation.

All attendees will lodge and take their meals at the same vacation colony, which is also where services will be held. This means it is not necessary to rent a car. Prices per person for lodging and full board (three meals per day) will be approximately \$500 or less per adult, lodging and two meals (breakfast and lunch or dinner) a day will run approximately \$400 or less. The cost of your stay must be paid in French francs (or euros), so the exact amount in dollars will vary. We anticipate 100 to 150 people attending.

Reservations: Additional information and applications can be obtained in Europe from Jacques Le Houédec, B.P. 51254, F-45002 Orleans Cedex 1, France; telephone or fax: +33 2-38-83-62-70; e-mail: jacques_le_houedec@ucg.org.

Additional information and applications can be obtained in North America from Joel Meeker, 926 Ampere Place, Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367-2227; telephone (636) 561-4026; fax (636) 625-1691; or e-mail joel_meeker@ucg.org.

Joel Meeker

Germany

Schluchsee

Set on Lake Schluchsee in southern Germany, in a beautiful area just 10 miles (16 kilometers) from the Black Forest's highest mountain, the Feldberg (1,493 meters, 4,860 feet), is the picturesque town of Schluchsee. Lake Titisee, with its picturesque town of Titisee, is a 30-minute drive from Schluchsee, and the famous Rhine river waterfall in Schaffhausen/Neuhausen, Switzerland, is about 60 minutes by car. The area is familiar to brethren from past years when the Feast was observed in Bonndorf.

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

Accommodations for transfer guests are available in selected hotels and vacation apartments. Vacation apartments offer kitchenettes. Half-pension arrangements are available in most hotels. Lodging costs range from US\$50 to US\$100 for a vacation apartment and from US\$40 upwards per person for hotel accommodations. (Transfer guests can make their own reservations if they so desire; lodging information is available via the Schluchsee Web site.)

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

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

Expected attendance is approximately

175. Services will be held in German, with simultaneous translation into English.

For more information, visit the Schluchsee Web site (in German and English) at www.sbo.de/schluchsee.

Reservations:

Visitors wishing to transfer should write to Vereinte Kirche Gottes, Postfach 30 15 09, D-53195 Bonn, Germany. Or fax to +49 228 9 45 46 37 (within Europe 0049) or e-mail UCG-Germany at gutenachrichten@compuserve.com.

Location of Services: Grosser Kursaal, Kurhaus Schluchsee (next to the Rathaus, behind the tourism office).

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.



Schluchsee, Germany

Paul Kieffer

Guatemala

Antigua

Once again the brethren from Guatemala will be having the Feast in beautiful Antigua. Last year our international brethren who visited us enjoyed not only the surroundings, but also the company of hundreds of smiling brethren in this part of the world. Brethren in other parts of the world, you are invited to enjoy God's Feast with us!

Antigua was once the capital city of this country and it is the oldest city in all of Central America. Even now its buildings and streets take you back at least 300 years in history. By law every building and street must look colonial. The Spaniards knew where to locate a capital city! You cannot find a better place to enjoy peace, surroundings and weather. Antigua is considered by many to have perfect weather year round. Many Americans and Europeans decide to retire here to enjoy their last years of life. The temperature is in the 70s almost all year. During the time of the Feast there may be showers, so come prepared to enjoy some rain.

One aspect that our international brethren enjoyed most is the warmth of our wonderful brethren here. Their smiles, hospitality and love will attract anyone. Most visitors say they go back to their homes with the feeling of having left part of their heart here.

Antigua is only 30 miles away from Guatemala City, where you can visit interesting places like the Central Market. From Guatemala City you can visit one of the most beautiful lakes of the world: Lake Atitlan. You can also visit Tikal, the city that once was the capital of the Mayan Empire.

This year we will have the same kind of accommodations we had last year. The meeting hall is located beside the central park. We will be using several hotels offering different prices. The top price will be only US\$15 per person. Children under 10 do not pay. All of the hotels we will be using are within

walking distance from the meeting hall.

Services will be in Spanish with English translation. We are planning several activities to make the Feast even more enjoyable. We will be having a family day, a talent show, a children's party and much more. So, come prepared to enjoy yourself. You will never forget this experience! We are expecting around 500, mostly from Guatemala.

Reservations: If you plan to come, please send a check payable to "Iglesia de Dios Unida" for half of the cost of your hotel. You can send your check to the following address: Iglesia de Dios Unida, Apartado Postal 1064, 01019 Guatemala City, Guatemala. For more information, please call or write Saul Langarica. The phone number is (502) 256-0692 and the e-mail address is langaric@concyt.gob.gt.

Saul Langarica

Italy

Sabaudia (Latina)

Brethren from all over the world will be most welcome to the Feast in Italy. Hotel and food prices are approximately the same as last year. Church services are always inspirational, the meals are delicious, the activities are involving and the tours are interesting. Because the Year 2000 is the Jubilee Year for world ecumenism in Rome, those who like to watch world events will have the opportunity to see this with their own eyes.

Church services will be held alternately in English and in Italian with simultaneous translation. With possibly one exception, all services will be held in the morning.

The Feast site is in Sabaudia, a calm sea town in the Latina province, just south of Rome. Sabaudia is situated along the shores of the lake Paola, adjacent to the greenish Circeo National Park and linked to the sea by a bridge. Sabaudia is 150 kilometers north of Naples and only 100 kilometers south of the fascinating and historical city of Rome.

It's only a few minutes from the spot on the ancient Apian Way where first century brethren from Rome came to welcome the apostle Paul, as described in Acts 28:14-15: "And so we went toward Rome. And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage." After 19 centuries, you can make that event come true again by celebrating the Feast with your brothers and sisters in Italy, who are looking forward to welcoming you personally to the site.

The Sabaudia area is astonishing for the richness of its panoramas. Its beauty draws us closer to our Creator God, the greatest artist of all. The mild climate even in late October allows many activities. Night and day temperatures vary from 16 to 35 degrees Celsius (61 to 95 Fahrenheit).

Prearranged bus transportation from Rome International Airport to the Feast hotel is available at an economical price, and can be requested on the Feast Registration Form

for Italy. Also, helpful information will be sent to those who express the desire to travel to the Feast site on their own.

Tours can be arranged to various important historical places like Pompeii (which was destroyed by Vesuvius' explosion in 79 B.C.), the famous Botanic Garden of Ninfa and, of course, Roman sites like the Coliseum, Imperial Forum, Paul's prison and tomb, the Vatican museums and other places and monuments that are a witness of pagan persecutions of true Christianity. There will also be a half-day tour for souvenir shopping.

The Roman-Sabaudian cuisine is probably some of the richest and most delicious in the world. Our hotel chef knows the distinction between clean and unclean foods, and the restaurant staff is looking forward to welcoming and serving you diligently.

Everyone will be able to stay and eat at the same economical, yet beautiful, three-star restaurant/hotel, where services will be held. This will allow all of us to get to know each other and enjoy Christian fellowship. The hotel faces one of the most limpid and uncontaminated stretches of the Tyrrhenian Sea, and has a private beach. All rooms are equipped with telephone, TV set, hair-dryer, air-conditioner and shower.

The hotel management has offered us the very special price of approximately US\$49 (90.000 lire) per night, per adult. This price includes three meals a day, mineral water, local wine and taxes.

Discounts: 10 percent discount for third or fourth bed; 30 percent discount for children under 12; 50 percent discount for children under 6. No charge for children under 2.

The hotel also has mini-apartments with two adjacent rooms. There is no extra cost for mini-apartments.

The hotel offers the use of its ping-pong table, bicycles, private beach, sea-bicycle, fitness equipment, sauna and dance area, all free of charge. This promises fun opportunities to our young people, our singles and our families in a safe environment. The tennis courts and horse-riding lessons cost extra.

Our Feast site gives the opportunity to easily reach and visit other beautiful and famous places like Naples, Amalfi, Capri, Ischia and the Pontine Islands before and after the Feast. A couple of travel agencies have offered their services at a good price. More information can be sent upon request.

If you have a musical talent, please let us know in advance. Your involvement in making the Feast a greater success to God's glory will be appreciated.

Reservations: To request detailed information and an application form, please contact the Festival coordinator, Carmelo Anastasi, by e-mail at anastasi@spm.it or feast_italy@labuonanotizia.org or carmelo_anastasi@labuonanotizia.org; by mail: *La Buona Notizia*, Via Don Minzoni 15, 24061 Albano S.A. (Bergamo), Italy; by phone +39 035-583474; or by fax +39 035-582140. You can also apply by filling in the Feast form on the Internet: www.labuonanotizia.org.

Carmelo Anastasi

Jordan

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is again being offered as one of the UCG's most exciting and exotic Feast sites. Jordan is a country rich with history, mesmerizing desert beauty and unique Arabic culture.

The highlight of the Feast will be the two nights we spend in Petra, a stunning ancient Nabatean city of ruins cut from red mountain walls. Feastgoers will be able to tour and hike the rose red city at their own leisure. Following Petra, we will spend one day and night at the Dead Sea Spa Hotel enjoying the therapeutic salt water, mud and sun. Day trips to Jerash, Kerak castle, Madaba and Mount Nebo are also included.



Jordan

The Feast will be held primarily in Amman, the capital of modern Jordan since 1950, which boasts Feast-time temperatures that range between 21 and 30 degrees Celsius (70 to

86 Fahrenheit). While in Amman, Feastgoers will stay in the five-star LeMeridien Hotel and all services will be held in the same place. Dress for services will be nice casual to allow for lighter packing (one suitcase per person) to accommodate our Petra and Dead Sea outing.

The price per adult is US\$1,795 and US\$1,200 per child (ages 2 to 11 sharing room with parents). The prices include:

- air transportation New York/Amman/New York (economy class)
- full accommodations
- breakfast, lunch, dinner per program
- transfers to and from Amman airport
- all tours
- all entrance fees for tourist sites
- English-speaking guides
- deluxe, air-conditioned motor coaches for tours
- all tips to guides, drivers and hotel staff
- group entry visa and departure tax.

Extensions—Israel and/or Egypt: In addition, a seven-day tour of Israel is offered as a post-Feast extension for US\$745 per adult and US\$440 per child (ages 2 to 11). A five-day tour to Egypt is offered as a post-Feast extension for US\$1,275 per adult and US\$1,075 per child (ages 2 to 11). The Egypt extension may be taken immediately following the Feast or Israel extension, although 10 people are needed to operate the tour.

For those unable to attend the full extension to Israel, we plan to arrange a day trip to Jerusalem for approximately \$150.

The flight from New York to Amman will depart Wednesday, October 11, and the return flight will depart from Amman to New York on Sunday, October 22.

Reservations: See our Web site listed below and contact: Cory and Colene Erickson, 818 Spring Hill Court, Woodbury, MN 55125; phone/fax: (651) 714-4054. Itineraries and travel tips can be found on the Web at: www.worldopp.org/jordan.

Cory and Colene Erickson

Kenya

Tigoni

Beautiful Kenya will host the Feast in the village of Tigoni, located in pleasantly cool and quiet foothills about 12 miles (20 kilometers) from Nairobi. Services will be held in a monastery conference center, where our Kenyan brethren will also lodge. Visitors will stay in the Kentmere Club a few miles from the center. A shuttle will be available to take visitors to and from services and activities. Days are usually warm, around 75 degrees Fahrenheit (25 Celsius).

The Kentmere Club is like an English country inn. There are colorful gardens, and tea plantations in the distance. There are 16 double rooms and four single rooms in the garden cottages spread around the grounds. There are also two triple rooms, with the possibility of adding a fourth bed. Each room has its own bathroom, fireplace and veranda. Guests are welcome at the nearby Limuru Country Club for golf, tennis and swimming.

Prices for half board (breakfast and dinner) are approximately \$55 per day single occupancy; \$45 per day per person double occupancy. Full board (breakfast, lunch and dinner) is approximately \$65 per day single occupancy; \$55 per person double occupancy. Children under 12 are half price when sharing a room with their parents. Prices will be paid in Kenyan shillings, so the exact amount in dollars may vary slightly.

Excursions planned include a visit to two national parks, where it is possible to see zebras, gazelles, baboons, lions, giraffes, rhinos, cheetahs and leopards. We also plan to visit the Karen Blixen farm, which inspired her famous book, *Out of Africa*. If enough visitors express an interest, we will organize an additional safari after the Feast.

Reservations: For more information you may contact: Joel Meeker, 926 Ampere Place, Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367-2227; telephone (636) 561-4026; fax (636) 625-1691; or e-mail joel_meeker@ucg.org.

