



## News At a Glance

### Breaking Free Journal Now Online

The latest publication of the United Church of God is now available online.

*Breaking Free Journal* is the online magazine that helps members of the Church who struggle with alcoholism, substance abuse, sexual addictions, same-sex attraction, mental disorders and other forms of dysfunctional behavior. It will also help those who seek a deeper understanding of these issues.

The success of the magazine depends greatly on your input. Please send articles to [melvin\\_rhodes@ucg.org](mailto:melvin_rhodes@ucg.org). They must be written by members of the United Church of God and should be under 1,500 words.

You can view *Breaking Free Journal* at [breakingfree.ucg.org](http://breakingfree.ucg.org). So far more than a dozen articles have been posted.

Melvin Rhodes

### Walker Replaces Meeker on Council

Upon returning from an international trip in July, Joel Meeker tendered a letter of resignation from the Council of Elders.

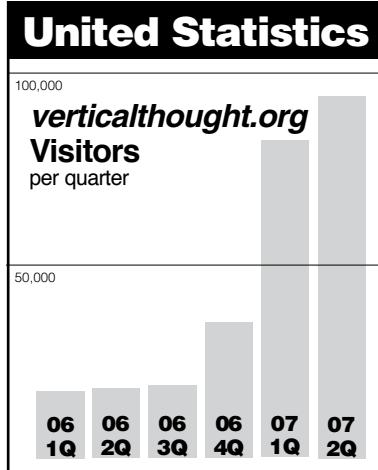
Council Chairman Bob Dick wrote, "I received the letter, dated July 25, a few days later and notified Leon Walker that he was next in line to fill an international vacancy. Leon will begin filling the remainder of Joel's term [through June 30, 2008] at the August meeting.

"We would like to thank Joel for his service to the Council and know his plate will remain brim full with all his editorial and membership oversight responsibilities in the French-speaking areas."

### Council Agenda Set

Chairman Bob Dick sent the agenda for

See "News at a Glance," page 2



## Print and Online Advertising Break Records

by Peter Eddington

The fiscal year that ended June 30 was a record-breaking year with more than 27 million print advertising pieces distributed throughout the United States. This was more than a 400 percent increase over last year.

Ten million of these pieces were seen in a nationwide *Reader's Digest* advertisement, and more than 2 million each in *American Baby* and *Parents* magazines. The remaining 13 million pieces were distributed through card packs, supermarket brochure stands, UCG member distribution and co-op mailers—similar to previous years.

The total number of responses added through June 2007 from these efforts is 115,172, with residual responses still coming in each day. Our overall cost per response for the fiscal year stands at \$5.70, and it is going down more each day.

### Reader's Digest Ad Exceeds All Previous Efforts

As of June 30 we had 31,082 responses to our April *Reader's Digest* advertisement, and another 1,373 responses were received in July. We initially projected we would add 30,000 subscribers from this ad.

So far, this *Reader's Digest* ad has received a 0.32 percent response. Our previous *Reader's Digest* ad in 2000 brought in a 0.25 percent response. Our goal was to meet or exceed that percentage, which we have done. Since we are still receiving cards from the ad run in 2000, I would imagine that over the next few years we will exceed 0.4 percent for this year's ad, which would be very good.

*Reader's Digest* subscribers are the most likely group of any of our subscrib-

ers to read the magazine and renew their subscription every two years. It's among our best-spent advertising money.

Responses to the April *American Baby* advertisement were projected to be 7,600. As of the end of July we had received 11,016, which exceeds our initial projection nicely. However, the May *Parents* magazine ad is underperforming from what we had hoped. We had 5,047 responses as of the end of July, while we had projected 8,400.

Overall, these three additions to our print advertising were expected to bring in 46,000 responses, and we had 46,225

as of June 30. We're ahead very favorably—and thousands more will be added in subsequent months. It was a very good year for our print advertising proclamation efforts!

### Online Advertising Best Year Yet

It was also a record-breaking year for our Internet advertising at Yahoo and Google, with more than 765 million impressions of our ads shown. From this we gleaned 118,611 responses, by far our best year yet. This online advertising allows subscribers to learn much more about our teachings,

if they wish, before they request the literature than normal print advertising does. The cost per response for online ads is around \$2.65.

Additional funds were approved mid-fiscal year for both print and Internet advertising. Thus, we began promoting *World News and Prophecy*, *Vertical Thought* and various booklets online as part of the plan to use the additional \$531,500 added to the Media and Communications Services budget. This is beginning to show results, as the print run for *World News and Prophecy* exceeded 50,000 for the first time in August. UN

### Regional Conferences Begin



Regional pastor Paul Suckling and Richard Pinelli; Sadie Parks and Jim Franks

Sunday, July 15, 19 out of 23 Northeast Region elders (plus many wives) gathered in Richmond, Virginia, for the first regional ministerial conference with the theme "Study to Show Yourself Approved." They were joined by six instructors: Clyde Kilough, Jim Franks, Richard Pinelli, Dick Thompson, David Register and Doug Horchak. The nonsalaried elders left Monday evening and the salaried men had ses-

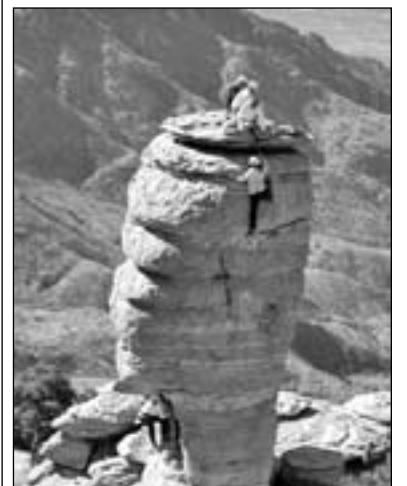
sions specific to their work on Tuesday.

One elder said the background given to the work of the Council was most enlightening for him and that he felt he had clear understanding of how UCG operates. The elders also received a 169-page manual on the fundamental beliefs. It was a packed three days of information enhanced by great fellowship and a true spirit of brotherly love.

Paul Suckling

### Challenger II—Rock Climbing Program Set for December

Young adults are invited to experience camp on "the next level" at this leadership-focused program.



Challenger II climber scales Mt. Lemmon's famous Hitchcock Pinnacle outside Tucson, Arizona

Challenger II offers young adults of the Church, ages 18 to 30, a unique opportunity.

See "Challenger," page 5

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## United Passes 5-Millionth Booklet Mark

UCG has now printed more than 5 million booklets, which would make a stack 12 miles high!

by Scott Ashley

The United Church of God passed a major milestone recently when it printed its 5 millionth booklet. To put that into perspective, if all 5 million booklets were put into one stack, the stack would tower almost 12 miles high!

The total number printed now stands at 5,078,000 (English language) across our 32 booklet titles. At the moment, the two most-printed booklets are *What Is Your Destiny?* and *What Happens After Death?* (both with 255,000 copies printed).



More than 5 million copies of United's 32 booklets have been printed, with 600,000 to 700,000 mailed each year

As a general category, our booklets on prophecy are the most popular. All five are among our most printed, with the titles and number printed as follows: *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*, 231,000; *The Middle East in Bible*

*Prophecy*, 220,000; *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*, 200,000; *Are We Living in the Time of the End?* 200,000; and *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*, 190,000.

Other very popular titles are *Jesus Christ: The Real Story*, 200,000; *The Ten Commandments*, 190,000; and *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, 185,000.

In an average year we print and mail 600,000 to 700,000 booklets. This year will probably be considerably higher due to an increase in our media budget, allowing us to reach more readers and subscribers.

We are grateful for the generosity of our members, coworkers and donors that make this possible. UN

Scott Ashley is managing editor of booklets, as well as The Good News and Bible Study Course.

## News At a Glance

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the August Council meeting to the elders Aug. 1. Items to be discussed include:

- Reading of the Council Code of Conduct.
- President's Unified Report.
- Home office relocation update.
- Amendment Committee (making four appointments to fill expired terms).
- Plans for 2008 GCE.
- Search for a new Council reporter.
- GCE Advisory Committee on Elder's Forum (selecting members and appointing a chairman).
- Completed assessments of the president and the treasurer will be given to each Council member. Results will be shared with the president in executive session.
- Three Ministerial Services policies that need minor adjustments.
- Executive session to cover ordinations; a legal update; updates on health, retirement and congregational situations; home office relocation issues not covered in previous open session; and assessment of president and treasurer.
- Committee restructuring.

## New Home Office Site Sought

President Clyde Kilough reported to the elders in a July 24 e-mail that the search was on for other properties in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, metroplex after he decided not to pursue the property that was being considered near Denton, Texas, for the relocation of the home office.

Mr. Kilough mentioned the proximity of a Safety Kleen plant within a mile of the property. "The environmental assessment performed in our due diligence process assured us that this plant is not a threat to the property," Mr. Kilough said. "Nevertheless, that does not change the fact that the plant is still less than a mile away, which for some raises concerns and reservations.

"Therefore, after considering 'a multitude of counsel' and further discussion with the Council of Elders, I have decided to withdraw our efforts to procure the Kings Row property. We have already begun a search for other properties in the greater Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex. Based on our initial investigation some months ago we expect to soon have other prospects for the Council to review," Mr. Kilough said.

## Pastor Interviewed on Talk Show About Patriotism

Stephanie Frascetti, a talk-show host from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, called Don Hooser, pastor of the Sedro-Woolley, Washington, congregation, July 2,

See "News at a Glance," page 16

## Council Member Profile: Larry Salyer

Larry Salyer and his wife, Judy, began attending God's Church exactly one week after their wedding in 1963. Then in 1965, they and their 1-year-old daughter, Lisa, moved to Big Sandy, Texas, when Larry was accepted to Ambassador College. Born in northern Indiana in 1942, the eighth of 10 children, Mr. Salyer remembers when his parents began listening to Herbert Armstrong in 1954. His mom was baptized in 1960.

Larry and Judy met in high school. Judy had no previous knowledge of the Church. But her future mother-in-law introduced her to the booklet on the subject of marriage and divorce and the *Bible Story*, which Judy found agreed with the Bible. Within a week after their marriage, studying and talking led them to ask permission to attend the Elkhart, Indiana, congregation where some of the family already attended. Both were baptized on the same day in November 1963 by George Meeker.

Mr. Salyer graduated from Ambassador College in 1968. He was ordained an elder the next day and immediately sent to Houston, Texas, as an assistant pastor. In January 1969, he took up his first pastor-

ate in Abilene and Odessa, Texas. Subsequently, he pastored in Houston North and South; Big Sandy; Washington, D.C.; Hagerstown, Maryland; Pasadena Auditorium and San Francisco, California; and St. Louis and Wentzville, Missouri.

From 1982 to 1986, as dean of students at Ambassador College in Big Sandy, he worked closely with Les McCullough, Don Ward and Dick Thompson. After Mr. Armstrong's death, Mr. Salyer was drafted away from "the best job in the world" to become the director of Church Administration in Pasadena. By 1988, Church Administration was reorganized and Mr. Salyer became the director of Church Administration, International, overseeing all aspects of the international work until 1992. In addition, he was responsible for all YOU programs, summer camps and Imperial Schools. He served on the Council of Elders and taught in the Ministerial Refresher Program.

Working in Pasadena, Mr. Salyer became aware of the negative trends in the Church. In the summer of 1992, with the job becoming impossible due to doctrinal changes, Mr. Salyer volunteered for

a pastorate in the field. The Salyers moved to the St. Louis and Wentzville, Missouri, circuit, thinking it would be possible to teach the truth without interference. That would soon prove to be untrue.

In 1993, Mr. Salyer was asked to serve as a regional pastor. He cautiously accepted the role, alongside other senior ministers now serving in the United Church of God. He thought perhaps this team would be used by God to restore the Church's traditional teachings. But within a few months, the apostasy had become egregious and doctrinal division in the congregation and local ministry were intolerable. He resigned from the ministry of the Worldwide Church of God in February 1994.

As faithful members left the WCG, a small congregation was formed, meeting in homes. They soon found the Global Church of God and merged with that group at Pentecost. The Salyers pastored the Midwest churches until 1996, when Mr. Salyer became director of editorial services in San Diego, California. By 1998, internal conflicts led to a split in Global. Later, a number of ministers and members formed the Church of God, a Christian



Larry and Judy Salyer

Fellowship, which then merged with the United Church of God in 2001.

Mr. Salyer has served on the Godly Leadership Task Force, the Expelled Elder Appeal Committee and the Bible Reading Program editorial team. He pastored the congregations in Salt Lake City, Utah; Grand Junction, Colorado; and Twin Falls, Idaho, before moving to Cincinnati, Ohio, to become operation manager of Media and Communications Services in 2007.

The Salyers have four children: Lisa (Mrs. Andy Burnett), Jeff, Julie (Mrs. Royden Morgan) and Randy (married to Stephanie Millan); and four grandchildren. **UN**

## FORWARD! "On the Road Again..."

by Jim Franks



International travel is often very difficult and wearing on your body. Last month I traveled to Asia for 10 days. In that period I traveled about 25,000 miles, an average of 2,500 miles a day.

The plan was to visit congregations and conduct a leadership conference. We traveled to India, Thailand and the Philippines. Because of the route we were traveling, it was critical that we be in certain cities at certain times to catch certain flights. In some cases there was only one flight per day to the cities we needed to visit. We had to stay with the itinerary or our purpose for the trip would not be accomplished.

All the traveling made me think of an old song by

Willie Nelson titled "On the Road Again." In this song there is a longing to get back on the road—to travel again. It struck me during this trip that there is a spiritual parallel that can be drawn about traveling and being on the right road or path.

Christ identified two paths. One is the wide way that leads to destruction, and the other is the narrow way that leads to life (Matthew 7:13-14). He admonished us to choose the narrow (the difficult) road. As Christians, we have to admit that life presents many challenges to staying on this narrow road.

We struggle with this continuously. We do well for a while, but then either an attitude or a trial in life takes us off the road or to the side of the road for a while. Without the willingness to at times push ourselves, we end up in the wrong city at the wrong time and are unable to catch the plane that will take us to our desired destination.

Conviction and dedication to God's way of life are incredibly important since every one of us will experi-

ence trials that will seem insurmountable and capable of causing us to detour. At times it would be easy to give up and get off the road. A few years ago a member told me that he was just worn out and that he wanted to get off the road and rest for a while. I cautioned him that once you take a break from church and the Christian life, it will be very hard to get back on the road.

It takes effort and an attitude of conviction to get back on the road again once we have experienced a setback. The challenge of Christianity is to stay on the narrow way so that we can arrive at the proper destination.

On this recent trip to Asia, Dave Baker and I made all our appointments, but it required a great effort because it was so difficult and tiring. Willie Nelson described what must be the attitude of every Christian—that in spite of the difficult path and the trials that we will experience along the way, "I can't wait to get on the road again." The road that we must travel is challenging, but the destination (God's Kingdom) will be worth it. **UN**

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Editor: Peter W. Eddington Managing editor: Mike Bennett Copy editor: Becky Bennett  
UCG/IA Council of Elders: Robert Berendt, Aaron Dean, Robert Dick (chairman), Bill Eddington, Jim Franks, Roy Holladay, Clyde Kilough, Victor Kubik, Richard Pinelli, Larry Salyer, Richard Thompson, Leon Walker

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

### International addresses:

AFRICA & ASIA (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

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

CARIBBEAN: United Church of God, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. E-mail: info@ucg.org

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

God—East Africa, 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: Église 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: mauritius@ucg.org

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

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

NIGERIA: United Church of God, P.O. Box 2265, Somolu, Lagos, Nigeria. Phone: 01-8113644. E-mail: nigeria@ucg.org

PHILIPPINES: United Church of God, P.O. Box 81840, DCCPO, 8000 Davao City, Philippines. Phone: (+63) 82 224-4444 Cell/Text: (+63) 918-904-4444

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.

