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United News™

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

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June 2005

News At a Glance

Council Committee Assignments Announced

May 18 the Council unanimously passed a resolution establishing the configuration of its committees, as follows:

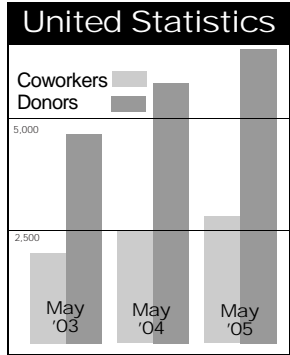
- Doctrine—Jim Franks (chairman), Larry Salyer, Mario Seiglie, Leon Walker, Anthony Wasilkoff.
- Education and Ministerial Services—Jim Franks, Clyde Kilough, Victor Kubik, Larry Salyer, Richard Thompson (chairman).
- Ethics, Roles and Rules—Aaron Dean, Joel Meeker, Richard Thompson, Leon Walker, Anthony Wasilkoff.
- Executive—Aaron Dean, Robert Dick, Jim Franks, Clyde Kilough, Leon Walker.
- Media and Communications—Clyde Kilough, Victor Kubik (chairman), Les McCullough, Joel Meeker, Larry Salyer, Mario Seiglie, Anthony Wasilkoff.
- Strategic Planning and Finance—Aaron Dean (chairman), Clyde Kilough, Les McCullough, Mario Seiglie.

U.S. Holy Day Offerings Reported

The offering reported for the First Day of Unleavened Bread was \$743,162.46, with an attendance of 13,092. This was a 4.2 percent increase in the offering amount over the previous year, and a 1.3 percent decrease in attendance.

For the Last Day of Unleavened Bread, the reported offering amount was \$715,708.94 with an attendance of 11,922. This was a 0.7 percent increase in offering amount over the previous year, and a 4.9 percent decrease in attendance.

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United Names Clyde Kilough as Next President

■ Former Council chairman to assume new duties July 1; calls Churchwide fast for June 4.

On May 12, 2005, the 12-man Council of Elders of the United Church of God, *an International Association*, selected Clyde Kilough as the new president of the Church from a final list of three candidates. The selection of Mr. Kilough concluded a process that lasted nearly 60 days following formal input solicited from

Church elders and Council members.

Mr. Kilough will succeed Roy Holladay, who has served as United's president from 2002 to the present. A long-time Church pastor, Mr. Kilough was elected to the Council in 2001 by the General Conference of Elders. He previously served as the Council's official reporter from 1997 to 1999.

In his remarks to the Council, Mr. Kilough said that the Church's CEO must personally understand the Church's mission and vision and keep it constantly in the forefront of those involved in United's work. "Our mem-

bers are ready," he emphasized. "They want to be rallied."

He outlined how the Church's leadership and ministry need to stir up the membership and those associated with United with increased focus and zeal. Citing 2 Timothy 1:6, Mr. Kilough reminded those present that "zeal is a spiritual issue." He spoke of deepening our sense of being an integral part of the work of the Church of God.



Clyde Kilough

"There are people out there whose lives are waiting to be transformed," Mr. Kilough said. "It's a time for us to rally—a time to revive—as people did in Nehemiah's time."

He went on to quote from the book of Nehemiah: "Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, 'The work is great and exten-

See "President," page 2

GCE Focuses on "Seizing the Vision"



ABC Choir performs at Sabbath services; Ladies' Tea is a highlight on Monday (photos by Janet Treadway)

The General Conference of Elders Annual Meeting drew 225 elders and 175 wives to Cincinnati, Ohio, May 14 to 16. The theme was "Seizing the Vision: The Next Decade and Beyond."

Associated with the GCE meetings were the international meetings May 13 and the special Sabbath services May 14, heard by an estimated 9,000 members through telephone and Internet connections. President Roy Holla-

day outlined the accomplishments of the first 10 years of United, and newly chosen next president Clyde Kilough stirred the Church to action with a message on capturing the zeal that motivated Jesus Christ.

Also Saturday night was a question-and-answer session with the authors of the amendments on the ballot. The

See "GCE," page 4

Mail Room Has Record Week

by Janet Treadway

As Roy Holladay mentioned during the president's address to the GCE, the week of May 15 was a record week for mail going out of the home office postal center. There were over 10,049 envelopes, which translates into 16,856



Roy Holladay checks out the tons of mail (photo by Janet Treadway)

booklets to be hand stuffed! This required the help of several volunteers. When these were placed in large mailing sacks, there were more than 100 sacks!

Normally the booklet requests run around 4,000 a week. When the office moved to Cincinnati seven years ago, the average number of envelopes to stuff with booklets was around 300 a week. At that time a label had to be placed on each envelope. Thankfully we now have a high-speed printer that prints all the addresses on the envelopes. (Can you imagine peeling labels and sticking them

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New Council Member Chosen and Three Reselected

At the General Conference of Elders Annual Meeting May 15, the elders chose four Council members to serve for the next three years. Aaron Dean, Jim Franks and Joel Meeker (international) were returned to the Council, and Larry Salyer was added as a new member. Doug Horchak had chosen not to be on the ballot,



Aaron Dean



Jim Franks

and leaves the Council as his term expires.

Larry Salyer is new to the Council,

but certainly not new to the Church of God. Here is a brief biography of this new Council member:

Biography of Larry Salyer

Larry Salyer and his wife, Judy, began attending God's Church exactly one week after their wedding in 1963. They and their 1-year-old daughter, Lisa, moved to Big Sandy, Texas, in 1965 when Larry was accepted to Ambassador College as one of the first three married students at that campus.

Born in northern Indiana in 1942, the eighth of 10 children, Mr. Salyer had little formal reli-



Larry Salyer



Joel Meeker

gious training. His parents began listening to Herbert Armstrong in 1954, and his mom was baptized in 1960. His father remained aloof from the Church, and the kids mostly ignored the Church, though his mom had a definite influence on their thinking. Several family members eventually became members.

Larry met his wife-to-be when they entered the same small high school in Westville, Indiana. Judy had no previous knowledge of the Church, and the subject did not come up until they were engaged. Her future mother-in-law

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News At a Glance

Continued from page 1

Good News Renewals Analyzed

GN subscribers who first came onto the U.S. file from direct mail promotions are renewing at a rate of 37 percent, the highest source. From space ads (primarily *Reader's Digest*) subscribers renew at 36 percent, from radio programming at 29 percent, from card decks at 28 percent and brochures and TV programming both at 26 percent.

The overall average (after discounting the "unknown" and "miscellaneous" categories) is 24.2 percent.

Since the renewal cycle is two years, these figures are for subscribers who came on the list from 1995 through 2002.

Personal Correspondence Answers Hundreds of Questions

Cecil Maranville, the Church's main Personal Correspondence writer, answered 120 letters in May, along with six questions by e-mail. A team of ministers who volunteer to answer Internet Personal Correspondence handled another 110 messages, and the *Vertical Thought* team answered 43.

Also in May, most of these ministers got together for a luncheon seminar during the GCE. Mr. Maranville gave the presentation, and at the meeting it was also announced that Terri Eddington has been hired part-time at the home office to help with the e-mail that comes in from the Web sites. She replaces Clarissa de Campos, who is engaged and has moved to Texas.

Here are some highlights from May: A former WCG member, now an inmate, wants to become an active member of UCG. He wonders if it's necessary for him to be baptized again. Another subscriber who used to subscribe to *The Plain Truth* recognized the same themes and asked if we are connected to that magazine.

Another subscriber asked if the bar code that we use on our literature is the mark of the Beast.

Africa presents unique challenges. A subscriber asked us to pray that he would be safe from witches and wizards. Coincidentally, an American subscriber wrote for help and counsel, fearing that she has been put under a voodoo curse.

We heard from an inmate on whose behalf we had spoken to a high official in the department of corrections.

The inmate wrote that the chaplain just left his cell with the paperwork signed. "He said that he was told to hand deliver the completed paperwork to the kitchen management. . . . I have not ever

See "News at a Glance," page 16

Council Names Robert Dick as Chairman, Reviews GCE

by Don Henson

Following on the heels of the GCE annual meeting, Clyde Kilough called the Council of Elders meeting to order May 17. Mr. Kilough acknowledged the reelection of Jim Franks, Aaron Dean and Joel Meeker and greeted Larry Salyer, who was elected to the Council and will begin serving July 1.

During the day, the Council took care of several items of business, including the approval of an adjustment to salary ranges, clarification of the terms of committee chairmen, a discussion about the president serving on the Council and a review of the GCE meeting.

Treasurer Tom Kirkpatrick provided the Council with a budget report, pointing out that year-to-date expenses are exactly on track with the budget.

At Dr. Kirkpatrick's request, the Council unanimously approved a resolution to adjust the Church's salary ranges to reflect the cost of living adjustments of the past few years. Dr. Kirkpatrick described the adjustment as a "mechanical process" necessary so that employees will remain within their salary ranges.

In addition, late in the day the Council

unanimously passed a resolution instructing the president to conduct a study of compensation of all employees in order to focus on adjustments that may need to be made on their behalf.

Media Center Update

Peter Eddington gave the Council an update on the construction of the home office media center. When completed, the project will include three new office areas in addition to the recording studio. A contract has been signed and construction should begin soon. Mr. Eddington pointed out that the costs for the construction and equipment are within the budget.

Studio equipment will include four cameras, one of which will be mounted on a small crane. Advanced editing software will allow a finished production to be completed by two or three employees. Videos will be recorded on DVDs in high-definition format, from which a standard definition product can also be provided. On a new multimedia Web site, smart streaming software can be used that can determine the capabilities of the customer's computer, so video can be delivered at an appropriate speed and format.

Within the next two months production meetings will be held to finalize the format and style of the program. The plan is to create 36 to 40 programs per year, with production anticipated to begin in September 2005.

Terms of Committee Chairs

Leon Walker proposed a resolution that would clarify the term for which Council members serve as the chairman of a committee.

The proposal is that the term for the chairman of a Council committee will expire at the same time as his term as a Council member. If he is reelected to the Council, he can also be reelected to serve as the chairman of a committee, or the committee could select another committee member as chairman.

After some discussion and clarification, the resolution was passed with 10 in favor and two abstentions (Mario Seiglie and Aaron Dean).

President Serving on the Council

Mr. Kilough, newly appointed president of UCG, introduced a discussion of the president serving as a member of the Council of Elders.

Mr. Kilough emphasized his desire to serve the Church in whatever way is most effective. He pointed out that while the presidency will be his singular focus, much of that effort will involve a close working relationship with the Council. He asked the Council for their thoughts and suggestions as to principles he should factor into his decision whether to remain a member of the Council.

Mr. Walker commented that the bylaws allow any officer of the Church (including president) to be a member of the Council of Elders. He voiced that Mr. Kilough's decision should be based on experience rather than hypothetical possibilities and suggested that Mr. Kilough remain on the Council for at least a session or two to see how it works out. Mr. Walker expressed his view that Mr. Kilough would be more effective as a voting member of the Council than as an observer. He added that, to lighten his load a bit, Mr. Kilough might be excused from committee work.

Mr. Franks pointed out that on more than one occasion proposed amendments to prevent a president from serving on the Council had failed to pass.

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"Mail," continued from page 1

on more than 10,000 envelopes?)

In addition to the 10,049 envelopes with booklets that week, we also had nearly 27,000 envelopes that were

inserted with the current *Good News* magazine, *United News* or *World News and Prophecy* for international areas that are serviced from the home office. In order to get this ready to go and out the door on time, the addresses must be

printed on envelopes, then a work party must be organized with a group of volunteers who are willing to give up their Sunday to do this inserting.

So what does a record week of mail translate to? Over 37,000 envelopes

were inserted and weighed over 5 tons! It took eight APCs (all-purpose containers) to transport the domestic mail to the post office, and over eight pallets of international mail were sent out to be remailed overseas. UN

"President," continued from page 1

and we are separated far from one another on the wall. Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us" (Nehemiah 4:19-20).

Continuing the discussion of his planned focus as UCG's new president, Mr. Kilough stressed that "this spirit has to come from within, not pri-

marily from projects, media thrusts or personnel changes. The Church's core strengths are spiritual, not physical." Concluding his remarks, he emphasized: "When our ways please God, He will bless us."

The Council of Elders thanked Mr. Holladay and his wife, Norma, for their three years of leadership and service in strengthening a foundation that will enable broad growth of the United Church of God.

Mr. Kilough was born in 1951 and came into the Church with his parents in 1963. He graduated from Ambassador College, Big Sandy, in 1974 and served congregations in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Canada, from 1974 to 1981. Since then he has served congregations in Arkansas, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Ohio and California.

The Kiloughs will be moving to the Cincinnati area from their home in Sacramento, California, where Mr. Kilo-

ugh has been serving as pastor of congregations in Sacramento and Reno, Nevada. He and his wife, Dee, have two children, David and Rebecca, and are excited new grandparents.

In accordance with the UCGIA bylaws, Mr. Kilough has stepped down from his prior position as chairman of the Council. The family will move to Cincinnati shortly, where Mr. Kilough will devote his full time to his new position at the Church's home office. UN

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President: Roy Holladay

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News From Around the World

What Our Brethren Face in Zambia

by Elize van Belkum

Having lived in South Africa most of my life, I have traveled to countries to our north on numerous occasions.

It has given me the opportunity to get to know our brethren, and also to become familiar with the problems and struggles they live with on a daily basis.

In April I accompanied my husband, Andre van Belkum, on a visit to Zambia. Kambani Banda, our resident minister, and his wife, Shirley, fetched us at the airport and we drove directly into the country to visit one of our members. Mr. Banda was concerned since she had not attended the Passover service, and there was no way of contacting her.

After about two hours of driving, we arrived at a village where we were able to locate our member, Mrs. Phiri. She greeted us with a big smile even though she was recuperating from a serious bout of malaria, losing half her weight in the process. Malaria was the reason she was unable to attend the Passover.

She led us to her little village where she lived in a typical reed-thatched abode. Looking around I was distressed to see the maize plants with very few cobs on them. It was very evident that they were experiencing a severe drought. Because they live in an outlying rural environment, far from the city, they have no access to running water or electricity. It is essential for their survival that good rains fall every year, otherwise they experience severe food shortages.

Death is a constant phenomenon, and it is something we in the developed world would find difficult to understand. Let me illustrate this by referring to what



Mrs. Phiri with her 103-year-old grandmother in Zambia

occurred in the immediate vicinity where Mrs. Phiri lives. Mrs. Phiri's husband died about two years ago, leaving her with two small children. She has two sisters, both widows, also with children that rely on them for all their needs. Only two days before our arrival, a widow living close by and her 2-year-old son died of kwashiorkor. These deaths occurred on the same day, and within a few hours of each other. Kwashiorkor is a debilitating physical condition resulting from malnutrition, and especially a lack of protein in the diet.

Malaria, AIDS and malnutrition are ravaging much of Africa, and it is distressing to see the struggle that takes place from day to day in most of their lives. To add to the tragedies, a funeral was taking place a little distance from where we were sitting. The day before

our arrival a husband had injured his wife during an altercation, and as a result she had run away. The husband was worried that she was calling the police, and killed himself by drinking poison.

Mrs. Phiri also told us a few days earlier robbers stole all her 23 chickens, and also most of the maize she had already reaped. She had planted all of the maize, sugar beet and cassava (a root plant) on her own. We walked through her cassava plants, and it seemed she would get a reasonable crop.

The events described here do not occur every week in the lives of these people, but are all too familiar and a reality for those communities who toil and strive daily just to survive.

Whenever we visit our brethren in these outlying villages, we do leave there feeling overwhelmed by the poverty and sickness that are so prevalent in most areas. Most countries of the world need the intervention of God in man's affairs, and the establishment of the wonderful world tomorrow. What a difference God's government will make in Zambia, and all countries of this suffering world.

However, despite these setbacks and challenges, our members are looked after. Through the Church, and also LifeNets, our members in Zambia are in a position to feed and clothe themselves. We also offer them opportunities to improve themselves through various self-help schemes.

There was one highlight of our trip to Mrs. Phiri. We met her grandmother who is 103 years of age! Although wizened and weak, she was able to communicate, and asked us for sweets, which we fortunately had in our luggage. UN

International News At a Glance

Canada Ends Fiscal Year Strong; Internet Responses Leading the Way

The fiscal year for the United Church of God Canada ended March 31 on a very positive note. The mail income for the year was 12.3 percent above the budget. There have been several new baptisms since January. Membership stands at 457 across Canada. Weekly attendance this calendar year, however, is down just over 1 percent from the same period last year due to Sabbath services being cancelled because of inclement weather in several areas.

