



United Church of God
P.O. Box 541027,
Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027
(513) 576-9796

Vol. 11, No. 6

www.ucg.org

July 2005

News At a Glance

New Feast Site Announced in Sri Lanka

A Feast site has been arranged for the Indian Ocean island of Sri Lanka. "We have a congregation of 16 in Sri Lanka, and they would love to have some guests for the Feast of Tabernacles," said David Baker, who serves that area.



The Neptune Hotel on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka will host the Feast this year

The Feast site will be the Neptune Hotel located in Beruwela, which is 35 miles south of Colombo, the capital city. Photos of the hotel can be viewed at www.aitekspenceholidays.com/neptune/. The rates are for full board and are as follows: single—US\$55; double—US\$65; triple—US\$87.

For additional information, contact Mr. Baker at david_baker@ucg.org or call (585) 624-5166.

Ministerial Hires and Transfers Announced

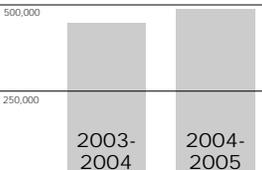
Two elders have been hired full-time in the U.S. ministry. Vince and Carol Szymkowiak will be serving the St. Louis and Rolla, Missouri, congregations. Scott and Monica Lord will be

See "News at a Glance," page 2

United Statistics

Literature Mailed From Home Office

(mainly booklets, BSC, tapes, etc. Does not include GN, WNP or UN)



New Booklet on Marriage and Family Being Printed

■ **Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension** will be United's 32nd booklet, and 100,000 copies are being printed. Members will be sent a copy automatically in late July or early August.

by Scott Ashley

A new booklet titled *Marriage and*

Family: The Missing Dimension is being offered in the July-August issue of *The Good News*.

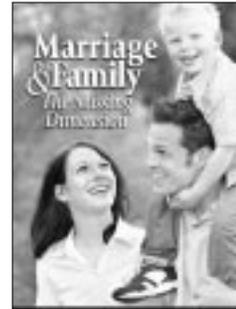
The booklet is a natural fit with the cover theme for this issue: "Marital Happiness: The Choice Is Up to You!"

This new booklet will be a 32-page, magazine-format, color booklet. Members do not need to request it; a copy will be sent automatically to everyone on the member mailing list in late July or early August.

The initial print run for this booklet will be 100,000. In addition to

offering it in *The Good News*, we also will be offering it to subscribers in a letter. We expect it to be very popular with our readers, as we continually get many requests for material about marriage.

In addition to covering marriage, the booklet will also cover basic principles of right parenting. The



whole approach of the booklet is to show the spiritual dimension and foundation of marriage and parenting revealed in the Bible.

The booklet was written by David Treybig, pastor of the Tampa and St. Petersburg, Florida, congregations, who has written many articles on those subjects for our publications. UN

Feast Video Features Malawi, South Africa



Bill Jahns and brethren in Malawi are videotaped for the 2005 Feast sermon video (photos by Peter Eddington)

Clay Thornton and Peter Eddington returned June 8 from a 10-day trip to South Africa and Malawi. The reason for the journey was to record material for the 2005 Feast sermon video to be titled, "The Next Decade and Beyond."

Last year a portion of the special Feast sermon focused on our brethren in the Philippines and portions of Southeast Asia. The year before we focused on the Mexican brethren. This year, it will include parts of southern Africa.



Two cities were visited in South Africa: Johannesburg and Durban. In Malawi, Blantyre and Lilongwe were on the itinerary, and combined services were held in the southern city of Blantyre. The time spent with all the brethren visited was thoroughly enjoyed, and they were extremely warm and hospitable! During services on June 4, Glad-

See "Feast Video," page 2

GN Print Ads Successfully Target Younger Audience

In United's ongoing efforts to reach a younger audience with the gospel message, close to 16,000 new mothers, whose median age is 28, were added to the *Good News* subscriber files during the 2004-2005 fiscal year. Our four-color bifold subscription brochure "Are You Prepared to Teach Values?" (see photo),



"Are You Prepared to Teach Values?"

was included in 1,600,000 *American Baby* Group's co-op mailing packages.

In the 2005-2006 fiscal year, we expect to add an additional 34,000 or more new mothers to the files, by advertising *The Good News* and our new marriage and family booklet to 3,330,000 new mothers.

Also, more than 2,600 parents of homeschooled children were added to the *Good News* subscriber files during the last fiscal year. According to National Response Marketing, Inc., the company mailing card packs to homeschooling families, the median age of their target audience is 38. During the 2004-2005 fiscal year our inserts were included in 600,000 card packs mailed to these families. Of the four new insert cards promoted this



The highest responses have come from the brochure advertising the booklet *Jesus Christ: The Real Story*.

year, the highest response came on the subject of creation vs. evolution.

In the 2005-2006 fiscal year we expect to again mail to 600,000 parents of homeschooled children using

See "Younger," page 2

"Ambassadors for Peace" to Reignite Middle East Work

by Cory Erickson

The year 2005 represents a significant opportunity for the United Church of God to reinvigorate its gospel efforts in



Invitation letter to UCG from Prince Ra'ad bin Zeid, lord chamberlain to King Abdullah of Jordan

the Middle East. The kickoff for these efforts is the establishment of a Feast site in Amman, Jordan, where more than 200 people have already registered for the Fall Festival.

The theme for the site is "Ambas-

See "Jordan," page 17

Inside:

- 3 News From Around the World
- 6 From the Word
- 7 High School Graduates 2005
- 19 Treasure Digest
- 21 Local Church Updates
- 23 Announcements
- 24 What's New on the Web?

News At a Glance

Continued from page 1

training with pastor David Baker in the Upstate New York area.

Joe and Jacquelyn Horchak are transferring to Sacramento, California, to fill the pastorate formerly held by new president Clyde Kilough.

The Horchaks are being replaced in Columbus and Cambridge, Ohio, by Randall and Linda Stiver. The replacement for the Stivers in Coos Bay, Eugene and Roseburg, Oregon, had not been announced at press time.

Ordinations Announced

Gladstone Chonde was ordained June 4 (see article and photo, page 3). He and his wife, Alice, serve the Lilongwe, Malawi, congregation.

The following were ordained on Pentecost, June 12:

Ken Cline and his wife, Jean, serve the Minneapolis, Minnesota, congregation.

Don Finger serves the St. Paul, Minnesota, congregation.

Geoff Nelson and his wife, Judy, serve the Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, congregation.

David Schreiber and his wife, Jolinda, serve the Austin, Minnesota, congregation.

"This Is the Way" E-mail Launched June 20

"We are very excited to announce the launch of a new e-mail service titled "This Is the Way," wrote Roy Holladay in the June 23 *Home Office Update*. "We have been working on this project for months, and the first messages went out this week. These e-mails contain brief messages, based on biblical principles, that will hopefully inspire, encourage and motivate people to remember God and study His Word more deeply."

Members are encouraged to sign up to receive these messages three times a week. If you feel friends or family members might benefit from "This Is the Way" messages, then please forward them a sample message so they can sign up. Subscribe today at www.thisisthe-way.org and see some of the past messages that have been sent to subscribers.

Aaron Booth

Writing Class Shows Results

An introductory writing class was offered in the "Home Office Update" in January, and more than 150 people signed up. They were almost evenly

See "News at a Glance," page 24

Treasurer: God Blesses Church With Stable and Growing Income

■ *The fiscal year ended with income 4.2 percent above the previous year. This was 2 percent above the budgeted amount, and expenses were 1.5 percent less than budgeted.*

by Tom Kirkpatrick, treasurer

We have now come to the end of the 2004-2005 fiscal year of the United Church of God, an *International Association*. I am happy to report that

the Church has been blessed with a good year financially, thus enabling it to move forward in fulfilling its mission.

God has moved the brethren of the Church and others who support its work to give income slightly in excess of what was budgeted for the year and in excess of the income of the previous fiscal year. The expenses of the Church were slightly less than what was budgeted, through the cooperation, commitment and carefulness of its employees and managers.

For the 2004-2005 fiscal year, the unrestricted income of the Church

was a little over \$19,850,000, which is 2 percent more than the amount budgeted, and 4.2 percent above the income of the previous fiscal year.

The corresponding expenditures were about \$19,200,000, which is 1.5 percent less than the amount budgeted.

These results make it possible for the Church to continue to have a solid financial base upon which to operate in the coming years to further its work.

The Church continues to face potential financial challenges because of the demographic profile of its min-

istry and membership, and thus is committed to careful and conservative stewardship of the resources at its disposal, ever mindful that it is God who provides all our needs according to His will, and of our responsibility to do our part.

We thank God for His abundant provision, and we thank the brethren and other contributors for their faithful and generous support.

Finally, we are continually mindful of our need for God's direction and wisdom in all stewardship matters. Please pray that God will provide that direction and wisdom. UN

"Feast Video," continued from page 1

stone Chonde, from Lilongwe, was ordained an elder by Bill Jahns who pastors Johannesburg and Malawi.

Malawi is one of the poorest nations on earth—some say the poorest. However, despite their poor economic situation and simple mud brick homes, they are some of the happiest people one could meet. Also on the itinerary was a visit to two medical clinics in Malawi that are partially funded by LifeNets. These facilities have been a tremendous help to our brethren and the local communities.

The visit was very profitable, with video footage gathered of interviews with brethren from all four cities—plus

some colorful footage of the South African and Malawian countryside, animals, people and culture. Video was gathered of the largest township in Blantyre. In this township most homes have no electricity, and none have running water or sewer services. Roads are impassable by vehicle in much of the township, and so a visit to a member's home was undertaken on foot.

South Africa is the major economy on the continent that helps to keep Africa afloat financially and technologically. The South African brethren are warm and friendly, and the visit with them was thoroughly enjoyed. Johannesburg is a bustling metropolis, and Durban is a beautiful seaside city. The main drawback with the large South African cities is the level of crime. Homes are heavily



Feast video will include African wildlife (photo by Peter Eddington)

barricaded with fences and alarms to protect the occupants.

The Feast of Tabernacles sermon

message was delivered by pastor Bill Jahns in Blantyre at services on June 4. We believe this will help make our 2005 Feast sermon video very interesting to our brethren around the globe.

In addition to the material we have gathered so far, incoming UCGIA president Clyde Kilough will give an update on the work of the Church as we plan for the next decade and beyond.

It's always encouraging to visit brethren from other parts of the world. One thing that we always notice is the common bond that we in God's Church have with one another through the Holy Spirit—no matter where we live. We immediately developed a connection and spiritual kinship while meeting the brethren in these two countries.

Peter Eddington

"Younger," continued from page 1

four brand-new insert cards covering the following topics: "You Can Understand Bible Prophecy," "Does God Exist?" "Why Does God Allow Suffering?" and "Is There Really a Devil?"

Additionally during the 2004-2005 fiscal year, 560,000 four-color bifold "take one" brochures were distributed on "Good Neighbor" displays in 4,000 major supermarkets



GN brochures are displayed in stores

and discount stores. As a result, nearly 8,500 *Good News* subscriptions have so far been added to the files.

The highest response came from our brochure advertising the booklet *Jesus Christ: The Real Story* (see page 1 photo).

The large, attractive displays (see photo), located in the entrances and exits of many Wal-Mart, A&P, Safeway, Kroger and other large chains, have proved to be excellent advertising venues. We know that many of our brochures are picked up by younger subscribers, since demographic studies show the median

age of store display visitors is 39.

Beginning in October 2005 we plan to begin distributing 478,000 subscription brochures of five brand-new titles on 4,550 "Good Neighbor" displays in stores all across the United States.

During the 2005-2006 fiscal year the majority of our *Good News* print advertising budget will be directed toward programs targeting a younger audience.

John LaBissoniere

July 2005
Vol. 11, No. 6



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

United News (ISSN 1088-8020) is published monthly except April and October by the United Church of God, an International Association, 555 Technecenter Drive, Milford, OH 45150. © 2005 United Church of God, an International Association. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited. Periodicals Postage paid at Milford, Ohio 45150, and at additional mailing offices. Canada Post publications mail agreement number 1487167.

Editor: Peter W. Eddington Managing editor: Mike Bennett Copy editor: Becky Bennett
UCGIA Council of Elders: Aaron Dean, Robert Dick (chairman), Jim Franks, Clyde Kilough, Victor

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

International addresses:

AFRICA (except as listed below): United Church of God, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. E-mail: info@ucg.org

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 705, Watford, Herts. WD19 6FZ England. Phone: 020 8386 8467 Fax: 020 8386 1999

CANADA: United Church of God—Canada, P.O. Box 144, Station D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1, Canada. Phone: (905) 876-9966, (800) 338-7779 Fax: (905) 876-0569 E-mail: info@ucg.ca

EAST AFRICA (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda): United Church of

God, Kenya, P.O. Box 75261, Nairobi 00200 Kenya. E-mail: kenya@ucg.org

Fiji: United Church of God, P.O. Box 11081, Laucala Beach Estate, Suva, Fiji.

FRENCH-SPEAKING AREAS: Eglise de Dieu Unie—France, 127 rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France.

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

ITALY: La Buona Notizia, Chiesa di Dio Unita, Casella Postale 187, 24121 Bergamo Centro, Italy. Phone/Fax: (+39) 035 4523573. E-mail: info@labuonanotizia.org

MALAWI: P.O. Box 32257, Chichiri, Blantyre 3, Malawi. E-mail: malawi@ucg.org

MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 53, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius. E-mail: maurilius@ucg.org

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

Kubik, Les McCullough, Joel Meeker, Larry Salyer, Mario Seiglie, Richard Thompson, Leon Walker, Anthony Wasikoff

President: Clyde Kilough

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

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

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

NIGERIA: United Church of God—West Africa, P.O. Box 1715, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria. Phone: 234-1-791 8009. E-mail: nigeria@ucg.org

PHILIPPINES: United Church of God, P.O. Box 81840, DCCPO, 8000 Davao City, Philippines. Phone: (+63) 82 241-0150 Call/Fax: (+63) 0918-904-4444

SCANDINAVIA: Guds Enade Kyrka, P.O. Box 3535, 111 74, Stockholm, Sweden. E-mail: sverige@ucg.org

SOUTH AFRICA (and Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland only): United Church of God, Southern Africa, P.O. Box 2209, Beacon Bay, East London 5205, South Africa. Phone/Fax: 043 748-1694. E-mail: rsa@ucg.org

SPANISH-SPEAKING AREAS: Iglesia de Dios Unida, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. Phone: (613) 576-9796

TONGA: United Church of God—Tonga, P.O. Box 127,

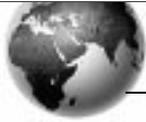
Nukualofa, Tonga.

ZAMBIA: United Church of God, P.O. Box 23076, Kitwe, Zambia. Phone: (02) 226076. E-mail: zambia@ucg.org

ZIMBABWE: United Church of God, Zimbabwe, P.O. Box 928, Causeway, Harare, Zimbabwe. Phone: 011716273 E-mail: zimbabwe@ucg.org

Internet access on your computer:

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



News From **Around the World**

Canadian National Council Meets in Abbotsford

Members of the Canadian National Council traveled to Abbotsford, British Columbia, for meetings June 2 to 5. Ghyslaine Palmer, wife of the hosting pastor, was able to negotiate some very good room rates.

The meetings began on Thursday morning with a welcome to the newest member of the Council, Dennis Horlick, who then gave a short icebreaker. After that the Code of Conduct and Council Member Job Description were read.

The report from the National Office showed positive growth. The Media Committee also reported very encouraging results from our Internet advertising with the overall cost per response being lower by far than any other method we have tried.

The Ministerial Services Team reported on their progress with the Leadership Training Programs and discussed the potential upcoming ministerial conferences.

During meetings in March, the Council authorized the director of operations to work with HRToGrow, a consultant company, to perform a policy audit. William Stephaniuk presented his findings and recommendations to the Council. There are still some important policies that need to be created and existing policies that need to be more consistent in form. Mr. Stephaniuk will continue to work with the Canadian National Office and Council on these.

On Friday, the Council had an appeal to deal with. This appeal showed up a weakness in a document that will be remedied.

Each year, the Council must review

our Strategic Plan to see if there should be any adjustments. The National Conference will see a slight change in the next Strategic Plan with an additional element to promote increased zeal in the Church.

The Governance Committee is charged with, among other issues, looking for anything in the Bylaws that should be adjusted or fine-tuned. It put forward a proposed amendment that the Council agreed to sponsor. It will now begin its way through the amendment process. This committee also updated the Council Member Job Description, which will help clarify the responsibilities of each Council member.

As had been noted with the Policy Audit, the Church is in need of additional policies. With this in mind, the director of operations asked that a Ministerial Transfer Policy be adopted. After discussion and a few edits, the policy was adopted.

Although the June 4 Sabbath was a day of fasting, the Vancouver congregation warmly welcomed the Council. A special treat was to have Marolyn Wilson attending there as well. Many of the Council members have fond memories of the days when Mr. and Mrs. Wilson served in Canada. Having Mrs. Wilson visiting in the area made the weekend extra special for both the Council and the congregation. Following services Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Davies graciously opened their home to the Council and some of the local members for a "break fast" meal.

One of the missions of the Church is feeding the flock. This is a primary concern for Council. On Sunday, each church pastor gave a report on his areas.

There is steady, consistent growth as well as local challenges. As always, manpower is stretched and the pastors are concerned that the brethren aren't served as well as they need to be.

The Church was generously offered a time-share in Cancun, Mexico. After discussion, it was determined that even though this was offered to the Church free of charge, it would not be appropriate for the Church to accept an asset of this type at this time.

A need has existed for the formal adoption of a standard of parliamentary procedure. The Council has been using a book, *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*, for some time and formally adopted it. The Council also appointed the secretary as the official parliamentarian. Another need has been to have guidelines for one aspect of the amendment process. The Council adopted a Guideline for the Statements of Justification and Concern, which should be a help for the Amendment Committee.

There is always a concern about reducing expenses wherever possible. The Council will begin to call upon personnel who will negotiate better prices and look for the least expensive areas to meet. The government requires the Council to meet four times a year, and this it will continue to do. This coming year the face-to-face meetings will be scaled back from three to two. The other two meetings will be teleconferences. Hopefully, this will allow all the necessary work to be done and result in some good savings.

Linda Wasilkoff,
secretary, Canadian National Council

International News At a Glance

Visiting New Groups in the Philippines

In March ministers in the Philippines were invited to go to Badian and Moalboal in Cebu province.

Mr. and Mrs. Florante Siopan, who pastor in the central Philippines, were joined on this trip by Mr. and Mrs. Edmond Macaraeg, pastor of the Mindanao congregations; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Cebrian, of the northern Mindanao congregation; and Mr. Heracleo Gempero, a member from Butuan City.

Sabbath afternoon of March 19 at 2 p.m., they met the group in Badian, which calls itself Bible Believers Christian Fellowship. The group consisted of different faiths meeting together every Sabbath afternoon to discuss their faith based on the Scriptures. In the group were Jehovah's Witnesses, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Assembly of God, Seventh-Day Adventists, United Church of Christ in the Philippines and some other observers.

After a brief introduction from each one, Mr. Siopan presented the subject of Jesus' statement that He would be three days and three nights in the grave (the group practices Good Friday and Easter Sunday celebrations). Reaction from the group varied. Some were attentive and were taking notes, while others didn't even pay attention.

The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer portion, which Mr. Macaraeg and Mr. Cebrian ably handled. This lasted until 6 p.m.

The following day the UCG group proceeded to Moalboal to meet with another group. The attitude of this group was different from the group in Badian, since they were very attentive and receptive to the presentation given by Mr. Macaraeg. They showed a willingness to listen and learn.

There is a potential for establishing a Bible study in the area since they asked if we could visit them in the future.

(Source: March/April 2005 United News Philippines, www.ucg.org.ph.)

Internet Now Makes Up 42 Percent of Canadian Mail

The amount of mail received at the Canadian office from January through the end of May was about the same as last year for the same period. However, last year an ad in *Alive* magazine and the Open & Save program boosted the mail.

This year, the difference is made up by Internet responses. Nearly 42 percent of the mail received since January has been from the Internet. Over 2,200 sub-

scription and literature requests have been received from the Web sites and various Internet keyword campaigns.

In 2003, the Canadian office received just over 1,500 requests from the Internet, making up 15.7 percent of the total mail received that year. Last year, 3,268 requests were received, representing 23.7 percent of the total mail received.

Putting the number of Internet requests into perspective, the Canadian office receives an average of one request every one hour and 48 minutes.

Edwin van Pelt

Pastor Moving to Calgary, Alberta

After many years of living in Prince George, British Columbia, Rainer and Claudia Salomaa will be relocating to pastor the Calgary, Alberta, congregation. They plan to look for housing at the end of August and move after the Feast.

Isle of Man Has Special Sabbaths

The Isle of Man congregation is holding a series of three special Sabbath services on June 25, July 16 and sometime in September or October. The congregation has for many years met in Ramsey in the north of the island. These special Sabbath services will be held in Douglas, the island's capital, and selected readers of *The Good News* from all over the island are being invited.

The theme of the messages to be presented will include the calling of God, the work of God, the rewards of God, counting the cost and why Jesus Christ refers to a "little flock." Speakers will include David Payne and Paul Howard, who are members on the Isle of Man, and David Fenney, pastor of the congregation in the island.

British Isles Reports May Circulation

Highlights from the circulation report for May, which covers all literature distributed by the United Church of God from Britain, include:

- 1,058 letters and other responses.
- 394 new *Good News* requests.
- 81 new *Bible Study Course* requests.
- 669 other requests for 1,186 further items of literature.