SPANISH-SPEAKING AREAS: Iglesia de Dios Unida, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. Phone: (513) 576-9796

TONGA: United Church of God—Tonga, P.O. Box 2617, Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

**Mission Statement:** The mission of the Church of God is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God in all the world, make disciples in all nations and care for those disciples.

President: Clyde Kilough

Doctrinal reviewers: Roy Demarest, Bill Jahns, Arthur Suckling, Chuck Zimmerman

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## News From **Around the World**

### Volunteer Pastor in Latvia Interested in UCG

by Victor Kubik

The UCG home office received an e-mail from a Baptist pastor in Latvia (one of the Baltic Republics) who told us that he has been studying our literature. He learned about us through his wife who had been surfing the Internet.

The e-mail in part read: "Several months ago my wife on I-net found your site and made order of some literature. Since we got first parcel from you, many things, good things, have happened and *changed* in our life, and in life of believers in church where I'm pastor. We have rather small congregation, about 25-35 people attend Sunday (still Sunday, but will become Sabbath) meeting."

I wrote back to him and later gave him my Skype mail and invited him to contact me through that means. This time he responded with his phone number and city. He lives just south of the Estonian border and is 100 miles from Tartu, Estonia, where I travel often.

He contacted me via Skype in mid-July. We talked for 45 minutes. He had talked previously to elder Johnnie Lambert who was still in Estonia. They talked for about half an hour.

What an interesting story he had to tell! I am very cautious about international contacts that purport to believe what we do and want contact with us, because often the motives are not as genuine as we hope. The contacts turn out to be a fishing expedition for U.S. connections. But the longer I talked with this gentleman, the more I was impressed with what I heard.

He is a volunteer pastor. His paid occupation is working as a timber salesman. He has many dealings with Americans, thus his English is good. He had been a food importer and had been to the United States as well. He and his wife have four children ranging in age from 12 to 17.

He told me they started ordering UCG booklets, but found the two-month turnaround time to be too slow. So, they started downloading our online literature. From

this he would read, translate and preach. This started more than a year ago. He did not want to contact us before because he wanted to understand as much as he could about us before making contact.

He told me that our literature is wonderful. It is written in a straightforward style, easy to understand and is backed up with Scripture.

He wants to join us in Tartu, Estonia, for a part of the Feast of Tabernacles. While he still meets with his congregation on Sunday for now, he and his family keep the Sabbath and make it a family day.

I introduced him to the United Church of God more and explained about the Church's work in Scandinavia, the Baltic Republics and Eastern Europe. He had already known quite a bit by finding out as much as could on the Internet.

He invited my wife and me to visit him, and I look forward to doing that the next time I'm in the Baltic Republics. **UN**

*The author is senior pastor for Eastern Europe and Scandinavia.*

### International News At a Glance

#### Canada Reports on Growth in First Half of the Year

As of June 30, UCG-Canada had 12,625 subscribers to *The Good News* magazine. (About 2,700 subscribers have been added since Jan. 1.)

Total incoming mail for the first six months of 2007 stands at just over 9,000 pieces. That's about 8 percent more than the same period in 2006. Nearly half of all the mail received this year is via the Internet and e-mail.

All the incoming mail is resulting in a lot of outgoing mail. From January to June of this year UCG-Canada distributed nearly 97,000 items. That works out to 16,135 items per month or about 535 items per day. ("Items" include magazines, periodicals, booklets, article reprints, study papers, letters, CDs and DVDs.)

Sabbath attendance is about 2.8 percent higher than last year at this time. On the other hand, Holy Day attendance is down slightly from last year, even though a record 716 attended Pentecost services across Canada this year.

Canadian income for the first three months of the new fiscal year is ahead of budget, as are the Holy Day offerings.

The responses to the *Beyond Today* television program continue to come in. We're now approaching 2,000 responses in total since the program began airing in Canada in May 2006. The average number of responses is just under 33 per program. About 72 percent of all the responses have come from new viewers, with the balance coming from those already on file.

The Canadian office staff have been working on the next semiannual letter to be sent to about 7,000 readers of *The Good News*.

Longer-term plans include working on the upcoming advertisement in *Reader's Digest*. The ad is planned for the November issue.

We are heading for a record-breaking year in many areas, and your continued prayers for the success of the various projects we're doing are greatly appreciated.

*Edwin van Pelt*

#### Floods Affect Members in Central England

Newspaper reports called it some of the worst flooding in the United Kingdom in 60 years.

Frank Jarvis, pastor of the Gloucester and Preston congregations, reported, "The Gloucester brethren are all safe, but power cuts and a lack of drinking water are the major problems." Services were canceled July 21 and 28 because of the flooding.

David Jones was stuck in traffic after leaving work on a Friday afternoon. He finally arrived home late afternoon on Saturday! David Elliott's vehicle was completely ruined as he was traveling to Gloucester.

Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis also described their nerve-wracking experience driving through the flooded streets: "Two thirds of the way through the bow wave was engulfing the bonnet, water was sucked in through the air filter and the engine died.

"[We were] helpless, and with water halfway up the car and rising. It seeped in and lapped around our feet.

"Long story short, four strangers pushed us out, and I was able to walk home and tell my neighbor what had happened. He immediately drove me back, and towed the car home. The AA got to us yesterday afternoon (July 23), and towed the car to the garage where it has joined a queue of vehicles awaiting similar attention. We count ourselves very fortunate when we see the plight of others."

The Church office at Chalfont St. Giles was also on the edge of a "lake" as the drains had not been cleared. The staff was at the UCG-British Isles National Council meeting, so "we were blissfully unaware of how close the office came to being flooded," Peter Hawkins said.

The north of England was also affected a couple of weeks earlier. David Fenney, pastor of the northern England and Scotland congregations, said that this time, "As far as I am aware, no one associated with Scotland, Isle of Man, Birmingham and Nottingham congregations has been affected."

#### UCG-British Isles National Council Meets After AGM

In a meeting of the UCG-British Isles National Council that followed the conclusion of July 15's annual general meeting (see article, left), several business items were conducted. Council members:

- Acknowledged the selection by the U.K. ministry of David Payne to serve as a ministerial member of the Council following the retirement of Gerhard Marx and Peter Hawkins to continue to serve as a ministerial member following the conclusion of his previous three-year term.

- Welcomed Brian Crook and Steven Moschidis as newly appointed members of the Council and Bryan Ellams as a reappointed member.

- Reappointed Bryan Ellams to the position of executive lay member and as chairman of the Council.

- Reappointed Peter Hawkins to the position of chief executive officer.

- Appointed Mark Webb to take over the position of secretary following the present secretary Brian Crook's appointment as a member of the Council.

- Appointed Laura Payne as a co-opted young adult member of the Council following the present co-opted young adult member Steven Moschidis' appointment as a member of the Council.

### UCG-British Isles Holds Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting of the registered charity United Church of God-British Isles was held on Sunday, July 15, in Gloucester.

#### Business Session

Members of the charity reappointed Bryan Ellams as a member of the Council, appointed Brian Crook and Steven Moschidis as members of the Council, reappointed Barbara Fenney as treasurer and ratified the budget for the financial year ending June 30, 2008.

#### Chairman's Report

Bryan Ellams reported:

It has been a year of progress and change with the European English-language *Good News* no longer being sent out from the United Kingdom. That responsibility has now been transferred to the home office. Also, UCG-British Isles has moved to a new office at Chalfont St. Giles, which has enabled us to solve the health-and-safety problem of moving items up and down stairs, while providing a larger area for future growth, all within budget.

We are now able to focus our efforts on the United Kingdom and Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands. Advertising in the Consumer Information Centre brochure (delivered to homes by direct mail) has brought in many replies as we continue to build up our readership to the previous level we had with the European mailings.

The Internet continually brings in new *Good News* subscribers at the rate of over 500 a month. This interest leads also to growth in our literature requests. We need to maintain a vigorous renewal program to keep the subscription numbers to a manageable level and to only send the magazine to those genuinely interested.

#### Chief Executive Officer's Report

Peter Hawkins reported that the past

year has seen some significant and welcome developments.

**Publications:** This financial year we distributed 42,000 copies of *The Good News*, an increase of 10 percent over the previous year. The resulting mail was 16,400 items of normal mail plus 12,100 Internet requests. More than 29,500 booklets were posted, excluding our serial publications. An average of 150 *United News*, 215 *Vertical Thought* and 450 *World News and Prophecy* per issue were sent, down a bit on the previous year due to renewals.

The National Council approved an advertisement in the Consumer Information brochure summer issue just before the conclusion of the financial year. We agreed to pay for 2,500 responses from people requesting *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension* and the May/June issue of *The Good News*, which featured the family as its cover theme. The majority of these have been posted, and we are receiving some good comments and a few cancellations.

The coworker letter in November 2006 advertised the booklets *The Book of Revelation Unveiled* and *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*. We were pleased with the 9 percent response since these publications are often mentioned in the magazine itself.

A number of other projects are on the move, including the hand delivery of older magazines through letter boxes, offering a free subscription.

The local Web site [www.ucg.org.uk](http://www.ucg.org.uk) is now running quite well, including areas for registration of both 2007 and 2008 Feast sites. At the same time development is taking place to provide an easier way of updating information and perhaps having a member-related area.

**Church Activities:** We were very happy to have an increase of 4 percent in attendance and 33 percent in offerings over the first three Holy Day services this year.

Some of the main developments this year included:

- 40 speakers and leaders attending a Leadership Development weekend in Derbyshire provided by the home office.

- The ordination of two elders to assist pastors in their congregations.

- Three two-week pastors' training sessions were recorded for distribution for the U.K. pastors.

- Five U.K. elders attended the GCE in Cincinnati.

- The Feast in York was very successful. Planning for this year's Feast in Milford-on-Sea and the next in Stirling, Scotland, is well underway. Stirling has provided much overseas interest.

- Our young adults group is becoming more involved in the work of the Church, and this is very encouraging.

- We had one ministerial meeting during the year.

- Although we have suspended Sabbath meetings in Chelmsford and the Bible study in Camberley, we have begun more regular meetings in Milton Keynes, Nottingham and Stirling, Scotland.

#### Presentation of Business Plan

Peter Hawkins included the following possibilities and options for next year's activities:

- Selection of two ministers who may be able to participate in a second pastors' training at the home office.

- Possible European conference of ministers organized by the home office.

- Online banking and payments.

- Increased number of ministerial meetings.

- List of emergency contact numbers of members.

A meeting of the UCG-British Isles National Council followed the annual general meeting. See the report in the "International News at a Glance" section to the right. **UN**

# Congratulations, High School Graduates 2007

## Jessica Janae Johnson

Parents: Edmond and Sharlene Johnson and Phillipa McKinney



Jessica Janae Johnson

*Congregation:* Nassau, Bahamas  
*High School Accomplishments:* Jessica received top honors in French and the Progress Award.  
*Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:* She enjoys listening to music, traveling and going camping.  
*Plans After Graduation:* Jessica plans to work and go to college.

## Ashley Michelle Kosloski

Parents: Joseph and Cynthia Kosloski



Ashley Michelle Kosloski

# Feast Sermon Video Explores "Threshold of a New Age"

■ European trip sets stage for Feast video featuring European members and Europe in end-time prophecy.

by Peter Eddington

This year's Feast of Tabernacles sermon video, titled "Threshold of a New Age," tells the tumultuous story of end-time Europe in prophecy and also shares the perspectives of our brethren there.

The Bible describes the rise and fall of four important empires over the millennia—Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. Prophecy reveals there is yet another coming revival of a powerful Holy Roman Empire, encompassing the world in a religious and political system that the book of Revelation calls Babylon. These great empires of man have failed, and will fail, to bring peace to humanity.

However, the prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation tell us that another kingdom will replace these four. This final kingdom will be the



Kingdom of God, foreshadowed by the Feast of Tabernacles. We truly are on the threshold of a new age for humankind!

Peter Eddington and Clay Thornton, videographers from the Media and Communications Services department, visited Europe dur-

ing June and July to record footage, interviews and location shots for this year's Feast sermon video. A very busy editing schedule is now under-



Far left: brethren in Bordeaux, France, share a meal with the film crew; above, services in Milan, Italy; left, the Colosseum in Rome (photos by Peter Eddington)

way to prepare the material in time for the Feast.

Join us at the Feast for this sobering, yet inspiring, video presentation, and at the same time meet your brethren

*Congregation:* Memphis/Jackson, Tennessee

*High School Accomplishments:* Ashley was home schooled since fifth grade and qualified for the Hope Scholarship.

*Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:* Ashley has been attending UCG for one year and has since attended Camps Woodmen and Pinecrest and the Louisville Winter Family Weekend. Ashley is very active and enjoys sports of all kinds, traveling, music, makeovers, costume design, acting, spending time with family and friends and meeting new people.

*Plans After Graduation:* Ashley hopes to go to college in the spring of '08 at the University of Memphis.

*Words to Live By:* With God as your Guide, never be afraid; try something new.

*Advice:* Be yourself; don't be quick to judge people.

## Andrew McGee

Parents: Dan and Evelia McGee

*Congregation:* Phoenix Northwest, Arizona



Andrew McGee

*High School Accomplishments:* Andrew held the high school weight lifting record as a freshman, played nose guard on the high school football team and is accomplished in heavy machine operations.

*Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:* Andrew is an avid outdoorsman who likes hunting and fishing. He has traveled to six different countries including a trip to Africa, and he enjoys snowboarding and

riding his ATV. He has attended camp for nine years and is going back as a counselor this year.

*Plans After Graduation:* He plans to go to Estrella Mountain Community College for a business degree.

*Favorite Scripture:* "To God our Saviour, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen" (Jude 25).

*Motto:* Live life to its fullest, and have no regrets.

## Sa'Leah Marie Smallwood

Parents: Terry and Shirley Smallwood

*Congregation:* Columbus, Georgia

*High School Accomplishments:* Sa'Leah graduated from Troup High School and has been working on an art portfolio for Disney.

*Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:* Sa'Leah sings in the chorus in church and attends camp every year. Her interests include turning photo-



Sa'Leah Marie Smallwood

graphic imaging into art, cloth designing and anything art related.

*Plans After Graduation:* Sa'Leah plans to attend Columbus State University.

*Advice:* Stay pure and learn from other people's mistakes. Listen to advice, but consider whom it came from and how they are living and their beliefs.

## Tessa Williams

Parents: Willie and Gloria Williams

*Congregation:* Orlando, Florida

*High School Accomplishments:* Tessa is a home-school graduate (two years early) and has been attending Brevard Community College since her sophomore year. She was listed in *Who's Who Among American High School Students* and was awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award and the Editor's Choice Award for her poem "Dream Game." Throughout high school she maintained a 3.92 GPA.

*Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests/etc.:* In addition to sports, Tessa enjoys shopping, spending time



Tessa Williams

with family, being crazy with her friends, talking on the phone, community service (which she's been involved in for four years), music, fashion design, cars and writing poetry and songs. She has attended Camp Woodmen twice. She's been in local church and Festival choirs and also has assisted with Festival Youth Instruction for four years.

*Plans After Graduation:* Tessa is currently working and also finishing up her associate of science degree at Brevard Community College to become a licensed EMT and then transfer to medical school. In the future she would like to attend ABC.

*Favorite Motto:* Live every day as if it's your last and without regret.

*Favorite Scripture:* Psalm 91.

*Favorite Quote:* "Hug harder, laugh louder, smile bigger and love longer."

ren living in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Italy. We truly look forward to God's Kingdom as we stand on the threshold of a new age! **UN**

# Campers "Learn It, Live It and Love It" at Hye Sierra

by James Capo

It was a Fourth-of-July week with an international flavor at Camp Hye Sierra this summer. Campers and staff from all parts of the United States, along with those from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Barbados, gathered in the majestic mountains of California's Sierra Nevada range for a week together in "the Zone."

With over 200 campers and staff, it was the largest camp yet in our five-year history at Hye Sierra. And with God's evident blessings, it was also one of our best.

