

United News™

News of the UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association

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Battle Fatigue: Don't Let It Undermine You!

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by Roy Holladay

The movie *Saving Private Ryan* vividly portrayed the trauma, pain and suffering associated with war. Many soldiers experience battle fatigue from the constant physical, emotional and psychological pressures of combat. In World War I this condition was called shell shock—it was thought to be an organic condition.

In the psychology book titled “Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life,” 5th edition by James C. Coleman, there is a section dealing with “Traumatic Reactions to Combat.” Notice the following from page 186 (all the quotes in this article will be taken from this book): “Most of these men were suffering instead from the general combat situation with its physical fatigue, ever-present threat of death or mutilation, and severe psychological shocks. During World War II, traumatic reaction to combat passed through a numb of classification such as ‘operational fatigue’ and ‘war neuroses,’ before finally being termed ‘combat fatigue’ or ‘combat exhaustion.’”

In World War II 10 percent of the men in combat developed battle fatigue. Slightly over 10 million men were accepted for military service in the United States. Out of that number 1,363,000 were given a medical discharge. Approximately 530,000, or 39 percent, were for neuropsychiatric disorders. This was the single greatest loss of manpower during that great conflict. It also accounts for the greatest loss of membership in the church of God community. Many have experienced *spiritual battle fatigue*.

Our modern history shows that one third of the membership of the church have left for various reasons. Many have become “weary in well doing” (2 Thessalonians 3:13). We have all gone through shell shock since the 1995 events surrounding apostasy in the church. Many are still suffering from the trauma of that experience. It is expressed in many ways—including a lack of trust, commitment, loyalty and faith. Many have

become fatigued and exhausted and want to be left alone. They want peace—no more fighting or confusion.

Symptoms

“Common symptoms among combat troops were dejection, weariness, hypersensitivity, sleep disturbances, and tremors. In air-corps personnel...the more typical symptoms were anxiety, frequently with accompanying dejection and depression, phobias toward combat missions, irritability, tension, and startle reaction” (page 187). How well I remember experiencing the same symptoms when the Church was going through its crisis—the inability to sleep, tension, shaking inside, nightmares, emotional hurt, pain, and disbelief. We felt betrayed, deceived and used. Notice this quote from page 188: “In the majority of cases they followed a stereotyped pattern: ‘I just can’t take it any more.... I just couldn’t control myself.’” The Bible reveals that as Christians we are in a spiritual battle for our eternal lives. Satan wants us to quit and give up. He wants us to stop fighting.

Christian Soldiers

The Scriptures explain that we are Christian soldiers. In 2 Timothy 2:3–4 we read the following: “You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier” (emphasis mine throughout).

The Christian life is not always easy—there are hardships we must endure. We strive to please our commander, Jesus Christ. First Timothy 6:12 shows that we are to “fight the good fight of faith.” We are in a spiritual battle daily with Satan. We must also do battle against the society around us and the pulls and passions of our own nature. When Paul looked back on his life he stated that “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7). Paul also exhorted Timothy to “wage

the good warfare” in 1 Timothy 1:18. In verses 19–20 Paul lists some of the spiritual battle casualties of the first century. None of us want to become victims of spiritual battle fatigue.

How do you prevent spiritual battle fatigue? How do we help one another as we go through the battles of life? What can we do to prevent others and ourselves from becoming casualties?

James C. Coleman, in his book on psychology, explains that there were four attitudes and approaches that helped the combat soldier resist combat exhaustion and fatigue. These approaches can help us also in our spiritual battles.

Clarity and Acceptability of War Goals

In World War II there was no doubt as to who the enemy was, and why we had entered the war. We realized that the well being of our country was at stake. Contrast this with what occurred in the Vietnam War. The average soldier did not know why we were in the war. We were not trying to win the war—just contain the Vietcong. The morale of the military was extremely low. “In general, the more concretely and realistically war goals can be integrated into the values of the individual in terms of ‘his stake’ in the war and the worth and importance of what he is doing, the greater will be their supportive effort on him.... Time and again men who have felt strongly about the rightness of their cause and its vital importance to themselves and their loved ones have shown incredible endurance, bravery, and personal sacrifice under combat conditions” (page 195).

We, as *Christian soldiers*, must have our goals clearly in mind. Matthew 6:33 states that we are to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” These goals have never changed. Our ultimate goal is to be a spirit member of the family of God through the resurrection—to be born again. Sometimes the kingdom of God can seem vague and off in the distance. (See “FATIGUE,” page 2)

The next issue of *United News* is scheduled to be published on Monday, July 5, 1999.

IN THIS ISSUE!..

- **Feast of Tabernacles updates**
- **Canadian summer youth camp information**
- **Extensive international reports.**

"FATIGUE," (Continued from page 1)

tant future. As we struggle with daily living, it is hard to continue to focus on the future and our calling. Notice the following quote from page 195: "[I]n the actual combat situation the soldier's concern about the political goals of the war is somewhat remote; he is fighting for survival. Perhaps this is the reason why *distant ideas*, such as democracy, were the first to go in the personality decompensation associated with prolonged combat." If we are not careful we can go for days without thinking about our ultimate goal, and forgetting to pray and study diligently.

It was proven that in actual combat short-term goals provided the impetus for soldiers to carry on. "The pursuit of short-range military objectives appears, in general, to cause less stress than the pursuit of long-range ones, where there always seems to be another hill or town to take" (page 196). We likewise should break down our pursuit of the kingdom of God into daily, weekly, monthly and yearly goals. The kingdom can seem unattainable, but a daily goal of more effective prayer is attainable. Soldiers in battle must take one hill or city at a time as they march across a country. We should tackle one weakness, fault or habit at a time. Remember that *overcoming* means "to conquer, to carry off the victory, or come off victorious" (Enhanced Strong's Lexicon).¹

Another supportive factor in battle is the *buddy system*. "The 'buddy system' in which the individual is encouraged to develop a close personal relationship with another member of his unit, often provides needed emotional support" (pages 195-196). There are times that we all need encouragement and help from others to lift us up. Spiritually speaking we should not be an island to ourselves. Notice what Solomon stated in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12: "Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."²

In 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Paul states that God comforts and encourages us in all our trials so that we might be able to do the same for others. We all help each other adjust to battle conditions. The raw recruit (babe in Christ) may need special attention. United may still have others from our former association attend with us. Don't be critical of them, but welcome them and make them feel a part of our local battle unit (local congregation).

Identification With Our Battle Unit

The second factor that aided combat

soldiers in dealing with combat fatigue was group identification. "It has been found particularly important to maintain good group identification in combat troops. The soldier who is unable to identify himself with or take pride in his group lacks the feeling of 'we-ness' that is a *highly supportive* factor in maintaining stress tolerance. Lacking this, he stands alone, psychologically isolated and less able to withstand combat stress. In fact, the stronger the sense of group identification, the less chance that the soldier will crack up in combat" (page 195).

In the spiritual battle of the last four years Satan has done a good job of isolating Christian soldiers. He believes in the philosophy of divide and conquer. We cannot be a religious independent or loner. If we are, Satan will pick us off one at a time.



Norma and Roy Holladay

Many today do not want to have anything to do with a church organization. But commitment is a biblical principle taught throughout the Scriptures. In the heat of battle you want as many of your buddies as possible engaged in the fray. There is strength in unity. None of us want to become separate and unconnected to a greater work.

Matthew 24:14 and 28:19-20 are still in the Scriptures. We collectively have an obligation to preach the gospel to the world. One soldier can accomplish some on his own, but a whole army can accomplish more when they work together.

"In cases of combat exhaustion, the soldier often returns to his unit with feelings of apprehension that his unit will not accept him or have confidence in him in the future.... If the group does accept him, he is likely to make a satisfactory readjustment to further combat; if it does not, he is highly vulnerable to subsequent breakdown. In general, group identification and acceptance appear to be highly important in maintaining his appropriate role behavior" (page 195).

Many people are still wrestling with where to attend services. Those who may join us later must be made to feel accepted. Statements such as "It is about time you showed up" or "What took you so long?" will only drive them away. This principle also applies to someone who has been suspended or disfellowshipped. When they are invited back we should

welcome them with open arms (2 Corinthians 2:6-8). They should feel needed and wanted.

Esprit de Corps

Closely related to group identification is the matter of esprit de corps, the morale of the group as a whole. The spirit of the group seems to be contagious. When the group is generally optimistic and confident prior to battle, the individual is also apt to show good morale. If the unit has a reputation for efficiency in battle, the individual soldier is challenged to exhibit his maximum effort and efficiency" (page 195). Clearly, our attitude and approach can have a very positive or negative affect on others around us.

Notice in Deuteronomy 20:1-8 the instruction God gave to Israel when they went to war. God encouraged them not to be afraid because "the LORD your God is with you." Jesus Christ has not forsaken us—He is still the commander-in-chief and actively leads the church. Next, certain reasons were given for excusing men from battle that could be summarized as "divided loyalty." Notice verse 8: "The officers shall speak further to the people, and say, 'What man is there who is *fearful and fainthearted*? Let him go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart.'"³

It is not wrong to be positive and optimistic about the work of God and the United Church of God. Negative attitudes can demoralize others. "On the other hand, when the unit is demoralized or has a history of defeats and a high loss of personnel, the individual is likely to succumb more easily to anxiety and panic" (page 195). We have the classic example in Deuteronomy 1:28-31 of how the spies *discouraged the hearts* of the Israelites by their negative reports. It is easy to be negative and cynical about the Church. Do we understand how this can undermine the morale of those we come in contact with? Some have never gotten over what happened to them in the past. This can only lead to resentment and bitterness. Can we forgive and move on, or will we continue to be trapped in the past?

Notice what our hatred and righteous indignation should be directed against. "Finally, hatred of the enemy appears to be a factor that tends to raise the combat soldier's stress tolerance" (page 196). Ephesians 6:12 shows that Satan and his demons are our enemies—not humans. We should hate sin, hate gossip, hate the devil's methods, and hate division and factions. We should love all people—especially the brotherhood.

Quality of Leadership

The fourth factor for dealing with battle stress is the quality of leadership. "Confidence in military leaders is also of vital importance. When the soldier

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respects his leaders, his confidence in their judgment and ability, and can accept them as relatively strong father or brother figures, his morale and resistance to stress are bolstered" (page 195). Ephesians 1:20 explains that Jesus Christ is the head of the church. This is the best leadership possible. He will never leave us or forsake us.

He will be with us to the end of the age. With His guidance and help we know that we will win the battle and be in God's kingdom.

The real problem is that our confidence in humans has been shaken. We have felt deceived and betrayed by some of our leaders in the past. Consequently, some have said that they will never be under any government again. Brethren, we should realize that God has not left us without leaders even on the human level today. Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 11:18-19: "For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you."⁴ God has allowed problems in the church to demonstrate which leaders are approved and which are disapproved. We have been very disappointed because many of our leaders have failed the test.

The Greek word for "approved" is *dokimos*. Notice the definition that is given in the Enhanced Strong's Lexicon: "In the ancient world there was no banking system as we know it today, and no paper money. All money was made from metal,

heated until liquid, poured into moulds and allowed to cool. When the coins were cooled, it was necessary to smooth off the uneven edges. The coins were comparatively soft and of course many people shaved them closely. In one century, more than eighty laws were passed in Athens, to stop the practice of shaving down the coins then in circulation. But some money changers were men of integrity, who would accept no counterfeit money. They were men of honor who put only genuine full weighted money into circulation. Such men were called "dokimos" or "approved."⁵

This aptly describes the faith of the ministry and membership of the church. We would not accept or teach a counterfeit doctrine. We are people of honor and integrity. The ministry has been placed in the church by God to provide leadership and oversight, to guide and teach, and to be helpers of our joy. Those who have been faithful should be given honor and respect—just as every faithful member of the church should likewise be honored and respected. The ministry should not be condemned and not be trusted because some ministers have not been faithful. One third of the angels

rebelled, but two thirds remained faithful. We don't lump the faithful angels in with the unfaithful.

