



News At a Glance

Internet Impact Growing Fast

United has seen a continuing overall increase in our Web site traffic over the past 12 months. We are now averaging more than 430,000 visitors per month between our two main sites!

On the gnmagazine.org site there was a sudden downturn in visitors for September and October because of the cutting of advertising to areas outside the United States.

Our advertising at Yahoo and Google is still proving to be an excellent and cost-effective way to introduce readers to the truth of the gospel and the Kingdom of God, and to add new subscribers to our file for around \$1.75 per subscriber. In addition, we add thousands of new subscribers at no advertising cost—they just find us while surfing the Web.

Of the 400,000+ visitors we get to ucg.org and gnmagazine.org every month, the vast majority are not our members. This is encouraging from the perspective that outsiders visit our site a lot. Of those who request literature from the Web site, 99 percent are not members of United.

Peter Eddington

Two More ABC Classes Sent to Congregations on MP3 CD

In December the home office will mail two more Ambassador Bible Center classes to local congregations on MP3 CD and will also post them on the ABC section of the Web site (www.ucg.org/abc). The two classes are "The Acts of the Apostles" and "The Epistles of Paul."

See "News at a Glance," page 2

United Statistics	
50,000	2005
	2004
40,000	2003
	2002
30,000	
20,000	2001
10,000	2000

Bible Study Course Graduates, Cumulative

Total lessons mailed: **915,808**

Total tape mailings to graduates: **169,523**

Total tape mailing graduates: **12,644**

Pinelli and Franks Pass Ministerial Services Baton

After serving as Ministerial Services operation manager for 10 years under four presidents, Richard Pinelli is turning over the reins to Jim Franks, a Council member and longtime Ministerial Services team member.

Beginning with the regional pastors meetings in early December, Richard Pinelli began turning the responsibilities as operation manager for Ministerial

Services over to Jim Franks. The transition will be complete in mid-January.

Mr. Pinelli is looking forward to his new role as coordinator of ministerial development programs, and he won't miss the pressure of the operation manager job. He kids that he is going to get a T-shirt that says, "Give it to Jimmy!"

Without Hesitation

When Mr. Kilough asked Mr. Pinelli about who would be the best one to succeed him as Ministerial Services operation manager, without hesitation Mr. Pinelli recommended Jim Franks. "He



Jim and Sharron Franks

has a full 10 years of experience as part of the Ministerial Services team. He

knows the men very well. He has an acute sense of discernment," said Mr. Pinelli. "Working for Jim Franks will be a pleasant thing for me," he said.

"In counseling with many others and poring over all of the written requirements plus the intangible qualities needed for this job, his name consistently emerged as the one that fit the bill," said Mr. Kilough.

"We will see a smooth transition as these administrations change, which will allow Mr. Franks to quickly focus on the new challenges we are tackling."

See related articles, pages 4 and 5. UN

First Four Beyond Today Programs Recorded



Steve Myers, Randy Stiver and David Treybig record "Christmas: Mirth or Myth"; Clay Thornton at the controls by Peter Eddington

On Nov. 16 and 17 the first four *Beyond Today* video programs were recorded in the new media center at the home office. Overall, the recordings were a great success—especially for the first ones out of the chute! For this initial round we brought in all three main presenters so that they could each get a feel for how things will run. In addition, there were six guests.

Here are the subjects that were covered:

- 1) "Christmas: Mirth or Myth" (Steve Myers, Randy Stiver and David Treybig) to air the week of Dec. 18-24.
- 2) "New Religion for the Middle East" (Darris McNeely, Melvin Rhodes and Ralph Levy) to air the week of Dec. 25-31.

See "Beyond Today," page 4

Camp Team Meets for Seventh Consecutive Year

by Larry W. Greider

Camp team members met at the home office Nov. 14 and 15 to assess the 2005 camp season, including the 2004 Winter Camp. (Winter Camp 2005 will be held in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, Dec. 21 to 26).

In the camp survey, parents were asked, "If your child has attended UYC in the past, do you feel they have made a lasting impression on your child?" The response was 98 percent "Yes"! And when they were asked if they want their child to come back next year, the response was 99 percent! It seems that camp is providing positive reinforcement for parents in teaching their children about God's amazing plan for mankind.

The concept of the "Zone" is well



Steve Nutzman, Kathy and Ken Treybig, Paul Luecke and Larry Greider at the camp team meetings

appreciated by our youth, and they clearly connect the security, fun and education of the United Youth Camps with a foretaste of the coming Kingdom of God.

In 2005, including Winter Camp, we

project over 800 campers and 400 staff members will have participated. The average age of campers was 14.72 and campers averaged almost four years (3.61) of attendance. Our staff have commented on the enthusiasm and compliance of this group of teens who seem to "own the Zone."

Camp would be impossible without the fine volunteers who make up the excellent staff and the many ministers and wives who work at the camps to serve our future leaders in a myriad of ways.

Some comments from campers

See "Camp," page 2

Ambassador Bible Center Becomes Part of Ministerial Services

As part of the reorganization of Ministerial Services, Dave Register was brought into the home office to become director of educational programs. This new position oversees not only the four education modules that have long been part of Ministerial Services (general education, youth education, ministerial education and focused education), but also the Ambassador Bible Center.

Dave Johnson has also moved to the home office to teach ABC classes as well as assisting in Ministerial Services half time. He will be teaching Epistles of Paul and Former Prophets in the first semester.

The ABC staff is gearing up for the 2006 year, which begins with orientation Sunday, Jan. 8, and classes beginning Monday morning, Jan. 9. The graduation is set for Aug. 13.

So far, 55 students have been accepted for the 2006 year—31 females and 24 males. They range in age from 17 to 67, but 40 students are age 25 and under. They come from six countries: Australia, Canada, Honduras, South Africa, Sweden and the United States. "We may have a few more come in before the Dec. 17 deadline for 2006 applications," said Gary Antion.

"We anticipate this will be our biggest class, and we're looking forward to their arrival," said Mr. Register. UN

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News At a Glance

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Instead of the four 20-audiotape volumes sent in years past, everything will fit on two CDs. This cuts the cost of duplication to one-fortieth, or less, of the audiotape version, and cuts mailing costs a great deal.

"We tried this for the first time with two classes last year and it worked very well," said Peter Eddington, Media and Communications Services operation manager. "Also, duplication of the entire set of classes is very simple by the local congregation since just one or two CDs have to be copied. Generational loss of quality is also then negligible."

Elders Ordained

Dempsey Bruton III was ordained an elder Oct. 4. He and his wife, Susan, serve in the Williamsburg, Virginia, congregation.

Timothy Heine was also ordained Oct. 4. He and his wife, Mary, serve in the Salt Lake City, Utah, congregation.

Oludare Akinbo was ordained Oct. 18. He and his wife, Tololope, serve in the Lagos, Nigeria, congregation.

Alberto González Peña was ordained Oct. 18. He and his wife, Yulum, serve the Tepic Nayarit, Mexico, congregation.

Paul Cebrian was ordained Oct. 25. He and his wife, Merlen, serve in the Butuan City, Philippines, congregation.

North Carolina Churches Contact 3,166 Readers

The Asheboro, Charlotte, Kinston and Raleigh, North Carolina, congregations contacted 3,166 *Good News* subscribers in their area this summer. The subscribers, who have been receiving the magazine for more than two years, were invited to a special service to hear a sermon on "Are We Living at the Time of the End?" or to request a tape of the sermon.

A total of seven new people attended services, and they received 433 responses—a 13.7 percent response. David Mills, pastor of the four congregations, said, "I feel this is good contact with our subscribers, and hope we can do it again next summer."

U.S. Newsstands Converted to Brochure Program

A decision was made in December 2003 to decrease the quantity of *Good News* newsstand magazines per issue from 85,000 to 25,000. That decision centered on the high cost to maintain the program compared to other less-expensive

See "News at a Glance," page 16

Media Area Makes Cuts to Deal With Sharply Higher Shipping Costs

by Peter Eddington

Mailing and shipping costs have made quite a dent in the Media and Communications Services budget year-to-date. In particular, our shipping costs to areas outside the United States have risen sharply—due in many ways to the higher oil prices.

It appears that we will need to find a way to save at least \$70,000 out of our current budget to pay for the increased shipping and to stay within our overall budget. In addition, U.S. postal rates are going up in January. Here are the cuts we have already worked on. The potential savings are shown for the remainder of the fiscal year in parenthesis:

- Eliminated the *Bible Study Course* graduate audiotape program (\$26,000).

Graduates will be offered *World News and Prophecy* and contact information for the nearest United Church of God congregation right away, instead of after receiving tapes for a year. Graduates will also be offered the free brochure *Preaching the Gospel, Preparing a People: This Is the United Church of God*.

The tremendous efforts of the members in St. Paul, Minnesota, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin, who diligently mailed the thousands of audiotapes, are much appreciated. However, we hope the new plan will not only be less labor-intensive, but more cost-effective.

- Cut back dramatically on Internet advertising and eliminated advertising outside of the United States, which will hopefully bring this line item back into budget. It is over at present.

- Because of the reduced Internet advertising just mentioned, booklet requests from international areas will drop significantly, as will new *GN* subscriptions. This will mean that our *Good News* print run is going to start to fall. Savings will result in both printing and shipping of the *GN* and booklets—ensuring these two categories stay within budget.

- Pursue printing of *The Good News* in Australia for that region (\$37,000).

- Phase out three radio stations (\$20,000).

- Eliminate U.S. newsstand copies of the *GN* (\$28,000).

- Eliminate the Caribbean and Canadian newsstand copies (\$7,350 plus \$2,250). We are encouraging brethren to place subscription brochures, which can

be distributed at a fraction of the cost, instead of the newsstand magazines.

- Encourage all other international offices to eliminate their newsstand programs and put the savings into generating new, individual subscribers.

All in all, these measures could save up to \$120,600 in expenses for the remainder of the fiscal year. However, it's unfortunate that we'll see a decline in our *Good News* magazine reach and circulation, plus see a dramatic drop in our Web site visitor statistics and be unable to help spread the gospel in areas outside the United States for the time being (as we had been doing).

Some Internet advertising for Canada has been reinstated because they are eliminating their newsstand program immediately. UN

"Camp," continued from page 1

include: "Camp has me leaving feeling all pumped up about God and His way" (Winter Camp). "It made me learn more of God and His plan and made me realize I'm very lucky to be here" (Winter Camp). "Camp has an indescribable atmosphere. It's like a mini-Kingdom, and I always leave so deeply moved and feeling closer to God and to my friends of like mind" (Woodmen).

A new camp director was welcomed this year by the camp team. David Holladay, an elder who works for Microsoft in the Seattle, Washington, area, will replace Andy Burnett as the director of Camp Davidson, Oregon. Mr. Holladay has been an integral part of the camps for many years and lives in the region. Mr. Burnett, who pastors in Louisiana, will continue working with the UYC in his region.

Mr. Holladay said, "I'm super excited to be working among the youth of our Church with such a key program as camp! The many summers at camp were one of the biggest influences for me



New camp director David Holladay will serve Camp Davidson in Oregon

growing up in the Church, and I'm honored to now be part of a very supportive camp directors team. It's encouraging to see God powerfully at work in the lives of our youth and the amazing things He is doing through them." He said it is a goal this year to add additional activities geared toward challenging the older teens.

With more than 90 percent of campers

desiring to be on a UYC staff when they are old enough, it was decided to try to provide opportunities for at least 5 percent new staff each year.

To give more opportunity for young adults, two Challenger II programs have been created for those 18 and over. In addition to the rock climbing program near Tucson, Arizona, in December, a canoeing program on the Buffalo River in Arkansas is planned for June 2006 (see the Youth Web page for more details). The Teton Challenger program will increase its age limits to 16 (com-

pleting the sophomore year) through 21.

Information for the 2006 programs will be available soon on the United Youth Web page. Begin preparing now for a trip into the "Zone" next year.

Camp team members include: Larry Greider (overall coordinator), James Capo, Dave Dobson, David Holladay, Paul Luecke, Doug Johnson, David Myers (preteen liaison), Steve Nutzman, Greg Sargent and Ken Treybig. Also in attendance was education coordinator David Register and Youth Education Team member Jim Servidio. UN

2006 Camp Dates Announced

United Youth Camps are scheduled for the following dates in 2006:

- Pinecrest, Missouri: June 15-22.
- Hye Sierra, California: June 25-July 2.
- Woodman, Alabama: July 2-9.
- Teton Challenger, Wyoming: July 9-20.
- Camp Carter, Texas: July 23-30.
- Davidson, Oregon: July 30 -Aug. 6.
- Heritage, Pennsylvania: Aug. 13-20.
- Winter Camp, Williams Bay, Wisconsin: Dec. 24-29.

More information will be available in the camp magazine to be mailed in mid-February and on the Web site at www.ucg.org/youthcamps.

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President: Clyde Kilough

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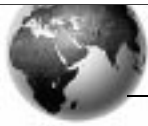
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Internet access on your computer:

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



News From Around the World

Kiloughs Visit Australia and New Zealand

by Bill Eddington

UCGIA president Clyde Kilough and his wife, Dee, recently returned from a visit to Australia and New Zealand where they had the opportunity to catch up with the work being done in that part of the world. This was the first international trip undertaken by Mr. Kilough since he assumed the office of president in July this year.

The Australian National Council invited Mr. Kilough to visit Australia and suggested he time the visit to coincide with a National Council meeting scheduled for November. Subsequently, it was decided to take further advantage of the visit, by also arranging a General Conference of Australian elders and wives over the two days of Nov. 20 and 21. This was to be the first Australian General Conference held since 1999.

Being only four hours away from Australia by air, it was convenient for the Kiloughs to include New Zealand in their itinerary. Mr. Kilough was able to meet with New Zealand pastor Jeff Caudle for a few days, and also speak at a Sabbath service in Auckland on Nov. 12.

Mr. Kilough took both the sermonette and sermon time at a combined South East Queensland service on the next Sabbath as he gave an update on the progress being made in several areas of UCGIA's activities and exhorted the congregation to keep their eyes on the spiritual horizon, emphasizing the three values of vision, commitment and sacrifice.

Over the course of the conference in Australia, Mr. Kilough led two sessions of the program. The first, titled "Lessons Learned From the Last Decade," was an interactive session that drew upon the personal experiences of Australian elders and wives and what they had learned from the challenges posed in the formative years of UCGIA.

The second session dealt with personal spiritual effectiveness and the need for leadership to be firmly based on integrity in the dealings we all have in



Clyde and Dee Kilough (right) with the assembled elders in Australia

our personal spheres of influence. Mr. Kilough emphasized that God's Church will always be measured by its spiritual depth, not by its numbers. Skills will only take us so far—only the gifts of God through His Holy Spirit can take us further.

The conference concluded with Mr. Kilough fielding questions from those present on a range of topics, including the current Council of Elders discussion regarding the role of the president in international areas.

Mr. and Mrs. Kilough's presence was greatly appreciated and we in Australia look forward to another visit when their schedule allows. UN

Ministers Tour Nigerian Congregations

by Oludare Akinbo

Mark Mickelson, associate pastor for the Nigerian congregations, and pastor of the Kennewick and Spokane, Washington/Coeur d'Alene and Lewiston, Idaho, congregations, traveled to Nigeria Nov. 8 to 22 to work with and assist in my training. I am a newly ordained elder in Nigeria.

The Nigerian brethren were full of gratitude for the gift of allowing us to benefit from Mr. Mickelson's God-given wisdom and teachings, because his messages and personal experiences shared with us are indeed encouraging and inspiring. He spent the first four days in Lagos, meeting with the brethren, preparing for the almost 3,000-kilometer road trip and kept the Sabbath with the Lagos congregation.

His message was heard by three new people who came to the Sabbath services for the first time! One of the three had simply visited a Web site that lists churches, scrolled down and saw the name United Church of God, clicked the link and was taken to our Web site. She read the articles in the brochure *Marriage and Family: the Missing Dimension* and had been deeply touched. She decided she would like to be associated with the publishers of this literature. She had come thinking the meeting was being held on Saturday because of the visiting pastor! It was only after services that she found out that we permanently keep the Sabbath, and she was so happy to be at our service!

On Sunday, Nov. 13, we left Lagos for

the almost 800-kilometer drive to Abuja, the capital of Nigeria. There we met and fellowshiped with two of our members, Joseph and Gloria Forson.