## Camp Theme

Our United Youth Camps theme this year was "Diving Into God's Word!" Morning Compass Checks and evening Christian Living classes focused on deepening our appreciation and understanding of different aspects of God's Word, from the authority and reliability of the Bible, to a better understanding of prophecy (complete with the prophecies of Daniel reenacted before our eyes around the campfire circle Friday night!).

With God's Word being our clear foundation for life at camp and

beyond, our motto for the week became "Learn It, Live It—Love It!"—which we certainly did at camp.

God's blessings were evident in many ways. With a very low snowpack in the mountains over the winter, the Kings River was running well below normal, and with less than a week to go before camp, we got a call from the river outfitters informing us our rafting trip had to be cancelled.

This forced a change in our overnight camping activity for the older campers, but because of good pre-camp scouting for another activity by Randy and Kay Schreiber (pastor from the Phoenix, Arizona, Northwest congregation) we were able to plan a day hike in its place up Big Baldy, a granite summit topping out at 8,211 feet and offering beautiful views.

For our hikes among the big trees in the national parks and to the summit



of Big Baldy, the Schreibers arranged team-building challenges and asked the campers to remember how God provided for the Israelites during their wandering in the wilderness—albeit a different kind of wilderness than one covered with giant sequoias!

With temperatures threatening to rise uncomfortably later in the week, Mr. Schreiber started the hike up Baldy by pointing out some clouds in the distance and reminding us how God provided a cloud by day for the

Israelites, and maybe He would do the same for us.

By the time we reached the summit, our cloud cover had come! Temperatures for the rest of camp were much more comfortable, and quite a bit lower than weather forecasters had predicted.



Hye Sierra includes kayaking, climbing Big Baldy (group pictured at the 8,211-foot summit and climbing Cliffhanger (photos by Fred Crow, Tamara Reynolds and Amanda Hendee)

## Full Slate of Fun

Other activities during the week included kayaking, archery, basketball, volleyball, speedway, crafts,

orienting, rock climbing and rappelling, swimming, dancing, a Ping-Pong tournament, fishing, novelty Olympics, campfire skits and talent, our camp-end banquet and dance and our popular camper-staff football and basketball games.

During Sabbath services, campers Gregory Zajac and Jedd Cole gave sermonettes. Others participated in camper speeches and presentations later in the day. We

were also fortunate to have visits from Larry Greider, national director of United Youth Camps; David Register, director of Education Programs for the Church; and President Clyde Kilough during portions of camp this year.

It was a full week of fellowship and fun, with many wonderful memories and lessons. **UN**

# 22 Caribbean Campers Gather in Barbados

by Michael Lowe

It's gone—the last airplane, carrying the last group of campers. Suddenly reality hits home. It's all over.

Our summer retreat occurred on the island of Barbados, the most easterly of the Caribbean chain of islands. It was to be the home of nine female and 13 male campers, accompanied by their nine counselors, all coming from the five countries of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Bahamas and Barbados. Unfortunately two of the registered campers were unable to make it this year.

Camp officially started on Thursday, July 19, at 7 p.m. with camp orientation.

Before this was the counselors' orientation. Todd Carey, the camp director, explained the role of the counselor and the objectives of the camp. His wealth of experience came to bear as his inquisitive audience—mindful of the responsibilities placed upon them—made queries on a number of issues. He was also assisted by the other elders, Arnold Hampton, Leeford Burke and Kingsley Mather.

With this information in hand, the campers were ushered in for their orientation.

They were introduced to their counselors and given a list of guidelines including the camp theme, "Bearing Fruit." With all the bases covered, the campers prepared for the first activity of summer camp 2007, a domino tournament/games evening.

This event provided lots of laughs, especially for one of the Jamaicans, named Teo, who controlled his table from beginning to end. Most of the laughs came, however, from a group of about 10 gathered for a card game called "donkey," while another group preferred a quieter game of Chinese checkers. The two-hour session came to a close, and so it was time to sing the camp song, "Thank You, Lord." With that, it was off to the dorms in anticipation of day two.

What do *Star Wars* and *Chronicles of Narnia* have in common? This was the question asked the next morning at the Christian Living class. The teens were able to see the attempt by the media to weave their version of biblical insight into motion pictures without using God's name or biblical references.

Mr. Carey then keyed in on the "true force," which is the power of the Holy Spirit. The campers were encouraged to

recognize that they had "the real deal," and a Father they needed to become more aware of. Mr. Carey spoke of the steps to conversion and the benefits of being different. During the session the campers turned to scriptures and some chose to read aloud for the group.

The next destination was Ocean Park, where campers saw and learned about piranhas, sting rays and other aquatic animals. Many of the teens amused themselves with touching and holding the sea slugs, conk shell and sea sponge. One even dared to pick up the island's largest sea crabs. Outside of Ocean Park the group played miniature golf.

After Ocean Park it was off to the beach. Dover Beach, one of the many beautiful beaches in Barbados, was chosen as it also provided the group with an opportunity to shop for souvenirs. Eight of the campers formed teams and played "pass the ball" in the sea, while several others swam.

With day two almost over, we headed back to camp, ate and prepared for the Sabbath. The next activity was Bible study. The group, including the counselors, was split into two. Each team was given the same three rounds of questions. It was

a most intense search of the Scriptures. The other three elders were the judges. In the end, the winning team won by only two points. Sabbath notes were written afterward, and the camp song ended that night's activity.

Sabbath morning provided for another exciting Bible game—Bible baseball, the girls vs. the boys. With some good pitching by the guy's pitcher, Mosi, the girls struggled for home runs. Trudy Burke, the girls' pitcher, fought hard for the ladies, but fell just short, as the boys won by one.

The next highlight was reading the Sabbath notes as we prepared to leave to attend services with the Barbadian brethren. At services, Curt, one of the campers, volunteered to be songleader. There were two pieces of special music, one from the children's choir and the other from the Barbados choir. The sermon was given by Mr. Carey. This message encouraged all to pack the things mentioned in 2 Peter 1:5-7 and to leave behind those mentioned in Proverbs 6:16-19.

Back at the dorm at the close of the Sabbath, the campers and some of the counselors entertained themselves with a little friendly water warfare. The night had just



Mosi Daniel and Trudy-Lee Burke examine a sea slug at Ocean Park.

begun. Up next was karaoke, followed by a dance. It was a night that revealed some hidden talents among the young, and the elders were not to be outdone. When it came to the dance, the Bahamians and Jamaicans really came alive. The deejay found himself swamped with requests.

This was to be the last night shared by the campers, with only the Barbadians and Jamaicans staying on for another day. E-mail addresses and telephone numbers were exchanged, and for the first time, rounding up the troops became a challenge. But dry your tears—next year promises to be longer and louder than ever! **UN**

## "Challenger," continued from page 1

nity for spiritual growth and for building deep friendships as they share adventure, challenge and mentoring in leadership with a small group of their peers in a wilderness/adventure setting.

Challenger II is designed for those who want to challenge themselves both physically and spiritually, and deepen their faith and commitment to a life of

service and leadership in doing the work of the Church. Mentoring is provided by ministers and staff in both the spiritual and physical aspects of the experience. Group size is limited to 12 to 15 participants, who all work together as a team where each member becomes personally responsible for the success and welfare of the group.

Challenger II is designed to provide a lifetime of benefit, and each participant will also be responsible for carrying out

a service/leadership project after the program, with the approval of his or her pastor, in order to help put into practice the personal lessons learned.

The Challenger II—Rock Climbing program is scheduled to take place during the winter break from Dec. 23 to 30, 2007, in the Santa Catalina Mountains near Tucson, Arizona. The cost of tuition is just \$210.

Mt. Lemmon, Arizona, offers spectacular climbing and rappelling opportunities

at every skill level, and draws world-class climbers to its warm cliff faces during the winter months. Base camp for this program will be in tents in the high desert near the foot of the mountain in a developed group camp area. Temperatures during the day are comfortable, but participants should be prepared for cool nights.

Previous experience is not required. As long as you are in reasonable physical health, and "up" for an adventure and a

challenge (both physically and spiritually), that is what is needed. Those with climbing experience will, however, be able to take the skills they've learned to "the next level." Challenger II will be a step beyond what is offered at the United teen camps.

Applications and more information about the program can be found at <http://ucg.org/challenger> or by contacting the director at [james\\_capo@ucg.org](mailto:james_capo@ucg.org).

James Capo

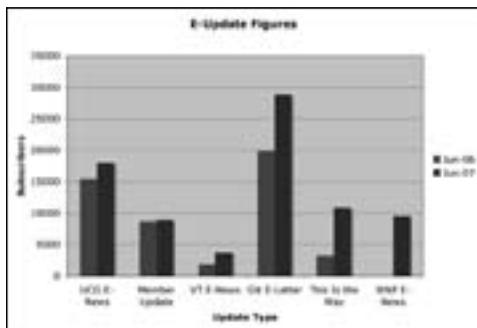
## Media At a Glance

### UCG E-mail Update Lists Show Growth

Staying in touch with readers is important, but it would be quite expensive if we were to mail letters every week. However, with e-mail, it is virtually free.

It is encouraging to see significant growth in new people signing up to receive our weekly "UCG Web Site" updates and "UCG Member" updates.

As of June 2007 we have 18,041 subscribers (a 17 percent increase) to our weekly www.ucg.org Web site updates. This service provides our users with the



All of United's E-mail update lists are growing

latest new items on our site. In addition, there are 8,921 people (a 3 percent increase) receiving UCG member updates (which give our members updates of Church news and other important developments).

Of interest to our teens and young adults is the

*Vertical Thought* magazine e-mail update that alerts them to new material posted at www.verticalthought.org and links to new material as it becomes available. It also now includes a weekly *Vertical Thought* commentary written by our young people. We have 3,749 current subscribers to this service (a 97 percent increase over a year ago).

An exciting development is the number of *Good News* readers who are signed up to receive our monthly "GNReader E-Letter." At present we have 28,872—a very encouraging 45 percent increase. Samples of what our *Good News* readers have been getting can be seen at www.gnmagazine.org/gnupdate.

The e-news program titled "This Is the Way" goes to 10,870 readers—a 242 percent increase over a year ago! You can view samples of past commentaries at www.thisistheway.org.

The new *World News and Prophecy* biweekly update is showing considerable growth as well in its first year. You can sign up at www.wnponline.org.

### Radio Program Now Airing in San Antonio

The *Beyond Today* program began airing Sunday, July 8, on KTSA 550 AM, a news/talk format radio station in San Antonio, Texas. The program airs at 6:30 a.m. Sundays, just prior to a program by a San Antonio-based evangelist, *John Hagee Today*.

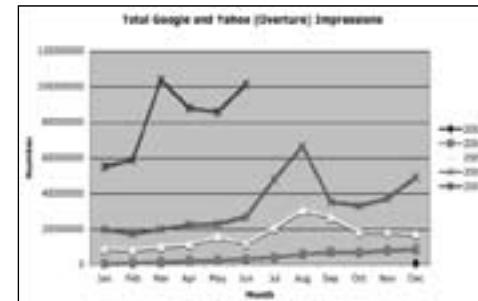
San Antonio is the nation's 32nd largest media market out of 276 media markets. KTSA is San Antonio's oldest radio station (it began in 1922), which currently features mostly locally-based conservative talk shows. The station has 5,000 watts and reaches a huge geographical area—99 of 254 Texas counties including the area of metro Houston.

We hope to be given perhaps a dozen or so free 30-second promotional spots (as available on a weekly rotator) and a 15-second tag after each program.

### Fiscal Year Growth Stats

Out of 30 categories, here are the media statistics showing the greatest growth (those that grew more than 15 percent) in the fiscal year that ended June 30:

- Magazine and booklet insert card responses processed: 302,071 (48 percent increase over previous fiscal year).
- Total incoming mail processed (including the Internet): 598,716 (24 percent increase).
- Coworkers: 3,740 (15 percent increase).
- Donors: 9,588 (21 percent increase).
- *World News and Prophecy* circulation: 47,833 (22 percent increase).
- *Good News* print run: 506,754 (23 percent increase).
- U.S. *Good News* subscribers: 386,180 (18 percent increase).
- Data served off ucg.org: 5.1 terabytes (65 percent increase).
- Data served off gnmagazine.org: 1.9 terabytes (160 percent increase).
- gnmagazine.org visitors: 1,907,759 (65 percent increase).
- beyondtoday.tv visitors: 294,791 (122 percent increase).
- *Beyond Today* phone and Web responses: 10,926 (263 percent increase).
- wnponline.org visitors: 96,892 (293 percent increase).
- verticalthought.org visitors: 231,882 (541 percent increase).
- Yahoo Internet ad conversions: 57,059 (19 per-



Internet ad impressions are up 189 percent for year (percent increase).

- Google Internet ad conversions: 61,552 (56 percent increase).
- Total Google and Yahoo advertising impressions: 765,159,069 (189 percent increase).
- Print advertising impressions: 27,291,000 (425 percent increase).

### Bible Study Course

The *Bible Study Course* was promoted and mailed to thousands of interested readers this past fiscal year. During the fiscal year, 130,000 copies were reprinted (3 percent less than last year). This all equates to 1.3 million total copies of all lessons printed so far. As of June 30, we have 11,093 people currently enrolled (65 percent more than this time last year).

An interesting note about our *Bible Study Course* graduates: 11 percent of them are either coworkers or donors, and 95 percent of them have ordered other literature beyond *The Good News*. In contrast, only 2.8 percent of our entire subscriber base are coworkers or donors. Therefore, it seems that our *BSC* readers are four times more likely to make a donation.

Contributors: Peter Eddington, John LaBissoniere

## Brochure Distribution Program: "I Did That Back in the '80s and It Didn't Work!"

by John LaBissoniere

A Church member who is active in *Good News* brochure distribution told me that he recently tried to encourage other brethren to participate in the program. One member told him: "I did that back in the '80s and it didn't work!"

Upon learning this, I wondered why that member, and perhaps others, came to this conclusion. Was it because he thought the brochure pick-up rate was too slow? Did he encounter rejection or opposition? Did he become discouraged when brochures and displays were occasionally discarded? Was it difficult for him to find distribution locations?

In my view, even though these difficulties and hurdles do indeed occur, it does not indicate brochure distribution is unsuccessful or unproductive. These challenges are simply part of "doing business" and don't imply failure or ineffectiveness.

Typically, the pick-up rate for commercially distributed brochures is very

slow. All literature "take one" campaigns require interested consumers to make a concerted effort to select a flyer or brochure from a display. Not everybody does it. But those who do have shown a curiosity about a particular subject. Understanding this fact

should help brethren avoid becoming discouraged or losing heart if they don't see much brochure "movement" taking place from a display.

Also, when it comes to rejection or opposition, it should be no surprise to us that the true gospel message is not now, and has never been, a popular one (John 15:18-25; 16:33). Indeed, opposition does occasionally occur, particularly by those who endorse differing religious doctrines (2 Timothy 3:12). And it does take a bit of effort to find distribution locations for brochures. But, with perseverance, optimism and prayer, those endeavors are regularly rewarded.

#### Good Responses

For example, a member-distributor from Kentucky recently mentioned this to me in an e-mail message: "I'm

having good responses from the Lexington Kroger stores as far as folks taking the literature, and it's my hope to have a display at each of their locations as well as other businesses in town.

*What if each of the approximately 10,000 subscribers to United News distributed just five brochures per month for one year? The results would be that about 600,000 people would have an opportunity to learn about the true gospel. And 12,000 to 22,000 of them would request and receive a booklet and become a Good News subscriber.*

We have an extremely busy YWCA not far from my office where I've set out the literature. It also appears to be a positive location for folks picking up the material."

Even though "take one" brochures move at a turtle's pace, we have found that subscription response has been very good. On average, response to a commercial direct media offer is around 1 percent of the total number of literature pieces distributed. However, people have responded to our brochures at between 2.0 to 3.7 percent!