Incoming mail, on the other hand, continues to be strong. It has been running about 10 percent ahead of last year. Of particular note is that the mail generated from the Internet accounts for over 40 percent of the Canadian mail total for the first four months of this year. In the first four months of the year we received as much mail from the Internet as we did in all of 2003.

Nearly 16 percent of Canadian mail was generated by the Internet in 2003, and in 2004 the total about 24 percent. This is one area in which we are expecting to see more growth as we plan more ad campaigns geared toward the Internet.

Edwin van Pelt

"In consultation with our local minister in Zambia, we estimate that an amount of \$16,000 will enable us to build a hall and a store room, provide wooden or similar benches for seating, and put in a solid floor, more durable door and window frames and roofing. Currently many of the adults and children sit on mats on the ground during services.

"Your contribution to this project will enable the Church in Mumbwa to worship God in a much improved and more inspiring setting than the past nine years. And they will greatly appreciate such a facility."

The El Salvador emergency relief project and other previous projects are now fully funded. For details, see www.ucg.org/goodworks.

New German Booklet Nearing Completion

Translation and typesetting for the German version of the booklet *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy* are nearing completion. The booklet is scheduled to be printed in late summer. A fund-raiser is being held to provide \$5,000 to help pay the printing costs for this 48-page booklet, the largest that UCG-Germany has printed to date. The forerunner of this booklet was the most frequently requested publication in the German language.

The May-June issue of the *Gute Nachrichten* magazine was mailed to 3,801 subscribers in 18 European countries. German pastor Paul Kieffer wrote a special article on the world oil crisis and its implications for the future.

As part of a regular direct mail program, 1,000 former subscribers of the *Gute Nachrichten* magazine were sent a special invitation to renew their subscription. The program has a 20 percent response rate. In addition, 100 current subscribers received an offer to receive the monthly newsletter *Intern*.

Two Pastors Appointed in British Isles

UCG-British Isles announced the appointment of John Ross Schroeder and Will McLoughlin as pastors of the Tonbridge and Bricket Wood congregations (respectively).

"My wife, Sonja, and I will continue to enjoy our visits to these congregations, but it will be a help knowing that the week-to-week needs will be provided for by two dedicated ministers," said Peter Hawkins, UCG-British Isles CEO.

Mr. Schroeder will also continue developing the meetings in Belfast and Ballymena, Northern Ireland, on a six-week basis or more often if possible.

British Isles National Council Sees Growth

The National Council of United Church of God-British Isles met for its regular quarterly meeting on May 29.

The circulation report for April, the most recent complete month for which figures are available, highlights the remarkable fact that in the first four months of 2005 more subscribers (2,180) have been added to the *Good News* list than in the whole of 2004 (2,161). Also, two thirds of the number of items of other literature requested in the whole of 2004 has been requested in just the first four months of 2005.

The downside of this is the impact on the Church's postage budget and an increase in the number of man-hours being worked in the Northwood office.

In her financial report, treasurer Barbara Fenney reported that at 10 months into the financial year, overall income is 16 percent above the anticipated amount. There was likely to be a £7,000 surplus over the present year as a whole.

The 2005 Summer Camp is rapidly approaching and David Fenney highlighted current plans and the expected

attendance of a number of young people from the United States and several European countries in addition to young people from Britain.

In discussion the Council felt it would be appropriate to extend an invitation to a number of teenagers on our *Vertical Thought* mailing list. The demographics of the teenage component of the Church and implications for camps in the next several years were also discussed.

The Council's principle item of business at this meeting was the approval of the budget for the new financial year beginning on July 1. Taking into account the higher-than-budgeted income trend during the present year, leading to an anticipated surplus at the end of the year, and the fact that UCGIA has agreed to a subsidy request specifically relating to servicing subscribers in areas outside of the United Kingdom, the proposed budget for the new year shows a 31 percent increase over last year's budget.

The Council directed that its Strategic Planning and Finance Committee consider the implications for the organiza-

tion's structure should this anticipated growth continue in future years. The Council accepted the proposed budget, which will now be submitted to the balloting membership for ratification at the Annual General Meeting July 24.

The Council's committees reported on their work. Highlights include:

- Feast Site Selection: David Fenney described some potential Festival venues in the north of England and North Wales and described the ongoing search for suitable holiday camps that could be used for the Feast. The Council discussed the possibility that the Church may need two separate Feast sites in some years due to a number of factors such as availability of facilities and the geographic distribution of members.

- Media and Internet: Peter Hawkins advised that he had discussed design proposals for a revamp of the UCG-BI Web site with Church personnel in Cincinnati and that he would be obtaining several quotations from Web developers for the work involved in implementing the redesign. UN

Good Works Project: Church Hall in Mumbwa, Zambia

The latest Good Works Project posted on the Web site (www.ucg.org/goodworks) was submitted by Andre van Belkum for a church hall in Zambia, with a total cost of \$16,000. It reads:

"Most of our members in Zambia are farmers who live in the province of Mumbwa. Since the inception of United they have been meeting in a structure composed of thatch grass, with little protection from the elements. With the increase in membership (143 attended the Feast of 2004), it seems an opportune time to consider building a more durable and permanent hall, and one that more appropriately represents the United Church of God.

"In spite of difficult and trying economic conditions, the members have been faithful in saving their first and second tithes, but these contributions are insufficient to cover the Church expenses in their country. Unless they obtain financial assistance, they will be unable to construct a hall from local income.

GCE Gears Up for "Next Decade and Beyond"

"GCE," continued from page 1

meeting was chaired by Rick Avent, chair of Amendment Committee.

Business Meeting

Mr. Kilough, as chairman of the Council of Elders, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m., and asked Pablo Dimakis, pastor of the Mexico City, Mexico, congregation, to give the opening prayer.

Mr. Kilough then introduced the new elders. One was credentialed and 10 ordained since the last GCE meeting. They are, in alphabetical order: Mike and Becky Bennett, Fred and Sue Crow, Michael and Barbara Joseph, Randy and Kathy Love, Fred and Lidia Nance, Tim and Maryse Pebworth, Blaney and Linda Sproul, Gary and June Steeves, Vince and Carol Szymkowiak (credentialed and serving in the Rolla, Missouri, area), Lloyd and Helen Teetaert and Steve and Margaret Villaeusca.

Next came the balloting portion of the business meeting. For results of the balloting, announced at the end of the day, see "Ballot Results" sidebar below.

Keynote Speech From the New President

The keynote speaker was the incoming president, Clyde Kilough. He asked the elders to personally consider the questions asked of the presidential candidates. What is your vision for the Church, and what would you focus on for the next three to five years? All of the candidates had the same basic vision. We all want the Church to be a place where people come and grow, like "the Zone" at our summer camps. We want a Church that is ever more positive, zealous, fervent and upbeat—that is truly focused on the Kingdom of God.

How do we achieve this? Mr. Kilough said we must always be on a quest to better coordinate our resources. What can we do better, faster and stronger? He said we will waste nothing, seek to continually lift our standards of performance and establish a true spirit of reconciliation.

Mr. Kilough said some of the chal-

lenges we face in this quest are the need for manpower, especially in the international areas, and the question of how we can stop being spread so thin. Wearing a lot of hats can get heavy, he said.

How can we improve the media? Mr. Kilough pointed out that the Council has drafted the Media Philosophy, and now we need to institutionalize it. How can we better reach the world? He talked about the globalization of our media efforts so that they are seen as a representation of the Kingdom of God, not of the United States. We must make decisions about the focus of our media efforts, he said. We want to be on the cutting edge of the Internet technology in the religious world.

Mr. Kilough encouraged the audience to follow the example of Nehemiah. Nehemiah 4 talks about the people rallying when they hear the sound of a trumpet, and "our God will fight for us." Mr. Kilough asked, Is there anyone who can't hear the trumpet blowing for the Church of God? Nehemiah had unwavering faith. We need to be Nehemiahs, he said.

Mr. Kilough pointed out that the strengths of the Church are spiritual in nature. The exercise of godliness has benefits in the future and now. We are not called to focus on our local congregations or nations, but the great work of God.

Mr. Kilough asked the audience to focus on their calling. What gave them meaning in life? He mentioned that he never gave the final heart-to-heart speech in Spokesman Club, but that he gave a heart-to-heart to the Council in the presidential selection process. He told about how he learned the truths of the Bible and was called by God.

He explained that real zeal and enthusiasm bring emotion, but should not be fueled by emotion. We shouldn't rely on an emotional spiritual caffeine jolt, but have a steadily burning inner zeal that drives us daily.

He explained how the fear of nuclear war caused his parents to consider moving to Australia, Latin America and a 500-acre farm in the Ozarks. But all of these plans fell through, and then his par-

ents heard the distinctive voice of Herbert Armstrong on the radio. They started getting the literature and "fighting" over who could read it first. He learned the purpose of his life early from the booklet *Why Were You Born?*

Coming into the Church of God meant big changes for his family. At age 13, in 1965, he attended the first camp in Orr, Minnesota, and was gone from home for eight weeks. He was convinced when he wanted to go to Ambassador College—given a sense even as a youth that we were called to be part of something big.

Mr. Kilough quoted Paul's instructions to Titus giving specifics to help him focus on helping every person and attending to their needs. Mr. Kilough encouraged the elders to put their shoulders to the work and to speak from the heart more than ever.

According to a study his wife read, the most contagious thing in the world is *mood*. Dean Wilson, a minister who died earlier this year, was a man of infectious optimism. Stir up one another to love and good works, Mr. Kilough said.

He mentioned that the fast he called for June 4 is between Passover/Unleavened Bread and Pentecost, and that we should focus on the themes of both seasons. He said we would hope that if members of the first-century Church could see us now, they would not only recognize us as having the same doctrines, but recognize us as having the same spirit and zeal.

International Reports

After a break, six ministers gave international reports.

First was Rainer Salomaa, reporting on the work of the Church in Canada. Mr. Salomaa said that Canada has served as a training ground for future presidents—three of the four UCG presidents have served in Canada!

He mentioned that on the national scene, right now Canada is facing the biggest governmental scandal in its history and has same-sex marriage legislation in the works. Also, four RCMP officers were shot recently, causing great trauma in the nation.

Mr. Salomaa gave an update about the Church in Canada. He mentioned that there are 23 members of the Canadian National Conference and nine members on the National Council. He showed photos of the office staff: Ed van Pelt, Kevin Ford, Linda Wasilkoff and Wayne Liu.

United News Canada is now handled by Graemme Marshall, and Canada's Ministerial Services team is made up of Bob Berendt, Glen White and Rainer Salomaa. The media team is coordinated by David Palmer, and the webmaster is Paul Wasilkoff. Canada has 21 elders; five are salaried and one is a half-time trainee. Herb Teitgen from the United States helps with the Winnipeg, Manitoba, congregation. He also said they are alternating summer camps between eastern and western Canada.

Peter Hawkins then reported on the **British Isles**. He said so many people in Britain live lives that are without meaning.

The Good News is going into 40 countries from the British Isles. Since the Internet is without boundaries, we are hearing from groups in countries such as Spain and Norway, receiving visit requests from Turkey, etc. There were 5,680 copies of the March/April *GN* sent out (20 percent of them to Europe, with postage about three times as costly as those sent to the United Kingdom).

Mr. Hawkins gave a list of the British ministers and the areas they serve. He mentioned that four new church services started in the last two years and that the Church moved offices. Two new elders and three deacons and deaconesses were ordained. Nine members also give split sermons. None of the ministers are full-time pastors.

Mr. Hawkins commented on the encouraging growth in *Good News* circulation and an exceptional 41 percent increase in offerings for Unleavened Bread. He also mentioned that the British Isles summer camp is attended by a number of Church of God groups.

Carmelo Anastasi reported on the work of the Church in Italy. He mentioned that 97 percent of Italians are Roman Catholic. The Church of God is legally free to proclaim the gospel now, but time is fleeting. There are very few financial resources and little time.

There are 21 members in the north, 16 in Sicily and other members scattered across the country. Total attendance is 62, including children.



International speakers: Peter Hawkins, David Baker, Kingsley Mather, Melvin Rhodes, Carmelo Anastasi and Rainer Salomaa; right, German elder Alfred Riehle and German ABC student Jurgen Haslop

The Italian *Good News* had dropped from 6,000 to about 1,500, but with advertising in several magazines they have attracted 1,500 new subscribers, so now they are up to about 3,000 subscribers.

Mr. Anastasi said they have now purchased a one-room national office, which also serves as a meeting hall and has other uses. He said the Italian brethren feel so isolated and welcome visitors.

Melvin Rhodes reported on **Ghana**. He mentioned that we were hoping to have two Ghanaian pastors at the GCE, but the U.S. officials didn't schedule their interview for travel documents until tomorrow! He said he hopes they can come next year.

Mr. Rhodes said Ghana is stable and prospering compared to its troubled neighbors. He expressed appreciation

for the Good Works projects that have helped build church buildings and buy a van for the Church in Ghana. He mentioned that there are four meetings of the Ghana National Council each year when he visits.

Mr. Rhodes talked about the Ghana Children's Home that members in Lansing, Michigan, help with. He also told the story of a young man who had typhoid fever for months since he didn't have the \$6.25 for the medicine. When Mr. Rhodes found out on his last trip, he bought the medicine for him. Mr. Rhodes described the summer camp in Ghana and mentioned that they are looking for Youth Corps volunteers.

Kingsley Mather then reported on the many different countries in the **Caribbean** region. The first UCG service was in Freeport, Bahamas (where 17 attend). Nassau, Bahamas, has 18 in attendance.

Jamaica has the largest group, with 54 baptized members in two congregations. Now a group of six people in Montego Bay want to become part of UCG. Leeford Burke, an elder from Jamaica, has tried twice to come to the GCE but has been turned down by U.S. authorities.

Barbados used to be "the Church of God of women," but now has eight men along with the 20 baptized women, with a total attendance of 40. We began airing *GN* radio programs in February.

In Guyana, our members are from Amerindian groups in the interior. There have been challenges getting tapes to them.

In St. Kitts there is an attendance of six. They have a *GN* radio broadcast there, as well as a brochure and newsstand program.

In St. Lucia, they have 15 attending and have brochure and newsstand programs.

In Trinidad, they now have 13 attending and recently incorporated the Church there.

Mr. Mather also discussed the Caribbean Leadership Training group and the youth camp in Jamaica. There are 10,800 *Good News* magazines being sent into the region, and *GN* radio programs air in three areas. Now about 250 people are being served in the Caribbean, while there were only two when Mr. Mather first came to the GCE.

David Baker reported on the work in the **Far East**. He mentioned there has been steady growth in the Philippines—there are now 22 congregations with 571 attending. They have three Feast sites. Though they wish they could all get together at just one site, transportation is too expensive. In 2001 the Philippines had 3,860 *GN* subscribers, and now has 8,263. Mr. Baker mentioned that one of the Philippine ministers, Mr. Siopan, has to travel for five days to reach one congregation! The Philippines also has a summer camp, which expects 36 campers later this month.

In Hong Kong there are five mem-

Ballot Results

At the end of the business session May 15, then Council Chairman Clyde Kilough announced the results of the balloting:

First, he gave thanks to Doug Horchak, who chose to step off the Council of Elders, for his years of service on the Council. The Council members chosen this year are Joel Meeker, Aaron Dean, Jim Franks and Larry Salyer.

- The 2005-2006 Strategic Plan passed with 303 yes, 18 no.
- The 2005-2006 Operation Plan passed with 301 yes, 18 no.
- The 2005-2006 Budget passed with 293 yes, 28 no.
- Amendment to the Constitution 5.1.1 passed with 279 yes, 24 no.
- Amendment to the Bylaws 8.2.1 did not pass with 183 yes, 124 no.
- Amendment to the Bylaws 12.2.2.6 passed with 260 yes, 32 no.
- Amendment to the Bylaws 12.2.2.7 passed with 255 yes, 44 no.
- Amendment to the Bylaws 12.2.2.8 passed with 208 yes, 104 no. (This is the official result announced May 24 by Secretary Gerald Seelig, confirming the provisional announcement at the GCE May 15. The amendment passed by exactly the two thirds required.)

- Amendment to Bylaws 12.2.2.12 passed with 253 yes, 49 no.
- Amendment to the Bylaws 12.2.2.1-12 passed with 286 yes, 19 no.

The revised Constitution and Bylaws can be found on the Web at www.ucg.org/about. The changed sections are 5.1.1 of the Constitution and 12.2.2.1 through 12.2.2.13 of the Bylaws.

bers. Many have been praying about Sophia Ma who had leukemia. Her cancer has gone into remission. Her brother will be going to the United Youth Camp in Texas this year.

In Sri Lanka there are 49 *Good News* subscribers and 15 members just south of the capital, Colombo. Mr. Baker baptized two people on a recent trip. We are hoping to establish a Feast site in Sri Lanka.