There are now:

- 5,469 subscribers to *The Good News*, of which 4,126 are distributed in the United Kingdom and the Isle of Man.
- 322 subscribers to the *Bible Study Course*.
- 434 subscribers to *United News*.
- 720 subscribers to *World News and Prophecy*.
- 373 subscribers to *Vertical Thought*.

First UCG Elder in Malawi Ordained

by Bill Jahns

The Malawi United Church of God had a very encouraging service on June 4. The first elder, Gladstone Chonde, was ordained in a special ceremony by Bill Jahns and Peter Eddington. Mr. Eddington was present because the Feast video was being recorded on that day.

Mr. and Mrs. Chonde were the first members of the United Church of God in Malawi, and they have been strong leaders in the area. They have been hosting the Lilongwe congregation for some time, and sometimes have over 30 people in their home for services. Services are going to be moved to the Malakia Clinic in the near future. Occasionally around 50 are attending in Lilongwe and 50 are also attending in Blantyre.

Peter Eddington and Clay Thornton recorded parts of the Feast video to be shown at the Feast of Tabernacles around the world this year (see article, page 1).

Documents for registration of the United Church of God, Malawi were

prepared and have been submitted to the government to register the Church in Malawi. The Church continues to grow there, with another group of 14 asking if they can become associated with the United Church of God. There is a growing need for a church hall in both the Blantyre and Lilongwe areas.

LifeNets projects continue to help the Malawi brethren. James Mapinda recently purchased a sewing machine to make shoes and this has helped him support himself and his family. He recently lost his job because of his Sabbath-keeping beliefs.

The brethren in Malawi are very thankful for the projects that have helped them so much. They also are encouraged by the growth of the Church. Leadership training classes were held in both the Lilongwe and Blantyre areas. There is a critical need in African countries to train local men.

Peter Eddington and Clay Thornton also visited the clinic in Balaka. There around 195 orphans are fed and taught by Dr. Sam Chilopora and his wife,



Malawi pastor Bill Jahns with newly ordained elder Gladstone Chonde

Esther. It is encouraging to see the improved health of these children after they have participated in the program for some time. Africa has a sad problem of many children being made orphans because both parents die of AIDS. Dr. Chilopora's program is designed to give them nourishment along with the instructions about health that they so desperately need.

Pentecost services were held June 12 in both Blantyre and Lilongwe. UN

Spring Feast "Safari" Shows How God Is Blessing His Work in East Africa

by Sandy Korthuis

This spring, my husband, Barry, and I had the opportunity to ride along on a visiting tour of East Africa and see firsthand how God is blessing the work there.

First Impressions

Our "safari" began when we landed in Nairobi, Kenya, late in the evening April 12, with the senior pastor for East Africa, John Elliott, and his wife, Merrie. The next morning Mr. Elliott held a meeting with Church leaders at the Church's downtown office. Issues concerning the Church in East Africa were discussed including the spiritual and physical needs of the members and a review of the annual budget. Deacon Antonio Ndung'u presented printed copies of the *Transforming Your Life* booklet in the Luo dialect.

The East Africa work currently includes Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda where around 350 brethren attend services each Sabbath across the region.

The laborers are indeed few, as there are only five deacons overseeing all 27 congregations and additional small groups. These men are stretched thin traveling to remote areas, sometimes walking for miles in visiting and serving members. They have many responsibilities including giving sermons, translating booklets and sermons, managing the construction of church halls, administering assistance requests and providing initial baptism counseling.

Into the West

On Thursday, we joined the Elliotts and Antonio Ndung'u and began a sometimes treacherous drive west from Nairobi through Naivasha and Nakuru to Elburgon. The rented 4x4 driven by John and Barry would be tested to its limits in the coming days. Driving on the left side of the road took some getting used to, along with everything being reversed to us inside the vehicle. We crossed the spacious, green Rift Valley to the south and were greeted by baboons and zebras along the roadside.

We held a Bible study with the Elburgon congregation at the home of Gilbert Kanyingi. The ladies prepared a delicious lunch of chicken, cabbage and *chipati* (unleavened flour tortilla). For the Bible study, Mr. Elliott spoke about how sin hurts others and Barry Korthuis reviewed the Mark 4 parable of the sower.

The next morning we drove to Ogembo for a Bible study, Q&A and baptism counseling. Deacon Moses Nyaira translated the messages into the local Kisi language while cows mooed outside the hotel. The dedication of the brethren was inspiring. One man walked seven miles to attend the Bible study and many asked questions

to better understand the Days of Unleavened Bread. The fact that yeast and leavened bread are rare in rural Kenya adds a challenge to their understanding.

Sabbath Circuit

On Sabbath morning, deacon John Otieno joined us as we drove from Migori west toward Lake Victoria to the village of Got Kachola. It was a grueling road not found on our map and was all

but impassable. During the two-hour drive each way, we bottomed out the 4x4 numerous times navigating potholes and dodged a few cattle, goats and donkeys in our path.



From upper left: Baptism at Bar Ober; Church members at Migori; new Church hall at Migori nears completion (photos by Sandy Korthuis)

As we pulled up to the Got Kachola church hall, we were greeted by the sound of brethren singing hymns in Luo as they sat waiting for services to begin. Barry Korthuis gave the first message on revering God. Mr. Elliott's sermon was about conquering sin as the city of Jericho was conquered. Brothers John Otieno and David Ogweno (deacons) provided translation into Luo and assisted with fellowshiping and counselings.

After services, we walked through the lakeside village to the water's edge, drawing a curious crowd of children and adults. John Angen, Conslater Adair and Jack Perez were baptized in the lake among the fishing boat fleet anchored in Lake Victoria.

A long, dusty drive took us back to Migori where the congregation waited patiently at the hall for services to begin. Hymns were led by an orphaned teenager named Willis who had been taken in by the congregation as a young boy. Mr. Elliott was very pleased to witness the growth and maturity of this fine young man.

Tanzania

The congregation at Nyanjagi, Tanzania, was our destination on Sunday. The border crossing took about 1½ hours with stops at eight border offices. We then drove southward reaching a

small group of huts where Mr. Elliott conducted a Bible study and Q&A for 30 people. Singing women warmly greeted us and we appreciated the shade the "meeting hall" lean-to provided from the burning equatorial sun. Chickens scurrying around our feet during the study added some amusement.

The leaders informed us that new



congregations are forming in Buturi and Kisumwa. There was also discussion about the complicated church registration process in Tanzania.

After a quick stop to visit a temporary Church office in Tarime

that is being used to facilitate the Church's registration in Tanzania, it was time to retrace the official paperwork at the border before crossing back into Kenya.

More Baptisms

Monday morning provided Mr. Elliott time in Migori to hold a Q&A with the brethren and counsel two more people for baptism. We then walked down a trail to the Migori River for the baptism of Bernard Amoko, accompanied by curious neighborhood children. Before leaving Migori we visited the new meeting hall and office site nearing the final stages of construction. The roof had just been completed and the next stage is a concrete floor. The hall was made large enough to accommodate the growing Migori congregation plus combined meetings on Holy Days. The brethren are excited and grateful to the Good Works Program for making the new building possible.

That afternoon we visited the site of this year's Feast of Tabernacles located in Mosocho near Kisi. The site is a private complex that can house about 275 members from around the region. A dining hall will permit the members to eat all their meals together. It will definitely be a millennial setting with lush and peaceful grounds, flowering courtyards and a large field for Family Day games. Afterwards we drove to Kisumu and spent our first and only night in a hotel with air conditioning.

On Tuesday, we drove 2½ hours

northwest from Kisumu toward the Uganda border to visit the Bar Ober congregation. We were thankful for John Otieno's navigation as we traveled far off the beaten path. At Bar Ober we held a Bible study for 23 in the shade of tall trees outside the round earthen homes. The children sat quietly on a reed mat in the grass for well over an hour listening to the messages.

Afterwards, our hosts offered everyone soft drinks, tea and *chipati* while Mr. Elliott conducted baptism counseling. Then many joined us at a nearby stream for the baptism of George Ochieng.

Heading back eastward on Wednesday, our final Bible study and Q&A were high up in the mountains at Kericho with 40 brethren attending. The area is lush and green with cooler temperatures and a relatively good economy from tea plantations covering the mountains and valleys. The Q&A addressed concerns of several new attendees about traditional Sunday



Clockwise from upper left: Night to Be Much Observed meal in Nairobi; services in Nairobi; Bible study with the Kericho congregation (photos by Sandy Korthuis)

and heaven issues. Before we departed, the children sang us a beautiful song about "finding a better way."

Traveling back toward Nairobi, we enjoyed a visit to Lake Nakuru National Game Preserve. There we drove among herds of animals where even the typically shy zebras and warthogs allowed us to get close for photos. The more unusual animals we saw were black and white rhinos, eland, black-and-white colobus monkeys, a side-striped jackal, hippopotamus and spotted hyena. Of course, giraffes, cape buffalo, impala,

Thomson's gazelle and varieties of eagles and birds were abundant.

Back "Home" in Nairobi

We drove back to Nairobi for Passover and Unleavened Bread. Fourteen members kept the Passover. Sabbath services the next day included some brethren who traveled from surrounding areas for the Holy Day weekend. The Night to Be Much Observed was a delicious potluck of goat, chicken, vegetable stew, potatoes, chipati, pineapple, watermelon, bananas, cheese, chocolate bars, wine and tea.

The First Day of Unleavened Bread was a joyful Holy Day as we gathered for afternoon services at the Amani Centre. Barry Korthuis gave the first message about "Our Daily Bread." In his sermon, Mr. Elliott spoke about the three greatest safaris in history: 1) coming out of Egypt across the Red Sea, 2) coming out of the wilderness across the Jordan and 3) our coming out of sin and into God's Kingdom.

After services, many of us stayed late talking and drinking tea while Mr. Elliott counseled several for baptism. It was difficult to say good-bye to the brethren. We felt at home among the brethren in East Africa. They were so warm, enthusiastic and giving. They were eager to share the hope that lies within them.



Our final day in Nairobi started with the baptisms of Raymond Tele and Samuel Nasibo at a local hotel swimming pool. Afterwards, Mr. Elliott and the Church leaders had an administrative meeting at the Church office to discuss financial planning, church registration procedures for Uganda and Tanzania, the

needs of several congregations, the Kenya youth camp and projects of the regional chapter of LifeNets. Our safari came to an end as we boarded a late-night flight to London and home. Since our return home, people have asked us what the East African brethren need the most. The answer is our love and prayers. They, like us, need continued spiritual growth along with the needs of daily life including good health. The leaders also need our prayers for God's guidance and strength as they serve all their congregations. Praying for the upcoming Feast and youth camp will also add to their successes.

We are grateful to have had such a delightful trip to East Africa and encourage you to take a "safari" to visit your brethren there. UN

Pastor Visits New Areas of French Africa

by Joel Meeker

The Spring Holy Day season found me traveling through francophone Africa on what was a very fruitful trip. The first stop was the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire). We had been contacted about a year previously by a small group in the capital city of Kinshasa, and requested to visit them. I had tried to make the visit in February but flight cancellations prevented me from doing so.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Jacob Pembrongo met me at the airport with a man named Justin, another member of the group, and we drove the 45 minutes into Kinshasa. Since this was my first time in the country and since there is a civil war going on, I had reserved a room in one of the better hotels in town, to increase the chances of having safe lodging. There were blue-helmeted United Nations peacekeeping troops in the lobby as I arrived. I wasn't sure if this was a good sign or not! I learned later that they were actually stationed in the east of the country, and were simply traveling through Kinshasa.

The next morning, Jacob came to the hotel and explained their story to me. A friend had given them a copy of our *Fundamental Beliefs* booklet, which they had studied in great detail. They became convicted that these were in fact the true doctrines of the Church of God, and began observing the Sabbath and studying the Holy Days. They then visited our Web site and read the other literature available in French. They also were able to find my contact information, and called me on the telephone to request additional information and a visit, which I was pleased to be able finally to make.

We discussed the situation in Congo, which had suffered so greatly under the crushing dictatorship of Joseph Mobutu, who later changed his name to Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga ("the all-powerful warrior who goes from conquest to conquest, leaving fire in his wake"—in fact he left only desolation and poverty in his wake). Much of the nation is still in chaos, with various paramilitary groups fighting for control of the rich mineral wealth of the interior. Kinshasa, at least, is calm.

Public Bible Lectures

They had arranged for two public Bible lectures at their usual assembly location. We drove through the packed-sand streets to the "hall" in late afternoon as regular attendees and new invitees arrived. They can't afford to rent a hall, so they rent space in a courtyard surrounded by a wall. A tarp is raised over one end of the courtyard to shield the speaker and sound system in the event of rain. (The congregation just takes its chances . . . Thankfully we had good weather both evenings.)

About 50 people were present the first night. The subject was how Christians must be "called, chosen and faithful." The study was translated into the local language for those who didn't speak French well. I took some questions after the study and met many of those present.

The next day, the group leaders met with me to discuss how they could become part of United. I explained the process of getting to know each other and making sure we understand the conditions of their joining us. This reminded me of the start of the process of the former Remnant Church of God becoming part of United. It's too early to tell whether this group will finally become part of United, but this first contact was very positive.

That night, I again addressed the group and guests, this time on the topic of God's Holy Days. Some of the group had already begun observing them, but they were not entirely clear on the meaning of the days. Following the study, we took some photos and then I took my leave, telling them I would do my best to return



From left: public Bible lecture in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo; members in Lamé, Ivory Coast, watching video of previous visit; newly baptized members in Ivory Coast: Houmarou Kindo, Felix Tia, Albert Oulai, Paul Tia, Charlotte Bleu and Bernadette Oulai

again to visit them prior to the autumn Holy Days.

Six Baptisms in Côte d'Ivoire

The next stop was Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire). I arrived fairly late that night in Abidjan, thankful to find that the city was calm. In the previous months there had been rioting and shoot-outs in the streets. French residents had been attacked by angry crowds. French peacekeepers had fired into a threatening crowd, and many civilians were killed and wounded.

In the village of Lamé we had a Bible study on the subject of baptism, in part to help those who were counseling for this important commitment.

The next day I had counseling sessions with seven people, several of whom I had begun counseling on my previous visit. Several of them knew of the need to be baptized and had tried to be baptized in the biblical manner before, but each time they found that something wasn't being correctly done. The ministers to whom they had gone

had either wanted to baptize them by sprinkling or did not perform the laying on of hands and so on. They were very eager to be baptized by a minister of the Church of God, in the true biblical manner.

Six of them were ready to be baptized, so we traveled several miles to the only place nearby where there was enough water to be immersed. There are no bathtubs in Lamé, and only a shallow stream was within walking distance. The stream was a laundry washing site, and ran through fields and the outlying jungle.

When we arrived, it seemed too shallow, so we borrowed a shovel from a nearby farmer and dug a trough in the streambed. After a few minutes we had an arrangement that allowed them to be completely immersed. Several people working in nearby fields came to see what was happening, so we had a bit of an audience for the baptisms.

Brothers Paul and Felix Tia, Bernadette Oulai (Paul's wife), Albert Oulai (no relation to Bernadette), Charlotte Bleu (Bernadette's sister) and Houmarou Kindo were baptized in the stream.

Kindo, as everyone calls him, has an interesting life story. He was born and raised a Muslim, but began to study Christianity while attending a Catholic school. When he expressed an interest in Christianity to his parents and brothers, they threatened to disown him, and take his wife away from him (families participate in the collection of the bride price before weddings, so they have a great deal of influence in such matters—and as she is a Muslim also, she might have cooperated). Thankfully this threat was not executed. Still Kindo is the only Christian in his extended family.

Later that night we had another Bible study, a wide-ranging, four-hour Q&A session that discussed baptism, biblical financial principles, principles of marriage, how to keep the Passover (their first would be in only a few days), among other topics.

We met again the next morning for another varied Q&A discussion. The role of women in the Church, how members can preach the gospel, why people say Africa is the cradle of humanity and what to do when haunted by scary dreams (of death and ghostly spirits), were some of the more memorable questions asked. I said a prayer to close our Bible study and our visit together.

Rwanda

Our elder in Rwanda, Mr. Mundeli, met me at the airport in Kigali and escorted me to my hotel. That evening we planned the different activities during my stay. The next night, 17 of us gathered on the shore of Lake Muhazi for the Passover service. The exotic sounds of the African night were the backdrop for that most meaningful of celebrations.

The next day, the Sabbath, everyone

gathered at Muhazi once again. With the children and those not yet baptized, we were 60 in all. After a morning service, we shared a meal financed by gifts from brethren in France and the United States.

After the meal I had several baptismal counseling sessions. These were a little more challenging than usual, in that those who wished to be baptized didn't share a common language with me. I would ask questions in French, which would then be translated by Mr. Mundeli or Mr. Sibobugingo into Kinyarwanda, and the replies were then translated back into French for me.

One young woman, Ruth Mukeshimana, had lost her hearing to a complication of meningitis when she was younger. In her case my oral communication in French



had to actually be written down in Kinyarwanda for her.



tismal and marriage counseling sessions, the blessing of a two-day old baby and a visit to the husband of a member who had been paralyzed by a stroke.

On the last Holy Day we gathered for services. Normally some brethren from neighboring Togo would have come as well, but the current civil unrest in that nation had closed the borders and prevented them from coming.

I had a final counseling session with Bonaventure Ogoudélé and his fiancée Elizabeth. They had already married according to the local tribal customs, but had not yet lived together as man and wife, waiting until a minister from the Church could come and ask God to unite them. It was my pleasure to perform the ceremony for them, which caused great joy among the brethren in Cotonou.



Left, five new members were baptized in Lake Muhazi, Rwanda: Ruth Mukeshimana, Immaculée Uwantege, Révérien Gatanazi, Berthilde Nimukuze and Damascène Bazatsinda. Above, the Cotonou, Benin congregation

The next day was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We gathered again at Lake Muhazi for a morning Church service. After services, there were again counseling sessions while we waited for lunch to be prepared. After lunch I continued counseling, and by 4:30 in the afternoon we were ready for some baptisms.

Wading out in the lake I was moved by the thought of how this lake appeared in 1994. At that time, during the genocide, Lake Muhazi was filled with the bloated bodies of murdered men, women and children.

On this happy day, however, Lake Muhazi would serve a wonderful purpose. God would use it to cleanse His children of their sins and start them on the road to eternal life in His family. We had to write out the ceremony in Kinyarwanda for Ruth, so that she could accept the baptismal covenant. Finally five people were baptized: Damascène Bazatsinda and his wife, Berthilde Nimukuze; Révérien Gatanazi and his wife, Immaculée Uwantege; and Ruth Mukeshimana.

Church members had composed a special hymn to encourage the newly baptized members to be strong and faithful in their new vocation. It was heartwarming to see and hear the love and support they expressed for one another as they sang the hymn together.

During the next two days I had additional visits and counseling sessions with brethren and administrative meetings with Mr. Mundeli.

Benin

Next stop was Cotonou, Benin, where we had several Q&A Bible studies, bap-

On to Ouagadougou

The last stop on this trip was Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. I arrived around midnight and was met at the airport by members of the Kaboré family. Mr. Kaboré is a longtime member of the Church. He and his family, the only members in their whole country, had lost touch with their Church family.

One of the daughters is a member of UCG and now lives in the Cincinnati area. She asked me to get in touch with her family, which I was happy to do. This was the first personal contact Mr. Kaboré has had with a Church elder in over 10 years, yet he has remained faithful to God, and His commandments.

It was my first visit to this country. Burkina Faso is on the edge of the Sahara, so the climate is extremely hot and dry. It was around 110 degrees Fahrenheit (45 Celsius) during the day, and even the nights were very hot. The humidity was lower than in the coastal areas of Africa, however, which made the heat easier to bear.

I spent two days with the Kaborés, discussing recent Church history, answering their questions about United and various biblical topics as well, such as baptism, law and grace, the Holy Days and much more. The whole extended family was most hospitable, and they were very excited to receive a visitor from far away. Mr. Kaboré was encouraged to see this sign of support from his brethren in the Church.

I said I would do my best to visit them again before the Feast of Tabernacles. I was encouraged to see this little island of faith, almost alone in a whole country, where people of God hold to His truth. UN



From the Word

A Call for Spiritual Revitalization

■ As individuals and as a church, we need a hunger for renewal and an understanding of these seven components of spiritual revival.

by Gary Petty

All of us need a certain amount of stability and structure in our lives. It is natural for human beings to create daily routines. Over time those routines can become a habitual daily grind—a life of complacency—a gray world without passion, excitement, spontaneity or purpose. This listless existence is all the more tragic when it strikes the heart of a Christian.

When Christians slide into complacency, they need a renewed zeal in their love of God, a revived submission to His Word, a deeper commitment to each other, a burning desire to build strong marriages and families, and a willingness to spread the gospel. Complacent Christians need a revival—a renewed enthusiasm that motivates us to obedience and faith.

All of us have been stirred by reading the Bible, by hearing a sermon or by feelings of guilt to an enthusiastic declaration that “tomorrow I’ll be different. Tomorrow I’ll participate in more Bible study, I’ll pray more, I’ll conquer a sin, I’ll be more caring, I’ll be a better spouse or parent.” But tomorrow comes and soon the zeal wanes. When zeal is based entirely on emotion, it is easy for it to quickly fade or get misdirected.

Misplaced Zeal

Stephen Covey, in his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, tells a parable of how easy it is for zeal to get misdirected. He relates a story of workers who are clearing the underbrush from a jungle. They’re hard at work with their machetes. The managers are sharpening machetes, writing policies and manuals and setting up seminars for muscle development and creating work schedules. Everybody’s working hard, full of zeal and accomplishing tasks.