Joel Meeker

Mexico

Acapulco

The warm hearts of your Mexican brethren are calling you to Acapulco for the Feast. The language for church services will alternate between English and Spanish every other day. The enthusiasm of the Spanish members and ministry make for a fun time.

Fellowship and activities will abound, with ample opportunities for individual meal time together, and time on the warm sunny beach. The entire group is already scheduled for a Mexican Night with dinner.

This year a very reasonable air and hotel package has been arranged with the Continental Plaza Acapulco Hotel and Continental Airlines. This package includes:

- nine nights at the Continental Plaza Acapulco (services will be held here)
- airfare from Houston, Texas, to and

- from Acapulco on Continental Airlines
- home city add-on airfare to and from Houston available on Continental
- Festival translation headsets
- Mexican Fun Night.

The costs are: \$815 per adult (based on double occupancy); \$437 per child under 12 years of age sharing room with two adults (maximum two children per room); \$1,115 per adult single occupancy.

Add-on air rates from home cities are available from \$60 to \$260 depending on your location.

Reservations: Request an information package today. Space is limited and the site may fill fast. Telephone: 800-858-6999 (North America toll-free) or 626-577-9717; fax 626-577-0577 or contact Travel Gallery, Inc., 1388 E. Walnut Street, Pasadena, CA 91106; or e-mail them at gordon@travel-gallery.com. Site information is also listed at www.travelgallery.com. *Hasta la vista!*

Larry Roybal

New Zealand

Taupo

Taupo has again been selected as the site for the New Zealand Feast of Tabernacles. This beautiful town is on the North Island. Located four hours' drive south of Auckland International Airport, Taupo may be reached by rental car or by bus, traveling through the green countryside of the lush Waikato farmland. There are also regular domestic air flights from the main cities.

The town of Taupo, population approximately 15,000, is nestled on the northern end of the beautiful Lake Taupo, New Zealand's largest lake. Lake Taupo is famous for its rainbow trout, and has a wide range of chartered fishing boats to hire. There are many places of interest in the area, including the Wairakei Geothermal Project, Aratiatia Rapids, Huka Falls and Craters of the Moon boiling mud pools. There are a number of thermal hot pools, and some accommodation units have private pools attached.

Within an hour's drive of Taupo there is the city of Rotorua, with its many Maori and thermal attractions. Close by are areas for fly-fishing, hunting and bush walking. Taupo offers a wide range of attractions making this a truly marvelous site. Mount Ruapehu is a two-hour drive to the south of Lake Taupo. The mountain, an active volcano, is known for its excellent skiing. The ski fields are normally operating during the Feast.

There is an excellent range of accommodations, from four-star hotels to motels, lodges, homes and camping grounds. Prices for good quality hotels and motels cost from NZ\$60 per night. Other less expensive accommodations may also be found.

The weather is normally temperate, with cooler nights and warm sunny days. Visitors should bring warm clothing, as it can be cooler in the evenings.

The New Zealand United Church of God welcomes all visitors to the Feast at Taupo. As a smaller church, the members

look forward to having visitors who can contribute towards making it a time of rejoicing and learning about God's way of life.

Reservations: Visitors wishing to transfer to this site please contact Jeff Caudle, 6 Grendon Road, Titirangi, Auckland 1007, New Zealand, by telephone at +64-9-8175855, by fax at +64-6-8366699 or by e-mail at jeffcaudle@clear.net.nz.

Location of Services: Taupo Events Centre, A.C. Baths Avenue, Taupo.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

Art Verschoor/Jeff Caudle

Nigeria

Lagos

Final Festival arrangements are still pending for Nigeria. The Festival site this year will be near Lagos, Nigeria's largest city. We anticipate about 40 people attending this English-speaking site. Nigeria is to Africa what China is to the world: it is home to one out of every five Africans. Our brethren in Nigeria are warm and wonderful people, but very sadly, years of increasingly difficult economic, social and political situations have made Nigeria a very dangerous place in which to travel. Although there is currently some hope that the overall situation will improve (following recent elections), only people with considerable experience traveling in the developing world should consider attending this Feast site.

Reservations: For more information you may contact: Joel Meeker, 926 Ampere Place, Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367-2227; telephone (636) 561-4026; fax (636) 625-1691; or e-mail joel_meeker@ucg.org.

Joel Meeker

Peru

Huanchaco

The Feast site for Peru this year will be Huanchaco. Huanchaco is a small town located on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. Huanchaco is 15 minutes away from Trujillo. The third major city in Peru, Trujillo is known as the city of eternal spring due to its nice weather all year long. Trujillo is 348 miles north from Lima, the Peruvian capital.

You can travel from Lima to Trujillo by bus or by plane. It takes eight hours by bus, and a round-trip Lima-Trujillo-Lima will cost US\$50 in very comfortable buses. The flight to Trujillo is only 45 minutes and a round-trip will cost US\$130. Every five minutes there are vans from Trujillo to Huanchaco.

Lodging in Huanchaco will range from US\$20 to US\$60 per night. Translations from Spanish to English will be provided. More specific information will be given upon request.

Reservations: Please contact Manuel Quijano, Apdo. 18-0766, Lima, Peru; telephone +51-1-4486004; or e-mail him at smquija@terra.com.pe.

Manuel Quijano

Philippines

Davao City

Located one and a half-hours by jet south-southeast of Manila, Davao is the capital city of Region XI and the biggest on the island of Mindanao. Reputed to be the largest city in the world by actual land area; the geographical boundary extends about 60 kilometers north to south and about 40 kilometers east to west covering both populated and forested areas totaling 244,000 hectares. It has a population of about 1.3 million people most of whom can understand and speak English to varying degrees of proficiency.

Lying outside the typhoon belt, it is blessed with relatively fair weather throughout the year. The temperature ranges from 28 to 32 Celsius (80 to 90 Fahrenheit). It is also blessed with fertile, volcanic soil, producing bountiful tropical fruits and vegetables. In the Philippines, it claims host for the "king of fruits and the fruit for kings"—the famous durian. Other rare and exotic tropical fruits are the marang, mangosteen and rambutan among many others. Beautiful tropical flowers such as orchids, vanda and waling-waling are commercially cultured. Davao City is also home to the endangered Philippine monkey-eating eagle. This is the largest eagle species in the world, and programs have been established to breed them in captivity.

Beautiful white sand beaches abound along its coasts lapped by waves of reflected blue waters. Most of the hotels and some resorts in the city are of international standards; with many also offering international dishes at reasonable costs.

Davao City is connected to the rest of the country by land, sea and its own international airport. Visitors will find the uniqueness of the public transport system using the popular Philippine jeepneys (World War II jeeps styled into a mass transportation vehicle) and motorcabs (motorcycles harnessed to a sidecar) or air-conditioned buses for longer trips. Davao City is the first in the country to deploy the phone-in taxi service equipped with transceivers among its about 2,500 taxi units.

Services will be held again this year at the Girl Scouts of the Philippines Training Camp in Daliao, Toril, Davao City. It is about 15 kilometers (10 miles) southwest from downtown Davao and just about a kilometer from the coast. As a training camp facility, it has several screened cottages and modern dormitories. Some rooms are air-conditioned. All meals will be catered and served in the screened dining facilities for all Feastgoers. Camp accommodations range from about \$1 to \$10 per bed per day; while budget meals are priced at about \$1 per meal to make it affordable for most of the Filipino brethren.

The ambience of the camp enhances our spiritual calling out of this world and provides for continued fellowship. Morning services is a daily feature balanced by a variety of afternoon social activities and tours except of course on the Holy Days. While all are expected to have arrived by Friday sunset

(October 13), the first formal service will be on the morning of the First Holy Day/Sabbath to allow rest for those who may have traveled long distances to attend.

There are also other hotel facilities in the Toril district within a kilometer or two outside the camp. However, the top five-star hotels are located in downtown Davao City (15 kilometers away). Multistar-rated international standard accommodations with room phone, hot and cold shower, cable TV, air-conditioning, refrigerator, etc., costs about \$35 per night and up depending on other added features and facilities. Top buffet meals are about \$10. Some already include taxes (about 15 percent) in their published rates while others have not. Rates, especially for accommodations, also depend on negotiated discounts.

Reservations: For more details, bookings or reservations, please contact our Davao festival coordinator: Edmond D. Macaraeg, P.O. Box 81315, 8000 Davao City, Philippines. His telephone number is +63 82 241-0733 and his mobile phone number 0919-553-0922. His e-mail address is: macaraeg@skynet.net.

Edmond Macaraeg

Iloilo City

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

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

A visit to Iloilo is a trip back to the past, without losing touch with the present. One can still find scores of neoclassical structures dotting the streets. Most of these are ancestral homes, mansions built during the Spanish era; reminiscent of a glorious past. Within the city, one can find a few surviving antique homes, another facet of Iloilo's rich heritage.

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

Morning services are a daily features

balanced by a variety of afternoon social activities and sports except on the Holy Days.

An added feature after the Feast is a side-trip to the world famous and one of the best beaches in the world, Boracay Island.

Reservations: For more details, bookings or reservations, contact Florante G. Siopan, P.O. Box 73, 6100 Bacolod City, Philippines. His telephone numbers are +63-34 708-3005 and +63-34 435-3231 or e-mail him at florante@babysky.net.ph.

Florante Siopan

Southern Africa

Uvongo, South Africa

This year the Feast of Tabernacles in southern Africa will again be observed in the small town of Uvongo, which is situated on the eastern coastline of South Africa. Uvongo is roughly a one-hour drive from Durban International Airport, so it is recommended that overseas visitors rent a car. Car rental companies such as Avis have offices at the Durban airport and will arrange to have the vehicle of your choice available upon arrival.

The climate is subtropical and the temperatures should reach the lower 70s Fahrenheit (lower 20s Celsius). Feastgoers should take note that the Feast falls during the rainy season.

Accommodations are mostly self-catering, with a wide variety of two- or three-bedroom holiday apartments available. Hotels are scarce, but there are two in close proximity to the meeting place. Since this area is a premier tourist attraction, there are many restaurants as well as shopping centers that cater to most requirements. Accommodation costs will range from US\$30 to US\$50 per day for self-catering units. Hotel rates fall into the same price range per person per day, inclusive of dinner, bed and breakfast.

Uvongo is situated close to a golf course and other sporting activities such as tennis, horse riding, swimming and surfing (the area enjoys a warm sea current).

There are also a number of scenic drives, such as the well-known Oribi Gorge. Another place of interest, especially for overseas visitors, is the Zulu village near Durban.

Attendance is expected to be about 180.

Reservations: Visitors interested in attending or who need more information, should contact André van Belkum by e-mail at andre_van_belkum@ucg.org or by telephone at +27 (31) 267-1109. If dialing from within South Africa the area code is 031.

Location of Services: Uvongo Town Hall.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

André van Belkum

Mumbwa, Zambia

A Feast is being planned in the Mumbwa District for the brethren in Zambia. Details were not available at press time.

Harare, Zimbabwe

Details were not finalized at press time for the Feast in Harare. For information, con-

tact Mrs. Heathcote by e-mail at mheathcote@hotmail.com, or write her at P.O. Box 6359, Harare, Zimbabwe, or telephone +263-4-885175.

André van Belkum

United States

Bend, Oregon

The Bend-Redmond area of central Oregon is the hub of the resort area in the Cascade Mountains. The beautiful scenery of snow-capped mountains, towering Ponderosa pines, sparkling lakes, and mountain streams with spectacular waterfalls, provides a millennial setting. Expect warm, sunny days and crisp, cool nights.

Services will be held in the newly constructed Deschutes County Fair and Expo Center, less than a mile from the Bend-Redmond airport. Air service is provided by United Express and Horizon airlines.

All types of housing are available from low-cost motel rooms (some with kitchenettes) to homes and condominiums with full kitchens, fireplaces and hot tubs at scenic resort properties. Prices range from \$27 to \$175 per night.

The Bend area offers a wide range of family-oriented activities. The nationally acclaimed High Desert Museum features impressive indoor natural history exhibits and live animal programs in an outdoor setting. Newberry National Volcanic Monument offers views of interesting features of the area's volcanic past. Crater Lake is another well known nearby scenic attraction. View the scenery via helicopter, private plane or the 38-mile Crooked River dinner train ride. Scenic tour maps are available to see the sights by car. Or, enjoy hiking or biking your choice of many miles of trail.