We also had a discussion with the leaders of a group that separated from our previous affiliation, numbering about 50, now going by the corporation name Narrow Way Church of God. They had met Mr. Kellers when he was on a visit to see our members in Abuja some years ago, and they had expressed interest in working with us closely. They are already receiving our *Good News* magazines and sermon tapes. The entire congregation has remained faithful to God's truth all these years.

They have been publishing and providing, free of charge, a magazine called *The Gospel* for some years and produce four issues a year. Mr. Mickelson, Mr. Forson and I hope to organize a seminar for them by next spring since they expressed the desire for their leaders to be trained by us.

We also visited George Esievo, a member who has been in the Church since 1981, in his office at the Federal Ministry of Finance.

We left Abuja by 6 a.m. the next day for Enugu in the southeastern part of Nigeria. We met with the leaders of the Church of God in Nigeria, who understand almost all that we do except the concept of the second resurrection. Mr. Mickelson explained the gospel in a simple and concise form: that God is calling all men to salvation, but not all now.

They asked us to help teach and train their men as they have nowhere to go for

training except the Pentecostal Bible schools, and this has caused them to be influenced by the Pentecostal style of worship. A training seminar is planned for their leaders next spring when Jim Franks and Fred Kellers will be around as well.

They are simple, humble and happy people, zealous for the work of God—so much so that beginning six months ago they started broadcasting on radio. They persuaded Mr. Mickelson to be the key speaker on an impromptu recording at the State Broadcasting Station. God directed him to speak without prior preparation and he delivered an inspiring message.

We also met with another group closely affiliated with the Church of God in Nigeria, called Divine Church of God 7th Day. There are a number of doctrinal differences. Still, I believe it is right for us to work with them and teach them, as they requested.

We left Owerri on Thursday, Nov. 17. In Owerri we visited brethren in their villages, broke bread, fellowshiped and encouraged them to continue in the faith.

We left Owerri for Benin City on Nov. 18. We kept the Sabbath and fellowshiped with the Benin City brethren before leaving for Lagos.

On Sunday, Nov. 19, Mr. Mickelson continued fellowshiping with the Lagos members, and he was taken to see a possible site for the 2006 Lagos, Nigeria, Feast of Tabernacles and a proposed National Youth Camp. It is a beautiful enclosed facility situated just along the Atlantic Ocean. UN

International News At a Glance

UCG East Africa Registered

The official registration of "United Church of God, East Africa" was completed on Oct. 24, 2005. A regional sub-office in Nairobi, Kenya, began processing literature requests as of March 2005, and the Personal Correspondence Department there now handles all incoming requests via mail and e-mail.

A western suboffice and church hall was built at Migori, Kenya, and was dedicated on Atonement 2005.

Currently two booklets (*Fundamental Beliefs* and *Transforming Your Life*) have been translated into the Swahili (Kiswahili) and Luo languages.

John Elliott

Man From Armenia Baptized

Feastgoers in Schluchsee, Germany, provided a warm welcome for Mnazakan Poghosjan and his daughter, Ani, from Armenia. Armenia was formerly part of the Soviet Union and borders Turkey and Iran.



Mnazakan Poghosjan and his daughter, Ani, from Armenia. Mr. Poghosjan was baptized during the Feast in Germany

Seventeen years ago Mr. Poghosjan met Darmstadt, Germany, Church member Albert Wilhelm, who was in Armenia on an editorial assignment for his employer and needed a translator during his visit. Mr. Poghosjan, who speaks fluent German, was his translator, and over the years Mr. Wilhelm and Mr. Poghosjan remained in contact.

About five years ago Mr. Wilhelm sent Mr. Poghosjan some literature in German, and Mr. Poghosjan became more and more interested in what he was reading. He began to see that the true teachings of the Bible are quite different from what he learned in the Armenian Orthodox Church.

With help from the Wilhelms and other members in the Darmstadt congregation, Mr. Poghosjan, his wife and daughter planned to attend the Feast in Germany. However, the German embassy in Yerevan refused to grant all

three of them a tourist visa. At the last minute, Mr. Wilhelm's congressman in Berlin requested that visas be granted to Mr. Poghosjan and his daughter.

The German congregation sent them home with two suitcases full of clothing and an MP3 player so Mr. Poghosjan can listen to MP3 sermons in German.

On the final day of the Feast, a warm round of applause greeted the announcement that three people had been baptized during the Feast: Mr. Poghosjan, Marian Mulder from the Netherlands and Jörg Habich from Germany.

Paul Kieffer

Spot Ads Draw Good Response in the Philippines

Aired for free four times a day, seven days a week, one-minute spot ads on radio have been bringing in good responses in the Philippines. Many listeners are requesting our advertised literature through text messaging.

The spot ads were aired as bonuses to the Philippine weekly program, *The Good News of the World Tomorrow*, broadcast on Sunday nights.

Transfer and Realignment in Western Canada

Rainer and Claudia Salomaa are in the process of completing a move from Prince George, British Columbia, to Calgary, Alberta. Rainer Salomaa's pastorate will now include Calgary and Grande Prairie, Alberta; and Prince George, Kelowna and Penticton, British Columbia.

David Palmer and area elders will assist him in the Okanagan Valley (Kelowna and Penticton) as needed. Similarly, Robert Berendt and area elders will assist in the Prince George and Grande Prairie areas as needed.

The Lethbridge, Alberta, and Regina, Saskatchewan, congregations, which are cared for respectively by resident elders Larry Delong and Lloyd Teetaert, will be pastored out of the Canadian National Office.

Ministers Safe From Jordan Blasts

Scott Ashley and Darris McNeely returned safely from Amman, Jordan, Nov. 10, escaping the suicide bomb blasts that hit three Western hotels in that city Nov. 9. They were staying in the Le Meridien Hotel, where the Feast was held, after post-Feast touring in the area. Their hotel was not hit, but was evacuated while security personnel searched it for explosives.

Beyond Today Taping Launches Newly Completed Media Center

"Beyond Today," continued from page 1

3) "Better Than Heaven" (Steve Myers, Howard Davis and Don Henson) to air the week of Jan. 1-7, 2006.

4) "Life After Death" (Gary Petty, Randy Stiver and Don Henson) to air the week of Jan. 8-14.

The next round of recordings will take place on Dec. 7 and 8 with host Gary Petty doing four programs that will include Council members Victor Kubik, Richard Thompson and Mario Seiglie, plus Todd Carey, Ralph Levy and Melvin Rhodes.

Construction is underway on our new multi-media Web site to host these video programs (www.beyondtoday.tv), and we will immediately be on 100+ cable-access community television stations.

If you are interested in airing *Beyond Today* on your local cable-access television station, please contact John LaBissoniere at john_labissoniere@ucg.org or (888) 369-9940 (toll-free) for more information. UN



Above, Darris McNeely, Ralph Levy and Melvin Rhodes record "New Religion for the Middle East"; right, Gary Petty, Randy Stiver and Don Henson tape "Life After Death."

Ministerial Services Plans for the Future

by Jim Franks

From January 1996 until the present, Richard Pinelli has served faithfully as Ministerial Services operation manager. It will not be an easy task to replace him. He has served several presidents and shown dedication and support for the principles upon which United was founded.

Few men have been as directly involved in stabilizing the Church through some very difficult times as has Richard Pinelli. For that we owe him a great deal of thanks! My wife and I will always remember the strength he and Mary showed during the various trials and challenges of the past 10 years, both doctrinally and administratively.

I have been privileged to work closely with Richard as part of the Ministerial Services team from the very beginning in 1996. We also served together as regional pastors for three years prior. We have formed a strong bond of friendship and respect.

I am looking forward to the new job knowing that Richard will still be in the area working with something that he has a true passion for—training new ministers. No one in the history of the Church that I am aware of has had more experience with training ministers than Richard Pinelli.

Training New Ministers

When I was asked to become the operation manager, Mr. Kilough and the Ministerial Services team (Doug Horchak, Denny Luker and myself) discussed at some length the priorities of the Church for the next several years. We all agreed that one of the great priorities (obviously our number one priority is to preach the gospel) and urgent needs is to prepare men and women for service to the Church.

We need younger men to take on the duties of pastoring congregations. Where will these men come from? How will they be trained? These questions are being studied and a plan is being formulated. Richard Pinelli will be at the heart of our ministerial development program. I truly believe that the fruit from this program will serve the Church well for the foreseeable future.

Richard and Mary Pinelli are two of the greatest resources in the Church

today, and I am confident that they will be successful in developing a plan for the future.

ABC Joins MS

The primary changes in Ministerial Services initially will be in the area of personnel. Mr. Kilough has asked that every program that comes out of the home office be assigned to an operation manager. Since the beginning of United, the education programs have been assigned to Ministerial Services. As we move forward, Mr. Kilough has asked that ABC be considered part of Ministerial Services and a part of the overall education program of the Church.

ABC is unique in many ways, but it is truly a means of educating people to God's way of life. As such, it will come under the management of David Register, who will take on the responsibility of director of the Church's education programs. David will serve in this new job as well as becoming a member of the Ministerial Services team (joining Doug Horchak and Dennis Luker).

The position of education director is a new responsibility that has been proposed since 1996 when the Council of Elders approved the initial education programs of the Church. To have someone devoted to bringing together the various and divergent programs that we currently have going in education was considered a priority by Mr. Kilough.

In addition, David and Becky Johnson are being relocated to Cincinnati, and Dave will teach at ABC as well as contribute to other projects assigned by Ministerial Services. These three personnel changes will highlight the beginning of new programs and further development of the areas assigned to MS.

Opportunity to Serve

My wife and I look forward to the opportunity of working with the men and women in the home office and the many men and women serving in the congregations throughout the United States. We are humbled by the opportunity to serve in this manner.

When United began, we chose the name Ministerial Services rather than Church Administration. From the beginning we felt the emphasis should be on service. We want to be sure that we never lose sight of the big picture and that

before making any decision, we always ask the question: What would God have us do to benefit the Church? It is my hope and prayer that we never deviate from these principles. UN

Ambassador Bible Center Administration

1. Dave Register (Director of education programs)
2. Gary Antion (ABC instructor)
3. Ralph Levy (ABC instructor)
4. Dave Johnson (ABC instructor)

Regional Pastors (Effective 2006)

1. Paul Suckling, Northeast
2. Bruce Gore, Southeast
3. Lyle Welty, Great Lakes
4. Mike Hanisko, North Central
5. Greg Sargent, Central
6. Ken Giese, South Central
7. Larry Neff, Mountain
8. Dennis Luker, Northwest
9. Larry Greider, Southwest

Responsibilities Within Ministerial Services

1. Operation manager—Jim Franks
2. Director of education programs and MS Team member—Dave Register
3. Coordinator of ministerial development programs—Richard Pinelli
4. Assistant working in office—Dave Johnson (half-time)
5. Administrator and assistant working in office—Dave Evans
6. Administrative assistant working in office—Mary Pinelli (part-time)
7. Festival planning/conference planning—Charles Melear
8. MS Team member/Festival planning coordinator—Doug Horchak
9. MS Team member/regional pastor—Dennis Luker
10. Personal Correspondence—Cecil Maranville
11. *Ministerial Quarterly*—Don Ward/Cecil Maranville

Ministerial Services Personnel Changes

By January 2006, the following personnel changes will have taken place:

Name	Former Responsibility	New Responsibility
Dave Johnson	Pastor of Cape Girardeau and Poplar Bluff, Mo., and Paducah, Ky.	Instructor at ABC and assistant in Ministerial Services
Rick Beam	Pastor of Huntsville, Ala., and Cleveland, Tenn.	Pastor of Cape Girardeau and Poplar Bluff, Mo., and Paducah, Ky.
Roy Holladay	President of UCGIA	Pastor of Cleveland, Tenn.
Clyde Kilough	Pastor of Sacramento, Calif., and Reno, Nev.	President of UCGIA
Joe Horchak	Pastor of Columbus and Cambridge, Ohio	Pastor of Sacramento, Calif., and Reno, Nev.
Randy Stiver	Pastor of Eugene, Coos Bay and Roseburg, Ore.	Pastor of Columbus and Cambridge, Ohio
John Cafourek	Pastor of Salem, Ore.	Pastor of Salem and Eugene, Ore. (Coos Bay becomes Bible Study)
Larry Walker	Pastor of Bend and Medford, Ore.	Pastor of Bend, Medford and Roseburg, Ore.
Bill Winner	Pastor of Athens and Marietta, Ohio, and Morgantown, W.Va.	Pastor of Huntsville, Birmingham and Gadsden, Ala.
Tim Waddle	Assistant pastor of Denver, Colorado Springs and Loveland, Colo.	Pastor of Athens and Marietta, Ohio, and Morgantown, W.Va.
Dan Dowd	Assistant pastor of Worcester, Mass., and Portsmouth, N.H.	Pastor of Portsmouth, N.H.
Lyle Welty	Pastor of Cleveland, Ohio; regional pastor	Pastor of Cincinnati East, Ohio; regional pastor
Richard Pinelli	Operation manager Ministerial Services; pastor of Cincinnati East, Ohio	Ministerial development coordinator working within Ministerial Services
Doug Johnson	Pastor of Mansfield and Canton, Ohio	Pastor of Cleveland, Ohio, and Meadville, Pa.
Chris Moen	Assistant pastor of Ocala, Jacksonville and Orlando, Fla.	Pastor of Mansfield and Canton, Ohio
Don Henson	Pastor of Pittsburgh and Meadville, Pa., and Wheeling, W.Va.	Pastor of Pittsburgh, Pa., and Wheeling, W.Va.
Dave Register	Pastor of Los Angeles, Bakersfield and Fresno, Calif.; regional pastor	Director of Education Programs working within Ministerial Services
Larry Greider	Pastor of Collinsville, Ill.; regional pastor	Pastor of Los Angeles, Bakersfield and Fresno, Calif.; regional pastor
Jim Franks	Pastor of Houston North, Texas; MS Team member	Operation manager Ministerial Services
Jim Servidio	Pastor of Minneapolis, Duluth and Little Falls, Minn.; regional pastor	Pastor of Houston North, Texas
Mike Hanisko	Pastor of Milwaukee and Oshkosh, Wis.	Pastor of Minneapolis, Duluth and Little Falls, Minn.; regional pastor
Greg Sargent	Pastor of St. Louis, Kansas City and Columbia, Mo.	Pastor of Kansas City and Columbia, Mo.; regional pastor
Vince Szymkowiak	Assistant pastor Rolla, Springfield and Joplin, Mo., and Harrison, Ark.	Pastor of Rolla and St. Louis, Mo., and Collinsville, Ill.

Pinellis Complete 10 Years Serving in Ministerial Services

In 10 years as operation manager of Ministerial Services, Richard Pinelli has contributed greatly to the United Church of God.

"Mr. Pinelli has held this post for nearly a decade, a remarkable feat in the modern history of the Church considering the difficulty of his job," said Clyde Kilough.

"I first heard from him the phrase often used to describe the developmental stages of our short history in the United Church of God: 'forming, storming, norming and performing.' He and his wife, Mary, have been pillars of stability as we traversed these stages, their example and words often shoring up and strengthening many members and ministers."

Highlights From the Last 10 Years

Mr. Pinelli had been in charge of the ministry in Canada from 1976 to 1978 when there were about 10,000 members in that country, so it was natural that he was asked to submit a plan about how to organize Ministerial Services in United. He received a call from the president at 4 p.m. on the first Friday in 1996, and was asked how he would handle the job. The following Tuesday he was hired.

"Richard has worked at his job through all the various administrations. No one else can really say that," said Mr. Franks. "We should probably be awarding him a medal!"

By March 1996, the regional pastors and the Ministerial Services team were set up, and it has been "a good,

four presidential administrations speaks volumes for his performance," said Mr. Kilough. "I share with many the highest appreciation for that service."

Accomplishments

During the last 10 years, many things have been accomplished in the Ministerial Services area. Much has been achieved because of the willingness of the pastors to multitask in many areas formerly handled by full-time employees.

Pastors are helping answer Person-



al Correspondence questions, writing and reviewing articles and booklets, producing *Ministerial Quarterly*, *World News and Prophecy*, *Vertical Thought* and other publications, writing and recording radio and television programs, helping with summer camps and the Feast, producing a wealth of educational materials, teaching at ABC, etc.

One example of ministerial involvement was the development of *World News and Prophecy*.

Mr. Pinelli said, "Darris McNeely and several of the men wanted to put together something on prophecy, and I recommended to Darris, 'Why don't you work it through the home office so you don't have to charge people a couple of bucks to get a copy of this. You can use our system here and we can get you some extra people to do proofreading and all of that.'"