But the question some brethren might ask is: "Why not simply let the home office handle the entire job of preaching of the gospel? What's the point of my participating in a hands-on matter in my community?"

The fact is, home office advertising can only reach a segment of the population. The media staff can do much, but certainly not everything. The fact is, numerous opportunities to reach the public abound at the local level.

That is why we want to give brethren

the tools of inexpensive, yet eye-catching, brochures and displays to reach into their own towns and neighborhoods with Christ's message of good news. Brethren can have an effect on

the lives of their own family members, neighbors and friends in a way that a large centralized program often can not.

Consider this: What if each of the approximately 10,000 subscribers to *United News* distributed just five brochures per month for one year? The results would be that about 600,000 people would have an opportunity to learn about the true gospel. And 12,000 to 22,000 of them would request and receive a booklet and become a *Good News* subscriber. Isn't that incentive and reward worth the effort of every member in the United Church of God?

I often mention the following to those who are currently participat-

ing in the brochure program: "If you were not doing what you are in helping preach the gospel in your community, just who would be?" This might be a good question for each of us.

#### Get Involved!

If you live in the United States and would like to participate in the brochure distribution program or would simply like more information, please write to me at john\_labissoniere@ucg.org or call toll-free (888) 369-9940.

We have just printed three brand-new 3½-by-8½-inch trifold "take one" brochures: "The Debt Trap," "The Middle East in Bible Prophecy" and "Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension" (see photos).

With permission, you can place these attractive brochures in restaurants, supermarkets, motels, hospital and clinic lobbies, hairdressers, senior centers, libraries, convenience stores and many other locations. Or you can simply offer copies to interested family members, coworkers, neighbors and friends.

Please let me know the quantity of each brochure and the number of acrylic displays you would like to have. We'll have them on the way to you shortly. I look forward to hearing from you! UN

John LaBissoniere is *Good News Brochure Program manager*.





## From the Word

# School and the Feast: Tips for Getting Children Excused

by Gary and Gale Black

If you have school-age children, then you probably have stories about trying to get them excused from school for the Feast of Tabernacles. Some teachers and schools are very accommodating; some are not. School districts have different perspectives on what constitutes an “excused absence.”

Some teachers are well organized and willing to provide schoolwork for students to take with them so they can keep up while at the Feast. Other teachers seem to prepare their lessons a few days before and are less prepared to provide class work.

Most parents prefer that their children keep up with the class work while at the Feast so they don't get behind. Here are some tips that will help you in obtaining your child's schoolwork and an excused absence for the Feast.

1. Approximately three weeks to one month in advance of the Feast, let your child's teacher(s) know about the upcoming absence dates and your desire for schoolwork to take with you during the absence.

A letter sent with your child from you personally and an official form letter provided and signed by your local pastor can be helpful. In the letter you might explain the religious nature of the observance (so it's not seen as a vacation), specific dates you will be gone, a request for class work and the Festival location you will be

attending. You could also mention some of the educational aspects of your trip.

In elementary school, you might only have one teacher to inform. If your child is in middle or high school, you might have five to seven teachers to contact.

You could mail the notes to the teachers. But you may find it helpful to personally visit the school and talk to the teachers. If your child is older, he or she could deliver the notes and explain the situation to the teachers. In any case, make sure each teacher receives the communication.

2. Send a copy of any correspondence with the teacher(s) to the school office for their file records. This will inform the administration that your child will be absent. Check to see if there is any paperwork you need to fill out with the office or attendance office regarding excused absences.

3. Consider going to the open house or parent night most schools conduct near

the beginning of the school year. Meeting the teachers in person and confirming that they are aware of the pending absence will help put a name with a face. Even if your meeting is brief, it is worth the personal contact.

If at all possible, you may wish to volunteer to help in copying materials and getting any necessary items that would be needed to complete the lessons in advance. It is helpful to reassure the teachers that you will work with your child to complete the assignments.

4. A week before leaving for the Feast, send a reminder notice to the teachers about the need for schoolwork assignments and the day your child will plan to pick up materials before his or her absence. Remind them again of the dates your child will be gone from school.

5. Be sure to aid your children in obtaining their schoolwork assignments on the last school day before you leave. If at all

possible, you might pick your children up from school that day to be sure they are prepared for the Feast with their books, needed materials and assignments. Your involvement will mean a lot to the teachers, school and your children's education. You might call or drop by the school office to confirm your children's absence as well.

6. Help your child schedule times and places to do schoolwork before, during and after the Feast. It can be very challenging to fit it in with all the other activities, but help your child make it as efficient as possible so your whole family can rejoice together at the Feast.

Encourage your child by explaining that his or her efforts to complete the homework set a great example of godly character to the teachers and staff at school, and so can be a part in preaching the good news of the coming Kingdom we picture at the Feast.

7. Be sure all school assignments, books, materials and any items that the teachers let you borrow are returned to the school after the Feast.

8. If you receive resistance from a teacher or if your student is penalized after the Feast for missing and you can't work it out with the teacher, you can go to the principal with your concern. Most issues can be resolved with the teacher or the principal. Having your absence request in writing with the dated letter and a copy at the office can also help eliminate issues.



9. Talk with your children about how they will answer questions from teachers and peers about their religion. This can be very helpful and give them confidence.

10. Ask your pastor and other parents in your congregation for advice.

11. And it is very important to pray that God will bless your efforts and smooth the way for your child to be excused from school.

Good communication is the key. Our parental responsibility is both to teach our children to observe God's Festival and to help them keep up with schoolwork during the Feast. We hope these tips will be helpful for you. **UN**

*Gary and Gale Black have three daughters. He pastors the St. Paul, Minnesota, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin, congregations.*

## Dealing With the World's Holidays Too

Parents of elementary school students: If you write a personal note to the teacher about the Feast of Tabernacles, you might consider letting your child's teacher know about holidays that you don't observe (Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter).

Many school districts no longer have holiday parties or religious observances in the schools. If your school still does, it can be helpful to notify the teacher that your child will not be participating. Include suggestions about what your child will do for that time period (examples include early pickup from school, visiting the library, etc.).

# Small Things Can Make a Big Difference

by John Miller

The word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah in the form of a question: “Who has despised the day of small things?” (Zechariah 4:10). This question, framed in the context of Zerrubabel's mission to rebuild the temple, has application that goes way beyond the immediate context to identify a central methodology in the biblical message.

Small things: Who does them? Who despises them? More importantly, does it even matter?

## Started With Just One Man

Perhaps it is appropriate to start at the beginning. When God created the heavens and the earth, the trees and the seas, the fish and the fowl, the mammals and the reptiles, He did so for a great purpose—to provide a habitat that would ultimately house humans who were destined to become divine.

Then He began by creating a man—just one. Thus, God set in motion a great purpose with a very small beginning.

Who despised it? The story unfolds in Genesis 3: “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your

eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil’” (verses 4-5).

Can't you just hear the contempt in the serpent's voice? He despised the small thing that God had just created—mortal man, far from divine. Predictably, Eve made the wrong choice, beginning a cycle of misery that continues to this day. Satan influenced her to despise what she had and to covet the grand—becoming “like God” by taking the forbidden fruit.

## The Savior Despised

When God sent the Savior to undo the damage, He used the same methodology. It began small: a baby in a manger; a child in the temple; a carpenter by trade; a Jew in a Roman protectorate. Not the type of personality, nor the methodology, we might expect to save the world, but He came to do just that.

However, the Savior was also despised. Do we need to ask by whom? When Jesus was hungry, the tempter taunted Him: “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread”—ever the contempt, always despising the one destined to replace him (Matthew 4:3).

But Jesus prevailed. What began as a small thing on the dusty roads of a small

Roman outpost ultimately will save the whole world.

## Small Acts of Service

What does God expect of His servants today? The model has not changed and the methodology still works: If we want to be great, we must first be a servant and slave (Mark 10:42-45). It's a menial message and many are too small to take it to heart. A servant first? That is the correct model. The question is: Do we embrace it, or do we despise it? The answer is a pretty good indicator of the path we are on.

Christ's life consisted of innumerable

*Great people do small things and make a big difference. Small people covet great things and in the end it makes no difference.*

small acts that consummated in a single great act, no less despised: He held the children. He cooked fish. He washed the feet of His students. He comforted the sick as He modeled the method—no act was too small.

The apostles embraced the model and took it to the world. Peter advocated hospitality without grumbling. Paul besought the Romans to become living sacrifices, day by day. James challenged the faithful to help the widows in their trouble. In the

final analysis, it is all about small things.

When Jesus describes the day of accounting, the theme of small things plays a central role:

“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me’” (Matthew 25:34-36).

Conspicuously missing is an enumeration of the great and the grand. In the final analysis it all comes down to the small things.

What is equally astounding is the unassuming response by those who had just inherited the divine:

“Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and

clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’” (verses 37-39).

Astonishing! So engrained was the methodology that they never realized they were doing great deeds. It was not a big deal. It was just a small thing. It was the way they lived. In the end it became the defining difference.

“And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me’” (Matthew 25:40).

Great people do small things and make a big difference. Small people covet great things and in the end it makes no difference.

God asked a pertinent question: “Who has despised the day of small things?” I believe the answer is clear: The serpent, the adversary, the accuser, the mocker, the deceiver, the archenemy of all—Satan the devil. He thought he was grand. He considered himself great. He despised small things because he sought more important things to do.

But with God it is all about small things! Which path are you on? **UN**

*John Miller is an elder in Cambridge, Ohio.*

# Help Your Child Refute Evolution

■ Here are some tips for helping your child deal with evolutionary teachings at school and everywhere else in society today.

by Paul Luecke

You are watching a nature show on television with your child. The film footage is impressive; the narration is interesting, adding fact upon incredible fact.

The narrator then adds another remarkable “fact”: “Over millions of years, the hummingbird developed the remarkable ability to fly not only forward as other birds, but to also fly backwards and hover in midflight like a helicopter.”

The next day your child comes home from school with homework for science. You notice some charts to be filled in, showing how humans evolved through time.

What should you do?

Even if your children grow up in God’s Church, in today’s world they will be bombarded with the concept of evolution. But will they just naturally learn what the truth is about creation by hearing something said about it a few times a year at Sabbath services? No! Without your consistent instruction and guidance, your child will be taught by default one predominant picture of how the world and everything in it came to exist—evolution.

## Convinced of a Creator

Following are some pointers to help your child not only refute the false teachings of evolution, but also become convinced of a Creator who is very real and who should become very real to him or her personally.

1. First, become informed yourself. You are your child’s most important teacher! And God intends you to be your child’s *most influential teacher*. But as a teacher you need to be armed with important information to pass along.

Take the time to read or view

some of the materials listed in the box “Some Resources to Help.” Your child’s teachers at school will most likely not be taking the time to become informed about this information if they believe in evolution, so you must. Some of the books you can find at your local library (maybe even your church library), or you can find most of them used through the Internet.

2. Whenever evolutionary concepts are encountered—whether in a TV show, in a book or at school—at your earliest opportunity discuss it with your child. If you have educated yourself with some facts and proofs that show evolution is false, you can help your child refute what he or she has just heard about evolution on a level you know your own child can best understand.

There are many ways to teach the truth, especially if you are creative. There are several important concepts brought out clearly in the book *Darwin’s Black Box*, for example. These include the principles of irreducible complexity, minimal function and obvious intelligent design.

3. The theory of evolution refuses to acknowledge the existence of the Creator God and the validity of His revealed instruction to the human race—the Holy Bible. But if you remove something from a bottle, something else must come in to replace the void. You cannot only teach your child that evolution is false. You must also be reading the Bible with your children regularly, starting at an early age and continuing through their formative years at home.

Explain why evolution is so popular today. Go through Romans 1:18-32 and explain how the underlying motivation is that people—even many highly-educated people—don’t want there to be a God. They don’t want to believe that someone has authority over how they should live their lives. They want to feel free to live as they wish without the guilt of answering to their Creator.

Despite advanced knowledge in many areas today, God says



*What about dealing with evolution being taught at school? Ultimately, you are responsible for the education of your child, and you need to know what others are teaching him or her.*

the end-time nations of Israel will come to destruction because they lack knowledge: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). This certainly includes a willing ignorance of the existence of God.

While teaching your children that we exist because God created us, it is also very important to teach why God created us! As you read through the Bible with your child, reinforce the reason God made humans with an intelligence vastly higher than any other creature—our potential to enter the immortal, divine family of God!

4. What about dealing with evolution being taught at school? Ultimately, you are responsible for the education of your child, and it is important to know what others are teaching him or her. Start the habit of discussing what was taught in school each day, briefly at the dinner table or before starting on homework. And when it comes to the subject of evolution vs. creation, it is critical you are involved.

Here are some tips for helping your child deal with evolutionary teachings at school:

- Taking tests in school—where evolutionary teachings are expected to be put down as the “correct” answers—can be handled without violating the student’s conscience by simply adding a note at the top of the test page to the effect, “The book says...” or “The teacher said...” These three words (or something similar) qualify all the answers that follow as not necessarily being the student’s personal belief, but that he or she is merely remembering and repeating back what the teacher or book said.

- Don’t start arguments about evolution vs. creation in the classroom. As well-meaning as we may be, arguing with people who do not

Bible—as an ongoing process. Remind your child that he or she is not alone; there are many others who believe in creation rather than evolution; many of them not even in our Church. Still, even if he or she were alone, this is good practice in learning to hold fast to the truth, even if no one else around us believes it. This is one of those areas of peer pressure our children need help to stand up against.

5. Help your child formulate a list of proofs of the existence of a Creator. In order to develop a relationship with God and ultimately become baptized and converted, they must come to prove absolutely that God exists. “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is...” (Hebrews 11:6).

Start a listing of absolute proofs, which can be added to or expanded upon as your child grows in understanding.

## Preparing for the Kingdom

The world around us is rapidly approaching its end. Why? Because it has rejected God. But we—including you and your children—have been called out of that world to walk with our Creator and prepare for the arrival of His Kingdom here on earth.

Parents, God has charged us with the responsibility of equipping our children with the knowledge and direction that will help them see their calling clearly; and love it, embrace it and pursue it! **UN**

*The author is pastor of the Bethlehem, Philadelphia and York, Pennsylvania, congregations.*

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## The “Old Earth” vs. “Young Earth” Issue

As your children grow older, the question will likely arise whether or not God created everything about 6,000 years ago...or billions of years ago. In other words, they will hear from some creationists (who believe in a Creator rather than evolution) very good arguments for a Creator God, but then will find that these creationists maintain that nothing in the universe was created prior to the time of Adam and Eve.

This is where a misunderstanding arises over the interpretation of Genesis 1:1-2. The United Church of God believes the evidence of the Scriptures indicates that God actually created the universe (including the earth) long before Adam and Eve. For a more thorough explanation, read pages 29-31 of our brochure *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?*

In any event, the important thing to understand is that all creation originated with God, not by evolution, and that God made us—humans—starting with Adam and Eve. We take His Word at face value, and we are the creative product of the Creator, not of an evolutionary process of gradually developing primates.

## Some Resources to Help

- UCG booklet: *Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?* (In this booklet you will find another listing of some additional excellent books.)
- UCG booklet: *Life’s Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?*
- DVD (or VHS): *Unlocking the Mystery of Life*, Illustra Media, 2002. This excellent documentary examines the scientific case for intelligent design and, through computer animation, takes you into the interior of the living cell to explore systems and machines that bear the unmistakable hallmarks of design.
- Book: *Darwin’s Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*, Michael Behe, 1996. This book demonstrates that the tiny building blocks of life—cells and their myriad components—are far too complex for their codependent parts and processes to have evolved without an outside, intelligent design at work.
- Book: *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, Michael Denton, 1996. This book examines features of the natural world that mutation and natural selection cannot explain and shows the impossibility of transitional forms required by evolution to have taken place.
- Book: *Darwin on Trial*, Phillip Johnson (professor of law), 1993. This book examines scientific detail that argues convincingly against the theory of evolution.
- Book: *The Case for a Creator*, Lee Strobel, 2004. A journalist investigates scientific evidence that points toward God.
- Book: *Icons of Evolution*, Dr. Jonathan Wells, 2000. A molecular biologist tackles 10 of the most prominent arguments neo-Darwinists use as examples of evidence for evolution and shows how each is misrepresented and misused to support Darwin’s theory of naturalism. (At the Web site [www.iconsofevolution.com](http://www.iconsofevolution.com) you can also find his list of “Ten Questions to Ask Your Biology Teacher About Evolution”).