In India, there are 1,176 *Good News* subscribers and one member. The group in eastern India is still interested in our literature and is using our booklets for adult Bible classes. The group is very zealous—they have four services on the Sabbath! The children are able to recite long passages of Scripture. Mr. Baker was also visited by a man in India who serves a group of 100 attendees. He just heard about us and came all the way across India to meet Mr. Baker. The man also requested 1,000 *GN* brochures for distribution in his area!

In Myanmar, Mr. Baker gave a man an old *Strong's Concordance*. The man was very thankful and said there was not another book like it in his country.

Tribute to Deceased Elders/Wives

Ken Giese led a tribute to 14 elders and wives, with photos, tributes from family and friends and a printed brochure. Those remembered were:

Robert Ashland, Garry Barber, Janet Borton, Christine Carter, Elsie Conley, Teresa Dimakis, Rosene Hegna, Willie Johnson, Sherry Koon, Mary McCarble, Gene Nielander, George Peyton, Mary Whetson and Dean Wilson.

The afternoon was started with a prayer by Don Waterhouse.

President's Address

Roy Holladay reported on the last 10 years of United as well as growth in the last three years. In 1995 there were 11,726 attending on Pentecost and 17,458 at the Feast. In 2004 we had 55 Feast sites, and attendance has grown 30 percent over the last six years.

He reported that over the last three years we have added over a million dollars to reserves. Two years ago \$430,000 were added to reserves, and \$460,000 were added last year. This year another \$200,000 is projected to be added.

Mr. Holladay also mentioned the big increase in donors and coworkers and the 464,000 pieces sent out from the home office mail room. He reported that *World News and Prophecy* has grown from 18,000 to 30,000, and we anticipate it growing to 50,000.

Mr. Holladay also highlighted the growth of the United Church of God Web site. In 2002 we had a high of 120,000 visitors a month. Now we've had 353,000 for the highest month, and we're shooting for a half million this year. We've almost tripled the number of daily hits. Mr. Holladay said he was excited about the new media center.

Mr. Holladay also mentioned the Good Works program and the meeting held last year to help coordinate the education programs of the Church.

Three opportunities Mr. Holladay highlighted were the development of our children and teenagers, advancement of the Internet and growth in international

areas. He also listed challenges in handling difficulties among people in a way that promotes growth, focusing our proclamation efforts and transitioning responsibilities from the aging to the younger generation.

After Mr. Holladay's address, Mr. Kilough presented a gift and flowers to Roy and Norma Holladay to warm applause.

Treasurer's Address

Tom Kirkpatrick said that God has been good and generous in supplying our needs and then some. He has given us stability following the "earthquake" of the 1990s. Dr. Kirkpatrick said that maybe we have had seven fat years since 1998, during which we have stored reserves to help in future lean years, if God allows that to come.

He said the "train wreck" of 1998 has morphed into financial stability. Today's balance sheet expresses commitment to the longer term. Dr. Kirkpatrick stressed that God gets all the credit.

But to put things in perspective, he pointed out that one professional baseball player earns more each year than the entire income of the Church. He urged everyone not to give in to the temptation to say, "We are rich and increased in goods."

He mentioned that the salary ranges hadn't changed, and that last year's financial statements were printed in the September/October 2004 *United News*. He handed out a Summary Financial Indicators sheet that highlighted the tremendous change in financial position from 1997 to 2004.

Dr. Kirkpatrick pointed out that the trend to the end of the fiscal year shows income about 1 percent above budget.

Ministerial Services

Richard Pinelli, Ministerial Services operation manager, said this year has been a very good year overall, with a few glitches. Ministerial Services has fulfilled most of what was in the Operation Plan from last year. A few things in educational areas were not done since the ministers are wearing so many hats.

Why was U.S. Holy Day attendance down a little? He said he doesn't know, but he tries to look at the trends for the whole year. One factor is that the Church is getting older, and it is harder for many to travel to services.

Mr. Pinelli reported that there were 176 baptisms and two new congregations started last year. For the first time, new contacts without a Sabbatarian background (73 per month) were high-

er than the number of Sabbatarians (69 per month) who contacted our ministers.

Mr. Pinelli also reported that the final hardback hymnal will be ready in two years or less, and we hope to print copies for members who want to buy them for about \$3.50.

In the last three years of Leadership Workshops, 54 have attended and five have been ordained. There have been seven hires, and two hires are pending to balance the two pastors who are retiring.

There will be a Feast in Jordan this year, and Mr. Pinelli encouraged everyone to pray for peace in the Middle East. He mentioned that last year two Feast sites were spared the hurricanes (Panama City Beach, Florida, and Jekyll Island, Georgia).

There have been three-day regional conferences in six areas so far, and there has been good feedback so far.

Mr. Pinelli concluded with some lessons learned during the last 10 years, as reported by those at the three-day conferences: You do what is right because it is the right thing to do, regardless of the cost. We have seen peace grow. We have a God of peace, but He fights for His people (Romans 16:20). Righteousness leads to quietness (Isaiah 32:17). Mr. Pinelli encouraged everyone not to let down after 10 years. Satan will have war with the Church. Being comfortable is good, he said, except when it leads to complacency.

Media and Communications Services

Peter Eddington, operation manager, reported many key statistics in the growth of the media efforts, and highlighted the potential of the new Internet technologies that the Church is positioned to use even more effectively.

- Although the *Good News* print run remains fairly constant, individual subscriptions continue to grow. They are now at 312,000, for a 9 percent increase for the year.

- After several mentions in *The Good News*, *World News* and *Prophecy* subscriptions are rising very sharply, now nearing 35,000.

- There has been a 14 percent increase in donors, and a 15 percent increase in coworkers. Together they make up 8 percent of Church income.

- 40,000 mailings go out of the home office mail room every month, a 150 percent increase over 2002.

- A new e-mail initiative, called "This Is the Way," will go out to the 20,000 people who have signed up for e-mail

updates from the Church. The hope is that these short, interesting and helpful messages will be passed along to friends to reach a growing number of people.

- A press release about the Church's observance of Unleavened Bread was sent out to newspapers in 20 areas, including the local pastors' contact information. We also plan to test a press release about Pentecost as well.

- Print advertising is getting excellent results. There will be a record high of 9 million total impressions this year, and we expect 70,000 responses.

- There has been encouraging growth through the Web sites, with up to



George and Karen Meeker and Billie Sue and Burk McNair receive plaques in honor of 50 years of service in the ministry (photo by Janet Treadway)

350,000 visitors every month. We had about 300 visitors a day when we moved the office to Cincinnati; now there are over 11,000 a day. The *Good News* site has had a 418 percent increase.

- Internet keyword search advertising exposed 11.5 million people to our listings, and 2,619 Google users and 5,305 Yahoo searchers clicked through in April. Altogether, the Internet drew 20,000 responses in April.

Mr. Eddington said the Church has been increasing Internet advertising, while cutting back a little on print advertising. He also talked about the media center and the development of a multimedia Web site. Over the years the Church has capitalized on print and radio—the new technologies of the time. The seeds we are sowing will bear fruit at the right time.

Address From the Chairman

Clyde Kilough then gave the Council chairman's report. He asked, How has the Council developed in the last 10 years? To answer that question, he interviewed Bob Dick and Vic Kubik, the two men who have served on the Council continuously since the beginning of United.

They said the Council began with a clear focus and great zeal, but as many

were ordained in January 1955 and are celebrating 50 years in the ministry of the Church of God. An audiovisual presentation included photos from the past 50 years and video clips from the honorees.

Mr. McNair encouraged young people to do what is right—do unto others as you would have them do to you. Mr. Meeker advised spending time getting very familiar with the Bible, following what the Bible says. He said that's what people did in the early years, and they would pattern their lives on what they learned.

The couples received plaques in honor of the occasion and received a standing ovation from the General Conference of Elders.

The meeting concluded with prayer by Don Ward. UN

Selected Financial Comparisons			
	1997	2004	
Total current assets	\$311,499	\$6,307,690	
Total current liabilities	1,341,400	908,455	
Total net working capital	(1,029,901)	5,399,235	
Total unrestricted net assets ("net worth")	(775,094)	6,436,969	
Total income	15,785,912	19,096,637	
Total expense	16,570,894	18,725,224	
Total change in net assets	(784,982)	371,413	
Total appropriated funds set aside for retirement	"YGTBK!!!"*	788,756	

*You've got to be kidding!!

GCE Workshops Held May 16

On Monday, GCE attendees could participate in three workshops from the following:

- *Stirring Up Love and Good Works Through Friendship: Part 1: Women's Panel* (Teddi Treybig) and Part 2 and Ladies' Tea (Janel Johnson).
- *Working With Young Adults* (James Capo, Darris McNeely and David Treybig).
- *Vision for the Generations* (Doug Horchak and Mark Winner).
- *Communication—a Vital Ingredient for Happy, Successful Marriages!* (Gary Antion, Jerold Aust and Steve Myers).
- *Culture Warfare and the Church* (Larry Greider, Ralph Levy and Dave Reg-ister).
- *Extreme Makeover: Computer Edition* (Richard Kennebeck and Paul Wasilkoff).
- *Parenting Nuts and Bolts* (Ken Treybig, Larry Salyer and Gerald Hoyer).
- *Planning for Retirement* (Britton Taylor and Jon Gamant).



Ladies' Tea (photo by Janet Treadway)

United's 10th Anniversary: Looking Back, Looking Ahead

by Roy Holladay

During this spring and early summer, the United Church of God, an International Association, is celebrating its 10th anniversary. Of course, our humble efforts are simply a continuation of the work that Jesus Christ began in the first century.

To God Goes the Praise

First of all, we acknowledge, as Jesus Christ did, that it is God who receives the credit for any accomplishments over the last 10 years. In John 5:19 Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner."

Paul applied this principle to himself and the New Testament Church. "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:6-7). We fully recognize that God gives to each of us different gifts, talents, opportunities and responsibilities, but He produces the growth.

As we look back over the past 10 years, we need to reflect on what God has done for us by His inspiration and power, realizing our total dependency upon Him.

Blessing of Brethren

United has been blessed with a large core of members who have been in the Church for a long time—20 to 40 years. They remained faithful and in many cases took the lead against heresies being introduced. Since that time, our brethren have shown spiritual maturity in weathering the various challenges and trials United has experienced.

Members have served directly and indirectly in almost all facets of the work of the Church: local, regional, national, in the congregation, in humanitarian projects, in media efforts, etc. This is what Paul discussed in Ephesians 4:16, "from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

The members of the Church are our greatest asset—an army of Spirit-filled, committed and faithful servants. Our appreciation goes out to them for their support, prayers and involvement in continuing the work of God.

Leadership of Elders

Throughout the Bible, God has used elders to serve His people and provide them with direction, guidance, comfort and care. God has blessed United with hundreds of elders, both those employed and not employed by the Church, most of whom have been ordained for 10 years or more. These individuals have given of their energy, heart and time to help ensure a peaceful and enriching spiritual home for God's people.

United started with the approach that we would provide shepherds and servants to pastor and serve each congregation that we have. In addition, minis-

ters in United have been asked to fulfill more job responsibilities than in the past. These include writing, editing, serving at teen and preteen camps, coordinating Feast sites, special committees and task forces, Council duties, speaking more often, etc.

Their maturity and sound teaching have provided stability to the congregations. Notice the job of an elder in Ephesians 4:13-15: "Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried



about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ."

We thank you elders and wives for your tireless service to God, to His Church and to the world as a whole.

Youth of the Church—Our Future

United has always recognized that the youth are our future—future members and leaders. We have been blessed with many young adults and young people among us who are excited about God's plan and about working together.

God places a strong emphasis on passing along the truth of the Bible to our children, teenagers and young adults, and on bringing families together (Malachi 4:6). Back in 1995, the first item of business for the interim Council was the establishment of youth camps for that summer. Indeed, one of the biggest successes of United has been the United Youth Camps program, which has given thousands of teens and adult workers the chance to grow (spiritually and otherwise) in a concentrated and enjoyable environment. In addition, we have *Vertical Thought* magazine, Sabbath school programs, teen Bible studies and the Youth Corps program.

We want to offer special thanks to all those who have served faithfully and diligently in the youth programs. We salute our young people as well, knowing that it is not easy to serve God in this world.

Giving Attention to Doctrine

When we think about the main catalyst for the start of United, one word comes to mind: *doctrine*.

In the late '80s and early '90s, our traditional beliefs and way of life were being systematically dismantled. The insidious thing was that we were being

told that nothing had really changed. Yet almost every teaching was being undermined.

God has blessed United as an organizational home where we can practice our traditional beliefs in peace. God has preserved the truth and we strive to live it. Yet, we cannot take this for granted. Even in the first-century Church, the apostles had to warn about and combat false teachings. That danger was present then, and has been a threat ever since.

In the formation of governance within United, a process was established involving the General Conference of Elders, Council of Elders and numerous individual efforts so that no one person or small group of people could change doctrine again. On the positive side, this process also allows us to research, articulate and expound on those doctrines in a manner that is clear and thorough. We have heard many times about the effectiveness of our brochures,



Above, regional pastors in June 1995; upper left, first issue of *The Good News* handed out at the Feast in 1995; upper right, Council of Elders and wives Dec. 3, 1995; right, new home office building completed 2002

magazines and reprint articles.

Paul regularly admonished Timothy and others to emphasize doctrine—i.e., sound teachings. In 2 Timothy 2:14-16 we read: "Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness."

God has given us capable researchers, writers and editors who can make these vital truths understandable for a 21st century audience. Through the *Bible Study Course*, Web site, Fundamental Beliefs audio cassette program, study papers and literature, brethren and new people have several means by which they can study the main doctrines of the Bible.

Financial Stability

The spiritual, doctrinal and human resources God has blessed United with are by far the most important. However, funds are also needed to accomplish the work God has given us. Thanks to God's blessings, dedicated brethren, coworkers and donors have provided stable

financial resources through their tithes and offerings.

We all remember the potential financial disaster we were faced with in 1997. We appreciate all of the sacrifices that were made by both members and the ministry to blunt that monetary meltdown.

Since that time we have been able to accumulate proper cash reserves and live within our budgets.

Increases in income over the years have allowed the Church to slowly improve and expand its work in every area. Responsible and conservative use of finances by all employees during the last several years has allowed for a consistent cash flow and the ability to main-



tain a healthy level of reserves.

The Gospel Goes Out

The Bible is clear: the good news of the Kingdom of God



will be preached until the return of Jesus Christ, and the Church has been directed to proclaim that message. The New Testament Church began on that directive.

United was founded on the principle of greater involvement, and we see that in efforts that involve ministers and members in reaching out to the public.

United has been given, and has used, nearly every available method to preach the gospel. These include *The Good News*, *World News* and *Prophecy*, dozens of booklets, *Good News Radio*, two cable-access television programs (*Tomorrow* and *Good News*), the Internet, advertisements and public Bible seminars.

We have printed 3,543,000 booklets and currently we have 31 titles in print. We have printed over 15,690,832 *Good News* magazines and sent those to subscribers and other outlets. Recently, a media center was approved that will greatly increase our abilities in the video area—including TV programs and streaming video for the Internet.

Do Good to All

God has not only given us what we need to provide for people spiritually. He has also been generous to us so that we can offer charitable assistance to Church members and all humanity. While Unit-

ed must use most of its resources to carry out the commission of preaching the gospel and preparing a people, God has blessed us graciously so that we can also dedicate time, manpower and finances to help those less fortunate.

In working together with LifeNets and through the Church's own Good Works Program, hundreds of people have been helped in numerous countries to be able to establish better lives for themselves. The value of all goods and services easily reaches into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. LifeNets has been able to provide more than \$2 million in charitable assistance, most of which has benefited United members.

Growing in Knowledge

In both the Old and New Testaments, there are clear examples and instructions for training future leaders within the Church. Some of the prophets established schools to meet this goal. Paul instructed Timothy to train others, so that they could teach brethren: "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:1-2).

To this end, God gave us the means to establish the Ambassador Bible Center, a seven-month, intensive study of the Bible. This program gives detailed instruction in every book of the Bible. It also gives teaching on the major doctrines and practical Christianity.

Along with ABC, there has been a strong emphasis on education throughout the Church.

The Bible admonishes all members to grow in knowledge. United has been blessed with capable people in a variety of important educational areas: General Education, Youth Education, Ministerial Education and Focused Education. Each committee has specific plans for topics to be covered and methods to be used. This past year the first education conference was held to make sure that our efforts are being coordinated and that there is no unnecessary duplication of effort.

In addition to specific literature and articles in *The Good News* and *United News*, classes from ABC are made available online. Instructors from ABC also conduct three or four regional mini-samplers every year. Ministerial Services has also begun a program to mentor and develop leadership at all levels of the Church and among all age groups.