"Now of course, *World News and Prophecy* has become a mainstay in giving food in the prophecy area. He came with the idea and we worked with him on that, and now there are a lot of men helping with that. The same thing with *Ministerial Quarterly*, we have a lot of contributions."

Mr. Pinelli compared this with the situation "years ago in our former association, we had 900 to 1,000 people doing many of these jobs, now they are done by many of the men in the field. We feel the use of the ministry in that way has been most productive."

"This multitasking has been one of the biggest helps to the overall devel-

opment of the work," Mr. Pinelli said. All this is being done with fewer pastors, down from 128 to 92 today. Mr. Pinelli pointed out the Ministerial Services area has never been over budget, thanks to the cooperation of the men in the field. Mr. Pinelli said he appreciates the loyalty and faithfulness of the men.

Mr. Pinelli also listed maintaining doctrinal purity as a key accomplishment of the Church over the last 10 years. "As a result of all of us working together—between Ministerial Services, the Council, the Doctrine Committee—we feel like we have really gotten a good handle on the doctrine of the Church, and the purity of doctrine we have seen come out of United is a result of everybody working together."

Mr. Pinelli also highlighted the great contributions of the ministry in the educational area (general education, youth education, ministerial education and focused education).

"Ministerial Services was responsible for overseeing the development of the four modules of education, and now we have outgrown ourselves! So much has been done by all of the men in the field, elders and pastors, to the point that now you have to have somebody who is going to coordinate all those programs and ABC."

Working Together

"We've had to learn something really important," said Mr. Pinelli. "Our system of consensus and collaboration is most interesting. The only reason consensus works in the United Church of God is because of

conversion, and it does not work without deeply converted people."

"I have to say working with the field ministers and the elders has been



really a joy in most cases. The men have been very cooperative and helpful in many, many areas . . . If it weren't the for the guys in the trenches, our job would have been a whole a lot harder."

Mr. Pinelli also expressed appreciation for his wife's role in his ministry.

"We were married in 1960 and were sent to Canada in 1961 to work, and my wife has worked at my side since that time. She's always served at my side, has always been involved in all of the things that I've done. She has been a fantastic help, so far as just listening to my rantings and ravings at times, and helping me sort through things that just needed a woman's touch . . . You can't do this

job without your wife."

New Challenges

Mr. Pinelli will now be working on developing and implementing a program to train pastors to develop the leadership skills of members in the local congregations.

"We know already of young men and women who are committed to God's way, who have a heart of service, but need focused training and opportunity to grow," said Mr. Kilough. "We know already of elders and other spiritually mature members whose leadership potential could be accelerated by effective training. However, such mentoring is a



skill, and Mr. Pinelli's focus will be on helping pastors develop this skill set, to help them be more effective in this realm."

Mr. Pinelli has mentored over 35 trainees in his career and is very enthused about this new job. "His work in this area is going to bear good results for years to come," said Mr. Kilough. UN



solid" system and "highly successful," said Mr. Pinelli. This was especially important during those "forming and storming" times. During the first difficult seven years it was a time of sorting, as people with different doctrinal and administrative ideas eventually chose to go separate ways.

Mr. Pinelli said at first he was receiving about 150 e-mails a day, and up to 50 complaints after each Feast. He said he knew that the "norming" stage was arriving when four years ago the Feast was very peaceful. Now there are only about an average of 35 e-mails a day and only seven or eight complaints after the Feast. "Now we see ourselves between the 'norming' and 'performing' stage of the Church," Mr. Pinelli said.

"The situations that made their way to Mr. Pinelli's desk were inevitably the most difficult, demanding the most in terms of judgment. But his track record of consistency through

Words of Appreciation for Richard and Mary Pinelli

"God has richly blessed us with two fine examples of His way of life. Richard and Mary Pinelli have thrown themselves into the ministry of Jesus Christ for almost half a century," said regional pastor Larry Greider. "Bonnie and I first met the Pinellis in Toronto, Canada, in 1978 when they replaced Mr. Gary Antion, who was going to Pasadena to teach at the college and Mr. Pinelli was to be the area coordinator for the Toronto region. We served together in organizing Feast sites and promoting youth activities.

"As the years rolled by, Mr. Pinelli's stability and stalwart example helped many of us steer our way into the safe harbor of the UCG, which formed out of the renaissance of the new beginning only miles from his pastorate in Indiana. As director of MS, Mr. Pinelli has shown his willingness to work collaboratively, yet act decisively when the situation required leadership.

"As we reach a decade as an organized group of contenders for the faith once delivered, Mr. Pinelli has steadied the reigns of enthusiasm and angst through the storming, forming and norming seasons of a young organization. The Church of God has a rich history of survival, yet we should never take for granted those guardians God gives us who show the way."

"Richard Pinelli was simply the best man for the job for the last 10 years," said regional pastor Jim Servidio. "First of all, unlike most former directors of the ministry, Richard had many years of field experience. He and Mary both understood how administrative decisions and directives would affect local congregations and the ministry. This has been a great help to all the men and wives in the field, especially the full-time employees.

"Working with the various presidents and Council members under the stressful and transitional circumstances of the past decade, yet remaining a friend and supportive supervisor to the men in the field, has been a remarkable accomplishment. There was no other individual in the Church who found himself more in the middle on numerous occasions than Richard, yet he maintained his loyalty, dignity, honor and spiritual footing.

"Judith and I are both grateful for the support, counsel and leadership Richard has extended to us personally. He was there to encourage and believe in us when we were under duress, yet provided wisdom and guidance when we needed direction. Most importantly he and Mary both have just been good people and good friends," Mr. Servidio said.

"One of the qualities that comes to mind when I think of Richard is fairness; fairness with everyone," said Harold Rhodes, a Festival coordinator and former regional pastor. "He has the necessary ability to relate to the field ministry; a real minister's minister. Richard is always willing to listen and help and has contributed greatly in creating stability in the Church during some very trying times.

"He is balanced, has a good sense of humor and his fishing skills have steadily improved over the years I've known him! He may be small in stature, but can hold his own in 5-foot seas.

"Richard and Mary make an excellent team and Loree and I consider ourselves blessed to have them as true friends; a real brother and sister."



From the Word

Teaching Values to Your Child: Making Wise Media Choices

■ How can we teach our children how to decide what music to listen to and which movies to see?

by Larry W. Greider

How do you teach values or morals to your children in the 21st century? Actually, the same way it has been done at any time in history. As a parent or teacher, you use the environment around you to identify that which is good and true and expose that which is wrong and harmful.

The Bible says this very eloquently in Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

Perhaps one of the best teaching opportunities for our consumer-focused younger generation is to challenge the choices that they make, especially in entertainment, that can have an undue amount of influence on developing minds.

Today there are 31.6 million 12- to 19-year-olds in the United States—the largest generation ever—with plenty of buying power. In 2000, U.S. teens spent an estimated \$105 billion and influenced their parents to spend an additional \$48 billion (Teen Research Unlimited). The choices made by teens are thus very relevant to merchants. Perhaps there has never been a time in which so many young people have had the leisure time plus the money in their pockets to just have fun.

Choices, choices, choices. What

movie, CD or video game should I spend my money on this time? What is cool and what is going to be exciting and "fun"?

Not All Options Are Good

According to one author, "Most television programming is insipid, illicit, and idiotic" (Douglas Groothuis, Ph.D., "How Bombarding Images of TV Culture Undermine the Power of Words," *Modern Reformation*, Jan.-Feb. 2001, page 39).

It is obvious to those who have been watching TV and movies for a few years that there is more violence and sex than ever before—actually, *quite a lot more*. Every major network has a show, often in prime time, which features a gay character, not to mention all the shows that glamorize extramarital sex.

Are these shows, which admittedly entertain and stimulate people, really good for you? Are the big screen's latest flicks appropriate for Christians to watch?

In 1939, Rhett Butler, talking angrily to Scarlet O'Hara in the cinematic blockbuster *Gone With the Wind*, appeared without his shirt and also used a four-letter word thought to be shocking to say in public. This epic movie was considered controversial because of this *one* word and the shirtlessness.

Today, nudity or partial nudity is considered normal and the use of expletives is so commonplace that some characters would have virtually nothing to say if you deleted curse words. Casual sex, graphically depicted, is almost natural between the main characters in most movies.

Ratings of movies (seldom enforced, as most teens know) have been steadily getting looser—meaning less and less is being censored. Full frontal nudity, lots

of blood and guts and generous quantities of profanity are not that big a deal anymore.

Marshall McLuhan remarked, "We become what we behold." Joshua Meyrowitch, a professor of communication, complains that his students tend to have an image-based standard of truth. "If I ask, 'What evidence supports your view or contradicts it?' they look at me as if I came from another planet" (*ibid.*, p. 33).

Ideas for Making Choices About Movies and Music

• Is this appropriate? Are the words of the song or the plot of the movie good for me? It is true that options are often few, even at a major multiplex with 10 or more theaters. One recent marquee offered movies that included three R-rated flicks that had adult language, nudity and violence; two movies dealing with the paranormal (spirit world including demon possession); and one thoroughly gross picture that was called a comedy.

That didn't leave much to view, which is very sad. The powerful combination of surround sound and high-definition digital technologies allow for stunning imagery. It seems we get addicted to special effects and need more and more to be thrilled. But what about the mind? Do we need to guard this important gateway to our character? The answer is YES!

• Will this be uplifting and positive? It is great to have powerful music that lifts your spirit and makes you feel good. A few years ago I visited the Epcot Center in Disney World. Toward the end of the day, there was a colorful parade with puppets 20-feet high, dancers and rolling drums with the accompaniment of the most intriguing and inspiring music that

I've ever heard. I was so taken, I had to find the CD for my collection.

Music should fit the mood but not *create* a negative or destructive one. You can select from a huge variety of music today. Make wise choices. Choose music that inspires and uplifts you.

• What are the options? Suggest to your children that it might be more fun and rewarding to do something *else* instead of taking in a movie, if there isn't anything worth watching. Why not *go do* something or get with a group and talk about ideas, plans, etc.?

Have you ever thought about going to a park and throwing a Frisbee or football around? Your imagination is the limit of things to do that are fun, creative and help you build friendships.

Going to a movie is getting to be more expensive and often puts ideas in your mind that are not clean and pure. Just talking in a peaceful environment with good friends might actually be the most fun of all. Learning from others while sharing your concerns and fears can be healthy and helpful in building lasting relationships.

Sadly, companies that see the youth market as a real bonanza produce many of the things considered cool. The intention of most sponsors is to make money, not help build character. MTV, which seems to have turned into one big continuous commercial, does not always have the purest of motives.

In a PBS *Frontline* documentary titled "Merchants of Cool" (first aired Feb. 27, 2001), media analyst Douglas Rushkoff speaks with teens at a concert by the Detroit-based Insane Clown Posse, purveyors of a genre of music that became known as "rage rock." When asked to

describe what appeals to them about such music, the teens invariably respond that it belongs to them; it hasn't yet been taken and sold back to them at the mall. Full of profanity, violence and misogyny, rage rock is literally a challenge thrown up to marketers—just try to market this!

But marketers accepted the challenge. Rage rock became big business. Not only did Insane Clown Posse become mainstream, but much bigger acts like Eminem and Limp Bizkit were breaking sales records and winning Grammy nominations and other mainstream music awards.

In the documentary, Mr. Rushkoff details how MTV and other huge commercial outlets orchestrated the rise of Limp Bizkit—despite the group's objectionable lyrics—and then relentlessly promoted them on the air.

But in doing so, critics ask if MTV is truly reflecting the desires of today's teenagers or stoking a cultural infatuation with music and imagery that glorifies violence and sex as well as antisocial behavior and attitudes. In today's media-saturated environment, such questions, it seems, are becoming increasingly difficult to answer.

If you want your teens to be aware of godly values, you will have to teach them. The world around us attacks that which is good, pure and right. I was struck by Paul's use of the word *if* in Philippians 4:8: "... *if* there is any virtue and *if* there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

As parents, we must search for what is appropriate for our children and guide them toward making right decisions. Their future success and happiness will depend on it. UN

Why I Celebrate God's Biblical Holy Days Instead of Holidays

Following is a paper 11-year-old Tessa Black wrote for a class in school about why we keep the Holy Days. Tessa and her family attend the East Texas congregation.

by Tessa Black

My family doesn't celebrate Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day or any other religious holiday like most people do. People sometimes think that means we are not Christians, but we are. We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and was born on earth to the virgin Mary, to die for us so we can have a chance to live forever. We read the same Bible as everyone else.

The reason we don't keep Christmas is because the Bible doesn't tell us to. It tells the story of Jesus' birth, but not as a Holy Day. It doesn't even tell us what day He was born. Dec. 25 is a day called the winter solstice. Most of the traditions of Christmas come from people called pagans who lived before Christ was born and worshipped idols. Later, during the

Roman Empire, Christians started keeping these traditions in Jesus' name and today everyone thinks that's OK.

But the Bible says we shouldn't take away or add to God's laws. And we are not supposed to reject God's Commandments so that we can keep man's traditions, even if they seem fun. So that's why my family doesn't celebrate Christmas.

We do celebrate Holy Days from the Bible. These Holy Days were given to God's people in the Old Testament and were kept by Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament. I love God's Holy Days because they teach me to remember things that God has done for His people in the past and His plan for saving all mankind in the future.

I want to tell you about the festivals that are in the Bible and what they mean to me.

Passover: We remember God's angel passing over the houses of His people and sparing their firstborn sons in Egypt.

We also learn that the first step in God's plan to save us is for us to accept

Christ's death as a Passover sacrifice for and be baptized.

First and Last Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread: We remember God rescuing His people from slavery in Egypt and that they had to eat unleavened bread. Unleavened bread has no yeast to puff it up, so it is flat.

We also learn that the next step in God's plan is to try to take the sin out of our lives. Sin is like leavening, it puffs us up and makes us proud. God wants us humble, like the flat bread. During this week we eat unleavened bread and take all of the puffy bread out of our house to remind us to clean the sin out of our lives.

The Day of Pentecost (also called the Feast of the Firstfruits): We remember that Jesus started His small Church with His apostles and gave them the Holy Spirit as a comforter while He is gone.

We also learn that the next step is that we can be one of God's firstfruits in His harvest when He returns.

The Feast of Trumpets: We learn that this day is the day Christ returns to

rule the earth and set up His Kingdom. It will not be a secret when He comes, because angels will blow trumpets so loud that the whole world will know.

The Day of Atonement: We learn that when Christ returns, Satan will be put away for a while and we will finally be at one with God without the devil causing trouble. Atonement kind of means "at-one-ment." On this day God tells us to fast for 24 hours, from sundown to sundown. Fasting means we don't eat or drink anything, not even water. This teaches us that if we do not become at one with God, we have no hope and will die.

The Feast of Tabernacles (Feast of Booths): We learn that next is 1,000 years of peace in God's Kingdom here on earth. God will rebuild the earth and Jerusalem will be the capital. King David will rule under God. All people will be taught to obey God's laws and keep these Feasts every year. The Bible even says that people who won't keep the Feasts will have no rain for their crops until they obey.

The Feast of Tabernacles is my favorite festival. We must leave our house and live in temporary houses and live like God's Kingdom was already here for a whole week. We go to really cool places and do lots of fun things as a family. We also go to church every day for two hours—some days twice!

The Last Great Day: We learn that when the 1,000 years is over, God will resurrect all the people that ever lived and died but were not part of His Church. Billions of people will be brought back to life and put back together as skin and bones and given a chance to learn His laws and His way of life. God loves all His children and hopes that "not one should perish." Everyone gets a chance to be in God's family and live forever as a spirit being like God. This will be the GREATEST DAY EVER, because all friends and families will be together again and know God.

I hope you enjoyed learning about these Holy Days and why I keep them, and now you understand why I don't celebrate Christmas. UN

Building Up or Tearing Down?

by Gregory Dullum

Who can forget 9/11?

When hijacked jetliners were flown into the two 110-story structures on Sept. 11, 2001, they burst into flames and within two hours, the World Trade Center's Twin Towers collapsed like an accordion, leaving a pile of twisted steel and concrete dust. Those images are burned indelibly into our minds.

But how many of us remember the building up of the Twin Towers? When were they built? How long did it take? How many workers did it take?

Making Plans

The idea for a World Trade Center in New York began in 1946, just after World War II. But it wasn't until 1960 that it became feasible to build a World Trade Center. The New York and New Jersey Port Authority began planning the project. The Port Authority's initial proposal for a World Trade Center was made in March 1961.