# How to Build Your House

■ Talk about a dream home! The Bible tells us how to construct a beautiful building that will last forever!

by Ken Murray

Have you ever been involved in building a house or helping to build a house or ever dreamed of building a house?

Are there lessons we can learn from building a physical dream home that we can apply to building the reality of our spiritual home?

## Where Is God Building His Spiritual Temple Today?

Paul tells us the answer in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20:

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

The amazing reality for us as Christians today, is that we are building a spiritual temple to God.

Did Jesus give us a vital lesson in how we should build?

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall” (Matthew 7:24-27).

What do we notice from this parable?

To hear and to do is to be founded on the spiritual Rock (Jesus Christ). To hear and not to do is to be founded on unstable sand (Satan and this world’s philosophies and theology).

Why are the “houses” people have built falling apart morally?

Hosea prophesied: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). They do not love God nor do they love His truth.

So, how can we “prevent truth decay” in the way we build our spiritual house?

### 1. We need an excellent Architect/Engineer/Master Builder to show us the way.

When we consider building our spiritual house to God, it is encouraging that the vision of what we are to construct and how we can grow and develop spiritually has already been laid out for us, by God.

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

### 2. We need to be stirred with enthusiasm.

What was the significant frame of

mind of the people who built the first tabernacle of God? “Then everyone came whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing” (Exodus 35:21).

It is so important we continue with the will and enthusiasm for completing the job of building our spiritual house to God.

### 3. We need a good plan.

We need to check out the vision of our Architect as laid out in plan form, to know what the spiritual Temple we are constructing should ultimately look like in us.

It is God’s plan that we be the sons and daughters of God.

As Paul wrote:

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’

“Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

In short, the plan is to conduct ourselves in our thinking, words and actions as sons and daughters of the true God and not as children of the god of this world.

### 4. We need detailed specifications of how the Temple is to be built.

What are the basics in building an excellent physical house?

*An old and wise master builder once told me, when I was an up-and-coming building inspector, that the hardest thing about building a house “is finishing it!”*

The most important basics are:

- Sound foundations.
- Sound substance in the structural components.
- Sound in being level, plumb, square and true.

Spiritually, here are some specification basics for building our spiritual house:

“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22).

### 5. We need to count the cost.

In 2005 my wife and I visited Nigeria, and we were amazed at the number of unfinished houses. It reminded us of the physical and spiritual principles Jesus explained to us about counting the cost:

“And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish’” (Luke 14:27-30).

An old and wise master builder once told me, when I was an up-and-coming building inspector, that the hardest thing about building a house “is finishing it!”

Yes, I have now found from experience that a physical house’s foundations and walls and roof are constructed relatively quickly, but what really takes the time is all those quality finishing touches.

When we consider counting the cost, the most important one is that we need to love God and follow God more than anyone or anything and let no person take our crown.

Remember these words of Jesus:

“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matthew 10:37-39).

### 6. We need to be good builders, following our Master Builder as our mentor.

A profitable spiritual builder builds on a sound foundation of godly truth, knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

Paul gives more instruction on how to be a quality builder of the spiritual Temple:

“Nevertheless the solid foundation

of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.’ But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife” (2 Timothy 2:19-23).

As a quality builder following the Master Builder’s guidance, we need to be continually about our Father’s business, if we are to build a quality Temple to God’s glory.

### 7. We need to use God’s sound tools of the trade as Christians to build ourselves as a Temple to God.

What are some of our most important tools of the trade as a quality Christian builder?



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*As a quality builder following the Master Builder’s guidance, we need to be continually about our Father’s business, if we are to build a quality Temple to God’s glory.*

- Bible study to learn to grow in faith and love in Jesus Christ. “Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:13).

God’s gift of the Holy Spirit given to us as His indwelling power. This comes by the laying on of hands of the ministry after we are baptized, upon our repentance and forgiveness of our sins by God, through Christ’s sacrifice to pay the death penalty for our sins.

“That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us” (2 Timothy 1:14).

- Daily prayer to build a close, loving relationship with God.

“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22).

- Fasting to repent of our sins and to gain help to replace evil with God’s good way of life.

“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:16-21).

Follow Daniel’s example in fasting and repentance as outlined in Daniel 9.

- Doing the will of God in following His way of life and preaching the good news (gospel) of the coming Kingdom of God on this earth.

### Take Heed How We Build

So, what is the value of us building our spiritual house to God now?

Everyone’s spiritual house is going to be tested and tried by fire right down to the depths of its foundations. So, doesn’t it behoove every one of us to take heed how we build our spiritual house?

“According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is.

“If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are” (1 Corinthians 3:10-17).

When God the Father and Jesus Christ began to build the household of the family of God, They planned it all out before They laid the foundation.

God set out the way for us to become converted and to be able to be sons and daughters in God’s family, by God’s forgiveness and grace—forever.

In appreciation of God’s love for us, and in our return love for God, shouldn’t we be continually stirred and willing to build our spiritual house God’s way—the way of the supreme Architect? **UN**

*The author is an elder in Clermont, Queensland, Australia.*

# The Blessing and Responsibility of Intercessory Prayer

by Vince Szymkowiak

Brethren continue to receive prayer requests regarding others who are struggling with serious illnesses and trials. We are updated weekly, sometimes daily, regarding the physical and spiritual needs of not only the brethren in our immediate congregation, but also the needs of brethren throughout the world. Furthermore, we are often called upon to pray for many who are not members of United Church of God.

When we respond to these requests, we are partaking in an ancient form of supplication called intercessory prayer. That is, we are praying fervently on behalf of someone else. We take someone else's needs very personally; we see that someone else has a problem and we bow before God on their behalf.

## Sodom Lost; Lot Saved

One of the earliest recorded examples of intercessory prayer is the famous example of Abraham interceding for his nephew, Lot (Genesis 18:16-33). Abraham had just finished preparing

a meal for the preincarnate Christ and two angels. Christ told Abraham that He was about to visit Sodom to decide whether or not He should completely destroy this wicked city. Abraham, realizing that his nephew, Lot, and his family would also be destroyed in Sodom, began interceding with God on behalf of his nephew.

We have all been inspired, even amused, at the boldness of Abraham. First, he pleaded to the Lord that if 50 righteous people were found in the city, could possibly the city be spared? When the Lord said He would not destroy it if 50 righteous were found, then Abraham asked Him to consider 45, then 40, then finally 10!

This is a marvelous example of intercessory prayer. Abraham was fervently beseeching God on behalf of another, in this case, Lot and his entire family. The city of Sodom was destroyed, but God did hear Abraham's prayer and provided a way of escape for Lot.

## Daniel's Example

A second example of intercessory prayer is found in the book of Daniel.

This is the time when Jerusalem had been conquered by King Nebuchadnezzar and many Jews had been deported to Babylon. Among them was Daniel.

In chapter 9, we read that Daniel understood, at least in part, through the prophecies of Jeremiah, that ultimately the blessings promised to the tribe of Judah would be restored. The entire world would be refreshed by the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on this earth. But before Daniel received the explanation of the 70-weeks prophecy, he realized that he needed to fast and pray and intercede on behalf of Israel (Daniel 9:11).

This was a remarkable prayer in many ways. First, it shows Daniel's own heart of repentance because he acknowledged that he too was a sinner: "We have sinned" (verse 5); "We have rebelled" (verse 9).

What is also recorded is Daniel's intercessory prayer for Israel. See verses 17-19: "Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant and his supplications [urgent and fervent prayer for mercy]...

"Oh my God, incline Your ear and hear;...for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

This is a classic example of a person applying intercessory prayer on behalf of others.

## "Intercession for the Transgressors"

The greatest example of intercessory prayer is found in the mission of Jesus Christ. We read in the prophecy of Isaiah 53:12 that Jesus Christ was to bear "the sin of many." Further, He "made intercession for the transgressors."

Indeed, while on the cross, Jesus prayed for and interceded for those who were killing him (Luke 23:34). Even before this incident, while He was being arrested, He insisted that the disciples be let go (John 18:8). And, just a few moments before His death, He interceded on behalf of His own mother and

instructed John to provide a home for her (John 19:26-27). These are examples from the One who, by His very office, is to intercede on behalf of His people.

In Romans 8:34, we read of Jesus being seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding for all of us. And finally we read in Hebrews 7:25 that as our High Priest, Jesus is "also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them."

## Needed as Never Before

What an incredible blessing that we have in realizing that Jesus Christ is our Intercessor! And what a wonderful responsibility we share in following the example of Christ in offering up intercessory prayer on behalf of others!

God's people need each other's prayers as never before. May God bless you in your prayer life as you strive to follow the intercessory example of our elder Brother, Jesus Christ. **UN**

*The author is pastor of the Rolla and St. Louis, Missouri, and Fairview Heights, Illinois, congregations.*

# When the Power Goes Out

■ Summer storms can knock out power for hours. Are there spiritual lessons we can learn from having the power go out?

by Gregory Dullum

One Monday afternoon I was at work getting the newspaper my company produces ready to send to the printing plant. Suddenly a terrible summer storm blew through the area. High winds tore up trees like a gardener pulling up weeds.

In our newspaper office, we kept working through the storm until suddenly, BOOM! Everything went dark and silent. No lights. No computers. No phones. No air conditioning.

For an hour we waited for the power to return. We couldn't work without it. Finally, we decided to go home and come back when the power returned.

A coworker drove me home. None of the traffic signals were working. All of the businesses and homes looked dark. Everywhere trees had suffered broken limbs that had pulled down power lines. When we got two blocks from my house, we could drive no farther. Fallen trees had blocked the road. I walked the rest of the way.

My home was undamaged, but there was no power. I waited in the silent darkness for my family to come home.

I thought about how we take electricity for granted. When the clock radio wakes us up, we push aside our electric blanket, go into our bathroom and turn on the light. We wash with electrically heated water. We turn on our electric coffee pots and electric stove to make breakfast. We turn on

the TV to catch the morning news. Whenever we flip a switch, electricity is always there.

But that Monday, it wasn't there. When my family got home, we couldn't cook. The house was hot with no air conditioning. So we went to a restaurant for a hot meal and cool air.

When the sun went down, we lit candles and got out flashlights, but there was little to do. Radios and TV required power. We couldn't even read our Bibles after dark because there was no light.

By 9 p.m. the power was restored at my office, so I went back to work. But when I got home after midnight, my house was still dark. Power was not restored at home until Tuesday afternoon.

## Can We Have a Spiritual Power Outage?

None of us like being without electrical power. It's frustrating. But what about being without *spiritual* power?

At Pentecost we focused our attention on God's Spirit and how we receive it. But is it possible to take God's Spirit for granted and lose it? Can we have a spiritual power outage?

What is life like without God's Spirit? It's similar to being without electrical power in our physical lives.

**1. We can't work.** When the power went out at the office, we all went home. We couldn't work.

Without God's Spirit we can't do God's work! Jesus Christ did a great spiritual work when He walked the earth. But He said three times in the Gospel of John that He could do nothing of Himself (John 5:19, 30; 8:28). His works were done by God through the power of His Spirit. If Christ had

been without God's Spirit, He could have done nothing.

If we don't have the Spirit of God, we *cannot* do the work of God.

**2. We can't communicate.** When the power went out at work, our phone system went dead. Radios and televisions don't work without electricity.

Without God's Spirit, we are cut off from God and can't communicate with Him. Romans 8:5-10 tells us that without God's Spirit, we are the enemies of God; we can't please God; we are not Christ's. How thankful we can be for God's calling and His plan to call all men!

**3. We can't prepare our food.** Without electricity for our stove, we couldn't cook. That made preparing something to eat difficult.

It takes God's Spirit to open our minds to accept the spiritual food offered by God through the Bible and inspired preaching and publications (1 Corinthians 2:10-14).

**4. Food begins to spoil.** Without electricity, food stored in refrigerators and freezers thaws, gets warm and begins to spoil.

If we lose God's Spirit, the spiritual knowledge that we have stored up will begin to spoil. We have seen people who knew God's ways and kept the Sabbath and Holy Days for years but gave them up when they left God's Church. The truth they had spoiled when they cut themselves off from God's Spirit.

All the food stored in our freezers will be for nothing if electricity is not restored in time. And years of obeying God will be for nothing if people cut themselves off from God's Spirit for too long a time (Ezekiel 18:24).

**5. We're not comfortable.** I've had power go out on hot, sticky summer

days and in frigid winter ice storms. In either case, the house becomes uncomfortable very quickly. It soon becomes unbearably warm or unbearably cold.

With God's Spirit there is peace (2 Timothy 1:7). Christ called it the Comforter (John 15:26; 16:7, King James Version). Without it, life is not peaceful. Life is uncomfortable.

**6. We're in the dark.** Without electricity, we are in the dark.

Without God's Spirit giving us access to Christ and God, we walk in the dark, not knowing where we're going (John 12:35-36).

## What Causes Spiritual Outages?

Summer storms with high winds and lightning strikes can cause electrical power outages. But what causes spiritual power outages?

**1. Our sins.** Isaiah 59:2 says our sins cut us off from God. After David sinned with Bathsheba, he prayed to God in Psalm 51:11, "Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." David was afraid God would take away His Spirit because he sinned.

When we sin, we should quickly repent as David did in Psalm 51, before we find ourselves in a spiritual power outage.

**2. Neglect.** We also can lose God's Spirit by ignoring or neglecting it. You've heard the old expression, "Use it or lose it." In 12th grade I knew French well enough to read whole books in French without looking up hardly a word. Now I can hardly read a book in French without looking up *most* of the words.

The Spirit leads us into all truth (John 16:13). It produces fruit in us



Design Pics

*Without electricity, we are in the dark. Without God's Spirit giving us access to Christ and God, we walk in the dark, not knowing where we're going.*

(Galatians 5:22-23). If we don't follow where the Spirit leads us, we will lose the Spirit through neglect.

Paul told Timothy, "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands" (2 Timothy 1:6). Getting connected to this spiritual power source requires a laying on of hands, which is prescribed to follow repentance and baptism—Acts 2:38. To receive this spiritual power, young people in the Church should prepare to be baptized when the time is right.

A physical power outage is no fun. It's frustrating to live without electrical power. But a spiritual power outage is much worse! Let's not go through life in a spiritual power outage! **UN**

*The author is a member of the Cape Girardeau, Missouri, congregation.*

# Treasure Digest

## Thoughts About the Real Thing: Growth

There used to be a clever cola commercial that marketed itself as “the real thing.” They wanted you not to sell out to the close tasting and identical looking “not the real thing.”

A similar (but much more important) comparison can be made about growth. There is the “real” growth, and the phony growth that looks clever, but is not the real thing.

Consider James 1:22-25. “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

God was gracious enough to provide us a sure formula for personal spiritual growth: Instruction plus involvement equals spiritual growth.

James tells us that the first step is to be an effective, involved listener of the Word. If we just read the Bible or listen to a sermon and do not concentrate on the material, or if we allow ourselves to be distracted, then we are not absorbing the instruction God intends for us. There are two kinds of listeners, those who are careless and those who are intent and attentive.

However, instruction alone does not grow the Christian. Unfortunately, many mistakenly assume that more factual knowledge of the Bible equals more intimate knowledge of God and His ways. That is not the “real thing,” but it can deceive us to become complacent with a false sense of security.