Other activities include horseback riding, hay rides, rock climbing, rock hounding, fishing, canoeing, boating and white water rafting on the world famous Deschutes River. Golfers will enjoy some of the nation's best courses with reasonable green fees. The Bend-Redmond area offers all the usual recreational activities such as movie theaters, health clubs, bowling, skating, miniature golf, go-carts, bumper cars and video games. Other facilities include art galleries, nature centers, observatories and lava caves.

Bend has three shopping malls, including a factory outlet mall. The small tourist town of Sisters is a must for window shopping and souvenirs. The resort community of Sunriver offers a wide range of dining, shopping and recreational opportunities in a spectacular forest setting.

Feastgoers will enjoy a full range of dining from all the usual fast-food places and delis to gourmet restaurants. Expected attendance will be approximately 1,000 to 2,000.

Location of Services: Deschutes County Fair and Expo Center, North Sister conference hall, 3800 SW Airport Way, Redmond, Oregon.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

Taxes: There is a 7 to 7.5 percent room tax. Oregon has no sales tax.

Larry J. Walker

Branson, Missouri

Now in its fifth year hosting the Feast, Branson again promises to be a very popular site. Situated near the Missouri-Arkansas line, Branson draws visitors from around the world. Famous for its beautiful scenery, crystal-clear lakes and music theaters, it offers something for almost everyone.

Branson is on two lakes in the hardwood forests of the Ozark mountains, and the fall foliage and scenery can be spectacular. It should be about at its peak during the Feast. Many hiking trails and secluded coves on the lakes add to the serene beauty of the area.

Branson is home to about 50 live theater shows. These range from such country stars as Mel Tillis, Roy Clark, Mo Bandy, Micky Gilley and the Sons of the Pioneers, to traditional long-time favorites such as the Lawrence Welk Orchestra with the Lennon Sisters, Andy Williams, Bobby Vinton, the Glen Miller Orchestra and the Platters. The area also hosts variety shows and such entertainers as Yakov Smirnoff, Jim Stafford, Spirit of the Dance Irish dance company and Shoji Tabuchi.

Branson is a favorite family site, with a wealth of attractions for the whole family. These include the very popular Silver Dollar City amusement park, patterned after an 1890's village complete with over 100 craftsmen. During the time of the Feast the National Crafts Festival will be featured at Silver Dollar City. Branson also has an IMAX theater, many go-cart tracks and miniature golf courses, museums, paddleboat rides on the lakes and a host of other family activities.

For golfing enthusiasts, the area has several fine PGA-rated golf courses. Fishing on Table Rock Lake and on Lake Taneycomo are both excellent. The area also boasts many unique shops, antique stores and three factory outlet malls.

A variety of housing is available in Branson, including resorts on the lakes, new high-rise hotels, condominiums and small motels in a quiet setting. For those who have heard horror stories about the traffic in Branson, you can relax. New roads completed in the last few years have greatly reduced traffic problems. For those here last year, the theater we are using this year has a level parking lot, instead of the hillside parking we had last year.

Whether you are looking for a site with lots of activities for the family, or a place to get away to the peace and quiet of nature, there is something for all in Branson.

Expected attendance is 1,600.

Location of Services: Baldknobbers Theater, West Hwy. 76, Branson, Missouri.

First Service: Saturday, October 14, 2000, at 10 a.m.

Taxes: Vary from 5.75 percent to 12 percent.

Michael Blackwell

Corpus Christi, Texas

Corpus Christi, "the sparkling city by the sea," is located on the Gulf of Mexico in southeast Texas. It is situated near the Padre Island National Seashore, the longest white, sandy beach in the world. Local attractions include tours of the Texas State Aquarium, authentic replicas of Columbus's fleet and the aircraft carrier USS *Lexington*.

Temperatures range from 60 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit (16 to 32 Celsius), with high humidity.

The Houston Intercontinental Airport is 215 miles away, and offers connecting flights to Corpus Christi. A rental car is advised for this site.

Room rates range from \$33 to more than \$80 per night, plus 13 percent tax. Condominiums are also available. Expected attendance is 1,100.

Location of Services: Bayfront Plaza Convention Center, 1901 N. Shoreline Drive, Corpus Christi, Texas.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000 at 7:30 p.m.

Taxes: Rooms subject to a 13 percent state and local tax. Sales tax is about 7 percent.

Britton Taylor

Escondido (San Diego), California

The San Diego area will host the 2000 Feast at the California Center for the Arts in Escondido, California. This is a beautiful fixed-seat concert auditorium with an adjoining museum and park. Escondido is a northern suburb of San Diego, about 30 minutes north of downtown San Diego and the Lindbergh International Airport. The airports

in Ontario and Orange County, California, are also about one hour away from the site.

Escondido offers less traffic congestion than the busier downtown areas of San Diego. North San Diego County also offers a variety of housing options from homes on the beach to economy properties. Housing prices range from \$32 to \$150 per night.

Available optional activities in the San Diego area include the world-famous San Diego Zoo, the Wild Animal Park, Sea World and Lego Land in nearby Carlsbad.

We will host a number of special activities for all age groups including a Family Day, teen activities, young adults activities, seniors' luncheon, a harbor cruise, a Hawaiian luau, a golf tournament and a special dinner-concert. We are expecting between 1,200 to 1,400 in attendance.

Average temperatures range from highs in the 80s Fahrenheit to lows in the 50s.

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

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

Taxes: There is a 10 percent tax on hotel rooms. The sales tax is 7.5 percent.

Dave Register

Estes Park, Colorado

Cradled in a mountain valley at the entrance to Rocky Mountain National Park is the popular resort town of Estes Park. The setting is magnificent and exhilarating, with clean mountain air, plentiful wildlife and majestic peaks.

Rocky Mountain National Park is the major attraction. The highway, which

reaches over 12,000 feet in elevation, is the highest paved through road in the United States. It rises well above the timberline and offers splendid views of peaks of the Colorado Rockies. Thousands of elk are in the area and can usually be seen anywhere from downtown Estes Park all the way to the higher elevations. Feast time is normally mating season, and it is common to see large bulls with a "harem" of 10 or 20 cows.

Other things to do in the area include visiting the downtown tourist and shopping district, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, miniature golf, rock climbing, mountain biking or even a trip to Denver or Boulder.

Though lower than other Colorado Feast sites used in the past, the elevation is 7,522 feet and warrants caution by anyone with heart or breathing difficulties. Driving time from Denver International Airport is approximately an hour-and-a-half, or a little longer by way of the scenic Big Thompson River Canyon route up Highway 34.

Although the Feast is later this year, restaurants and shops are still open this time of year. There is a wide variety of restaurants. They vary in quality, so a recommendation may be helpful.

With a later Feast the housing prices will be less expensive than in 1999. There is a broad range and diversity in housing as well, including more economical motels. If booking through one of the property management companies, we highly advise that you ask questions about what seems appealing. The Holiday Inn is very up-to-date and offers the enjoyable convenience of lodging in the facility where we meet.

The average high temperature in

October is 65 degrees Fahrenheit and the low around 25. One should be prepared for wintry weather, including snow, or balmy warm conditions. Attendance is anticipated to be around 700 to 800, but last year we had far more than we expected. More information is available from Estes Park, Colorado Visitors Information, 500 Big Thompson Ave., Estes Park, CO 80517. Phone (800) 443-7837 or look on the Web at www.estesnet.com.

Location of Services: Holiday Inn Conference Center, Highway 7 at Highway 36, Estes Park, Colorado.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

Taxes: Vary with location; 8.73 percent is most common.

Larry Neff

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Historic Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, will be our northeastern U.S. site for the Feast of Tabernacles. Located in the beautiful rolling hills of north central Pennsylvania, Gettysburg's scenic beauty and rich heritage will make it an excellent festival location.

Services will be held in the elegant ballroom of the Eisenhower Inn and Conference Center (www.eisenhower.com). Attached to the ballroom by wide, carpeted hallways is the 203-room inn (hotel) complete with on-site restaurant, lounge, deli, indoor pool and exercise room. Adjacent to the Eisenhower is the Allstar Family Fun and Sports Complex (www.allstarp.com), a 70,000-square-foot indoor recreation facility featuring indoor basketball, volleyball, batting cages, video arcade, billiards, etc. Also at the complex are two go-cart tracks, paddle boat lake, kiddie play area and a picnic pavilion.

Add to this the solemn significance to the United States of the events that have taken place in Gettysburg and we have a great family site. As our children visit area battle sites and attractions, they will be able to learn firsthand the suffering and destruction that war brings. The need for the fulfillment of the prophecy "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore," and "they shall beat their swords into plowshares" (Isaiah 2:4) should come to life while visiting Gettysburg.

Package tours of the Gettysburg area and trips to Washington D.C. and Baltimore (both less than a two-hour drive from the Eisenhower Inn) are in the planning stages.

Information about the Gettysburg area can be found on the Web at www.gettysburg.com or by writing to the Gettysburg Convention and Visitors Bureau at 35 Carlisle Street, Gettysburg, PA 17325, or calling them at (717) 334-6274.

Church updates on the Feast at Gettysburg can be found on the Web at www.ucgakron.org/feast2000.cfm. Expected attendance is 1,000.

Location of Services: Eisenhower Inn and Conference Center, 2634 Emmitsburg Road, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

Dave Myers

Festival 2000 Travel Program

The United Church of God has contracted with both Delta Airlines and Avis Car Rental for discounted Festival travel. Delta and Avis serve nearly all the U.S. Festival sites. When you book with Delta or Avis and provide the appropriate file number, the United Church of God is credited. The United Church of God earns complimentary airline tickets for every 40 booked reservations. Avis also has a similar program that provides free car rentals for official Church business. You may use your personal travel agent and still provide the Delta file number.

Of course if you find a better fare on a competing airline, buy it.

Airline Tickets

Delta Air Lines Delta Meeting Network (800) 241-6760

File # 160706A for U.S. sites

File # 160702A for Corpus Christi

- 10 percent discount off Delta's published round-trip fares, when booked 60 days or more in advance

- 5 percent discount off Delta's published round-trip fares

- Zone Fares—These special round-trip fares apply when not staying over a

Saturday night and may offer a benefit to those traveling to or from Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, San Juan, Nassau or U.S. Virgin Islands.

Car Rental

Avis Rent a Car (800) 331-1600
AWD # T292099

Special meeting rates at all Festival sites and rates for round-trip home city travel during the Festival period of October 10 to 24, 2000. If you drive from your home to the Feast with Avis, the same discounts apply.

Hawaii Festival Travel

Travel Gallery, Inc. (800) 858-6999

In reviewing the many travel options in today's market place, we recommend purchasing your Hawaii festival travel as a package from the airline and vacation operators. These package purchases result in a lower total cost when booking the airfare and car rental as a package. Even multi-island itineraries are possible. Gordon Barr in our office has been arranging such festival packages for many years and will be glad to assist you. He will need your names, dates of travel and size

of car. If you like you can e-mail him at gordon@travelgallery.com.

International Festival Travel

Travel Gallery, Inc. (800) 858-6999

Since 1984 our specialization with Festival travel has created thousands of rewarding journeys to more than 177 exciting sites in over 55 countries. We have not only traveled the world but have done so in conjunction with Festival observance. Our intimate knowledge of travel days, Sabbaths and Holy Days is coupled with a feeling for the tempo, excitement and deep spiritual significance of the Feast. We work with wholesalers and consolidators all across the country to supply the "unpublished street price" for international airline tickets. In addition, we provide bookings for rail passes, car/van rentals, pre/post-Festival hotel stays. Give us a call today!

Travel Gallery, Inc.

1388 E. Walnut Street
Pasadena, CA 91106

(626) 577-9717, (626) 577-0577 (fax)

info@travelgallery.com

www.travelgallery.com

CST# 1019830-40

Jekyll Island, Georgia

The Jekyll Island Festival site is located just off the coast of southern Georgia. Beautiful beaches, walking, hiking, fishing, golfing, tennis and wildlife viewing are available. A tour of Millionaires' Village is one of the highlight attractions. Horseback riding is available on St. Simons Island.

Temperatures range from 60 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit (16 to 24 degrees Celsius), with the possibility of rain. Major airports for arrival and departure are Savannah, Georgia; Brunswick, Georgia; and Jacksonville, Florida. A rental car is advised for this site. There is a toll to enter the island of \$3 per entry. Economy passes are available.

Room rates vary per night, with motels costing from \$46 to \$110 and condominiums from \$64 to \$150. Rental homes and cottages are available from \$35 to \$235 per day.

