

United News™

News of the UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association

United Church of God
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Task Forces Conduct Positive Meetings

Task forces of the Church of God, a Christian Fellowship, and the United Church of God, an International Association, met in Memphis, Tennessee, August 14 and 15 for talks they characterized as being very open, positive and laying a groundwork for future progress and goodwill.

The respective councils of the two church organizations initiated these meetings in May, as a positive step toward striving for "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). Foundational to this action was the recognition that both groups essentially shared common views on the following points: both recognize the other as brethren and members of the true Church of God; both want a closer relationship and interaction; both want to do the work that God has ordained for the Church; both

have common bonds through family, tradition and doctrinal understanding; both mutually respect the other as a result of the number of years spent working together as peers.

However, both groups also recognized the reality that other issues have impeded good relationships, and commissioned the task forces to candidly examine all of these areas. In preparation for these sessions, members and ministers from both organizations submitted a significant number of questions and concerns, as well as general encouragement for this process. Their input formed the basis for the discussions and, by being able to address them forthrightly, members of the task forces felt they took a giant forward step toward future cooperation and reconciliation.

Much of the first day's talks

addressed doctrinal and administrative issues. Prior to meeting, the groups had exchanged their statements on fundamental beliefs, as well as all the doctrinal questions and issues they would be asked. Each group was therefore able to provide answers—many in the form of booklets, articles and study papers—that could demonstrate its official teaching.

The task force discussions often went much further than the original inquiries, however, as each group freely asked follow-up questions. Much of the dialogue also centered around understanding why certain questions were raised, why perceptions are held about each group's views and why people have concerns about doctrinal integrity on various issues. Of particular value was the opportunity to hear explanations, or see in print the written positions, on all of these issues. The task forces mutually concluded that the official doctrinal positions of the two groups are essentially the same.

Also discussed at length were views of governance, administration (See "MEETINGS," page 2)



Les McCullough with international campers and ministers at Camp Carter; left, ACA representatives Sylvia Fisher and Ann Sheets

1,220 Campers and Staff Attend United Youth Camps in the U.S.

This summer 857 campers attended the seven United Youth Camps in the United States, served by 363 adult and college-age staff members.

This adds up to 1,220, or a 15 percent increase over the 1,060 that attended six camps last summer. Again this means that about 10 percent of those who attend Church in the United States were at camp this year.

Representatives from the American Camping Association

visited four camps—Oakhurst, Carter, McKenzie and Heritage—and rated them all highly. The collective scoresheet was submitted to the ACA and "we should be notified of the result by the middle of November," said David Treybig.

Reports on the Teton Challenger Camp, Camp Carter, Camp McKenzie, Camp Heritage and the Canadian camp are included in this issue, starting on page 6. The earlier camps were covered in the July and August issues. UN

Volunteers Producing 240 Sabbath School Teachers' Guides

"For nearly two years a group of over 30 Church members has volunteered its work in helping write Sabbath school lessons," Les McCullough said in his August 16 "President's Letter." "I know those teachers who use the material appreciate the effort very much. I want to add my thanks as well for all their hard work."

These teacher's guides are based on a curriculum approved by the Education Committee of the Council of Elders. They are written for six grade levels, from kinder-

garten through fifth grade, with 40 lessons on each level. The project has been coordinated by Jim and Judy Servidio, assisted by four other ministers as grade level chairmen: Steve Myers, Herb Teitgen, Gary Smith and Greg Sargent.

"This material is being made available so that each teacher has a class outline and family activity sheet already prepared for him or her," said Mr. Servidio. "We feel they can be of tremendous help in saving time and providing fresh ideas to illustrate the truth of God to our children.... Of course, use of the program is entirely optional."

The Sabbath school curriculum can be downloaded from www.ucgyouth.org/resources/sabbathschool/index.htm. Instructors should contact their pastor for details on downloading the actual lessons.

"We would prefer to have this first year serve as a 'shakedown cruise' so that additions, corrections and improvements can be made prior to being fully accessible on the Internet," Mr. Servidio said in a message to pastors and Sabbath school instructors. UN

The Good News Tops 300,000 for First Time

"We passed another major milestone with the September/October issue of *The Good News*," said Scott Ashley, managing editor of the *GN*. "Our print run for that issue topped 300,000 for the first time, with a total requested quantity of 302,751. For the 2000-2001 fiscal year we plan to average a print run of 325,000, so we're well on our way toward that goal."

This print run is up more than 18,000 over last issue and almost 89,000 higher than a year ago. This represents a 6 percent increase over the last issue and 41 percent over last year. These increases have come in spite of the fact that, over the last two issues, some 20,000 subscribers chose not to renew.

New subscribers have come from a variety of promotions. At the end of August, 22,834 responses had come in from the June *Reader's Digest* ad. The direct mail packages

sent out in July have received 8,344 responses, a 3 percent response rate. Approximately a thousand new subscribers come in from cards in waiting room copies of the magazine. And the relaunched brochure display program using member participation attracted 585 new subscribers in August.