Those suffering battle fatigue had a high rate of recovery. However, how quickly treatment was administered to them was very important. "In World War II, many men were able to return to combat after a night or two of such relief. Soldiers whose symptoms proved resistant to such treatment were evacuated to medical facilities behind the lines. It was found, however, that the farther the soldier was removed from the combat area, the less likely he was able to return to battle. Removal to an interior zone seemed to encourage the maintenance of symptoms and a reluctance to return to his unit. During the first combat engagements of American forces in North Africa, combat exhaustion cases were transported to base hospitals hundreds of

miles behind the battle lines; under these conditions less than 10 percent of the soldiers were able to return to duty.... In contrast, approximately 60 percent of those treated immediately within fifteen to twenty miles of the front lines were sent back to combat duty, and apparently the majority readjusted successfully" (page 196).

The longer a person stays away from church, the harder it is for him to return. It is important to maintain contact with our friends who may not be attending with us. We have a responsibility to show love and concern without proselytizing.

There are times that we all go through trials and endure hardship. We become discouraged and weary. We should seek help immediately. One of the biggest helps in these situations is a close friend.

Brethren don't allow battle fatigue to undermine you! *UN*

¹Enhanced Strong's Lexicon, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.

²The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³The Holy Bible, New King James Version,

(Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁵Enhanced Strong's Lexicon, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.

International Desk...

- We continue this new section, coordinated by Matthew Fenchel, devoted exclusively to articles and updates from areas outside of the United States.

Our Continuing Work in Estonia

- Victor Kubik, a member of the Council of Elders, travels to Estonia and serves brethren there as time and opportunity allows. Below is an update from him about the members there, the progress being made in translating our literature into Russian and Estonian, and preparations for the Feast of Tabernacles.

We continue to serve our brethren in Estonia, formerly a Soviet Republic, now an independent country. Ministerial support now comes only from the United States. But, once a month, Henriks Klovass, a deacon from Lithuania, travels by bus and rail to conduct a Bible study and visit with brethren in Tartu, Estonia. He is able to speak Russian, a language common to them.

This coming Fall we will be holding our third consecutive Feast of Tabernacles in Tartu, where most of the brethren live. Festival attendance has steadily increased from 21 in 1997 to 42 in 1998. This coming Feast we project about 55 people in attendance. Of this number, 15 are from Estonia

and about 40 are transferring from the West.

Our greatest challenge is to serve people who have so little support from literature, media and personal contact. Little by little we have made *Good News* articles available. First, they were translated into Russian and they are now translated from Russian into Estonian by member Ylo Maaring. Another member, Margit Kaljas, has been translating and printing our *Bible Study Course* into Estonian, which has become the study guide for Bible studies when there is no minister present.

In February, Beverly and I visited our group by traveling from the Sabbatarian part of Ukraine where we had participated in a medical mission. First we visited Henriks Klovass and his family in Kaunas, Lithuania. After a few days, Bev, Henriks and I took the bus trip that he undertakes monthly to Tartu. We wanted to experience what he goes through. We left Friday morning, February 12, at 6 a.m. and traveled to Riga, Latvia, where we had a six-hour layover with temperatures in the teens Fahrenheit. The layover was extended two more hours because of mechanical troubles. We then continued the remaining five hours across our second international border to Tartu, ending up at the apartment of Luule Lepik. At noon on the Sabbath we held a service for 12 of us. Henriks and I spoke.

Through the week we made new arrangements for hotel and meeting facilities for the Feast because the fine place we used

last year was closed. We hired a translator to translate simultaneously from English to Estonian. We found that it's worth extra effort and cost to provide translation to people in the language they know best. While most understand Russian, having had to learn it in Soviet times, they sometimes didn't get everything we said. Russian is declining in use as the Soviet Union's part of their life dims into history. However, talking to



Victor and Beverly Kubik

them personally in Russian is still very effective. They really appreciated the concentrated time we spent with each of them.

The second Sabbath we again had a dozen in attendance. Ylo Maaring gave a sermonette on faith, along with my sermon about the meaning of the coming Days of Unleavened Bread.

For the Spring Holy days elder John

Lambert from New York took the initiative to bring a delegation of five which included his wife Hazel, son Bryant, Russian-speaking Tina Engelbart, and Estonian-speaking member Juta Kulbin from Redlands, California. Along with the Estonians they conducted the Passover, Night to Be Much Observed, First Day of Unleavened Bread and two weekly Sabbaths. Every evening John Lambert conducted a Bible study and showed a documentary video of the Exodus.

Henrikas, our deacon from Lithuania, arrived at 3 p.m. before the Passover and a service was held in the Lamberts' room at the hotel. A total of nine people took the Passover—four Americans and five Estonians. Ylo Maaring had ordered a big box of matzos from Israel and gave everyone a package. Bryant Lambert, the Lambert's son, accompanied us on the portable piano, which they had brought all the way from New York State, and Mariina Vija translated the services.

Through the week they further solidified plans for the Feast this coming Fall. We are very happy to have accommodations at the newly constructed hotel near the city center. We expect another fine Feast of Tabernacles in a time of year when the Autumn colors are often at their peak.

For those going it will be quite an experience, not only traveling to a very interesting part of the world, a country that's been part of Sweden, Germany or Russia, but also interacting daily with the Estonians and

Henrikas Klovias. Festival time is a big morale boost to these people cut off by distance and language. We have enough people helping translate among us to provide fellowship.

The Lamberts also brought ten loose-leaf hymnals which were translated from English into Estonian by Juta Kulbin from Redlands and Judy Sieker from Elmira, New York. They are a gift to the Estonians from Judy Sieker. One side is the Estonian hymn and on the other side is the English. So, the Estonians are now able to worship God in song in their own language. We will be able to have more made by the Feast.

Currently, the United Church of God has no members in Scandinavia and the only members are in the Baltic countries of Lithuania and Estonia where there has been a presence of the church since the days of the Soviet Union.

Ozzie and Tina Engelbart are going to Tartu for Pentecost and two weekly Sabbaths. After that there will be no more direct contact with our people there until the Feast of Tabernacles. Until then, they will gather on the Sabbath and listen to tapes of sermons overdubbed into Estonian and study the *Bible Study Course* translated by Margit.

Forty-foot Container with Aid Arrives at Member's Clinic in Malawi

• Gladstone and Alice Chonde are United members in the African nation of Malawi. There they operate a medical clinic that serves hundreds of people per week. Recently, they received a container of humanitarian aid—the result of donations from members, congregations, companies and organizations. The entire project was coordinated by Victor Kubik, who writes this report.

Members Gladstone and Alice Chonde operate a medical clinic in the capital city of Lilongwe, in Malawi. They had previously worked for another clinic more than 100 miles away in Blantyre, but because they wanted to keep the Sabbath properly, they moved to Lilongwe and opened their own clinic seven years ago. You can find out more about their clinic on the Internet at <http://www.lifenets.org/malawi/mal-cli.htm>. In the first five years of their operation they have treated 130,000 people, often 150 a day. The clinic personnel comprises Gladstone, his wife Alice (who is a nurse and midwife), a secretary, and a guard.

I met the Chonde's at the 1996 Mutare Feast in Zimbabwe. They told me about the poverty of Malawi which is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. The dreadful scourge of AIDS has depopulated entire villages of adults and given rise to a new African problem: AIDS orphans.

They told me that the number one killer of children is diarrhea. At their clinic they also treat malaria and pneumonia. We promised to help them with essential humanitarian help.

First, we have been shipping them medicine on a regular basis. We are able to buy the



Gladstone Chonde counsels a patient (above), and Mr. Chonde and his wife, Alice, join Victor Kubik for a photograph.

glasses that optometrist Steve Grabowski in Laramie, Wyoming, has been processing. Others came to us from the Lion's Club.

Deacon Tom Karestes donated some heavy-duty desks for the clinic along with a deluxe whiteboard for giving lectures. We also sent a copier, paper and supplies donated by Willis and Brenda Hogg in Dallas, Texas.



medicine at about six percent of cost. Pastor Bill Jahns of the Salt Lake City, Utah, congregation has coordinated the medical shipments to the clinic. His other congregation in Boise, Idaho, has donated a fax machine.

In the meantime we have wanted to provide a large shipment of items that would be helpful to his clinic, which he calls "Malakia," named after the book of Malachi. Dyanne Dick, (wife of UCG Council chairman Bob Dick), volunteered to collect desperately needed blankets for Malawi. Over a period of several months she (with the help of Northwest members and congregations) collected nearly 1,500 pounds of blankets and had them put on palettes, shrink-wrapped and trucked to our Minnesota warehouse from which they were loaded on the container.

I arranged for a container to be shipped through a Department of Defense program in which the government pays the cost of shipping and guarantees delivery. The total shipping bill exceeded \$20,000—completely paid for by the Defense Department. While a wonderful blessing, it is a complex process. The container was nearly one year late getting all the approvals necessary. In the meantime we were collecting items to go on the container. We had wonderful donations of cash, furniture, food and medicine. Besides the blankets from the Northwest, other blankets were shipped from brethren in Phoenix, Arizona, Kansas City, Missouri, and West Palm Beach, Florida, to our warehouse in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Dale and Todd Booth, members in the Tucson, Arizona, congregation assembled a Pentium computer for the clinic to use for processing patient information. Hopefully, we'll have regular e-mail contact. Two other computers were donated. The food items included cooking oil, three tons of rice, pasta, and a ton of flour donated by Bay City Milling through elder Lonnie Gjesvold in Minneapolis. We also had wheelchairs, crutches and walkers. Thousands of pairs of eyeglasses were sent. Many were the eye-

response, which is close to the 50 percent goal we had set.

However, there is something even more interesting. At the last minute, after having read about the very positive response (in the U.S.) regarding the offer of the *What Happens After Death?* booklet, I decided to include in the reply coupon an optional offer for the *Ten Commandments* booklet. (We chose this one because it is clearly a "biblical" subject, and many of the subscribers would not be surprised by its religious contents. A large number of our readers are not of a Christian background.)

The result? Of the 25 who renewed, 23 requested the booklet, which is a 44 percent response (from the 52 renewal letters)!

It is very likely that if we had a large number of subscribers, the percentage of response would have been much lower. Even though our numbers here are not large, at least the percent of those responding continues to be on par with most other areas.

Canadian Report

• The articles below come from updates submitted by Gary Antion, operation manager for the work in Canada, Rainer Salomaa, chairman of the UCG-Canada national council, and Ed van Pelt, office manager.

Statistical Summary From Past Fiscal Year

This past fiscal year for the United Church of God-Canada (which concluded on March 31), has been an exciting one for the tremendous growth that God gave! The following is a summary of that growth as we carry on into the new fiscal year.

On March 31, 1998, we had 342 members, 230 donors, and 1,417 subscribers. One year later we had 362 members, 248 donors, and 3,675 subscribers on file. These represent increases of 5.9 percent, 7.8 percent, and 159.4 percent respectively. Most of the increase in subscribers is attributed to the *Reader's Digest* ad that was placed in the Ontario edition in June 1998, as well as to the television ads that aired in June and July 1998 in the Calgary/Edmonton and Montréal markets. In addition the waiting room program was started in Winnipeg and in Lethbridge.

Another source for new subscribers is the internet and e-mail. We have received many requests for subscriptions electronically. As our Web site becomes better known we can expect to see more growth in this area. Personal contact is another area that has resulted in more subscribers being added to the mailing list. Individuals have asked us to send gift subscriptions to their friends.

We have added new subscribers through some interesting ways. One person found a copy of *The Good News* on a train, and one subscriber who lives quite a distance north of the Arctic Circle responded to

Good News Renewal Update from Mauritius

• Mauritius is an island-nation east of the African continent, east of the island of Madagascar. Suren Proag, one of our few members there, recently wrote us about renewal efforts in that country.

Greetings to all of you! Just a brief note to let you know of some encouraging news regarding the *Good News* subscription list in Mauritius.