The only way to grow spiritually is to make

the truth you learn your very own, to grasp it and apply it to your life. You are to become a doer of the Word.

Jesus involved Himself in the lives of people. We are to use Him as our model as we love God and others (the great commandments) and serve the Church in its work (the great commission—preaching the gospel and preparing a people).

All true children of God have the life of Christ within them through the Holy Spirit. And remember, Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. When it comes to the “real thing,” don’t be fooled by anything else.

Stuart Segall

Pastor of the Crescent City, Eureka and Red Bluff, California, congregations

## Blessed Are the Merciful

On Nov. 16, 1998, Bruce Murakam had lunch with his wife and daughter and then left to go to a job site. His wife and only daughter left to do some shopping.

When Bruce was returning home, he came upon emergency vehicles and a huge fire on a street near his home. His worst fears came true. It was his wife’s van that was in flames! It had been broadsided with such force, it had flipped over and burst into flames.

Bruce went into all kinds of emotions—anger, shock and disbelief that his wife and daughter were gone. A week after the accident he found out that his family had been killed by someone who was drag racing.

Bruce was so angry that he wanted to find the kid and kill him! But when Bruce saw the young man, Justin, for the first time in the courtroom, his heart began to change toward the killer of his family. He saw that Justin was truly sorry and was facing up to his responsibility for the horrible act.

As amazing as it seems, eventually Bruce was able to put his arms around Justin and tell him he forgave him.

Justin was facing up to 30 years in prison. Because of Bruce’s great mercy, he fought for Justin. Bruce recommended a community service program to the judge.

The judge listened and reduced Justin’s sentence

to eight years’ probation with two years’ house arrest. The condition of this sentence was that Justin had to talk to students about this tragic accident. Together Bruce Murakam and Justin founded the organization “Safe Teen Driver” and travel to different schools talking with teens about the dangers of irresponsible driving and what it can do to families ([www.safe-teendrivers.org](http://www.safe-teendrivers.org)).

How well do we measure up in showing mercy to one another, even in much smaller matters?

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Matthew 5:7). What is mercy? In English, the word *mercy* is normally used to mean showing compassion, forgiveness or refraining from harming our enemies.

William Barclay’s *Daily Study Bible* commentary on Matthew states that mercy means the ability to get right inside the other person’s skin until we can see things with his eyes, think things with his mind and feel things with his feelings. Bruce began to be able to do that when he saw this very remorseful young man in the courtroom.

When we have wronged someone, we need him or her to show us mercy and forgiveness. Justin certainly needed mercy from Bruce. When Bruce put his arms around the weeping teen and said, “I forgive you,” Justin said Bruce lifted the world off his shoulders.

When we show no mercy, we are the losers in

terms of God’s mercy. “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses” (Matthew 18:35).

Do we seek to understand someone who has wronged us, or do we want blood? Bruce could have turned his back on this young man and made him pay for what he did by serving 30 years in prison.

If we do not have a merciful heart, we will become bitter and sour of spirit. Bruce said he was only able to rise out of his self-pity, hate and anger when he began to search the Bible and read about forgiveness. Then Bruce’s heart began to soften. Sometimes to regain a soft heart it may take not just study and prayer, but fasting.

Bruce not only forgave but reached out to help Justin, and together they are reaching out to help many teens avoid making the same mistake. Does being merciful work? You bet it does, even in the small offenses.

Ask God for a soft and understanding heart, a heart of mercy and forgiveness. We will be truly blessed if we are merciful.

Janet Treadway

Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation

## Share Your Treasures!

Do you have any short items of biblical wisdom, humor or practical information that you would like to share? Please send them to your local pastor and ask him to forward them to *United News* at the home office. Guidelines available on request ([mike\\_bennett@ucg.org](mailto:mike_bennett@ucg.org)).

## Turning the Hearts . . . Spending Time With Our Families

“A young successful attorney said: ‘The greatest gift I ever received was a gift I got . . . when my dad gave me a small box. Inside was a note saying, ‘Son, this year I will give you 365 hours, an hour every day after dinner. It’s yours. We’ll talk about what you want to talk about, we’ll go where you want to go, play what you want to play. It will be your hour!’”

“‘My dad not only kept his promise,’ he said, ‘but every year he renewed it—and it’s the greatest gift I ever had in my life. I am the result of his time’” (Dr. Paul Lee Tan, *Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations*, 1998, from *Moody Monthly*).

The story above vividly illustrates the importance of spending time with our families and the impact time together can have on the family members.

Here in the northern hemisphere we’re in the middle of summer time, which means longer daylight hours and warmer weather to enjoy the outdoors. This is the time for picnics and barbecues. It’s a time for vacations and special family outings.

How well I recall the only vacation I remember our family taking in my 18 years at home. My parents decided to drive from western Pennsylvania to Wildwood, New Jersey. We would be staying at a rental house near the beach. How exciting to walk to the ocean, eat out at restaurants, walk the boardwalk at night and spend lots of time enjoying each other’s company! That was over 50 years ago, and I can still remember that occasion so well.

We parents have the opportunity to help our children create memories by planning summer events and fulfilling those plans with them. We need to redeem the time, as Paul said in Ephesians 5:16, because our children will be gone from our homes before you know it. Children are precious and desire to be recognized as special and loved by their families (Titus 2:4). Parents are the glory of their children, so let’s give them the opportunities to look up to and appreciate their loving, caring, fun parents (Proverbs 17:6; 31:28).

So, whatever season of the year you may find yourself in, please take time out to spend special, quality time with your families. Build memories to last a lifetime!

Gary E. Antion



## Children’s Corner Draw Your Favorite Bible Story!

Use the space below to draw your favorite story from the Bible. If you would like to share it with us, have your parents send it to *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027. Please include your name, age, congregation and the name of the Bible story. We may print some, but we won’t be able to return them. Have fun!



## Local Church Updates

### Silver Ambassadors Honored in Dallas May 5

The annual Dallas, Texas, seniors' banquet was held on Sabbath, May 5. The "Garden Party" theme this year included relaxing instrumental music, a CD of which was given to each honored guest by our hostesses. The teens from the Dallas congregation joined with the older members to enjoy a fine home-cooked meal prepared by members of the congregation.

Elder John Lusk welcomed the guests and provided introductory remarks expressing deep appreciation for the Silver Ambassadors. The attendees were reminded of the positive influence our seniors give to the congregation, and of our responsibilities toward the elderly in our care.

After a prayer of blessing on the meal, the teens served the seniors, and Amber



Above, Dallas, Texas, teens who helped honor the senior citizens at a banquet May 5. Right, Pablo Romo was selected to receive an oil painting from the artist, member Dick Knapp (photos by John Lusk)



Benedict later performed a beautiful vocal solo.

Dallas deacon Rick Bennis then facilitated a survey panel including five of the senior members (Helen MacKeller, Myrtie Schaeffer, Jean Talbott, Charles Oren and Ralph Metz) who provided attendees with a great opportunity to get know them better by sharing a little bit about themselves.

A booklet compiling short histories with encouraging remarks of each of the Silver Ambassadors was given to the teens so that they could get to know all of their "adoptive grandparents." In addition, senior member Dick Knapp brought in one of his beautiful oil paintings, which was presented to a selected honored guest, Pablo Romo.

*Diane Bennis*

### Mansfield Travels to Malabar Park

On April 21 the Mansfield, Ohio, congregation pastored by Chris and Angela Moen celebrated an inspiring Sabbath in



Mansfield, Ohio, congregation celebrates the Sabbath in the woods April 21. Right, eating in Pugh cabin (photos by Dick Hindenlang)



the Woods at Malabar State Park, Lucas, Ohio. After Sabbath services and a Bible study, which were conducted inside the Pugh cabin, the congregation enjoyed a potluck evening meal and fellowship time together.

Prior to Sabbath services, many children (and adults) strolled through the peaceful trails surrounding the cabin, enjoying the beauty of God's creation.

*Regina Wilson*

### Milwaukee Holds Focused Education Weekend

On Sabbath, June 30, the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, congregation hosted a focused education weekend. Six presenters came from as far as Seattle, Washington, to give their presentations to the congregation and guests who came from afar.

Services on the Sabbath started early (9:30 a.m.) so that there would be ample time to have the presentations afterward. Guest speakers gave the split sermons. Melvin Rhodes



Milwaukee presenters: Helen Richards, Rick Klimek, Rachel Quast, Dennis Luker, Merna Leisure-Eppick and Melvin Rhodes (photo by Leone Burns)

gave a sermon titled "Equipping the Saints for the Work of the Ministry," followed by Dennis Luker's sermon, "Overcoming for the Kingdom of God."

Then Sabbath afternoon and Sunday the six presenters gave various informa-

tive lectures on a number of social ills that plague even those in God's Church, such as substance abuse, sexual abuse, homosexuality, dysfunctional behaviors and other related marriage and family issues.

Rick Klimek, a licensed professional counselor, spoke on the topic of "The Impact of Trauma." Mr. Rhodes, a senior writer for *The Good News* magazine, talked on "Understanding Same-Sex Attraction." Mr. Luker, a minister in God's Church for 44 years, spoke on alcoholism and how to be an overcomer.

Rachel Quast, an author, public speaker, group leader and counselor, spoke on "Eating Disorders—Exposing the Storm Within." Helen Richards, a counselor with a master's degree, spoke on "All the Crazy People—Where Do They All Come From?" as well as "Move on, Get Over It—How Do I Do THAT?" Merna Leisure-Eppick spoke on "Anger—The Misunderstood Gift" and about alcoholism. Mr. Rhodes also covered another aspect of alcoholism Sunday morning.

*Leone Burns*

### Santiago Is Growing!

We feel very blessed in the United Church of God in the southern part of South America and specifically in Santiago, Chile, for having a nice-sized congregation composed of good-sized groups of different ages.



Baby boom in Santiago, Chile! This photo shows many of the babies that have been born in the last few months, but one of the babies with her mom is not in the picture! (photo by Juan Espinoza)

Beginning in 1995, around 90 percent of the Santiago congregation stayed with the truth of God under the direction of Mario Seiglie. Since then the congregation has been growing slowly but steadily. At this moment we have an average attendance of 330.

The congregation is composed of all different age groups. We have the maturity and stability of several elderly brethren and older married couples. We also have the energy and enthusiasm of many young married couples. Many youngsters of camp age help with the joyfulness of the congregation. We also have many children of different ages.

The photo shows some of the babies who have been born in the last few months in the Santiago congregation!

*Saul Langarica*

### Asheboro Ladies Club Active in Service

The Ladies Club of the Asheboro, North Carolina, congregation began earlier this year, and already the enthusiasm of the members (teens to seniors) has resulted in several projects being undertaken.

The club offers support for a local women and children's shelter with paper product donations quarterly. Photo albums filled with Feast pictures were made for those of the congregation not able to attend. A care package was sent out of state to a family in the Church that is undergoing a severe trial.

All the ladies have shown a desire to serve in various capacities in the congregation. Volunteers oversee the snack table, make coffee, empty trash, clean restrooms, provide water for speakers, greet attendees at the door and make get-well or sympathy cards weekly. Not so surprisingly, the ladies not only do their own assignments but also help everyone else!

At every meeting a topic (one of many submitted by the ladies) is chosen for discussion at the next meeting. Getting to know each other better through one-on-one interviews and speaking about a favorite woman in the Bible has generated exciting and

loving conversations among members of the group.

Sadie Parks is facilitator for the club, and David Mills is pastor.

*Nancy L. Holloway*

### Brethren Visit Old World Wisconsin

On Sunday, July 15, 21 members of the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, congregation gathered at Old World Wisconsin, located just west of Eagle, Wisconsin.

Imagine living in the 1800s without any modern conveniences. Now imagine coming to Wisconsin from thousands of miles away with your family with only the possessions you could carry. This was the scenario in early Wisconsin soon after it became a state in 1848. European immigrants began arriving in droves in search of religious and economic freedoms.

Old World Wisconsin demonstrates



Milwaukee brethren gather for a day of history lessons and fellowship (photo by Leone Burns)

that life in Wisconsin back then was very hard—they had to clear the land and learn to survive and create a new life here. Along with original pioneer homes, Old World Wisconsin includes many prairie lands, ponds, farms, walking trails, wagon shops, shoemakers and many other areas of interest.

Volunteers dressed in period clothing come every day to explain to the visitors what life was like back then. At the blacksmith shop brethren saw a fellow making iron doorsteps in the open fire. Over at the shoe workshop, the lady explained how shoes were made by hand and even how they repaired shoes that had worn out.

It was a wonderful outing for the whole family.

*Leone Burns*

### Phoenix East Camps in White Mountains

The Phoenix East, Arizona, congregation enjoyed a campout in the White Mountains on the weekend of June 9. A total of 49 brethren traveled above 7,000-foot elevation to the rim country located east of Payson, Ari-

See "Local Church Updates," page 15

# Announcements

## Births

Paul and Heather (Anderson) Wakin of Portland, Oregon, are happy to announce the birth of their first child, Isaiah David-Allan. Isaiah was born Dec. 7, 2006. He weighed 6 pounds 5 ounces and was 19 inches long. Isaiah is the first grandchild of extremely proud grandparents, Allan



Isaiah David-Allan Wakin

and Jane Anderson of Salem, Oregon, and Michelle Wakin of Vancouver, Washington. Isaiah is a very happy baby and is a wonderful blessing to our family.

Chad and Lora Mortier of the Topeka, Kansas, congregation are excited



Ava Loren Mortier

to announce the birth of their daughter, Ava Loren. Ava was born on March 21, 2007, weighing 7 pounds 11 ounces and measuring 20 inches long. She is a very happy baby and grows more every day. Ava is the third grandchild for Donn and Alice Mortier of the Oshkosh, Wisconsin, congregation and the first for Leonard and Kathryn Hatter of Brodhead, Wisconsin.

Andy and Alisha Edinborough of the Salina, Kansas, congregation are happy to announce the birth of their son, Andrew Ray. He was born June 4, 2007, weighing 8 pounds 14 ounces and measuring 19



Andrew Ray Edinborough with older sister Alana Faye

inches long. He was also welcomed by older sister Alana Faye.



McKinley Brooke and Kennedy Anne Yost

Jeff and Stacie (Hollis) Yost are happy to announce the birth of their twin daughters, born March 14, 2007. McKinley Brooke weighed 6 pounds 1 ounce and Kennedy Anne weighed 6 pounds 14 ounces. Big sisters Madison, age 7, and Reagan, age 3, welcomed the additions to the family. Grandparents are Ron and Roxanna Yost of Joplin, Missouri, and Maynard and Cindy Allen of Creston, Iowa, and the late Dale Hollis. The family attends the Portland, Oregon, congregation.

## Engagements

The family of the late Dewey and Lola Spradling would like to announce the engagement of their sister Carolyn (Spradling) Meadows to R. Cecil Campbell. Both of their spouses died about three years ago. Carolyn and Cecil were childhood



R. Cecil Campbell and Carolyn (Spradling) Meadows

sweethearts; a fairy tale could be written about their courtship. They will be wed just before the Feast of Tabernacles. They will be in Alaska for the Feast. They will be living in Phoenix, Arizona, in winter and Somerset, Kentucky, in the summer, attending the London, Kentucky, congregation. Cecil is very happy to go back to the "promised land" where he grew up. Carolyn has one son and one granddaughter, and Cecil has two daughters, two granddaughters and two grandsons.

Michael and Holly Beyer of Kansas City, Missouri, are very pleased to



Caleb Creech and Valerie Beyer

announce the engagement of their daughter Valerie Beyer to Caleb Creech, son of Glenn and Ronda Creech of Cincinnati, Ohio. Caleb and Valerie were engaged on Dec. 23, 2006, at the Winter Family Weekend, where they first met four years earlier. Caleb is studying accounting at Morehead State University in Kentucky where they will reside after their marriage. A wedding is planned for May 25, 2008, in Kansas City.