Then one day a leader climbs up a tall tree, surveys the area, and yells down, “Wrong jungle!”

It is possible to have a misplaced zeal for God. The apostle Paul said of the Jewish people of his day: “They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.” Paul explained why their zeal was misdirected, “For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:2-3).

In fact, without the proper guidance of God, a person’s misplaced zeal can

actually work against what He is accomplishing. The Gospel of Mark records an incident where Jesus healed a leper and then instructed him to show the priests, but not to tell anyone who did the healing. In his zeal, the leper told everyone who would listen. The result of the ensuing controversy was that Jesus could no longer preach in the city but had to minister in the countryside (Mark 1:40-45).

Components of Renewal

To revive something is to bring it back to life. Here are some important components of sustained spiritual revival:

Congregational revival begins with personal revival.

All group revivals begin with individuals who come to realize their hunger for God and how corrupt their nature is before Him. They embrace their need for God to heal them at the deepest levels of their being and to create in them a new way of thinking and feeling. If we feel spiritually self-sufficient, then we will experience no need to be revived.

There can be no spiritual revival without a willingness to be healed of our emotional hurts, to let go of the past, to be stripped of self-sufficiency, pride and inordinate physical desires and to be willing to submit to God’s plan for our lives.

The prophet Isaiah wrote, “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones’” (Isaiah 57:15). God’s Spirit will only interact with and revive those who are humble.

Personal revival leads to personal renewal.

Revivals don’t begin with the unconverted (who have never been spiritually alive), but with those who have been spiritually awakened only to fall into complacency.

Israel’s King David prayed for personal renewal when he recognized that he had fallen into a spiritually complacent and morally corrupt state. He writes in his famous psalm of repentance:

“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit” (Psalm 51:7-12).

David understood that only through total repentance could he again experi-

ence the “joy of salvation.” He prayed to God to be purged, washed, to “hear joy and gladness,” to have his sins blotted out, to have God create in him a clean heart and to have a renewed spirit.

He also understood that only through this personal revival and renewal could he hope to help others turn to God. He writes in verse 13: “Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You.”

Personal renewal involves a dramatic change in thinking.

Spiritual complacency doesn’t happen overnight. It is the result of a slow deterioration of prayer and Bible study, allowing our thoughts to be filled with worry and anxiety, expending our energy on acquiring material possessions, letting love in our relationships for others wax cold and compromising with sin.

Once we hear the call to be revived, we must participate in the daily renewal of the mind that Paul writes about in Ephesians 4:17-23: “This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to

sacrifices and the observance of the annual Holy Days. Individuals began to repent and a revival spread over the entire nation.

“Also the hand of God was on Judah to give them singleness of heart to obey the command of the king and the leaders, at the word of the LORD” (2 Chronicles 30:12). The result of congregational repentance and revival was a singleness of heart in the people as they responded to God’s teachings.

Congregational revival leads to renewed group worship of God and obedience to His Word.

The people of Judah had lost the understanding of the observance of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. Hezekiah reinstated the observance of these festivals. In 2 Chronicles 30:22-24 we see the results of this revival: “And Hezekiah gave encouragement to all the Levites who taught the good knowledge of the LORD; and they ate throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

“Then the whole assembly agreed to keep the feast another seven days, and they kept it another seven days with gladness. For Hezekiah king of Judah gave to the assembly a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep, and the leaders gave to the assembly a thousand bulls

Personal and congregational revival, sustained in daily spiritual renewal, results in a clear vision of God’s Kingdom, zeal to do His will, a commitment to His work in us and the preaching of that Kingdom to others.

work all uncleanness with greediness.

“But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind . . .” See also Philippians 4:4-9.

Personal renewal leads to a renewal of energy, dedication and commitment.

King Hezekiah led one of the greatest revivals in the history of ancient Judah. Notice what 2 Chronicles 31:20-21 says about Hezekiah’s success: “Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, and he did what was good and right and true before the LORD his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, in the law and in the commandment, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart. So he prospered.”

Hezekiah first sought God’s will in how He was to be worshipped and the instructions of life contained in God’s law. He also obeyed “in every work . . . with all his heart.”

Personal revival leads to influencing congregational repentance and unity.

Hezekiah launched his reforms by restoring the worship of God in the temple. He had the priests renew the

must be willing to set aside our own viewpoints and seek God’s vision and goals.

1. *Seek to be focused on the Kingdom of God.* Have a clear vision of that Kingdom as the goal of your life and strive to incorporate the values of God’s Kingdom into every aspect of your life. Study Matthew 5 through 7.

2. *Seek a clean heart and humility before God.* Study Psalm 51.

3. *Seek to bear the fruits of God’s Spirit through renewed daily prayer and Bible study, along with fasting and meditation.* Study Romans 6 through 8 and Galatians 5:16-23.

4. *Seek to build the unity of God’s Spirit in your family and among your Church brethren.* Study Ephesians 5 and 1 Corinthians 12 through 13.

5. *Seek to be grounded in the basic, core doctrines of the Bible and not to be blown about by every wind of doctrine.* Study Matthew 22:34-40; Exodus 20; and Hebrews 6:1-2.

6. *Seek balance in all areas of life.* Study Luke 2:52.

7. *Seek to face problems realistically and to maintain a positive attitude.* Study Philippians 4:8.

Let It Begin With Me

Study these seven components of revival; pray about them and ask for understanding. Tear them apart word by word; talk about them with each other and seek a renewal of God’s involvement in your daily life and in the life of your congregation.

One of the hotbeds for personal complacency, doctrinal deception, congregational infighting and acceptance of sin is when people are emotionally and spiritually *insecure*. It is ironic that another hotbed of complacency and compromise is when people are emotionally and spiritually *secure* in their own understanding. The solution lies in humility before God to guide us instead of trusting our own understanding, which can be motivated by fear, pride or a desire to make the Bible say what we want it to say.

Misdirected zeal can lead us to busy-work. We can have a well-designed organization and a sense of accomplishment, only to find out we’re chopping down the wrong jungle. Personal and congregational revival, sustained in daily spiritual renewal, results in a clear vision of God’s Kingdom, zeal to do His will, a commitment to His work in us and the preaching of that Kingdom to others.

There’s an old song that said, “Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.” Christ is calling His Church to be revived and to maintain that zeal and enthusiasm as a lifelong commitment to become more like Him. All of us need to hunger for that revival and pray, “Let there be a spiritual revival among your people, and let it begin with me.” UN

Seeking Personal Revival

What can we do to be involved in renewal and revival in our personal lives and in the Church of God as a whole? First, we must understand that renewal and revival are based on a deep, personal spiritual hunger that motivates us to seek healing from God. Secondly, we

Congratulations, High School Graduates 2005

David Michael Ames

Parent: Tracy Ames
Congregation: Dallas, Texas
High School Accomplishments: David played JV baseball (one year), varsity basketball (four years), was varsity basketball captain (senior year) and 2005 National Homeschool Basketball Tournament All-American.



David Michael Ames

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: David was active in his local teen group, including fund-raising, service projects, teen club and sports. He enjoys sports of all kinds, music and spending time with friends.
Plans After Graduation: David plans to attend Collin County Community College for two years, then transfer to Texas A&M or Southern Methodist University to pursue a degree in accounting.
Favorite Scripture: Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (KJV).

Stephanie Anderson

Parents: Cary and Christine Anderson
Congregation: Wichita, Kansas
High School Accomplishments: Stephanie grad-



Stephanie Anderson

uated cum laude and was on the honor roll all four years. She was varsity dance team cocaptain, all-American dance team member, state piano competition (1 rating) grades 11 and 12, varsity tennis four years, varsity softball four years and Pro-Humanitate.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests: Stephanie has attended Pinecrest and Winter Camps

numerous times and was a counselor at Camp Carter last year. She has worked as a waitress at a Red Robin restaurant, a customer service representative and as a paper girl. She has volunteered in the Big Brothers, Big Sisters program.

Plans After Graduation: Stephanie plans to attend Southern Methodist University (Dallas, Texas), in the fall to study premed.
Favorite Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:4: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud" (NIV).

Johnathan Armstrong

Parents: Pam and Barney Rehm
Congregation: Little Rock, Arkansas
High School Accomplishments: Johnathan graduated with honors in the top 3 percent of his class and was a member of the National Honor Society. He received the



Johnathan Armstrong

KATV/North Point Toyota Academic Allstar award and character student awards for honesty and integrity.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Johnathan enjoys getting together with other teenagers in the Church. He especially enjoys Bible study, and also enjoys bowling, tennis and basketball.

Plans After Graduation: Johnathan plans to major in physics at Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas.
Advice: Work hard, because it will always pay off, sooner or later.
Favorite Quote: "Try not. Do or do not; there is no try"—Yoda.

Sean D. Ashcraft

Parent: Jeanine Ashcraft
Congregation: Corpus Christi, Texas
High School Accomplishments: Sean was an active member of NJROTC and Concert Orchestra.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Sean's Church activities included song leading, prayers, helping with audio and setting up and taking down for potluck dinners.
Plans After Graduation: Sean plans to attend Del Mar College in Corpus Christi and then go to Texas State Technical College to major in computer programming.

Brittany Ballo

Parents: Don and Camille Ballo

Congregation: Fort Myers, Florida
High School Accomplishments: Brittany received full Bright Futures Academic Scholarship and graduated as an International Baccalaureate Diploma candi-



Brittany Ballo

date with a 5.08 GPA.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Brittany enjoys a variety of music, reading, cleaning, soaking in the Florida sun and playing Texas hold 'em. She loves old movies and musicals. She has attended United Youth Camps in Alabama, Texas and California many times.

Plans After Graduation: Brittany is attending the University of Florida and plans to pursue a pharmaceutical degree.
Additional Comments: Brittany would like to thank Aunt Vicky, Uncle Charles and Mawmaw for making the long trek to see her graduate.
Favorite Scripture: 3 John 11: "Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God."

Michael Barbeau

Parents: Robert and Jane Barbeau
Congregation: Collinsville, Illinois



Michael Barbeau

High School Accomplishments: Michael graduated in the top 3 percent of his class of over 500 students. Michael was a member of National Honor Society and the math and chess teams. He received academic recognition as a National Merit Scholar Finalist and an Illinois State Scholar.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Michael enjoys cycling, reading and watching anything that has to do with Monty Python. He has served as an assistant counselor at Pinecrest and at preteen camps in Arkansas and Oklahoma.

Plans After Graduation: Michael plans to attend the University of Florida to study chemical engineering.
Favorite Scripture: Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is man's all" (NAB).

Amy Elizabeth Bauer

Parents: Terry and Hazel Bauer
Congregation: San Antonio, Texas
High School Accomplishments: Graduated Texas Scholar, cum laude and top 12.6 percent; involved in Key Club (four years), Student Council (three years), class officer (four years), journalism (five years), choir (two years), dance (two years), varsity cheer manager (one year); competed in district UIL (sophomore year) and placed third in news writing and fifth in headline writing.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Amy's Church activities include volleyball, basketball and cheerleading. Her hobbies are singing and scrapbooking and her interests are her best friends.
Plans After Graduation: Amy plans to attend



Amy Elizabeth Bauer

Texas Lutheran University and double major in accounting and business administration and minor in public relations.
Favorite Quote: "The most unfortunate thing that happens to a person who fears failure, is that he limits himself by becoming afraid to try anything new."

Favorite Scripture: 1 Timothy 4:14: "Do not neglect the gift that is in you . . ."
Motto: Dream your dreams, shoot for the moon, reach for the stars, and attempt to make something of yourself.
Advice: Don't look for the things you want, God will provide you with what you need right in front of you. Accept yourself for who you are and love that person. Love your friends, love your family and love God. Good luck in the future.

Additional Comments: Congratulations, Class of 2005! Now we begin the next leg of this wonderful journey we call life. I wish you all the best of luck and lots of success. Thank you to all of my friends for support-

ing me and helping me through the hard times. I want to thank my parents and my sister for standing by me and never giving up on me or my dreams.

Heather Berkey

Parents: Ron and Sally (Oliver) Berkey
Congregation: Salem, Oregon



Heather Berkey

High School Accomplishments: Heather has been in four plays in her high school drama class, and has been active in choir, jazz choir, band, art, painting and printmaking. She received the most inspirational student award in band. She has been on the honor roll since she was a freshman and received an honors diploma. She is taking college courses to transfer to a four-year college.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Heather has gone to summer camps in Oregon since she was 10. Her hobbies include going to the beach, being with friends, reading, listening to rock music, photography and various art activities. She currently works at Pizza Hut.

Plans After Graduation: Heather is going to Chemeketa Community College this summer and fall, then plans to transfer to Western Oregon University to get a teaching degree for high school history and art.

Advice: Enjoy the time you have in high school because it will end all too soon, and then you will have to become an adult.

Favorite Quote: "All you need is love"—John Lennon.

Sarah Bornhorst

Parents: Bart and Joan Bornhorst
Congregation: Dayton, Ohio



Sarah Bornhorst

High School Accomplishments: Sarah was a member of National Honor Society, graduated with honors and received the Ohio Award of Merit, the Presidential Award for Educational Excellence and the Scholar Athlete Award. She was girls tennis captain and received the Leadership Award and the Highest GPA Award. She was president of the Future Educators of America Club. She received the following scholarships:

Wilmington College Presidential Scholarship, Future Educators of America Scholarship and the Xenia American Association of University Women Book Scholarship.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Sarah has attended Camp Heritage for seven years where she has met most of her closest friends. She has studied and enjoys dance—jazz, ballet and tap. She also enjoys writing poetry and loves to read.

Plans After Graduation: Sarah will attend Wilmington College in pursuit of a degree in early childhood education. She has applied to and hopes to attend ABC this coming year.

Favorite Quote: "Beauty Tips: For attractive lips, speak words of kindness. For lovely eyes, seek out the good in people. For a slim figure, share your food with the hungry. For beautiful hair, let a child run his fingers through it once a day. For poise, walk with the knowledge that you never walk alone"—Audrey Hepburn.

Favorite Scripture: Romans 8:18: "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Advice: Remember, if God can take time to feed you, clothe you, house you and provide for you daily, never wonder if He has time to hear your problems. Just like a best friend He desires to listen to us, and like a Father He desires to answer us.

John Bratincevic

Parents: Jack and Janet Bratincevic
Congregation: Chicago, Illinois



John Bratincevic

High School Accomplishments: John received presidential scholarships from Elmhurst College and North Central College. He was treasurer of 4-H, president of 4-H, Cook County Grand Champion for journalism, visual arts and (reluctantly) baking. He was a swim team member, ranking third in the division for backstroke. John was home-schooled.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests: John is on the sound crew at church. His hobby is the study, performance and appreciation of classical music—particularly Beethoven, Schumann and Chopin.

Plans After Graduation: John is going to attend Elmhurst College, double-majoring in music business and business administration.

Favorite Quote: "To me the highest thing, after God, is my honor"—Ludwig van Beethoven.

Lacey Darleen Buck

Parents: Mary Kathleen Buck and Ernest Wayne Buck

Congregation: Eureka, California

High School Accomplishments: Lacey maintained an approximate 3.8 GPA throughout

high school and ranks seventh in her class. She has won several art awards.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Lacey loves to read and write. She aspires to be a professional studio artist and is in the process of writing a full-length novel.

Plans After Graduation: Lacey is already enrolled in the local community college, College of the Redwoods. She has plans to transfer to Humboldt State or another four-year university.



Lacey Darleen Buck

Favorite Quote: "... Novels change us because their authors are willing to draw upon their deepest selves without flinching. They hold nothing back, making their novels the deepest possible expression of their own experience and beliefs"—Donald Maass, *Writing the Breakout Novel*.

Katie Burbeck

Parents: Jim and Denise Burbeck
Congregation: Minneapolis, Minnesota

High School Accomplishments: Katie graduated with honors and was on the honor roll throughout high school. She was outstanding 12th grade social studies student, vice president of symphony orchestra, president of Future Educators of America, received the Leadership, Enthusiasm and Commitment Award for orchestra, played viola for 10 years and took five years of French.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Katie teaches viola lessons, and likes hanging out with the crew, reading, going to movies, taking Joey the dog out on walks and enjoying life.



Katie Burbeck

Plans After Graduation: Katie plans to attend the University of St. Thomas, majoring in social studies education (secondary) and minoring in French.

Favorite Scripture: Proverbs 16:9: "A man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps."

Favorite Quote: Lady: "You, sir, are drunk." Winston Churchill: "And you, ma'am, are ugly. The difference is, when I wake up, I will no longer be drunk."



Nate Burbeck

Nate Burbeck

Parents: Jim and Denise Burbeck
Congregation: Minneapolis, Minnesota

High School Accomplishments: Nate graduated with honors and earned high achievements in art. He designed the 2004 Homecoming button.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Nate enjoys drawing, making ceramics, playing the bass guitar, playing basketball and being with friends. He really enjoyed an art trip with other high school students to New York City in March 2005.

Plans After Graduation: Nate plans to attend St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, to major in studio arts.

Favorite Scripture: John 14:2: "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

Sofia T. Carreon

Parents: Tony and Martie (Reyes) Carreon
Congregation: Sierra Vista, Arizona

High School Accomplishments: Sofia did well in academics all four years, was recipient of the Tombstone Association of the Arts \$1,000 Scholarship (her artwork was displayed in the Tombstone Art Gallery in Tombstone, Arizona, several years) and was



Sofia T. Carreon

manager for cross-country and track.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Sofia enjoyed attending three years of camp at Camp Carter in Fort Worth, Texas, and loves to draw in her spare time.

Plans After Graduation: She initially plans on attending a local community college to take courses in order to pursue a career in radiology.

Rachel Cherie Clark

Parents: Tom and Mary Clark
Congregations: Wichita, Salina and Liberal, Kansas

High School Accomplishments: Rachel's achievements include K.A.Y. Council, 11 and 12 (officer); wrestling cheerleading, 12 (lettered); Heartland Reader Award, 9, 10, 11 and 12; *Who's Who Among American High School Students*, 9.



Rachel Cherie Clark

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Rachel enjoys working with kids and is able to work with them in the preteen classes at church. She is a lifeguard and a swim teacher at one of the local YMCAs. She also is able to teach gymnastics at the Y. She is excited that she will be able to use her lifeguarding to work on staff at Camp Carter in July. She has been going to summer camp since before she was old enough to be a camper (with her mom and dad). She is a very social person and loves staying in communication with her friends and family. She also really enjoys reading and cooking.

Plans After Graduation: Rachel plans to go to Butler County Community College, working toward their nursing program.

Favorite Quote: Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in their shoes. That way, you are a mile away and you have their shoes.

Favorite Scripture: Psalm 121:1-8: "I will lift up my eyes to the hills—from whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to be moved . . ."

Motto: Happiness is a good book and chocolate.
Advice: Get unlimited minutes on your cell phone plan.

Jason Lee "Ace" Cockrell

Parents: Tim and Cathy Cockrell
Congregation: Dallas, Texas

High School Accomplishments: He was listed in *Who's Who Among American High School Students* for three years and won the Football Gatorade Will to Win Award.



Jason Lee "Ace" Cockrell

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: He was treasurer of the Teen Club 2004/2005.

Plans After Graduation: He plans to graduate from the University of North Texas and possibly work with autistic children and their siblings.

Additional Comments: Having an older brother with autism has helped him learn tolerance and compassion toward others and to understand their needs.

Katie Cole

Parents: Martin and Maxine Cole
Congregation: Worcester, Massachusetts
High School Accomplishments: Katie was a member of the National Honor Society,

coeditor of the yearbook, named to *Who's Who Among American High School Students* and inducted into the National Honor Roll.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Katie is a die-hard Red Sox fan. She enjoys playing tennis and hiking.



Katie Cole

Plans After Graduation: She plans to attend a community college for one to two years and then transfer to the University of Massachusetts to get a degree in zoology or wildlife management.

Caleb Creech

Parents: Glenn and Ronda Creech
Congregation: Cincinnati East, Ohio
High School Accomplishments: Caleb graduated third in his class with a 4.0 GPA, was



Caleb Creech

awarded top student in his county, received top AP English and top AP calculus student awards and received 11 varsity letters.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Caleb likes to play all types of sports, hang out with the teen group, go to camp and chat online.

Plans After Graduation: Caleb is spending the summer working at Sears on the dock unloading trucks to earn some money before heading off to college at Morehead State University in Kentucky in the fall. He plans to study biology and specialize in premed with an emphasis on pediatrics.

Favorite Quote: Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment.

Steven D. Czepizak

Parents: Henry and Elizabeth Czepizak
Congregation: Chicago Northwest, Illinois
High School Accomplishments: Steven received seven semester honor roll awards, Prairie State Achievement Award for mathematics and science and the President's Award for Educational Excellence.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Steven has served in the choir and with ushering at church, and enjoys hunting, fishing, boating, waterskiing, snow skiing, volleyball, building models, bass guitar and working on cars.



Steven D. Czepizak

Plans After Graduation: He plans to go to Southern Illinois University to study mechanical engineering and minor in auto mechanics.

Favorite Quote: I win!

Jesse Dreaden

Parents: Art and Sandra Dreaden
Congregation: Geneva, Alabama
High School Accomplishments: Jesse graduated summa cum laude from Crestview High School in Crestview, Florida.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Jesse's hobbies include waterskiing, snow



Jesse Dreaden

skiing, restoring a 1951 Dodge pickup truck and swing dance. It has been a very interesting senior year for Jesse. Hurricane Ivan forced his family out of their home on Trumpets. Jesse not only helped the family move three times, but also helped his dad do demolition and removal work as the whole southern half of the house had to be gutted to the studs and rafters.