In late January we sent out 52 renewal letters. By the end of March, 25 subscribers had renewed, which gives us a 48 percent

one of the *Reader's Digest* ads in the United States.

Our *Reader's Digest* ads have reached several international areas as well. We've had responses from readers in the United States, Britain, Peru, Ecuador, Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana, the Czech Republic, the Philippines, Iraq, Tunisia and Tanzania. There are readers of *The Good News* in every province and territory in Canada including its newest territory—Nunavut. In the past year we have added nearly 2,800 new names to the files.

Church attendance has also grown over the past year. We have upgraded several groups to churches and Bible study groups. We have 14 churches, six Bible studies, and two video groups. Attendance each week has been consistently over 400 recently.

Holy day attendance has set new records. Attendance on the First Day of Unleavened Bread 1998 was a record 602. This year, a new all-time Holy day attendance record of 647 was set. Also, in 1998, 419 people partook of the Passover and this year 460 took part.

We can see God working in the letters and comments we receive. Some are simply words like "Thanks you," or "Thank you very much." Other letters are longer and there is a hungering and thirsting that is evident. Many of these letters contain literature requests. In 1998 we sent out about 950 of each of the booklets, *How to Understand the Bible* and *Is the Bible True?* The *Ten Commandments* booklet was next with nearly 500 copies sent out. So far this year we have sent out 790 additional copies. The booklet *Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God* was popular last year as well. We sent out over 350 copies. We mailed from 100 to 350 copies of each of the other booklets during 1998. In all of 1998 we distributed about 16,250 copies of the *Good News* magazine. So far this year we have distributed over 9,000 magazines.

The Work in Canada is growing. Of course we look to God to bring the growth and we do what we can to help nurture and feed that new growth. We look forward to an exciting year of preaching the gospel to the rest of Canada.

Financial Report and Recent Developments

We closed-out the fiscal year with nearly a 12 percent increase in donation income and a five percent increase in the Holy day budgeted income. We are grateful for these increases and hope it portends good things for 1999-2000! We have ambitiously budgeted for a five percent increase on top of these amounts for the new fiscal year. We hope we exceed that amount and top out at \$1,000,000 for the first time in this facet of God's work in Canada. That amount would include the gracious subsidy we receive from the United States!

Our Holy day offerings were up by three percent over last year at the present count. We are still two percent behind our

budget, but over last year's amount! A nice way to have a deficit. We expect more will trickle in from those areas where there is no church.

We have over 500 responses to the *Reader's Digest* advertisement with reply cards in the regions of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec (English), and the Atlantic provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. There were 488,000 subscribers on the list. Alberta leads the way with around 20 percent of the total number of responses. In fact, every province and territory except the Yukon has at least one response! We have two subscribers from within the Arctic Circle! If they request a visit, that will be a challenge as they are over 2,000 miles due north of Toronto.

We have a mini-newsstand program in Toronto which has cost us virtually nothing as the four stands were donated. They have moved over 500 magazines and we just received our first subscriber from those magazines.

Spring Trip to Africa

• During the recent Spring Holy days, Joel Meeker again traveled to Africa to visit the congregations there and help make arrangements.

Spring Holy day greetings from your brethren in Africa! During, and immediately following the Feast of Unleavened Bread 1999, I had the opportunity to visit brethren in Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya and South Africa.

My stay in Nigeria was very short. Due to a sudden death in our family I delayed my departure for a week, most of which would have been spent in Nigeria. The change in schedule meant that following the nine-hour overnight flight to London I would only have half-an-hour to catch the connecting flight to Lagos. The flight to London arrived an hour late! In what I'm convinced was answered prayer, the flight out of London to Lagos was delayed by two hours. This was just the time needed to allow not only me, but also my suitcase to arrive on the connecting flight. The schedule was so tight during this trip that if my suitcase hadn't made this transfer it might never have caught up with me.

Following the seven-hour flight, because of the delayed departure, I arrived after dark. This is definitely something to be avoided in Lagos, but there was little choice this time. Dr. and Mrs. Akin-Ogundipe, Mr. Ogundipe, and Mr. Alimi met me at the airport and drove me to the hotel for the night. We had some brief discussions at the hotel that evening and I gave them some new hymnals, hymn cassette tapes, booklets and *United News* back issues they had requested. We had to keep it short, however, because of the danger to the members of traveling at night.

The next morning we had a Sabbath

service at 8:30 a.m., much earlier than usual, so that I could catch my next flight shortly before noon. Following services I was able to meet with three people who had requested baptismal counseling. I also delivered a special gift to Mrs. Alade whose husband, a faithful member of United, had died unexpectedly only a few months before. Mrs. Alade is now left with several children, some of them still quite young. The gift I transmitted to her came from a family in the United States.

Following a slide show and update I gave in one church area in the U.S., the children of a church family spontaneously decided to give some of the money they make each year raising calves to support our brethren in Africa. Their father then matched their gift and asked me to use the sum of \$300 to help brethren in need. After discussing the Alade family's situation with him, we agreed this would be a good use for this special gift. This money will help pay rent and school fees for the Alade children. The thoughtful gesture was a very inspiring example on the part of these young people. The whole congregation in Lagos was moved and appreciative of this show of love and solidarity.

After a mad dash to the airport (going anywhere in Lagos seems like a mad dash), I caught the Cameroon Airways flight to Douala, Cameroon. The flight was on time, which is not to be taken for granted in this part of the world. After checking into the hotel we drove to the hall where services were to be held for the 30 members present. I gave an update on the work of the Church, followed by a sermon.

The next day we all met again at the same hall for a meal of rice, a local kind of potato, and a sauce made of a spinach-like green, and fish. Then we had a Bible study which included a question and answer session, and a discussion of the timeline of God's plan of salvation. There were questions on the identity of the churches of Revelation two and three, the meaning of the symbols in Revelation 17, and the New Testament teaching on marriage, divorce and polygamy (which is not uncommon in this part of Africa). Following this Bible study I met with four people who had requested baptismal counseling.

Before leaving we visited a house for rent, which turned out to be a suitable meeting hall for the small congregation. After consulting briefly on the phone with Mr. McCullough, we made the necessary arrangements to rent the house, which costs no more to rent per month than it cost to rent the previous hall for four Sabbaths each month. The house can also be used for the Feast of Tabernacles. Our brethren in Douala were very encouraged by this development.

The flight from Douala to Nairobi, my next stop, was delayed by two hours, which eventually made for a very late arrival. There was a one-hour layover in Kinshasa, Congo, which is currently involved in a civil war. This very large city seemed from the air

to be mostly blacked out, but happily the airport area was calm.

Because of our late departure, I arrived in Nairobi at 2:30 in the morning. Once I made it through the arrival formalities and baggage claim, I was met by Mr. David Gichuru, one of our members in Nairobi. He had very faithfully waited as the arrival time was pushed back farther and farther. It would have been very difficult to get a taxi at three in the morning, so I was very thankful for this service.

After a short night we met the next day at noon for the first service of the last day of Unleavened Bread. A group of 35 were present during the two services, during which I gave the sermons. Between services we shared a delicious potluck meal, and very enjoyable fellowship.

Throughout the next day I had visits in my hotel room with several of the members in the Nairobi area and one from a man who traveled by bush taxi several hundred kilometers from the north to be in Nairobi for the Holy day.

Before leaving Kenya after the two-and-a-half days I was there, the Gichurus and I had an interesting lunch at a local restaurant which serves game meat. The menu of the day included zebra (we passed on that), crocodile (we passed on that too), eland—the largest of the African antelope—and hartebeest—a medium sized antelope. The latter two were delicious!

On Friday, April 9, I flew to Johannesburg, South Africa. This was my first visit to South Africa and the congregations there seldom receive visitors from outside the country. The four congregations in the country are served by three United elders and their wives: André and Elise van Belkum, Neil and Erlene Becker, and Peter and Sonja Hawkins. Mr. van Belkum had mentioned before this trip that since I was in the neighborhood, (when the nearest other elders are over 3,000 miles away and on other continents, the "neighborhood" is pretty big), a visit would be welcome.

I spent a delightful Friday evening with the de Campos family in Johannesburg, who also kindly lodged me for the night. The next morning I had the opportunity to speak to about 50 people in Johannesburg during services, after which we had a 45-minute question-and-answer-session which touched on news of the work United is doing, as well as Council of Elders' activities over the past year.

From services we drove quickly to the airport for the 500 km (312 mile) flight to Durban, where Mr. van Belkum kindly met me for the drive over to afternoon services. Durban has the largest United congregation in South Africa, with about 60 attending. Following services we enjoyed a meal of curry prepared by the ladies of the congregation, several of whom are of Indian origin. The food was absolutely delicious and the fellowship was very enjoyable as well. This congregation is quite cosmopolitan and includes members from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. I met members of

Zulu, East Indian, Dutch, as well as English background.

Sunday morning I flew on to East London, where Mr. Becker is the pastor. We spent an enjoyable afternoon together, part of which was spent walking along the beautiful beaches of this medium-sized coastal town. That evening 26 members gathered in the Beckers' home for a Bible study. After the study I answered a few questions about various projects on which the Council of Elders had worked, and several policy decisions made during the previous year.

Monday morning I flew down the rest of the eastern coast to Cape Town, my last stop in South Africa. Peter and Sonja Hawks met me at the airport and took me on a drive through the beautiful Cape of Good Hope area which is where the Atlantic ocean meets the Indian ocean. The climate is similar to that of the Mediterranean coast. This was the first place colonized by the Europeans who arrived here in the mid 17th century, and it is still possible to visit several of the wine and farm estates they founded which have become museums and continue to produce wine.

That evening I was invited, along with members from the area, to Stan and Barbara Botha's home for a *Poijie* (pronounced poikee) dinner. *Poijie* is an Afrikaans word meaning "little pot," and consists of a meat and vegetable stew cooked in a black iron cauldron-type pot. The meal was copious and delicious and we had a very interesting discussion about the history of the church of God in South Africa, as well as its future. Several of the members in Cape Town, as well as other areas of South Africa, were called to the truth as far back as the 1960s, so they have quite a broad perspective. We also discussed how that underneath the relatively peaceful life in many areas, there is an increasing lack of security, and mounting economic stress being felt in the country.

The crime rate has exploded in recent years, and newspapers often carry stories of horribly violent crimes. The economic situation is also deteriorating, and unemployment and inflation are increasingly serious problems in a land that still has much to offer.

The next morning I left early for the long flight home. I deeply appreciated God's blessing on this trip, which passed without major incident. As always the members in all the parts of Africa I visited would appreciate your prayers for our Father's protection and blessings. Many asked me to express to their brethren in other parts of the world that they are praying for you too.

Spring Holy Days Update from the Caribbean

- This report about the Spring feasts and other developments in the Caribbean was submitted by Kingsley Mather, pastor in that region.

The Spring Holy day season was most

uplifting for UCG family in the Caribbean! Brethren from the Bahamas to Barbados enjoyed the Feast in a spirit of peace, reassurance, and appreciation for the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and God's plan of salvation.

Barbados

Arnold Hampton reports that 13 kept the Passover in Barbados. Twenty-five happy brethren assembled for the first Day of Unleavened Bread. The Holy day offering was US\$16.48 per person. The attendance for the last Day of Unleavened Bread was 19 and the offering was \$17.86 per person. The congregation is eagerly preparing for various programs to advertise the *Good News* magazine in our attempt to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of Barbados.

Dominica

The brethren on the Nature Island of the Caribbean were extremely pleased the way God blessed them during the Passover season. They had a number of visiting brethren for the Passover and first Day of Unleavened Bread. Maxwell Victor, a long-time member who moved back to Dominica after coming into the church in England, officiated at the Passover service. Here is a report that was filed with me by Rick Daniel, a Dominican American.

"We had five visitors for the first Holy day and just our regular congregation for the second Holy day. The offering for the two Holy Days was EC\$1,303.20 or US\$479.66.

"Passover was a thrill for the Dominica brethren because we had four baptized guests from America attending with us. One young man, Mr. Clay Staggs from Arkansas, was observing his first Passover. We felt honored to be able to share this very special event with him. There were nine of us observing the Passover with UCG-Dominica (six men and three women).