Public relations expert Lee K. Jaffe wrote a memo that stated, "Incidentally, if you're going to build a great project, you should build the world's tallest building." The idea caught on, and the job of designing it went to Japanese-American architect Minoru Yamasaki.

Yamasaki designed the 110-story Twin Towers (which were the tallest buildings in the world until the Sears Tower in Chicago surpassed them in 1974). The plans for the Twin Towers were revealed in January 1964. There was a certain amount of protest and construction was delayed until 1966.

"Before anything new could be constructed, old buildings had to be demolished and the land cleared" (*Twin Towers* by Angus Gillespie, p. 81). It took 20 months to demolish the buildings and excavate the site before the first part of construction could be done.

Construction Begins

At 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 6, 1968, the Karl Koch Erecting Company began its work by placing the first steel grillage on the southwest corner of the North Tower.

"It was a significant step. A grillage is the framework of crossing steel beams that is used to spread heavy loads over large areas. A gang of workers guided the grillage, a key component in skyscraper construction, gently and precisely onto the concrete slab or footing 70 feet below street level. Thus this step represented the transition from foundation work to erection work" (Gillespie, p. 100).

There were four steps to the construction. First was the center core where all the elevators were. Each tower had 23 express elevators that carried 55 people at a time. The building was divided into thirds and the express elevators only stopped at these main lobby areas where passengers got off to take a local elevator to their floor. There were 72 local elevators that served only one third of the building at a time. They shared the same elevator shaft as the local elevators above and or below them. And there were nine freight ele-

vators that serviced 116 floors—110 stories above the ground and six basement floors. All these and a central support structure were built in the center of each tower.

To build a skyscraper, the builders needed cranes taller than the building. But there were no 110-story cranes. To solve this problem, they imported cranes from Australia, nicknamed "kangaroo cranes." These had a long leg that fit inside the elevator shafts. As the building rose around these cranes, they had diesel motors and hydraulic lifts that allowed them to rise up three stories taller than the current floor. These cranes rose with the building.

The second part of the construction was the exterior wall, which supported the weight of the entire building. The wall was put up in prefabricated sections. The vertical columns were already welded to horizontal beams. Each piece weighed 22 tons.

Third was the installation of the floor. These pieces stretched from the center core to the outside walls. The floor sections had 32-inch deep metal trusses topped with corrugated metal to accept the poured concrete for the floor. Air ducts were installed in the trusses under the floor and ceiling tiles covered them.

Fireproofing was attached to the outside steel structures and then they were covered with an aluminum skin and stainless steel trim. Bronze-tinted heat-reflective glass was ordered for the 43,600 windows. The windows were recessed 10 inches to shade them from all but direct sunlight (Gillespie, pp. 107-108).

During peak construction times, about 3,600 workers were on the job site (Gillespie, p. 84). "Material requirements for the project called for 200,000 tons of structural steel. Some 1.25 million man-hours of work would be needed to excavate 1.2 million cubic yards of earth and boulders, not to mention about 45,000 yards of bedrock prior to laying the foundations. The World Trade Center would require six million square feet of masonry walls and five million square feet of painted surfaces. Also needed would be 1,520 miles of wire, 400 miles of conduit, and 200,000 lighting fixtures. Toward the end of the project, ceiling workers would install seven million square feet of acoustical tile. Similarly, floor installers would lay seven million square feet of floors" (Gillespie, p. 59).

Up to 30 truckloads of steel arrived daily at the site. The floor sections were too big to be hauled by truck and had to be ferried by tugboat across the river.

On Oct. 19, 1970, the World Trade Center became the tallest building in the world as it surpassed the 1,250-foot high Empire State Building.

On Dec. 22, 1970, the north tower was "topped out." The south tower was topped out July 19, 1971, 10 years after the Port Authority's initial proposal to build a World Trade Center.

The official dedication was April 1973, but by then the buildings were more than half-filled with rent-paying tenants.

What did it take to build the World Trade Center? A lot of time—about a decade. It took a lot of people working together—3,600 people working at one time. It took cooperation and coordination and planning. It took all types of machinery and vehicles from sledge hammers to paint brushes to kangaroo cranes and tugboats.

Quick Destruction

What did it take to destroy these buildings? Less than a dozen men. With what tools? A few box cutters placed at the throats of an airline crew.

How long did it take to destroy the World Trade Center? Not long. Just minutes. The north tower was hit first at 8:45 a.m. EDT. It collapsed at 10:28. The south tower was hit at 9:03 and collapsed at 10:05, just about an hour later.

It took years and years of hard work to build. But it only took minutes to destroy.

It takes a lot of time and effort to build something great. Isn't it sad that all that effort can be destroyed so quickly and easily?

Another Building

There is another building, one that has been under construction for nearly 2,000 years. Work began A.D. 31, and today, in 2005, it is still incomplete. It is a spiritual building. Jesus Christ is the cornerstone; the apostles and prophets make up the foundation (Ephesians 2:20). That building is the Church of God (1 Corinthians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21).

What role do we play in this spiritual building? Are we like the 3,600 workers on the job site who built up the Twin Towers? Or do we do things to tear down and destroy the spiritual building like the hijackers? Are we doing all we can to help build up the Church? Or are we sometimes, without realizing it, doing things that can harm the Church?

We Should Build Up

In 1 Corinthians 14 the apostle Paul addressed the issue of speaking in tongues. The people in Corinth sought spiritual gifts, and the gift they especially wanted was speaking in tongues. Paul told them this gift that they wanted the most was not the best one. Why? Because speaking in tongues edified—built up—the speaker but did nothing for the Church as a whole (1 Corinthians 14:4). Notice how many times in this passage Paul said we should do things to edify—build up—the Church:

"But he who prophesies speaks *edification and exhortation and comfort to men*" (verse 3, emphasis added throughout). What do these three words mean? To *edify* means to build up. To *exhort* means to urge, advise or caution earnestly. *Comfort* means to soothe, console, cheer, to make physically comfortable, to aid or encourage. These things unify and build up the Church. "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church" (verse 4). Our focus should be on building up the Church, not ourselves.



"I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification . . . Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel" (verses 5, 12). We should use our spiritual gifts, whatever they are, to build up the Church.

"Let all things be done for edification" (verse 26). Everything we do should be to build up the Church.

In Romans 14:19 and 15:1-2, Paul wrote about not offending people when we eat. One principle we can learn from this discussion is that those who are spiritually stronger at the moment should help build up those who are weak at the moment. (We all have our strong periods and our weak periods.)

In Ephesians 4:11-16 Paul tells us that it is primarily the minister's job to edify. It *begins* with them. But notice verse 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." Every joint and every part supplies something. It is not just the minister's job. Every Church member also must supply something.

What to Do?

What can we do? We, in the Church, should consider each other our friends. How do friends behave toward each other?

Wilfred A. Peterson, in *The Art of Living*, writes: "To be a friend a man should strive to be 'like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,' to be a source of refuge and strength to those who walk in darkness.

"To be a friend, a man should strive to lift people up, not cast them down; to encourage, not discourage; to set an example that will be an inspiration to others.

"To be a friend a man should practice the companionship of silence and the magic of words that his speech may build and not destroy, help and not hinder" (pp. 30-31).

These are some good general guidelines. But are there specific actions we should take? What specific things can

we do to build up the Church?

Here are a few things mostly garnered from biblical examples and commands that would help build up the Church:

1. Pray for each other and for the work of the Church.
2. Write cards to the sick.
3. Attend services whenever possible.
4. Volunteer to serve when there's a need.
5. Compliment each other.
6. Use talents to serve God and the brethren (accompany hymns, perform special music, share talent in a fun show, etc.).
7. Offer wise advice.
8. Show kindness and gentleness to one another.
9. Sing psalms.
10. Look out for interests of others.
11. Invite the brethren home for a meal and fellowship.
12. Wives submitting to husbands, and husbands loving their wives and their children.

Construction of the Twin Towers took years and years to accomplish. But they were destroyed in just minutes. The Church of God has taken nearly 2,000 years to build. Yet it, too, has suffered devastating attacks.

Thankfully Jesus Christ said the gates of hell will not prevail against His Church (Matthew 16:18). That doesn't stop Satan from trying (Revelation 12:7-10, 12-17).

We must be careful we don't unwittingly become a box cutter in Satan's hand as he attempts to damage the Church of God and destroy its members.

Things to Avoid

What specific actions might help tear down the Church?

1. Gossip.
2. Complaining and murmuring against Church leadership.
3. Staying home from services for no good reason.
4. Making fun of people, cutting them down.
5. Lying.
6. Foolish talking and coarse jesting.
7. Spreading our own ideas that are not Bible-based and are contrary to what the Church teaches.

There are probably hundreds of things we can do to build up the Church. And a lot of things we should avoid as well, because they hurt unity.

Before we do or say things, let's ask ourselves, will these actions or these words help build up the Church or will they harm the Church?

None of us would knowingly do anything to harm the Church. But we could do something without realizing the harm it may cause. We need to be alert to the results our words and actions can have.

Instead of even accidentally causing harm, let's strive to be like the thousands of workers who built up the Twin Towers. Let's build up the spiritual temple of God. UN

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Considering Counseling for Baptism? What Are You Waiting For?

■ I have heard people say they are waiting to counsel for baptism because they aren't good enough yet or need to study the Bible more. If you feel this way, read on and let's see what the Scriptures teach.

by Steve McNeely

One of the most brilliant components of God's plan is to give His human offspring freedom of choice. God the Father and Jesus Christ aren't going to force anyone to be in Their eternal family.

It is only when a human being—made in the image and likeness of God, imbued with the spirit in mankind and completely free to choose—comes to the stark realization that he or she is helpless, flawed, wrong and utterly incomplete without a deep, meaningful spiritual relationship with the Creator of all life that the path to real living begins.

There can be no more important decision in the life of a human being than to choose to be baptized into the Body of Christ. There are many critical questions we should ask ourselves before being baptized, such as: "How do I know when I am ready for baptism?" "What do I need to know before counseling for baptism?" "What do I have to do before counseling?" "What sins do I have to overcome before being baptized?" "How long should the process take?"

The answers to these questions will be somewhat different for every beautifully unique person, but there are some consistent principles we can mine from the rich veins of truth in the Bible.

Are You Ready to Counsel for Baptism?

Do you believe with your whole heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Do you believe with every fiber of your being that the Messiah—the Savior of humanity—divested Himself of glory, became a human embryo, lived a perfect

life, was tortured to death for our sins, was resurrected by the Almighty God and now lives as a supremely glorious God sitting at the right hand of the Father?

Do you recognize that you have done things that are wrong in God's sight and feel sorry for it? Do you deeply desire to do better and be like Jesus?

Are you willing to commit to Christ's way of life? Are you ready to live your life for God and Christ?

If you can answer "YES!" to all these questions without the slightest hint of doubt in the back of your mind, then you are ready to counsel for baptism. These are not superficial questions. These are not questions that should be answered when you are on an emotional high. These questions take intellectual commitment after intensive soul-searching, prayer and fasting.

That is why we don't practice altar calls. It is also the reason children cannot be held responsible for answering these questions. Children can and do answer yes to these questions, but they have not lived long enough to understand the depth of commitment necessary to keep one's hand to the plow for a lifetime. God will not bind children to agreements they cannot completely understand.

Let's briefly refer to a few biblical examples. If you are interested, you will feel impelled to dig deeper on your own.

Acts 2: After the Holy Spirit was visibly showered on Jesus' disciples, Peter preached a powerful Pentecost sermon urging people to repent and be baptized. About 3,000 responded and were baptized that day.

Acts 8: Philip was instructed by an angel to meet the chariot of a highly successful Ethiopian government official whom he found reading the book of Isaiah. The Ethiopian, though powerful, was humble enough to ask Philip for help with understanding the scripture.

Philip preached the gospel of Jesus Christ and the official asked to be baptized. "Do you believe with all your heart?" asked Philip. "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," replied the

man. Philip baptized him right then and there in a river along the road.

Acts 16: Paul and Silas were whipped and then bound in a Philippi prison. Their midnight songs of praise were interrupted by a miraculous earthquake that freed the captives and opened the doors. The jailer raised his sword to kill himself, knowing that escaped prisoners meant a death sentence anyway.

Paul shouted for him to stop because the prisoners were all still there. The jailer, shaking from head to toe, fell at the Christians' feet and cried, "What must I do to be saved?" They tenderly replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Later that same night, now early morning, Paul and Silas preached the true Word to the jailer and his household, and they were all baptized.

What Common Conceptions Are Missing From These Biblical Histories?

There is no requirement that people become perfect, sin-free, totally righteous and holy before somehow measuring up for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Our God is gracious, tenderhearted and only wants the best for His children.

The order of the Spring Holy Day season is telling. We do not put leavened bread (sin) out of our houses (lives) for seven days and then celebrate the Passover to commemorate the gift of being made righteous through Christ. It is the other way around. First we accept Christ's sacrifice and are forgiven. Then true love, fueled by the Spirit of God, drives us to redouble our efforts to become holy.

Without a doubt, the 3,000 people baptized on Pentecost (the birth of the Christian Church) were all, every one of them, sinners. It is no doubt that every Christian I know, including me, is still a sinner. However, it is only when people rise up out of the watery baptismal grave as a new, spiritual creation that the real, lifelong struggle to crucify innate humanness, with all its passions and desires, begins.

The only perfect Christian is Christ. We all continue to struggle. Why do you want to struggle on your own? Baptism is not the end of a Christian's walk; it is only the beginning.

Secondly, there is no requirement to become a biblical scholar before baptism. The Ethiopian struggled with Isaiah's writings. The jailer and

alive will be granted the call. For now, it is a matter of timing. Christ's apostles, the disciples, the 3,000, the Ethiopian, the jailer and his family and all who are Christ's in this age were first called by the Father.

How do you know if you are being called? Don't worry, you'll know. Likely if you've read this far, you are.



My heartfelt suggestion is that if you are old enough to make important decisions on your own and you can answer yes to these questions, you need to immediately contact a minister to begin counseling for baptism.

his family could not have memorized whole passages in one night. You don't have to have complete understanding of the Bible and Church doctrines before counseling for baptism.

On the other hand, you are not excused to be lazy or less than diligent. Once made, you have one shot at this choice. All great decision makers become good friends with the facts and truth. So should you.

What Do All Baptized People Share in Common?

In spite of our varied and colorful uniqueness, there is one absolute common thread that binds all baptized human beings: All are called by God the Father. We praise God that eventually all humans who have ever been

If you feel "cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37)—convicted, convinced that this is God's way and that He wants you to change to become like Him—you are.

It's up to you whether you answer. I plead with you to not let the answering machine take a message. This is one call you need to get now!

My heartfelt suggestion is that if you are old enough to make important decisions on your own and you can answer yes to the above questions, you need to immediately contact a minister to begin counseling for baptism. Don't wait another minute. Claim the free gift of the power of God's Holy Spirit to begin the steps toward your ultimate destiny today! UN

Steve McNeely attends the East Texas congregation.

The Real Deal: Avoiding Counterfeits

■ The greatest counterfeiter of course tries to replicate the most valuable things. We need to be aware of his techniques.

by Andy McClain

If someone owed you money, would you accept payment in the form of Monopoly money? Unless you were playing Monopoly and really wanted to buy Park Place, you would not. No, you would not accept it because it is not real money.

Most of us can easily distinguish the difference between genuine mon-

ey and play money from a board game. We recognize the characteristics of real money.

However, the U.S. Treasury estimates that \$1 in every \$10,100 is a counterfeit. This means that there is a slight chance you could be carrying a counterfeit bill without even realizing it.

The Greatest Counterfeiter

There is a much greater counterfeiter that is rampant in society today. In fact, the operation is so successful that society doesn't even realize it is being deceived. This is a counterfeit way of life that has been circulated by the greatest counterfeiter in the universe—Satan.

To counterfeit means to imitate or feign with intent to deceive. Counterfeiting means making a fraudulent replica of something of value. God's truth is of the greatest value. Jesus Christ compared it to finding a pearl of great price in Matthew 13:46. Understanding God's way leads to life. Satan has cleverly counterfeited God's Holy Days with his own days and has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12:9).

Counterfeiting is one of the oldest crimes in history. During the time of the Civil War in the United States, the U.S. Treasury estimates that one third of all currency in circulation was counterfeit. Approximately 1,600 state banks were designing and printing their own notes. Over 4,000 vari-



eties of counterfeits were difficult to distinguish from the 7,000 genuine notes.