Plans After Graduation: Jesse has three different 100 percent scholarships to pay for the first two years at a local community college and two 100 percent scholarships to pay for the last two years at the University of Florida in Gainesville. He plans to major in chemical engineering.

Virginia "Ginger" Irene Eads

Parents: Earl H. Eads and Marie Zelenka



Virginia "Ginger" Irene Eads

Congregation: Los Angeles, California
High School Accomplishments: Ginger had two years in the Academy of Health Sciences and was on the Principal's Recognition Roll her sophomore through senior years.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Ginger has participated in choir, Camp Oakhurst and Camp Hye Sierra (five years) and enjoys travel and friends.

Plans After Graduation: She plans to attend Citrus College in Glendora, California, to receive an associate's degree.

Favorite Scripture: Psalm 56:3: "Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You."

Matthew Braden Eddington

Parents: Peter and Terri Eddington
Congregation: Cincinnati East, Ohio
High School Accomplishments: Matthew completed two years of college during the last two years of high school. He is a member



Matthew Braden Eddington

of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and received a Cincinnatus Scholarship and the President's Education Award in Recognition of Outstanding Academic Excellence.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Matthew was assistant manager of a local business establishment his junior and senior years.

Plans After Graduation: Matthew plans to complete a bachelor's degree in business management.

Favorite Scriptures: Ecclesiastes 4:9-10: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up." Revelation 21:4: "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Whitney Ellis

Parents: Dan and Toni Ellis



Whitney Ellis

Congregation: Fort Worth, Texas
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Whitney enjoys basketball and dance.

Plans After Graduation: Whitney plans to train to become an accountant.

Favorite Scripture: Matthew 6:34: "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Amber Michelle Epperson

Parents: Raymond and Annette Epperson
Congregation: Cleveland, Tennessee

(Chattanooga)

High School Accomplishments: Amber attended an honors high school in Memphis,



Amber Michelle Epperson

Tennessee, for three years, and participated in the school orchestra, Jacettes Service Club, Dance Club, National Honor Society, National Beta Club and the Spanish Club. Her family moved from Memphis to east Tennessee in July 2004 and she graduated from Marion County High School in Jasper, Tennessee, in May 2005. She continued to participate in the National Beta Club and received the Marion County Seal of Excellence for academic achievement. She also received several class awards and the Daughters of the American Revolution Award for Outstanding Knowledge of American History.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Amber enjoys attending church each week and talking to all of her friends there. She also enjoys keeping in contact with all of the people she's met at United Youth Camp via the Internet. This summer she plans to volunteer at both Camp Pinecrest in Missouri and Camp Woodmen in Alabama as an assistant counselor. She has volunteered at various preteen camps for the past four years. She also enjoys traveling to other countries for the Feast of Tabernacles. Her current hobbies are crocheting, knitting, sewing, reading, scrapbooking and running. She also spends a lot of time working at Sonic Drive-In in Jasper.

Plans After Graduation: Amber has been accepted to three universities, and plans to attend the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She has received three scholarships.

Melissa Fergen

Parents: Dave and Karen Fergen
Congregation: Wichita, Kansas

High School Accomplishments: Melissa was cocaptain in varsity volleyball, basketball and softball; valedictorian; State Scholar; class president; Student Council secretary; journalism editor; Scholar's Bowl captain, and was in Show Choir and National Honor Society.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Melissa has been to Pinecrest, Tetons, Winter Camp, Woodmen and the central region preteen camp. She loves graphic



Melissa Fergen

design, going to camp, playing sports, singing, playing piano and scrapbooking.

Plans After Graduation: Melissa will attend the University of Kansas to major in visual communication with an emphasis on graphic design. She'll be living just down the hall from her sister! After four years, she'd like to attend ABC and/or begin working for an advertising agency.

Additional Comments: Melissa's favorite book of the Bible is James.

Keleb Steven Franke

Parents: Shane and Kimberly Franke

Congregation: Soldotna, Alaska



Keleb Steven Franke

High School Accomplishments: Keleb graduated with a 3.8 GPA while holding down a full-time job.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Keleb enjoys camping, hunting, karate and hanging out with his friends. He also makes and collects miniature die-cast airplanes and has an extensive sword collection. He serves in the local congregation whenever there is a need and occasionally gives opening and closing prayers.

Plans After Graduation: Keleb plans to work for another year and then attend college for mechanical engineering.

Joseph Tyler Gatlin

Parents: Denise Gatlin and Nathan Gatlin

Congregation: Tucson, Arizona



Joseph Tyler Gatlin

High School Accomplishments: Joseph lettered four years in track and field, and took third place in the state meet for the 400-meter dash. He also lettered two years in varsity soccer and one year in basketball.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Joseph loves church dances and church picnics. He draws a lot and likes to hang out with friends and family in his free time.

Plans After Graduation: Joseph plans to work and then go to college to run track.

Brandi Gearhart

Parent: Laurie Gearhart

Congregation: Elmira, New York

High School Accomplishments: Brandi par-



Brandi Gearhart

ticipated in Festival Chorus (10th-12th grades), Concert Choir (11th-12th grades), SADD (10th-12th grades), yearbook (10th-12th grades), Key Club (11th-12th grades), varsity tennis (12th grade) and Varsity Club (12th grade).

Plans After Graduation: Brandi is planning to take the nursing program at Coming Community College.

Favorite Quote: "What makes you different makes you beautiful"—Anonymous.

Breanne Gearhart

Parent: Laurie Gearhart

Congregation: Elmira, New York

High School Accomplishments: Breanne participated in Women's Chorale (ninth grade), Show Choir (ninth grade), NYSSMA (ninth grade), junior high area all state (ninth



Breanne Gearhart

grade), Festival Chorus (10th-12th grades), Concert Choir (11th-12th grades), yearbook (10th-12th grades), Key Club (11th-12th grades), SADD (11th-12th grades), varsity tennis (11th-12th grades) and Varsity Club (11th-12th grades).

Plans After Graduation: Breanne is planning to take the criminal justice program at Coming Community College.

Rhonda Gehrke

Parents: Rod and Violet Gehrke

Congregation: East Texas

High School Accomplishments: Rhonda has attended Union Grove schools from kindergarten through her senior year in high school. She is a member of the National Honor Society, is historian for her class and has been chosen for *Who's Who Among American High School Students*. In addition, Rhonda is a Texas Globe Scholar (award given by Greater Longview Business Association to students ranked in top 10 percent of their class) and has taken



Rhonda Gehrke

dual credit courses. Among her accomplishments is being selected best actress at a one-act play competition.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Rhonda has been an active member of youth activities at church, including volleyball and basketball. She has been a camper at Woodmen, Pinecrest and Davidson camps. Also, she has participated in teen service projects and youth trips. Rhonda has worked at Pizza Hut for over a year. She enjoys reading/writing poetry, yoga and good times with great friends.

Plans After Graduation: She plans to attend Tyler Junior College for one year and then probably transfer to a state university. Rhonda's career goals are to go into public relations or human relations.

Tiffany Giddens

Parents: Ralph and Sherrie Giddens

Congregation: St. Louis, Missouri

High School Accomplishments: Tiffany graduated a year early.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Tiffany has been homeschooled her entire academic career. She enjoys reading, swimming, working out, dancing and goofing around with friends. She's worked at the Osage preteen camp the last two years as



Tiffany Giddens

swimming staff. This is her last year attending Pinecrest as a camper, but she would like to attend as staff next year.

Plans After Graduation: Tiffany is taking a year off from school, and in that time she plans on looking into all her options on which direction she'd like her life to go.

Favorite Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in

the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

Motto: "Life happens, so paint yourself a beautiful day." That motto appears in the magazine her mom publishes. It means things are bound to happen that are out of your control, but no matter what, make your day into how you want it to be.

Advice: Don't let anything get you down. Things are going to happen, but just trust, that no matter what, God is looking out for you. It's easy to forget that sometimes.

Lauren Kimberly Graham

Parents: Susan T. Graham and Kenneth A. Graham II
Congregation: Bloomington-Normal, Illinois



Lauren Kimberly Graham

High School Accomplishments: Lauren maintained a 3.5 GPA all through high school and participated in Latin Club and the Junior Classical League.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Lauren's hobbies include photography and painting.

Plans After Graduation: Lauren plans to get a bachelor's degree in the arts at Illinois Central College. After that she plans on attending an art specialty school and becoming a freelance photographer.

Holly Marie Haley

Parents: Steve and Delores Haley
Congregation: Louisville, Kentucky
High School Accomplishments: Holly was vice president of student council and was in philanthropy for a year. She was on



Holly Marie Haley

the prom committee her junior year. She volunteers for the American Red Cross and has already received one college credit.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Holly went to Camp Woodmen for four years and has attended the Winter Family Weekend every year. She went to the Atlanta prom three years. She enjoys hanging out with her friends and playing

sports. Her favorite sports are tennis and softball.

Plans After Graduation: Holly plans to attend the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville, Indiana. She wants to get a degree in nursing and work at a nursing home in the Alzheimer's unit.

Favorite Quote: Don't be sad because it's over. Be happy because it happened.

Favorite Scripture: Psalm 118:29: "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever."

Brandon Howard

Parents: Lesley and Veronica Carlisle-Johnson
Congregation: Fort Worth, Texas

High School Accomplishments: Brandon's accomplishments include *Who's Who Among American High School Students*, varsity band, band squad leader, National Society of High School Scholars and National Honor Roll.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Brandon enjoys Church basketball, guitar, art, band and music.



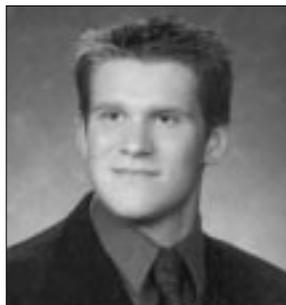
Brandon Howard

Plans After Graduation: Brandon plans to pursue a marketing degree.

Favorite Quote: "Don't gain the world and lose your soul; wisdom is better than gold."

Jeremiah Steven Johnson

Parents: Steven and Christine Johnson
Congregation: Beloit, Wisconsin
High School Accomplishments: Jeremiah was



Jeremiah Steven Johnson

an honor student and a letter winner in football (two years), wrestling (four years) and track (one year). His team won the Southern Lakes Conference Championship in football and he received All Conference Honors in wrestling.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Jeremiah went to Winter Camp and staffed a preteen camp every year and officiated the Kids' Club Wrestling Tournaments. He will soon be assistant coach for the high school wrestling team. He enjoys playing basketball, football, volleyball and any other sport

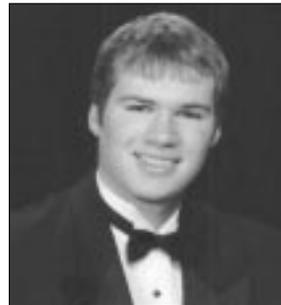
you can think of, lifting weights and running and hanging out with friends.

Plans After Graduation: Jeremiah is planning to attend the University of Wisconsin-Rock County for two years while playing basketball there. He will then transfer to the University of Wisconsin-Madison for either a medical or law degree. He said his career choice will be important to be able to have kids, provide for them and raise them in the Church just as he has been.

Favorite Scripture: Ephesians 6:12: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age; against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

Nathaniel Wayne Joyner

Parents: Tim and Martha Joyner
Congregation: Austin, Texas



Nathaniel Wayne Joyner

High School Accomplishments: Varsity basketball, National Honor Roll and A-B Honor Roll.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Basketball, juggling and attending the Feast and camp.

Plans After Graduation: Nathaniel plans to attend Austin Community College for the fall semester and then transfer to Texas State University in the spring. He would like to play basketball in college while obtaining a degree in accounting/business administration.

Favorite Scripture: Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

Elizabeth Ann Kidder

Grandparents: Emerson and Doris Kidder
Congregation: Fort Myers, Florida
High School Accomplishments: Liz was on the swim team for four years and earned four varsity letters. She attended Quantum Learning Camp for two years at Wake



Elizabeth Ann Kidder

Forest University in North Carolina. She received three scholarships for college: The Quest scholarship, which is a full four-year tuition to any Florida university/college; the Elizabeth and Lynn Memorial Scholarship; and the Bonita Shores Club Scholarship.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Liz attended United Youth Camps from 1995 to 2003, and helps with the refreshment table at church. She volunteered at North Collier Hospital Birthplace for 374 hours. She was active in Key Club and was a Girl Scout for 13 years, Brownies through Seniors. In her spare time she enjoys reading books and being with family and friends.

Plans After Graduation: This summer she plans to work two part-time jobs at Toucan Grille and Applebee's. On July 2 her older brother Joe is getting married and she will be a bridesmaid. In August she will be attending Edison Community College in Fort Myers for two years, then transferring to another Florida university/college for her bachelor of science degree.

Favorite Scripture: Proverbs 27:1: "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth."

Magnolia Ko

Parents: Thomas and Esther Ko
Congregation: Raleigh, North Carolina
High School Accomplishments: Magnolia was



Magnolia Ko

involved in French Honor Society Club, International Club and Interact Club.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Magnolia likes to crochet, draw and paint. She likes to play volleyball and tennis and is interested in medicine and in nursing.

Plans After Graduation: She is going to East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina.

Favorite Quote: "The doors of wisdom are never shut"—Benjamin Franklin.

Favorite Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13-14. Plus others!

Advice: Take mistakes that you've done as lessons that will teach you throughout your life.

Nick Lamoureux

Parents: Don and Donna Lamoureux
Congregation: Worcester, Massachusetts
High School Accomplishments: Nick was involved in the National Technical Honor Society, football, band and chorus. He also became an Eagle Scout.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Nick enjoys Church camp, hunting, fishing, motocross, four-wheeling, mudding, snowboarding, camping and playing drums.

Plans After Graduation: Nick plans to attend WyoTech in Pennsylvania and then open a fabrication shop.

Favorite Quote: Git-r-done!
Favorite Scripture: Matthew 6:25: "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life,



Nick Lamoureux

what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

Anne M. Lewis

Parents: Jeff and Janice Lewis
Congregation: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
High School Accomplishments: Anne was involved in National Honor Society, National Latin Honor Society, SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions),



Anne M. Lewis

SMAC (Student Movement Against Cancer) and was founder and captain of first high school biking team (Team Cherokee) in the American Cancer Society Bike-a-Thon in Philadelphia.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Anne worked on the sound crew at the Feast of Tabernacles and locally on the Holy Days, played offertory and special music on the piano and worked as a counselor at Camp Buckeye.

Plans After Graduation: Anne plans to attend The College of New Jersey to double major in psychology and secondary education.

Favorite Quote: "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power"—Abraham Lincoln.

Caroline Elizabeth Luck

Parents: Andrew and Patricia Luck



Caroline Elizabeth Luck

Congregation: Nashville, Tennessee
High School Accomplishments: Caroline's achievements include: top 10 percent of class, honorable mention medalist, honorable mention Citizenship Award, Girls' State nominee and runner-up, student council member (ninth and 12th grades), sophomore class secretary, junior class vice president, best dressed of class, varsity soccer (four years), track team (two years), freshmen basketball, concert choir, Beauty Shop Revue, BETA Club member and Youth Leadership Advisory Committee.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Caroline has attended Camp Woodmen (five years), Tetons (one year) and Pinecrest (one year). At church she plays piano for special music, church choir and teaches Sabbath school classes. Her interests and hobbies include piano, singing, art, soccer, shopping, clothing design, traveling, hanging out with friends and going to concerts with her sister.

Plans After Graduation: Caroline plans to major in nursing and minor in art at Tennessee Technological University. Then she plans to attend either fashion design or nurse anesthetist school.

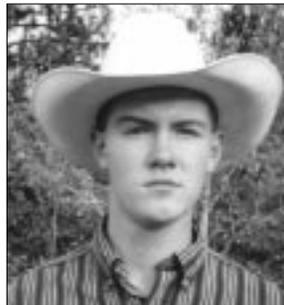
Favorite Scripture: Revelation 21:1-4: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away . . . 'God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.'"

Favorite Quote: A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.

Jason Maine

Parents: Roger and Florence Maine
Congregation: Spokane, Washington/Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

High School Accomplishments: Jason has been on class council for the last four years. He has been student of the month several times and on the honor roll.



Jason Maine

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: At church Jason has been helping with setup and takedown of the sound system and with telephone hookups. He likes to play volleyball, go snowmobiling and drive his '74 three-quarter ton, four-wheel drive Ford pickup. He helps his dad and a couple other farmers work the fields and work on the equipment. When he was 13 one of his farmer friends gave him a combine, and he has been enjoying using it every year.

Plans After Graduation: In January 2006 Jason will be attending Walla Walla State College, taking the John Deere tech program. In the future Jason's goal is to work for John Deere Company and have a 600- to 700-acre farm in Montana and raise hay and grain.



Gina Renee McCauley

Gina Renee McCauley

Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Robert McCauley
Congregation: Corpus Christi, Texas
High School Accomplishments: Throughout high school Gina has been active in dance, choir, German Club, P.A.L.s (Peer Assistance and Leadership) and Future Teachers of America.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Gina enjoys spending time with her friends and family and meeting new people.

Plans After Graduation: This fall Gina will be starting college and majoring in elementary education. She hopes to earn a bachelor's degree in education and work with third through fifth graders.

Favorite Quote: "We need people in our lives with whom we can be as open as possible. To have real conversations with people may seem like such a simple, obvious suggestion, but it involves courage and risk"—Thomas Moore.

Scott McIntosh

Parents: Ken and Louise McIntosh
Congregation: Fort Worth, Texas



Scott McIntosh

High School Accomplishments: Scott competed in track, football, cross-country running and wrestling and served as captain of the high school wrestling team. He was winner of the Texas Scholar Medal.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Scott participated in the congregation's youth basketball team.

Plans After Graduation: This summer Scott will work at the United Youth Corps summer camp in Ghana. This fall he plans to attend Tarrant County College in Fort Worth.

Amanda Valene McKinney

Parents: Doug and Elaine McKinney
Congregation: Gadsden, Alabama
High School Accomplishments: Amanda received an Advanced Diploma, with a 4.2 GPA. She was a member of the National Honor Society, president of Spanish Club and a member of Future Business Leaders of America.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Amanda enjoys reading, baking and spending time with friends and family. She also loves to spend time on the water during the summer.



Amanda Valene McKinney

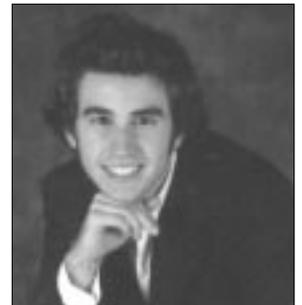
Plans After Graduation: She plans to attend Northeast Alabama Community College in the fall and then transfer to the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She plans to major in elementary education.

Favorite Quote: "It's not always rainbows and butterflies, it's compromise, it moves us along"—Maroon 5.

Favorite Scripture: Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

Stephen McNeely

Parents: Steve and Mary McNeely
Congregation: East Texas
High School Accomplishments: Stephen attended Hawkins schools all 13 years and is listed as a distinguished graduate, among the top 10 students of his class. He has been active in high school sports, participating in basketball, baseball and track. In basketball he was recognized as part of the all-state academic team, second team all district and received honorable mention from East Texas newspapers. He has been



Stephen McNeely

on the student council all four years of high school and has been class president for one year and class vice president for two years. Stephen has participated in one-act plays all four years and his team has progressed to the area level. In his junior year Stephen received a scholarship award from the *Longview News Journal* for an article he authored for the "laws of life" essay contest.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Stephen has been active in Church camps—attending Pinecrest, Woodmen, Tetons, Carter and Alvin. He has participated in basketball and volleyball and has contributed musically at Church events.

Stephen is working part-time for the Hawkins Animal Clinic. He enjoys art, creative writing and music. He is lead singer, lead guitarist and writes most of the songs for a local band.

Plans After Graduation: After graduation, Stephen plans to attend the University of Texas at Tyler, where he has been awarded a Patriot scholarship. He intends to major in either English or music.

Marty Miller

Parents: Dan and Martha Miller
Congregation: Cambridge, Ohio
High School Accomplishments: Marty was an Industrial Arts Club officer as a sophomore, was on the Leadership Committee as a junior and was SkillsUSA VICA club sergeant at arms as a senior. He was an honor student throughout high school, a member of the National Honor Society and received several scholarship that give enough money to pay for college or at least close to it.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Marty has been part of the Northeast Ohio regional teen speech club and held office for two years as treasurer and president. He is on the sound crew at his local congregation, and he attends youth camps each year, the winter weekends and most other Church



Marty Miller

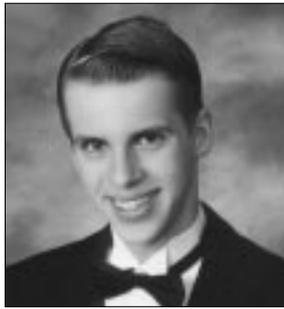
activities. He enjoys playing almost every sport, hunting, working with his hands, building things, etc. For the last two years of high school he attended the Buckeye Career Center and was trained in the carpentry field. Each year the various construction-related programs build a house and sell it at the end of the year, and the carpentry program is largely involved.

Plans After Graduation: Marty will work over the summer for his dad building an addition onto their manufacturing plant and will try to fit in a few summer camps. Once fall rolls around he'll attend Ohio State University's Agricultural Technical Institute in Wooster, Ohio, studying in the construction management field (an associate's program). After that he plans on attending ABC and having fun.

Advice: Work really, really hard your senior year and fill out as many scholarship applications as you are eligible for because you might be surprised how many you'll receive. It pays off when you get out of college practically debt-free.