Walk in Faith

We could certainly say much more about the past 10 years. The credit and glory for what has been accomplished goes to God. The last 10 years demonstrate what God can do in spite of our human frailties and deficiencies. No matter how many "tangibles" we may have in people, literature, finances, etc., we must never forget that this is a work of faith. "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). Let us appreciate the blessings that we have, moving forward on our knees in seeking to follow God's will. UN



From the Word

Do You Practice 1 Thessalonians 5:21?

■ The Bible instructs us to examine, test and prove what we believe. It isn't good enough to just believe or to accept a doctrine just because it has been taught.

by Thomas L. Clark

The wet and coolness of spring was finally giving way to the pleasant warmth of early summer, so John and Marge decided it was time to invite the new neighbors over for a backyard barbecue. Over the course of the evening the conversation turned to church and religion.

Since John and Marge were established and comfortable with their church, the new couple asked several questions about their beliefs and why they believed them. John quickly found himself in a quandary with one of the "why" questions because he had no answer. He turned to Marge, who could not answer either. So he turned back to their guests and stated, "I guess I believe it because it's what our Church teaches."

As members of the Church of God, most of us find ourselves faced with questions about our beliefs from time to time. Questions like: "Why do you go to church on Saturday? Are you Jewish?" or "Why don't you keep Christmas? Don't you believe in Jesus?" And we can expect that our neighbors and coworkers will have questions, because our beliefs are in many ways very different from the beliefs of most of our neighbors, coworkers and even family members.

When you are asked questions about your faith, are you able to provide an answer, or do you find yourself in the same position as John? This is not what our Creator wants from those He has called and chosen to live His way of life!

In a list of final admonitions at the end of his letter to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul told the Church in

Thessalonica to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21, KJV). The word used for "prove" in the Greek means to "test, examine, prove, scrutinize" (*Thayer's Abridged Greek Lexicon*).

We are instructed to examine, test and prove what we believe. It isn't good enough to just believe, or to accept a doctrine just because it has been taught. Perhaps now would be a good time for each of us to ask ourselves: "Do I practice 1 Thessalonians 5:21?"

Being Like the Bereans

A wonderful example of doing just that is recorded in Acts 17. Paul and his party had trouble in the city of Thessalonica and had to leave under cover of darkness. They traveled west about 75 miles to the city of Berea, where Paul once again began to preach the truth.

Verse 11 says this of the men and women of Berea: "Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" (NIV).

The approach of the Bereans is something you and I can learn from. First of all they "received the word"—they listened attentively and respectfully to the preaching of Paul. They wanted to know what he had to say and make sure they clearly understood him before making any judgments.

Now I suppose it would have been much easier for them to listen and then conclude that Paul was correct, and accept what he said without further worry. But that was not their approach. They understood that the Word of God should be handled with dignity and care, not taken lightly or taken for granted. So they "examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."

Not only did they open the Scriptures and study subjects for themselves, but we are told they did so daily. They didn't just listen on the Sabbath and look up some things

then—they made a study of the Word of God a part of their lives *every day!* They wanted to know whether or not Paul's preaching was accurate. If they could affirm his teachings from the Scriptures they had (what we call the Old Testament), then they could accept it as something new they had learned.

If, however, they had found Paul's teachings to be incorrect when examined in the light of Scriptures, it is certain they would have rejected them as heresy. Put another way, it was important for them to know what they believed, but it was just as important to know *why* they believed it!

Their example is a wonderful lesson for each of us in the Church of God today. Paul was not always met with respect, but he was in Berea. It should be the hallmark of every individual and every congregation of God's Church that we listen and approach the ministry with dignity and respect (Hebrews 13:17). That is the starting point.

But we also must know with certainty what we believe, and we need to be sure we know *why* we believe it. To do that, we have to examine, test and prove our beliefs, carefully examining the things we are taught in the light of Scripture, being certain our faith is secure, not easily moved (Hebrews 13:9).

That is the danger of accepting the Church teachings blindly rather than following 1 Thessalonians 5:21. To the congregation in Corinth Paul wrote: "But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough" (2 Corinthians 11:3-4, NIV).

The Corinthians exhibited the all-too-human tendency to be taken in by a good sounding argument without

spending the time and effort to examine it carefully in the light of Scripture. The same thing happened later on in the congregations of the region of Galatia (Galatians 1:6; 3:1). If it could happen to them—it could happen to us!

Where Do We Start?

Understanding that, how can and should we go about examining and proving our beliefs? Where do we start?

We are fortunate to live in an age where studying the Scriptures is more convenient than ever before. Bibles in many different translations are commonly available, and many are fairly inexpensive to obtain. There are concordances that make finding a particular verse or section much easier and faster. There are Bible dictionaries, lexicons, commentaries and Bible atlases to help us further understand the words God chose to use, the circumstances in which the men and women of old lived and how to apply their examples to our lives today.

For those who are a little computer savvy, all of those Bible helps can be found in various computer programs or many times even on the Internet free of charge. A computer can make finding information faster, and often will allow you to pull material together from various sources and save it to a file or print it out as a study of a particular topic.

Church publications also provide a wealth of information that we can use to prove our beliefs. The topics addressed in various booklets have been researched and written carefully to be easy to understand and scripturally accurate.

The Bible Reading Program (www.ucg.org/brp) has been developed as a means to help each of us read through the entire Bible with a great deal of background information. It is a wonderful source of information and an aid to Bible study.

The United Church of God also has produced and distributed a sizable

library of tapes and CDs of the lectures of various Ambassador Bible Center (ABC) classes and sermons collected on various topics. The General Epistles and Epistles of Paul, the book of Daniel, marriage and family relations and much more have been taped and duplicated for each congregation to put in their library. Each provides another tool to use in personal Bible study.

All of these can be a big help to us in following 1 Thessalonians 5:21, but I want to offer a word of caution here: As well written and accurate as a magazine article, booklet and study course may be, as colorful and well presented as an ABC class may be, they are not Scripture, and watching, reading and studying them should not *replace* reading the Bible.

To effectively use material published by the Church, we should take the approach of the Bereans and listen (or read) intently, and then study the Bible daily to prove what we've read.

Prepared to Give an Answer

The benefits to each of us of examining, studying and proving our beliefs are tremendous. Our faith is strengthened as we become more confident in what we believe. We will not be as easily swayed by a new idea or passing fancy of doctrine that comes our way, because we will not only know what we believe, but, just as importantly, we will know why we believe it—and we can go back and prove it again if need be. We will be able to do what John and Marge couldn't when we are questioned about our beliefs: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15, NIV).

Paul told the brethren in Thessalonica to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." It was sage advice for the early Church, and it is needful for the Church of God in these end times as much or more than ever.

So once again let's ask, "Do I practice 1 Thessalonians 5:21?" UN

Remember Your Beginning!

■ Looking back over the last 10 years can remind us to be humble and thankful for all God has given us.

by Janet Treadway

It was a warm evening in May of 1995 when a group of 30 of us, along with our pastor, met in the basement of an elder's home. This was a very important meeting, to decide a major issue. Do we leave our church associ-

ation or not? And if so, what do we do?

Of course there was no doubt that all of us at that meeting had had enough of the changing of doctrines that left us with a crisis of conscience. We had to take action and do something.

When the question was asked if we should leave the church that essentially left us, all hands went up with a resounding "yes!" Why? Because we remembered our roots. We went back to the trunk of the tree, to where all of

us had started, grounded in God's Word. Why? Because God said in Numbers 15:40: "Then you will remember to obey all my commands and will be consecrated to your God" (New International Version throughout).

Many decisions were made that night. The one thing that stood out in my mind that evening was humility. We had nothing as a group of people to start out with: No meeting place, no podium, no sound system . . .

All we had was each other and the

determination to make it work and meet in a place where we could worship God in spirit and truth. We were willing to bring our own chairs to sit in just so we could meet together.

Why did we feel this way? Because Psalm 78:35 says, "They remembered that God was their Rock, that God Most High was their Redeemer." Psalm 103:18 adds that God is "with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts." The desire to do this was much greater than the desire to

remain in a church that had abolished God's laws.

United's First Pentecost

Pentecost was our first service with United. It was an emotional time for us. We were very sad that we had to leave friends and family members behind, but we were also happy that we could join others who remembered their roots, which were based on God's laws. The next Sabbath we met in a small conference room in a hotel. The first song we sang together was, "Oh,

How Love I Thy Law!" How many times had I sung that song before, but it seemed as if I were singing it for the first time and with great emotion.

I remember how people came out of the woodwork to serve with humility. Whatever needed to be done was done. People surprised me with their talents, which I never knew they had! Feast sites were put together in a matter of a few weeks, and some of the people involved had no previous experience.

Overwhelming Feast

The first Feast with United was overwhelming! At Jekyll Island, every sermon was met with applause. We were hearing sermons that were no longer allowed in our former association—sermons about the world tomorrow and its great meaning. The first *Good News*, published with the truth

of God, was handed out at the few Feast sites that we had. We were on our way to restoring the truth of God! It was a joy to run into people at the Feast that you knew and to share the excitement of remembering our roots and remaining true to God's truth.

Mighty Blessings

It has now been 10 years since that first Pentecost service with United. God has blessed us mightily. We have a beautiful home office building, more than 40 international Feast sites, 11 U.S. Feast sites, Ambassador Bible Center, 31 booklets, *World News and Prophecy*, *United News*, *Vertical Thought* youth magazine, six official Web sites, a *Bible Study Course*, eight United Youth Camps, 217 congregations throughout the United States, more than 150 congregations, Bible

studies and audio and video groups in 45 international countries, ministers to serve all of those churches and more.

We have come a long way from 1995. God was truly compassionate to us and has given us much. In Psalm 111:4 it says, "He has caused his wonders to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and compassionate." He truly has been compassionate to us as a people and a church.

As God has given us all these blessings, can we forget and lose that excitement that we had in the beginning? Can we begin to become unthankful, demanding complainers?

We must not lose sight of our beginnings. We must remember the humility that we had in 1995. In Psalm 143:5 David says, "I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works

and consider what your hands have done." We must go back from time to time and reflect on all that God has done for us with gratitude and thanksgiving, not only as a church, but as individuals.

Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering (Hebrews 10:32). Did we stand our ground in 1995? You bet! But it was God who helped us and blessed us. Hebrews 11 is a chapter about faith and about remembering all that God did for our fathers before us.

Be Careful Not to Forget

We must remember and be grateful for all the good that God has done for us. In Deuteronomy 8:11-14 Moses warned the children of Israel: "Be care-

ful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery."

Like the ancient Israelites, we all have stories to tell of our coming out of "Egypt," of how God delivered us and blessed us mightily. It is good to look back and remember lest we become haughty, proud, boasters, demanding and unthankful. Let us all remember and give God thanks for all that He has done for us! UN

Serious Illness Brings Greater Appreciation of Life's Preciousness

by John McClain

Two years ago the MRI showed a nickel-sized benign tumor in my right ear that had grown around the sheath that covers three nerves that transmit hearing, balance and facial control data to the brain. It had grown out of the bony canal of the ear and up against the brain at the top of the spinal column.

That would explain the loss of hearing and the frequent dizziness, the ear, nose and throat doctor said. He referred me to a surgeon who specializes in removing this type of tumor.

Only one in 100,000 people get such a tumor. It usually grows at an annual rate of 10 percent, and the cause is unknown. During this experience I have heard of others in the Church community who have an acoustic neuroma, but even larger than mine, so they have had more serious health problems and occupational complications.

Treatment Options

The surgeon explained that I had three options. I could choose observation by way of an MRI every six months, since it is a slow growing mass. However, if left untreated, in time the tumor could be fatal as it increased in size and pressed against the brain.

I could elect to have surgery, but there was no guarantee that the tumor would not grow back. I could expect total hearing loss in that ear, a droopy face, a dry eye and an eyelid that would not close properly and possibly permanent headaches because of the proximity of the tumor to the top of the spinal column.

What else have you got, Doc?

A third option was radiation treatments to kill the tumor. It took an oncologist to explain what to expect from radiation. The side effects, if any, were not as obvious and might be delayed for years. Any residual hearing could be saved. I would be spared the droopy face and would still be able to "pucker." My wife and I liked that.

However, with radiation there is the possibility of creating new *malignant* tumors adjacent to the *benign* tumor you

are trying to kill if the beam is not perfectly focused.

Each of these treatments was available just 10 minutes from our home.

What to Do?

I was anointed, we prayed and we waited for over a year from the first diagnosis. Another MRI at that time showed the predicted slow growth rate. Having to wait meant putting many things on hold. We couldn't just do what we wanted when we wanted. To quote a well-known person, "No problem for us patient guys!" Right?

We read all the literature from the surgeon and radiation oncologist. We searched on the Internet about acoustic neuroma, and found volumes of information on AN.

Our children were wonderful about finding Web sites and articles.

Local Support Group

We joined the local support group of the ANA, Acoustic Neuroma Association. It was a wonderfully helpful group, which met only semiannually, at best, but when I needed information, they just happened to have meetings.

There were members at the meetings who had had each of the types of treatments available. They were willing to share their experiences and I could see the outward results from those treatments. We did not like what we saw.

We asked the brethren in our local congregation for their prayers for my healing and for wisdom and guidance to make the best choice. This was another "support group" for us.

While investigating all the details we could find about radiation, we learned that a newer type of more focused radiation was available three hours from our home.

It would mean living there for two months during the series of fractionated radiation doses given daily five days a week for about seven weeks, instead of in one big dose. I had seen the negative results of that one dose method at an ANA meeting.

Then in the next follow-up MRI the tumor showed a growth spurt, just like

two other support group members had experienced, but this sudden growth rate was seven times the normal annual rate. The ENT doctor told me that I needed immediate treatment and he would not let me leave his office until I promised to schedule it; no more discussion about options and no more waiting with observation. He was refreshingly frank and firm.

I wanted to continue to wait because my first choice of the more focused radiation was not yet on-line at the new facility, and wouldn't be for another year. That was too long.

So we had a second consultation with the local oncologist and scheduled a starting date for radiation treatments. I felt peaceful and thought that we were getting the guidance and direction for which we had prayed.

The treatments were painless, although it took some time to get used to the restraining helmet needed to hold my head immobile while I was being zapped. I was very thankful for the skills the medical staff had learned on patients who had gone before me.

Just as they predicted, I was so very tired for weeks after the 28th and final treatment, but I remembered God's strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).

I kept thinking, "When you're down to nothing, God is up to something."

Recovery Statistics

Six months after the final treatment and just three days before Thanksgiving Day, the follow-up MRI showed that the tumor was . . . DEAD!! It will remain as scar tissue indefinitely.

We had many reasons to rejoice and give thanks. One in 10 acoustic neuromas are not killed. Only one in four patients get better. My balance had started to show big improvement at the Feast of Tabernacles. Even though the hearing was still poor, the loud noise before and after church services no longer made me nauseous. And my strength began to return.

Thirty-five years ago the treatment methods were very primitive by today's standards and the survival rate for AN



then faced something that was life threatening, and many of them talked about it. Like those in the waiting room, all Church members know that our past behavior was spiritually life threatening.

Although the ANA was, and still is, helpful, the Church is our best support group. It meets weekly, not semiannually, and we discuss much

Serious illness does more than interrupt our routine. It can alter our view of life and help us to focus on what's really important and to appreciate life's preciousness even more.

patients was poor. I am thankful that these more advanced medical techniques are now available.

Any Lessons From This Experience?

What am I supposed to learn from this? Besides wearing earplugs when doing noisy work to protect what hearing I have left, a few lessons come to mind.

In Job 36:22 Job's friend, Elihu, asks, "Who teaches like Him?" It has been most humbling to thank dozens of brethren for their prayers and to thank God for answering those prayers in such a positive way. If God had not been involved and had not healed, I would not have the quality of life I enjoy now.

So although I had treatments, I feel that God was involved and did heal. The results from these treatments didn't have to turn out so positively.

We thank God for each new day and the strength and health to enjoy it.

Serious illness does more than interrupt our routine. It can alter our view of life and help us to focus on what's really important and to appreciate life's preciousness even more. We are thankful that God is the great Sustainer.

Sharing with other patients in the oncology waiting room was an eye-opener. This was not your typical doctor's office waiting room! Everyone

more than serious illnesses. The Church always points us toward the Kingdom of God; nothing can be more supportive than that.

We certainly have more empathy for the person behind each prayer request.

We didn't know how good we had it for many years; we now appreciate good health much more than before. We experienced just a tiny little bit of what many brethren have gone through and are going through in health trials. May God heal each one as He sees fit to do.

The intricate medical details we learned through this trial served to reinforce Psalm 139:14: We are "fearfully and wonderfully made." These three nerves, which were impacted by the tumor, are each smaller than a human hair, yet they carry invaluable data for the brain to process about hearing, balance and facial control.