Expected attendance is 1,200.

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

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

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

Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii

The United Church of God will have the opportunity once again to meet in the Kauai War Memorial Convention Hall at Lihue, Kauai, for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Kauai is called the Garden Isle with good reason! It is the Hawaiian islands' most lush island, with verdant valleys, countless waterfalls and rivers and tropical gardens overflowing with exotic plants and flowers—a bounty of stunning color and beauty.

Kauai has more than 60 lovely beaches, from the famous Barking Sands Beach on the west, to Poipu Beach on the south, to the beaches of the Na Pali Coast on the north. Kauai also boasts the wettest place on earth—Mount Wai'ale'ale—with 480 inches of rain per year. (That's only in the center of the island; the rest of the island enjoys normal tropical weather.)

On the west side of the island is the famous Waimea Canyon, labeled by Mark Twain as the Grand Canyon of the Pacific—a spectacular sight indeed.

The convention hall in Lihue is an air-conditioned, theater-style auditorium. Housing will be available from Princeville near Hanalei, to Kapa'a, to Lihue, to Poipu. Prices for most hotel rooms and condominiums range from \$65 to about \$200 per night.

The island of Kauai is located approximately 100 miles from Honolulu. Hourly flights from Honolulu are available.

Daily temperatures should be in the 80s Fahrenheit (26 to 31 Celsius).

Expected attendance is about 500.

Location of Services: Kauai War Memorial Convention Center, Lihue, Hawaii.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7 p.m.

Taxes: State tax is 6 percent; hotel tax is 4.17 percent.

Earl Roemer

Louisville, Kentucky

Louisville is a warm and friendly destination sitting on the Ohio River. With its 2,500 restaurants and 80 attractions, there are plenty of choices available for everyone. Of course, Louisville hosts the Kentucky Derby, but it is also home to other exciting attractions such as the Kentucky Derby museum, the Louisville Slugger Museum and Bat Factory, and one of the world's best amusement parks, Kentucky Kingdom.

Louisville is also rich in the arts, with the nationally acclaimed Actors Theatre and Kentucky Center for the Arts, offering some of the country's finest performances. Shoppers enjoy everything from antiques to unique Kentucky crafts, and visitors find the world at their table through Louisville's impressive selection of fine restaurants.

This is scheduled to be the final year for the Feast in Louisville, so this is your last chance to attend in this "neck of the woods."

A big plus for those coming to Louisville for the Feast is the opportunity to stay in the facility where services are held. The Holiday Inn Airport South has a holiday, a restaurant and room service for everyone's convenience. For families as well as senior citizens this can be a big advantage. This year we plan to have several additional family activities available so that we can spend as much time together as possible. Our goal is to make this Feast the most family oriented you have ever experienced.

Housing costs will range from the upper \$30s to \$85 per night to accommodate all budgets. Several options involving suites and/or kitchenettes will also be available.

Temperatures should range from 55 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit (12 to 23 Celsius). The Louisville International Airport is five minutes from the Holiday Inn South where we will be holding services. Expected attendance is 850.

Come and enjoy the southern hospitality of Louisville, Looahvul or Looveyville—your kind of place any way you say it.

Location of Services: Holiday Inn Airport South, 3317 Fern Valley Road, Louisville, Kentucky.

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

Mark Winner

Panama City Beach, Florida

The Edgewater Beach Resort along the coastline of Panama City Beach will host the Feast of Tabernacles in Florida for 2000.

Edgewater's 110-acre gated community incorporates an array of activities and amenities sure to make a successful Feast with 11 swimming pools, 12 tennis courts, 11 shuffleboard courts, 4 hot tubs, a tanning salon, gift shop, game arcade, one full-service restaurant and a Pizza Hut.

A complimentary tram service is available for transportation across the resort and to the meeting facility if needed. The guest ser-

vice department will even do the shopping for you prior to your arrival and stock your pantry and refrigerator.

Part of the resort rests along the coastline recently returned to its original splendor through a \$21 million restoration project.



Panama City Beach, Florida

Step back a few yards from the ocean, and you'll find yourself on the deck surrounding Edgewater's famous Lagoon Pool. Landscaped islands and several flowing waterfalls find their way into this 11,000-square-foot Polynesian-style, free-form pool, while several whirlpools and reflecting ponds make this tropical area complete.

The other part of the resort, across the street connected by a 10-foot wide pedestrian walkway, houses the meeting facility and a cluster of luxurious golf villas; a nine-hole, par-three executive golf course with nine lakes and several island greens; a complete clubhouse and pro shop; 12 Plexicushion tennis courts with six lighted for night play; and also shuffleboard courts.

A new health club opens in 2000. This 1,500-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility will feature everything from cardiovascular exercise equipment to an aerobics salon to a massage therapy room.

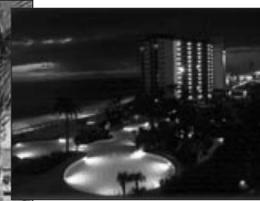
Housing: Approximately 70 percent of the units are oceanfront, which include studios, one-, two- and three-bedroom condominiums. The remaining condos surround the meeting facility and golf course. Some oceanfront condos owned by Edgewater are about a mile away and a few others are on another golf course nearby.

Economy housing accommodations will also be provided nearby and oceanfront.

Prices per night throughout Edgewater Resort will range from: studios, in the \$70s; one-bedroom, \$95 to \$115; two-bedroom, \$99 to \$135; and three-bedroom, \$119 to \$180. Nearby economy properties will range from \$25 to \$49.

Special Considerations: This will be a restricted site with anticipated attendance near 1,800. There is a possibility some requests will be denied. Do not make travel arrangement to this site until notification of approval at Sabbath services on May 13.

The long-term success of this site depends on members only using the housing listed in the brochure. The low price for the meeting facility will save the Church thousands of dollars the first year and Edgewater Resort is trusting the cooperation of our



members to use their housing. Some condos in the area may be less expensive, but the rates at Edgewater are

comparable and of dependable quality.

For more information, check out the resort's Web page at www.edgewater-beachresort.com.

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

First Service: Friday, October 13, 2000, at 7:30 p.m.

Taxes: 11.1 percent.

Harold Rhodes

Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

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

Services will be held at the beautiful Crystal Grand Music Theater. This modern facility seats more than 1,400 people and is ideal for fellowship. Parking is conveniently located next to the facility.

The Dells offers a nice variety of motels, homes, cottages and condominiums in various price ranges. Several facilities offer large indoor water parks and whirlpool suites, so ask about them when making reservations. All establishments require a housing deposit, so please check when making reservations. Also, cancellation policies vary, so check with the establishment.

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

The Madison, Wisconsin, airport is an hour's drive from the Dells. The Milwaukee airport is two hours away and Chicago's O'Hare airport is three hours by car. The weather during the Feast can vary from beautiful fall weather to the possibility of colder autumn temperatures. Additional information about the Dells site and surrounding area can be found on the Web at www.ucg-beloit/dells. Expected attendance is 800.

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

First Service: Friday, October 13, at 7:30 p.m. The next service will be at 10 a.m., Sabbath, October 14.

Taxes: Local tax is 5.5 percent and hotel tax is 11 percent.

Steve Nutzman

Night to Be Much Observed: Keeping the Vigil

by Larry W. Greider

The NTBMO is a rather cryptic anagram that would be hard to understand for someone not attending God's Church. Affectionately known as the Night to Be Much Observed, this yearly observance is always celebrated on the beginning of the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

Ancient Custom

Exodus 12:42 mentions, "It is a night of solemn observance to the LORD for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the LORD, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations" (emphasis added throughout).

This must have been a time of attentiveness to every nuance of the dramatic details that were enfolding around them.

Traditionally we gather in one another's homes or assemble together as a group in a private room and enjoy a fine meal and fellowship.

The solemn observance that this evening commemorates took place at the beginning of the exodus out of Egypt. It must have been a night of grave concern and apprehension. After living for generations in the fertile Nile delta, the Israelites were ready to move on with their lives and go to the land promised to their fathers. The origin of the word *observe* has the sense of guarding or watching. In the margin of my New King

James translation for Exodus 12:42 it says, "*night of vigil.*" The New International Version says: "Because the LORD kept vigil that night to bring them out of Egypt, on this night all the Israelites are to keep vigil to honor the LORD for the generations to come."

Being alert and vigilant certainly are vital characteristics for Christians to have while living in a foreign country or in an age that Paul calls "this present evil age" (Galatians 1:4).

The concept of keeping a vigil is also mentioned in Exodus 12:37-42 in the Jerusalem Bible, Readers' edition:

"The sons of Israel left Rameses for Succoth, about six hundred thousand on the march—all men—not counting their families. People of various sorts joined them in great numbers; there were flocks, too, and herds in immense droves.

"They baked cakes with the dough, which they had brought from Egypt, unleavened because the dough was not leavened; they had been driven out of Egypt, with no time for dallying, and had not provided themselves with food for the journey. The time that the sons of Israel had spent in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And on the very day the four hundred and thirty years end, all the army of Yahweh left the land of Egypt.

"The night, when Yahweh kept vigil to bring them out of the land of Egypt, must be kept as a vigil in honor of Yahweh for all their generations."

the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

Christ Asked Disciples to Watch

Prior to Christ's trial and persecution leading up to His crucifixion, He went to a private place to pray.

In Matthew 26:36-46 we read the account. Three times he asked Peter and the two sons of Zebedee to "watch with Me." Each time He returned to check on them, they were asleep. In verse 41 Christ entreated them, "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." When the hour came for Jesus to be betrayed, they were still sleeping. They provided little companionship during this most intense time.

What is the meaning of this word *watch* used by Christ? *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* says it comes from the Greek word *gregoreo* and is used in the sense of keeping awake and spiritual alertness. Some good references are found in Acts 20:31, 1 Corinthians 16:13, Colossians 4:2 and 1 Thessalonians 5:6. The context of the word *watch* is in reference to a spiritual condition of alertness. Christ's instruction is to prevent us becoming unwitting dupes of Satan and falling to temptation or becoming entangled with distractions. We are to be spiritually alert. This requires placing our priorities above diversions and enticements.

In Mark's account in chapter 14:37, Christ said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour?" It is difficult to keep focused on our calling and remain very vigilant against the temptations and pulls of the flesh. If anyone thinks the Christian calling is easy, he doesn't grasp the challenge. It was once said that Christianity isn't difficult to find, but that it was found difficult and not tried.

Stay Vigilant

Paul reminds us all that we must continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving (Colossians 4:2). We live in a fascinating and frightening world in which it is easy to be distracted and fall asleep spiritually. Perhaps in God's wisdom, the Holy Day cycle starts off with fellowship among true believers who realize the vital importance of remaining on guard and vigilant against a powerful fallen archangel who wants to hinder us from being a part of the family of God.

This NTBMO, let's learn the lesson of vigilance. It is always inspiring to look up at the full moon and remember that God's way will be a lamp unto our feet and illuminate the journey to which He has called us. Enjoy! But be on guard, for the days are evil and our deliverance to a new world depends on our following God the Father and Jesus Christ our Savior. *UV*

Leavening: Symbol of Deadly Spiritual Infection

by Mark Mickelson

Pride puffs us up. That is a vital lesson of leavening that we are all familiar with. We talk about people having a big head, thinking they are big stuff. Vanity and arrogance truly are dangerous to our spiritual health. They can lead us to cut ourselves off from God, leading to spiritual death!

But the puffed up stage of leavening is not immediate. It takes time for tiny yeast microorganisms to multiply and spread. By the time swelling comes, the process—the infection—is well along. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump" (1 Corinthians 5:6-7). They were exposing themselves to infection, instead of quarantining the one who was spreading wrong attitudes.

Think of leavening as an analogy of disease cells in the body that must be killed or removed. If you get to them quickly, then you can prevent further damage. But unchecked, the infection grows out of control and can lead to our death.

Biological and Chemical Warfare

For a week each year we can think of leavening as a weapon of Satan. The leavening we avoid comes in two types: biological (yeast) and chemical (baking powder and baking soda). Biological and

chemical weapons are among the most feared types of warfare today. And so their spiritual counterpoints should be to the Christian.

Some of the gases that have been used in chemical war can incapacitate a man in concentrations as little as one part in 10 million. How much sin can we touch and say, "that won't hurt me"? The only true protection is to get away from the cause.

God gives us the power, through His Holy Spirit, to address the cause of the infection, the sin. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

Replacing the Leaven

The old leaven must be put out and replaced by the Holy Spirit. You can't get rid of poisoned air in your lungs without taking in good air to replace it. If a new man is not created after the old man is put away in baptism, the old man simply rises to live again.