Eddie Mills

Parents: Clay and Renee Mills
Congregation: Austin, Texas
High School Accomplishments: Eddie received Gold Medalist 2001 State Marching Band, Silver Medalist 2004 State Marching Band, Texas Scholar graduate and Most Dedicated Band



Eddie Mills

Student Award 2004-2005.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Eddie plays church basketball and also enjoys playing trombone and juggling.

Plans After Graduation: Eddie plans to begin at a community college and later transfer to a four-year university.

Favorite Quote: "We crucify ourselves between two thieves: regret for yesterday and fear of tomorrow"—Fulton Oursler.

Mitchell Moss

Parents: Scott and Peggy Moss
Congregation: Fort Wayne, Indiana
High School Accomplishments: National Honor Society, Tech Team, first chair saxophone.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Mitch duplicates audiotapes at church, accompanies hymns on saxophone and performs special music piano solos. He formed a jazz combo with friends and plays gigs within a hundred-mile radius. He is interested in



Mitchell Moss

Macintosh hardware, software and all things Apple.

Plans After Graduation: Mitchell plans to commute to Honors College at Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, then attend ABC in a year or two.

Megan Roswyn Murphey

Parents: Jacqueline Murphey-Opichka (nee Ramsey) and stepdaughter of Ward Opichka.

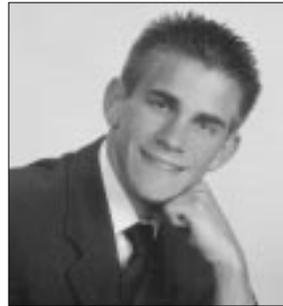


Megan Roswyn Murphey

High School: Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas.
High School Accomplishments: High school marching band, playing saxophone for three years.
Plans After Graduation: Accepted to Texas Christian University with a \$30,000 scholarship to study fashion management.

Christopher David Murphy

Parents: Calvin Ray Murphy and Linda (Dullum) Murphy
Congregation: Los Angeles, California
High School Accomplishments: Chris was senior class council representative and was on the dean's list eight consecutive semesters. Awards he received include Scholar Athlete (National Football Association),



Christopher David Murphy

Outstanding Improvisation (jazz band), Louis Armstrong Award for Jazz and many second and third place medals for track. He participated in marching band and jazz band (first chair alto saxophone), junior varsity and varsity football (2004 Rio Hondo League champions) and track (shot put and discus).

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Chris has been active in many youth/young adult church activities, including the annual fundraiser of selling Rose Parade programs. He loves interactive computer games and would find it interesting and challenging to design games.

Plans After Graduation: Chris plans to attend California State University to obtain a B.S. in software engineering in computer science.

Favorite Saying: Keep on keeping on.

Damian Nathan Naidoo

Parents: Colin and Meena Naidoo
Congregation: Durban, South Africa



Damian Nathan Naidoo

High School Accomplishments: Damian received outstanding achievement awards and distinctions in mathematics, physical science, computer studies, English and accounting, including an "A" aggregate.

Plans After Graduation: Damian plans to attend

the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal to obtain a degree in business science: management.
Favorite Scripture: Matthew 6:34: "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (NIV).

Christina Ann Ockert

Parents: Walter and Valorie Ockert
Congregation: Joplin, Missouri



Christina Ann Ockert

Plans After Graduation: Christina is considering nursing school.

John Franklin Ockert

Parents: Walter and Valorie Ockert
Congregation: Joplin, Missouri



John Franklin Ockert

Plans After Graduation: John has enlisted in the Marines and leaves Aug. 2 for boot camp training in California.

Desiree Olson

Parents: Keith and Victoria Olson
Congregation: Seattle, Washington
High School Accomplishments: Desiree was heavily involved in her school's music and drama programs and was nominated as part of "best pit orchestra" in the Puget Sound area at the 5th Ave. High School Musical Awards. She also enjoyed playing golf with the women's varsity golf team and playing piano and clarinet at school and at her local congregation. This year she was elected as upper school editor for the school yearbook.



Desiree Olson

Plans After Graduation: Desiree will attend the University of Washington this fall, where she plans to study French and music.
Favorite Scripture: Isaiah 40:30-31: "Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (NIV).

James Lee Osborne

Parents: Michael and Carolyn Osborne
Congregation: Laurel, Mississippi
High School Accomplishments: Some of James' accomplishments are winning fourth place in a regional speaking contest, the



James Lee Osborne

Student of the Month for February 2005, the VFW Scholarship and the American Legion Award.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: James' hobbies include reading, drawing, fishing, exercising/working out and shooting pool.
Plans After Graduation: James will be attending Hinds Community College in the fall with the hope of transferring later to a university. He plans to major in art to study to become a forensic artist or a political cartoonist.
Favorite Quote: Think like a man of action; act like a man of thought.
Favorite Scripture: 1 Corinthians 16:13-14: "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all you do be done with love."

Rebecca Taryn Patterson

Parents: Alan and Toni Patterson
Congregation: Detroit, Michigan
High School Accomplishments: Rebecca graduated cum laude with a 3.2 GPA. She has served as a volunteer on Project Mango where she collected food, clothing, money, etc. for battered women.



Rebecca Taryn Patterson

Plans After Graduation: Rebecca will be attending Baker College to pursue a career in accounting.
Favorite Scripture: Psalm 133:1: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Amber LaChelle Pettigrew

Parents: Kevin and Pamela Pettigrew
Congregation: Charlotte, North Carolina
High School Accomplishments: Amber graduated with honors, was a member of the National Honor Society and enjoyed participating in Lady Knights basketball and soccer.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Some



Amber LaChelle Pettigrew

activities Amber enjoys doing include participating in youth activities, going on camping trips to the mountains and the beach, summer cookouts, hanging out by the pool with friends and family, being outside and playing sports.
Plans After Graduation: Amber plans to work to save money, travel with her family and hopefully attend ABC. She then plans to pursue a degree at a university. This summer, apart from working, she plans to attend Camp Woodmen one last time as a camper and hang out with her friends.

Favorite Quote: "Enthusiasm is one of the most powerful engines of success. When you do a thing, do it with all your might . . . be active, be energetic, be enthusiastic and faithful, and you will accomplish your objective"—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Heather Quick

Parent: Melaine Quick
Congregation: Loveland, Colorado
High School Accomplishments: Heather was level 3 link crew leader, assistant editor for the school newspaper and received a letter in orchestra.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Heather



Heather Quick

enjoys camping, coordinating teen activities and videotaping everything. She likes to rock climb and is always writing something, whether an e-mail or a short story.
Plans After Graduation: Heather plans to attend a community college for two years, then transfer to a university to complete a degree in genetics. Then she plans to complete her studies to become a physical therapist.
Advice: You can waste your life drawing lines, or you can live your life crossing them.

Favorite Quote: "Climbing may be hard, but it is easier than growing up."

Justin Michael Raines

Parents: William and Carolyn Raines
Congregation: Cumberland, Maryland
High School Accomplishments: Justin took AP classes, graduated in the top 10 percent of his class and won a Bausch & Lomb Science Award and a physics award from Rutgers University.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Justin has attended Camp Heritage for six years. He enjoys computer games and books on physics, especially *Universe in a Nutshell*.



Justin Michael Raines

Plans After Graduation: Justin will attend Frostburg State University and major in physics or computer science.
Favorite Scripture: Genesis 1:3: "And God said, 'Let there be light . . .'"

Jennifer Reisinger

Parents: Wes and Arlene Reisinger
Congregation: Wichita Kansas
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Jennifer



Jennifer Reisinger

is 17 years old, and will be 18 on July 29.
Plans After Graduation: Jennifer has not decided at this point.

Abigail Susanne Riley

Parents: C.W. and Martha Riley
Congregation: Wichita, Kansas
High School Accomplishments: Abigail's accomplishments include first place art



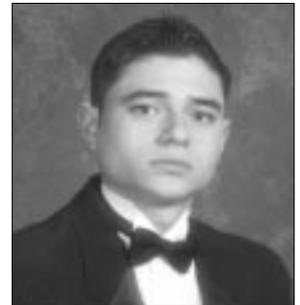
Abigail Susanne Riley

sculpture and best of show, first place regional music composition as well as state, two year state track competitor as well as regional runner-up in high jump and Principal's Honor Roll.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Abigail sings in the church choir and as a vocal soloist. She enjoys music, art, photography, volleyball and teaching gymnastics.
Plans After Graduation: She plans to study cosmetology and later become a nurse.
Favorite Scripture: Philippians 2:4: "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (NIV).

Adam Jonathan Robles

Parents: Martina and Adam Robles
Congregation: Dallas, Texas
High School Accomplishments: Adam graduated in the top 10 percent of his class on the A honor roll.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: He is active in church basketball, speech club and serves as an usher. His hobbies include basketball, soccer, baseball, karate and fixing

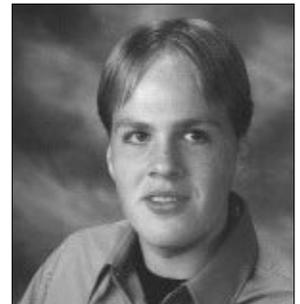


Adam Jonathan Robles

cars. He has been working since he was 11 years old cleaning bathrooms with his grandmother. He has worked at a garage fixing cars and for a mortgage company.
Plans After Graduation: He plans to go to the University of Arlington to major in mechanical engineering and minor in business.
Comments: "I would like to thank God and the Church for helping me do so much and leading me to the right path of life. I would like to thank my family—grandmother and grandfather for their wisdom; mother, father and little sis for their help and the love they give me; uncles, aunts and cousins for their support; my girlfriend for being there every step of the way."
Advice: Work hard, because nothing is free in life. Cherish every moment of life and dream big. Keep God in heart and mind always.

Gregory Rorem

Parents: Mark and Linda Rorem
Congregation: Oakland, California
High School Accomplishments: Greg is in



Gregory Rorem

demand as an accompanist for students in the drama department or students doing songs for other classes. He plays guitar (electric, acoustic and classical) and some viola.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Greg has attended a United Youth Camp every year since he was 9. He enjoys music, mountain biking and tennis.

Plans After Graduation: Greg plans to attend college to study architecture.

Favorite Scripture: Ecclesiastes 9:10:

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might . . ."

Kelley Jo Schreiber

Parents: David and Jolinda Schreiber
Congregation: Austin, Minnesota



Kelley Jo Schreiber

High School Accomplishments: She participated in yearbook staff, one act play, lifeguarding and varsity soccer, track and cheerleading.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: She enjoys art and art projects, loves soccer and wants to play it in college.

Plans After Graduation: She plans to attend Waldorf College and pursue a degree in elementary education with an art certification. She has a scholarship to play soccer.

Advice: Play every game (or whatever your pursuit is) with passion because you never know, with injuries and stuff, when it could be your last.

Tamara Schwartz

Parents: Bill and Patty Schwartz
Congregation: San Jose, California
High School Accomplishments: Peer counselor junior and senior years, completed two years college sign language courses, active in various community service projects.



Tamara Schwartz

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Tammy enjoys running, going to the beach, going to concerts and helping others. She teaches a youth swimming class and plans to work with children. She has attended youth camp every year since she was 10 and attended Teton Challenger Camp, which she considers a highlight of her teen years.

Plans After Graduation: Tammy will attend California State University at Chico and has been accepted into the nursing program.

Favorite Scripture: Matthew 6:25-26: "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

Favorite Quote: "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade"—Anonymous.

Sarah Shoemaker

Parents: Rick and Carol Shoemaker
Congregation: Portsmouth, Ohio
High School Accomplishments: Sarah is not only graduating from Peebles High School, but also from Southern State Community College.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Sarah's Church activities include winter weekend, Camp Pinecrest, assisting with



Sarah Shoemaker

Sabbath school and serving on the staff at the preteen camp in Cincinnati. Her interests included rock climbing/rappelling, herpetology, dance (jazz and ballet) and giving dance lessons.

Plans After Graduation: Sarah plans to continue her education at Morehead State University to get her bachelor's and master's degrees in biology and then to be a biology professor.

Favorite Quote: "You come to love, not by finding the perfect person, but by seeing the imperfect person perfectly."

Favorite Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:2, 4-8:

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing . . . Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away."

Advice: Keep on smiling, even when times get tough, because somewhere out there is someone who loves you.

Kaitlyn Smith

Parents: James and Cathy Smith
Congregation: Dallas, Texas
High School Accomplishments: Kaitlyn has been homeschooled the past three years and has participated in the Richardson Homeschool Association Co-op. She has been very active in the Student Council. She was vice president her senior year and was cotreasurer her junior year. She has



Kaitlyn Smith

also taken an active part in helping to produce the yearbook for the last three years. She was the editor of the yearbook for her junior and senior years. She has also volunteered at the City of Allen Animal Shelter and at Equest Therapeutic Riding stables.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Kaitlyn's hobbies include wood turning, reading, math and astronomy. These interests have lead Kaitlyn to her decision of continuing her education in the field of space physics.

Plans After Graduation: Her plans at this time are to attend the University of Texas at Dallas starting this fall pursuing a bachelor of science in physics and then to go on to get a master's in space physics.

Favorite Quote: "The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool"—William Shakespeare.

Motto: Kaitlyn's Aunt Nina's (Nina Rogers) favorite poem was "Success" by Ralph Waldo Emerson. This poem expresses the goals of Kaitlyn's heart and life.

"To laugh often and much,

"To win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children,

"To earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends,

"To appreciate beauty,

"To find the best in others!

"To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition.

"To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.

"This is to have succeeded."

Joscelyn Sodergren

Parents: John and Becky Sodergren
Congregation: Houston North, Texas



Joscelyn Sodergren

High School Accomplishments: Joscelyn was homeschooled, so had perfect attendance.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: For Church activities, Joscelyn loves to serve in the kitchen and at dinner functions. She volunteers at the Church camps and played church basketball for a handful of years. For interests, she loves music and classic

movies. For hobbies, she plays the drums and is learning how to play the bass. She has taken up scrapbooking and loves to cook.

Plans After Graduation: Joscelyn plans to attend a community college for two years and then transfer to a four-year college to master in business management.

Favorite Quote: "Dream as if you'll live forever. Live as if you'll die today"—James Dean.

Kerianne Springer

Parents: Mark and Marti Springer
Congregation: Charlotte, North Carolina
High School Accomplishments: Kerianne was valedictorian, AP Scholar and attended Governor's School. She was chief junior marshal, National Honor Society president, Interact Club president, Student Council Association executive treasurer and concert master of the Salisbury Youth Orchestra.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Kerianne enjoys running and swimming and was on the cross-country team for three years and the swim team for four. She also enjoys photography, working with children, medical things and, strangely enough, cooking.

Plans After Graduation: Kerianne will be attending Furman University in the fall where she plans to major in chemistry. After that she hopes to continue on to medical school to become a pediatrician.



Kerianne Springer

Favorite Scripture: Matthew 5:14-16: "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

Favorite Quotation: "In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: It goes on!"—Robert Frost.

Tiffany Danielle Stinnett

Parent: Jeanie Stinnett
Congregation: Chattanooga, Tennessee
High School Accomplishments: Tiffany was on the honor roll and was involved in peer tutoring, teacher's aide, library aide, FCA and DECA. She worked as a peer tutor for kindergarten children in her leadership and develop-



Tiffany Danielle Stinnett

ment class. She was also listed in *Who's Who Among American High School Students*.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests: Tiffany belongs to the church choir and enjoys helping at different functions like potlucks, and get-togethers. She really enjoys fellowshiping with her brethren. She was baptized April 17, 2005. Her hobbies include singing, writing poems and stories, playing racquetball and working with the computer. Her interests include working with children, teaching, music and being with family and friends.
Plans After Graduation: Tiffany is working on a bachelor's degree in childhood education and wants to be a kindergarten teacher.

Favorite Quote: Count each and every day as a blessing.

Favorite Scripture: Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

Motto: Don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today.

Advice: Treat others the way you would want to be treated.

Brittany Ann Toler

Parents: Thomas Ray and Donna Toler
Congregation: Prestonsburg, Kentucky
High School Accomplishments: Brittany was on the B honor roll.



Brittany Ann Toler

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:

Brittany is involved a lot in the arts. She enjoys oil painting, drawing and writing.

Plans After Graduation: Brittany would like to go into pediatrics or education. She also wants to have a family of her own.

Advice: Be yourself. Be righteous in the eyes of God. It's the only way you can truly be seen as a light to others, as well as yourself.

Hazel Tranquada

Parents: Martin and Nancy Tranquada
Congregation: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
High School Accomplishments: Hazel received academic awards, was listed on the honor roll and in *Who's Who Among High School Students*, was treasurer of French Club, leader of Stainless, Hands for Service and SADD.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Hazel is a major history buff, mainly Civil War and WWII. She enjoys writing and reading, music and friends. She has been to Camp Heritage as a camper and soon will be a staff member, and she has also helped plan



Hazel Tranquada

the Great Lakes Regional Prom.
Plans After Graduation: Hazel plans to attend Gannon University to major in history and possibly French.
Favorite Quote: "God's gifts put man's best dreams to shame"—Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Teresa VanAusdle

Parents: Gary and Nancy VanAusdle
Congregation: Sedro-Woolley, Washington
High School Accomplishments: Teresa has tried to take almost every music class held at the high school, including concert choir, guitar, beginning instruments, music theory,



Teresa VanAusdle

music appreciation and being a TA for two music classes, in which she is helping someone learn how to play the guitar.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Teresa is a truly musical girl with a love of music and singing. In her local congregation, she has been involved in the choir, a small women's choir and helping with Sabbath school classes. She also enjoys writing, photography and people.

Favorite Saying: Singing lifts the spirits. So sing out and praise God.

Jared Michael Vaughn

Parents: Gregory and Dara Vaughn
Congregation: Dallas, Texas
High School Accomplishments: Jared was a



Jared Michael Vaughn

member of VICA and was on the A-B honor roll.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Jared served as Teen Club president and enjoys basketball and computer animation.

Plans After Graduation: Jared plans on attending community college and transferring to University of North Texas.

Favorite Scripture: Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

Motto: "Be prepared."



Jamie Raye Veale

Jamie Raye Veale

Parents: Allen and Kellie Veale
Congregation: Des Moines, Iowa
High School Accomplishments: Jamie was a state DECA competitor, DECA treasurer and All-American Cheerleader nominee.
Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Jamie is an active United Church of God Social Committee member and part of the Women's Bible Study Group. She also enjoys cheerleading, DECA, volleyball, football, tennis, dancing and swimming.
Plans After Graduation: Jamie plans to attend a community college then transfer to a university to get a major in English, child development and political science.

Favorite Scripture: Proverbs 16:1: "The preparations of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD."

Favorite Quote: God doesn't judge you by what you look like on the outside, but by the faith that comes from within.

Advice: Put God first. If you just put Him on hold to concentrate on friends, school, activities or family (all of which are important), in the end not one of your accomplishments will seem finished. No reward is worthy unless the Lord was by your side, in your thoughts and in your actions.

Nathan Villaescusa

Parents: Steve and Margaret Villaescusa
Congregation: Raleigh, North Carolina
High School Accomplishments: Nathan's achievements include National Honor Society, National Technical Honor Society, IT Academy, principal's list every semester, 3.9/4.4 GPA, A+ Certified.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Nathan is the webmaster for all North Carolina congregations and a self-professed "all-around computer nerd."

Plans After Graduation: Nathan plans to attend North Carolina State University in the fall, majoring in computer science and computer engineering.

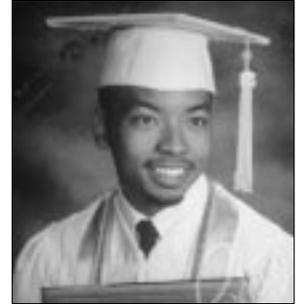
Favorite Quote: "Don't be like anybody else. Be different. Then you can make a contribution. Otherwise, you just echo something; you're just a reflection"—Hugh Nibley.



Nathan Villaescusa

Reuben White

Parents: James and Keiko White
Congregation: Williamsburg, Virginia
High School Accomplishments: Reuben was class representative, on the honor roll, in the top 10 percent of his class and received the Pillars of Character Award and the Academic Hall of Fame Award. He also played varsity volleyball.



Reuben White

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Reuben runs the sound system at church alongside his father and brother. He enjoys dealing with all aspects of the automotive scene and hopes to have his own successful shop someday.

Plans After Graduation: Reuben plans on attending Old Dominion University, majoring in mechanical engineering. Also, he will be working on his ASE certification to become a master tech during college.

Motto: Everything happens for a reason, even the bad things. So, just learn from your mistakes.

Sarah R. Williams

Parents: Blane and Julie Williams
Congregation: Cincinnati East, Ohio
High School Accomplishments: Several pieces of Sarah's artwork have been displayed in her school. A few of those pieces were used in her portfolio for the scholarship award she received. She wrote a children's book in Creative Writing class and hopes to have it published someday.



Sarah R. Williams

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests: Sarah loves art and loves to write. She feels God has blessed her with these talents and wants to use them in a positive way. She really loves going to the Church teen camps. She has attended Pincrest and Heritage for the past four years. She hopes to return to them soon as staff to give back to the camps because they have given so much to her. Currently she's in the Youth Sabbath Club in her local congregation and participates in the many local teen activities including service projects.
Plans After Graduation: Sarah will be attending the Art Institute of Cincinnati starting in

September. Any spare time she has she will probably be working.

Favorite Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7:

“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” That’s just how things SHOULD be.