Patient endurance has been one big lesson. When exhaustion sets in, it is best to remember that this is all I can do today. When there is no strength, it is harder to have enthusiasm. Not being able to serve as I used to was a whole new experience in itself. I hope to return to more active service in the Church soon since God has been so gracious.

Don't rush to judgment. That dizzy old man you see stumbling along may not have a drinking problem. He may have an acoustic neuroma. UN

Reading the Scriptures to Your Children

■ Why not take advantage of the incredible, spongelike learning capacity of our children to start planting the most important information of all—God's instructions—within them at a young age? Here are some tips on reading the Bible as a family no matter your children's ages.

by Paul Luecke

The most recent educational video sermon, "Passing on Our Faith to Our Children," was given in all congregations last year. That message explained the importance of us parents imparting God's truth to our children through Bible study, prayer and conversation. This article addresses the specifics of reading the Bible to our children.

At what age should we start reading the Scriptures to our children? God's Word should be an important and natural part of life from very early childhood on.

We expect small children to grow up learning songs, stories, the names of colors and the sounds animals make. Why not take advantage of the incredible, spongelike learning capacity of a small child and start planting the most important information of all—God's instructions—within them?

Following are some ideas for effectively reading Scripture to your children:

1. Make it an important, daily activity.

Children are highly adaptive to new routines and habits, but repetition and consistency are the key. A regularly scheduled, daily activity becomes part of their normal, comfortable routine of life.

How much time should we spend per session? A wise parent will find the balance in setting a time period that is neither unreasonably long, nor so short that it gives the impression God's Word is a low priority in our day. For comparison, how long can a preschooler sit to watch a television show or hear a story read to them? How long can an elementary-age child sit to listen to a teacher in a classroom or read a book?

2. Read from the Bible.

There are many good materials to read, but ultimately there is no substitute for the Bible itself. You cannot go wrong by starting in Genesis and reading on through the Bible. Alternate methods are also fine, such as alternating books from the Old Testament and New Testament (Genesis, Matthew, Exodus, Mark, etc.).

For young children, consider skipping over long lists such as genealogies, or briefly summarizing them. You may also want to paraphrase some passages, putting them into your own words in simple language your child can under-

stand, instead of reading the text as written.

Proverbs can be read through multiple times, since it was written specifically for youth. Reading from this book could be interspersed through the year. Perhaps every Monday's reading session could be a chapter or two in Proverbs. In that way you'll review the book over and over through the months and years. Or you could take two weeks to go through Proverbs, twice a year.

Another idea is to read one chapter of Proverbs each day before continuing your ongoing chapters of Bible reading. (Since there are 31 chapters in Proverbs, you could even read the chapter that corresponds to the day of the month).

3. Have children join in reading when they learn to read.

Everyone who can read could read a few verses each, taking turns throughout the reading session. Beginning readers might be given just a verse or two each turn. Better readers can read more verses per turn.

Whenever your child learns to read, consider presenting him or her with a Bible of his or her own. In order for our children to learn the Bible and become familiar and comfortable with handling it, studying it and using it, they need to have one. It should be a true Bible, not a pseudo-Bible or children's storybook-type volume. It should contain all the same scriptures a regular Bible has.

An example of a good starter Bible would be the International Children's Bible, New Century Version. Each verse is reworded (paraphrased) in short sentences with a third-grade vocabulary, easy for younger children to comprehend. It is a good choice for children just starting to read, through about third or fourth grade.

As they become more proficient readers, it is time to advance to a Bible such as the New King James Version, which is an excellent choice for a study Bible. Thumb tabs are also very helpful for children to find books faster.

4. Plan ahead to add interest.

Do a few minutes of "homework" of your own before each reading session. Some ideas to bring into the reading session of the day include:

- Comment on the scriptures. Your reading will become much more effective as you add your own comments to the passages you read. Ask questions to make them think (this is important). Make up a little story that gets a point across. Act out the scenario. Anything you add along these lines is well worth the effort.

- Pictures. As the saying goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Some Bible resource books (Bible dictionaries, Bible encyclopedias, etc.) contain some good diagrams or pictures. A word of caution regarding pictures, however: A child's mind is very impressionable and a picture can stick in the mind for a long time. With this in mind, we should avoid using certain pictures such as those that depict Christ with long hair, for example.



At what age should we start reading the Scriptures to our children? God's Word should be an important and natural part of life from very early childhood on.

- Props. Props are a great teaching aid. For Proverbs 11:1, you could bring a balance scale (even a homemade model) and some weights (such as checkers or clay pieces) and illustrate the lesson God is giving in this verse. For Genesis, you could construct a model of Noah's ark; and for Exodus 25 through 31, a model of the tabernacle.

- Make a time line. Starting with the beginning of the Bible have your child start a time line of the sequence of the major events you are reading about through the Bible. You could provide a short roll of fax paper or sheets of graph paper taped together to make a continuous time line that can be rolled up or folded.

- Have your child memorize important scriptures. "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. *You shall teach them diligently to your children*" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

The word translated here as "teach" is the Hebrew word *shanan*, which means to sharpen, whet, teach (incisively), pierce or inculcate. The intent of the word *shanan* includes reading, repeating and reviewing the scriptures in order to etch them deeply in the mind.

Memorizing is a normal part of life for a child—from the alphabet to nursery rhymes to state capitals. It should be a normal part of life to

memorize the most important information of all—God's words.

Important Themes to Reinforce While Reading

There are many important concepts we need to impart to our children from the Bible. But because of our understanding of our calling, there are some we need to especially emphasize as we read through the Scriptures.

1. Our children have an invitation from God.

They have a special invitation to be part of God's coming Kingdom (Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 7:14). This is a great honor; others will not receive this invitation until after Christ returns. God revealed to us His truth and plan, which most others cannot yet understand.

We are expected to live differently than the rest of the world lives and set a good example to them. It is only natural that in many ways we will be different from our peers in school and society. Reinforcing this concept will greatly help our children in resisting negative peer pressure as they grow older, and will help them embrace convictions as their own.

2. "Fear God and keep His commandments" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

The world around us is becoming irreverent and opposed to the God of the Bible. Many don't even believe God exists. We should review often that God is the Creator of everything, and talk

often about the marvels of His creative genius. The time to start impressing the reality of our Creator God and the fallacies of evolution is before your child is bombarded with evolutionary ideas in the world and public school system.

We owe our Creator great respect, and we must carefully do whatever He tells us to do. God's laws should become as familiar as the ABCs and names of colors to our children. Knowing the Ten Commandments and annual Holy Days in order is fundamental. As with learning any important subject, repetition and review are key to imbedding it deeply into long-term memory.

3. The Kingdom of God.

We all need vision to stay focused in our calling and living God's laws. The perpetual question on a child's mind is, "Why?" "Why should we try so hard to keep God's laws?" "Why should we resist peer pressure?" "Why do we have trials?" As parents, we need to continually keep the bright future painted before our child's eyes (similar to the proverbial carrot held before the donkey's eyes that kept him going forward).

Talk about every aspect of God's Kingdom—often! Spend time on prophecies about the Millennium, and go into vivid detail in any way possible. Talk about the animals being changed, what life might be like in a town in the Millennium, how they will be teaching others, how everyone will go to church on the Sabbath, how there will be no more wars, hunger, crime, pollution, etc.

4. End-time prophecies.

As our children grow older, they also need to learn what God says will be happening in the end time. End-time prophecies should not outweigh Kingdom of God prophecies in our emphasis, but we must include them and discuss them in detail as our children become old enough to grasp the concepts. We don't want our children to become deceived in the future, as the rest of the world will be. They need to know what is coming to be forewarned and further convicted to commit their life to God rather than be part of the world.

As the Twig Is Bent, So Grows the Tree

One thing that any of us parents will agree on is that our children grow up too fast! Before we know it, the little sapling has become a tree. People train trees with anchors and wire or other such means to nudge the young tree to grow in the right direction. But for this to work, the training must be a daily force on the tree, not an occasional one. God has charged us as parents with the responsibility to train the growth of our children in the right direction—God's direction.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Reading God's Word to our children is a vital part of shaping the minds and hearts of our children for the future—not only for the end-time events that already are on the horizon, but for taking their place in the Kingdom of God. UN

Treasure Digest

Beginning of Birth Pangs

With the recent tsunami, the terrorist bombing of the World Trade Center and the war on terrorism, our attention is drawn to the prophecy in Matthew 24. Jesus said, "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:7-8).

According to *Strong's Concordance*, the word translated "sorrows" is defined as, "A pang or throes, especially of childbirth." So verse 8 could be translated, "All these are the beginning of the labor pains of childbirth."

This is very interesting when we realize that God compares the pain that man will experience during the last days just before Christ's return with the pain of childbirth.

In Isaiah 13:6-9 we read, "Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty . . . Pangs and sorrows will take hold of them; they will be in pain as a woman in childbirth."

Knowing that God uses the example of the pain during childbirth to illustrate the pain experienced by those just before Christ's return, we may safely assume that the frequency and magnitude of the pain will increase as we get nearer to the end of this age.

The good news is that the entire earth, as well as the universe, is looking forward to that new birth. It is looking forward to the time when the children of God will be born into the family of God. Paul, writing about the future, said, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the

glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God . . . because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now" (Romans 8:18-22).

Even as a pregnant woman must experience the increasingly intense pains of childbirth and sometimes excruciating pain during delivery, once the baby is born and she holds it in her arms, it overshadows all the previous pain that she experienced. And so it will be for this world and everyone in it when the Kingdom of God is finally established.

Bill Faith
St. Louis, Missouri, congregation

Recharge Daily

"Recharge daily" was the third point of Mitch Knapp's recent sermon on "Following Christ's Example."

Throughout the sermon, he gave examples of how Christ drew His strength from God to meet the demands of spreading the gospel and serving the needs of mankind by intense prayer, meditation and dwelling on the Word of God. These three elements seemed to be the preparation, indeed, the foundation necessary to live a powerful, victorious Christian life.

If Christ, the Son of God, needed those three elements for success in His ministry, how much more should we need to fit them into our daily routine, if we hope to make a difference for God?

I quickly recognized that my lack of attention to

these important details of the Christian walk had sadly diminished my spiritual growth and rendered fairly ineffective my Christian witness.

Had I been content to "just get by" by having my spiritual senses "titled" by inspiring messages on the Sabbath, only to return to daily life seemingly unaffected by what I'd heard? Was I the seed

sown that heard the Word, grew for a short time, but then withered for lack of nourishment? In taking an honest look at myself, I had to respond, "Guilty as charged!"

I was without excuse. My cares were no greater than anyone else's. My day, too, consisted of 24 hours. Those 24 hours were filled with the activities I chose.

If I neglected the "weightier" things such as daily recharging through prayer, meditation and studying God's Word, God granted me the freedom to do so, and must have watched sadly as I denied His power to give me the best: power to discern and resist evil, power to meet whatever task came before me with confidence and wisdom, power to let His light for good, truth and righteousness shine through me to the world.

Will I act on the encouragement to pray, meditate and study, or will I forget about it and continue to deny God's power in my life? Will I make the best choices for my allotted 24 hours, or will I revert to the status quo?

I resolve to daily recharge by prayer, meditation and study of God's Word, fully confident that "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it" (Philippians 1:6).

Claudia Brunick
Watertown, South Dakota, congregation

The Big "Let Down"

Our home is our refuge from the world. It is the place we go to put our feet up, let our hair down and be ourselves. So much of the time when we are at work, Church or other social events, we have to put our best foot forward and be on our best behavior. This is how it should be—we should be at our best to ensure we are treating others properly and being good examples. But at home, we can "let down" a little. We can relax and loosen up.

This can be good and bad. It is good that we are more comfortable at home. Our family members know us well, and we know them well. We are usually more open and candid with them than we are with others. However, if we are not careful, we can "let down" too much and end up treating others better than members of our own families.

We can sometimes not give our loved ones the care and consideration we should.

Show courtesy: Our families deserve our courtesy just like others do. When a family member does something we have asked them to do, or does something special for us, are we appreciative? Do we say "thank you"? By not showing appreciation, our mates and children can be left feeling like they can never please us, and resentments can start to grow.

Also, when we want one of our family members to do something for us, do we ask them in a courteous way? Do we show consideration for their time and not assume our needs are more important? Do we order them around, or do we use kindness and consideration when making requests?

Show respect: Our families also deserve our respect. Do we show honor in the way we talk to each member, or are we quick to criticize and nag? When there are problems and disagreements, are they handled in a proper way, or do we fly off the handle and use words that we later regret? Belittling and criticizing in front of others can be especially hurtful.

Our family members deserve our best, but some-

times end up seeing our worst. Let's remember to treat them with courtesy and respect so that we don't end up "letting down" the people who mean the most to us.

Nancy Morgan
Huntsville, Alabama, congregation

A Cave Lesson

When my family and I were on a tour of Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, we found that losing the light can be devastating.

While we were deep in the cave, the lights were extinguished in one of its rooms so that we could experience the cave in its natural state. Instantly we fell into an abyss of darkness. All our senses were lost. Time and space did not exist.

Was this the darkness that was upon the earth in Genesis 1:1? Was this the same as the darkness poured out in Revelation 16:10, when the people would gnaw their tongues because of the pain? We

feared to move, for literally you could not see your hand in front of your face.

Gradually people began to speak in reverently subdued voices. Then the lanterns were lit. The guides with lanterns led the way into a tunnel off the room. My daughter and I happened to be the last of the group. We took this

opportunity to look back a moment in awe and wonder.

This was a moment too long! The people and the lanterns went around a bend in the tunnel. Once more we were in that impenetrable darkness. As we were about to panic, a light appeared a short distance away.

A voice said, "There you are. I had a feeling someone was left behind. It is a good thing I turned back."

"Thank you! Thank you!" we said together. Our knees were weak as we walked gratefully to the light, and followed our rescuer closely.

Holding my hand, my daughter said, "Let's stay close all the way, Mom."

"Yes, we will for sure!" I answered.

For the rest of the tour we did just that. Because of this experience, Psalm 119:105 is ever present with me. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Jesus Christ is the light of the world; He is the Guide who will show the way, through the dark times on earth, into eternal life in His Kingdom (John 8:12).

Phyllis Newton
Eau Claire, Wisconsin, congregation

Overfocused Serving

Service takes many forms, from the ministry to ushering, but in whatever form it takes, we must be careful of our attitude. When we do it to distraction, it can be a problem.

At the Feast years ago, my husband was in pain, so he went to the lobby. There he and a minister were talking, when an usher approached them and rudely said they should be quiet. The men thought that they'd been loud, so they apologized and whispered. A moment later the usher returned, only this time he threatened them. Insulted, both men said their good-byes and left the area.

The usher was trying to do a good job, but did he? He neglected the feelings of his brothers; the men weren't disturbing anyone. Had the usher kindly asked the men to move outside or offered an expla-



Turning the Hearts "Honor Your Father and Your Mother"

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12). One of the Ten Commandments concerns the relationships between parents and children. And that relationship will affect the lives of the children—whether they live "long" or not.

With Mother's Day last month and Father's Day in June, we are reminded of the need to honor our fathers and our mothers.

I know some have not had good experiences with either one or both parents. I'm truly sorry if you did not have a positive experience, but perhaps you may still be able to apply some of these points.

How may all of us "children" show honor and respect to our parents?

1. **Listen to your parents.** This is especially important for younger children still in the home. But even when we are on our own, it is still important to listen to the advice of our parents and then make our decisions. Remember, our parents have usually had more experiences with life than we have had. They also usually know us better than anyone else (Proverbs 1:8).

2. **Ask your parents questions about themselves.** Children would do well to ask their parents about how things were when they were younger so they can learn about times and circumstances in their parents' generation. This really helps children to relate to their parents (Exodus 12:26).

3. **Think and thank.** We can remember special occasions like their anniversary, Mother's Day, Father's Day and Thanksgiving with cards, gifts, flowers and words of how grateful we are to have parents like them. How thankful we should be to them for giving us physical life (John 11:41).

4. **Determine to succeed.** When we are successful in marriage, vocation, education and in life, we bring honor to our parents. I've sat with many parents and watched them "glow" as they told me how pleased they were with how their children were doing in life. If we determine to do the best we can in life, with God's help, we will honor our parents and our God (Proverbs 10:1).

5. **Love our parents.** Love requires action. It's not enough just to think nice thoughts about our parents. We need to let them know we love them with hugs, kisses and doing things for them. Remember, love is an outgoing concern for others and is important in both words and deeds. Parents know when they feel loved and cared for (Genesis 46:29; 47:12).

So let's remember to "turn our hearts" to honoring and respecting our parents, not only when reminded by Mother's or Father's Day, but regularly throughout the years (Malachi 4:6). Then may we be blessed with not only a long life in the flesh, but for all eternity.