Sin is a dangerous infection to be avoided at all costs. As you set aside the bread, the croutons—the leavening—this year, think about putting out the infection of sin. As we eat the unleavened bread, we can be reminded we are not just putting sin out, but God is putting His nature in. *UV*



Photo © PhotoDisc, Inc.

Being alert and vigilant certainly are vital characteristics for Christians to have while living in a foreign country or in an age that Paul calls "this present evil age."

The Torah also uses this same terminology concerning verse 42: "the same night is the LORD's one of vigil."

Lessons for Our Day

When we gather together with friends on this Sabbath eve, what lessons are we to focus on? We live in a world that is full of evil and the way of truth and righteousness is far from the minds of most. Did Christ want the anxious Israelites to look to God for deliverance and also to learn the value of being vigilant in a very hostile environment?

Peter mentioned in 1 Peter 5:8: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary

Repentance Is for Christians

by Cecil E. Maranville

“Have you repented of your sins and accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior?” Most will immediately recognize these words as part of our baptismal ceremony. Repentance is an essential prerequisite to becoming a Christian. But what do all the scriptures about repentance mean for those who already are baptized Christians?

At baptism the old self is buried. Paul wrote of this truth in Romans 6:6, “Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with [Christ], that the body of sin might be done away with [rendered inoperative], that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”

Of course, we know that baptism does not put an end to our human nature. (If only it did!) Neither does it put an end to the need for repentance. Repentance is not only for those who want to become Christians. Repentance is for Christians.

How a Christian Might Sin

What type of sin can or does a Christian—the man or woman who keeps both the laws of man and the laws of God—commit? I would like to take you back to the city of Rome when the Church was first founded there. Paul compares and contrasts the converted Jews with the converted gentiles, all members of the fledgling Church of God.

He wrote of the fact that people can sin “in the law”—that is, in a law-abiding culture (meaning God’s laws) such as the Jewish culture in which those Christian Jews grew up (Romans 2:12). He explained that living in a law-abiding culture could lead one to the false assumption that since the law is all around him, it is also in him. The gentile Christians, in contrast to the Jews, did not live

for a long time in a law-abiding environment before their conversion. Nonetheless, it was possible for these gentiles to have the law in them (Romans 2:13–15).

In the first chapter of this book, Paul addresses some grossly immoral acts taking place in the general populace at Rome. In the third verse of the second chapter, we read the startling facts that the Roman Christians were practicing such things, too—and were in danger of God’s judgment! While some members at Rome may have slipped back into these overtly immoral sins, we don’t want to overlook the less obvious, but just as serious, sins of the mind.

If you read the list of sins being committed in the general populace (Romans 1:29–31), you will see several that are sins of the mind—often also expressed by words. Some of them were: covetousness, maliciousness, envy, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness, whisperers, backbiters, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, undiscerning, unforgiving and unmerciful.

It seems that these sins were put on a par with blatantly immoral behavior. Could that be so? Why should thoughts and words be considered on a par with plainly sinful actions?

Christ answers this with, “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” He added, “For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned” (Matthew 12:34, 37). Our words mirror our thoughts. Our thoughts reflect our character. To know if we need to repent, we need to look not only at sinful actions, but at the thoughts that spring from our minds and the words that tumble from our lips.

Thoughts and the words that they engender can corrupt spiritual character.

Addressing criticism that His disciples did not wash in accord with Pharisaic tradition, Christ said: “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart...proceed evil thoughts...covetousness...deceit...pride, [and] foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man” (Mark 7:20–23).

Sins of the mind and the mouth actually break the law just as much as the transparently obvious sins that we repented of before baptism (James 4:11–12). People who would never commit a murder would not hesitate to destroy a life with words. “The hypocrite with his mouth,” says the proverb, “destroys his neighbor” (Proverbs 11:9).

Gossip and judging are only two sins of the mind and the mouth. Let’s look at others.

Sins of the Mind and the Mouth

Peter wrote of “laying aside” or repenting of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and evil speaking (1 Peter 2:1). Malice is a desire to hurt someone. Sometimes people kid themselves by thinking that it’s OK to hurt someone who “deserves it.” Deceit is misrepresentation. You might recall the fundamental law of God, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Exodus 20:16). It is a sin to misrepresent the facts about others. It is also a sin to misrepresent Christ, appearing to be a Christian on the outside, while thinking like a carnal person on the inside. That also relates to hypocrisy. Envy or jealousy is a sin of the mind that may be invisible. It can be disguised as criticism or resentment of others. Evil speaking brings us not only to the subject of gossip, but also to that of simply saying unkind things.

In some ways, repentance means becoming like a child again, like the tenderhearted person that you were when you first repented and sought baptism (1 Peter 2:2). Do we sometimes confuse these qualities with weakness or naiveté, seeking to excuse our sins of the mind in the name of being “mature Christians”? A long time in the Church environment is not license to sin.

Sins of Commission and Omission

There are sins of commission as well as sins of omission—that is, not only doing what we should not do, but also leaving off what should be done. Not only do you not lie; you tell the truth! It can be sin to fail to act with righteous indignation against a wrong. It is also a sin to fail to put an end to your anger.

Not only do you not steal; you work for a living. Not only do you avoid saying the wrong thing; you work at saying the right thing. Not only do you avoid damaging thoughts and words; you choose and use forgiving thoughts and kind words. Failure to do this “grieves the Holy Spirit”—that is, it is sin (Ephesians 4:25–32).

The teaching of God, is to take sin seriously—all sin. That’s the meaning of Christ’s sobering admonition, “If your hand or foot

causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire” (Matthew 18:8).

Corinth was infamous for its sins of the flesh, but the apostle Paul made it clear to the Church there that sins of the mind and the mouth were just as serious. The RSV lists “quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness [NIV ‘factions’], slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder” in 2 Corinthians 12:20, along with “immorality and licentiousness.” These sins are all covered in the word *uncleanness* or impurity in verse 21. Paul was plain about the fact that any of these sins could cause a Christian to be taken out of the Church.

Blessings of True Repentance

Why should a Christian repent? Based on what we just read, one obvious answer is that failing to repent may cause us to be taken out of the Church. Secondly, failing to repent hurts the Church—both the entire Body of Christ and the local congregation. And thirdly, failing to repent damages relationships with other people.

Les McCullough wrote of still another reason in a recent letter, saying, “The blessings of true repentance are great and eternal.” Let’s call that a fourth reason—to enjoy the blessings of true repentance.

What are they? Here are three: forgiveness, humility and access to God.

How wonderfully encouraging to know that we can be and are totally forgiven when we repent—just as clean as when first baptized. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). How discouraging to think about if we were never forgiven. Forgiveness is a priceless blessing for the repentant.

A humble person is better able to get along with others. He’s approachable, and he’s not likely to be quick to condemn anyone else. He or she is a better spouse, parent or child—a better member of the Church (Romans 12:3, 14–16).

Finally, a person who repents has access to the great God. Sin blocks communication with and help from God. It’s not that He is limited in any way. Sin is simply that damaging. “Your iniquities have separated you from your God,” wrote the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 59:2). The same prophet was stirred to write about the way to open contact with our Creator: “On this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word” (Isaiah 66:2).

Repentance is for Christians. It’s as necessary to continue to seek spiritual cleansing throughout our Christian lives as it is when we first ask God to forgive our sins. The words of our baptismal ceremony still apply: “Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? Are you *still* repenting of your sins?” *UN*

Anticipating Unleavened Bread

by Mary Ann Aust

My mother, Dorothy Williams, kept her first Feast in 1949. This means that I’ve kept 52 Unleavened Bread seasons (and I’m only 39 and holding!). Each one has special meaning to me, and more so since I have been able to share it with my family. Each Unleavened Bread, we anticipate the recipes exclusive to this special time.

As a wife and mother, I’ve tried to concentrate making these seven days something special to look forward to. Work and school lunches can be exciting meals, prepared without leaven and filled with savory tastes.

We always involved our children in the menu planning during these special days. We taught them that meals without leavening could be tasty and exciting. It became fun to honor God. The kids loved this and it taught them God’s way in the process.

What foods did we consume during this special time? Commercial products that we can look forward to are Triscuits, corn

tortillas, Ry Krisps and the many delicious flavors of matzos. Some health food stores even have unleavened bread called Manna. Be sure to check ingredients.

A few of our favorite main dishes during this season include beef Wellington (made with phyllo dough), prime rib with Yorkshire pudding, shepherd pie, quiche, tacos, enchiladas, crepes and any pasta (including spaghetti, fettuccini alfredo and lasagna). I enjoy preparing unleavened pound cake, brownies, pies, Mississippi mud cake, cheesecake with butter crunch crust, lemon bars, Chinese chews, apple crisp and baklava. Breakfast creations can include popovers and Swedish pancakes.

You’ll find some recipes in the April/May issue of *Virtual Christian Magazine*, on the Web at vcmagazine.org.

During the past 52 Unleavened Bread seasons, I’ve discovered many helpful hints by sharing recipes with others. I hope your unleavened meals become extra special for your entire family. *UN*

The Metamorphosis of Firstfruits

by Graemme Marshall

A butterfly lays eggs, but no beautiful winged insect hatches. Instead a creepy crawly caterpillar! Then, when a grown caterpillar turns into a pupa inside a chrysalis, nothing remains unchanged: jaws, claws, legs, digestive system, even its shape all disappear. The ugly crawling grub vanishes and in its place is a gorgeous butterfly!

Is the miracle of metamorphosis mainly a lesson for humans? God has ordained a witness in creation that illustrates the transformation needed for humans to become spirit. It is the firstfruits who will first transform into a different state of being at Christ's return.

Transformation

Transformation has been a constant theme ever since creation. It's essential within God's Church in the lives of the saints. Transformation is to change, modify, alter or, in New Testament terminology, to convert. It means to restructure and reorganize from within. Much of nature reflects the miracle of transformation.

Few things are as beautiful as butterflies. Before a butterfly becomes an adult, it must go through a complete four-stage metamorphosis: egg, larva (worm or caterpillar), pupa (or chrysalis) and then the adult butterfly. We can assume God designed these life cycles to teach us a lesson. The metamorphosis of the caterpillar into a butterfly is an obvious one. If the repulsive, greedy, earthbound caterpillar portrays humanity in their lowly sin-filled state, then transformation into the butterfly is a lesson in our need for a spiritual birth (John 3:3, 5, 7).

The Black Swallowtail Butterfly

The black swallowtail is one of the most common species in North America. Extensions on its rear wings look like the swallow's tail. Its four life stages take only a few weeks. The female flies about searching for members of the parsley family and on them deposits its eggs. The eggs hatch in 10 days. The caterpillars then feed on the leaves of the host plant and grow rapidly.

When fully grown, the skin splits at its head and gets cast aside. The new covering hardens and then for about 10 days the chrysalis rests. If the chrysalis formed in late summer, it will actually remain dormant over winter. (What signals it to do this?)

Next, the butterfly forces the top of the chrysalis open. During this struggle, fluid is pumped into the wing veins. They expand for an hour or more until they are so large it's difficult to imagine they were previously folded inside the pupa case. Without the struggle, the beautiful wings wouldn't form. At last the magnificent butterfly is ready for flight, only to survive a few weeks, then lay eggs for the next generation.

What starts as a caterpillar undergoes a radical change in body shape. After growing

through a number of molts, it becomes a pupa. Inside the pupa shell the caterpillar's tissues are reorganized. The adult that emerges is quite different from the larva and will lead a distinctly different lifestyle. The butterfly emerges fully grown and does not have to grow up like a baby chick. We could say it comes forth resurrected. It's almost immediately capable of winging its way across an ocean. In our resurrection and new state of being, will we too instantly be able to "wing across the oceans"?

Reflections on the Process

It's easy to connect the Holy Spirit as the invisible power at work within us. It's changing us from what birth bestowed into another state. We are in-between, part spirit yet still very earthly and very much tied to our environment. Paul described this conversion process as putting "off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:22-24, NIV throughout).

Paul further illustrated our change this way: "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed" (Romans 8:18-19). And that change will be instantaneous: "Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

The witness of metamorphosis is also evident in the analogy God uses of a potter and clay.

"Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8). Jeremiah was also told by God: "Go down to the potter's house.... So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him" (Jeremiah 18:2-4).