"The Night To Be Much Observed was special as well. In addition to our American guests we had spouses and children of Dominica brethren join us for this festive night. Fifteen of us enjoyed each other's fellowship and friendship that evening. Our appetites were satisfied with numerous dishes and large portions for everyone. We finished off the meal with some homemade soursop ice cream. It was a wonderful night.

"The first day of Unleavened Bread for UCG-Dominica had a huge attendance of 14. This may not seem like much, but when some Holy days are kept with as few as two brethren (due to other members traveling abroad), you can imagine how populous we felt! For the last day of Unleavened Bread we were back to our regular small little flock and observed this Holy day with six people in attendance, our five regular baptized members and one child who also regularly attends.

"In all, the Spring Holy days in Dominica were a joy and we felt as though we thoroughly covered the topics God has

inspired to be taught each year during this season. We hope the brethren around the world had as fulfilling and rewarding a Spring Holy day season as we did on the Nature Island."

Jamaica

The brethren are thankful to God that they have found their way home. They are extremely happy to be worshiping God and meeting with brethren of like mind. This was the second Passover as part of UCG and although the group is small, the number is growing.

Harry Grant, our lead man in Jamaica, is a hard working and dedicated young man. He is an employee in the office of The Attorney General of Jamaica. Ten brethren met for this second Passover as part of UCG. It was great to reflect on the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ our Passover sacrifice.

Fourteen cheerful brethren met for the Night to be Much Observed, when a sumptuous meal was served. The attendance on the first Holy Day was 10 and the Holy day offering was JA\$4,259 or US\$115. The attendance for the Last Day of Unleavened Bread was 12.

St. Kitts and Nevis

We have three members in this country, but I was unable to reach them by telephone. I did get a letter from Mrs. Bart, the wife of Mr. Sydney Bart, and she indicated that they were looking forward to the spring Holy day season. I expect that they and Mr. Vincent Herbert, our one member who lives on the island of Nevis, observed the Passover and days of Unleavened Bread in their homes.

Bahamas

This is the fourth Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread services that were held in the Bahamas since UCG came into being. Since the Bahamas is a group of islands, the brethren are not able to meet together. This year brethren observed Passover on three separate islands.

Roderick Turnquest and Daniel McKinney conducted the Passover service in Freeport, Grand Bahama. Nine brethren took the Passover. Twenty-six happy members met for a sumptuous meal on the Night to be Much Observed. The Holy day offering was \$751 and there were 23 in attendance. The attendance for the last Day of Unleavened Bread was 21 and the offering was \$524. It is also encouraging to see that their speech club is already producing fruit. Mr. Mark Mackey gave the offertory message on the first Day of Unleavened Bread.

Kingsley O. Mather conducted the Passover for eight brethren in Nassau. Fifteen happy brethren and children met at the Mather's home for a delicious meal. It was a delightful start to the Days of Unleavened Bread. Service was held in Nassau at 10 a.m. on the first Day of Unleavened Bread. Mr. Mather then caught

a flight to Freeport for a 3 p.m. service on that island. The offering in Nassau was \$360; there were 15 in attendance. Services on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread were held at 10 a.m. The Offering was \$255.00 and the attendance was 13.

We have three scattered members on two islands who were not able to travel to Nassau for the Passover. Two observed the Passover in their home and the third one missed it and has requested to take the second Passover. The brethren in the Caribbean are happy that they have a place where they can continue to worship God in the way He directs, with brethren of like mind. They look forward to the growth they expect will come with the programs that are being implemented to increase the *Good News* circulation in the region.

Advertisements and Political Situation

We finally began our advertising campaign in the Bahamas last Thursday. The first day (April 15) we got six responses. The snail mail is trickling in; so far we have received about twenty responses from our first ad. This week we also began a *Good News* newsstand program in the Bahamas. I was pleased that we were able to get one of the best outlets that we used in the past in the Bahamas! Plans are underway to introduce other programs in the region.

We did encounter one setback in our plans. I was scheduled to fly to Kingston, Jamaica. Plans were set to meet with the advertising agency that helped us start our advertising a short time after UCG got started. There is political unrest in Jamaica. Recently the government increased tax on gasoline and other petroleum products. This has caused demonstrations, road blockages, looting, and other acts of vandalism. Four people have been shot and are dead. Businesses and schools have closed and the nation is in a state of confusion. The tourist sector is threatened. I spoke with Harry Grant (our contact in Jamaica) this morning. The brethren are safe and he is hoping to go to work today, the first time this week.

I was hoping to begin advertising in Jamaica then plan for ads in Barbados, St. Lucia, Trinidad and a few other islands. We will have to rethink our plans. This is a quick update just to let you know what is happening in the region.

News from New Zealand

- In April, Council member Dr. Donald Ward visited the brethren in New Zealand. The first section, by Bruce Porteous, a member in the area, discusses his trip. Monica Webb, also a member in New Zealand, then gives a statistical update about subscriber development in that area.

Visit by Dr. Ward

The New Zealand Church was privi-

leged to have Dr. Donald Ward and his wife visit them for Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. His first visit to New Zealand has given us all a tremendous boost.

Shortly after his arrival from Los Angles on Tuesday, March 30, he was taken to the local Sky TV studios to be interviewed on the local Larry King-style program. The 20-minute interview was on prophecy and the coming of the beast power and was scheduled to be viewed nationwide the following Monday evening at 7.30 p.m. on the CNN Channel.

That evening Passover was conducted by Dr. Ward. Two members participated in the Passover ceremony for the first time. Some had traveled 300 kilometers to attend.

The Night to Be Much Observed was a combined evening meal, providing an opportunity for us all to meet Dr. Ward and his wife, Wanda. The following day approximately 50 brethren gathered together to hear two inspiring sermons from him. He spoke of examples of faith from the Book of Joshua, and keeping our sense of direction at this time. It was a wonderful day for the entire church, as we do not have a regular minister in attendance that often. The offering was up 50 percent over last year.

We were privileged to have a seminar on world news and prophecy on the Sabbath morning by Dr. Ward. He gave a presentation of the current world situation, describing how the events were leading up to the coming of the beast power, and the move towards international globalization, with one dominate economic and political system controlling the western world. He also spoke about the Third Way, an alternative to uncontrolled capitalism, currently being promoted by such world leaders as Tony Blair and the pope. The Third Way advocates the state having greater control over the distribution of wealth and the world's resources.

Following a potluck lunch, Dr. Ward took the afternoon sermon titled "Is Christ Divided?", which was a timely sermon for the Auckland congregation.

On Sunday afternoon the church here hosted a public lecture, where Dr. Ward spoke on "The Final World Ruling Dictatorship described as a Beast in the Book of Revelation," and the end-time prophecies from Daniel referred to as "The Abomination of Desolation." The lecture was promoted to the *Good News* mailing list, plus one advertisement in a Christian newspaper, and a limited number of leaflet drops in letter-boxes.

Though the publicity was quite limited, we had 24 new people attend the lecture, which we believe was exceptional for a beautiful sunny Sunday afternoon when people are normally at the beach. The lecture went for 1½ hours, followed by 45 minutes of questions from the floor. Those attending generally had knowledge of the subject matter, and asked informed questions. None left till the completion of the lecture. Many lingered for awhile after-

wards, took Church literature, and expressed interest in knowing more about the Church.

This public lecture was relatively inexpensive to run, and a very effective way of bringing the truth to those wishing to learn more. If we have the right subject matter, and have a speaker with appropriate credentials such as Dr. Ward, we should be able to obtain considerable media coverage leading up to the lecture. As world events lead to the fulfillment of prophecy, this could be one way of getting the warning message out to our people.

We are also having responses come in from a letter mailed out last week to *Good News* subscribers. Even though we have just mailed out the letter, we have received over 50 requests for additional literature.

So, things are gaining momentum for us here in New Zealand in the United Church of God. The year 1999 looks like it is going to be a year of strong growth for God's work here.

Subscriber Development in New Zealand

Advertisements in the New Zealand edition of *Reader's Digest* have proven to be effective and efficient means of promoting *The Good News* and booklets here. Below is a short overview of the responses we have received from each ad campaign:

June '98 *Reader's Digest*
269 requests for *The Good News*
September '98 *Reader's Digest*
411 requests for *The Good News*
February '99 *Reader's Digest*
341 requests for *The Good News*.

The September 1998 ad offered the

booklet *What is Your Destiny?* in addition to *The Good News*. We received requests for this booklet from 49 percent of those who requested the magazine. The results from the February 1999 promotion were similar. In that advertisement, we offered the *Ten Commandments* booklet (as well as *The Good News*). Again, almost 50 percent requested both pieces of literature.

In addition to the above numbers, we have received a total of 161 gift subscription requests for *The Good News* since the beginning of United in New Zealand, as well as 103 miscellaneous subscriber requests. Additional booklet requests total 265. Our New Zealand subscriber file now contains 1,302 addresses!

true feast of food prepared with Peruvian flavor.

Our next stop was La Paz, Bolivia, where we were able to meet with our members there. They are always enthusiastic about God's way and His Festivals. As we drove from the world's highest airport into the city, we heard about the Feast of Tabernacles that was kept last year in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, by four members. They had a schedule of activities, which included a talent night, a family dance and a tea for the seniors! They faxed their schedule to the members who were in La Paz so that they could rejoice together in their activities, although separated by distance. (And we get discouraged when we think about how small our congregations are now!)

We observed the Last Day of Unleavened Bread in Santiago with the congregation there. This is one of the largest congregations of United in the Spanish-speaking area with about 200 in attendance. The choir sang at both morning and afternoon services, and these very few voices made a very beautiful addition to the services. The afternoon presentation was the Exodus and was very moving. I never cease to be amazed at how the Latinos sing!

Chile is suffering from a drought and they are now having daily cuts in electricity, which last about an hour. In the zone where we meet for church, the cut comes at 5:30 in the afternoon, so we were unable to have the regular Bible study after services. They changed their meeting time so the Bible study can be fitted in before the blackout occurs on future Sabbaths. The cuts are scheduled to last at least six weeks. Sunday evening we boarded our plane for Dallas, Texas, once again inspired by a visit to these faithful and dedicated members of God's church. UN

Trip to South America

- Leon Walker, operations manager for the work in Spanish-speaking areas, and his wife Reba, recently visited congregations in South America. This is a report of their trip from Mrs. Walker.