"Good Neighbor" Displays

Last summer the Church contracted with Snyder Communications Corporation to distribute 50,000 *Good News* subscription brochures on 500 of their "Good Neighbor" displays located at the high-traffic entrances of major supermarkets and discount stores. "During that test we received a 2.17 percent response with a very good \$6.43 cost per subscription," said John LaBissoniere, who is coordinating the program. "Because of the test's success, we decided to expand

distribution this year." This has already begun, and in three months close to a quarter-million brochures will be distributed in over 2,000 stores in 68 U.S. media markets.

Testing Radio

Over the first four weeks, calls from listeners to the new *Good News* radio program totaled 96. Although the numbers haven't been high, the callers have been enthusiastic about the program, which has been exciting for the volunteers answering the calls, said Laura Peabody, who supervises the volunteers.

"It does take a little time to build up a radio audience (especially early on a Sunday morning) and our listeners need to feel comfortable about calling in," said Peter Eddington, Media and Communications operation manager. "We'd appreciate your prayers for the success of this new broadcast effort." UN

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Spiritual Balance—A Lifelong Quest

“...the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it” (Matthew 7:14, NAS).

by Robert Dick

In the Sermon on the Mount, containing Christ's foundational instruction to His disciples, He warned that the road traveled by true Christians is both narrow and difficult and few in this lifetime travel it successfully.

As an observer of the human parade, I am fascinated by how easy it is to land in the ditch on either side of the road to eternal life—how difficult it is to achieve true spiritual balance.

This year I was privileged to work as a part of the newspaper staff at Camp McKenzie, one of our summer youth camps, where I was impressed by one young lady's understanding of this spiritual principle. Among the articles submitted by the campers for the camp newspaper, *The McKenzie Good Times*, was a short yet insightful article on spiritual balance by Teresa VanAusdelle. The journalism is youthful, but the spiritual insight is quite mature.

To Be “in The World” and Not “of the World”

What does it mean to be “in the world” and not “of the world”? Well, it means that even if you are around the world all of your life, you shouldn't do all the things that they do.

An example of that would be a fish that lives in an ocean or a sea. It lives in salt water all of its life and yet when you catch the fish you still have to add salt. In other words, just because it lives in the saltwater doesn't mean that it needs to absorb it. That is what we need to do—not absorb the world around us just like the fish.

Quite a challenge isn't it? Christ intended that His disciples go into the world yet not absorb it. This requires delicate spiritual balance.

How have generations of religious people handled this matter? Throughout time the fearful, timid or, in stark contrast, the aloof and arrogantly superior have cloistered themselves

away from society so as not to be contaminated. The Essenes of Christ's day, the monasteries, cloisters and abbeys of Europe and Asia, even the isolationist sects that sprang up in 18th and 19th century North America—all sought to find and preserve spirituality through isolation.

One of the timeless observations in the Word of God about isolation is found in Paul's advice to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 5:9-10). Paul acknowledged that if they were to totally isolate themselves from fornicators, covetous, extortioners and idolaters, they would have to leave the planet. Centuries have passed, but this comment is as true today as it was two thousand years ago. Go to work on Monday morning and stand elbow to elbow with all the categories Paul described and more—nothing has changed except it is probably worse. Yet that's where God wants you to be—in it, but not of it.

Look at Matthew 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” The truism is ageless. What light can be shed in a monastery, a Shaker village or for that matter a Church of God home safely insulated from outside exposure?

None. The light is safe and secure under its bushel basket.

It's dangerous to be a light. It is not a job for the spiritually weak or insecure.

God from ancient times has preserved the names and the recorded trials of those who stood in the midst of this world and shed light brightly—Joseph, Esther, Daniel and Nehemiah, just to name a few. And God was glorified by the light they cast in a darkened world.

There is a not-so-obvious benefit that comes from letting light shine. That is validation—validation of the worth of what is taught; validation of how it is practiced. God's way *does* work, but people have to see it in order to appreciate it and thereby glorify God for it.

Remember the words of Matthew 5:16, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your

distrust, suspicion or reservations. The task forces agreed that overcoming these relationship problems presents the greatest stumbling block to harmony, but that “striving for the unity of the faith” means that Christians must work hard to overcome such challenges. Realistic, practical solutions to healing will require the humility and courage to lovingly and openly communicate, listen, understand, repent and forgive. The consensus was that true unity can and will be attained through the process of spiritual healing and maturing.

The next step the task forces take will

Father in heaven.” The formula is simple—before men—they may see—glorify God.

I had an opportunity to speak at length with Larry Greider, United Youth Camp Coordinator, when he made a visit to Camp McKenzie as a part of our request for ACA accreditation. What I found interesting were the comments he passed along of those who visited our camps on behalf of the ACA. They were deeply impressed by the amount of effort put out to make possible a one-week camping experience for our youth. They likened our staff's arrival and set-up to a World War II beachhead landing. They were impressed with how many would volunteer their time to work as unpaid staff and how much effort we would expend to make it all possible. The ACA representatives also wanted a copy of our camp manuals—not in this case to examine for accreditation, but because they were impressed by the thoroughness of our preparation. Our interacting with the ACA allowed a light to shine in a new area.