So a national currency was adopted in 1863 in the hope of solving the counterfeiting problem. Yet the national currency was so extensively

counterfeited that by 1865, the U.S. Secret Service was established as a necessary measure to suppress counterfeiting.

Satan started circulating his counterfeit way in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). Satan is very subtle and

knows exactly how to make his counterfeit pass for the real thing. (He is nothing like the joke about the dumbest counterfeiter who was caught trying to pass notes made from \$1 bills with corners from \$20 bills taped to them.) Satan purposely tries to deceive mankind in an effort to cloud our minds from understanding God's truth.

"Improving" Techniques

The U.S. Secret Service admits that a counterfeiter today can easily produce accurate looking currency using computers and other readily available technology (www.secretservice.gov/counterfeit.shtml). As those with criminal intent become more fluent in technology, they expect counterfeiting statistics will increase.

As time progresses, Satan also continues to improve his counterfeiting techniques to circulate his counterfeit culture and mind-set. He works constantly to promote his ways that are contrary to God.



Most of us can easily distinguish the difference between genuine money and play money from a board game. We recognize the characteristics of real money. However, the U.S. Treasury estimates that \$1 in every \$10,100 is a counterfeit. This means that there is a slight chance you could be carrying a counterfeit bill without even realizing it.

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic princi-

ples of the world, and not according to Christ" is a strong warning from Colossians 2:8 that we should be vigilant to follow. Just because everyone

around us may accept the counterfeit way does not make it genuine.

The Counterfeiter Will Soon Pay

The typical life of a counterfeit bill can range from just a few months to almost a year, according to the U.S. Treasury. A genuine bill will stay in circulation for about eight years.

As we wait for God's Kingdom to come, it may seem that Satan has been circulating his counterfeits for a long period of time. However, God tells us that Satan's time is actually short and will soon come to an end (Revelation 12:12).

Manufacturing counterfeit currency or altering genuine currency in the United States carries a stiff penalty including fines and imprisonment for up to 15 years. Trying to pass off counterfeit money carries the same penalty.

Satan, as the great counterfeiter, will also receive punishment. He will

answer for his crimes against the Almighty and for defiling God's Holy Day plan. God will bind Satan for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1-3). After a short release period in which Satan will return to his old counterfeiting ways, God will stop Satan forever (Revelation 20:7, 10).

Unfortunately, the world today cannot see through Satan's counterfeit way of life, and they are paying the penalty through the suffering and confusion that exists. God has allowed mankind to be blinded.

In fact, in a strange twist, society often feels that God's way is the counterfeit. Many of the days and seasons on our calendar are counterfeits of God's plan. Only because of God's mercy do we understand. Satan the counterfeiter will be caught and stopped. But in the meantime, Satan will try any means to get you to accept his counterfeit. Make sure you look for the real deal. UN

Andy McClain attends the Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation.

Qualities of an Effective Teacher

■ Whether we're teaching scuba diving or God's way of life, these attitudes can help make us easier to learn from.

by Dianne Carter

The Bible tells us that we must be teachers of our children and grandchildren and be preparing for our job of teaching others now and in the future (Deuteronomy 4:9-10; Matthew 28:20; Revelation 5:10; Malachi 2:7).

As a scuba instructor since 1987, and a teacher of diving instructors since 1990, I've found the methods, techniques and attitudes we use can also be used whatever the subject matter. Naturally, to be a teacher of anything, it is imperative to have a complete knowledge of the subject or skill that must be taught.

Easy to Learn From

During our course for training scuba divers to become instructors, we conduct a workshop to explore the attributes of a good teacher or educator. The candidates, as we call the students, think of qualities that made someone's teaching easy to learn from.

Once we have our list, we categorize it into knowledge, skill or attitude. The attitude category always wins, hands down!

I would like to explore three of the top attributes of attitude, which are patience, enthusiasm and encouragement.

Patience

Patience is something we all need. The Bible sometimes calls patience long-suffering. We can surely feel as though we are suffering long when we exercise patience.

In *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, the word *patient* is defined as "bearing pains or trials calmly without complaint; manifesting forbearance under provocation or strain; not hasty or impetuous; steadfast despite opposition, difficulty or adversity."

To that, I say—wow! No wonder we take our whole lifetime developing this particular attribute.

In Romans 15:4-5 we read, "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Also see Luke 8:15, Romans 5:3 and Hebrews 6:12. Since God has infinite patience with us, we can be sure He expects us to be the same with one another, especially when we serve as teachers!

In learning scuba diving, many people have difficulty with clearing their mask of water while under water. It is really quite easy, but it arouses irrational fear. Simply reminding people that they already know how to blow their nose, and that they can also hold their breath for a few seconds helps them in this exercise.

We can apply these same principles to learning about the Bible. Jesus used many life experiences and well-known examples to illustrate the things God wants us to know and do.

In Mark 4:30 we read, "Then He said, 'To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.'"

Patience requires us as teachers to acknowledge the smallest of accomplishments. People learn so much more with positive remarks. Who wants to be

told the one thing he did wrong? True compliments on performance open up the mind to receive criticism to improve. In diving instruction, we have a formula for critiques. One thing we do is point out exactly what was done correctly.

Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm, the next attribute on our list, is one that everyone benefits from. When a person speaks with enthusiasm, his voice shows it. An excited person doesn't speak in a boring and monotone voice. Enthusiasm inspires the learner to pay attention. We want to know what it is that makes the teacher so excited!

When we apply this same enthusiasm to teaching God's Word, people will want to know what gives us that zeal, and they will want to have it too. Remember your excitement when the Bible and God's plan began to make sense for you? Then your enthusiasm, your zeal, your excitement flowed out and affected everyone who listened to you! (Consider Apollos' example in Acts 18:24-25.)

Encouragement

Encouragement is the last attribute to bring to your mind today. It means giving hope or promise, to be inspiring. With the patience of helping people to learn at their own pace, in their own way, and teaching with enthusi-



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asm, you almost automatically become an encourager.

In teaching scuba diving, we remind the students of what they have learned so far. This encourages them in their efforts to learn more.

Paul's letters often begin with his saying that he thanks God for the people he is writing to. Then he reminds them of what they are doing right, and how they can build on it.

In teaching any subject, being patient by putting yourself in the students' shoes, showing enthusiasm and giving encouragement by telling them that you are proud of what they have learned so far, will do much to make

you more effective as a teacher now and in the world to come.

Our scuba instructor training manual states the following in its conclusion: "Your attitude is the most important professional attribute. The instructor development process can enhance your skills and knowledge, but only you can develop the proper attitude necessary to succeed as an instructor."

May God help us all to develop these wonderful attributes that will enable us to be more effective teachers. UN

Dianne Carter attends the West Palm Beach, Florida, congregation.

Strategy for Overcoming

by Jim Smith

Overcoming is a very serious topic! We must overcome sins, bad habits, wrong thinking and devise ways to resist temptations if we are to please our God.

Jesus says, "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne" (Revelation 3:21).

"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations" (Revelation 2:26). So we see that it is only we who overcome during our lifetime who shall reign with Christ.

So the Christian life we lead is a new and a different life—an overcoming life. Many professing Christians do not feel they have to overcome. They would tell you they do not have to get better because God's grace covers their shortcomings. We must progress toward righteousness. Failure is not an option for us because this is the only chance for those called now.

Why do we stumble and fall so often? Even when we pray for victory over some vicious habit, we still seem to fall down much too often and progress is ever so slow.

The apostle Paul said, in Romans 6:14, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Yet I realized that sin did have dominion over me and I was its slave! Why?

Be Vigilant

The key to it all is, "Be vigilant." Be on your guard. The heavyweight boxing champion of the world knows when his next fight will be and carefully calculates when he should begin to train so he will be prepared. We are not so fortunate. We have to be at our spiritual fighting weight all the time because we do not know the date of the next bout with the devil.

So what does "be vigilant" mean? It means to never slack off on prayers and fasting and Bible study.

So strategy number one is to be vigilant, so when you are tempted to make a wrong choice you will be able to just say no.

Don't Disappoint God

Once upon a time, two friends and I were talking about teenagers who were brought up in the Church and what motivates them. One of these two men was once such a teenager, so I was keen to hear what he had to say.

He told me that he was often tempted to make wrong choices when he was a teenager in the Church, but the biggest reason he did not was because he loved his parents so much that he did not want to disappoint them—especially his dad.

A few weeks after we had this conversation I found myself greatly tempted. I had never been tempted that much

ever before. But I walked away from that temptation just like Jesus did when tempted in the wilderness. Not because I was so strong spiritually, but because I began to think how much God loved me and worked with me for 39 years and how disappointed He would be to see me crash and burn after all those years of patiently teaching me and making my every good wish come true.

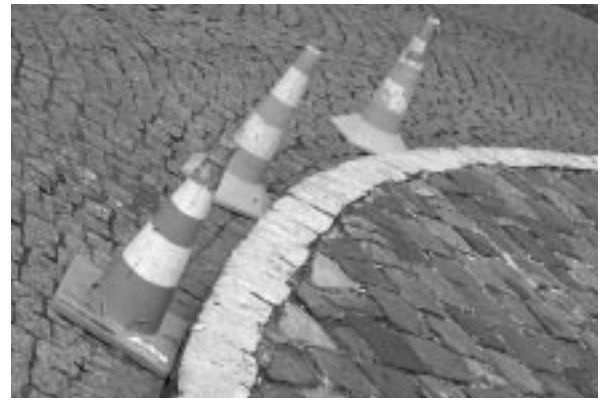
I walked away from that temptation because I did not want to disappoint my heavenly Father—just as my friend brought up in the Church walked away from temptation because he did not want to disappoint his earthly father.

Stay Away From the Edge

One more helpful hint on how to overcome so we won't sin so often: Don't drive so close to the edge of the road.

About 20 years ago I began to wonder why I had so many flat tires and why they were always the tires on the right side of the car. My wife said, "I have been telling you for 10 years that you drive too close to the edge instead of in the middle of your lane. Maybe there are a lot of nails and broken bottles over there to cut your tires on that side." So I started driving in the middle of the lane from then on so I wouldn't have so many ruined tires.

OK! Here is the analogy. If we know about where sin lies and we always live



If we know about where sin lies and we always live close to it, we will have more sins to repent of just as I had to replace a lot of tires when I drove too close to the shoulder of the road.

close to it, we will have more sins to repent of just as I had to replace a lot of tires when I drove too close to the shoulder of the road.

For example, if you look at the clock at 3:30 on Friday afternoon, you should remember the Sabbath then and start tying up those loose ends instead of cutting it close by waiting for the 20-minute period around sunset.

If you do not get wise and move away from the gray areas of where sin starts and stops, you might find yourself wondering why you have to repent so often. Better to live your life in the center of your lane so you do not have so many accidents for which to repent.

So here is a review of the strategies: Be vigilant so the devil doesn't give you a temptation when you are not ready—a sucker punch.

Be reluctant to disappoint God.

Don't live so far off center you cannot tell where righteousness ends and sin begins.

If we keep these three strategies in mind, maybe they will keep our feet from slipping when our next trial is gnawing on our leg like a bad dog. Let's not disappoint our Father who works with us every single day, and let's be vigilant and prepared to just say no. UN

Jim Smith is a member of the Jefferson, Georgia, congregation.

The Second Death—A Further Purpose

by Robert Berendt

God is almighty and supreme in every sense of the fullness of those words, so He created and knows what is good and righteousness. By definition, anything that is contrary to that is evil and sinful.

He is a loving Father and does not rejoice in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:23) and He is always working toward helping mankind choose the right way. In Ezekiel 3:18-21 we read about the warnings God sends to people through His servants and Church. He warns of punishment to come and encourages repentance. He also warns those who have repented to stay the course and not fall from their positions.

In Deuteronomy 30:15 Moses wrote: "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil." God continues to encourage Israel, but also states the obvious in verse 18 where we read: "You shall surely perish."

The prospect of eternal death is mentioned in several places in the Bible. Jesus encourages Church members in Smyrna that if they continue to overcome, they will not be hurt by the second death (Revelation 2:11). Revelation 20:6, 14 addresses the second death. In Hebrews 6:4-6, we also read Paul's warning to the converted. Understanding that there is such a thing as a second death is an important deterrent

to humans (converted as well as unconverted).

God would not make such a statement about a second death if it has no meaning or is a hollow and empty statement. Of course all humans die once, the Bible tells us (Hebrews 9:27). We understand that this first death comes to saints as well as sinners (Ecclesiastes 9:2, 5).

But most humans have not understood or even heard the gospel message. God is fair and just and will make sure everyone does have a chance. To this end, there is the resurrection of all who have died without understanding (including babies and other innocents) so they can live and learn.

This resurrection to physical life is described in Ezekiel 37 where we read of people who had been cut off from God now coming to understand Him. They will receive His Holy Spirit, which indicates repentance through Jesus Christ must come (Acts 2:38), and so our loving heavenly Father will act in fairness to all since He wants all men to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).

It is obvious that if humans have died and then been resurrected to physical life again, they will either receive eternal life (after conversion) or eternal death (if they refuse salvation). The second death is an even greater deterrent to those resurrected than it is to this present generation, because they have already died once. Death is real. It is not logi-

cal or possible to be resurrected to physical life a second time and not die again (second death)—if a person fails to reach salvation.

The threat of extinction in the second death must be a real and true threat or consequence, or it is meaningless. Not only does God have to complete His warning, He must carry it through. There must be a resurrection for those who have totally rejected every attempt made by God to help and guide them,

After every human being has had an equal and full opportunity to accept eternal life on God's terms, then those who have rejected it will cease to exist for all eternity. Their death will be instant and permanent. Although little is mentioned in detail, the act reflects the justice and mercy of our heavenly Father.

and they must receive the penalty of sin—which is the second death.

They will join those of the second resurrection who have come to the end of the time God allows—and have failed. That penalty cannot be the first death, because even the converted experience that. We can see that this reality is a strong deterrent for us all. We would be wise to heed it.

There are three resurrections indicated in Scripture, but only two deaths. All humans are physical and the body does die—that is the first death. The saved are resurrected at Christ's return in the first resurrection unto eternal life (Revelation 20:6; 1 Corinthians 15:44).

Some humans will live through the

Great Tribulation into the 1,000-year period reflected in the Feast of Tabernacles. They and their descendants will then have the opportunity to choose life or death, for at that time everyone will know the truth.

All people since the time of Adam and Eve who have died, including the innocent little babies, must have the time and opportunity needed to be able to choose (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4). They will be given physical life and be

taught the truth. This is the second resurrection and will take place after the 1,000-year period. Revelation 20:12 alludes to this, and verse 5, which speaks to the "first" resurrection, implies there is a second. Ezekiel 37 describes people—long dead—who are raised and for the first time are given hope and understanding.

After every human being has had an equal and full opportunity to accept eternal life on God's terms, then those who have rejected it will cease to exist for all eternity. Their death will be instant and permanent. Although little is mentioned in detail, the act reflects the justice and mercy of our heavenly Father.

There are also many other eyes observing the events that envelope mankind. Angels rejoice when one person repents and when glory is given to God (Luke 15:7, 10). They are concerned and involved in the affairs on earth (Revelation 5:11-12). They also notice the involvement of Satan and the demons in troubling humans (Job 1:7, 12; Matthew 5:1-11; 13:19).

The two thirds of the "good" angels rejoice in the justice and power of God. Just as they will see the final sentence carried out on the third of the angels who followed Lucifer's rebellion, they will witness the fair and just sentence for mankind.

Jude 6 and 13 tell of the sentencing of the fallen angels that is also necessary. God has no joy in this either, but He must follow through with it because there is no other way. He is just and the penalty for sin—whether of angels or men—must be fully paid.

Demons will be out of God's creation forever and humans who refuse salvation will also be out of the memories of all who remain. Their final death removes the memory of their existence forever (Psalm 109:15; Isaiah 26:14).

When even the memory is erased, there are none with regrets, none who mourn lost family members. There will be no more tears or sorrow (Revelation 21:4). There will be no more death. UN

Treasure Digest

Does It Matter What You Believe?

Ten years ago, most of us had to struggle with issues of doctrine. The Church of God was being tested more than at any other time in our recollection. There were issues of belief, of loyalty, of trust.

Now, 10 years later, is doctrine all that important to you?

Jesus taught a very significant lesson to His disciples in Matthew 16:5-12 about the importance of the true doctrines or teachings of the Bible. He had told the disciples to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees," but they did not understand at first. Finally they understood He was warning them of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Today, all around us are those claiming to be Christians, espousing other doctrines or teachings. Like the self-righteous doctrines of the Pharisees, these can look and feel good, but they are not the doctrines of Jesus Christ we fought so hard to hold on to just a few years ago.