We just returned from a trip to South America, which included visits to Peru, Bolivia and Chile. We kept the Passover in Lima with 54 persons, and had 82 present for the first Holy day. Our Night to Be Much Observed was a delight as we shared the meal with 10 people. Our mix was very interesting. We had one child, a four-year-old, who fulfilled the biblical example of asking in wonder when the bread was passed "What is this?" Our oldest guest was 91 and in excellent spirits. He amazed and amused us with some of his exploits as a youth, such as walking along the beach from Peru to Ecuador. We also enjoyed a

God's Holy Days • Ten-Year Calendar • 2000 - 2010

Roman Year	First Day of Sacred Year	Passover	Days of Unleavened Bread	Pentecost	Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Tabernacles	Last Great Day
2000	April 6 (Th)	April 19 (W)	April 20–26 (Th-W)	June 11	Sept. 30 (Sa)	Oct. 9 (M)	Oct. 14–20 (Sa)	Oct. 21 (Sa)
2001	March 25 (Su)	April 7 (Sa)	April 8–14 (Su-Sa)	May 27	Sept. 18 (Tu)	Sept. 27 (Th)	Oct. 2–8 (Tu)	Oct. 9 (Tu)
2002	March 14 (Th)	March 27 (W)	March 28–April 3 (Th-W)	May 19	Sept. 7 (Sa)	Sept. 16 (M)	Sept. 21–27 (Sa)	Sept. 28 (Sa)
2003	April 3 (Th)	April 16 (W)	April 17–23 (Th-W)	June 8	Sept. 27 (Sa)	Oct. 6 (M)	Oct. 11–17 (Sa)	Oct. 18 (Sa)
2004	March 23 (Tu)	April 5 (M)	April 6–12 (Tu-M)	May 30	Sept. 16 (Th)	Sept. 25 (Sa)	Sept. 30–Oct. 6 (Th)	Oct. 7 (Th)
2005	April 10 (Su)	April 23 (Sa)	April 24–30 (Su-Sa)	June 12	Oct. 4 (Tu)	Oct. 13 (Th)	Oct. 18–24 (Tu)	Oct. 25 (Tu)
2006	March 30 (Th)	April 12 (W)	April 13–19 (Th-W)	June 4	Sept. 23 (Sa)	Oct 2 (M)	Oct. 7–13 (Sa)	Oct. 14 (Sa)
2007	March 20 (Tu)	April 2 (M)	April 3–9 (Tu-M)	May 27	Sept. 13 (Th)	Sept. 22 (Sa)	Sept. 27–Oct. 3 (Th)	Oct. 4 (Th)
2008	April 6 (Su)	April 19 (Sa)	April 20–26 (Su-Sa)	June 8	Sept. 30 (Tu)	Oct. 9 (Th)	Oct. 14–20 (Tu)	Oct. 21 (Tu)
2009	March 26 (Th)	April 8 (W)	April 9–15 (Th-W)	May 31	Sept. 19 (Sa)	Sept. 28 (M)	Oct. 3–9 (Sa)	Oct. 10 (Sa)
2010	March 16 (Tu)	March 29 (M)	March 30–April 5 (Tu-M)	May 23	Sept. 9 (Th)	Sept. 18 (Sa)	Sept. 23–29 (Th)	Sept. 30 (Th)

Passover observed evening before All Holy Days begin evening before

We thought it might be helpful for the membership to have the dates of God's Holy days for the next ten years. We will continue to provide a wallet-sized five-year calendar each year if possible, but in the meantime the above calendar will help you with any long-range planning.

Local Church Updates...

Young Adults Weekend July 2–5, 1999 Oakhurst, California

All young adults ages 18 to 30-something are invited to a special weekend of fun activities and educational seminars at the site of the United Youth Camp in Oakhurst, California. The weekend will be held Friday through Monday, July 2–5, 1999.

Nestled in the beautiful Sierra Nevada Mountains about 40 miles north of Fresno, California, and less than an hour away from Yosemite National Park, Oakhurst offers spectacular sight-seeing, swimming, a ropes course, a climbing wall, volleyball, basketball and mountain biking. Sleeping accom-

modations are well-constructed tent cabins with modern shower facilities close by. A few camping spaces are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants should try to arrive Friday afternoon and depart Monday morning.

Seminars directed toward young adults will be intermingled with the recreational activities and will be conducted by Doug Horchak, Larry Greider, Bill Bradford, Dave Register, Robin Webber and Clyde Kilough.

The cost for housing and eight meals is only \$90. A nominal fee will be assessed for the climbing wall and ropes course. A limited number of motels are available in the area. For information contact Clyde Kilough at the number below.

Clyde Kilough

Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ e-mail address: _____

Please mail your completed form and payment to: *Clyde Kilough, 5413 Pearlstone Dr, Antelope CA 95843*. If you have any questions please call him at (916) 725-7957 or e-mail him at ckilough@ucg.org. Checks should be made out to *United Church of God – Sacramento*.

New Orleans Singles Activity Includes Participants from Across the U.S.

Over 40 singles gathered in the greater New Orleans, Louisiana, area March 31 through April 4, 1999, for a special event which focused on singles “in the middle”—that is, those aged 30 to 55. Participants literally came from the four corners of the nation—from the states of Washington, California, Florida, and New York, as well as many points in between.

The focus for the event was on group activities, which are conducive to developing friendships with many people of like age and spiritual values. One participant later wrote: “Thank you so much for the New Orleans event. It held much meaning for me since this was my first singles event and I made a lot of new friends.... We don’t realize how much we need each other and the importance of keeping in touch.” Another single wrote, “I really enjoyed myself and I hope more of us can do things like this with converted people in the Church.”

Accommodations were at the beautiful Holiday Inn Atrium and

Conference Center in Hammond, Louisiana, and began with the Night to Be Much Observed meal on Wednesday night in the main ballroom, featuring lamb and Cornish game hens. The three congregations in the area met together at the Holiday Inn for services on the First Day of Unleavened Bread and heard from United Church of God Chairman Robert Dick.

That evening the singles group enjoyed a jambalaya dinner and a social that included several interactive activities. Many participants laughed and kidded each other about the Bible character names that were pinned on their backs. The only way to have the name removed was to guess who it was by asking a maximum of five questions of the participants. Numerous prizes were given at the end of the evening by the event coordinator, Ina McLemore.

On Friday the group spent the day in New Orleans, beginning with a short ride down the Mississippi River from the French Quarter area on the paddlewheeler, Creole Queen. The cruise paused for a tour of the Chalmette Battlefield, sight of the famous Battle of New Orleans, the last major battle of the War of 1812. That afternoon they enjoyed some of the history as well as

the unique sights and sounds of the French Quarter, including the street performers and artists around Jackson Square. That evening they went to the Covington church hall and were treated to a Cajun meal of green gumbo as well as red beans and rice prepared by Sandy Letellier of the Covington congregation.

On Sabbath morning two seminars began the day’s activities. Local pastor Ken Treybig led a discussion titled “Looking for the Perfect-10 Mate,” which focused on the principal of building strong friendships before beginning to get serious about someone as a potential mate. The second seminar, “Men—Some Assembly Required,” was presented by Chairman Bob Dick, with points about the way men think and how to promote better understanding in communication with males.

Mr. Dick asked the question, “Who is Christ?”, to introduce his sermon during services that afternoon. It explored the loyalty and commitment of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

That night the event concluded with a dinner dance. Over 90 people, singles as well as members and teens from the local area, enjoyed the meal and dancing to the music of Joe LaPorte. As the evening drew to a close, there were many expressions of deep appreciation

Words to Live By

- The most important ability is availability.
- People who fight fire with fire usually end up with ashes.
- It’s not the number of hours you put in, but what you put in the hours, that counts.
- He who loses his head is usually the last one to miss it.

*Ernie McBratney,
British Columbia, Canada*

for this type of event and the efforts that went into helping it succeed. The note one person wrote seems to sum up the feelings of many. She said, “The words seem inadequate for my feelings but thank you for that beautiful time!”

There were also many requests that more of these type activities be organized and held periodically in various locations. Many requested that the event become an annual occurrence, so plans are already under way for a New Orleans singles’ happening during the Days of Unleavened Bread next year.

Ken Treybig



New Orleans (clockwise from above): Carol Monson (from Georgia), and Robert Dick, talk about their experiences in front of Jackson Square in the French Quarter; William Jones (from Brooklyn, New York), and Adrienne Johnson (also from Brooklyn), enjoy some matzohs with their red beans and rice and green gumbo dinner; and the group gather for a picture in front of the paddlewheeler, Creole Queen.



What One Person Can Do

"Hello, this is Lomax, could you send me more *Good News* back issues? My displays are almost empty once again!" This familiar, cheerful refrain was repeated time and again over the past several months in phone calls I received from Mr. Lomax Morris, a deacon in the 30-member New York City, New York, congregation.



It began in October 1998 when we mentioned in a newsletter to brethren involved in the Waiting Room Program, that the home office had several thousand older magazines dating as far back as May 1996 available for distribution. Mr. Morris, age 64, and retired from his job of 25 years as a financial counselor at the Queens Hospital Center, decided to try his hand at distributing some of them. The most logical starting place he felt, was to contact locations where he had distributed copies of the *Plain Truth* magazine through the church newsstand program in the late 1980s. After refurbishing several old displays he visited his former outlets: "OB's Bakery" and "The Hip Center" in Queens, New York. Surprisingly, both locations immediately responded favorably to Mr. Morris' offer of the *Good News*.

Over the next few months, Mr. Morris contacted additional outlets. Today he services 12 free locations distributing over 4,000 copies per month. Two of these, C-Town Supermarket and Western Beef, each distribute over 1,000 copies per month.

A man of infectious enthusiasm and a hearty laugh, Mr. Morris spends several hours each week checking his displays and restocking them with back issues. He carefully monitors the number of magazines being taken to ensure they are not being discarded. As he restocks the displays people often come up to him asking for a copy. Sometimes they even engage him in conversation about the magazine's content.

Since having emigrated to the United States from Trinidad in 1967, Mr. Morris has lived in the New York City area. He and his wife, Cynthia, were baptized in 1971 and have been married for 40 years. They have five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. One of their two sons, Bryan, age 39, unexpectedly died of a heart attack on March 28 of this year.

I asked Mr. Morris what motivated him to find the outlets and place the displays. He said: "It is such a joy for me to see people taking the magazines because I know, finally, here is the truth of God getting into somebody's hands. And who knows—only God does—how far that simple act of them picking up a *Good News* will go."

Since he began his campaign in October, Mr. Morris has distributed over 12,000 copies of *The Good News*. His example shows what one person can do to affect the lives of others in a positive, meaningful way.

John LaBissoniere

Florida Member Gives Gift of Music

In Tampa, Florida, the Winter 1999 edition of the University Community Hospital's "Your SeniorCare Report," featured an article on Mr. Angelo Guida, the accomplished accordionist who plays during Sunday Dining for SeniorCare. Mr. Guida and his wife, Frances, are members in Tampa. The article says that Angelo has played for more than 2,000 hours during

the Sunday dinner in the last eight years. He has committed to memory more than 800 different songs!

At age 15, Angelo had his first accordion lesson, after first being introduced to music by his father playing the mandolin and guitar. The article reveals that Angelo played in the following shows throughout his music career: the 1939 World's Fair in the Florida Arts Exhibits, the 1940s World Fair accompanying a singer and playing solo, at many dances in England sponsored by the Red Cross during his time in



the Air Force, in Spanish restaurants, and in a quintet that played at a hotel.

The article also explains how Angelo's love of teaching moved him to open a music store to give students lessons on the instrument of their choice. He taught many accomplished accordionists like Ronald Sweetz and Ann Daniels. Angelo states in the article that he relates the music that he plays for pleasure at Sunday Dining to "going to a cafe in Vienna with live Italian and Spanish music from the 1930s to the 1980s." UN

Doug Knott

For years he loved being a Seattle cab driver. He liked the freedom of it, being strong and able-bodied. In retrospect, he loved not needing others to ferry him around. Now a quadriplegic, Doug Knott is the brother in the high-tech wheel chair. It is not hard to see why Samson is one of his favorite characters in the Bible, and Christopher Reeves (AKA Superman) his favorite modern-day superstar.

On July 31, 1984, Doug was the victim of a random shooting. One minute he was walking down the hall in his apartment building; the next, he's fighting for his life, a 0.22-caliber bullet lodged in the right side of his neck. He wouldn't awaken from the ensuing coma until some time that September. When he did, he was unable to think or talk—or even *breathe* on his own. And, like about 29 percent of the approximately 200,000 other Americans who live with spinal cord injury today (according to the National Spinal Cord Injury Statistical Center), Doug has no sensation below the neck. Doctors called his survival a miracle and credited quick-acting paramedics with saving his life.

But for Doug that was only the beginning. As with many who suffer severe trauma to the brain (TBI) and/or spinal cord, recovery would be a tedious process requiring extraordinary determination and hard work. The degree of loss experienced is indescribable. Learning to accept sudden and unfamiliar limitations is an incredible challenge for anyone.



Experts say such a person must "re-invent" him or herself, just to survive. This poem, "From the Inside Out," by church member and TBI survivor and advocate, Kate Vincent,

illustrates a little-known aspect of the traumatically injured's journey:

Brain injury is a thief—
stealing the old me
replacing that me
with a stranger
that I must
come to
love.

But Doug says he doesn't like to focus on his struggles. He's too busy doing what brings him peace and enjoyment like listening to the Bible, watching the Discovery and Biography cable TV channels, talking on the phone, enjoying his mail or a visitor, or talking with a primary care giver, one of whom must be within earshot at all times.