Gary Antion

nation, their feelings would have been spared.

I have often thought of this man and wondered why he was neglectful, until the day I was hurtful and overzealous in my duties.

I had been asked to serve on the church snack service. Anxious to help, I arrived early to set up. During preparation, another member approached me. He tried to explain that there was coffee left by the previous users of the hall, but I didn't let him finish. I told him that we used instant coffee. He again attempted to tell me about the um full of coffee, free for our use, but again I cut him off.

I didn't hear until I shut my mouth and gave him time to explain. He ended with the comment: "Don't shoot the messenger!" I was apologetic, but I couldn't take back my rudeness or the poor impression I'd made.

I returned to my duties, but was still overly focused on them and at the end of the day someone said, "Wow you didn't even say hello to me today." That's when it hit me. I was that usher. I hadn't yelled, but I'd neglected even the simplest of courtesies.

We mustn't allow our diligence in serving to take our focus away from those we are serving. We may have to be about our business, but there's no reason we can't stop and say hello or take the time to listen.

Lorelei Nettles

Phoenix East, Arizona, congregation

Jesus Christ: Why the Early Life Experiences?

When Jesus Christ started His ministry, He was 30 years of age. His public ministry only lasted three and a half years. If He came to preach the gospel and to offer salvation, why did He wait so long to begin His ministry? Why did He spend 30 years in relative obscurity when He had a major mission to accomplish?

Christ's early years were necessary to fulfill prophetic timing and to provide an opportunity to experience human existence similar to other people. The 70 weeks prophecy given to Daniel (Daniel 9:20-27), and other prophecies had to play out before He could begin His ministry (Mark 1:14-15; Isaiah 40:3; Luke 1:12-17).

Wrestling with problems and challenges that are common to us all, He became an understanding and sympathetic High Priest who knows what it is like to be human.

Jesus Christ was not a wandering vagabond without human ties or responsibilities. God made sure He had personal experience in a family environment. He had four brothers and at least two sisters. He experienced life as both the oldest son and the male leader of the family. Jesus learned firsthand the advantages and challenges of a close-knit family.

Additional experience was gained working in, and apparently eventually running, the family carpentry business in His hometown of Nazareth (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). The carpentry profession at the time offered a large variety of trade and business experiences. The Greek word *tekton* had a far wider application than merely the term *carpenter*. It included much more than just the fabrication of wooden dwellings. Most of the homes were a combination of stone, mud and clay, hewn beams and lumber. Christ would have been proficient in the use of all these materials.

His stepfather Joseph would have instructed Jesus in the biblical principles of hard work and dedication to the job at hand (Ecclesiastes 9:10). Jesus made Himself of no reputation and took on the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7), providing for His family.

Through these family and business experiences, Jesus had the opportunity to apply God's way of life in the real world. These experiences became

the foundation for some of His later teachings. Jesus could explain parables and principles with firsthand experience in mind. He could teach others to do as He had done, not just do what He said. He could talk about human duties and relationships in a practical way because He lived them Himself.

Today Christ is a more effective, understanding and sympathetic High Priest because of His early life experiences. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15-16).

Rod Hall

Spokane, Washington/Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, congregation

Is Thank You Enough?

Ingratitude may be considered one of the worst of crimes. It is prevalent in our age, indicating the decline of religion and belief in God.

A gift—be it small or great—deserves a simple, but effective, "thank you." Little things in life make a big difference.

Are we faithful in the little things, or are we poor in returning gratitude? Benjamin Franklin said, "Most people return small favors, acknowledge medium ones and repay greater ones—with ingratitude."

Everyone would agree that it is our duty to show gratitude to those who have given us a gift or performed a service. Through thankfulness we proclaim our faith and make clear to our neighbors how attentive we are to the little things.

Christ said that if we are faithful in the least little things, our reward will be much greater.

Unexpectedly hearing "thank you" can be most welcome and uplifting. Someone in Church some time ago thanked me. She explained that, somehow, I had encouraged her at a difficult time. Hearing that impressed me and encouraged me. A thank you for encouragement works.

What about when someone gives a gift of money, a gift of his or her talent in art or some craft or an invitation for a meal? Is a simple verbal "thank you" adequate?

Personally, I would think it insensitive of someone who received a physical or material gift or an act of service not to send a thank you note. And most ungrateful of all is one who forgets that a gift has been given. You may like to read a good illustration of the need for gratitude in Luke 17:11-19. Nine out of the 10 who were healed were "no-shows"—a poor display of gratitude. It seems we have many requests to make in life, but few think to return and give thanks.

God helps us to be grateful for our blessings, then strive never to be guilty of the sin of ingratitude. We cannot send God thank-you notes, but we can have our supply of notes to send friends acceptable tokens of thanks, as we return love for love.

Paul Dzing

Tucson, Arizona, congregation

Deepening Conflicts

Conflict is like a mountain stream. Along this stream are large and small obstacles to overcome—some are huge boulders, others are small pebbles. Further downstream, as gravity pulls the water toward the sea, deep cuts are made in the earth as it races toward its destiny.

The moral of this metaphor is that individuals need to take care of conflicts and misunderstandings in their initial stages while they are manageable. Refusal to do so produces deep wounds that may never heal, leading to a virtual sea of sorrow and unresolved problems that can last a lifetime (Proverbs 18:19; 15:1; 25:11; Matthew 18:15).

Terry Hoffman

Phoenix East, Arizona, congregation

Points for Enriching Your Fasts

For years in the Church I heard that fasting, along with prayer, Bible study and meditation, were tools

a Christian could use for spiritual growth. However, it took many years before I learned how to use this powerful tool. From personal experience and the input of others, I have found three aids that have been extremely helpful in each stage of a fast. They are planning, prayer and journaling.

When to plan a fast is a personal decision. Some people schedule them regularly and some according to need or motivation. As soon as a fast is scheduled is a good time to begin praying that God will bless the fast and will show you what He wants you to include in your fast day. It is beneficial to have a notebook or journal to record the dates and details of what you prayed about.

At this point, before the fast, you can begin to write down things that come to mind, such as the needs of the Church's work, prayer requests from family and brethren and points for personal growth and overcoming.

Leave space on the page to write in the answers to prayers and needs because they often come

quickly! When it takes longer, it is helpful to have them written down because it is so encouraging to see that God remembered your requests!

On the day of the fast, after prayer and study, record what you learned and scriptures you found helpful, as well as goals for growth and change.

Once the fast is over, the going forward begins, and the prayers for God's help certainly continue.

This is also a time for planning how to implement your goals, how to serve those in need and encourage others with perhaps a call or a card. In Isaiah 58:6-9 we're encouraged to reach out to others as part of our fasting.

As the days go by, the journal can be reviewed to see how far we've come. It becomes a record of God's intervention and help in His work and in our lives.

Melania Nutzman

Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation



Share Your Word Treasures!

Do you have any short items of biblical wisdom, humor or practical information that you would like to share in this section? Or if you have any suggestions, please contact *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027 or mike_bennett@ucg.org.

Be Ready to Give an Answer: Why Do You Believe in Tithing?

Our *Fundamental Beliefs* booklet puts it this way: **We believe in tithing as a way of honoring God with our substance and as a means of serving Him in the preaching of the gospel, the care of the Church, attending the festivals and helping the needy (Proverbs 3:9-10; Genesis 14:17-20; 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; Numbers 18:21; Deuteronomy 14:22-29).**

To "tith" means to give a tenth of "all the increase" (Deuteronomy 14:22) derived from one's produce, property or income, for the support of a religious purpose. The motivation to tithe is a worshipful recognition of God as the Creator and Possessor of everything, including ourselves.

Although tithing became a written law under the covenant God made with Israel, it was practiced among those who were faithful to God before that covenant. Abraham, after his defeat of the four kings, tithed on the spoils of the war to Melchizedek, priest of God Most High (Genesis 14:18-22). Abraham obviously understood giving a tenth as the appropriate way to honor God with one's physical possessions. Note that Abraham gave the tenth to Melchizedek, a representative of the Creator.

Abraham recognized the underlying premise for giving a tithe to God: He is the actual "Possessor of heaven and earth" who made his victory, and all blessings, possible. God reminds us throughout the Bible, and people of God respectfully acknowledge, that everything belongs to God (Exodus 19:5; Job 41:11; Psalm 24:1; 50:12; Haggai 2:8). "And you shall remember the LORD your God," Moses told Israel, "for it is He who gives you power to get wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:18). Tithing is thus, first and foremost, an act of worshipful recognition of God as our source of existence, blessing and providence.

Jacob also followed the example of his grandfather Abraham. When God reconfirmed to him the promises He had made to Abraham, Jacob promised God, "Of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth [tithe] to You" (Genesis 28:20-22).

The practice of tithing was later incorporated into the covenant with Israel as a written law. The tribe of Levi, which was not given an inheritance of land from which they could derive increase (Numbers 18:23), was to receive the tithe of the agricultural produce in return for their service to the nation. The Levites, based on what they received in tithes from the people, in turn tithed to the priests (18:26-28).

As time passed, the tithe was carelessly neglected in postexilic Judah, for which God corrected the nation in the strongest of terms (Malachi 3:8-10). Failure to tithe, God said, was robbing Him, and the people were consequently cursed. Yet He also promised that renewed obedience in tithing would result in blessings from Him so abundant that "there [would] not be room enough to receive it."

Some centuries later, Jesus Himself clearly upheld the practice of tithing. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone" (Matthew 23:23). Christ plainly confirmed His will that tithing should indeed be practiced, along with sincere adherence to other "weightier [spiritual] matters."

As tithes and offerings in Israel were given to the tribe of Levi for their livelihood and service to God, the Church in the New Testament provided financial support for the ministry to carry on their work. Instances of, and principles relating to, this practice are found in Luke 10:1, 7-8; 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; 2 Corinthians 11:7-9; Philippians 4:14-18 and Hebrews 7.

Today the United Church of God continues the teaching that tithing is a universal law and that one's willing obedience to this law reflects the unselfish, giving nature of our Creator and Provider.

Through tithing that springs from willing and cheerful giving (2 Corinthians 9:6-8), God has provided the perfect financial system to take care of the needs of His work (Matthew 24:14; 28:19-20), the personal need to attend His festivals and the need to care for the poor (Deuteronomy 14:22-27, 28-29).

For more information, see *What Does the Bible Teach About Tithing?*



Local Church Updates

Indianapolis Celebrates 10th Anniversary of United

On the Last Day of Unleavened Bread, April 30, the Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation hosted a special celebration of the 10th anniversary of the United Church of God. The services were combined with the Lafayette, Terre Haute and Fort Wayne, Indiana, congregations, and many brethren came from Louisville, Kentucky. Additional visitors from surrounding states pushed the attendance to 301.

The activities culminated with a formal dinner and dance, attended by 113 members from the various areas.

During the first service, Darris McNeely, pastor of the Indianapolis and Fort Wayne congregations, integrated a commemorative video developed to document the history of the Indianapolis United congregation into his sermon. He conceived the idea because he "wanted to remember what it was like at that time by letting members tell their story. United was about members coming together to preserve the truth. Our history is an important legacy for us to keep intact."

The content of the video was directed by Mr. McNeely with help from several local members, and produced by Beth Pulliam from Cincinnati, Ohio.

A very meaningful aspect of the video was a segment with photographs of the members who have died in the faith during the past 10 years, and then the children who have been born.

Debbie Zimmerman, a member in Indianapolis, said, "It was especially moving to see the brethren who have died . . . It's encouraging to see that so

to give God the time He deserves."

Mr. Winner also served as the deejay for the evening dance, and occasionally abandoned his post to join others on the dance floor.

The meaning of the Holy Day combined with the anniversary was indeed cause for celebration, and the activities brought wonderful memories of the past and hope for the future.

David Cobb

Vancouver Elder Receives Special Honor

May 6, under bright sunshine and with a host of local dignitaries and former athletes on hand, the Simon Fraser University athletic facility was officially named the Lorne Davies Complex, a gesture in recognition of the legacy of Lorne Davies in SFU athletics and



Vancouver, British Columbia, elder Lorne Davies has athletic complex named for him

Canadian university sports.

Mr. Davies is associate pastor of the Vancouver, British Columbia, congregation. In his speech, the president of the university mentioned that Mr. Davies' priorities in life included God, his family and his church.

SFU's current athletic director, Wilf Wedmann, was among those who acknowledged the Davies legacy:

"As director of Athletics and Recreation at Simon Fraser from 1965 to 1995, Lorne Davies built an athletic program considered one of the best in Canada, and that program continues to this day. Lorne created an environment of

success that produced dozens of players for the Canadian Football League, as well as some of Canada's top Olympic athletes. He was a Canadian pioneer in recruitment, marketing and fund-raising, as he established the first endowment fund to support a university program, in addition to being an avid promoter of women's athletics.

"Lorne Davies has led an exemplary life of service to young athletes. He is a fund-raiser, a volunteer, a leader, a motivator and teacher who has left behind a legacy of thousands of successful university graduates who have gone on to success in their numerous different professions. He won the Premier's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Sport in B.C. in 1994, and in 1995 was inducted

into the University Sports Hall of Fame in Western Washington. In 2000 Lorne was awarded the Order of British Columbia for his contributions to athletics and philanthropy."

David Palmer

Fort Worth Hosts Basketball and Bible Millionaire

The Fort Worth, Texas, congregation hosted an invitational basketball tournament the weekend of March 19 and 20. Nine congregations from Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana attended this end-of-the-season tournament for the teens.

Don Ward, pastor of the Ruston, Louisiana, congregation, gave a sermon titled "What Will You Be, Shell or Substance?" He used the analogy of a baseball and its solid inner core to emphasize that we, too, must be solid at the center of our being in order to sail through the storms of life.

A teen dance was held Saturday night, followed by basketball games the next day.

The highlight of the weekend was the Bible question-and-answer game, Bible Millionaire, named after the popular television game show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* The theme of the game was "Who was the real Jesus Christ?" The majority of the questions were taken from the Church's booklet, *Jesus Christ, the Real Story*: For the fourth year in a row, dedicated members from the Fort Worth congregation put on a technical extravaganza. Players once again found themselves in the proverbial "hot seat," immersed in dramatic lights, music and computer-driven game screens.

Each team of five players took turns fielding questions of increasing difficulty from the game's host, in front of an audience of 450 people. Each team continued until they exhausted their lifelines, missed a question or reached the \$1 million level. The Houston North team took home the medals this year, reaching the \$125,000 level.

Tim Rickard

South Dakota Deaconess Helps Orphans in Iraq

When the war in Iraq began and many U.S. soldiers were sent overseas away from their families and friends, they also found themselves without many of the comforts we take for granted. A UCG member from Hot Springs, South Dakota, has shown her generous spirit by giving of herself on their behalf. Florence Quartullo, a longtime deaconess in the Church, has donated countless hours to making quilts and searching thrift shops for toys and basic necessities for not only the Americans, but the orphans in Iraq.

She, along with the Rapid City community and surrounding Western Black Hills area, and four neighboring states, gathered supplies for 350 Iraqi children. This supplied two schools that had been closed down during Saddam's regime and were reopened by U.S. troops.

Operation Caring Hands is the organization most of her 70 quilts were sent through. Three letters of thanks were sent to her, as well as pictures of the orphans receiving some of her quilts and toys. One letter she received from Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City also enclosed an American flag that had been flown over the Iraqi skies in



Florence Quartullo donates quilts and toys to help orphans in Iraq; one interesting memento she received in thanks was an Iraqi medal

her honor. A most interesting memento included was an Iraqi medal said to be a duplicate worn by the Iraqi soldiers.

Florence has shown her generosity through the many years of service to God and His people by opening her home to travelers from all over. She has set a tremendous example to us as she is determined to follow God's laws in spite of living in a somewhat secluded part of the world with limited opportunity for church fellowship.

Dianne Skorseth

Bakersfield Bikes Through the Wildflowers

On Sunday, April 10, the Bakersfield, California, congregation held their annual bicycle ride to enjoy the spring wildflowers at California Hot Springs, a small mountain community just outside the Sequoia National Forest.

The cyclists met at a member's home to begin the 11-mile trek on a slightly downhill-sloped dirt road lined with numerous varieties of colorful wildflowers. Several others followed the group in a pickup truck just in case help was needed along the way. Some of the cyclists observed what appeared to be mountain lion tracks. Lions do live in the area but are rarely spotted. Others enjoyed a doe that ran across their path.

Some people preferred to go fishing rather than cycle. Others took a walk. Participants saw cascading waterfalls on the local streams and acres and acres of vibrant green ranch land dotted with cows and their young calves.