## Weddings

Charlene Langner and John Williams were married on a gorgeous springlike day, March 11, 2007. David Treybig performed the ceremony at the Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore in front of 70 family members and friends. Standing with Charlene and John were sons, Ryan Colbert and Jacob



Charlene and John Williams

Zeman. John's brother, Jared Williams, and Joel Crocker and Christopher Rader served as ushers. John's nephew, Wyatt Clement, served as junior usher. Charlene is the daughter of Mrs. Renell Book of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the late Donald Langner. John is the son of John and Jan Williams of the Houston, Texas, North congregation. They reside in Port Richey, Florida, congregation.

It is with great delight that Jim and Lorinda Springer announce the marriage of their daughter, Kimberly Marie Spring-



Kimberly and Kyle Mullen

er, to Kyle Aidan Mullen, son of Gerald and the late Carmel Mullen.

The wedding took place in Placerville, California, at a restored gold rush era man-

sion, with the father of the bride performing the ceremony. Leslie Schwartz and Sarah Bates, longtime friends of the bride, were the maids of honor. The bridesmaids were the bride's cousins, Heather and Erica Bennett, and another friend, Melanie Van Kol.

The best man was Orin Mullen, younger brother of the groom. Other groomsmen were brothers Shaney and Kieran Mullen; Geoff Pate, friend of the groom; and Jim Springer, brother of the bride. The ring bearer was William Neff and the flower girl was Emily Neff, both young friends of the bride.

The groom has recently completed his master's degree in education and plans to teach high school biology. The bride works as a chemical engineer for HP. The newlyweds reside in Corvallis, Oregon.

It is with great joy that Charles and Gay Oren of Murphy, Texas, announce the marriage of their son, Joshua Dan Oren, to Jessica Martha Yandle, daughter of Bill Yandle, of Rochester, Washington, and Mr. and Mrs. John Gray of Rudy, Arkansas. The wedding and reception took place in McKinney, Texas, at the Eldorado Country Club on a gorgeous early summer evening, June 3, 2007. Don Hooser, pastor in Sedro-Woolley, Washington, performed the ceremony.

Jessica's sisters, Jennifer Dyer and Joelene Brown, were the maids of honor. Bridesmaids were family members Veronica Puryear and Reagan Francis and close friends Audrey Gibson and



Jessica and Josh Oren

Denise Vulchev. Taylor Hansen of Richardson, Texas, niece of the groom, was the flower girl. Standing with Joshua were his best men, close friend Marshall Moluf and childhood friend Maurice Lopez. Groomsmen included his father, Charles Oren; his new brother-in-law, Jeff Dyer; his brother-in-law, Jerry Hansen; and his friend, Daniel Palacios. Jayden Dyer, nephew of the bride, was the ring bearer. The bride's sister, Joelene Brown of Onalaska, Washington, performed a vocal solo, "Come Away with Me," during the ceremony.

Josh has completed a degree at Stephen F. Austin and has since been employed at Sanmina-SCI. Jessica received her associate's degree from Texas State University and will finish up a bachelor's degree soon. She is currently working for the Screen Actors Guild. The new Mr. and Mrs. Oren reside in Plano and are members of the Dallas congregation. The couple spent three days in Frisco, Texas, at the Westin and will be taking their honeymoon during the Feast 2007 in St. Lucia.

Jerry and Mary Reisdorff of Phoenix, Arizona, and Ruperta Beto of Bacolod, Philippines, are pleased to announce the marriage of their children Anthony Reisdorff and Ketchel Beto. The church ceremony, performed by Florante Siopan, took place Oct. 8, 2006, during the Feast of Tabernacles in the Philippines, where the couple resided until recently moving to the United States. After a warm reception by



Anthony and Ketchel Reisdorff

the Phoenix East, Arizona, congregation, the couple is now relocating to the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, area.

## Anniversaries

Peter and Anne Korneluk celebrated their 50th anniversary in June. After services in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, on June 23, family and friends gathered together in the Korneluk's beautiful backyard for a barbecue to honor them on reaching this special milestone in their lives.

It was wonderful that Anne was able to be out in the yard for a good part of the evening to enjoy the great fellowship and food with everyone. Because of some health problems, she isn't always able to come to services, so the brethren all appreciated the opportunity to visit with her and Peter that evening. Peter and Anne Korneluk have been longtime Sabbath-keepers and Church members. They moved from Yorkton to Saskatoon a number of years ago and have supported UCG strongly.



Peter and Anne Korneluk

Their only son, Bob, and his wife, Kristen, from Edmonton, Alberta, were able to be there and spend a few days with them, which made the occasion even more special for them. Others attending included brethren from North Battleford and Saskatoon, elder Bruce and Donna Bird and pastor Robert and Valerie Berendt from Edmonton, along with some family members.

Melvin and Sadie Parks of the Asheboro, North Carolina, congregation celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 17, 2007, with around 150 family members and Church members at the Exchange Hall in Asheboro. The celebration was sponsored by their family members and included an enjoyable slide presentation of their marriage, comments by guests, a buffet dinner and cutting of the anniversary cake.

Melvin and Sadie began their courtship by letters in 1956 when Melvin was in the Air Force and Sadie was in the 11th grade. This led to their marriage on June



Melvin and Sadie Parks

22, 1957, at the home of Melvin's parents in Wilkes County, North Carolina. They moved to Ramseur shortly after Melvin was honorably discharged from the Air Force, and have lived there most of their 50 years of marriage.

They have three sons: Ken of Clarksville, Tennessee; Maurice, who died in 1986; and Orlando of Greensboro, North Carolina. They have four grandchildren: Austin, Dale, Devon and Donovan. They have two step-grandsons, John and Lawrence, and one step-granddaughter, Moneka. And they have three step-great-granddaughters, Camille, Kaylie and Elise, with two more on the way.

Melvin and Sadie became baptized members of the Church in 1976 and later served as deacon and deaconess in the Greensboro congregation. They attended with United Church of God in Asheboro at its beginning in May 1995. Melvin was ordained as an elder in 2000, and he and Sadie continue to serve faithfully in Asheboro and also occasionally in Charlotte and Raleigh.

On July 7 the Asheboro congregation surprised Melvin and Sadie with a special celebration after the service, including an anniversary cake with punch and finger foods, along with a crystal serving set as a gift from the congregation.

The New Orleans, Louisiana, congregation surprised Julius and Elizabeth Pitre with cake and punch after Sabbath services



Elizabeth and Julius Pitre

on June 9, honoring them in recognition of their 50th wedding anniversary. Julius and Elizabeth were married on June 9, 1957, in Houma, Louisiana, where they presently reside.

They have three children: Jerylyn, Ted and Patricia; and four grandchildren: Talia, Shawn, Felicia and Kristofer. Julius is a retired welder and Elizabeth is a homemaker. They began attending God's Church in 1986. Both love gardening. In fact, their yard is one big garden!

Gary and Claudia Loo observed their 45th anniversary on June 30, 2007, with the Tallahassee, Florida, brethren in a Chinese restaurant. Gary and Claudia were married on June 30, 1962, in San Francisco, California, and relocated to Honolulu, Hawaii, with the Army Corps of Engineers in March 1965. Their eldest child, Laurie Lai (grandsons Byron, Ryan and Gunther; granddaughter, Daisy) was born in San Francisco.

Four of their children were born in Honolulu: sons Gerald (daughter-in-law Debbie, grandsons Alexander, Timothy and Brenton of Sydney, Australia), Leslie (daughter-in-law Silvia) and Daniel (daughter-in-law Alice, grandson Zachary); and daughter Lianne Valenzuela (son-in-law Tony). Their son Jonathon (ABC graduate of 2005) was born in



Claudia and Gary Loo

South Pasadena, California.

Gary became a coworker with Christ in the Radio Church of God in February 1962. Gary and Claudia were baptized by Wayne Cole in Honolulu in June 1965, and were original members of the first congregation in Hawaii in December 1968. They relocated in August 1974 to Southern California, where five of their children reside.

They served many years in YOU sports, refreshments stands and hospitality service, including 15 years in Pasadena Rose Parade duties. They were ordained deacon and deaconess in July 1988 in Pasadena.

After taking early retirement from the California Public Utilities Commission in November 1989, Gary worked nearly eight years as the rate manager of San Gabriel Valley Water Company, retiring again in September 1997. They then moved to Havana, Florida, where they assist in the Tallahassee congregation. Gary is a registered civil engineer in California and Florida.

## Obituaries

Lela Shabi, 83, of Palm Coast, Florida, died peacefully after a brief illness on Dec. 22, 2006.

A longtime member of the Church of God, she and her husband, Paul, who pre-

## Tribute: Richard Fenstermacher

Richard Kocher Fenstermacher, 84, of Allentown, Pennsylvania, died of pneumonia on June 12, 2007. He was the only child of the late George and Anna Fenstermacher whose ancestors can be traced back to the 1700s in the Palatinate region of Germany. Fenstermacher means "window maker" in German.

Richard served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1946, the last several months in the Pacific theater of operations. While attending an Army specialized program at Penn State University, he had the good fortune to meet a sweet young lady named Grace Hoover at a dance. Richard was smitten, and it wasn't long after he was discharged that they were married on June 28, 1947. When asked by the preacher if he took Grace to be his wife, he replied excitedly, "I do, I do!" So they did for 59 years and 50 weeks.

Richard graduated from Lehigh University with a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering. He worked as a chemist in the textile industry. In November 1949, their son Robert was born and in October 1953, their daughter, Virginia.

Richard was a quiet man, given to witty, dry humor and always thinking before speaking. He loved to read, study, take photos and develop his own film. In the 1950s, he began a search for a church to attend with his family and was excited after hearing Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong on the radio. In July 1956 he was baptized by the traveling team of Gerald

Waterhouse and Allen Manteufel. They said "see you at the Feast," and Richard had no idea what that meant. With a little cash, he and his family did attend their first Feast of Tabernacles in Big Sandy, Texas, that year. Grace was baptized in 1961.

Richard and Grace loved serving the Church members. Grace's specialty was running the kitchen for the festivals in various hotels in New York City and Philadelphia. One of Richard's specialties was eating Grace's food—especially her desserts.

Richard served on the welcoming committee, setting up chairs, taking up offerings, doing cleanup and singing in the choir. They were always among the first to arrive before services and the last to leave after services. They made a great team and served in any way they were asked. Richard became a deacon in 1967 and Grace, a deaconess in 1968. In 1969 Richard was ordained a local elder, an honor he cherished to the end of his life.

In the spring of 1995, they attended the first service of the United Church of God in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where Richard continued to preach until his eyesight was diminished by macular degeneration.

His joys in life were studying God's Word, music, mystery novels, travel and spending time with his family, especially his granddaughters.

He is survived by his wife, Grace; son, Robert, and his wife, Karen (Smith), of Coupeville, Washington; daughter, Virginia Bromfield, and her husband, Joseph, of Allentown; granddaughters,

and younger brother, and there her family was called into the Church. She was baptized in 1969 at the age of 21. She also met John Rutis and in August of 1970 they were married. They had six children; one they lost right before birth. She homeschooled all five of her children. She also taught preschool classes at church.

Once her children were grown she started an Internet business, Rutis Enterprises, with her husband, John. This included Antelope Publishing, which produced browser-readable e-books for all ages, including a lot of her own work. One of her greatest joys to come from this was "Christian Children's Corner." Her religious stories for children have also been broadcast on the radio. A number of her writings appeared in *Virtual Christian Magazine*, and she had been published in *The Good News* magazine.

In 2004 she became a grandmother to Samantha Mae, and in 2006 to Spencer Avery. She loved her grandchildren very much, and enjoyed reading, coloring, drawing and playing with them. Even as the end drew near, she wel-

ceded her in death, were baptized in 1964. Over the years, they attended congregations in LaGrange, Illinois; Crown Point, Indiana; Columbus, Indiana; Murfreesboro, Tennessee; and Las Vegas, Nevada. After her husband's death, she relocated to Florida with her daughter and attended church when able.

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Richard Fenstermacher

Lori Fenstermacher, Christa Blaser and her husband Zack, Tanya McIntyre and her husband Taige, and Erin Bromfield; and great-grandsons, Hunter McIntyre and Gavin Blaser.

No matter how important his family was to him, Richard's mission was striving toward excellence in the sight of God. His comfort through illness and passing was the knowledge of the resurrection and birth into God's family.

Grace and her family express their gratitude for all the prayers, cards, letters and flowers received from God's people.

Regional pastor Paul Suckling said, "When I first met Mr. Fenstermacher, he came across very clearly as a very converted individual who spoke well for the Church. He was highly respected by the congregation where he served and was solid in the faith. Several mentioned his wisdom and deep thoughtfulness concerning matters that were taking place during the early and late '90s. He will certainly be missed."

came her grandbabies onto her bed so that they could be close and spend time together.

She is preceded in death by her son John Charles and parents, Joyce and Melbourne Raab. She is survived by her husband, John; children, Rebecca, Anna (and Bill) Veek, Merry (and Douglas) Stewart, Daniel and Clara; and grandchildren, Samantha and Spencer Stewart.

Addie Ice, 92, of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, died July 7, 2006. Until she went into the hospital shortly before her death, she had been able to live at home with her husband of 75 years.

Mrs. Ice was born May 25, 1914, in Chaonia, Missouri. She married Robert Ice Feb. 6, 1931, and they were blessed with over 75 happy years together. An article regarding them appeared in the June 2006 *United News*, page 14.

Mrs. Ice was baptized in March 1965 and remained a faithful member over these many years. Her husband, Robert, was also baptized at the same time and remains a member to this day.



Addie Ice

Survivors include her husband, Robert; one daughter, Karen (and Gary) Jones;

three sons, Robert Allen (and Claudia) Ice, James Gerald (and Brenda) Ice and Ronald Ice; nine grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild. A daughter, Bernice Ray, preceded Mrs. Ice in death, March 30, 2001.

Larry Dueitt Sr., 69, a longtime member of the Corpus Christi, Texas, congregation, died on June 19, 2007. He was a member of the high school all-American football team. Larry graduated from Rice University on a full football scholarship where he played in the Cotton Bowl.

He and his wife, Evelyn, were baptized in April 1968. Many of his football teammates said that Larry was a tough competitor on the field and a man with a sense of love and care for others.



Larry Dueitt Sr.

Larry is survived by his wife, Evelyn; son, Wade Dueitt, and his wife, Judy; daughter, Kelly Rodriguez; daughter-in-law, Laura Dueitt; and grandchildren Shelby, Garon, Alex, Jonathan, Ryan, Dina and Hannah.

Larry will be missed by his family, by the congregation and by his former teammates and many friends in the community.

Paul Anderson (of McMinnville, Oregon) and family are saddened to inform you of the death of Eunice Anderson June 26, 2007. She and Paul would have been married 61 years July 4. She was 82.

Eunice had recently encountered some difficult health problems that resulted in her death. Thankfully, she was under hospice care and was peaceful and free of pain, surrounded by her husband and four of her children when she died.

Eunice was baptized in 1964. She remained a faithful wife and mother till the very end, and took great comfort in the knowledge of God's plan. She will be greatly missed, but we all look forward



Eunice Anderson

with anticipation, as Eunice did, to the resurrection to life.

The family deeply appreciated all the prayers and expressions of concern offered on her behalf.

Eunice is survived by her husband, Paul, and her six children, Mary Campbell, Aumsville, Oregon; Nickie Johnson, Tumwater, Washington; Chris Anderson, Pasadena, California; Frances Siebert, McMinnville, Oregon; Joy Vail, San Leandro, California; and John Anderson, Lake Forest, California. Nickie is the wife

of elder Gary Johnson of the Olympia, Washington, congregation. John attends the Eagle Rock, California, congregation, and Chris is the Church's corporate risk manager. Eunice is also survived by 17 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Ken Howard, 87, died on June 21, 2007, at Chesalon Retirement Village in Wollongong, Australia. Ken was quite frail at the end of his life. His wife, Phyllis, died two years earlier and his son, Wayne, last year. He is survived by his son, Barry, and daughter, Fairlie, and seven grandchildren.