Doug learned that if he wanted to talk, he would have to go about it in a completely new way—and become this incredible juggler, pacing his words so that they slip neatly between ventilator compressions. This is no small feat and is why people need to give him plenty of time to get his words out. Asked if it hurts to talk, he just grins and says, "No, I just lose my breath a little."

The Bible discusses the need to control

our tongues, and of speaking in tongues, but Doug brings another dimension to the subject. By touching the tip of his tongue to a switch wired to his wheelchair, he can raise and lower himself to reduce the level of pressure on his head. He relishes doing anything he can for himself.

Doug's attachment to the RN's who are his primary caregivers is mutual. Dorie Currie, who has been with him around eight years, says he is a constant source of inspiration to her. When I asked Carlos Hughes (who has been with him about four-and-a-half years) what he would like to say about Doug, he said "patience. He's teaching everyone that—and principles of contentment—being able to be content with whatever your lot in life."

Doug describes the physical aspect of his post paralysis, post tracheotomy baptism by Dennis Luker in June of 1987 as "an ordeal...it was really complicated," but believes he received the Holy Spirit at that time. Although attending services and fellowshiping with brethren are highlights of his week, Doug has recently had to miss several services in a row. Carlos says Doug's health

(See "DOUG," page 14)

United Youth Camps...

First Philippine United Youth Camp is Held!

Fifty-four campers and staff successfully completed the first Philippine United Youth Camp based at the Girl Scouts of the Philippines training facilities in Toril, Davao City, Philippines, held April 18 to 25, 1999.

The youths were composed of 16 boys and 28 girls, out of which seven of them served as counselors and assistant counselors. Six full-time and four part-time staff members composed the administrative team. The UYC Camp Director was Edmond Macaraeg.

The campers learned, among other things, basic first aid, orienteering, map reading, outdoor cooking, basic electricity, basic carpentry (made a folding stool to take home), basics in computers (with hands-on), cooking and baking (all tasted of the chiffon cake they made), flower-card making (for them to take home also), and ball room dancing.

Evening activities included an orientation night, novelty Olympics, ball room dancing, and a variety show. Because of



keen interest in biblical and spiritual matters, and developments in the Church (as reflected by the flood of questions submitted by the campers), an unusual two consecutive evenings of open-forum sessions were held earlier in the week!

Another highlight of the camp was the boat trip across Davao Gulf into

Samal Island for a hike, map-making, ball games, outdoor cooking, swimming (on beautiful white sandy beaches), tours, and an overnight camp-out, all of which were blessed with good weather.

The latter part of the camp was graced by the visit of Aaron Dean who was on his

way to Bangkok, Thailand. He had an informal chat with the campers and staff starting with his arrival at Samal Island Thursday evening. He also conducted a lecture and forum on the Friday back in camp. During the Sabbath he gave a sermon in the morning and held a question-and-answer session in the afternoon. For the sake of some brethren who attended Sabbath services in camp (total attendance then was 101), his messages were simultaneously translated into Cebuano using "wireless" FM equipment. He also helped in the final award ceremonies.

Sadly, just when the campers were beginning to bond together, it was time to break camp. But the goal of conducting a United Youth Camp for the youths in the Philippines for the first time had been successful.

Campers and staff in the Philippines are very thankful to God and for the support of UCG through the home office. A two-week camp is being planned for next year. Under consideration also is a popular request to include a Mt. Apo climb (highest peak in the Philippines at 10,028 feet, not far from Davao City). The youths in the Church seem eager to please God and ready to face various challenges in life!

Edmond Macaraeg

Canada: 1999 United Youth Camp

Once again, United Church of God—Canada is sponsoring a summer camp for the Church youth between the ages of 12 to 18. The camp will run from Sunday, August 15, to Sunday, August 22, at the McGillvary Creek Youth Camp in Coleman, Alberta.

The tuition for the camp is \$95 for the first youth in a family, \$75 for the second, and \$55 for each additional youth from the same family. All interested in attending this

year should fill in the form at right and send it to:

Larry DeLong
Box 942
Coaldale, Alberta
T1M-1M8
CANADA
Phone: (403) 345-4051
Fax: (403) 345-4051
e-mail: Larry_DeLong@ucg.org

Note: Once this form is received, a comprehensive three-page application form will be sent out for both parent and youth to complete. The camp fee will be required at that time. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

United Church of God—Canada United Youth Camp 1999 Camper Application Form			
Camper Information			
Last name	First		
Age	Birth date (mm/dd/yy)	Grade	Sex
Mailing address			
City	Province	Postal Code	
Parent or guardian name			
Parent or guardian home phone number ()		Parent or guardian work phone number ()	

"FEAST," (Continued from page 10)
vices) to begin your tour of Washington D.C. Stops will include Arlington National Cemetery for the changing of the guard, Washington National Cathedral, Lincoln, Vietnam, and Korean memorials, and more! The price includes the guided tour and a sumptuous buffet at the famous Sgt. Pepper's (featuring roast beef and turkey) beginning at about 4:30 p.m. Offered September 27 and 28. You will be dropped off at the Eisenhower Inn at approximately 11 p.m.

Please fill in the form at right if you would like to take part in these tours!

Dave Myers

Gettysburg Tour

Place the number 1 through 4 to indicate which day you prefer:

<input type="checkbox"/> September 27	<input type="checkbox"/> September 28	<input type="checkbox"/> September 29	<input type="checkbox"/> September 30
_____ adult tickets at \$18 each	_____	\$ _____	
_____ children's (age 6–11) tickets at \$14 each	_____	\$ _____	
_____ free children's tickets (age 5 and under)	_____		
_____ total number of tickets	_____	Total: \$ _____	

Make checks payable to
United Church of God - Akron, and mail no later than
July 31, 1999 to:

United Church of God, Akron
P.O. Box 1920
Akron, OH 44309-1920

Washington D.C. Tour

Place the number 1 or 2 to indicate which day you prefer:

<input type="checkbox"/> September 27	<input type="checkbox"/> September 28	_____	
_____ adult tickets at \$35 each	_____	\$ _____	
_____ children's (age 12 and under) tickets at \$30 each	_____	\$ _____	
_____ total number of tickets	_____	Total: \$ _____	

Personal Growth...

Extending the Right Hand of Fellowship

by Judy Servidio

Who me? Yes, you.

This is the time of year we are to make changes in our life; to try to right wrongs and forgive one another. Our response is very important to God.

You might be thinking, "I'm a friendly person. I always shake hands with everyone in church." But do you always; with everyone?

Have you ever walked into church and avoided anyone? Think about this scenario. Someone like Suzie Gab or Lou Longwinded initiates a conversation. You secretly wish they hadn't. You quickly excuse yourself from the conversation.

Another example to consider occurs when you see someone with whom you've had misunderstandings or who has hurt you by their thoughtless words. Perhaps there is some long-standing memory of an embarrassing incident that has affected your comfort level with this particular person. Now is always an excellent time to face these negative feelings or anything that might separate us from God.

So, you have that base covered, but what about the other side of the equation?

You sense that someone never comes around you and seems to distance him/herself from you. The distance is real and may even detract from your joy at church services. What can we do?

Here are some simple ways in which we can extend the right hand of fellowship and restore a brother or sister.

- One approach would be to seek the person out. Make it your mission to find the person first and offer a smile and warmth that sets the stage for a positive encounter. This is a proactive move and may take a bit of courage.
- We can administer the healing art of prayer. How can you hold ill feelings toward anyone with whom you've invested so much prayer-time over?
- Take a personal interest in the offended or offensive brother. Be genuinely interested in finding common ground. Invite them for coffee after church or get a bite to eat with them. Barriers relax naturally in a less formal situation.
- Be willing to forgive. Maybe the person doesn't even know that you are still offended for the way he handled you in choir 20 years ago? Maybe she doesn't know you're still hurt when you felt demeaned by her supervision of a simple job you thought you knew how to perform. Whatever it is, let it go and extend the gift of forgiveness.

Can we go one step farther and apply this exercise to our neighbors? Yes, we can. It may even bear tangible "fruits." Let me share one example. We have a neighbor with the reputation of being a red-necked gruff. He is known as loud, coarse, and

open for business. He's always got extra cars in the driveway, usually in for repairs. You probably know the type. But my husband, Jim, has always been friendly to him, inspite of neighborhood prejudices and gossip. Because of Jim's friendliness he has

softened toward us. He has learned that we go to church on Saturday. He has also taught his children that there are people, like us, with different days of worship but whose differences are allowable. His children now know about our day of worship and a seed has been planted.

In my kitchen next to the stove is a calendar with daily quotes. This quote is one of my favorites. It expresses eloquently the desire to restore a brother and live in unity.

"Lord, make me a channel of thy peace,

"That where there is hatred I may bring love,

"That where there is wrong I may bring the spirit of forgiveness,

"That where there is discord I may bring harmony."

So go on. Jump right in and extend the right hand of fellowship and see what God will do. *u/n*



Cartoon taken from The Economics Press, Inc.,
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rough around the edges. He yells a lot. We know, because everyone hears him. His garage is set up like an auto workshop and

in both the Old and New Testaments. **Instructor:** Ralph Levy

- **The Book of Romans:** A comprehensive coverage of the major themes of the book including repentance, faith, justification, baptism, holy spirit, calling, law-grace and going on to perfection. **Instructor:** Donald Ward

Course Schedule

Monday-Friday

9 a.m.	The Law and the Covenants
10 a.m.	The Book of Malachi
11 a.m.	The Book of Romans
12 noon	<i>Lunch</i>
2 p.m.	Life Education
3 p.m.	Catholic Doctrine Compared to Holy Scripture
7 p.m.	Current Events and Prophecy
8:30 p.m.	Questions and Answers for the Day (All instructors)

Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Motel room(s) needed for how many nights: _____

Are you willing to share a room? _____

Date of arrival: _____

Need for financial assistance (please explain need and amount):

Please mail your completed form to Darris McNeely, 20 South Restin Rd., Greenwood, IN 46142-8498, with your \$50 payment, payable to "United Church of God (Summer Tuition)." Any questions can be directed to Mr. McNeely by e-mail at darrismac@att.net or by telephone at (317) 885-8548.

The Intrinsic Word of God

by Janna Thomas

For many months now God has used the intensity of trial, suffering, and circumstance to teach me some of the most profound lessons of my life. Many of these lessons were ones I thought I already knew. Other lessons I had no idea I needed to learn. I had forgotten God's statement in Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind" (or literally, the most secret parts.)

And, so He has done. He has searched my most secret parts, and found hidden things needful of light. He has orchestrated a complex sequence of lessons perfectly ordered and linked to create a wisdom far greater than the sum of its parts. It is an intrinsic* (a fundamental) knowledge that is difficult to relay and impossible to learn without the Holy Spirit. As Job 32:8 records: "There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the almighty gives him understanding."

God knew that there were things I only understood intellectually, academically, and by rote—doctrinally correct knowledge derived from reading, studying, sermons, and teachings. But, like the Israelites of old, I did not *know* these things. I needed God to fulfill His word, as written in Jeremiah 31:33 and Hebrews 8:10. He had already "put His laws into my mind," now I needed Him to "write them on my heart"—such a perfect illustration for the work God was, and is, performing in me. I have known these verses by heart, yet they were essentially meaningless to me until God carved them there, on my heart, just as He said He would.

Suppose you were to ask a man who has had his eyesight from birth to describe the color blue? He can't, at least not adequately, because the experience of color is an intrinsic awareness that defies words. But he *knows*. Now suppose this man was blind from birth. He has been taught that the sky is blue and He knows that the sky is blue. He will tell anyone who asks him that the sky is blue. Sadly, for him however, he will never have the concept of blue.

I *know* that we are saved by grace and not by works. Ephesians 2:8–9,

among other scriptures, is abundantly clear in this regard: "For by grace you have been saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, least anyone should boast."