A picnic lunch was served at the nearby country school where the children



Bakersfield cyclists (photo by Woneva Cotter)

could enjoy the playground while the adults fellowshipped. The meal was topped off with homemade ice cream.

Debbie Jo Bates

Chicago Hosts an Unforgettable Cruise

The Chicago, Illinois, Young Adults planned a four-day cruise on the Royal Caribbean *Enchantment of the Seas* from Feb. 24 to 28, and over 90 attended. The cruise ship embarked from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with stops in Key West, Florida, and Cozumel, Mexico.

The experience onboard was nothing short of incredible. We were greeted by a friendly international crew that offered top-quality service and made sure their guests were well taken care of. Each evening there was a different international menu to choose from, which was also the theme for that evening. The food was no less than the finest quality.

I was amazed at the many exciting activities and facilities on the cruise ship,



Participants in Chicago's Caribbean cruise Feb. 24 to 28

from rock climbing to elegant dining rooms, relaxing spas and steaming hot tubs. There were themed dining rooms and lounges, swimming pools, solariums, centrums and even a miniature golf course. Entertainment shows were also offered each evening.

In addition, the Church provided three eye-opening one-hour education sessions, applicable to both singles and marrieds alike, exploring biblical principles for improving our relationships with others professionally, at church and



Indianapolis celebrates United's 10th anniversary with a dinner and dance April 30

many paved the way for us." For her, the activities provided "motivation to make sure that we never take for granted the Church that we have and the people God has given us as a Church family."

Mark Winner, pastor of the Lexington, Louisville and Henderson, Kentucky, congregations, gave the sermon in the second service. He spoke about the importance of our willingness to make sacrifices in our lives, following the example of Jesus Christ.

Diana White, another member from Indianapolis, felt that the lessons of the message will help her become a "stronger Christian woman who is able

with our families. The sessions were led by Chicago pastor Bob Fahey. The interactive sessions were: "Basics of Biblical Conflict Resolution/Peacemaking," "The Proverbs 31 Man and Woman" and "Techniques of Conflict Resolution/Peacemaking." Onboard Sabbath services were held, which complemented well with the education sessions and inspired us all.

Many thanks to the Chicago Young Adults for planning this exciting cruise!

Michelle de Campos

Worcester Celebrates Seniors

Seniors from the Worcester, Massachusetts, congregation were honored at an elegant dinner after Sabbath services on April 2. The food, a complete turkey dinner, was a joint effort, prepared by some of our finest cooks and supplemented by an assortment of pies

and read by our assistant pastor. While watching pictures taken from their past

and present, we heard our seniors' favorite quotes, their favorite Bible verses and were able to learn a little more about their history and cherished memories.



Worcester, Massachusetts, honors its seniors April 2

The evening concluded with a montage of slides set to the song "Same Girl," which was moving enough to bring tears to the eyes. It was a beautiful tribute to those who have worked so hard and given so much through the years.

Lora Lallier

"New," continued from page 1

gently introduced the booklet on the subject of marriage and divorce, which Judy found agreed with her own values.

Later, she was given a Bible Story book and began to see that some of her long-held beliefs were contrary to the Scriptures. Within the week after their marriage, they agreed that they should have some religious foundation.

Studying and talking led them to ask permission to attend the Elkhart, Indiana, congregation where some of the family already attended. Their minds were opened and they were immediately excited about the truth, keeping a bare-bones Feast in Jekyll Island, Georgia, that year and then both being bap-

tized the same day in November 1963 by George Meeker.

Mr. Salyer graduated in 1968, a time of rapid growth in the Worldwide Church of God. 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 pastorate in Abilene and Odessa, Texas.

Returning to Houston in 1971, he was now responsible for about 1,000 members in two congregations. Later developments and crises in the Church at large led to pastorates in Big Sandy; Washington, D.C.; Hagerstown, Maryland; Pasadena and San Francisco, California.

In 1982, only six weeks after relocating to San Francisco, Mr. Salyer received notice that Mr. Armstrong was appointing him dean of students at

Ambassador College, Big Sandy. He held this position until March 1986.

After Mr. Armstrong's death, Mr. Salyer said he was drafted away from "the best job in the world" to become the director of Church Administration in Pasadena. The family moved immediately and resided in Pasadena for the next six years. By 1988, Church Administration was reorganized and he became the director of Church Administration, International, overseeing all aspects of the international work. In addition, he was responsible for all youth programs, camps and Imperial Schools.

Being involved in regular administrative meetings in Pasadena, related to finance, television, editorial, publishing, the college and doctrine, and a member of the Council of Elders, Mr. Salyer

became aware of the negative trends in the Church perhaps before most ministers. He let it be known that he would accept a pastorate in the field.

He moved to the St. Louis and Wentzville, Missouri, circuit, thinking it would be possible to teach the truth without interference. However, he found he could not walk a tightrope with the local congregation, which was distinctly split. He resigned from the Worldwide Church of God in February 1994.

Over time a small unstructured and unincorporated congregation of faithful brethren formed and was served by Mr. Salyer, Mr. Meeker and a number of elders and deacons. They found the Global Church of God still preaching the truth and merged with that group at Pentecost that year. The Salyers pastored the

entire Midwest region until 1996, when he was assigned to San Diego, California, as director of Editorial Services. By 1998, internal conflicts led to a split in Global.

A number of ministers and members formed the Church of God, a Christian Fellowship, which later 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.

The Salyers and son Jeff now live in Salt Lake City, Utah, and pastor congregations in Grand Junction, Colorado, and Twin Falls, Idaho as well. The Salyers have four children, Lisa Burnett, Jeff, Julie Morgan and Randy; and four grandchildren. UN

Letters

Thanks for Comfort After Tragedy in Milwaukee

Lena Reeves and Gail Hoffman, members of the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, UCG congregation, wrote the following note. Lena's husband and Gail's father both died in the LCG shootings in Brookfield, Wisconsin, on March 12.

To United Church of God members and congregations all around the world:

We would like to thank everyone for all the cards, prayers and comforting

words as we continue to go through our grieving time. It is good to know, and it has been inspiring to see that we have so many brothers and sisters who do love us and are concerned about us.

Times can be tough, but with the help of God's comforting Spirit and so many loving brethren, we all can endure.

With much love and appreciation,

Lena Reeves (wife of Richard Reeves)
Gail Hoffman (daughter of Harold Diekmeier)

Note From Nigeria to New President

I am grateful for your success as the new president of the United Church of God. I knew of the UCG from your Web site . . . I have seen the truth from the teachings of the UCG. I am a secretary in the Church of Christ in one of the congregations in Eket, Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria, and from the teachings I downloaded from my mails sent to me by the UCG, I have seen truth and Christ's ways.

I knew Mr. Roy Holladay just last week from the letter I received through my e-mail address signed by him. I know he was good; without that the spread of the United Church of God would not have reached me. From this letter I have seen the change in the presidency of the Church, and it is quiet and without any rancor, which shows the true and godly way in which the United Church of God has taught, and of the following of the

footsteps of Christ and God's way.
Nigeria

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Comments and suggestions to improve *United News* are welcome. Please let us know if you would like your name printed. Mail to: *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, or e-mail mike_bennett@ucg.org.

"Council," continued from page 2

indicating that the GCE is not in favor of such a restriction. He also stated that committee work need not be a factor since the committees determine their own workloads and can manage how much additional work they would ask of Mr. Kilough.

Doug Horchak expressed that presidential duties will be better fulfilled by Mr. Kilough's continued presence on the Council. He pointed out that the question is not a conflict of interest but a matter of workload. He encouraged Mr. Kilough to continue on the Council.

Richard Thompson added that it would be best for Mr. Kilough to also be on Council committees so he would be part of discussions that lead to recommendations and decisions.

Mr. Dean pointed out that it is not mandatory for a Council member to be on a committee—but that he thought it would be especially appropriate for Mr. Kilough to be on the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Kilough thanked the Council for their input and stated that he will take the time necessary to make his decision.

Council Chairman Selected

The Council went into executive session to select a chairman to replace Mr. Kilough as he assumes the presidency. The Council selected Robert Dick as the chairman. Mr. Dick assumed that responsibility on May 18.

Review of GCE Meeting

David Register, chairman of the GCE Planning Task Force, reviewed the results of the GCE exit survey.

Mr. Register stated that there were 225 elders and 175 wives in attendance (almost exactly the same as in 2004) and 62 attendees filled out the exit survey. Of those who responded, 95 percent expressed that they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the conference and 95 percent plan to attend again next year. He also pointed out that 85 percent of those who attended on Sunday stayed

for the workshops on Monday.

Mr. Register and the Council were very encouraged and pleased that the GCE was highly successful. The Council discussed several aspects of the meeting and how they might be strengthened in future conferences, including consideration of using a larger facility for the Sabbath service so that more can attend, reports by international representatives, the tributes to deceased elders and wives, the chairman's reception and the Council of Elders Q&A session.

Mr. Kilough thanked the task force and asked Mr. Register to make recommendations for any changes or additions to the task force for next year's planning. He also asked Mr. Register to consider continuing as chairman of the task force.

As an expression of their gratitude for years of service to the Council, Mr. Dean presented Larry Darden (Church counsel) and his wife, Carolan, with a beautifully framed photograph of the couple.

The Council concluded its day in executive session for consideration of ordination and credentialing requests.

May 18, in the second and final day of this abbreviated Council session, most of the morning was spent reviewing a doctrinal paper and the afternoon in executive session to consider ordinations, credentialing applications and other matters.

Mr. Franks led the Council through a thorough review of a study paper currently titled "Role of Women in the Church of God" and the Doctrine Committee's suggested edits. Mr. Franks said that he would incorporate the edits and provide the Council a final review copy in time for the August meetings.

Booklet Plan, Feast Video

Peter Eddington gave a brief update on five or six booklets that are scheduled to be published next as time and funding allow. Three are scheduled to be printed within the next several months: an as-yet untitled booklet on the subject of marriage and family, a booklet on the Trinity and another tentatively titled *The History of Europe and the Church*.

Mr. Eddington also briefly reviewed

plans for the 2005 Feast video. The video will focus on the brethren and work in South Africa and Malawi. Mr. Eddington and videographer Clay Thornton will be traveling into the areas in time to begin production of the video.

Mr. Horchak's Last Meeting

This was the final meeting for Doug Horchak, who did not seek reelection to the Council. As a gesture of appreciation for his service, the Council arranged for a potted plant to be delivered to their home as a gift for his wife, Tanya, and presented Mr. Horchak with a restaurant gift certificate. Mr. Horchak emphasized that his decision not to continue on the Council was a difficult one, but was necessary because of his other responsibilities and workload. He commented that one of the biggest lessons he had learned was patience—both with the process of Council work itself and with the kind of growth God has granted to United. He concluded by expressing his appreciation for the privilege of working with the Council. UN

Announcements

Births

A blond-haired, blue-eyed Sophia Yvonne Schwartzrock made her debut in Loves Park, Illinois, on Feb. 28. She



Sophia Yvonne Schwartzrock

weighed 8 pounds 10 ounces and measured 21½ inches. Sophia is Shawn and Heather Schwartzrock's first child, the first grandchild of Dean and Mary Kerr (Springfield, Illinois) and the 13th grandchild of Gerald and Ardelle Schwartzrock (Fargo, North Dakota). Steve Nutzman (Beloit, Wisconsin) asked for God's blessing on Sophia on April 9, during a special visit from her aunt, Johanna Kerr (Reno, Nevada).

David and Lynn Sandland from Australia are thrilled to announce the arrival of their fifth grandchild, Samuel David Eksanow. Samuel entered his new and bewildering world on April 27, 2005, and joins his brother Joel to appropriately torment and love his parents, Adam and Laura Eksanow. After some initial



Samuel David Eksanow

concerns and challenges, both mother and son are doing fine.

Jim and Linda (Purdy) Hawk are very happy to announce the birth of their first child, Amy Lynn Hawk. She was born Nov. 13, 2004. She weighed 6 pounds 12 ounces and was 19 inches long. She



Amy Lynn Hawk

is the first grandchild for Walter and Dorothy Hawk of the Canton, Ohio, congregation and Allen and Shirley Pur-

dy of the Akron, Ohio, congregation. She was also joyfully welcomed by her aunts and uncles. Amy and her parents attend the Canton congregation.

Abraham and Cathy Stores, along with big sister Makana, of Portland, Oregon, welcomed their new family addi-



Kyle Eric Stores

tion, Kyle Eric, on Jan. 22, 2005. Kyle weighed 8 pounds 3 ounces and measured 21 inches long. He is adored by his grandparents, all living close in Oregon and Washington. Kyle is our second gift from God—we feel truly blessed!

Ben and Rebekah (Shrode) Mauldin of Temple, Texas, are happy to announce



Benjamin Robert Mauldin IV

the birth of their first child, Benjamin Robert Mauldin IV. Ben was born on April 24, 2005, and weighed 6 pounds 4 ounces and was 18 inches long. Baby and family are doing well. Grandparents are Jim and Becky Shrode of Dallas, Texas, and Ben and Linda Mauldin of Temple, Texas.

Isak Thor Daniel and Aaron Sten Michael Spenser were born May 1, 2005. Isak weighed 2,070 grams (4.6 pounds) and Aaron weighed 2,315 grams (5.1 pounds). Aaron was 45 cen-



Isak and Aaron Spenser

timeters and Isak was 44.5 centimeters long. Due to the fact that they were premature (week 34 and 4 days), we had to stay in the hospital for 18 days, but things went very well.

The extremely proud parents are Paul Spenser and Kira Engholm-Spenser. The grandparents are Moira and Michael Spenser from the Isle of Man and Thorsten and Marianne Engholm from Sweden.

David and Vicki (Grant) Lawson of Lubbock, Texas, are overjoyed to announce the birth of Abigail Tamar



Abigail Tamar Lawson

Lawson. She joined our family on Feb. 16, 2005. She is the great-granddaughter of Johnnie Bob (Davenport) Griffith of Lubbock and Sterling and Norma Grant of Roswell, New Mexico.

Happy grandparents are Wanda (Selman) Lawson of Lubbock and Gordon and Lynette (Griffith) Grant of Cypress, Texas. She was also welcomed by many aunts and uncles and numerous cousins.

Nick, Sarah and 3-year-old Isabella Slaughter are happy to announce the



Sabrina Vaughn Slaughter

arrival of Sabrina Vaughn Slaughter. Born Feb. 10, 2005, Sabrina weighed 7 pounds 8 ounces and was 21 inches long. Proud grandparents are Lenna Slaughter and Jack and Mary Hendren.

Sam and Shaleena Dungan of Grove Hill, Alabama, are pleased to announce the birth of their second child, Madeline Eileen Dungan. She was born on July 26, 2004.

Madeline weighed 6 pounds 13 ounces and was 19½ inches long. Big brother Ethan, 2, is very proud of his little sister.

The proud grandparents are Marcia Dungan of Meridian Mississippi, and



Madeline Eileen Dungan with big brother Ethan

George and Eileen Fuller of Whatley, Alabama.

Jason and Kimberly Brunick joyfully announce the arrival of their daughter, Lillian Christine Brunick, on Dec. 7, 2004. Lillian weighed 6 pounds 3 ounces and measured 17½ inches long.



Lillian Christine Brunick

Happy grandparents include Ed and Claudia Brunick from the Watertown, South Dakota, congregation and Matthew and Diana Zollner from the Collinsville, Illinois, congregation. All are thankful to God for His precious blessing in their lives.

Bert and Tricia (Moore) Merring announce the birth of their son Caleb Andrew Merring. He was born Sept. 10, 2004, in Orlando, Florida. He weighed



Caleb Andrew Merring

7 pounds 15 ounces. Big sister Allison and big brother Brenden are very excited to welcome him to the family.

Engagements

Gary and Judy Readnack of New Tripoli, Pennsylvania, are pleased to announce the engagement of their

daughter Lauren Judith to Daniel Miller, son of John and Susan Miller of Sugar-creek, Ohio. Lauren is a graduate of Lehigh Carbon Community College and is currently a nutrition major at Penn State University. Daniel graduates in May from Kent State University with a bachelor's degree in technology and is IT and automation manager at SUPERB Industries, Inc. Both are members of the United Church of God and graduates of



the Ambassador Bible Center. An Aug. 28, 2005, wedding is being planned.

Jorge and Kathy de Campos of the Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation are very pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter Clarissa to Oliver Hooser, son of Randy and Tina



Clarissa de Campos and Oliver Hooser

Hooser of the Fort Worth, Texas, congregation. Plans are for an early September wedding.

Obituaries

Jean Yow, 64, of Seagrove, North Carolina, a member of the Asheboro congregation, died on April 10, 2005. Jean grew up on a farm near Seagrove, the oldest of six children. She graduated from high school in 1958; the next year, at age 19, she married her high school sweetheart, Harvey Yow, who was the oldest of eight children.