Julie Wilson

Parents: Dan and Anna Wilson

Congregation: Tulsa, Oklahoma

High School Accomplishments: Julie played in pep, concert and marching band; was assistant flute section leader; received two music bars and performing arts letter; was a member of German Club and National Spanish Honor Society; was Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America class secretary; received FCCLA degree pin and chosen as “Most Sincere” FCCLA member; received Letter “C” award in Honors Spanish, Family & Consumer Sciences, German and English IV; was a teacher’s assistant; appeared in *Parade* magazine; was selected to appear in *Who’s Who*

Among American High School Students; and won an Optimist Scholarship.



Julie Wilson

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: Julie attended three United Youth Camps, served as a staff member at the preteen camp in Oklahoma, was a member of the UCG Oklahoma girls’ basketball team, performed special music and offertory music on Holy Days and was baptized on April 19, 2005. Her hobbies and interests include music, writing, traveling, basketball, baseball, electric guitar, spending time with family and

friends and helping people.

Plans After Graduation: Julie plans to attend Tulsa Community College and work part-time. She would like to become a dental hygienist.

Favorite Quote: Don’t let your past dictate who you are, but let it be a part of who you become.

Favorite Scripture: John 15:13: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (KJV).

Motto: Wherever you go, there you are.

Advice: Strive to be the kind of person you would want to know.

Heather Wood

Parents: Steve and Ramona Karels Wood

Congregation: Ruston, Louisiana

High School Accomplishments: Heather was listed in *Who’s Who Among American High School Students*. She was active in Future Business Leaders of America, in gifted and talented courses and graduated second in her class of 2005 (salutatorian) with a 4.0 grade average. Heather placed in several high school art and writing competitions. Her scholarship-winning speech received recognition by the VFW’s Voice of Democracy contest in her senior year. Heather also won

the 2005 Shirley Jeffcoat Combs Art scholarship, a four-year tuition, room and board scholarship awarded by the Southern Arkansas University art department.

Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.: In her spare time Heather plays the piano and enjoys chatting with Church friends over the Internet.



Heather Wood

Plans After Graduation: Heather will work as an assistant counselor at United’s Camp Woodmen this summer and begin classes at Southern Arkansas University in the fall.

“Jordan,” continued from page 1

sadors for Peace,” with the focus on connecting brethren with local Jordanians around the theme of *real* peace in the future. The attendees in Jordan will have the opportunity to be addressed by the Jordanian royal family, to visit centers for the mentally and physically challenged and to conduct a service project alongside the Jordanian people.

In addition, many of those attending will fulfill lifelong dreams and partici-

pate in fascinating extension tours to Israel and Egypt.

Why the theme “Ambassadors for Peace,” and why would United be unique in this effort? Many people involved in political, social and cultural institutions of this world promote the concept and reality of peace and should be highly respected for these efforts. Yet the Church has a unique approach to bring to the Middle East: A message of the *real* opportunity and *reality* of peace that exists for this world, which is em-

bodied in the theme of our Fall Festival.

We have unique understanding of the future that can be translated into action in this life as well as an opportunity to bring an advance message of peace by going to Jordan (or any Feast site) as ambassadors, not just Feast participants. The Ambassadors for Peace will not go to the Middle East to convert, but to give, share and connect with God’s children.

The Jordan Feast site is but a kickoff to resuming a historic relationship with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. In an

invitation letter to the United Church of God on Feb. 22, 2005, Prince Ra’ad bin Zeid, lord chamberlain to King Abdullah, wrote, “I very much welcome your plans to hold a conference in Amman. You have been a great friend of Jordan in the past, giving continuous support to various NGOs in the field of rehabilitation for children with special needs. I hope that you will be able to visit these centres and renew your ties and relationships during your ten days stay in Amman.”

As a peaceful and secure country in an

unstable area, Jordan serves as a platform for many more activities in the region aimed at preaching the gospel. In addition, the national character of the Jordanian people is one of open hospitality and kindness.

Future activities will revolve around projects and programs that promote peaceful interaction through service. Plan to hear more about these opportunities in the future and we hope many will become involved as God opens doors. UN

Graduates: Follow Your Dreams

by Terry Hoffman

In the weeks just before the 2005 graduation ceremonies at Arizona State University (ASU), I had the opportunity to revisit my alma mater and recalled with fondness my own graduation that had occurred just one short year ago.

In spite of the familiar tension and apprehension of final exams, research papers and academic defenses that could make the last weeks of school seem like an eternity, there was an air of excitement that could not be contained. Once again, seniors were waiting in eager anticipation to finish—to take that all-important walk across the stage before fellow students, loved ones and friends to receive their diploma of recognition and success.

In the days that followed, numerous graduation ceremonies commenced, and I could not help but be moved with emotion and a sense of pride for their success as I extended congratulations to many of these students—now fellow alumni.

Like those at ASU, graduates from across America, whether from high schools or universities, will have again taken their place in the annals of academia. It is important, however, to take a moment and give credit to the one who

made it all possible.

The Highest Degrees

Consider that God holds the highest degrees in the universe. He is our Designer and Creator. He holds the highest degrees in communication, engineering, child development, architectural design, meteorology, computer science, music, family studies and geology, just to name a few (Proverbs 3:20; Job 38 to 42). He even has His finger on the pulse of history—past, present and future (Isaiah 46:10).

His list of accomplishments is infinite—His wisdom and knowledge beyond our total comprehension. Yet we have been given a mustard seed of His talents and abilities in that we come from the gene pool of God Himself, and it just doesn’t get any better than that (Genesis 1:26-27!)

God does not make yellow pencils—we are not all the same. Each person has been given varying gifts to share; therefore, our academic accomplishments are to His glory! He is the epitome of every educational aspiration a student will ever undertake and is clothed in a robe of honor (Revelation 19:11-16).

What comes to mind when you see a student wearing the traditional cap and gown, or robe of honor? As with any uni-

form, it represents a great deal of time, hard work, dedication, drive, resourcefulness and perseverance—some of the qualities expounded upon in the booklet *The Seven Laws of Success* written by the late Herbert W. Armstrong. He wrote, “These Seven Laws are the WAY, not only to business and economic success—they are THE LAWS that lead to . . . ETERNAL LIFE AND GLORY in the Kingdom of God” (page 62). He founded Ambassador College upon these timeless true values (Proverbs 9:10; Psalm 119:105).

Remember, knowledge is power (Proverbs 24:5). It is the stepping stone to our destiny.

Therefore, a diploma is not just some piece of paper to hang on the wall to gather dust. As most students confirm, there is a sense of accomplishment and confidence in the ability to articulate thoughts, feelings and ideas—to analyze data and formulate conclusions—to be disciplined to the end. As one student offered, “It is having the willingness to grow beyond what we are.”

As I reminisce about my own educational journey during some of the darkest years of my life, there were times when I felt I could not go on. An instructor once offered these encouraging words: “You can do this and more!”



Don’t stop now—find your passion—follow your own dreams—further your education to serve others with the talents and abilities God has given you. For, you are the future!

About 12 years ago, I found an inspirational greeting card authored by Amanda Bradley that encapsulated this comment, and I have often referred to it in moments of discouragement and despair. It is entitled “Follow Your Dream”:

“Follow Your Dream . . . take one step at a time and don’t settle for less, just continue to climb. Follow Your Dream . . . if you stumble, don’t stop and lose sight of your goal, press on to the top. For only on top can we see the whole view, can we see what we’ve done and what we can do, can we then have the vision to seek something new . . . Press on, and follow your dream.

“On the road of life, wherever you are, may God guide your way as you reach for a star, and may you find always while He is close by, no dream is too lofty—no goal is too high.”

So, congratulations to the class of 2005, and to those who will follow in your footsteps! And to our high school graduates, remember, you have achieved something very special. Don’t stop now—find your passion—follow your own dreams—further your education to serve others with the talents and abilities God has given you. For, you are the future! UN

Terry Hoffman is a member of the Phoenix, Arizona, East congregation.

Dealing With Death

by Janet Hendershot

Our 12-year-old granddaughter was killed riding a go-kart. She was on a dirt road full of potholes, and the traffic on that road might have been two vehicles daily. One of those two vehicles was present on the day she died, and it was enough to cause this tragedy.

How does one deal with this? We are devastated when an older member of the family dies, but a 12-year-old? Devastated doesn't even come close.

But there are positive aspects to dealing with death, strange as it may seem. These aspects linger with me now, as we move on in life without her. It would be easy to wallow in our sadness, live in the past when she was alive, surround ourselves with her pictures and memories, and maybe not even get out of bed in the morning. But we have responsibilities apart from our grief, and we cannot give in to these impulses.

Grieving, Serving and Being Served

First, there is the element of grieving itself. It's OK to grieve, and it's actually part of the healing process. I send more sympathy cards now to other people who have deaths in their families, because I have learned that people actually do read these cards. I read every one of mine, over and over, especially

when there were personal notes written.

The next sympathy card you send, please scribble a little something extra on it. It doesn't have to be a literary masterpiece. Just a short comment from your heart.

Then there is the element of serving. I have always prided myself on being there to serve others when required, but allowing oneself to be served is another story. Serving costs a person time and money, and doing it makes you feel better. Being served forces a person to admit a lack of self-sufficiency, and in accepting that we realize we need other people in our lives. If we ever thought we were an island, now we know we are not.

With this death, our daughter's house was full of people all the time, and eventually they all became hungry. Other people brought buckets of chicken and cases of soda, and we were so grateful for that.

I never understood the concept of taking food to a grieving household before, but I certainly do now. And when there is a death in our neighborhood, I take food. The family may not experience hunger, but the guests do, and bringing food alleviates the need for the family to feed the guests.

Explaining the Hope

We had to explain to several family

members what we thought was the fate of our granddaughter. Did we think she was in heaven? Did we think she was an angel? One opinion presented to me was that God took young girls from this earth to serve as babysitters for babies who had died as infants. That didn't sound much like a "heavenly" future to me.

I was surprised I could actually explain our hope for life after death to these people, and back it up with scriptures. I had learned more through the years than I realized.

And family members will rise to the occasion. Two of our children sat down and paid all the bills for our grieving daughter without being asked. I think it was months before she realized this had been done. Other family members wrote poems, sent flowers, visited, called, sent cards and money. There was an outpouring of concern for our daughter and what she was enduring from people we didn't expect to be that concerned for her tragedy.

A large corporation stepped forward and paid all the funeral expenses, bought the burial plot and paid for the headstone of our daughter's choice. This was unsolicited and unpublicized.

At the graveside services, over three hundred people, most of them not of our faith, heard the good news of the gospel of Christ expounded by one of God's ministers. A strange hush fell



We know that death is not permanent. We will see our granddaughter again, and when we do, life will be better. The circumstances that took her life in this world will not be present in the next.

over the crowd, and people strained to hear the hope of the dead explained. Afterwards, there were phone calls wanting more information about what we believed.

In the aftermath of this experience, I went through the newspapers and, whenever there was a death of a child, I would send a few bucks for pizza and pop and a letter explaining our experience and the hope that with time, they would adjust to this terrible tragedy. They would never get over it, but they would learn to live with it. I got dozens

of letters in reply thanking me for the encouragement and the hope that I was right.

Death Is Temporary

We know that death is not permanent. We will see our granddaughter again, and when we do, life will be better.

We'll be able to share with all who have died the joy of reunion, and the realization that death, as we know it in this world, will be part of our history, and no longer a blight on our present. UN

How Will You Be Remembered?

by Joe Dumond

On Tuesday in the middle of May, I was called and told my Nan had died in Newfoundland. She was 90 years old and it was expected. But it was not expected so suddenly. Just like with Gramps, who died five years ago in March, my cousin and I with our moms would drive the 22 hours from Ontario back home, plus the six-hour boat ride, nonstop.

When Gramps died, my aunt asked my cousin and me to do the eulogy and scripture reading. We were proud to do it. We admired Gramps. But my aunt asked us the day before the service. So just in case she asked us to do the same thing this time, we both started to prepare for the service as we drove to Newfoundland.

Remembering Nan

We both realized in a short while that, although everyone mourned the passing of Nan, everyone was also relieved and thankful that it was over. We both thought we must be wrong in our conclusions and began to talk to as many of the relatives and friends of the family as we could meet. They all said the same thing. "We don't want to speak disrespectful of the dead . . . but there will now be peace in the family."

We didn't have to ask them either. It would keep coming up in all the conversations. Gramps was a superstar for

putting up with it all the 60 years of marriage that he did.

Even the bishop of Newfoundland said the same thing in his tactful eulogy. Yes, my cousin and I were greatly relieved to hear that the bishop was going to give the eulogy. We didn't know what to say without either lying or hurting our aunts and uncles.

Don't get me wrong. We all loved Nan, and we all put up with her, though she was a difficult person to get along with.

But as we all said our good-byes to Nan at the grave, we each shed a small tear and walked back to the limousines relieved it was over. No more zingers or being made to feel guilty. And we all enjoyed the reunion of relatives that came from as far as British Columbia and all points in between.

We sang and drank and told many a story, and we all laughed until we cried. We visited as many of the old relatives as we could, knowing this will be the last time we see them alive, and we went to all the places we had heard stories about, and we talked. It was a great occasion.

Molly

Seven days after leaving for Newfoundland I arrived home exhausted from the drive and the emotional ups and downs that one deals with at a funeral. I just wanted to sleep. But my wife was upset and my daughter and son were too.

Our dog, Molly, who we had had for the past 16 years, was not well. And by the next day I, too, knew she was in trouble.

That afternoon my wife and I took Molly for her last car ride to the vet. We both cried all the way there. I carried her in and placed her on the examination table. Both of us were bawling. We petted her head and her ears as we said good-bye.

My wife had to leave and told me to stay with her until the end. I just wanted to get out of there and not cry in front of the vet staff to preserve my dignity. But I realized I needed to be with my dog. My dog who would always be the first to greet me each and every day I came home from work. And who always had a smile as if to say, "I am glad to see you back." Who was always excited when I would take her for a walk, and who never held a grudge when I punished her for having an accident on the rug or when I chained her up in the backyard.

Even in her last year, whenever we came in the door she would drag herself off the couch that she now claimed as her own and wobble out to greet us and have us pet her head and then return to the couch.

There is nothing bad I can say about Molly. Not a thing. So as I stroked her head and her ears and watched as the doctor injected her with the needle, I cried like I had not cried in a long time for my faithful companion.

And just like that she was gone.

I carried Molly out in the same blanket she had laid on and the one she died in and brought her home to where she had spent all her life. My son and I dug a deep hole next to the red current bush and gently placed her in the grave. And I cried as I watched my son place the dirt back on her in a very respectful and mindful way so as not to hurt the only dog he had known all his life.

When we finished burying Molly, we placed a large stone over the grave. The whole time my wife watched from the bedroom window as she too cried uncontrollably. I then sat there by the grave for some time thinking and sobbing at the loss of such a good and faithful friend.

How Will I Be Remembered?

So why have I put myself through this torturous effort to write these events to you, all the time crying and sobbing as I do? It is because I wonder just how each of us is going to be remembered. How will I be remembered by my children and grandchildren? Will they be glad to be rid of me or will they cry me a river of love like I have for Molly? I love my Nan, but I miss my dog.

How will you be remembered? What is written in the Book of Life about you? Are you working toward the Kingdom or is this just another religion to you?

What will those who attend your funeral say? Will they be happy or sad?

Will anyone cry a river of love for you? How will you be remembered?

Epilogue

Two weeks have now passed since Nan and Molly died. I still look for Molly to come around the corner to greet us. And I am also thinking about some of my earliest memories of Nan.

Each night when I walk into my bedroom I see a large picture of a little boy looking out to sea. The title reads "Priorities." Under that it reads: "A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, the kind of car I drove. But the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child."

I have read this many times. But I only now realized that it applied to my Nan. My forceful, demanding Nan took me to see the movie *The Ten Commandments*. I was 5 maybe, and she wanted me to learn the morals of the Bible. It was the first time I had seen a movie in color. The screen was huge! We sat near the front, and when the sea parted, I got goose bumps—and still do!

My Nan wanted this movie to make an impression on me. To this day I always watch it at Passover. Although many in our family have little good to say of Nan, I now have this memory. The other family members may not understand why it is important to me, but I will now treasure this memory. Thanks, Nan.

How will you be remembered? UN

Treasure Digest

Pillars of Wisdom: The Book of Proverbs

Solomon was king of Israel for 40 years around 1000 B.C., during which he wrote most of the book of Proverbs. Proverbs are short, concise statements that teach an important aspect of truth.

Points to Build On

Proverbs should be studied for their practical application in helping us become skillful in life.

Some proverbs are simple and direct statements, like Proverbs 20:21: "An inheritance gained hastily at the beginning will not be blessed at the end." Here Solomon conveys that a person will tend to squander something he hasn't earned.

Many of the proverbs are written in one of three different forms of couplets.

Contrasting statements (look for the word *but*). Proverbs 10:4: "He who has a slack hand becomes poor, but the hand of the diligent makes rich." Meaning: A person must work hard and plan ahead to make a living. The contrast is a person who doesn't commit to hard work or isn't diligent in planning for the future and so becomes poor.

Comparing statement (look for words *as/so, better/than*). Proverbs 10:26: "As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy man to those who send him." Meaning: A lazy person is an annoyance to his employer.

Complementing statement (look for word *and*). Proverbs 17:17: "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

The book of Proverbs can be divided into five basic segments:

1. Proverbs 1-9: Solomon's instructions for young people.
2. Proverbs 10-24: Solomon's instructions for everyone.

3. Proverbs 25-29: Proverbs of Solomon copied by the men of Hezekiah.
4. Proverbs 30: Proverbs of Agur.
5. Proverbs 31: Proverbs of King Lemuel's mother.

Application

There is an old saying that experience is the best teacher. The purpose of the book of Proverbs is the attempt of wise men to pass on their wisdom to others. Wisdom reveals that the difficult and fickle path of experience isn't always the best method of learning.

Begin the adventure of studying the book of Proverbs as the foundation of learning wisdom.

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

Honoring God With Music Now and at the Feast

Psalms 150:6 says, "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD." If you are reading this, you are certainly alive and, therefore, qualified to praise God! How do we praise God? Psalm 47:6 says, "Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!"

Singing praises is to be done our entire lives, as explained in Psalm 104:33. "I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." Instruments are also used to praise God, as is described in Psalm 150:3-5.

Human beings have the *ability* to recognize God and they should do it, but they don't. Why not? Romans 1:18-26 explains why. In verse 21 it says, "Although they knew God, they didn't glorify Him as God, nor were thankful . . ." Verse 26 points out, "For this reason, God gave them up to vile passions."

Simply, mankind is in the position it is in because we would not praise Him. Psalm 150:6 begins with "Let . . ." God has given "everyone that has breath" the ability. That's us!

Most of us have an opportunity to follow these commands during the weekly song service on the Sabbath, and some are blessed enough to have a local church choir and/or instrumental ensemble. There are even greater opportunities for praising God through music at the Feast. The benefits of doing so far outweigh the investment of time, especially considering that since baptism, our time is not our own anyway. Certainly God does honor us by allowing us to be involved and to serve Him by way of musical praise.

A Family Affair

As we plan and prepare for the Feast of Tabernacles, we should plan on how we can best praise God during this time. Praising God can and should be a family affair. Help your children share their talents by rehearsing the children's choir music with them so that they are well prepared and able to praise God in song at the Feast.

All ages can make a joyful noise during the song service, regardless of musical talent or the lack thereof. Encourage children to participate and compliment those whom you notice singing out during the song service.

Even those too young to read can learn the words to many of the hymns if you sing them together occasionally as a family. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 is a good reminder of the importance God puts on teaching your children how to love God. Verse 2 also includes fearing God as a benefit.

Festival Choirs

For those who've been blessed with a voice that can carry a tune, plan to sing in the choir at the Feast site you'll be attending. There is a sacrifice of time to learn the music and rehearse as a group, but what wonderful benefits all will reap from your participation! You will be building unity within the Body of Christ as you bond with others working together for a common goal of service through music.

Long-lasting friendships are often begun while meeting regularly during the Feast for rehearsals. Even more joyful are the reunions in future years when your paths cross once again. God is pleased and blesses your efforts of doing what He expects of us.

There can be many challenges, perhaps even obstacles to participation, but most can be overcome with some prayerful planning. Young children can make attending early morning practices difficult. Some spouses are willing to support the choir by their service in caring for the children while the other spouse carpools to the rehearsals. One family that we met at the Feast alternated years to serve, so that each would have the opportunity to do so every other year.

Some have been blessed to have grandparents who were willing to help out, and some even have "Feast grandparents"—friends who help watch children during the choir practices so that parents can participate.

Some children grow up in the Church learning to be involved because they see their parents serving by praising God. Children have benefited from parental relationships with others in the choirs and orchestras, and the kids have observed the teamwork within the family. This can cultivate a desire to share and develop their spark of talent too.

It is amazing how quickly the example pays off! The children anxiously await the time that they're old enough to sing in the children's choir, and as soon as they are too old for the children's choir, they realize that they have a place in the adult choir. It becomes a naturally accepted sequence.

It is truly a joy to work together to praise and worship God as a family. This is another way of giving honor back to God, since it is God who is forming us into His family. Praising God will become a way of life for the children, and they will, in turn, pass it on to their children. In this way we are creating a godly legacy for them.

Finally, it's important to realize we would not even know how to worship God if He did not show us *how* and *when* and *why* and *who* should do it.

How? With voice and with instruments. When? On His Holy Days. Why? He commands us to rejoice, and music causes unity in rejoicing. Who? Everyone who has been invited to attend and "has breath" should praise the Lord! How good and how pleasant it is indeed.

"What's the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding" (1 Corinthians 14:15).