Yet, as the trials increased in scope and intensity, I looked for solutions in my own behavior. "Dear God," I cried out, "What am I doing wrong? What do you want me to do differently?"—not that searching yourself for sin and changing accordingly is a bad thing, quite the contrary. In Lamentations 3:40 we are admonished to "search out and examine our ways, and turn back to the LORD." The problem was that I was unwittingly making His mercy dependent on my actions. In spite of the trials and pressures, as far as I could see, I was still obeying God to the best of my ability, striving, as I know we must, to fol-

low the example of Christ—failing woefully of course, but trying hard nonetheless. Yet, each day seemed to bring further disaster; new trials that separately could be managed, but collectively oppressed the spirit.

Several times a day I fell to my knees, asking Him to show me what I was doing wrong, what I was doing that was *so* bad, and, oh, He showed me. He showed me plenty, but not all at once, and not in a way that would allow me to see any cause and effect, because there appeared to be no direct correlation between my actions and the trials besieging me. That was a hard one for me to accept. Life taught me at an early age that it could spin crazily out of orbit at any given moment, that we are vulnerable to so much that is uncontrollable. Conversely, I inverted the lesson, I lived mine with a death grip on the reigns, constantly at attention least disaster strike, or creep in unawares.

I am a problem solver, convinced that always around the next corner is the solution I have yet to try—the one that will bring everything back under control, the action of my own that will make the difference. It seems that not to believe so is very terrifying. There are benefits to this approach. Your cup is always half full, your creativity is high, and you don't give up easily, if at all. But in this instance, and in this lesson, it was working to my detriment. To find myself so at the mercy of time and circumstance was causing me great psychological suffering. Again, I had read Ecclesiastes 9:11 many times. I knew that "the race is not to the swift, and the

battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise, nor wealth to the discerning, nor favor to men of ability, *but time and chance overtake them all*" (emphasis mine). But, until God wrote it on my heart, it was an abstract concept—as abstract to me as grace, not works.

Tearful promises of change and anguished acknowledgment of revealed sins seemed to avail me nothing. There was no ease from the trials. Every door was shut; locked even. DO NOT ENTER. NO ADMITTANCE. There were no discernible changes in circumstance, but changes were taking place: spiritual changes which were about to culminate into a life-altering awareness. I was being forced to internalize a very basic principle. Falling forward on my face, I surrendered to God in a way I had yet to do, even after years of baptism. I acknowledged to Him that I *knew* I was His to do with just as He desired, that I was His to chasten with or without cause, to bless or to curse, to save or destroy, solely on the basis of His good pleasure. I acknowledged that He owed me nothing, and even my existence was His to deem.

Immediately, God finished that day's work with a final stroke of His heavenly pen. Now I *knew*. I intrinsically knew that nothing I had ever done or ever would do could earn me the right to a backward glance from the Great Creator God—not my most righteous works or my best intentions.

I fully understood that it is by His *mercy*, by His incredible *goodness*, that I am sustained and will one day have eternal life. I am those "filthy rags" spoken of in Isaiah 64:6, and the good news is that according to James 2:13 "mercy triumphs over judgment."

God crosses his Ts and dots his Is. At least two years ago, or more, I had undertaken to read the book of Job. After reading it several times I explained to God that I just didn't "get it" and asked Him to grant me understanding. Then, I promptly forgot all about it, but God never forgets our smallest prayer. I do not by any means compare my righteousness to Job's, and certainly not his sufferings to mine, yet at that moment I "got it" in a major way, intrinsically. Since I cannot say it any better than Job himself, I will quote from his book in chapter 42 verse 5: "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes see You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Am I now relieved of the need or obligation to obey His commandments, strive for perfection, and walk as He would have me walk to the best of my ability? I say emphatically, "*no*." I obey Him as an outward sign of my love, obedience and commitment to Him, the Creator, because in doing so I live a richer, more rewarding life that honors and glorifies Him. But, with the intrinsic knowledge of mercy and grace, I have a new, deeper, communion with my God, and I can fail without despair, and I will fail again. His work in me is far from complete. Thankfully, I have the assurance of Philippians 1:6 "that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."

As surely as I am a work in progress, God is the master artisan. A skilled artisan will take his raw material and reshape it according to his design. He will use a variety of techniques to heat, stretch and mold it, applying pressure to the precise point in which it must either bond or break. God knows His raw material. A clever craftsman, He knows iron cannot be smelted as gold, nor will clay and cloth respond equally to equal treatment. What destroys one refines another. To some, my trials may have been only passing annoyances, mere bumps in the road. Someone else may have given up from the weight of them, surrendering the crown, forfeiting the race. But God was able to tailor them perfectly for me.

To some, my trials may have been only passing annoyances, mere bumps in the road. Someone else may have given up from the weight of them, surrendering the crown, forfeiting the race. But God was able to tailor them perfectly for me.

Has God relieved every trial plaguing me these many months? No, not all of them, although He has been merciful in

some. But, He has given me a precious gift, handwritten on my heart. It is the intrinsic word of God. *uv*

• *Janna and her husband, Ricky, live in Gainesville, Texas, along with their daughter Raichelle (22) and their youngest son, Ricky Allen (15). They attend the Sherman, Texas, congregation pastored by Frank McCrady. Their eldest son, Jason, lives with his wife, Janice, in Euless, Texas.*

***in•tri•nisi•c** Of or relating to the fundamental nature of a thing • inherent (*Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary*)

or

***in•tri•nisi•c 1 a:** belonging to the essential nature or constitution of a thing (*Merriam-Webster's Tenth Edition*).

Serious Fall at Feast Last Year Still Affects Jeananne Gibson

by Jean Jantzen

At the Feast of Tabernacles this past year in Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada, a woman fell down a flight of stairs and broke her neck after returning home the opening night. Who was she? Where does she live? How long has she been in the church? How is she doing now? How is her family coping? For us it is easier to pray for and communicate with someone if we become acquainted with them and their particular trial. Here is an update for you.

This woman, Jeananne Gibson, became an active member of the church of God in 1965. She brought to services with her two young sons, Bob, and Bill, and a daughter, Carolanne. They attended their first Feast in Jekyll Island, Georgia. Jeananne lived in Burlington, Vermont, but attended in Toronto, Ontario, where Gary Antion was pastor, and later attended the Kitchener, Ontario, congregation.

It was about this time that Jeananne started teaching special education to mentally challenged children, a volunteer job that turned into a paying position. She attended university full time during the Summer and then took night classes for a

couple of years to get credentialed. She continued teaching for 20 years, becoming a greatly loved teacher. Her husband had been semi-retired because of an earlier work-related injury and later-on developed severe asthma, so in 1988 she retired at age 55 to accompany her husband to a healthier climate, Victoria, British Columbia.

"Jeananne loved gardening, painting, and was a great letter-writer to church people world-wide" says her daughter, Carolanne, "and is an incredibly generous person. Even now, mom is concerned about her grandchildren and still pays them for good marks on their report card."

Last year they started out for the Feast early to spend a weekend in Manning Park, a mountainous area great for hiking. "Mom had dieted, lost weight in concern for her high blood pressure in the past year, and was able to hike with us that weekend. She shared our love of the outdoors."

After returning to accommodations in Kelowna after the opening service at the Feast, she was preparing for bed when her son-in-law, Jeff Patton, heard a bang. In this open-plan home the stairs leading

downstairs were next to the bedroom. Jeff checked the children and then found Jeananne at the bottom of the stairs not breathing, with only a faint pulse, and two broken wrists. Carolanne attempted mouth to mouth resuscitation while Jeff called an ambulance. Jeff continued resuscitation until help arrived ten minutes later. Taken to hospital, Jeananne was stabilized and her wrists looked after.

The doctors did not offer much hope

and did not expect her to live long. They had her airlifted the next morning to Vancouver where her husband, Bill, from Victoria, British Columbia, and son, Bob, from Calgary, Alberta, were waiting for her. She surprised the doctors however: her broken vertebrae healed in half the time expected.

But, because

the break was in the first and second vertebrae, she cannot breath on her own or move from the neck down. She has had to learn to swallow, and to speak with the rhythm of the ventilator machine which supplies air through a tracheotomy.

Her family had to wade through red tape to get her moved to Victoria, nearer to

her family. Her husband has been at her side from 8:30 in the morning until 6:30 every evening, feeding her, reading to her, helping her drink and encouraging her.

"At first," Carolanne says, "I was discouraged. How could God let this happen?" But Dad, who is not a church member, humbled me, by responding with, 'God can do what God wants to do.' He had a better basic understanding and I had to learn.

"Mom was such an active person, she was known as the sweater-maker. Mom prays, 'My hands are so important to me, please God give me back my hands.' One blessing everyone is thankful for is her mind, which is very aware. It makes it easier for the family. She is now able to talk for a couple of hours."

What really stands out is Jeananne's response to her son Bob, who is having a hard time adjusting and comprehending her situation. "Why would God do this, and how do you have faith in a God who has let you down?" he asked his mother, who replied, "You don't need faith until you find yourself in a situation like this. Why throw it out the window when you really need it?"

Jeananne, her husband, her children, and her grandchildren thank you for your prayers. Thankfully, she is now closer to her family and friends, but she remains paralyzed and is still on a respirator. If you would like to send her an e-mail, write to jpatton@coastnet.com. UN

You don't need faith until you find yourself in a situation like this. Why throw it out the window when you really need it?

She remains paralyzed and is still on a respirator.

Letters From Readers...

Waiting Room Program Makes a Difference!

"Dear Sir,

"About two months or so ago I was thinking about God's church—of what became of the Worldwide Church of God. I had lost touch since the 1980s when that church was rocked to its 'foundation.' For some reason, I can't explain it, I was reluctant to reach out for her. Then, one day, I chanced seeing your *Good News* magazine in the lobby of a local hospital. I have gone there every day now and then, in the hope of seeing another magazine or the person who placed it there.

"I was amazed by the content, and the love it expresses toward the world at large. I don't find a ridiculing attitude in the *Good News*, or in its other booklets that I now have.

"I don't normally ask for this, but your *Good News* is absolutely fabulous. I now have the May/June, the July/August, the September/October, and the November/December 1998 issues, and all the ones for this year. If you have some magazines left over and can spare them, I could benefit from them."

"Thank you."

Nevada

Truth Appreciated In Prison

"I'd like to thank you very, very much for your contribution to my spiritual development!! I pray that I am one day allowed the opportunity to support the United Church of God.

"I have only studied literature published by one other church that prints the undeniable truths that your Church does. That church was founded by Herbert W. Armstrong and it was the Worldwide Church of God. I do not know what happened to the Worldwide Church of God, but I thank the Creator for being introduced to the United Church of God.

"I share your literature with many. Your Church is a blessing and the truth you're disseminating is refreshing. Thank everyone of you for doing our Father's will.

"Keep your head to the sky."

Nevada

On the Internet

"It is so good to read through your Web site. I also receive your *Good News* magazine. Congratulations on an excellent service to God through His Son Jesus to mankind. I am blessed by your

ministry. May the Holy Spirit bless you with insight, knowledge and wisdom to continue this service until we are united with Him!"

Internet

"To the good people who sent me the magazine: thank you so much, your magazine truly depicts every aspect of the good news! Thank Him for this wonderful blessing!"

Internet

Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom

"Gentlemen, I have been searching for a place to tithe. I need to contribute to a church that announces well the kingdom of our Very God, and that keeps the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. I have found some churches that seem to be doing so on the Internet, and you are one of them to which I believe I should donate.

"Thanks for being there,

California

"DOUG," (Continued from page 9)

gets particularly fragile in winter, when it becomes a constant battle to keep him out of the hospital. He asks for prayers in this regard. Doug's response? "One good thing about being paralyzed is that you can't feel any pain when you get [e.g.] a urinary tract infection!"