Gary Petty gave a sermon last December that was circulated to all congregations as a video. Under the heading "Myth Number Four, Doctrine Doesn't Count," he discussed why people today don't like to have specific doctrinal beliefs.

He went on to say (with a note of sarcasm), "Well that would mean some things are wrong and that makes me judgmental and I can't be judgmental . . . The whole idea of humanity is to be made . . . into the children of God. Once you remove that concept—that doctrine—we make God like us. We make God in our image."

In the days following the first New Testament Pentecost we read of the new Church, "And they

continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Act 2:42, emphasis added). If we are to remain faithful to God, we must also continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.

*Knute Josifek
Los Angeles, California, congregation*

The Tribulation Has Begun and a Bomb Has Hit Our House!

When I was about 5, my parents started listening to Mr. Armstrong's broadcast on the radio and receiving literature from the Church of God. A lot was said about the Great Tribulation—the worst time ever in the history of man—the time that, if not shortened, would end in all flesh being killed (Matthew 24:21-22).

It was the '60s, and there were race riots, people being killed, businesses burned and robbed. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

One day—all of a sudden—there was a loud noise and lots of smoke! The house shook, and the windows in the kitchen broke. I desperately wondered, Is it world war? Has a bomb been dropped on us?

I was afraid because I knew we weren't obeying God. We kept most of the commandments, paid tithes, but didn't yet keep the Sabbath. That day the Tribulation was very real to me, and was something I greatly feared.

Of course, that explosion wasn't the start of world war. My parents were washing dishes and cooking a turkey in the pressure cooker. My mom looked at the gauge and said, "The pressure isn't coming up." My parents were standing next to the pressure cooker when it exploded! First it went down and then up. The stove was completely destroyed. The top of the pot went through the roof, and landed on the ground with the safety plug still intact.

If the cooker had gone to the side, instead of up, we might have all been killed. The kitchen walls had strings of turkey all over them.

We were spared that day, and I began to take

seriously the command to "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape" the Tribulation and to stand before Christ (Luke 21:36). I repented and was baptized when I was about 18.

I've come to realize that we are being prepared to teach and help others in God's Kingdom by living a Christian life and preaching the gospel now.

I still don't look forward to the Tribulation, but with God's help, I don't worry about it as much. God promises that all things work together for good to those who love Him (Romans 8:28)—even exploding turkeys.

*June Barrett
Fort Smith, Arkansas, congregation*

Pillars of Wisdom: Wisdom vs. Foolishness

In biblical wisdom literature, the opposite of a wise person is a fool. Solomon, in Proverbs 8 and 9, personifies wisdom and foolishness as two women. Wisdom is a woman who leads those who listen to her to God and life.

Her ways have more value than any amount of physical wealth. On the other hand, the woman named Folly leads her followers to death.

The book of Proverbs is filled with explanations of the differences in character, behavior and results of a life based on wisdom and one based on folly.

Points to Build On

Character traits of the foolish:

Proverbs 12:15: "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes . . ."

Proverbs 14:16: ". . . a fool rages and is self-confident." NIV: ". . . a fool is hotheaded and reckless."

Proverbs 19:3: "The foolishness of a man twists his way, and his heart frets against the LORD." NIV: "A man's own folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the LORD."

Proverbs 27:22: "Though you grind a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, yet his foolishness will not depart from him."

Proverbs 28:26: "He who trusts his own heart is a fool . . ."

Behavioral traits of the foolish:

Proverbs 10:23: "To do evil is like sport to a fool . . ."

Proverbs 14:15: "The simple believes every word . . ."

Proverbs 15:14: ". . . the mouth of the fool feeds on foolishness."

Proverbs 17:24 (NIV): ". . . a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth."

Proverbs 26:11: "As a dog returns to his own vomit, so a fool repeats his folly."

Proverbs 29:11 (NIV): "A fool gives full vent to his anger . . ."

Results of being foolish:

Proverbs 10:13: ". . . a rod is for the back of him who is devoid of understanding."

Proverbs 14:9: "Fools mock at sin . . ."

Proverbs 17:25: "A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her who bore him."

Proverbs 18:6-7: "A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calls for blows. A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul."

Application

Solomon concludes that a foolish person is self-centered, arrogant and controlled by his or

her own emotions. The fool is unable to accept correction from others and refuses to accept responsibility for the consequences of decisions, but instead blames God. The result is a lifestyle based on self-ordained concepts of right and wrong instead of obedience to God, immediate physical pleasure instead of personal character, repetition of mistakes, restless wandering void of peace, and relationships filled with strife.

Wisdom is something to be pursued, with value more than gold or precious stones. One of the cornerstones of wisdom is taking responsibility for personal decisions.

Copy proverbs and wise sayings into a small book and review them daily.

When you read a proverb, take a few minutes to consider how its simple wisdom can be applied to everyday life.

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

The Power of Multiplication

Recently, in an outbreak of ants in the city I live in, I was able to zero in on the lesson of synergism (the power of teamwork). The house I

live in and the surrounding yard became infested with tiny black ants, and

I had to engage in a do-it-yourself project to sort out the problem.

After much effort and time, just when I thought the problem was resolved, the ants moved to another level—off the ground and onto the walls. They were outwitting me and making it really difficult to get rid of them because they were moving in colonies. Such tiny creatures, but together they had much strength and perseverance.

A few months ago, our pastor was also subjected to an ant problem. His telephone line was down for days as an army of ants had invaded the main communication box. This problem had to be sorted out by telecommunications services.

In a sermon Richard Pinelli described this teamwork (synergy) as the power of multiplication. The efforts of one are limited. But when combined with another, instead of just adding, their efforts together can multiply.

In Revelation 3 the Philadelphia church is described as one with little strength, yet accomplishing much. This kind of teamwork begins with everyone being of the same mind, working toward a common goal and not underestimating the power of synergism. That is probably why there were 12 disciples instead of just one. That's also why our new president called a worldwide fast to focus our minds on being of the same mind and same spirit. Together we can go on to accomplish much!

*Patti-Ann Naidoo
Durban, South Africa, congregation*

Preparing for Our Examination

At my first Sabbath service in God's Church, I was told by a member leading the congregation that day that we are here to learn God's way so we can teach it in the world tomorrow (God's Kingdom).

A teacher in this passing world needs to go through thorough training, like listening to lectures and taking examinations, to be a qualified

Turning the Hearts . . . Myths About Teens

Teenage is an exciting yet challenging time. Young people are growing up physically, but emotionally and mentally they can't quite keep up with the physical growth.

Teens receive their share of legitimate criticism; however they also receive unfair criticism. This is especially true when they are all painted by the same brush. Teenage is a time of rapid changes in mood and physique. Hormonal changes may complicate relations with family.

Here are four major myths about teenagers:

Myth #1—Teens are not quite normal. Actually they are normal for teens. We often forget that we had to go through the teen stage of development into mature human beings. So do they.

Myth #2—Teenage is just a phase. Rather, teenage is an important transition from a boy to a young man and from a girl to a young lady. How we understand and handle that transition is crucial to our teenagers' well-being.

Myth #3—All teens are alike. Teens go through this transition in different ways. Only a very small percentage has a rough transition. Don't paint all teenagers with the same brush.

Myth #4—There will be a uniform growth pattern. Actually, there is quite a difference in how teens will grow through this transition period of their lives. How the young person handles this time of his or her life depends a lot on how much understanding he or she is given. Also contributing to the stability or lack thereof is the quality of the family life he or she experiences.

So we may help our teens by understanding them and giving them some space to grow through this challenging transition in their lives. Paul wrote, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Corinthians 13:11).

Let's not be in so much of a hurry for them to grow up that we make the teen transition more complicated and difficult than it needs to be. Let's show our teenagers the unconditional love that God expects us to give (Luke 15:20). Let's remember what it was like to be a teenager ourselves (1 Corinthians 9:22).

May God help our teens and us as we mature both physically and spiritually and achieve loving family relationships.

Gary E. Antion



teacher. To qualify for anything you have to thoroughly learn to do all that the field entails.

We, the chosen of God, are set apart (1 Peter 2:9-10) to be teachers in God's Kingdom to come.

What are we doing with the lectures (sermons and sermonettes) and our tests (trials)? Do we learn from the trials and tests of everyday life, instead of complaining about them?

Judgment has begun in God's Church (1 Peter 4:17), and some will fall away (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; 2 Timothy 4:3-4) by whom the way of truth will be blasphemed (Mark 3:28-29; Hebrew 10:26-30).

God has been telling us not to be ignorant of Satan's devices, telling us that the trials (tests) we face, in our personal lives, as families and even as a Church, prepare us for our final examination (Matthew 24:9; Luke 21:12), after which our Lord Jesus Christ will descend from heaven to make us qualified teachers in His Kingdom!

Awake, brethren (1 Thessalonians 5:6-10)! Be ready, for we are Christ's (2 Timothy 3:12) and must face our final examination soon!

Blessed are those who overcome (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7) for their reward is with Him (Revelation 22:12-13). Be prepared!

Samson Osajie

Benin City, Nigeria, congregation

A Most Precious Gift

Have you ever received a gift that was one of a kind? A gift that you could never replace if it was lost or stolen? A gift that you couldn't buy with all the money in the world? How would you take care of that gift?

My story is about a man who received a pocket watch from his father. This man adored his father's watch. He always had it with him, and he was continuously polishing and caring for it.

It was an exquisite watch with a gold case. It had been handcrafted for his father, and it was truly one of a kind.

This man, let's call him Jim, took very good care of that watch. He had it cleaned and maintained once a year by a local jeweler who had an impeccable reputation for watch repair. He also kept the outside of the watch in immaculate condition.

To see the watch you would think it was brand new. It kept extremely accurate time. Jim never seemed to grow tired of caring for that watch.

Have you ever received a truly precious gift like Jim's? Well, in fact, we all have. It is the gift of grace from our Heavenly Father. We couldn't buy it with all the money in the world. There is no way we can earn this gift. But, just like Jim with his father's watch, we must cherish this gift. We must keep it with us at all times and polish it continuously, so to speak.

Jim's father had left Jim some instructions on how to care for the watch. Jim was diligent to follow those instructions, and the results were that he had an old watch that looked as good and ran as well as it did when it was new.

Our Heavenly Father has given us a most precious gift, and along with it some instructions so that the gift can be enjoyed for eternity. Are we diligently following those instructions?

If Jim hadn't followed his father's instructions concerning that pocket watch, it would have soon started to look old, and over time it would have stopped keeping good time. It probably would have stopped running altogether at some point.



The same is true about our gift from God. If we ignore our Father's instructions, the gift will start to lose its luster, not because the gift is flawed, but because we have neglected to keep it in tip-top condition.

Many today say that once we receive this gift from God, we don't need to do anything but accept it. I hope you see the fallacy in that thinking. If all we need to do is accept the gift, then why has our Father given us instructions for its upkeep? We are to grow in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18). How do we do that if we don't follow His instructions?

Unfortunately, Jim lost that watch he loved so much because of an unfortunate accident. Jim refused to talk about it, but his wife said it was lost one evening when they were out. It seems the chain broke and somehow the watch must have fallen out of Jim's pocket, never to be seen again.

Unlike Jim's watch, our most precious gift cannot be lost by accident. The only way we can lose it is through neglect. We must read our Father's instructions and follow them to properly care for His gift.

Let's diligently follow those instructions to make certain our Father's gift will last a lifetime and beyond.

Gary Hasselbusch

Cleveland, Ohio, congregation

Sabbath Beacon

Before electronic navigation was invented, air-plane pilots had used airport beacon lights to find airports when flying at night. In fact, some small pleasure aircraft may still use the beacons. Likewise, ship captains for centuries used light-house beacons along the shore to help them navigate the dark nights.

Similarly, millennia ago God established a beacon that would help the people of this world find their way in a spiritually dark world.

On Mount Sinai, God established a special covenant concerning the Sabbath. He told Moses, "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you' . . . It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever" (Exodus 31:13, 17).

According to *Strong's Concordance*, the word translated "sign" can mean, among other things, a signal such as a beacon.

A beacon is a guiding or warning signal. Often it is an alternating light, such as the airport beacon that alternates between green and white every few seconds.

For those who are truly seeking God's way of life in this spiritually dark world, the Sabbath is like a beacon that alternates every seventh day of the week showing the way to Jesus Christ, the true light of the world, and to the true Church of God.

Bill Faith

St. Louis, Missouri, congregation

An Answer in the Midst of Trial

Most of us believe that to lose a child is one of the greatest trials we can ever face. Years ago, I faced that trial when the baby I was carrying for seven months died in the womb. The following Monday, I was in the hospital having had induced labor that lasted about 10 hours.

The nurse gave my baby to me to hold and examine. For a few moments, I felt an odd sense of peace for the little one and a half pound daughter I held. I had planned on naming her Rachel.

Later, the hospital staff came in and told me that Rachel could be sent to be buried in a funeral of our choice, or I could allow the hospital to cremate her free of cost. I knew money was tight and wondered what I should do. I would have liked to have a quiet little funeral. I knew my (now former) husband preferred no cost, but he said I could choose.

Alone in the hospital bed, I fervently prayed to God for help. When I was done praying, the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego just "popped" into my head. I thought about Daniel 3:8-30 and especially verses 17 and 18 where these three men knew God would deliver them at the time and, if not, they had confidence in His plan anyway.

If Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego had died in that fire, would God have still raised up their bodies even if they had been burned in the hottest of fires until there was no sign of them left? Will God raise up all the people who have ever died in fires or been cremated? Of course He would and of course He will! I had my answer. It will be OK.

Carolyn Prater

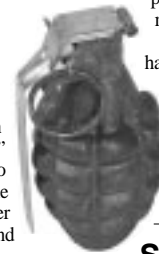
Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation

There Are No Atheists in Foxholes

Consider this verse: "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness!" (Psalm 4:1). David is calling God to hear him and listen to him—to take David's desires, needs and safety under consideration. He is in deep trouble and needs help now!

I never was in war, so I can't share from personal experience. But I know Robert's story. He was one of three young men in a foxhole in Korea. Not far from them was an enemy foxhole, with another three young men in it.

A grenade was thrown from that foxhole, and landed near Robert's foxhole. Suddenly his two fellow soldiers were dead. Robert's lungs were pierced with shrapnel and the enemy was coming



to finish the job. Despite his injuries, he had to continue fighting for his life. Eventually he won the battle, and began a three-day trek, literally crawling back to his unit.

If Robert had not made it back and received medical care, I could not tell the story. Robert was my father.

Many of us have heard this phrase: "There are no atheists in foxholes." God knows what goes on in foxholes, the urgent prayers of both sides. At this time, though, He is not intervening much in the affairs of this world. The Pharisees were partially correct in what they said: "God does not hear sinners" (John 9:31). It's a completely different story, however, when the sinner is repentant.

David knew this. He often found himself in similar distresses, his life in imminent danger. He urgently prayed to God, just like the men in the foxholes. David knew he needed forgiveness and mercy. He also knew that God would hear, rescue and restore him. David was well aware that he had much to go through, but he was privileged to know how the situations would end. Therefore, he trusted God to work it out.

We can trust, as David did, and these words will echo true in our lives: "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety" (Psalm 4:8).

We may not be in a literal war, but we all have our foxholes and enemies that we need deliverance from. In those times, we can remember and take comfort in these words: "The LORD will hear when I call to Him" (Psalm 4:3).

Jim Gillespie

Chicago, Illinois, congregation

Share Your 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 *UnitedNews*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027 or mike_bennett@ucg.org.

Be Ready to Give an Answer: Does It Really Matter?

A member in Nigeria wrote: "Professing Christians here feel that we—the Church of God—dwell on the inconsequential points such as Sabbath observance on Saturday, clean and unclean meats and refusal to keep Christmas. These, they feel, are unnecessary divides in Christianity. I am suggesting an article that gives some scriptures from the Old and New Testaments regarding why these things matter to God."

Many would point out the preeminence of love, and we agree (1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 John 4:8). But do people really naturally know how to love as God loves? Love is one of the most misused and misunderstood words, and not just in the romantic, heartbreak arena.

What is love? God is love and His commandments show us how to love God the way He wants to be loved. They show us how to love our neighbor in ways that really work for the best for everyone (Matthew 22:37-40; 1 John 5:2-3; Romans 13:8-10).