In the mid-1960s Jean and Harvey started attending the Greensboro congregation, along with their three children, Keith, Bruce and Teresa. Both were baptized in March 1966 and were faithful and serving members of the Greensboro congregation. In 1995 they started attending the newly formed congregation of the United Church of God in Asheboro.

Jean served in so many ways during her 39 years in the Church; she is especially remembered for her beautiful flower arrangements for church services, with many of the flowers grown in her own yard and garden.

A most difficult time came around 1997-98, when her husband, Harvey, became critically ill. She nourished, nurtured and cared for him at home until his



Jean Yow

death in September 1999. It broke her heart to lose her husband, and though she carried on, it was never quite the same. About two or three years ago it was discovered she had breast cancer in an advanced stage. She put up a valiant fight, her faith remained strong, and her family, Church members and friends gave her a lot of encouragement and support until her death.

She is survived by her three children, Keith, Bruce and Teresa; by two daughters-in-law, Gwynn and Ida; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren and one on the way; and three brothers and two sisters. Jean was a member of a very large family, on her family's side as well as her husband's—very close, warm and caring families. Several members of the immediate family are longtime members of the Greensboro and Asheboro congregations.

It is not surprising that an estimated 400 to 500 people came to the family visitation and funeral services to show their love and esteem for Jean. Her family is very appreciative at the outpouring of love, support and help during the time of her sickness and death.

During the funeral service, there was a reading of the Proverbs 31 woman. Jean certainly exemplified this kind of woman. She will be greatly missed by her family, Church members and friends. Her suffering is now over. Like the apostle Paul, she fought a good fight, finished her course and kept the faith. She now rests beside her husband until the resurrection, when we look forward to seeing both of them again.

May Bell White, 81, was a well-loved member of the Phoenix East, Arizona,



May Bell White

congregation and longtime member of the Church. She dedicated her life to serving God, her family and everyone around her. She loved to fellowship, cook for family and friends, and to help anyone in need. Her decline in health was due to complications resulting from a mishap during a medical examination.

Her funeral was held April 27, 2005, with many family, friends and members attending. Dan McGee read the obituary and pastor John Elliott performed the funeral service. May Bell was a lady of style and grace who will be remembered fondly by all who knew her.

Jane Holder of Doraville, Georgia, died April 13 after a three-year battle with lung cancer. She is survived by her husband, Dillard Holder, two sons, four grandchildren, four sisters and two brothers.

She was a faithful member for many years, attending the Jefferson, Georgia, congregation. Blessed with many talents, she was an excellent seamstress as



Jane Holder

well as the painter of a number of beautiful oil paintings.

A lady of a gentle spirit, Jane was kind and soft spoken. She loved to talk with others of God's Kingdom. Visits, cards and phone calls always lifted her spirit. She expressed many times her amazement and gratitude at the love and support during her illness. Consistently displaying an attitude of hope and cheerfulness, her faith in God never wavered throughout her long illness. She died just nine days before Passover.

Her zest for life, her faith and determination set an example for all. She will truly be missed by so many in central Georgia who knew and loved her.

A memorial service was held for Jane on April 17 in Duluth, Georgia.

V. Pearl Dues, 85, died peacefully in her sleep March 12, 2005. Mrs. Dues, as she was known to many, was born in



Pearl Dues

East Texas, then moved to Flint, Michigan, in 1938. After raising a large family (eight children) she answered God's call and was baptized in the spring of 1971. She attended the Flint congregation where she was active in the Singles

Tribute: Paul Eugene Nielander

Paul Eugene "Gene" Nielander was born Oct. 14, 1928, in Kokomo, Indiana. He graduated from Kokomo High School in 1947. As a young man, he loved sports and was actively involved in basketball, football and baseball.

Gene was an exceptional pitcher and after graduation, he played semi-pro baseball for the Class D League and worked his way up to the AAA level within two years. In March 1948 he was signed by the New York Giants to play in the Polatka State League in Sanford, Florida.

He went on to play baseball in many leagues including the Mountaineer League of Stone, Kentucky; the Mountain States League of Newport, Tennessee; the Portsmouth Ball Club of Ohio and Indiana; the Blue Ridge League of Radford, Virginia; and the Hazard, Kentucky, Baseball Club. He then signed a contract to play with the Philadelphia farm team in Moultrie, Georgia.

Club, C.A.P. Club and headed up the used clothing giveaway. She was always there to greet others with a hug and a big smile every Sabbath.

The funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Steve Shafer. She leaves her eight children and their families, including Beth and Larry Taylor who attend the Flint congregation; many, many grandchildren (including Dawn Taylor, also of the Flint congregation), great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. She will be greatly missed for her concerned and caring ways.

Mrs. Leolie Koester, age 83, died peacefully in her home in Brenham, Texas, March 31, 2005. She was born Nov. 15, 1921, to Albert and Lydia Dornhoefer.

She is survived by her husband, Herbert; son and daughter-in-law, Kirby and



Leolie Koester

Leah Koester of Brenham; daughters and sons-in-law, Karen and Paul Stegent of Carmine, Janice and Alan Gilchrist of Brenham, and Debbie and Chris Ash of Spring; 15 grandchildren: Sheena, Jaki (Dorris), Renee (Ton) and Steven Stegent; Nathan, Cherylyn (Lindenberg), Sara, Julianne, Jocelyn and Audra Gilchrist; Brian, Eric and John Koester; and Aaron and Brittany Ash; one great-grandson, Adrian Lindenberg; and two sisters, Evelyn Spies and Ruby Meier of Brenham. She was preceded in death by

Gene married Patricia Lou Keck-evoet on Aug. 12, 1950. He married Joan Misner Widmer on Nov. 2, 1974, and she survives.

Following his baseball days, he worked in management at Continental Steel Corporation in Kokomo for 35 years. In 1988, he was hired by WLFI TV-18 as their outside county sales representative, working there until 1996. In 1998, he went to work as a salesman for Lehnen's Furniture and retired seven years later.

Gene attended the Lafayette, Indiana, congregation, where he served as an elder. He was loved and respected by all and was called "Grandpa" by many. He was a kind man, always willing to help and serve. Gene loved life and storytelling. His repertoire of jokes was unprecedented, and he will be most remembered for his genial manner and kindness to all. Gene died at his residence on March 1, 2005, at the age of 76.

Surviving with his wife are two sons, Michael Nielander (and wife, Vicki) of Kokomo and Patrick Nielander (and



Paul Eugene "Gene" Nielander

wife, Linda) of Indianapolis; four stepsons, David Widmer of Pasadena, California, John Mark Widmer (and wife, Susan) of West Lafayette, Roger Widmer (and wife, Jodi) of Geneva, Illinois, and Scott Widmer (and wife, Bonnie) of Dalton, Ohio; a stepdaughter, Kathy Badgley (and husband, Bob) of Rocklin, California; and his brother, Gary Nielander (and wife, Elizabeth) of Angola.

her parents and her infant son, Jerry.

Herbert and Leolie were married on Nov. 3, 1946, and had been married for 58 years. Leolie started attending God's Church in 1964 and was baptized along with her husband, Herbert, in the mid '60s by Paul Flatt. Ill health in the past few years kept Leolie from attending services, but her faith remained strong, and her shining examples of commitment to God will long be remembered by those who knew her.

A graveside service, conducted by Glenn Doig of the Houston North congregation, was held April 3, 2005, in Brenham.

Dixie Faulk, 82, of Asheboro, North Carolina, died on Passover night, April 22, 2005. Dixie was a member of the Asheboro congregation. Her health had declined since suffering a stroke in April 2003, and declined even further after she fell and broke her hip in December 2004.

Dixie and her husband, Bill, were baptized by a baptizing tour in the Orlando, Florida, area in July 1961. They attended the Lakeland and Orlando congregations until 1987, when Bill retired and they moved to Georgia, attending the Moultrie congregation. In 1993 they moved to North Carolina and attended the Marion congregation for two years. When United Church of God began in 1995, they began attending the newly formed congregation in Asheboro.

A sad time for Dixie came when Bill died suddenly of a heart attack in September 1995. They had been married over 53 years. In 1996, Dixie moved to Asheboro to be close to her daughter, Sandy. She enjoyed relatively good health until the stroke two years ago.

Dixie is survived by her three daughters, Carol Jamison of West Palm Beach, Florida; Sandy Mills of Seagrave, North Carolina; and Phebe Friddle of Rutherfordton, North Carolina; and by two sisters, 16 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Dixie lived a full and eventful life. She loved music, artwork and writing poet-



Dixie Faulk

ry. She was a faithful member of God's Church for almost 44 years. She will be missed by all those who knew and loved her.

Donna Carol Dorsey, 47, of South Charleston, West Virginia, died April 14, 2005. She was a member of the Charleston congregation and was baptized in 1983.

She is survived by her husband of 27 years, Robert Dorsey; and two daughters, Michele Dorsey and Jessica Case and her husband, Nickolas. Also surviving Donna are her father, Donnie Midkiff; her two sisters, Pam Dorsey and Lisa Dustin; her brother, Douglas Midkiff; her four grandchildren, Chase and Caitlin Dorsey and Caleb and Carson Case; her mother-in-law, Louise Dorsey (who is also a member of the United Church of God congregation in Charleston); as well as a number of close family members and dear friends.

Donna suffered from pancreatic cancer for the past 2½ years. Despite her pain and discomfort, she was a shining example of optimism and courage. She did not seek pity, but was concerned for others. She approached each day as special and thanked God she had that day to enjoy life and her family. The Charleston congregation will miss her.

Her pastor, John Foster, conducted the funeral service.

News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

seen him in such a state of urgency. What was said to [the official]? Whatever was said, it shook him up real bad. Anyway, I think things have been taken care of here. Thank you for calling on my behalf."

Of course, the reason for the expedited service was this official's personal respect for the Church, not anything that we said. But it is a "good news" story that is nice to hear.

The recent Q&As in *The Good News* about the Trinity sparked a host of questions—most of them challenges to our denial of the Trinity doctrine.

Cecil Maramville



What's New on the Web?

On www.ucg.org

■ Compass Check

See video of home office weekly meeting.

www.ucg.org/about/homeoffice/compasscheck.htm

■ UCG Commentary on This Week's News

Weekly commentaries by UCG written on world news and trends, from a biblical perspective. Read these and more:

"Ending Sexual Abuse of Children"

"New Government—Same Problems"

"Going . . . Going . . . Gone"

"In an Age of Disillusionment, Forgiveness?"

www.ucg.org/commentary/

■ Current World News & Trends

Browse up-to-date world news events by subject categories!

www.ucg.org/worldnews/

■ E-mail Updates and UCG eNews

Receive e-mail updates relevant to UCG members and weekly HTML newsletters with ucg.org updates. Sign up today!

www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm

On vcmagazine.org

■ The June *VCM* includes "Planning for Life," "Hasty Judgments," "Has Christ Failed?" and "Why Have You Made Me Like This?"

vcmagazine.org

On verticalthought.org

■ New articles posted for June include "The Welcome Guest," "May the Real Force Be With You" and "What Do You Believe?"

verticalthought.org

Featured Links of the Month

■ *Youth and young adults' Web site.*

www.ucgyouth.org

■ *Singles' Web site for singles in the Church.*

www.ucgsingles.org

If you have any questions or comments, please contact: webmaster@ucg.org



ABC Announces Samplers

The home office will once again be the site of the sixth annual ABC Sampler. The dates for this weeklong event will be Aug. 22 to 26. Most will arrive Aug. 21 and depart after Sabbath on the 27th. Please contact Gary Antion at Gary_Antion@ucg.org or call (513) 576-9796 to reserve your place in this year's exciting educational program.

Mini-samplers are scheduled for Sept. 17 and 18 in Nashville, Tennessee, and in Akron, Ohio, Los Angeles, California, is the location for the third mini-sampler on Nov. 19 and 20.

More details will be in the next issue of *United News*.

Gary E. Antion, ABC Coordinator

Pastor Named to Newspaper Advisory Board

Melvin Rhodes, senior writer for *The Good News*, senior editor of *World News and Prophecy* and pastor of the Lansing, Michigan, congregation, has been appointed to the *Lansing State Journal's* Community Advisory Board.

This is an 18-month unpaid position, during which Mr. Rhodes will be asked to write an article for the paper once a month.

The newspaper serves the state capital of Michigan and is read by many of the state's elected representatives and the governor.

Viewing Literature Online? Save Us Some Paper

Some people are eager to read the latest *Good News*, *United News*, *World News and Prophecy* or *Vertical Thought* issue. So, when a new copy is published, they go to one of our Web sites to read the latest issue before their printed copy arrives in the mail. If you are one of these people and you no longer need to receive your printed copy of one or all of these publications, please let us know by e-mail at info@ucg.org.

Readers who want to opt out of receiving hard-copy versions of publications in the mail can easily do so in the United States and some other countries. Please note: if readers opt out of receiving *United News* in the mail, they will also not receive the *Festival Planning Brochure* or *United Youth Camps Magazine*.

You can read *World News and Prophecy* online at www.ucg.org/wnp and *United News* at www.ucg.org/un. *The Good News* is available at www.gnmagazine.org and *Vertical Thought* at www.verticalthought.org. Or simply sign up for United's regular e-mail updates at www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm to receive an alert when new material is available online.

Media and Communications Services

Young Adults Christian Leadership Conference Set for Sept. 2 to 5

The upper Midwest regional Christian Leadership Conference will be held from Friday evening, Sept. 2, through Monday, Sept. 5, at the Wesley Woods Camp, Williams Bay, Wisconsin.

Activities will include informative seminars and interactive studies concerning Christian leadership, Sabbath services, a service project, recreational activities including volleyball, basketball, horseshoes, lakefront swimming and fishing, pontoon boat rides, waterskiing and tubing and lots of fellowship. Dormitory housing and camping are available.

More information will be made avail-

able at our Web site, www.ucgstp.org, or you may contact Gary and Gale Black at (651) 769-8802 or by e-mail at gary_black@ucg.org.

Gary and Gale Black

Garden Grove Invites Teens and Young Adults to Beach

The Garden Grove, California, congregation is inviting all interested teens and young adults to a Southern California weekend at the beach July 15 to 17.

Activities will include a bonfire, brunch, gym night and day at the beach. If you are interested in attending or if you want additional information, please contact either DeAnn Weiss at lucky2binhb@yahoo.com or (714) 378-6143 or Kirk Talbott at kirkaltbott@cox.net or (949) 425-1218.

Kirk Talbott

Calendar of Events

May 30-June 8: Peter Eddington and Clay Thornton travel to Johannesburg and Durban, South Africa, and Llongwe and Blantyre, Malawi, to video-

tape for the 2005 Feast video.

June 12: Pentecost.

June 24-26: Ladies' Seminar, Seattle, Washington (www.ucg-seattle.org).

July 2-3: "Taking Your Calling Seriously—Being Ready to Lead in God's Kingdom," Toronto, Ontario (www.ucg-toronto.org/Seminars2005.asp).

July 7-10: European Youth Get-Together near Cologne, Germany.

July 15-17: Teen and young adult beach weekend, Garden Grove, California.

July 28-31: Bluegrass Family Fun Weekend, near Cadiz, Ohio (www.ucgnet.org/bluegrass).

Aug. 14: ABC graduation.

Aug. 19-21: Women's Weekend in Sacramento, California, "Encouraging One Another to Love and Good Works" (suecrow@gmail.com).

Aug. 22-26: ABC Sampler at the home office (gary_antion@ucg.org).

Aug. 26-31: Council meetings.

Sept. 2-5: Upper Midwest regional Christian Leadership Conference at Williams Bay, Wisconsin.

Sept. 17-18: ABC mini-samplers in Nashville, Tennessee, and Akron, Ohio.

Nov. 19-20: ABC mini-sampler in Los Angeles, California.

Dec. 11-15: Council meetings.

Dec. 23 (evening)-27 (late): Winter Family Weekend in Louisville, Kentucky (details in August).

Attention Graduating Seniors and Parents!

Congratulations! We would like to feature the 2005 high school graduates in a special section of the July *United News*. Please take a few minutes to answer these questions and send a photograph by June 20, 2005.

1. Graduate's Name
2. Parents' Names
3. Congregation
4. High School Accomplishments
5. Church Activities/Hobbies/Interests (tell a little bit about yourself)
6. Plans After Graduation
7. Additional Comments (favorite quote, favorite scripture, motto, advice, etc. Please identify which it is, so we don't think your advice is your motto, etc.)

Phone number or e-mail address to confirm spellings, etc. (*Will Not Be Printed*)

Please send with a recent photo of the graduate by June 20.

By e-mail to: Mike.Bennett@ucg.org

By mail to: *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027

We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length; 300-word maximum length. Thanks!



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