Carlos says Doug loves receiving cards from brethren and puts them up on the wall. He says Doug can always use visitors—even in the morning if you call ahead, though he's not up in the wheelchair till around 3:30 in the afternoon. The best times to phone are between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and after 5 p.m. until 10:30. If anyone wants to bring a gift he most values a fruit basket or loaf of whole wheat bread. Doug's mother, Norma Knott, visits him regularly. Chore people come twice a week. Dedicated brethren provide rides for him to services. He is looking into the possibility of a voice-activated computer.

Once I asked Doug what he missed the most. "Not having to be dependent on other people for almost everything!" he said. Soon after, he asked if I'd scratch his nose.

Teresa Jo Briley

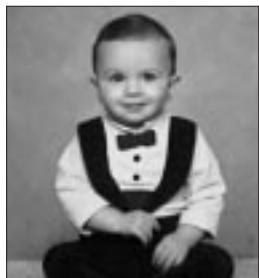
Editor's Note: The letters in this section may be edited for length and clarity.

Doug Knott, 10405 - SE 172nd, Apt. 10, Renton, WA 98055; (425) 226 0079

Announcements...

Births

Tom and Mary (Riner) Clark of Wichita, Kansas, would like to announce the birth of their third child, Daniel James Clark, born on March 10, 1998. Daniel weighed 7 pounds 8 ounces and was 19½ inches long.



Daniel James Clark

Grandparents are Tom and Bonny Riner of the Macon, Georgia, congregation and Ron and Sondra Selzer of the Des Moines, Iowa, congregation.



Jayde Linsey Cox

Joel and Jodi (Anderson) Cox of Phoenix, Arizona, are overjoyed to announce the arrival of their first child, Jayde Linsey, born December 27, 1998, at 8:10 a.m. Jayde weighed 7 pounds 0 ounces, and was 20 inches long. Her proud grandparents are Dan and Barbara Anderson of Phoenix, Arizona, and Robert and Ruth Cox of Wrenshall, Minnesota.

William and Brenda (Todd) Grinnell of La Crescenta, California, are happy to announce the birth of their twin boys, Jeremy Todd and Shawn William. They were born on June 22, 1998.

Jeremy weighed 6 pounds 10 ounces, and measured 19½ inches long. Shawn weighed 6 pounds, and measured 19 inches long.

Their proud grandparents are Jack and Beatrice Todd, of Wichita, Kansas, and Bob and Carole Grinnell, of Vinemont, Alabama.



Jessica Ryann Helwig

Michael and Karrie (McConnell) Helwig of Rockford, Illinois, are happy to announce the birth of their second child, Jessica Ryann, born March 30, 1999, weighing 8 pounds 13 ounces, and measuring 20½ inches long. They now have one boy and one girl. Jessica's grandparents are Charles and Janet Helwig of Rockford, and Richard and Shelly McConnell of Glencoe, Minnesota.



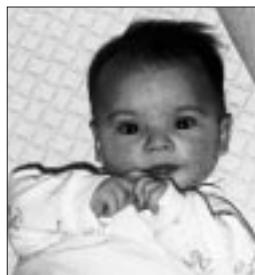
Khavren Charles Hoyer

Kurt and Jennifer Hoyer are pleased to announce the birth of their son, Khavren Charles Hoyer, born January 25, 1999. He weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces and was 21 inches long.

Floyd and Judy Cox of Lafayette, Indiana, and Gerald and Kathy Hoyer of Olympia, Washington, are exceptionally glad the ten-year wait for a grandchild is over.

Jared Nathan Kline arrived Monday, March 29, 1999, at 2:26 a.m. He weighed 7 pounds 4 ounces and was 20 inches long. Jared is the son of Al and Tina (Beans) Kline of Florence, Montana. Everyone is doing great! Now the Klines have one girl and two boys.

David and Christina McCarble, Jr., of Houston, Texas, are proud to announce the birth of their first child, David Charles, III, born on January 11, 1999, weighing 7 pounds 7 ounces. David Charles McCarble, III is a third-generation Houstonian first-born son.



David Charles
McCarble, III

Baby David is the seventh grandchild to David and Mary McCarble, Sr. and the first for John and Delia Mulvey of Houston.

James and Anne Marie (Fleck) Stotts of Trophy Club, Texas, are pleased to announce the birth of their first child, Brianna Rochelle, born June 17, 1998, at 5:34 p.m. Brianna weighed 7 pounds 10½ ounces and was 20 inches long.



Brianna Rochelle Stotts

Brianna's proud grandparents are James and Rose Stotts of Llano, Texas, and Richard and Carol Fleck of Trophy Club.

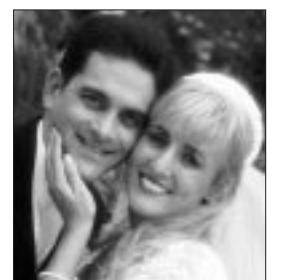
Engagement

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Johnsey of the Birmingham, Alabama, congregation are happy to announce the engagement of their daughter, Amy, to Charles Gilmer, son of Mr. and Mrs. David Gilmer of the Kingsport, Tennessee, congregation.

The wedding will take place on July 25, 1999.

Weddings

Nikola and Juliana Egedus of Cape Coral, Florida, and Stan and Susi Berkson of Queens Village, New York, are happy to announce the marriage of their children Juliana Egedus and Steven Berkson, on September 27, 1998, at the Don CeSar Beach Resort in St. Pete Beach, Florida. Mr. Arthur Suckling performed the ceremony.



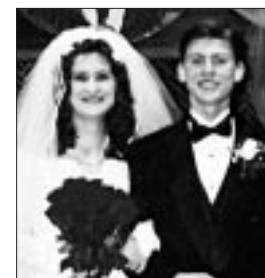
Steven and Juliana
Berkson

The Matron of Honor was Marija Cowan, with bridesmaids Ana Whidden, Leslie Galinat, and Ruth and Elizabeth Egedus. The best man was Alan Berkson, with groomsmen Mark Berkson, Rob Gunderson, and Nik Jr. and Moise Egedus.

The junior bridesmaids were Angela, Debra, Rachel and Victoria Egedus, with junior groomsmen Andrew and Timothy Egedus. The flower girl was Mia Cowan and the ring bearer was Jonathan Egedus.

The happily-ever-after couple reside in Tampa, Florida.

Paul and Bonnie Shemet and Kevin and Carol Dean are very pleased to announce the marriage of their children, Brent David Shemet and April Danielle Dean. The wedding took place on December 13, 1998, in Pasadena, California. Aaron Dean, uncle of the bride, performed the ceremony.



April and Brent Shemet

The maid of honor was Tania Dean and the bridesmaid was Michelle Shemet. The best man was Greg Stonick and the groomsman was John Bohannon. The couple reside in Pasadena.

Jon and Rhonda Howe of Oakland, California, and Lance and Misty VanSchuyver of Houston, Texas, happily announce the marriage of their parents,

What's New on the Web?

- Regular, weekly updates from the President and home office staff are posted in the "News" section on the *Life & Resources* page of our site. Check the News page weekly for updates on the work of United.

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

- Using RealMedia Player, listen to various sermons by United ministers.

<http://www.ucg.org/RealAud/Sermons.shtml>

- The fifth issue of *Virtual Christian Magazine* is now available. Read the May, 1999, issue of this on-line-only magazine.

<http://www.ucg.org/vcm>

- The May/June 1999 issue of the Spanish edition of the *Good News* magazine, *Las Buenas Noticias*, is now available in PDF (1.1mb) format.

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

- The *Festival Housing Brochure* is now available in PDF (748k) format and it includes site descriptions for each of United's Festival sites, housing information for U.S. and Canadian sites, and helpful articles and hints related to the Feast of Tabernacles.

<http://www.ucg.org/feast/fb99.pdf>

- The United Church of God Web site has a section managed by Council member Victor Kubik. The *UCGIA Life & Resources* page provides timely Church updates from various places around the world, as well as valuable resources for our teens and adults.

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

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

Joy Howe to Jim VanSchuyver. The wedding was conducted by Bill Bradford, pastor of the Oakland and San Jose, California, congregations on December 27, 1998.



Jim and Joy
VanSchuyver

The bride's sister, Doris Doss, of Birmingham, Alabama, was the matron of honor. The groom's brother, Jack VanSchuyver of Wanette, Oklahoma, was the best man. Jim and Joy live in Houston, Texas.

Anniversary

Angus and Hallie Benson of Erwin, North Carolina, celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary on April 6, 1999. The Bensons are members of the Raleigh, North Carolina, congregation and have been members of God's church since 1972, formerly attending in Fayetteville, North Carolina. They are blessed with two children, five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Obituaries

Laverne Gregory, 79, of Woodstock, Illinois, died January 16, 1999, following a massive heart attack of two days before.

He was born in October, 1919, on his grandfather's homesteaded farm in Capron, Illinois, and said he was a farmer from day one. He is survived by his two sons and a daughter, six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. His wife, Gladys, died January 14, 1993, after 53½ years of marriage.

Laverne first became a member of God's church in Chicago, Illinois, more than 30 years ago, and at the time of his death was an active member of the Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation. Mr. Steve Nutzman, the Beloit pastor, conducted the memorial service. He is greatly missed by his friends there, as well as family members and others in the midwest area.

Ethel M. Lott, 90, of Lebanon, Oregon, died Wednesday, April 7, 1999. She had been a faithful member of God's church since July 1960. A family

graveside service was held April 9, officiated by Mr. Randy Stiver.

Survivors include two daughters, Phyllis Johnson and Lois Baughman, two granddaughters, and two great-grandsons.

Fern Ogle, 81, died of a massive heart attack March 31, 1999, at St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. She was born March 5, 1918, in Shields, Kansas.

Fern's first husband died on September 2, 1991, after a long illness. She was baptized into God's church in December of 1994. Since November 20, 1994, she and Oran Ogle have been happily married.



Fern Ogle

She is survived by her husband, Oran; one daughter, Bonnie Griffin; one son, Max Good; plus three grandchildren, two step grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Her husband, Oran, has attended 44 Feasts and has been baptized since 1956. He expressed his joy in being married to her for almost five years. Fern will be remembered by the brethren for her sweet, kind manner to all.

Graveside services were held in Lawrence, Kansas, at the Oakhill Cemetery.

Sherman K. Sweesy, 83, of Hoquiam, Washington, died February 22, 1999, following gallstone surgery. He was born January 13, 1916, in Alexandria, South Dakota.

Mr. Sweesy served as a seaman aboard army supply ships during World

War II. He is survived by two sisters, Wilma Sweesy of Long Beach, California, and Harriet Smith of Rapid City, South Dakota. He was a member of the church of God since 1985.

Memorial services were conducted on Sunday, February 28, 1999, by John Cafourek, pastor of the Olympia, Washington, congregation.

Opal Christine Wright, 84, born April 22, 1914, in Green County, Kentucky, died peacefully April 8, 1999, in Bountiful, Utah.

She is survived by a brother, Kenneth W. Biggs; a sister, Ethel M. Roark; a brother, Stanley P. Biggs; a son, Harold B. Wright; a daughter, Judith C. Miller; and an extended family of 11 grandchildren, 39 great-grandchildren and 10 great-great-grandchildren.

Christine was a homemaker, and devoted wife and mother, who wrote poetry, did genealogy research and compilation, loved sewing, current events and family history, both written and oral.

She lived in Kentucky and Ohio for most of her life with extended sojourns in Florida, and finally in Bountiful. She was devoted to keeping in touch with family and friends throughout her life.

She was married for over 50 years to the late Albert C. Wright, also a native of Greensburg, Kentucky, and Green County, next to whom she was interred at Bethlehem Cemetery, Greensburg.

On Thursday, March 18, 1998, Heamasi Ta'ufu'ou from Tonga, was ordained as an elder of Jesus Christ. The ordination took place at the home office in Cincinnati, and it was our first ordination in the office. It should be very encouraging to the brethren in Tonga, and should be to all of us.

Mr. Ta'ufu'ou will join our other elder in Tonga, Tolu Ha'angana, in serving the brethren there. Please welcome Mr. Ta'ufu'ou to the eldership of the United Church of God!

Les McCullough

United News

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