Are there commandments that seem less important to people? The Bible acknowledges this (Matthew 5:19; 23:23), though how people look at things and how God looks at them are not necessarily the same (Isaiah 55:8-9). Of course we should concentrate on the weightier matters, but not leave the smaller things undone (Matthew 23:23). (Some of these things would be easy and normal in a world where everyone is doing them, but Satan uses them to make us stand out as sore thumbs today.)

Are biblical teachings important to Christ, and how did He respond to religious traditions that went against the biblical teachings? "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7; read verses 5-13). Sunday worship, Christmas celebrations and eating pork and shellfish are teachings of men that go against biblical teachings. God says not to adapt worship of other gods (like the Roman worship of the sun god on Sunday or the Saturnalia and other winter festivals that morphed into Christmas) to try to worship God (Deuteronomy 12:29-32).

We have done specific "Be Ready to Give an Answer" articles about the Sabbath (June 2003), Christmas (December 2003 and December 2004) and clean and unclean meats (May 2005).

For more detailed answers about why these matter to God, see the booklets, *Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest, Holidays or Holy Days: Does It Matter Which Days We Keep?* and *What Does the Bible Teach About Clean and Unclean Meats?* The booklets and *United News* can be found on the Web at www.ucg.org in the Literature Library section.



Local Church Updates

Four Anniversaries Celebrated on Trumpets in Central Illinois

The Bloomington-Normal, Canton and Springfield, Illinois, congregations had an extra special celebration on the Feast of Trumpets. Two couples, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Knochel and Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Gray, were honored for 50 years of marriage. Mr. and Mrs. Darrell



Keisel and Mr. and Mrs. Larry Cortelyou were honored for 35 years of marriage.

Beautiful corsages and boutonnieres were presented to all



From top, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Knochel and Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Gray, married 50 years; Mr. and Mrs. Larry Cortelyou and Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Keisel, celebrating 35 years of marriage

four couples as well as a variety of delicious cakes. The brethren brought finger foods to eat during the lunch hour along with the cake for dessert. It was a joyous double celebration of anniversaries and the Feast of Trumpets!

Akron Congregation Sponsors ABC Seminar

On the weekend of Sept. 17 and 18, the Akron, Ohio, congregation sponsored an ABC continuing education seminar (Mini-Sampler). Six congregations in Ohio were represented. We even had brethren visit from as far away as Florida, Michigan, Missouri and Virginia.

Our special guests for the weekend were Clyde and Dee Kilough and Gary and Barbara Antion. The weekend started on the Sabbath with split sermons from Mr. Antion and Mr.

Kilough. Mr. Antion spoke on lessons from Mary who washed Christ's feet shortly before His crucifixion. Mr. Kilough spoke about "Acts of God."



Willie Addington displays his award as the oldest member (80) to complete the ABC seminar in Akron.

After Sabbath services, we had a delicious catered lunch. Attendance for the Sabbath was 252.

The ABC seminars started at 2 p.m. and ran until 6:40 in the evening. The brethren came back on Sunday for a full day of classes running from 9 a.m. to 5:40 p.m. Another excellent lunch was provided in the middle of the day for all attending the ABC classes.

The classes presented were both informative and inspiring. Mr. Kilough presented "The Dynamics of Spiritual Growth." Mr. Antion presented 2 Peter and a class on secularism. The classes were well received and greatly appreciated by the brethren attending. Attendance for the Sunday classes was 149. Brethren commented that the classes served as good spiritual preparation for the Feast of Tabernacles.

During the classes, a Noah's Ark project was provided for children ages 5-12. It took the diligent effort of many brethren to carry out all the preparation and service needed to make this weekend a success.

Erik Jones

Lawton Loves Its Labor Day Campout

The Lawton, Oklahoma, congregation held its third annual Labor Day campout in the rugged and beautiful



Lawton, Oklahoma, campout; inset, a surprise reception was held for a recently engaged couple, Howard Lewis and Tammy Kohler

Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge near Lawton in southwest Oklahoma. Twenty-five campers pitched their tents at Camp Doris for three nights. A drive through the refuge provided sightings of the resident wildlife including buffalo, long-horn cattle, prairie dogs, deer and elk.

A Sabbath service for 35 attendees was held under the post oak trees indigenous to the locale. After a delicious potluck lunch, a surprise reception was held to honor a recently engaged couple, Howard Lewis of the Lawton congregation and Tammy Kohler of the Tulsa, Oklahoma, congregation.

A swim on Sunday was a refreshing break from the warm Oklahoma temperature. The campout concluded on Monday morning and everyone headed for home looking forward to another campout next Labor Day.

Judy Noel

Teen to Compete in Horse Riding Championship

National Reining Horse Association (NRHA) member James Myers, son of Steve and Kathe Myers, was chosen to compete in the NRHA North American



James Myers qualified to compete in the NRHA North American Affiliate Championships

Affiliate Championships in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Nov. 24 to Dec. 3, 2005. (Steve Myers is the pastor of the Austin and Mankato, Minnesota; La Crosse, Wisconsin; and Cedar Rapids, Iowa, congregations.)

James qualified to compete in two different classes against more than 1,000 entries from around the world. He will compete with his horse Jacs Good Bar in the Intermediate Non Pro Championship class and with his horse Boogie in the 14-18 Youth Championship class.

James qualified by winning the North Central Regional Affiliate Finals. Each final sends its four highest placing riders to the championships.

The NRHA Futurity and North American Affiliate Championships attracts approximately 65,000 spectators. Competitors will compete for more than \$1.4 million in purse and prizes.

Houston Enjoys Millennial Weekend Campout

After enduring a week of work and an hour and a half or more of traffic, over 290 brethren from Houston and other parts of Texas exited I-59 and entered Lake Livingston State Park Nov. 4 to begin a millennial weekend. The weekend began with a beautiful sunset of pinks overlooking the lake and a welcome dinner of hotdogs and grilled or deep-fried chicken among brethren anxious to experience a "mini-Feast" again.

Even though our eighth annual campout fell only one and a half weeks after the Feast, everyone was glad to be together again and to hear about each other's Feasts.

After dinner, campsites aglow with an array of lights and campfires invited others to come by and visit throughout the evening.

Sabbath morning brought some together for a sing-along at the pavilion, while others preferred to eat a leisurely breakfast and walk around the campgrounds visiting friends. The streets were filled, from sunup to well into the night, with our children on bikes, scooters, playing ball or just walking—happy to be with their friends for an entire weekend.

Campout coordinator Koehler Powell was able to give some history behind this annual Millennial Weekend: "Our first campout was in November of 1998, and it has continued to be on the first or second weekend in November. Our campers come from as far as Corpus Christi, Texas, and the New Orleans, Louisiana, area. Attendance has steadily grown from 197 in 1998 to over 300 the last several years. Everyone just enjoys the company of brethren in the great outdoors."



One of the four children blessed during the Blessing of the Little Children ceremony at the Houston campout (photo by Koehler Powell)

The afternoon brought the mass exodus to the pavilion for Sabbath services, given by Houston South pastor Ken Giese. This year we were given a treat by having the Blessing of the Little Children ceremony, with four new additions to our family being blessed.

A campout tradition is bringing the family dog to enjoy the outdoors with

us. They were all brought together for a photo after services.

The weather was very pleasant this year—not a drop of rain fell! Another glorious sunset across the lake brought the Sabbath to a close and campsites lit up again.

There was no lack of entertainment. Several campsites offered musical treats while the pavilion opened its doors to our young adults for an evening of fun and fellowship. Sunday brought an end to our millennial weekend. Everyone left tired, but renewed and ready to once again face the world and all its challenges.

Laurie Curry and Koehler Powell

Cambridge Hosts "Heart of a Woman" Enrichment Day

On Nov. 12, women from the Cambridge, Ohio, congregation hosted a women's enrichment day for ladies from surrounding churches. The theme was "The Heart of a Woman." Ami Hopkins, Ali Harper, Susan Miller and Pam Myers addressed this theme in their talks.

After lunch Randy Stiver gave the sermon titled "The Heart of the Converted Woman." This was followed by breakout sessions related to the sermon.

Later, a registered nurse from the local hospital spoke on having a healthy physical heart. The day ended with a healthy chicken dinner. Everyone went home spiritually and physically fed.

Doreen Rinehart

Salt Lake City to Host Ski Weekend Jan. 14-16

Once again, the Salt Lake City, Utah, congregation will host its annual family ski weekend over the Martin Luther King holiday, Jan. 14 to 16, 2006.

Park City Mountain Resort will again be the venue. Skiers seemed pleased with the slopes last year, and the group discount is dramatic. Lift ticket prices have increased to about \$75 a day, but our price should still be under \$45 a day.

The first scheduled activity will be a seminar on Sabbath morning. The last scheduled activity will be a Sunday night dinner and social.

Local transportation is normally free. There is a free shuttle from the Salt Lake City Airport to the Best Western Cotton Tree Inn, where services will be held. For reservations at this hotel, call toll-free at (800) 662-6886.

Once negotiations are complete, the local Web site will provide access to a registration form and payment deadlines at www.cgca.net/ucg-saltlakeut. Or contact Larry Salyer by e-mail (larry_salyer@ucg.org) or by phone at (801) 495-0412.

Announcements

Births

Mike and Mary (Miller) Beyer of the Salem/Eugene, Oregon, congregations are pleased to announce the



Hayden Carter Beyer

birth of their son, Hayden Carter. Hayden was born on Sept. 26, 2005, weighing in at 9 pounds 13 ounces and was 22 inches long.

Proud grandparents are Wes and Terry Miller of the Eugene church area and Bob and Debbie Beyer of Riverbank, California. Hayden is Wes and Terry's first grandchild and Bob and Debbie's fourth. Parents are sleep-deprived, but excited and doing fine.

Owen and Susan Davis of the Edmonton, Alberta, congregation are



Kaitlyn Ariel Davis

pleased to announce the arrival of their third child, Kaitlyn Ariel. Kaitlyn (Katie) was born on Aug. 5, 2005, weighing 7 pounds 4 ounces and she was 20 inches long. She is well loved by her two older sisters, Ashley and Natasha.

John and Sharon VanSchuyver, of the Houston North, Texas, congrega-



Jake Michael-Patric VanSchuyver with brother Evan

tion, are happy to announce the adoption of their son, Jake Michael-Patric VanSchuyver. Jake was born on Aug. 2, 2004, and came to join the VanSchuyver family as a foster child when he was only two days old. Jake is now 15 months, and the adoption consummation took place on Nov. 15, 2005. His 14-year-old brother, Evan, has been busy showing Jake the ropes and teaching him the basic fundamentals of family, friends, fun, food and football (not necessarily in that order).

Emily Bilson, daughter of Ian and Natalie Bilson, was born on the first



Emily Bilson

day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Oct. 18, 2005. She is the first granddaughter for David and Ghyslaine Palmer (who pastor the Vancouver, British Columbia, congregation) after two grandsons.

Mark and Vicki (Whitehead) Arner of Dallas, Texas, are excited to announce the arrival of their second son, Nolan Adam Arner, born Jan. 18, 2005. Nolan weighed 8 pounds 12



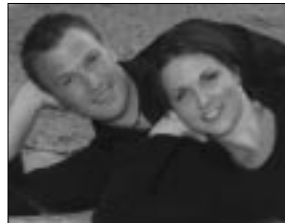
Nolan Adam Arner with big brother, Logan

ounces and was 20¼ inches long. Big brother Logan, 2, is glad to finally have his baby brother here to play with.

Proud grandparents are Richard and Margie Whitehead of Sidney, Iowa, and Radford and Josephine Arner of Big Sandy, Texas.

Engagements

David Evans, son of Gary and Sue Evans of the Portsmouth, Ohio, congregation, and Zaneta Holub, daughter of Lyle and Jean Ann Holub of the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, congregation, are announcing their engagement. They will marry Dec. 31, 2005, in Harrison, Ohio. After a cruise in the Caribbean, they will return to Bettendorf, Iowa, where David will finish his doctorate of chiropractic at Palmer



David Evans and Zaneta Holub

and Zaneta will begin her career in health promotion. They attend the Cedar Rapids congregation.

Weddings

Rebekah Sue (Evans) and Gregg Alan Drury are pleased to announce their marriage that took place on May 21, 2005, at Rocky Fork Lake in Hillsboro, Ohio. After a honeymoon on Sanibel Island, Florida, they moved into their new home in Leesburg, Ohio. They attend the Portsmouth, Ohio, congregation.

Rebekah is the daughter of Gary and Sue Evans of the Portsmouth congregation, and Gregg is the son of Paul and Norma Drury of the Tucson, Arizona, congregation. Gregg is employed



Rebekah and Gregg Drury

through Amerifund, and Rebekah is employed through Southern State Community College and is an OCAN College Access Advisor at Whiteoak and Miami Trace High Schools.

Anniversaries

Ernie and Hazel McBratney, a couple in the Vancouver, British Columbia, congregation, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Nov. 15, 2005. Ernie is a veteran of the Canadian



Ernie and Hazel McBratney

military, and the couple received letters of congratulations from the prime minister of Canada, the premier of British Columbia and the mayor of their city, White Rock, British Columbia.

Obituaries

Kenneth William Bryant, a member of the Church for many years, died Aug. 6, 2005, after a courageous battle with scleroderma lasting many years. He will be deeply missed by his wife of 52 years, Grace; daughter and son-in-law, Judy and Frank Spahich; and grandsons, Kevin and David Spahich.

Ken's faith in God gave him strength and the will to keep going. Despite the painful disease, which necessitated a liver transplant over seven years ago, Ken and Grace continued to travel to visit friends and family and enjoy their camping trail-



Kenneth William Bryant

er in beautiful parks along their way to Nova Scotia each year.

For their 50th anniversary they

traveled by train to Vancouver, British Columbia, visited his sister and friends and enjoyed an Alaskan cruise.

He was born Jan. 26, 1932. He was a member of the Teamsters' Local 938 having driven the big rigs for over 45 years. He was previously in the Royal Canadian Navy.

Mrs. Bryant and her daughter are members of the Toronto, Ontario, congregation.

Callie (Coloma) Henyan died Oct. 30, 2005, from leukemia. She was 78 years old. She has been a member of the Spokane, Washington, Church of God for 40 years. Funeral services were held on Nov. 4, 2005, with local elder Perry Miller officiating.

Frederick J. Nowlin, 79, of Mason, Michigan, died Sept. 23, 2005, in Lansing, Michigan. He was born May 20, 1926, in Jackson, Michigan, a son of Frederick A. and Idessa I. (Wright) Nowlin. He was a Navy World War II veteran, retired from Oldsmobile in 1978 after 30 years of service and was a 35-year member of the Church of God. He enjoyed reading (especially Zane Gray books) and gardening.

Mr. Nowlin was preceded in death by two children, Daniel and Margie Nowlin, three brothers and one sister.

Surviving are his wife, Maxine; three children, David Nowlin, Linda Hill and Harold Nowlin; three grandchildren, Chad Nowlin, Leroy and Troy Hill; two brothers, Don and Ken Nowlin and their spouses; a sister-in-law, Joanne Nowlin; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Lansing pastor Melvin Rhodes officiated at the memorial service Oct. 1.

Tribute: Mildred Carnes Prettyman

Mildred Carnes Prettyman, 81, widow of Andrew Milton Prettyman, an elder who died in February 2004, died Oct. 25, 2005, at her son's home in Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

Her husband had served as an elder in the Church since 1968. Through those years the Prettymans served congregations in Gaithersburg, Maryland; Appleton, Wisconsin; Chicago, Illinois; Toledo, Ohio; Memphis, Tennessee; Louisville, Kentucky; Findlay, Ohio; Mt. Sterling, Kentucky; and most recently Lexington, Kentucky.

A native of Bell County, Kentucky, she was born Jan. 16, 1924, daughter of the late John Riley and Etta Webb Carnes. She was a homemaker, a graduate of the University of Kentucky where she was a member of the Alpha Xi Delta Sorority and a graduate of the former Bethel Women's College.

Survivors include two sons and



Mildred Carnes Prettyman

daughters-in-law, Tony and Alethia Prettyman of Hopkinsville and Jonathan and Margie Prettyman of Lexington, Kentucky; a daughter and son-in-law, Anetta P. and Garland Nichols of Wyoming, Michigan; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a sister, Mabel Dunn of Port Arthur, Texas; two nieces; and a nephew.

The funeral was conducted Oct. 31 in Winchester, Kentucky, and she was buried next to her husband's grave in the Clarmont Memorial Gardens.