Properties of Clay

Good clay is soft, pliable, plastic—capable of being molded or shaped. The clay is beaten and pummeled to get rid of air pockets or hard lumps. At this stage it can be pounded, flattened, rolled, pinched, coiled, pressed, thrown on the wheel, cast into a mold, shredded, pierced, stamped, extruded, cut or spun. This could describe our Christian trials! Our confidence is that the Master Potter is in control of the process.

The potter places the clay into the dead center of the wheel to maintain the correct shape. As he works, water has to be constantly added to keep the clay pliable. This would be similar to the Holy Spirit's influence to keep us teachable. Without that influence, we harden and ultimately dry up spiritually.

If the shape is not working out right, the potter just pummels it down again and remolds it. When the clay is soft and pliable, it takes only light pressure from the potter to bring about the desired shape. Consider God's molding and shaping of you down through your conversion years.

Once shaped the vessel is far from finished. The outward form is there, but several important steps are yet to take place. Air drying must be at the right temperature. As the pots dry, they get lighter in color. Consider this expression: "A clay pot sitting in the sun will always be a clay pot. It has to go through the white heat of the furnace to become porcelain." What would you rather be—a clay pot or a piece of Lladro fine porcelain?

Now the clay pot is ready for the fiery furnace. Again the temperature must be just right. Too low and the pottery will be soft, too high and it will warp. After this firing the shape is permanently set.

Firstfruit Parallels

Our fiery trials are not to destroy, but to test, harden and shape us in right character. Once our character is set we will have an unchangeable righteousness, as God is now. The pots then have a glaze for decoration. What was once just a lump of clay is now transformed into exquisite pottery.

The highlight of all creation is mankind, thinking beings made in God's own image (Genesis 1:26-27). David said, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14), and our human body is truly the supreme miracle. Scientists say it is the most incredible piece of "machinery." Our physical bodies are programmed by God to go through life-stages of transformation.

One of the most exciting events that occur is the birth of children. Their brand-new facial expressions reflect total innocence. They are bundles of joy eager to learn, to walk, to talk. Youngsters are still childlike, trusting and teachable, but now emerges a distinctive personality with its own unique character traits.

The teen years might be likened to the final cocoon stage—dramatic physical and emotional changes, with a growing desire for independence (to break out of the cocoon). Now comes an asserting of one's own independence and a sense of identity.

During the adult years, learning still goes on, especially in the truth, with a new way to act and think. As the years pass the facial expressions show age lines from accumulated stress and worry that is part of adulthood. As the years pass, wisdom is built upon life's experiences and white hair becomes a badge of maturity. The facial expression can be one of serenity, at peace with oneself.

Death is inevitable. Before this the final questions have to be pondered: What is life? What happens after death? Will I ever see my loved ones again? We will emerge from death a totally different being.

The Universe Too Is a Witness

Most people who live in cities find that the street lights, neon signs and freeway lighting virtually obscure the heavens. A shepherd, like David, would have found no such distortion to the clarity of the heavens.

David, in searching the sky, pondered: "When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:3-4).

Earth is minuscule compared to other large planets. It is a dwarf physically, but gargantuan in what God is doing here.

Earth is just the right distance from the sun, the right size for the plan, the right atmosphere—everything just right for life. We are born on a very small part of a gigantic, uninhabited, lifeless star system that before telescopes and satellites couldn't be fully appreciated.

A good question is this: If the stars were only created for a covering at night to be seen with our eyes, why did God bother with the vastness of a universe?

What is it all for? As the Hubble telescope probes further into space, it brings greater humility when we consider its massive size. The universe gives a comparison with the glorified, resurrected state. Speaking of that, Paul compared our transformed state with the heavenly bodies: "The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor" (1 Corinthians 15:41).

As transformed saints, will we have a starry quality unique to ourselves?

Beauty From Desolation

An example of transformation is the Butchart Gardens in Victoria, British Columbia. These gardens were originally the limestone-exhausted quarry of Robert Butchart of Portland Cement.

The quarry's desolate bleakness offended the sensitive feelings of his wife, and she began a hobby garden there in 1904. In time that hobby garden developed into the gorgeous 130-acre, world-famous tourist attraction of today. It shows that beauty can be developed from desolation. God started the process in re-creating the earth from *tohu* and *bohu* (the Hebrew words translated "without form and void" in Genesis 1:2).

Desolation within human hearts is already being changed through the invisible presence of the Holy Spirit. It's changing the internal structures of firstfruit minds and hearts. A beauty of attitude, thought and action should result. When complete, we will break out of this constricting, earthly shell into the star-like magnificence of a glorified state. And perhaps, if intended by God, expand into a mega-beautifying project throughout our gigantic universe.

Are you busy with your job of transformation? *UN*

Hammering Out Differences or Making Peace?

by Stephen D. McNeely

American politician Hubert H. Humphrey once said, "Freedom is hammered out on the anvil of discussion, dissent and debate." In our democratic societies we attempt to settle disagreements with rhetoric rather than revolvers. What about those in God's Church who have differences? Should we forge agreement with hammer blows? Will forceful rhetoric bring us to consensus?

A War of Words

Let's consider this in light of the greatest blot on U.S. history. Today it is difficult to imagine anyone who would not condemn slavery as a damaging and tremendously sinful wrong. Yet it was not always so. For years the debate about slavery raged and words sharp as lances flew across the country. In his book *The Approaching Fury*, Stephen B. Oates recreates the events that led to the United State's worst disaster by speaking in the first person through 13 of the influential thinkers, writers and speakers of the day.

The influential and zealous abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison wrote the following: "[The slave] system has no redeeming feature, but is full of blood—the blood of innocent men, women and babies—full of adultery and concupiscence—full of blasphemy, darkness and woe—full of rebellion against God, and treason against the universe—full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores—full of temporal suffering and eternal damnation—full of wrath, and impurity, and ignorance, and brutality, and awful impiety..."

When George Fitzhugh, a southern patrician and the self-styled "voice of slave society" penned a response in defense of slavery as an institution, Mr. Garrison responded that Mr. Fitzhugh's writing "is a shallow, impudent, and thoroughly satanic work and he is evidently a moral lunatic. Mr. Fitzhugh is the Don Quixote of Slavedom—only still more demented than his 'illustrious predecessor.' He is certainly crack-brained, and deserves pity rather than ridicule or censure."

Mr. Garrison obviously felt that his position was righteous and as such justified the bitter condemnation of the opposition from the South. Mr. Garrison and Mr. Fitzhugh jostled with their pens, but what was the result of this conflict? Was it a bringing together, a meeting of the minds, a seeking of commonality and eventual unity of thought and purpose? Of course not. We can look back through the decades to easily identify these two men's words as adding fuel to the fire that eventually erupted into the inferno we call the Civil War.

Today, everywhere you look there is conflict and strife, debate and discussion. Americans can see opposing views aired

with distinction on CNN's *Crossfire* or NBC's *Meet the Press*. Or watch as the ignorant and unfortunate are goaded into exploding their most intimate conflicts into entertainment on exploitation television such as *The Jerry Springer Show*. Conflict, strife, debate and discussion are ubiquitous.

The German philosopher Freidrich Nietzsche said: "We would not let ourselves be burned to death for our opinions: we are not sure enough of them for that. But, perhaps for the right to have our opinions—for that we would burn." We treasure them, we hold them dear, we preach them as dogma to all who would listen, and we will dismiss them only after the fiercest and most painful struggle. They are our opinions.

And so it is even in the Body of Christ. Among people there will always be differences of opinion—even about the truth of God. Of course, there is absolute truth that flows from the mind of God. But, we are weak, human and our search for truth and its application marches on. How should we manage our differences?

We must understand that conflict is not the same as disagreement. It is possible to argue or discuss issues in a positive way where iron sharpens iron. Granted, it may not happen very often, especially when our level of maturity is low or our emotional involvement high. Conflict, though, is disagreement so pointed and protracted that it cracks the sheen of harmony and causes separation between people.

Conflict Versus Peace

Perhaps the negative impact of conflict can best be understood by contrasting it with peace. With peace there is freedom from quarrels and disagreement. With peace comes inner contentment and a feeling of serenity.

Let's read a few key scriptures and understand our heavenly Father's mind on these matters. "But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition" (2 Timothy 2:23-25). Our society tenaciously seeks to uncover and then air disputes. Do you and I? Paul taught Timothy to avoid strife.

Notice what James writes. "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits,

without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (James 3:13-18).

Making Peace

We need to prayerfully consider this instruction asking God to give us an honest look into the window of our own heart. We've all felt the bile of anger, bitterness and frustration rise in our throats when others disagree with us. James is really saying to you and me: Don't kid yourself! It doesn't matter how "right" we are, how clever and forceful our rhetoric or how civil our discourse. If these attitudes are present, great evil is causing them to bubble up.

The wisdom from God is pure, peaceable, gentle, merciful, positive, consistent and willing to yield. This wisdom cannot be crammed down someone else's throat in the name of truth. It is broadcast in peace by those who want to make peace. Christ taught us, as His disciples, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9). This means action! You and I could separate ourselves from the rest of humanity, live in a cave on a remote mountain and have perfect peace. That is not what Christ meant. A peacemaker is in the middle of it all with sleeves rolled up and is on a mission to create peace where once there was conflict—to create serenity where once there was separation.

Even if we "win" the argument by the sheer weight of our logic and the power of our unrelenting attack, what good is it if we have offended our brother or sister and damaged a relationship?

To me, this presents one of the greatest challenges in light of the current realities in the Church. How do we hone our convictions so we are willing to die for God and at the same time share our beliefs in a godly manner when necessary? How do we avoid giving unnecessary offense? (Christ said many would be offended because of the gospel message, not because of the messenger.) Here are a few of the many ways we could properly manage differences of opinion today. Perhaps you can add to the list.

1. Wisely determine if the topic under discussion is worth the time, effort and emotional investment for all concerned. Or

is it trivial and do we find ourselves arguing for the sake of argument?

Some people love to immerse themselves in any and all disputes, gnawing on them like a dog worries over a bone. This is not godly! Do we love to hear the latest bad news? Do we eagerly watch for some new controversy within the Church so we can jump in the middle of it? We mustn't kid ourselves—this is not godly!

2. When involved in a difference of opinions, we should examine our spirit—our feelings—deeply. Do we feel angry, bitter, determined to get our way, upset, resentful of the "opposition" and condemning of others?

It would be so much better for us to sit on the sidelines, keep quiet and pray for God to help our attitude than to dive into the middle of a conflict. We must make no mistake. To do otherwise may be a serious sin in the sight of God.

3. Consider the result of the debate. Is it godly edification and true growth? Do all part as friends? Are you and I *making* peace? Or, does the schism widen with each point we drive home with our compelling rhetoric like the blow of a hammer on a chisel?

What good is it to win the battle if it hastens the loss of the war? Even if we "win" the argument by the sheer weight of our logic and the power of our unrelenting attack, what good is it if we have offended our brother or sister and damaged a relationship? Whatever temporary satisfaction we may feel by winning the day will long fade with the blood, sweat and tears we may shed toiling to mend the cracks our hammer blows have wrought.

On April 12, 1861, all the passionate, but useless, rhetoric was buried under artillery fire and the United States was plunged into a bloody, protracted war. Pens were laid to rest and naked, unsheathed swords flashed in the sunlight. Six hundred thousand brothers died and \$5 billion in property was destroyed. Benjamin Franklin's words rang true: "There is no such thing as a good war or a bad peace." Total destruction is the destination of Satan's path.

No, God's truth is not hammered into anyone by sharp, iron blows on any anvil. As Christ's disciples we should always be ready to give an answer for our beliefs *with meekness and fear!* It will take God's help and the Holy Spirit to enable us to be as convicted and courageous as Stephen, but as harmless as the Lamb. God's truth should be carried in a crystal goblet and poured gently to begin to quench the thirst of those parched nearly unto death.

Since you and I are privileged to carry that truth, we need to learn how to *make* peace even as we settle differences of opinion. Then we shall be called the sons and daughters of God! *UN*

Local Church Updates...

Chris Thomas Merits Eagle Scout Award

On July 11, 1999, Chris Thomas, 17, of the Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation, was presented with the Boy Scouts of America's highest award—Eagle Scout. Chris' service project was assembling and



Chris Thomas

installing playground equipment and basketball hoops for the schools in his hometown, Durand, Illinois.

Chris earned more than 20 merit badges in everything from astronomy to woodcarving. His leadership experiences include den chief, historian, patrol leader, senior patrol leader and junior assistant scoutmaster.