Linda R. Hansen and John Barbush



"Do Unto Others"

"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you" is what is commonly known as the Golden Rule. It comes from the scripture in Matthew 7:12 that reads, "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." Many children are taught this because it is such a simple, yet profound principle on how to treat others and for having good relationships with them. We should do to others what we want done to us.

How we treat others is not only important in our relationships with people, it is also important in our relationship with God. It is so important that God actually uses some of the ways we treat others as a gauge to how He treats us.

Luke 6:37-38 reads, "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

We all want God to not condemn and judge us harshly for our mistakes. We want Him to extend mercy and forgive us when we err. God wants us to do the same with others. We must extend mercy and forgiveness to others in order to be forgiven by Him. Matthew 5:7 tells us, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Matthew 6:15 says that if we don't forgive others, neither will God forgive us.

We also want God to take care of our physical needs. We look to Him as our provider. God also expects us to help others when they are in need. We see in Proverbs 21:13, "Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be heard." God expects us to help others when it is in our means and power to do so, and when we are in need, God will hear our cry.

So, remember to "do unto others as you would have others do unto you," but also remember to "do unto others as you would have God do unto you."

Nancy Morgan
Huntsville, Alabama, congregation

Turning the Hearts Children's Day

"Honor your father and mother" was the theme of this column last issue. With this issue we begin a two-part series on turning the hearts of the parents to the children.

According to Malachi 4:6, turning the hearts is a two-way street—fathers (parents) to children and children to fathers (parents). How may we as parents turn our hearts to our children?

In this first part of the series, I'd like to share with you what my wife and I decided to do when our children were little. You see, we were childless for four years and feared we would never know what parenthood was like. In January 1968 at the ministerial conference in Pasadena, California, Herbert W. Armstrong anointed us for whatever impediment there may have been to conception.

One month later my wife conceived, and in November 1968 Janice (meaning "God's gracious gift") arrived. Fifteen months later, Susan was born and we were parents of not one but two precious children. Because we longed for children for so many years, we tried to treat our children as special blessings from God (Psalm 127:3).

We thought about how special it was to have a "Mother's Day" to honor Mother in May, and to have a "Father's Day" in June to honor Dad. So we decided to institute in our family a "Children's Day" in July to honor our children. We believed that modeling a respect for our family would help them understand respect for their parents. The intent was to treat them special on the second or third Sunday of July.

We would do something special with them—play miniature golf, go to a baseball game, go to the beach or just go to a nice place for lunch or dinner. We usually bought them each a nice gift just because we loved them. They thought this was really special, and we have kept it up for nearly 37 years.

Now, the point of this example is not to tell you to institute a "Children's Day," but to encourage you to explore ways to show and tell your children how special and how loved they are as blessings from God (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4).

Paul urged the older women to teach the younger "to love their children" (Titus 2:4). We need to make every effort to reach out to our children that they may know just how special and how loved they are. For indeed they are precious not only to us but to their Heavenly Father as well (Acts 2:39).

Gary Antion



online images © iStockphoto.com

God's Answer Isn't Always What We Expect

I was just leaving a wooded area on the outskirts of Houston, Texas. Just before I arrived at a busy intersection, my car died. It was almost dark, and I knew that the area behind me was where someone had discovered a dead body. This was very frightening!

I had my two sons with me. The older was 3 and my younger was 2. Because of cancer, the 2-year-old couldn't walk. The boys were too heavy for me to carry very far, and it was too dangerous for us to be walking on the side of the road anyway. It was dangerous to get out of the car. But it was also dangerous to be beside the road, in the car, especially after dark.

No one would be looking for us when we didn't return. God was our only hope.

I knew that Hebrews 13:5 says God will never forsake us. So I prayed very fervently (James 5:16). I didn't think there was any solution other than for the car to start. The car just had to start because I was afraid of anyone who might stop to help.

I knew that God won't allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able (1 Corinthians 10:13). So, the only thing left was for the car to start and run. All I knew to do was pray, and ask God to help the car start, and then turn the ignition on the car. But the car just wouldn't start.

In John 16:23 Jesus Christ said, "Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you." I continued to pray and turn the key in the ignition. But the car still wouldn't start!

Finally, a car pulled up behind me and stopped. A man with white hair got out of the car. A sense of peace came over me, and I knew the man wouldn't do us any harm (Philippians 4:7). I don't know if this man was an angel or just a man, but I know God sent him.

The man pushed us through the stoplight and a little ways past. The car started, and so he went on. I was able to get to the turnoff from the main road and start down an incline, going toward our house, before the car died again, but this time we were in our own neighborhood, and the house was only a couple of blocks away.

A policeman came up behind me and asked, "What's the trouble?" I told him, "I live a couple of blocks from here and the car won't run and I need to get the car into my driveway." So he got back in his car and pushed my car into our driveway.

God's answer wasn't what I expected. But God had brought us home, and it wasn't even dark yet. My sons hadn't even gotten out of the car! God had answered my prayers. God knows what we need more than we do. He knew how to take care of us.

If we are wise, we will always do what we can to avoid problems, and every morning we will ask for God's protection from accidents, injuries, problems, curses and troubles. At the end of the day, we'll give God thanks for His protection and care through the day.

God hears and answers our prayers. It may not be what you expect, but God knows what we need better than we do.

*June Barrett
Fort Smith, Arkansas, congregation*

Eternal Youth or Eternal Life?

From the earliest written records to our present day, the pursuit of eternal youth is a consistent theme throughout history. One of the oldest literary works is the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Gilgamesh was a king of Uruk in Babylonia, and the work chronicles

his search to conquer mortality and remain eternally young, which leads him to a fabled "spring of youth."

Near the end of his arduous and futile quest he asks, "... am I to sleep, and let the earth cover my head forever?" (N.K. Sanders, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, 1972, page 100). This question is strikingly similar to the one posed in Job 14:14, "If a man dies, shall he live again?"

The theme of eternal youth is again seen during the early 1500s, when Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon was enticed by tales of a mystical "fountain of youth." While some doubted the existence of such a fountain, he nevertheless obtained sponsorship from the king of Spain to lead an expedition in search of it. Ultimately this quest for eternal youth also proved unsuccessful.

In our time, the pursuit of endless youth continues. At a stunning rate, new medications claim to cure the typical effects of aging. A huge industry exists to deal with the maladies that accompany growing older. Many such options serve legitimate needs when used appropriately. However, many only attempt to delay the natural and inevitable processes of life designed by the Creator God, sometimes with unexpected and harmful consequences.

Thankfully, God offers a far more fulfilling and practical option—eternal life as a spirit being rather than eternal youth as a human being. While speaking to a Samaritan woman at a well, Jesus Christ said, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:13-14).

The laws and ways of God, and the blessings that He promises for obedience to them, are simple and practical. They are beautiful and filled with hope, and become a wellspring of life to those who follow them. Mercifully, God has blessed us with the understanding that we shall indeed live again. In response to his own question about life after death, Job stated, "You shall call, and I will answer You; You shall desire the work of Your hands." Let us always be thankful for and seek the true fountain—of eternal life!

*David Cobb
Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation*

What's Your Guess as a Guest?

The following easy quiz accompanies the article "The Welcome Guest" on the *Vertical Thought* Web site. For more about how to make sure your host will want to invite you to come again, see www.verticalthought.org/issues/vt07/guest.htm.

1. As you are washing your hands in the bathroom of your hosts' home, you notice your hair has become windblown during the day's activities, so you:

A. go back to your room to get your brush and fix your hair.

B. figure, hey, it's summer so no one should care how you look.

C. find a brush in a drawer of your hosts' bathroom, and use it.

2. Your host has invited you to make yourself at home, and suggested several items for snacking. That afternoon you are hungry and decide to enjoy an apple from the offered bowl of fruit. You:

A. peel stickers off the apple and stick them on the fruit bowl.

B. prepare and eat the apple, cleaning up after yourself.

C. find a knife to core and pare the apple, leaving the knife and scraps on the counter.

3. Many guests in your group are sharing a rather small bathroom. Since others are waiting for you to finish, you:

A. leave behind hair in the shower, spilled toothpaste on the sink counter or toenail clippings on the floor.

B. leave your cosmetic case or shaving kit open and on top of the sink counter so you can be quicker next time.

C. hastily clean up after yourself and remove personal items so the bathroom is pleasant for the next person.

D. leave the soiled tissue on the floor where you missed the trash can.

4. Your host has made you feel so "at home," you feel comfortable:

A. playing your rock CDs on their equipment to welcome them home.

B. telling your hostess how to present a dish more attractively at dinner one evening.

C. leaving your personal CD player, magazines, cell phones, etc. on the kitchen table or counter.

D. none of the above.

Answers: 1 A, 2 B, 3 C, 4 D.

*Susan Blumel-Berg
Jackson, Wyoming, congregation*

Poetry, Language of the Prophets

If you are a frequent reader of Scripture, you may have noticed some curious statements throughout the Bible, particularly in the Psalms and the prophets. For instance, in Isaiah 55:12 the last part of the verse says:

"The mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."

This is one example of numerous instances in Scripture where a "poetic device" is used. In this particular example the technique is "personification," where inanimate objects are shown as if having human qualities. There are many, many poetic devices used in Scripture, although some are not as evident in translations as in the original language.

Poetry in Scripture is writing inspired by God to share abundantly with you, the reader, emotions and thoughts that are best conveyed with written images and sounds.

For example, "You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 28:62).

We know that the people in ancient Israel were not the same in number as the stars in the heavens. They were far more than the number of stars that can be seen with the naked eye, but far fewer than the actual number. There are so many billions of stars that if there were as many people as stars, they would have to be stacked on top of each other to fit on the earth!

Yet, God's Word is true. How can this be? Because this form of exaggeration made a point to the ancient Israelites and to us today of the great contrast between God's blessing them and cursing them. The purpose of language is communication, and God's communication to His people is that they would decrease if they sinned! The example of the

stars was to make that point, not to make a count of the heavenly bodies. This was a serious warning!

Besides emotions and ideas, the Bible has writing about beauty. Psalm 119 is an example of excellent structure and lovely composition. It is an acrostic psalm with 22 stanzas, one for each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Each stanza has eight lines, and each of the eight lines begins with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The subject of the psalm is the excellence and beauty of God's law, and the psalm itself is excellent and beautiful. Perhaps we can join the author to say:

"Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law" (Psalm 119:18).

Do yourself a favor and spend some time savoring the beauty inspired by God and written by His poets, the prophets.

*Mary Beck
Texarkana, Arkansas/Texas, congregation*

A Story of "Mine"

Many years ago, I had a job as a babysitter for a 2-year-old girl named Katie. This child had a pacifier to which she was very attached, and she kept it in her mouth almost constantly. Now *pacifier* is a difficult word for a 2-year-old. So when speaking of her pacifier, she simply called it "mine."

Normally Katie was a very serene, quiet, happy little girl. But every once in a while, her 7-year-old brother would tease her by taking the pacifier away from her. Then quiet little Katie would suddenly scream, "MIIIIINE! Mine! Mine! Mine!"

Why? Because she knew that pacifier was hers and she wanted it. It was not her brother's. She knew that he should not be allowed to come along and yank what was hers right out of her mouth and not give it back. It was unjust for him to do so, and Katie was not too young to feel the sting of injustice.

Children are noted for being acutely aware of whether or not they are being treated justly. But are we adults less aware? I recall my own tendency to react when another driver grabs my right-of-way. I tend to get annoyed and mutter to myself, "Hey, bud! I think I was supposed to go next!" Mine! Mine! Mine! It's so easy to react this way when we have lost something that we have called "mine."

But what is the Christian way of handling the injustice of losing what is ours? Romans 12:19 tells us that vengeance belongs to God. This is because it's easy for a person's sense of justice to be warped. A cousin of mine was murdered because another man felt property that belonged to this cousin should have been his. The man probably thought he was performing an act of justice.

In contrast, in 1 Corinthians 6:7-8, Paul tells the Corinthians to be willing to allow themselves to be defrauded, and in Matthew 5:40 Jesus tells us that if our tunic is taken from us, we should also be willing to give our cloak.

Jesus Himself suffered the greatest injustice of all. He had His life unjustly taken from Him. Did He become angry about this? No, He did not, and it is His example that we are to follow. We must remember this when injustice happens to us and the fire of our resentment against it begins to burn.

*Penny Westrick
Ocala, Florida, congregation*

Be Ready to Give an Answer: What Questions Do You Want to See Answered Here?

Has the "Be Ready to Give an Answer" column been helpful to you? What questions would you like to see answered in future issues? Send your comments and questions to *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027 or mike_bennett@ucg.org.



Local Church Updates

Alaskan Women Enjoy "Tea and Talk"

On May 1, 2005, 22 women attended the first Alaskan Women's "Tea and Talk" to learn "Where in the Zoo Are You?" as presented by guest speaker LeeAnn Luker.



Shari Whitaker, Arlene Franke, LeeAnn Luker, Dorene Eckman and Mrs. Luker's "critters" at the tea; inset, Jennifer Osborn and Shana Franke assisted with serving (photos by Linda Dunn and Dorene Eckman)

Assessing our personalities using Mrs. Luker's "critters" as reminders of the different types of temperaments was helpful training in learning how to understand others and ourselves as we strive to be peacemakers. After refreshments, we completed an assessment of our spiritual gifts to further our understanding.

Mother and daughter team Arlene Franke and Shari Whitaker, assisted by Joan Tovsen and Sandra Kranich, turned the University of Alaska, Anchorage classroom into an elegant setting for ladies from Fairbanks, Soldotna, Anchorage and Wasilla to fellowship and learn. Assisting with serving were Jennifer Osborn and Shana Franke.

Party favors with silver teaspoons were a special memento of our time together.

Dorene Eckman

Christian Women's Reading Group Gets Enthusiastic Support

Approximately every three months 20 to 30 enthusiastic women from the Houston, Texas, South congregation meet before services to discuss their current book selection. The group began in the summer of 2003 and has continued to enjoy popular support. Round tables are beautifully decorated and a potluck brunch is provided at each meeting. A facilitator is designated in order to provide godly direction and focus. Hand-

outs of the questions to be discussed are given out a week or two before the meeting.

To maximize both group and individual participation, each table will be given perhaps 20 to 30 minutes to discuss a particular question, provide answers or pose solutions. A moderator from each table will then summarize what the table participants had to say. Remaining questions from the handout will then be opened up to comment from any of the book enthusiasts.

Books selected by the chosen facilitators are based on biblical principles and are aids in learning to apply God's teachings in our own lives. They are designed to spark discussions that can help us learn from and be inspired by the Christian walk of others.

Books are also selected with the realization that we all have different personalities and interests and an attempt is made to appeal to all quarters. Between meetings women are free to submit books that they would like to see discussed.

A few examples of books that have been read are *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman, *Becoming a Woman of Excellence* by Cynthia Heald and *Men Are Like Waffles, Women Are Like Spaghetti* by Bill and Pam Farrel.

Marilyn Braley

Seattle/Tacoma Youth Enjoy Medieval Banquet

On April 9, 2005, the Seattle and Tacoma, Washington, youth enjoyed a medieval banquet at the home of Jerry



The royalty and the minstrels at the medieval banquet (photos by Cheryl Reeves and Logan Smith)

and Jeanette Berg in Seabeck, Washington. Everyone came in costumes and was announced by the herald, Travis Smith, as they entered the great banquet hall.

There were two kings present, Logan

and Tyler Smith, along with their queens Kiersten Korhuis and Ariel Olson. Minstrels Mike True, Lewis and Teresa VanAusdle and two court jesters, Shaney Mullen and Chelsea Murphy, entertained the group.

The meal was an authentic four-course meal served on bread plates and consisted of a delicious soup, large quail (turkey) and lake trout (salmon) and a variety of vegetables. The serving wenches were Desiree Olson, Julie Smith, Jeanette Berg and Briana Kinash.

During the evening there was a bit of excitement when the gypsy, Becca Loiselle, stole coins from a coin bag worn by Fred Reeves. The executioner, Mike Sorbe, was called on to deal with her!

Cheryl Reeves

Central New Jersey and Philadelphia Have Flea Market to Raise Funds

On May 22, 2005, the combined congregations of Central New Jersey and



Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, raised nearly \$900 for the Good Works Program. The project was headed by Al and Joan Cole of the Philadelphia congregation and preparations for the fund-raiser were begun months in advance.

Brethren from the two congregations began setting aside items to be donated several months before the event. On the final week all the items were gathered up and taken to a final staging area before heading off to the Columbus Farmer's Market in south Jersey.

Early Sunday morning May 22, stout-hearted brethren convened at the Farmer's Market in the face of dark clouds and rain. Optimism would win the day as members began setting up at the first break in the rain. Sales began almost immediately as seasoned bargain hunters, unphased by the weather,

flocked around the tables vying for the best deals.

Sales were brisk throughout the early morning and, as an added bonus, the weather took a turn for the better. Church members haggled with customers over cameras, bicycles, lamps, golf balls, tools, dishes, radios, picture frames and flower pots. They also shared in fellowship and hot cups of coffee.

In the end they felt that they had done something good for Church members they have yet to meet.

Bobby Martinez

San Antonio Holds Open House

On March 12, 2005, the San Antonio, Texas, congregation had an open house, inviting *Good News* magazine subscribers and sermon-tape program participants from the surrounding area. Flyers were also placed in selected neighborhood businesses. The program was planned and sponsored by the congregation's Outreach Committee.

Guests were invited to our *Good News* Fellowship Day, receiving by mail a letter, a colorful flyer and a UCG brochure. The topics, presented in two half-hour segments, were "Are We Living in the Last Days?" and "God's Time of Rest." Gary Petty, San Antonio area pastor and presenter of the *Good News* radio program, spoke on these two important subjects during our regular Sabbath service.

Eight guests were present, along with friends and family members. Special music, "El Shaddai," sung by Roy Peer, added an inspiring interlude between the two presentations. A reception was held after services for the guests and the congregation, providing opportunity for further fellowship.

The San Antonio congregation has an ongoing process of providing Bible seminars in different regions of the Greater San Antonio area and Texas Hill Country. The idea of an open house for services seemed to be a natural extension to the seminars. A member urged us to "make it friendly," therefore resulting in naming it *Good News* Fellowship Day. Special appreciation is expressed for help from the home office with advice and editing.

Sam Urbina

10-Year-Old Has Artwork Displayed by Nashville Mayor

Jack Gregory, age 10, a student at Hickman Elementary School in Donelson, Tennessee, had his artwork displayed in the The Mayor's Art Show

during the month of April. Each spring the mayor of Nashville hosts a display of artwork from student artists in the Nashville-metro area schools. Only a small percentage of students are chosen to have their artwork on display at the



Jack Gregory, 10, talks with Nashville mayor Bill Purcell at art exhibit reception April 21

Frist Center for the Visual Arts.

Mayor Bill Purcell hosted the art show's opening and held a reception in honor of the artist on April 21, 2005. Jack was able to meet and discuss his colored pencil depiction of the San Francisco Skyline with the mayor and with the founder of the Frist Foundation, Dr. Thomas F. Frist, Jr.

Jack attends the Nashville, Tennessee, congregation with his parents Preston and Debbie Gregory and his brother, Clint. His grandparents, Bill and Linda Gregory and Rudy and Patricia Neely, also attend in Nashville.

Michele Franke

74 Camp Out in North Carolina

On the weekend of May 20 to 22, 2005, the Asheboro, Charlotte and Raleigh, North Carolina, congregations enjoyed their first annual Jordan Lake camping extravaganza. Brethren from the three churches—and even as far away as Ohio—all joined to celebrate the great outdoors. Nestled among tall,



Brethren enjoy camping at Jordan Lake (photo by Steve Villaescusa)

swaying pines, 74 adventure seekers enjoyed the opportunity to spend two fun-filled nights in unison under God's stary firmament.

Although liquid sunshine did prevail on Friday night, no one's spirit dampened as campers worked together to brave the storm and find dry ground. As God always has a way of stepping in and blessing His people, Sabbath morning presented itself with beautiful, crisp blue skies.

After the morning cooks demonstrat-

ed their camping culinary skills, David Mills presented the brethren with an exciting and fun-filled Bible study consisting of several biblical brain teasers. Lunch was made, food was shared, and then brethren enjoyed stimulating split sermons provided by Larry Lambert and Mr. Mills, truly excellent and encouraging spiritual nourishment needed for all.

The final evening featured clear skies that made a perfect natural stage for all to enjoy a rousing sing-along. Sunday morning again presented clear sunny skies. The tents were packed up, and the camping gear was put back in place. Some headed to the lake and enjoyed the cool, refreshing water while others continued to fellowship and enjoy other festivities that the park offered.

It was unanimous that next year Jordan Lake would be the number one place to enjoy God's beauty and present a wonderful opportunity to get to know the brethren in a natural setting.

Larry and Sigrid Powers

Student Receives Second Prize in International Competition

Tinenenji Banda, 22, was recently awarded second prize in an international competition in the field of law. Tine, as she is called by her family and friends, is the daughter of Kam-bani and Shirley Banda of Lusaka, Zambia. Mr. Banda is the pastor of the congregations in Zambia.

Tine has been top of her class most of her school life. She attended the International School in Lusaka, where she excelled academically.

After graduating from the International School she commenced studying law at the University of Cape Town in South Africa. Tine is in her fourth and final year and has placed at the top of her class each year. A few months ago she was selected, together with another law student, to travel to Zanzibar to compete against other law students chosen from universities throughout the African continent.

Their project was to defend a client before a panel of judges from the International Bar Association. Tine and her partner were awarded the second prize. However, this proved to be a blessing in disguise as the final presentation was scheduled to take place the following Saturday. Tine observes the Sabbath day, and was grateful that she did not have to face this dilemma. If she had refused to participate, she may have jeopardized her standing with the Cape Town University law faculty, especially since they had been awarding her yearly study grants.