Ken grew up in the Albury region on a farm. The young family moved to the coast at Merimbula and later to Nowra. Ken kept working on his property well into his late 70s.

Ken and Phyllis were deacon and deaconess and served the Wollongong congregation for many years. Both Ken and Phyllis carried out those duties with no fanfare. Ken was an honorable man with integrity. He always carried himself with dignity and had such a warm smile.

Bible studies were held in Ken and Phyllis' home, and they were always very hospitable to anyone who came to their home. They set a fine example to so many of genuine Christianity. Earlier this year his pastor, Bruce Dean, was able to thank him for his years of service to the Church and told Ken he hoped that the next generation of leaders would have the same attitude of selfless sacrifice as he and Phyllis had.

Funeral services were conducted on June 28 by Mr. Dean. It poured with rain that day, which was quite fitting for an old farmer.

Emily Dewyer, age 74, longtime member of the Pittsburgh, Pennsyl-



Emily Dewyer

vania, congregation, finished her race on April 25, 2007. Emily, a deaconess for over 25 years, was known for her loving acts of service. She organized Y.O.U. concessions, church potlucks, coffee service and typed weekly church announcements. One of her great joys was to cook and then share her creations for others to enjoy. She was an awesome cookie maker and loved showering her grandchildren with "Grama kisses." Her deep faith in God and gentle nature were a comfort and source of strength to all. She leaves a beautiful legacy to follow. She will be dearly missed by her husband, Jim; children: Pam (Myers), Jim Jr. and Jonathan; their spouses: Dave, Judy and JoAnn; her grandchildren: Melissa, Philip, Branden and Morgan.

Helen J. Merkle, formerly of St. Petersburg, Florida, died Feb. 25, 2007, in Omaha, Nebraska, of congestive heart failure following an illness of a year and a half. She is survived by her daughter, Robin (Williams) Dohrmann, son-in-law Christopher Dohrmann and two grandsons, Grant and Forrest, who now reside

in Homosassa, Florida. She was baptized in 1965 by Harold Lester and Robert Bertuzzi and was faithful to God's Word until the end.

Mary Linda Douglass, 76, of Carbondale, Kansas, died July 14, 2007, at Midland Hospice House in Topeka, Kansas. She was born March 23, 1931, in Topeka, the daughter of Charles George Dodds and Mary Truman Wilson-Dodds. She spent most of her early life in Topeka and graduated from Topeka High School in 1949. She was married to Laurance Reeves Douglass on June 24, 1949. They moved to Mobile, Alabama, in 1959 and in 1966 returned to Topeka, where they owned and operated Douglass Pest Control. Her husband preceded her in death on Feb. 15, 1983. Linda was baptized in April 1980. Her example of love, joy and peace was observed and appreciated by her family and many friends.

Survivors include three daughters: Lorraine Rowe, Shelli Ohlsen and Janice Hernandez; two sons, Jeff Douglass and Christopher Douglass; a sister, Norma Degraff; a brother, Scott Covey; 11 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Dwaine Hudson in Topeka on July 18, 2007.

**Announcements:** Members are welcome to submit announcements of the births, engagements, weddings, significant anniversaries (25, 40, 50, 60, etc.) and obituaries in their families. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Most items are 50 to 100 words and should not exceed 250 words. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give them to your local pastor** to forward to *United News*.

### "Local Church Updates," continued from page 12

zona. Campsites were set up across a large area of the primitive Colcord Ridge campground. Brethren camped in everything from small tents to full-sized motor homes with generators.

The weather was quite refreshing in comparison with the 100-degree-plus temperatures of the desert floor in Phoenix, with daytime sunny, breezy



Phoenix brethren prepare for services at campout June 9

days in the mid-70s and nights falling to the high 40s. Activities included a visit to a local fish hatchery and a tour of an old ranch and cabin that Clark Gable often enjoyed.

Morning Sabbath services were held in the shade of tall ponderosa pines with a panoramic view of valleys and mountains to the southwest.

The interactive Bible study format involved six presenters who each explored a principle of Psalm 15. The service began with a welcome from the pastor, John Elliott, and a hymn led by Steve Kennedy. Ed Dowd moderated the Bible study whose speakers were Kent Stoner, John Anderson, Rheo Knudson, Ray Wolfe, Robert Nettles and Shaun Tuck.

The Sabbath concluded with a sumptuous group meal consisting of barbecued meats and a plethora of side dishes contributed by the campers. After dark Mr. Elliott led a group on a daring "Midnight Hike" through the woods without flashlights. Young and old alike took turns leading the group on what turned out to be a very enjoyable trek through the inky shadows. Meanwhile others back in camp played card games with the help of bright lanterns.

Lorelei Nettles

## North Carolina Congregations Enjoy Weekend Campout

Raleigh, Asheboro, Charlotte and Kinston, North Carolina, congregations joined together for a group camp-



North Carolina brethren enjoy learning about God at Lake Jordan (photo by Danny and Jeanette Rich) out at Lake Jordan on the weekend of April 27 to 29. Many came on Friday and pitched their tents and enjoyed the beautiful weather, surroundings and evening chats around the campfire. Many more brethren began showing up on the Sabbath as we enjoyed a morning Bible study and afternoon services at one of the central campsites.

After Sabbath services we were treated to a meal provided by Mark McLeod. Saturday evening included a sing-along around the campfire and Sunday morning brought joy to the very young in the form of a craft activity headed up by Laura Scott.

It was a fun-filled weekend with lots of good fellowship, good food and absolutely gorgeous weather provided by our Creator!

Jeanette Rich

## Hawaiian Brethren Feast Together

The scattered brethren in Hawaii make the most of the Holy Days to get together for food and fellowship.

Vera Gordon and Sherry Ellis pooled their culinary talents to prepare a succulent and festive meal for the Night to Be Much Observed. Mr. Ellis was recovering in California from his kidney transplant.

Visiting minister Stuart Segall and his wife, Jan, after two Sabbaths and Passover on the island of Maui, met with all the Big Island of Hawaii brethren for the meal. An unexpected power outage brought an intimate, first-century touch to the meal, with candles in abundance.

The following afternoon, all nine in attendance tasted the spiritual food of the sermon for the First Day of Unleavened Bread. After another meal, the Segalls, to our dismay, had to leave for their drive to the airport.

The local brethren, although very few in number, have Sabbath services by telephone hookup and cybercast from their pastor's, Mario Seigle's, home congregation in Garden Grove, California. The *Beyond Today* program is also available on a public-access cable TV station on the Big Island.

Mr. and Mrs. Seigle were on the Big Island for Pentecost. Other neighboring islanders who arrived were Mr. and Mrs. James Lum, deacon and deaconess from Honolulu, and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Coughlin from Maui. Altogether 15 adults attended services for Pentecost weekend. Those who delivered the spiritual messages both days reminded us of the anniversary of the New Testament Church, and especially what needs to be accomplished in our lives through the Holy Spirit.

Everyone's palate delighted to two evening barbecues. Another dinner was shared by the 12 who remained and went to an Italian restaurant in downtown Hilo.

Johnny Kretz

**Local Church Updates:** If your congregation's news and events are rarely covered in *United News*, why not check with your pastor and write something for him to send in? We're looking for 100- to 300-word articles and photographs with captions. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Include the author's and photographer's names and your phone number. Please double-check the spelling of names. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give the material to your local pastor** to forward to *United News*.

## News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

to ask if he would do a prerecorded 13-minute interview with her.

She and her cohost, John Hall, do a talk show from 4 to 6 p.m. weekdays on Christian station WORD-FM 101.5 Pittsburgh (www.wordfm.com).

She told Mr. Hooser they wanted to interview him because she found his *Good News* article "Patriotism: The Good, the Bad and the Biblical," which appeared in the January/February 2003 issue, on the Web, and they were planning to focus on the subject of patriotism during their July 3 show.

The phone interview was recorded the morning of July 3. Some of the questions they asked included:

What is patriotism? Are there good and bad ways to be patriotic? (Mr. Hooser explained the difference between patriotism and nationalism.)

What does it mean to be a good citizen? Does the Bible teach patriotism? Are there examples of patriotism in the Bible?

Do you believe that God has especially blessed and protected the United States? If so, why? Do you believe God might withdraw His blessings someday?

Are we experiencing less patriotism in America? Why are increasing numbers of people unpatriotic?

Mr. Hooser said the interview "was very respectful and supportive. I think it was three times they mentioned that 'he has written an excellent article on patriotism' and twice said it was linked on their Web site.

"I was glad for the opportunity to sow some more seeds of truth, although I was a little nervous," he said.

### Free Publicity for *Beyond Today*

The *Northeast Georgian* newspaper printed an article highlighting the subjects to be covered in the *Beyond Today* programs for June and July. The article ran in the June 8 issue.

John LaBissoniere, who coordinates the

brethren who sponsor the *Beyond Today* program in their local community, wrote:

"James L. Smith, our *Beyond Today* cable-access TV sponsor in Cornelia, Georgia...submitted the current schedule with three short introductory paragraphs to the newspaper, and the editor was gracious enough to publish the information. We certainly congratulate James on his efforts and determination."

Mr. LaBissoniere shared this with the other sponsors and encouraged them to consider doing something similar in their communities. The title and synopsis of each program could be listed in weekly community newspapers, Saturday church pages and on the cable-access stations' online menu, where available.

"Also, if you are able to determine



Article about *Beyond Today* in *The Northeast Georgian* newspaper June 8

other means of free advertising for *Beyond Today* in your viewing area, please let me know and we could consider passing on your idea other sponsors," Mr. LaBissoniere wrote. His e-mail is john\_labissoniere@ucg.org.

July 13, Defiance, Ohio's *The Crescent-News* daily newspaper (daily circulation, 16,827) also published an article, free of charge, about *Beyond Today* airings in that area.

"Our local *Beyond Today* sponsor, Bea Rau, submitted the article," said Mr. LaBissoniere. "She told me that after the article appeared, some people contacted the cable-access TV station desiring more information about the Church. Bea supplied several copies of *The Good News* to the station for those interested."

Then Peter Eddington received a phone call from the cable-access station in Defiance. "The station manager said they've had a number of phone calls from people in the community, as a result of this article, who are wanting to find out how they can watch the



### ■ New Web Site: *Breaking Free Journal*

The *Breaking Free Journal* is now available online at [breakingfree.ucg.org](http://breakingfree.ucg.org).

### ■ 2007 Festival Activity Announcements

Wondering what activities are going to be available at the

program," Mr. Eddington said. "Some of them don't have cable TV, so I suggested to the station manager that he offer them a *Good News* subscription instead, from which they will get similar information as that aired on *Beyond Today*. He was very accommodating, and said he would help them sign up when he has them on the phone!"

### Pentecost Offering Up 3.2 Percent

This year 12,399 people attended Pentecost services in the United States May 27, a 1.1 percent increase in attendance. The offering was \$789,026.72, a 3.2 percent increase in the reported amount over 2006. The increase from 2005 to 2006 was 2.7 percent.

The offerings mailed to the home office by individuals should bring the actual figure to around \$800,000.

### Michigan YOU Reunion Planned for Nov. 17

If you were in YOU (the Youth Opportunities United teen program) anytime between 1980 and 1995, you are invited to a reunion on Nov. 17, 2007. The activity will be held at the

## What's New on the Web?

U.S. and Canadian Feast sites? Then check out the activity announcements available at [www.ucg.org/feast/](http://www.ucg.org/feast/).

### ■ *Beyond Today* Commentaries

Download past *Beyond Today* commentaries in video or MP3 audio format at [www.beyondtoday.tv/programs/commentary/](http://www.beyondtoday.tv/programs/commentary/).

### ■ UCG Commentary.

"If Only One True Church, Where Is It?"

"Archaeology Confirms the Bible Again"  
"The Terror of Child Abduction"  
[www.ucg.org/commentary/](http://www.ucg.org/commentary/)

### Featured Link

#### ■ Singles'

Web site for singles in the Church. [ucgsingles.org](http://ucgsingles.org)

If you have questions or comments, please contact: [webmaster@ucg.org](mailto:webmaster@ucg.org)

Brookshire Inn in Williamston, Michigan. Please visit the reunion Web site at [www.youreunion.myevent.com](http://www.youreunion.myevent.com).

If you have any questions, please contact Amy (Joseph) Welch at (517) 339-2033 or [jeffamywelch@hotmail.com](mailto:jeffamywelch@hotmail.com).

Amy Welch

### Add E-Mail Address to Lancaster Feast Form

The form to order tickets for shows during the Feast in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was missing a line for your e-mail address. If you use the form in the *U.S. and Canadian Festival Site Activity Announcements* brochure that was mailed to U.S. and Canadian members in mid-July, please add your e-mail address. The form has been corrected in the online version of the brochure at [www.ucg.org/feast/festivalactivities07.pdf](http://www.ucg.org/feast/festivalactivities07.pdf).

### Feast Taping Policy Reviewed

At the Festival coordinators' meeting earlier in the year, the policy for taping services was discussed. The policy says: "We request that members not tape services at the Feast of Tabernacles. All of our U.S. Feast sites will provide audio

files for all sermons following the Feast to members who would like them."

Audio files will be sent automatically to congregations assigned to the site. Anyone from congregations not assigned to the Feast site can fill out an address card (in the coordinator's office or at the information table) requesting their local pastor (include his name) receive a master copy of that site's messages. Within four weeks after the Feast, those pastors will also receive a copy. The members can then get a copy from the local pastor.

### Calendar of Events

- Aug. 5-8: Council of Elders meeting.
- Aug. 10-12: Young adults' weekend, Williams Bay, Wisconsin, contact [gary\\_black@ucg.org](mailto:gary_black@ucg.org).
- Aug. 12: ABC graduation.
- Aug. 19-21: Southeast Region ministerial conference, Atlanta, Georgia, area.
- Aug. 20-24: ABC continuing education classes at the home office.
- Aug. 25-26: ABC continuing education classes in Houston, Texas.
- Aug. 30-Sept. 3: Annual Leadership Workshop at the home office.
- Sept. 2: Houston Music Festival (see article, February issue, page 16).
- Nov. 11-13: Northwest Region ministerial conference, Portland, Oregon, area.
- Dec. 11-13: Council of Elders meeting.
- Feb. 29-March 5, 2008: Council of Elders meeting.
- May 18-19: GCE annual meeting.

### 12 Couples Invited to Sixth Leadership Workshop

Ministerial Services has invited 12 men and their wives from congregations in the United States and Canada to the sixth Leadership Workshop. The seminar will run from Aug. 30 to Sept. 3 (Labor Day weekend) at the home office in Milford, Ohio.

The invitees are: Steve and Lori Anderson, Los Angeles, California; Andy and Donna Buchholz, Elmira, New York; Martin and Maxcine Cole, Worcester, Massachusetts; Ed and RaeAnn Dowd, Phoenix East, Arizona; Graemme and Lynn Marshall, pastor of three Canadian congregations; Andy and Cynthia McClain, Indianapolis, Indiana; John and Judy Pentlin, Kansas City, Kansas; Brit and Julie Railston, Worcester; Randy and Stephanie Salyer, Los Angeles; Ken and Jean Welborn, Kansas City; Brian and Diana White, Indianapolis; and Sean and Kristin Yarbrough, Tampa, Florida.

There will be five days of classes covering topics such as: teaching as we have been taught; relevancy in speaking; developing sermonettes, split sermons and sermons; working with your pastor; history and overview of UCG's governing documents; the importance of sound doctrine; appreciating differences—understanding yourself and others; a women's section on how to be all things to all people without losing yourself; Church ceremonies; the heart of a servant; developing wisdom and judgment; working with the next generation; preparing effective messages: the importance of discernment; and answering doctrinal hot topics.



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