At the ceremony Chris accompanied Derek Simons, who sang "On Eagles Wings." He also thanked his parents, Steve and Alice Thomas, and others for their support.

Bonnie Strass

Houston Throws Second Annual Barn Dance

Over 250 brethren enjoyed the Houston area's second annual barn dance on Saturday evening, January 15, at Regal Ranch in Stafford, Texas. We welcomed guests from



Dancing at the Houston Barn Dance

Dallas, East Texas and other parts of our region to enjoy live music provided by the Buster Curry Band. The authentic barn was decorated with Texas sunflowers, bluebonnets, coyotes and cactus and the weather was so pleasant that guests were able to enjoy fellowship outside of the barn under the wide open Texas sky. Small children were thrilled by the inflatable "moonwalk" that kept them occupied most of the evening.

A traditional Texas barbecue dinner was served followed by dancing until midnight. The band played a variety of musical selections as patrons danced the cotton-eyed Joe, jitterbug, waltz as well as traditional Western

dances. All agreed that this event is worth doing again. The third annual barn dance is currently scheduled for January 13, 2001!

Ken Giese

Mini-Courses Top Off Millennium

Attendees from far-flung places experienced a jam-packed schedule from December 25 to 29, 1999, for the Dallas/Fort Worth Mini-Courses. Everything took place in the Dallas South church hall in DeSoto, Texas, a suburb of Dallas. The activities began with a family dance Saturday evening, with about 85 in attendance. The high attendance of the week was Sunday with 134 at the seminar on prophecy by Don Ward.

A large percent of the attendees were from North Texas, but members also came from Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado,



Teddi Treybig teaches at Dallas/Fort Worth Mini-Courses

Kansas, Indiana, Ohio, Alabama, Florida, Arkansas, Louisiana, and other parts of Texas. Some stayed in members' homes and others in motels and campers.

There was an interesting mix of people including about six high school students and about six college students. For some, these courses stimulated their desire to eventually go to the Ambassador Bible Center.

The seminars on Sunday were Courtship and Marriage by Ken Treybig, Prophecy by Dr. Ward and Relationships in the Workplace by Teddi Treybig. Mrs. Treybig's seminar applied the Myers-Briggs (personality) Type Indicator to the subject of how to maintain the best possible relationships at work.

Monday through Wednesday Dr. Ward conducted two classes, Haggai and Zechariah, and Elements of Salvation. Each day Gary Antion conducted two classes, Building and Nourishing a Lasting Marriage and a survey of the book of 1 Peter.

Several people commented that the week seemed like the Feast of Tabernacles, with all the spiritual and physical food and great fellowship. The fellowship at breaks, lunch periods and evenings was considered an important part of the benefits.

The event was hosted by the Dallas North and Dallas South congregations, pastored by Frank McCrady and Don Hooser.

Don Hooser

Quant Ranch Hosts BBQ

The Fort Worth, Texas, congregation enjoyed a pleasant afternoon October 24, 1999, at the 150-acre ranch of the Quant family. Skip, Michelle, Andrew, Angela and Emily provided fun for all ages, starting with a hayride from the parking area.

All enjoyed a catered meal of chicken and beef BBQ, followed by tours of the Quant's new home and property, then a variety of games. Tim Rickard won the "closest to the pin" golf tournament. The children enjoyed horseback riding and a jumping arena. All ages delighted in the petting farm



Children enjoy the petting farm at the Fort Worth BBQ

with chickens, goats, sheep, ducks, pigs, rabbits, prairie dogs and a donkey.

Michelle A Rickard

Eau Claire Honors Centenarian Member

Margaret Kohl was honored by family, friends and the Eau Claire, Wisconsin, brethren with a delicious turkey dinner after services February 12, 2000, on the occasion of her 100th birthday. After dinner the congregation surprised her with a cake and gift of a wooden wall clock. Margaret was delighted to be with her Church family, and wasn't even tired by the end of the festivities!



Margaret Kohl turns 100

Throughout her life Margaret has had a positive outlook and a zest for life. She was born February 11, 1900, and spent her growing up years on the farm helping to care for her 11 siblings. She attended business school and later married Lawrence Kohl January 8, 1929. They had two daughters, Phyllis and Patricia. Tragically, Patricia died from polio at age 8. Margaret was widowed in 1961.

She spent most of her widowhood with Phyllis and her husband, Jim Newton. They introduced her to God's Church, and Margaret was baptized in 1981.

Margaret stays as active as she can and is an avid reader. She has been blessed with three grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

Linda F. Knapp

San Antonio Dines, Dances

The San Antonio, Texas, congregation had a dinner and dance after services January 22, 2000. After dinner an auction was held to sell the approximately 35 desserts that were brought. The dessert that brought the most was a plate of cookies, selling for \$55. Others ranged from \$5 to \$35. A total of \$437 was raised for the local outreach program, and then the desserts were put on the food line.

A dance ensued, with a variety of music from rock and roll to a cotton-eyed Joe.

Bill Seelig

Beyond 2000: The World Tomorrow, May 26-29, 2000

UCG St. Louis, Missouri, invites adults 18 and older to enjoy Memorial Day weekend in the Gateway City! The weekend includes Christian Living seminars, services, a river boat cruise, an evening at Union Station, a ride to the top of the Arch, lunch at Planet Hollywood. Then beam aboard the U.S.S. 2000 for a formal singles' dinner dance that will be out of this world! The price for these events plus three nights in St. Louis' Premier Adam's Mark hotel is \$185 per person (four people to a room); \$215 (three to a room); \$271 (two to a room); or \$445 (one to a room). For more information see <http://hometown.aol.com/beyond2000twr> or e-mail beyond2000twr@aol.com or call (314) 849-4016. Transportation discounts available.

Name _____ Age* _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Room Type (select one) 2 double beds (4 people or less) 1 queen bed (2 people)

Include names and ages of people in your room. *All attendees must be 18 or older.

To register, send form and \$100 down payment (payable to Jason Watkins) by April 15 to:

Beyond 2000, c/o Jason Watkins, 13250 West Watson Rd., St. Louis MO 63127

Announcements...

Births



Adira Faith McNally

Michael and Aimée (Fultz) McNally and grandma Arleen Boudreau of Scotts Valley, California, joyfully announce the arrival of their first daughter, Adira Faith, born at home on December 11, 1999. She was very alert, weighed 7 pounds 14 ounces and was 21½ inches long.

Scott and Sherry (Loudin) Thouvenin of Canton, Ohio, are elated to announce the birth of their second child, Abigail Nicole. Abigail arrived Sabbath, January 22, 2000, at 3:54 a.m. She weighed 6 pounds 12 ounces and was 19½ inches long. Big sister Natalie welcomed her excitedly. The proud grandparents



Abigail Nicole Thouvenin

are Louis and Evelyn Thouvenin and Oral and Carol (Loudin) Garvin, also of the Canton congregation.

Berkeley and Carmella Weis of Vancouver, Washington, are pleased to announce the birth of their second child, Warren Wolfgang Weis. Sister Autumn, 2, smothers him with love. John and Sandy Cafourek (minister for Olympia and Tacoma,



Warren Wolfgang Weis

Washington) are excited that both of their daughters gave birth to boys, just two days apart. Warren weighed 9 pounds and was 21¼ inches long.



Jordan Scott Richey

Jordan Scott Richey, first child of Amy and Rob Richey of Columbus, Ohio, was born on August 26, 1999. He weighed 7 pounds 12 ounces and was 21 inches long. He's the fourth generation in God's Church. Grandparents are Donna and Barry Richey and John and Connie Seifert, and great-grandparents are Dave and Dottie Seifert and Don and Jean McColm.

Kambani Banda, elder in Lusaka, Zambia, and his wife, Shirley, were blessed with a baby boy weighing 10 pounds 3 ounces on Saturday, February 26, 2000. They have named him Rangana. Mother and Rangana are well, and the father overjoyed.

Jeff and Berenice Emeiser of Fairfield, Washington, are happy to



Jane Marie Emeiser

announce the birth of their daughter, Jane Marie, born in their home November 26, 1999. She weighed 7 pounds 6 ounces and was 21 inches long. Ray, Bruce and Benjamin are all delighted with their little sister. Her happy grandparents are Greg and Nancy Czech of Spokane, Washington, and Don and Sydney Emeiser of Post Falls, Idaho.

Mike and Jan Cook of Arlington, Texas, along with big sister Samantha, joyfully announce the

birth of their son, Joseph Lee ("Josh") Cook.

Josh was born on February 28, 2000, weighing in at 7 pounds, 12 ounces and measuring 21 inches long. Proud grandparents are Gary and Barbara Antion of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Jerry and Jacque Cook of Lafayette, Indiana.

Weddings

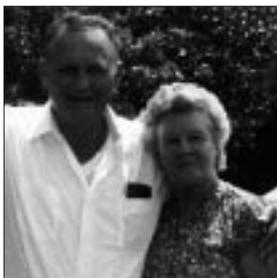


Kelly and Joe Mango

Greg and Betty Jean Thomas are pleased to announce the marriage of their oldest daughter, Kelly Michelle, to Joseph Andrew Mango of Leetonia, Ohio. The wedding took place November 27, 1999, and the ceremony was performed by Lyle Welty, with the prayer given by the bride's father. The couple reside in Strongsville, Ohio, and attend the Cleveland congregation. Our special thanks to the Cleveland brethren for all their help with the wedding.

Anniversaries

Lee and Mary Carter of Fellsmere, Florida, celebrate their 56th wedding anniversary March 8,



Lee and Mary Carter

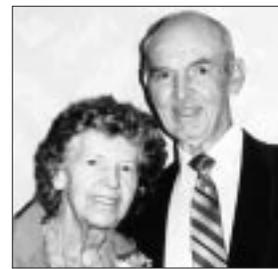
2000. The Carters have been members of God's Church for 30 years. They have two sons, Dale and Dean, of Fellsmere, three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Bob and Libby Dezso of Akron, Ohio, celebrated their 50th



Bob and Libby Dezso

wedding anniversary December 19, 1999. They were baptized in 1969. They have two children, Debbie Beebe of Monrovia, California, and Bob Dezso of Copley, Ohio; and three grandchildren, Lisa and Kelly Beebe and Ryan Dezso.



Peggy and Lloyd Smith

Lloyd and Peggy Smith celebrated their 50th anniversary January 14, 2000, and the Texarkana, Texas, congregation gave them a reception on January 15 after services.

Werner and Emily Krebs "cut the cake" once again, celebrating



Werner and Emily Krebs

their 50th wedding anniversary with the Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation December 18. They were married December 17, 1949.

Werner is a retired electrical engineer; Emily previously worked as a registered nurse. The Krebs have faithfully served in God's min-

istry since Pentecost, 1973. They have two sons, Greg and Ken.

Bernie and Helen Broman of the Camp Verde, Arizona, congrega-



Helen and Bernie Broman

tion, celebrated their 40th anniversary. They have four daughters and 12 grandchildren.

The Coleman, Texas, congregation hosted a 60th anniversary celebration for Otho and Mary Lee Peeples. The reception was held



Otho and Mary Lee Peeples

October 22, 1999. Britton Taylor, pastor, presented the couple with a carved wooden statue of a cowboy on his bucking horse.

The couple met while attending college in San Angelo, Texas. They have one son and a daughter-in-law, Howard and Brenda Peeples and a daughter and son-in-law, Carole and Gary Warlick. They are also the grandparents of Samuel Howard Peeples (deceased).

Mrs. Peeples has been a member since 1971 and Mr. Peeples since 1972.

Obituaries

Dallas S. Davis, 68, of the Nashville, Tennessee, congregation, died at his home in Carthage, Tennessee, with a sudden heart attack on July 2, 1999. He was a long-time member of the Church, serving faithfully for 34 years. He



Dallas S. Davis, with wife, Thelma

attended congregations in Detroit, Ann Arbor and Taylor, Michigan, before moving to the Nashville area in 1989.

He is survived by his wife of almost 51 years, Thelma, who is also a member. Services were officiated by Fred Kellers, pastor of the Nashville congregation.

Holly Noel, 41, of Crystal Beach, Florida, passed away at home December 25, 1999. She had battled cancer and radiation damage for nearly 14 years. For most of that time she lived with pain on a daily basis. Even though her suffering lasted for years, she always approached life with a cheerful and positive attitude right up to the end.