Tine will be graduating at year's end, and will then decide where she will further her career. Recently she was also given an opportunity to assist with tutoring first-year students at the university.

Her dedication, hard work and desire to place God first in her life have paid

rich dividends, and we see a bright future for her ahead.

Elize van Belkum

Bahamian Teen Named Valedictorian

Destiny McKinney, 13, was selected as valedictorian when she graduated from grade nine at the Grand Bahama Academy of Seventh-Day Adventists Junior High School. She received many academic honors and also achieved awards as the most helpful and best behaved student for the year.

Destiny gave her valedictorian speech at the graduation ceremony and encouraged her classmates to put God first in their lives and set high goals for themselves. She spoke in front of government officials who flew in from Nassau, the capital of the Bahamas, to attend the graduation ceremony in Freeport.

Destiny has been an honor role student since grade one and studies hard and applies herself diligently. She is a focused child and a good role model.

Destiny has been in the Church since she was born and does personal Bible study every night of her own accord. Destiny is a fourth-generation Church member—her grandmother is a deaconess and her father is a deacon in the Freeport, Bahamas, congregation.

Congratulations go out from her parents, Daniel and Hazel McKinney, brothers, grandparents and the Freeport congregation.



Destiny McKinney

Lafayette Member Gets Master's

Aimee Zahora graduated from the Indiana University School of Library and Information Science on Sunday, May 8, with a master's degree in information science. She earned her bachelor of science degree in English education from Ball State University in 1999 and her associate of arts from Ambassador University in 1996.

Aimee attends the UCG congregation in Lafayette, Indiana, which is pastored by Victor Kubik. There she serves as the chair of the local council. Her parents, Ken and Cherie Zahora, also attend in Lafayette. She has one brother, Nathan, and sister-in-law, Casey, who live in Peach Tree City, Georgia, and also attend with United.

Aimee works in Indianapolis for Dow AgroSciences, an agricultural and biotechnology company, in competitive intelligence. In her free time she enjoys swimming, cycling, ballroom dancing, playing the piano, reading and international travel.



Aimee Zahora

Toronto Member Earns Bachelor's Degree

Kevin Spahich of the Toronto, Ontario, congregation received an honors bachelor of business administration degree during the Wilfred Laurier University convocation ceremony on June 3, 2005, in Waterloo, Ontario.

His parents, brother and grandparents, Ken and Grace Bryant, also of the Toronto congregation, are very proud of his accomplishment. Kevin is active in the Young Ambassadors, Toronto's youth group.

Kevin's major was business, but he also minored in political science. He had an opportunity to work for Queen's Park as an intern during one summer break. He was elected to the student government for his final year at Laurier and was a delegate three years in a row at the mock United Nations held in Montreal each January. It includes representatives from universities and colleges throughout Canada and the United States.

He was a member of the Emergency Response Team throughout his university years as well as Foot Patrol, a program to ensure that students are safe walking from campus to their residence in the evenings until 2 a.m. Besides his volunteer activities, he is a certified lifeguard and enjoys water sports. Like most Canadian boys, he plays hockey whenever he gets a chance, but his passion for the game extends to refereeing as well.



Kevin Spahich

Colorado College Grad Wins Award

Robert Campbell Scott Danford of the Colorado Springs, Colorado, congregation graduated with high scholastic honors from Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado, on May 13.

He received a bachelor's degree in mathematics with a special interest in physics.

Scott also received the Ryan Sayers Memorial Award, which recognizes the academic achievement of a graduating senior majoring in engineering physics or mathematics who has performed significant undergraduate research.

Scott plans to continue postgraduate studies at Colorado School of Mines to obtain a master's degree in mathematics next spring.

He is a 2001 graduate of Ponderosa High School in Parker, Colorado. His parents, Bob and Judy Danford, live in Castle Rock, Colorado.



Scott Danford



Over a Dozen Congregations Have Used "Growing Kids God's Way"

Eleven pastors have now used "Growing Kids God's Way" materials by Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo as the basis for parenting classes in more than a dozen United congregations. This biblically based curriculum features a video lecture and then a discussion period.

The "Growing Kids God's Way" program was discussed in one of the seminars at the General Conference of Elders meeting in 2004, and another seminar discussed the program again this year.

According to the Ezzos' Web site, the *Along the Virtuous Way 5.0* series has been used by more than 9,000 churches and schools worldwide and served over 1.7 million households.

Topics include helping children internalize values, live out the character of God in their lives and learn self-control and personal responsibility. Classes also discuss how to train right behavior into children so parents will not have to spend unnecessary time correcting wrong behavior and how to handle sibling conflict, temper tantrums and lying, cheating and stealing. A session also discusses how to show love to children in the way they feel it most.

Congregations that have held the program include Northern Arizona and Northwest Phoenix, Arizona; Los Angeles and Bakersfield, California; Colorado Springs, Colorado; St. Petersburg and Tampa, Florida; St. Paul, Minnesota; Cincinnati East and Columbus, Ohio; East Texas, Dallas/Sherman and Houston South, Texas; and Salt Lake City, Utah.

Women Share "Joy and Gladness"

A beautiful Memorial Day Weekend

Parents in Dallas, Texas (top and left, photos by Philip Dick), Salt Lake City, Utah (middle, photo by Larry Salyer), and Los Angeles, California (bottom, photo by Francesca Nixon), take part in the "Growing Kids God's Way" program

awaited the ladies of the Spokane, Washington/Couer d'Alene, Idaho, area who gathered once again for the annual educational seminar. The weather was superb, with plenty of warm sunshine and blue skies enhanced by the sparkling waters of Deer Lake.

The theme for this year was "Joy and Gladness," and these were amply demonstrated by the ladies. The high tea dinner had the theme of the "Red Hat" society, and many delightful hats were worn by the various ladies. It was a very enjoyable evening.

The Sabbath services were given by Dennis Luker, who used the book of Philippians to demonstrate the attitudes



of joy and gladness. The book shows that even during trials, as Paul had, there can still be an element of joy in one's attitude.

In the afternoon LeeAnn Luker and Bev Pronishan shared valuable information on bearing the fruit of joy. Sunday morning presentations were given by Dyanne Dick on "Obstacles of Joy" followed by Sandy Cafourek who spoke on "Thirty Days to a Merry Heart."

The whole weekend truly showed us how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

Michelle Mickelson

Announcements

Births

David and Lynn Sandland proudly welcome their second grandson in the space of two months. Max Joseph Egan



Max Joseph Egan

entered our beautiful world on June 4, weighing in at a sizable 9 pounds. Mum Michelle was not too impressed with the challenge of delivering such a hefty bundle of joy, but all came through some initial challenges.

Max will be living on the Gold Coast of Australia with his parents, Tim and Michelle Egan, just down the road from grandparents David and Lynn.

William and Tia (Hurst) Howard of Tampa, Florida, joyfully announce the birth of their first child. Seth Aidan



Seth Aidan Howard

Howard arrived April 16, 2005. Seth weighed 8 pounds 5 ounces and was 22¼ inches long. Seth is surrounded by his loving family, grandparents Patrick and Deborah Howard (Tampa), grandfather Donald Hurst (Riverview, Florida) and loving aunt Cassandra Howard (Gainesville, Florida). Seth also has numerous cousins, uncles, aunts and a proud great-grandmother close by in Florida. Seth is a wonderful blessing!

James and Denise (Whitehead) Auch of the Sioux Falls, South Dakota, congregation are pleased to announce the birth of their third child, Brennon Cole. He was born Dec. 17, 2004, and weighed 9 pounds 8 ounces and was 21½ inches long.

His grandparents are Richard and



Brennon Cole Auch between Dillon and Brittney Rose

Margie Whitehead of Sidney, Iowa, and Donald and Darleen Auch of Lesterville, South Dakota. Big sister Brittney Rose and big brother Dillon are happy to have their baby brother.

Weddings

Tamara Leigh Patterson of the Detroit, Michigan, congregation and Jason Stephen Klimek were united in marriage on May 21, 2005. Randy D'Alessandro, Detroit and Ann Arbor,

Michigan, pastor, performed the ceremony.

Tamara is the daughter of Alan and Toni Patterson of the Detroit congregation. Jason is the son of Stephen Klimek and the late Nancy Klimek.

Jason is the manager of Zoupé, a soup and sandwich restaurant chain. Tamara is employed by Creative Marketing in a clerical position. The couple will reside in Clinton Township, Michigan.

Anniversaries

Gordon and Jessie Barr celebrated their 50th anniversary on June 18, 2004. In advance of their actual anniversary, family and friends were invited to write a special memory they had of the Barrs. All these memories were placed in an album that was presented to the Barrs at their anniversary party.

The Barrs were married in Port Arthur, Ontario, and in 1962 emigrated to the United States with their two children, Deborah and Derek. In Cleveland, Ohio, Gordon came into contact with the Church of God. He was baptized in 1968 and Jessie followed in 1973.

In 1971 they moved to Southern California, where they attended and served for many years in the Garden Grove congregation. In 1981 Gordon was ordained a deacon, and in 1991 he was ordained



Jessie and Gordon Barr

a local elder. Currently they attend and serve in Redlands, California, and enjoy spending time with their two grandsons, Alec and Cameron.

Alton and Elwanda Head celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary June 7, 2005. They were honored at their home with an anniversary cake and dinner prepared by their children and grandchildren. On the Sabbath of June 11, the Fort Worth, Texas, congregation honored them with a reception following ser-



Elwanda and Alton Head

VICES. An anniversary cake, punch and snacks were served.

Alton and Elwanda were baptized into God's Church in 1963. Alton served many years as a deacon and was ordained an elder in 1983. They have three sons: Arland and Terry Head of Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Carl and Neita Head and Kenneth and Denise Head both of Azle, Texas. They also have one daughter, Carol and José Rodriguez, who live in Saginaw, Texas.

Alton and Elwanda are also blessed to have 15 grandchildren.

On June 10, 2005, James and Lois Haeffele celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary.

Mr. Haeffele began attending church in Portland, Oregon, in January 1966. He

went to Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas, in August of that year. He had previous college and only needed three years to graduate at Ambassador. He was sent to Birmingham, Alabama, in 1969 as a trainee before graduating. He returned to Ambassador College in January of 1970 to finish his last semester, graduate and marry Lois.

Lois grew up on a farm near Anthony, Kansas, which is about 60 miles southwest of Wichita. She attended services in Wichita with her parents until leaving for Ambassador College. Jim and Lois met at Ambassador.

After graduation they were sent to Salt Lake City, Utah, where they served for three years. Over the years they have served in Pocatello, Idaho; Portland East (first pastorate) and Hood River, Oregon; Mansfield, Finley and Marion, Ohio. In 1989 they were transferred to Greensboro, North Carolina.



James and Lois Haeffele

Since United began Mr. Haeffele has started congregations in Greensboro and Hickory, North Carolina, and Roanoke, Virginia. At this time he pastors Asheville, Greensboro and Hickory, North Carolina, congregations in the western half of North Carolina. He is lovingly referred to as the I-40 preacher because his ministry stretches over 200 miles along the I-40 corridor.

Letters

Thanks From LCG Member

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all the people of the United Church of God who sent cards to the Living Church of God after the March shooting in our church. I have started to read each one and have found that even though they came from all over the world, and were from other Living Churches of God, Church of the Great God, Church of God Christian Fellowship, Lutheran churches, United Methodist churches and Baptist churches, the majority were from the United Church of God.

There were some very touching handmade cards from a United Church of God Sabbath school in Indiana. There was a book of poetry that United members composed and put together. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated.

Finally, I want to publicly acknowledge our thanks to the three United congregations in central Wisconsin who

donated food. There was so much food, drinks and desserts that we were able to send some to each of the grieving families and feed over 200 people who came to services the following week. We are unable to fully express the extent of our appreciation, but hope this letter will let you know we are very thankful.

Kathleen Wollin
Wisconsin

"Tear Down This Wall"

For 37 years I've puzzled over Ephesians 2:14-15 . . . Reading Kevin Epps' article, "Tear Down This Wall," February 2005 edition, has provided me with the clearest and most unambiguous explanation of the exact meaning of those scriptures. I am profoundly grateful.

Alberta

Believer in Eritrea

I felt so happy when I got your free

literature, which is very helpful to deepen my knowledge of the Holy Bible. This is indeed a good way of preaching the gospel.

I studied in a Roman Catholic mission from grade 6 to 12, then I graduated in mathematics at Asmara University.

I read the *Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God*. The topic that really struck my mind was "Military Service and War." I am serving in the military since almost all Eritreans are in the army due to the bloody war with Ethiopia. Thanks to God I am in the head office of the military headquarters. But I feel and see all the casualties of the war. So this topic reminds me I have to leave this military life, as this clearly should be my principle as a son of God.

Is there any way I can be your member, or are there any requirements I should fulfill? Thanks.

Eritrea

New Vigor

I wonder if all the other festival sites sensed the new vigor of the Holy Spirit moving among us, as we did in Gainesville, Georgia! It began to be apparent here two Sabbaths prior to Pentecost. Since the GCE, every sermon, sermonette and even the opening and closing prayers were more eloquent and on a higher spiritual plane than before. The Holy Day offering, per person, was higher than I have ever seen it in the 40 years I have been baptized, if that indicates the extent to which we support whatever God is about to do.

Of the seven churches mentioned in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, only one was prophesied to have a former and a latter work, but that does not mean that the others were prohibited from doing a former and latter work. It was prophesied that each of the churches would do a work once but it would surely be pleasing to God for a people to make a second

effort to give their people the truth that sets us free from the grips of evil—especially if the second effort became more effective than the first!

Jim Smith
Georgia

Prayers Answered

I would like to request some of your booklets. After 15 years searching for the truth, I think my prayers have been answered. It has been like looking for a single grain of wheat in an elevator full!

Missouri

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Comments and suggestions to improve *United News* are welcome. Please let us know if you would like your name printed. Mail to: *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, or e-mail mike_bennett@ucg.org.

News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

divided between men and women. They received five e-mailed "lessons" during the months of March, April and May, and many students completed three assignments and an optional editing test.

From the first assignment of "thought for the day" e-mail messages, 170 were received. Of these about 50 class contributions have been approved by coordinator Bob Berendt and submitted for use in the new "This Is the Way" e-mail program. Mr. Berendt requested that six writers who did well with the "This Is the Way" blurbs be invited to write five or six items each month.

Another assignment brought in more than 50 articles. A rough count shows 36 for *United News*, 11 for *Virtual Christian Magazine* and nine for *Vertical Thought*. Of these, 13 have already run in *United News* (mostly in "Treasure Digest"), one is currently on the *Vertical Thought* Web site and another in the current issue of *Vertical Thought*. Several more are planned for each of the publications.

Mike Bennett

Media Center Construction Update

Construction has begun in earnest for the Church's media center in the home office in Milford, Ohio. As of June 23, the walls to enclose the space have been framed and the drywall is half completed. Electrical wiring is being run and the insulation is on site ready to be installed.

Once the studio area and three offices are painted and finished (probably before the end of July), the on-camera set will be put together and cameras, lighting and editing equipment purchased.

A production meeting will be held soon to finalize the format and look of our new video program. We'd certainly appreciate your prayers for God's involvement in the success of our gospel efforts in this regard!

Peter Edington



What's New on the Web?

On www.ucg.org

■ Compass Check

See video of home office weekly meeting.
www.ucg.org/about/homeoffice/compasscheck.htm

■ UCG Commentary on This Week's News

Weekly commentaries by UCG written on world news and trends, from a biblical perspective. Read these and more:
"Is It Doomsday for Pensions?"
"Does God Matter to You?"
"Is the EU Becoming an 'Iron' and 'Clay' Union?"
"Message of Today's Graduation Addresses"
www.ucg.org/commentary/

■ Current World News & Trends

Browse up-to-date world news events by subject categories!
www.ucg.org/worldnews/

■ E-mail Updates and UCG eNews

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

On vcmagazine.org

■ The July VCM includes "Building a Solid Foundation—Part 2" and "Meaningful Hope for Christians With Chronic Illnesses."
vcmagazine.org

On verticalthought.org

■ The July-September issue includes: "Are You a Leader?"; "It Does Matter Who Your Friends Are"; "The Abortion Controversy"; and "Molding Your Personality for Leadership."
verticalthought.org

Featured Links of the Month

■ Good News Web site.

www.gnmagazine.org

■ **Anchor:** *A message of hope for those struggling with homosexuality.*

www.anchorhelp.com

If you have any questions or comments, please contact: webmaster@ucg.org

Houston Music Festival Set for Sept. 4

The Houston, Texas, North congregation will host an outdoor, live music festival on Sunday, Sept. 4, 2005 (Labor Day weekend). Music including folk, country, blues, religious, rock and jazz will be performed.

Musicians who wish to participate can use equipment provided by local musicians including a drum set, amplifiers, keyboards, congas, bongos, timpanis, microphones and monitors; guitars may be available by special arrangement.

For attendees who must avoid the sun, several canopies will be erected, but most will bring a chair or blanket and sit on the lawn, which should accommodate over 600 people. Local brethren will bring extra lawn chairs for visitors. In the event of rain, performances will be held in the building auditorium.

A concessions stand will sell food and drinks during the festival. Festival entry is free, however donations will be accepted to defray expenses; extra funds will be donated to the United Church of God's work in Ghana and the local teen fund. The starting time will be announced at a later date.

Hotel accommodations may be found

in Humble, Texas, approximately five minutes from the church building.

Musicians interested in participating in the Houston Music Festival should contact David Buchanan by e-mail at elbuch@aol.com (please use "Subject: Houston Music Festival" to avoid deletion of your correspondence), or by telephone at (281) 852-2438, no later than Aug. 14. Without exception, all musicians must be members or attendees of the United Church of God or another Sabbath-keeping Church of God.

David Buchanan

ABC Mini-Sampler Set for Nashville Sept. 17 and 18

There will be an Ambassador Bible Center mini-sampler over the weekend of Sept. 17 and 18, in Nashville, Tennessee. Instructors will be *Good News* writer and pastor of the Lansing, Michigan, congregation, Melvin Rhodes, and ABC instructor Ralph Levy. Subjects of the classes and location are yet to be determined. An announcement with more details will be forthcoming.

Please contact Fred Kellers, the pastor of the Nashville congregation, if you plan to come. Mr. Kellers may be con-

tacted at fred_kellers@ucg.org or (615) 591-4966.

Ralph Levy

Columbus Softball Tournament Set for Labor Day

The fifth annual Columbus, Ohio, UCG softball tournament will take place over the Labor Day weekend, with games during the day Sunday, Sept. 4, and again on Monday morning.

Sunday night the Columbus congregation will be hosting a pizza party and movie/games night at the Eagle's Nest Fellowship Center, their regular church hall. The park where the games will take place also features sand volleyball courts, basketball courts and a picnic shelter.

For more information and to register, please contact Greg or Kelley Hand at (614) 899-2106 or by e-mail at khand@insight.rti.com.

Rich Johnson

Calendar of Events

July 15-17: Teen and young adult beach weekend, Garden Grove, California.

July 28-31: Bluegrass Family Fun Weekend, near Cadiz, Ohio (www.ucgnet.org/bluegrass).

Aug. 14: ABC graduation.

Aug. 19-21: Women's Weekend in Sacramento, California, "Encouraging One Another to Love and Good Works" (suecrow@gmail.com).

Aug. 22-26: ABC Sampler at the home office (gary_antion@ucg.org).

Aug. 26-31: Council meetings.

Sept. 2-5: Upper Midwest regional Christian Leadership Conference at Williams Bay, Wisconsin.

Sept. 4: An outdoor, live music festival, Houston North, Texas, congregation (elbuch@aol.com, please use "Subject: Houston Music Festival").

Sept. 4-5: Fifth Columbus, Ohio, softball tournament.

Sept. 17-18: ABC mini-samplers in Nashville, Tennessee, and Akron, Ohio.

Nov. 19-20: ABC mini-sampler in Los Angeles, California.

Dec. 11-15: Council meetings.

Dec. 23 (evening)-27 (late): Winter Family Weekend in Louisville, Kentucky (details in August).

Feb. 27, 2006: Deadline for congregations to submit Statements of Concern about any proposed amendments to Amendment Committee.
May 7-8, 2006: General Conference of Elders annual meeting.
May 9-11, 2006: Council meetings.

Plans for ABC Sampler 2005 Announced

Ambassador Bible Center (ABC) announced the following program for the 2005 edition of the Cincinnati Sampler. This program provides attendees with a sense of what ABC is like by holding classes for one week in a style similar to that of the regular ABC year.

Classes are held at the ABC lecture hall at the home office building, 555 Techcenter Dr., Milford, Ohio. The dates for this year's program are Aug. 22 to 26. This year Ralph Levy will present material from Ezra and Nehemiah. Gary Antion will present material from the Practical Christianity class on marriage and communication as well as from the Minor Prophets class on Haggai. We are hopeful that new president Clyde Kilough will present material from his presentation on Godly Leadership. He has said that he wants to teach at least four hours.

Classes will begin at 8:45 a.m. each day. Each instructor will provide more details about his individual classes when students arrive for their first class. Students are asked to bring a Bible and a good notebook, and may want to pack a good concordance as well for personal study.

Students are responsible for their own housing arrangements. A housing list is available for student use in selecting housing. The tuition cost is \$50 per person and is due on or before the first day of classes.

To reserve a place at the Sampler, please contact us by phone at (513) 576-9796 or by letter or e-mail us at Ralph_Levy@ucg.org or Gary_Antion@ucg.org.



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