Tribute: Anne Burchard

Anne Burchard died on Oct. 11, 2005, after a battle with cancer. Anne was a deaconess in the Toowoomba, Australia, church and wife of elder Tom Burchard.

Anne came into the world as Anne Webster on Feb. 14, 1937, as the daughter of Scottish parents, Robert and Mary Webster, both pharmacists living at the time in Huntly, Scotland. Anne grew up in Scotland and migrated to Australia with her parents and four other siblings in 1951. The family moved to the town of Dalby in a country area of Queensland, west of Toowoomba, where they established a pharmacy.

Anne chose nursing as a career and enrolled as a nurse in Toowoomba General Hospital where she graduated with a diploma of general nursing and a second certificate of midwifery in 1960.

She met her husband of 45 years, Tom Burchard, at the local swimming pool. Anne excelled in swimming and diving, having become a finalist in the state diving championships in 1957. She also played A-grade squash in the Toowoomba league. Tom was attracted to her mischievousness and good humor as well as her femininity.

Anne and Tom married in October

1960 and lived in Toowoomba. Anne traveled back to Scotland for one year to care for her grandfather, while Tom back home built their dream home on a ridge having extensive views toward the coast. It was here that their four children were born: girls Suzanne Burchard, living in Toowoomba, and Julie Zehring, in Fort Collins, Colorado; and boys Peter, living in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, and David, in Brisbane, Australia. The last two were born at home and delivered by their father.

With the desire to move out of town and enjoy acreage, the family moved to Cabarlah north of Toowoomba. The 40 acres were not only home to the Burchard family, but to the horses, cows and pets that Anne loved. She spent much time in the outdoors growing vegetables and flowers watered from a spring-fed dam. She also spent time riding and breeding horses as well as milking a cow in what was close to a millennial setting. Injured wildlife were often taken into the living room and were kept there while Anne attended to their injuries with her nursing care.

Having mastered the challenge of clearing and establishing the farm, the family needed a further challenge. So they bought a mountain at Glencoe where there were panoramic views from 400 feet above the plain. Massive clearing and planting projects were

undertaken and up to 32 head of stock were pastured, with Anne very much involved with the animals and a massive garden. Anne was an avid gardener, and everyone agreed she had green thumbs. She had a zest for life and loved God's creation.

Anne was energetic and multitalented. She was the camp nurse for years at the Australian summer camps. She had a special knack for knowing a camper's psychological needs and provided just the right amount of maternal attention to needy campers.

At one time she walked from Tweed Heads to Toowoomba (150 kilometers, more than 90 miles) in a church activity to raise funds for the Heart Foundation. She was a volunteer literacy tutor for disadvantaged people and was involved with Disability Services Queensland in their Friendship Program giving support to the disabled and organizing outings for specific mental institution patients. Anne sponsored a child in a third world country through Plan International for 10 years.

She was actively involved in the church card-holder program, enrolled and completed the United introductory writing class, as well as contributed articles for *United News Australia* and *United News*.

Among her other talents, she was an excellent seamstress, making most of



Anne Burchard

the clothes for the family, as well as providing them with knitted garments. She developed a gift for painting pictures, made tapestries, wall hangings and carpets and achieved a diploma in Pergamano art.

She was a wonderful mother who encouraged her children in their pursuit of God's knowledge and its application to living life, as well as appreciation of the creation.

She was a loving wife, always having a positive outlook, finding the silver lining in any threatening cloud. Always one who watched out for her husband's needs, she exercised her literacy skills in censoring her husband's sermons.

Anne was ordained a deaconess in 1971 and served others faithfully until her health began to fail her. She required hip replacements, the first of which was done in 1994.

In May 2002, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. This was followed by a lumpectomy. Chemotherapy and radiation was declined. The cancer reactivated, appearing in the bones in 2005. With her declining health, her husband retired from work to look after her on a full-time basis. Hundreds of cards expressing care, love and encouragement poured in from all over the world. She never felt alone in her ordeal. Nor did she fear death.

One of the acts of service she was known for in the past 35 years was her care for those who were dying. Being a nurse, she spent sometimes weeks and months giving final care night and day to members of the Church who needed it. This time it was her turn to receive care, mainly from her husband, until she entered the hospital 10 days before she died. She loved God's way of life—the give way—and loved life itself, but was ready to accept death when it came at age 68. Anne was buried near her home in the country. The funeral was officiated by minister and longtime family friend, Bill Bradford.

Bill Bradford

Letters

Looks Dangerous

The picture with the article about the Challenger II rock climbing program on page 1 of the August *United News* depicts young people standing upon a rock formation (how high up?) which is one thing, but doing the "cancan" is another thing! The top area surface did not look to be very large!

I have seen people trip and fall down quickly on flat surfaces or were "tripped" up stepping either in forward or backward motion after stumbling over small protrusions, again on flat surfaces.

Please! Before the Churches of God have more tragedies—don't let the climbers practice unnecessary unsafe procedures that could be "tempting" God (Matthew 4:7)!

I am not advocating that the Challenger II be eliminated. But it appears to me that the pinnacle is not very wide for four or more people to be doing the "cancan" once they arrive up there!

If it were possible, perhaps a metal railing could be inserted around that pinnacle. I would feel very uncomfortable if my son would be up there on such a small area!

Pennsylvania

James Capo, the director of the Challenger II program, replied:

Safety is a primary concern with all of our Church-sponsored activities. Each of the climbers in the picture is wearing a helmet and safety harness, and is tethered to a bolt at the top of the pinnacle—though because of the small size of the picture and their distance from the camera, the rope is difficult to see.

So, while it would be possible for one

of the climbers to stumble, it would be impossible for the climber to fall off the pinnacle.

They are approximately 45 feet above the ground on top of this small pinnacle, but they are in no more danger of serious injury there than if they were standing on the ground below.

Desperate to Fellowship

I've been desperate to fellowship with UCGIA, and I very recently relocated to an area where there is a congregation. I'm going to visit this local congregation this Sabbath, which will be my first time.

I learned of UCGIA, while incarcerated, via the booklet *Heaven and Hell: What Does the Bible Really Teach?* and before that I was under the impression that there was not a church on earth that didn't hold at least one of the many false doctrines. But praise God, there is one!

Internet

Thanks to Personal Correspondence

Thank you for your reply. I write quite often to ministries and organizations, and I rarely get any response at all. Your response *did* raise some other questions in my mind, and I intend to read the booklet you suggested. (If I do not find what I seek there, you just may get another note from me.)

Again, thank you for your personal attention.

Internet

Thank you for your very clear explanation of a concept that was totally new to me (as are many of the concepts taught in *The Good News*). I certainly

appreciate your taking the time to correct my misconceptions concerning the article.

Internet

Appreciates "This Is the Way" E-mails

Thank you so very much for bringing these inspirational and spiritual "This Is the Way" e-mail messages to me. I am copying these messages and placing them on my desktop folder. Whenever I have an opportunity and remember that I have this folder (usually I forget!), I can easily reach for the folder and ask God to be a light to myself and my coworkers. And the glory and honor goes to Him. I truly appreciate these messages!

California

GN Reader in Myanmar

I am one of the receivers of your *Good News* magazine. Thank you very much for sending such a resourceful magazine. To introduce myself, I am an assistant lecturer at the Myanmar Institute of Theology. I want to let you know that your magazine, one way or another, helps me much in my teaching. I pray that God will richly bless your ministry.

Myanmar

Thanks for Radio Broadcast

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for all the time and effort you put into writing and producing the radio broadcast, all the literature and the time involved in mailing out the *Bible Study Course*. I am looking forward to attending the Feast of Tabernacles in Branson,

Missouri, if I am able. Being nearly 80 years old, I never know what illness may attack me next. I am praying and trying to stay well.

United States

"One Person at a Time"

I have read every form of literature that you offer. I happened across your Web site a few years ago. I enjoy the e-mails and *Good News*. I have just subscribed to *World News and Prophecy*. I just can't get enough of your information. I am 47 years old, but wish that I had access to this knowledge a long time ago. Thanks for changing the world, one person at a time.

Internet

"As If God Was Directing My Computer"

A couple of weeks ago I was just looking around for something to read, and I found your Web site. It was as if God was directing my computer. I wanted to study for a while now, but I didn't have the money to go to Bible school, so I kept putting everything on hold—"maybe next year," I kept saying. I said that this year I will read everything I can get my hands on so that I can understand the Bible better until I can go to Bible school. Finding your Web site was amazing. It is wonderful to be able to use your services.

New Zealand

"Interesting and Truthful"

I have been reading information on your site and also reading some of the booklets that you have to offer. I am Roman Catholic but find the things I

have read from your Church interesting and truthful. I looked to see if there were a church in Savannah. There is not. The other churches are quite some distance away. I was wondering if there are plans to build a Church of God in or around the Savannah area?

I also wanted to say thank you for such great information at the site.

Georgia

Ex-witch

Thanks for answering my inquiry (about gifts of the Spirit).

My husband and I are enjoying the booklets you sent me. I already knew of the pagan roots of the so-called "Christian" holidays Easter and Christmas. I make a point not to go to church services that celebrate them. I am having a hard time finding a church to call home because I do cringe at the pagan traditions. And that churches can try to "Christianize" Halloween in any manner really appalls me, because I am an ex-witch and know about the background of many of these celebrations. The best thing to do is not offer "a Christian alternative," e.g. fall carnival, but to just not acknowledge the day as special at all... my opinion.

Internet

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

News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

methods available to reach the public.

Since then, costs for printing, postage and shipping have risen dramatically. It now costs an average of \$98 to add one new subscriber to the *Good News* file through newsstand distribution. Comparing this to other advertising methods that add subscribers for \$1 to \$6 each, we feel we can no longer justify the newsstand program.

Therefore, *Good News* newsstand distribution, as a regular, ongoing program, is being canceled with the distribution of the November/December 2005 issue. We will continue to make available over-run copies of *The Good News* each issue on a first-come, first-served basis.

All the members who have generously and faithfully served in this program are being encouraged to use the newsstand displays to distribute brochures. Four brochures are available for distribution, with ads offering *Why Does God Allow Suffering? Is This the Time of the End? The Book of Revelation Unveiled and Jesus Christ: The Real Story*, along with a subscription to *The Good News*.

In announcing the change, the volunteers were told, "This decision in no way detracts from the excellent work you have done in distributing *The Good News*. Your efforts are greatly appreciated."

John LaBissoniere

Publication Print Runs Announced

United printed 39,000 copies of the November *World News and Prophecy*, and circulation was up about 27 over last year. It is only occasionally mentioned in *The Good News* to prevent the circulation from growing too fast for the budget.

Despite no advertising and only mentioning it in *The Good News* from time to time, requests for *Vertical Thought* continue to rise. The print run for the October-December issue was 20,500, up 78 percent from last year. We have institut-



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:

"A Campus Dilemma: Mixing Alcohol With Education"

"Why Give Thanks on Thanksgiving Day?"

"Lesser Known Veterans: Past Defenders of Joseph's Heritage"

www.ucg.org/commentary/

■ Current World News & Trends

Browse up-to-date world news by subject.
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 December *VCM* has articles on "What Makes a Woman Beautiful?" "Where's My Mate?" "Consider the Lilies," "Close to God's Heart" and "Life's Purpose."

vcmagazine.org

On verticalthought.org

■ New articles posted are "The Story of a Wise Fool" and "What Shape Is Your Future?" The January-March edition will deal with education and Christianity.

verticalthought.org

Featured Links of the Month

■ *Good News* Web site.

www.gnmagazine.org

■ *Anchor*: A message of hope for those struggling with homosexuality.

www.anchorhelp.com

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

ed a one-year renewal cycle for VT subscribers outside of the United States serviced by the home office. This will help with shipping costs and help ensure that subscribers really want the magazine.

At present we are working to keep the *Good News* circulation as close to 450,000 copies as we can. Our November/December 2005 print run was 453,174 copies, which is about where it has been for the past couple of issues. However, with our Internet advertising being cut back and with newsstand copies being eliminated, we expect the January/February 2006 issue to drop well below that number.

With a renewal rate of approximately 25 percent, and with around 338,000 U.S. subscribers on file, this means we need to advertise and replace 112,000 subscribers per year who do not renew. Then we have to advertise to additional people to increase our numbers. However, it's encouraging to see that we are reaching more than 100,000 new readers every year!

Our print promotions for the *GN* are going into 4.88 million homes this fiscal year. We have several card-deck advertising efforts underway plus supermarket brochure displays and co-op mailers. Overall cost per response is expected to be around \$4.28 for all of these projects. Also, much of our advertising campaign is aimed at young families and first-time

mothers using card decks and subscription brochures.

Peter Eddington

New Feast Site Set for Cincinnati Area

Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky, will be a Feast site location for 2006, 2007 and 2008, replacing Lexington, Kentucky. Ft. Mitchell is a part of the greater Cincinnati, Ohio, area. The Drawbridge Inn (www.drawbridgeinn.com) will be the host hotel and the location for church services. They provide very affordable rates with three restaurants and an indoor pool. Nearby overflow housing properties also provide nice facilities, some kitchen units and affordable rates.

Ample recreational activities and fine restaurants are in the area, plus the home office is 30 minutes away.

Charles Melear

British Isles Chooses York for 2006 Feast

In consultation with the UCG-

British Isles National Council in September, the ministry approved York as the venue for next year's Feast of Tabernacles. Services will take place in the Tempest Anderson Hall, a location we have previously used in 1996, 1997 and 2000. Further details will be provided later.

The Church currently has a provisional booking for Stirling in Scotland for 2008.

Portland Offers "Hidden Treasure" at Ladies' Retreat

The Portland, Oregon, congregation is sponsoring a ladies' retreat March 24-26, 2006, at Canby Grove Conference Center, 20 miles south of Portland. The weekend theme, "Hidden Treasure—The Pearl," will be presented by guest speakers and local talent.

We will share our "treasure" as we work on a special project for LifeNets relief outreach.

For more details and to request a registration form, contact Ruby Scruggs by e-mail at scruggsjr@aol.com or by phone at (503) 266-2430. Registrations are due by Feb. 1, 2006.

Ruby Scruggs

Calendar of Events

Dec. 5-7: Regional pastors meetings.
Dec. 9-14: Council meetings.
Dec. 21-26: Winter Camp, Wisconsin.
Dec. 23-27: Winter Family Weekend in Louisville, Kentucky.

Jan. 8, 2006: ABC orientation.

Jan. 13-15: Women's Enrichment Weekend, Garden Grove, California, area, "Accentuate the Positive!" (jeanupde@sbcglobal.com). Registration deadline Dec. 19, 2005.

Jan. 13-16 (corrected dates): Ski Weekend, Salt Lake City, Utah (see page 13 or www.cgca.net/ucg-saltlakeut/).

Jan. 24-25: Managing editors' meeting at the home office. The meeting will focus on the Church's media "voice" and the content and cross-promotion of the various publications and media efforts.

Feb. 24-March 1: Council meetings.

March 24-26: "Hidden Treasure—The Pearl" ladies' retreat, Portland, Oregon (scruggsjr@aol.com).

May 7-8, 2006: General Conference of Elders annual meeting.

May 9-11, 2006: Council meetings.

May 26-29, 2006: Memorial Day Weekend, Kansas City, Missouri.

Please send calendar items to mike_bennett@ucg.org.

Feast Webcasts Bring Positive Responses

Several Feast sites webcast their services through the Internet during the Feast again this year. Lexington, Kentucky, received a high of 119 audio and video connections, and Bend, Oregon, had a high of 79 connections.

"We had folks on from around the country and around the world," said Chip Chuprinko, who worked at the Bend site.

The Lexington webcast was received by people from all over the United States, Canada, Germany and a congregation in Barbados.

"We had a surprising number connected from non-UCG congregations," said Jerry Rehor. "The feedback we received was very positive."

Many people showed their appreciation through e-mailed comments during the Feast. One volunteer in Lexington communicated with the listeners before and after services.

Here are some of the comments: "Hi guys. You have absolutely made this a wonderful Feast for all of us who for whatever reason could not attend in person . . . We hope you had time for a wonderful Feast!"—Kentucky
"We have been bringing in the cybercast every day since last Thursday and really appreciate the sermons and music. It is almost like being at the Feast and fellowshiping with the brethren."—Ontario

"I am so grateful for the webcast you provide. I was unable to attend the Feast, but I was able to see my beautiful daughter sing yesterday with the children's choir. All the kids sounded and looked beautiful."—Indiana

"Greetings from the UCG Barbados congregation. We are having a wonderful Feast tuning in to your webcast."—Barbados



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