She is survived by her husband, David, and two children, Audrey, 16, and Michael, 14. David said, "We would like to thank you for all the heartfelt prayers and sympathy expressed to us and to God during her illness and after she died. It has really meant a great deal to us to

receive the outpouring of love, support and compassion by so many."

Holly was laid to rest on December 29, in Palm Harbor, Florida. The eulogy was given by Eugene Noel and Roy Holladay officiated the services.

Violet Monalim, 69, a long-time member in Hawaii, died January 12, 2000. She is survived by three brothers, William, Abraham and Jimmy Ramos; two stepdaughters, April and Davelynn; five grandchildren, Johnavin, David, Johnnie Boy, Derrick and Mona; three great-grandchildren, Johnastie, Damien and Jazlyn; and many nieces and nephews. Auntie Vee, as she was affectionately known, was called by God in 1986. She exhibited a tremendous faith during her long health trial that resulted in her death. She is greatly missed.

Nickolas Tomich, 78, of Big Sandy, Texas, died unexpectedly of a heart attack November 2, 1999. He is survived by his daughters, Laura



Nickolas Tomich

Tomich Worthen and Susan Tomich Graham; son Thomas; two sons-in-law, Jim Worthen and Kenneth A. Graham II; two daughters-in-law, C. Diane Peabody Tomich and Beverly Creager Tomich; and six grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, Betty Jean, and son, Nick. He was from Saginaw, Michigan, and began attending in 1963. He lived in Tucson, Arizona, from 1993 to 1999.

Louis Townley, 78, a member of the Houston South, Texas, congregation, died January 13, 2000. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Irene, six children, 14 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Mr. Townley began attending services in 1988 and was baptized in 1989. Funeral services were held January 17 and conducted by Kenneth Giese, pastor of Houston South.

Virginia Harper, 91, died December 31, 1999, in Pleasant Hill, California. Services were conducted by Bill Bradford. She is survived by her husband, Frank Harper; daughter, Jerri Anderson; son-in-law, Jim Anderson; grandsons, Timothy and James Anderson; and many great grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

Mary Louise Carter, 67, of rural Jefferson County, Ohio, died of congestive heart failure as a complication of terminal liver cancer,

January 25, 2000. Mrs. Carter was a long-time member of God's Church, baptized in 1959. She was a very active member in the Wheeling, West Virginia, congregation.

She is survived by her husband of 43 years, Robert Carter; daughter Amy Hargarten of Minnesota; son Robert Dale Carter of Missouri; daughter Melinda Rademacher of Ohio; and 11 grandchildren.

A memorial service was held February 2 at Toronto, Ohio, with Don Henson officiating.

Glen Keeley, 85, an elder in the Kalamazoo, Michigan, congregation, died January 1, 2000, in his sleep. He was a dairy farmer all of his very active life. He has been an elder in western Michigan for as long as there have been members there. Frank McCrady, a friend for many years, conducted the funeral January 4.

Jean Biehl died unexpectedly December 9, 1999. She suffered a massive heart attack. Mrs. Biehl was the wife of elder Jim Biehl of the Northwest Phoenix, Arizona, congregation. She faithfully served beside Jim for many years. Many enjoyed the warmth of her friendship and hospitality over the years she served the congregation. She is survived by her husband, their only child, Steve, one grandchild and many brothers and sisters of her 21 siblings, as well as her father. Services were conduct-

ed December 13 by Chuck Zimmerman.

Leota Kellogg died peacefully December 10, 1999, after 93 full years. She had been the pianist for the San Diego, California, congregation in the 1960s. She and her husband Edwin (deceased in 1995) had been in the grocery business and moved to Arizona to retire. She was a very lively example to all. She is survived by her two sons, one daughter, seven grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted December 13 by Chuck Zimmerman.

Betty Darby died peacefully on December 17, 1999. She had been battling cancer for some time. She lived a very full 75 years and had always inspired others with her clear, loving Christian example. She was the wife of long-time member, Hugh Darby, who is the lone survivor. Services were conducted by Chuck Zimmerman December 22.

Bill Dodge died peacefully on January 16, 2000, his 92nd birthday. He had recently moved from the Phoenix, Arizona, area to be with his daughter in Loveland, Colorado. Bill was a zealous Christian, and commented that God had blessed him with many extra years of life that had been good years. He was a father figure to many. He leaves his daughter, Pam Beckett, and a son, Carlton, of Phoenix.

News at a Glance...

British & European GN Supplement Published

"In order to further the Work in this region of the world we wanted to develop a better dialogue with our readership in the British Isles and Europe. One way to accomplish this was to publish a selection of regional letters and questions from our readers. So the idea of the British & European Supplement to *The Good News* was born," said John Ross Schroeder, who is responsible for the supplement. To date five 4-page issues have been published.

Included are one or two articles per issue dealing with current affairs in Britain and Europe. Occasionally an article about some specific arm of the Work in the region is featured, such as the weekly *World Tomorrow* radio broadcast aired from the Isle of Man. Several booklets are advertised in each issue as well.

"We receive a number of questions like, 'Would you tell me more about your

Church?'" said Mr. Schroeder. "By answering even one reader in the supplement we also serve others who have the very same question. Humanly people like to see their letters in print mentioning the particular city or town where they reside."

The British & European Supplement is mailed with the regular *Good News*. "Printing and mailing costs are relatively inexpensive and response has been very encouraging," said Mr. Schroeder.

Growth in GN Print Runs Compared

The print run for the January/February 2000 issue of *The Good News* is more than six and a half times what it was four years ago. The January/February 1997 print run was 39,742, and increased to 261,372 this year.

From 1997 to 1998 the increase was 79 percent. From 1998 to 1999 it increased 107 percent. From 1999 to 2000 the increase was 78 percent.

Letters Sent to Welcome New Contributors

Letters of appreciation have been developed to send to those who donate for the first time, and to those who donate twice within six months. This second group have traditionally been called coworkers, though that term does not appear in the letter.

In the first six weeks of this year, the home office staff sent out letters to 144 new donors, compared to 61 in the last six weeks of 1999. In the last six months, 86 letters have been sent to welcome new coworkers.

The new donor letter thanks donors and offers the 12-lesson *Bible Study Course* with a listing of the topics it covers. It ends by saying, "Please let us know if we may be of service to you in any way."

New coworkers are offered *The Good News, Expanded Edition* in appreciation for their donations. They will

also begin receiving coworker update letters quarterly "to give you a brief overview of the growth of the efforts you are supporting."

ABC Sampler Seminar Scheduled for August 14 to 18 in Cincinnati

Ambassador Bible Center will present the ABC Sampler Seminar to be held at the ABC classroom in Cincinnati, Ohio, August 14 to 18. The seminar will feature portions of some of the ABC class material, and will be taught by the resident ABC instructors, Gary Antion, Ralph Levy and Les McCullough.

The tuition cost for the ABC Sampler Seminar will be \$50 per person. Attendees will take care of their own housing and meal expenses. Reasonable motels are available in the area. More details will be in the next *United News*.

Gary Antion

News at a Glance...

What's New on the Web?

- The new booklet titled *Does God Exist?* is available in PDF (1.5mb) and HTML formats.

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

- Full reports on the Council of Elders meetings in Cincinnati February 23 to 29 are available.

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

- The March/April 2000 *Good News* is available in PDF (2.1mb) and HTML formats.

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

- The February 2000 edition of *El Comunicado* is now available in HTML format.

http://www.ucg.org/html/esp_a_ol.shtml

- Descriptions of each United Youth Camp, application forms and the Code of Honor agreement are posted on the camp page.

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

- A listing of the Feast sites for 2000 has been posted.

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

- For information about the Jordanian Feast site, visit:

<http://www.worldopp.org/jordan>

- The March issue of *Virtual Christian Magazine* has been posted.

<http://vcmagazine.org>

- See updates and new photographs of the Ambassador Bible Center:

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

- Regular updates from the president and home office staff, plus news of the Work United is doing, are posted on our news page.

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

If you have any questions or comments, please contact:

webmaster@ucg.org

Petty Named Initial Voice for Weekly Radio

Gary Petty, pastor of the Austin and San Antonio, Texas, congregations, will be the initial voice of a Church-sponsored weekly radio broadcast to begin in August. President Les McCullough announced the choice March 2, pointing out Mr. Petty's six years of past broadcast experience.

"He is already working on subject outlines and will be presenting the outlines for 13 initial programs in the next few days," said Mr. McCullough. "Those outlines will be presented to the Media and Communications Committee and Editorial Board for final suggestions, and will then be sent back to him.

"Another voice may be used at a later date in combination with Gary, but that remains to be seen," said Mr. McCullough.

Research is beginning on radio markets and rate schedules. "The budget for radio is somewhat limited, but if the response is good, we can give it further consideration" said Mr. McCullough. "Please consider the program in your prayers, as it is an important test in this media field."

Mail Up 90 Percent for First Two Months

The first two months of this year, mail received has set new records. The 22,588 pieces received in January were 97 percent more than received in January 1999. February mail totaled 12,536, which is 79 percent over the previous year.

About 30 percent of the mail received was in response to the semiannual letter, mailed December 21, 1999, offering the *Bible Study Course to Good News* readers. At the end of February, 10,688 responses had been received, for a 13 percent response.

Cards taken from magazines sent to waiting rooms brought in 1,010 subscription requests in January and 1,162 in February. Though no new waiting rooms are being added while the balance between businesses and individual subscribers is adjusted, the current waiting rooms continue to bring in a thousand new subscribers a month.

U.S. Elders Meet in Pocket Conferences

The last of 14 pocket conferences for U.S. pastors and elders will be completed in early March. The conferences are held on a Sunday and half a day Monday. "Sunday's topics focus on material for all elders and Monday's meetings mainly on pastoral responsibilities," said Richard Pinelli, Ministerial Services operation manager.

Topics covered on day one include: an update on the Work of God, Council policies and doctrinal updates, pastor/elder working relationships, expectations of Church elders,

Treasurer's Report

Because of God's many blessings, the financial condition of the United Church of God, an *International Association*, continues to strengthen and stabilize. Among those blessings are the faithful and generous financial support of the brethren and other supporters of the Work of the Church, and the cooperation and conscientiousness of operational personnel in being good stewards of the monies made available to the Church. For these blessings we are very grateful.

Last spring (1999), the Church began operating on a budget that was initially scheduled to cover the period April 1, 1999, to March 31, 2000. Later, the decision was made to change the accounting and budget year so that it ends on June 30. Thus, we are currently near the end of the original budget period (March 31). What follows is a summary of the report (covering the original budget year) that was presented to the Council of Elders during its recent meetings in Cincinnati.

Through February 19, which covers nearly 90 percent of the original fiscal year, total revenues of the Church equaled \$13,789,000. That is about 10 percent above budget so far. We anticipate that total income will exceed budget by about 8 or 9 percent by the end of the period. Total expenses for the same period equaled \$11,807,000. Thus, year to date, the excess of revenues over expenses has been \$1,982,000. This positive trend has permitted us to build our operational reserves to a point that we can plan to have about 10 weeks of operating expenses in reserve at all times. Given the volatility and uncertainty of the world in which we live, that amount seems to be a prudent reserve.

The proposed budget for the new fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2000, is set at \$15.7 million, and allows for some exciting new initiatives in preaching the gospel and caring for those God calls.

Tom Kirkpatrick

ideas that work, regional questions and our high calling.

Day two topics are: pastoral assessment/management, divorce and remarriage, budgeting for pastors and leadership programs.

Conferences have been held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Casper, Wyoming; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Atlanta, Georgia; Cambridge, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; Kalamazoo, Michigan; Amarillo, Texas; Riverside, California; Richmond, Virginia; Orlando, Florida; St. Louis, Missouri; Sacramento, California; and Portland, Oregon.

UCG Holland Begins

At the request of a small group of brethren in the Netherlands, UCG-Germany conducted a Bible study in Arnhem in October 1999 with eight people from the Netherlands in attendance. UCG-Holland has now been formed, and is registered in the Netherlands as a church. UCG-Holland has decided to be affiliated temporarily with

UCG-Germany until it has its own resident elder.

Tentative plans include advertising in the Dutch language for the English *Good News* magazine. A small space ad in Dutch has already been produced.

Plans include a Sabbath Bible study in Holland at least every two months.

Paul Kieffer

Results of Spanish Reader's Digest Ads Announced

Here are the responses we have received so far from the *Reader's Digest* ads run in Latin American editions in the December 1999 issue:

Central America	91
Chile	84
Colombia	26
Mexico	1,239
Peru	98
Venezuela	13

United News

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