Prior to speaking with Mr. Greider, a couple of us sat in the dining hall with Darryl Imhoff, former NBA player with the Los Angeles Lakers, and now the overseer of the facility at Camp McKenzie. We all knew that we were not their normal client, nor have they treated us as normal. We have been granted privileges at the facility that are offered to no other organization. Why? Mr. Imhoff made one comment that told the story. He said, “You are the one group that, when you leave our camp, it is cleaner than when you arrived.”

Where is the line between interfacing with the world as an opportunity to spread light, and becoming just another part of the world and its ways? The line is sometimes faint—the road, as Christ said, is “narrow,” difficult.

Keeping ourselves undefiled from the world yet being a light that glorifies God can be quite a spiritual balancing act. Our mandate though is clear. We are to go out to the world yet remain separate from its ways and actions.

Remember the very fitting lesson from the young writer at Camp McKenzie. Like the saltwater fish, we may live a lifetime in our surroundings, but we don't have to absorb it. That's spiritual balance. *UN*

be to bring detailed reports of this meeting to their respective councils and recommendations for the future. Such recommendations include continuing the dialogue begun in Memphis and specific ideas for furthering reconciliation among brethren.

The six members of the task forces—Norbert Link, George Meeker and Warren Zehrung for CGCF; Roy Holladay, Clyde Kilough and Dennis Luker for UCG—emphasized they enjoyed a comfortable, warm, respectful and harmonious working relationship and look forward to continuing the efforts toward peace and unity. *UN*

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“MEETINGS,” (Continued from page 1)

tive systems, the origins of each group's organization and subsequent events that took place, and common perceptions held by members and ministers about the other church. Again, they found similar ground in governance and administration, better understanding of why and how the two groups began, and whether many of the concepts people hold are real or perceived.

Clearly emerging from the talks was the fact that many of the barriers that exist stem from past hurts and personal offenses, consequently resulting in various levels of

International News...

British Isles' Circulation Tops 2,000; New Promotions Begin

by John A. Jewell

July was a good month for the work in the British Isles with the *Good News* circulation now going over 2,000. This is five times what it was just two years ago.

The increase has been aided by approximately 350 responses to the *Sunday Telegraph* ad July 16. This color ad appeared on the front page of this well-respected national newspaper with 1.6 million circulation. We regard this level of response as being successful, since Europeans, including the British, do not easily respond to ads which come across as religious or that have been placed by a church. We therefore have to be very careful how we approach advertising.

It may not be generally realized but the British newspapers, both daily and Sunday editions, are available on newsstands in virtually every town and city in Europe and Scandinavia. They can even be purchased in hotel shops and at airports. So we were not surprised when we received some responses from France, Norway, Russia and even India.

We hope to have another ad in either the *Sunday* or the *Daily Telegraph* early in the new year.

More responses continue to come in from the ads in the Swedish *Reader's Digest* and also the British one placed last November. A second ad has been contracted for the November edition of the Swedish *Reader's Digest*. Many people in Scandinavia read English. Sweden, the largest of the Scandinavian nations, is probably the best place for us to advertise. If we should produce any publications in Swedish, and we hope that we will, we would have the advantage that Swedish is easily understood throughout Scandinavia, whereas the other languages (Danish, Norwegian and Finnish) are not easily understood outside their borders.

We are still receiving replies to our semiannual letter and the total is getting close to 300 now. This gives us a response of over 17 percent. The income is climbing and we are getting more and more questions and requests for booklets. The *Bible Study Course*, which we operate as a correspondence course, is getting up towards 400 in membership and is becoming an important factor in our efforts to build a dialogue with the general mailing list.

Testing New Promotions

Planned to start on September 1 and running for an initial trial three months is the use of big rotary display units in two motorway (freeway) service areas. One

of these is near Edinburgh and the other near Birmingham in the midlands of England. Each display unit has four sides with 16 slots on each side in which are placed brochures for the general public to take. These units are placed in the main concourse of the service area. We are using a total of four slots in each of the two display units. On average, we are told by Granada (the company which owns these two service areas plus a further 54 areas), about 250 brochures are taken per slot per week.

We are supplying Granada with 10,000 brochures offering *The Good News* for our slots. We then pay a flat rate per month per slot. They will do all the maintenance, topping up the slots, tidying up and generally making sure everything runs properly. We are using reply-paid tear-off cards on the brochures. We have no idea what the response will be—it will be interesting finding out. Motorway service areas, in addition to selling petrol, have restaurants, children's play areas, toilets, shops, etc., and all centered on a central concourse. A tremendous number of people go through these areas every day. They are open 24 hours a day and every day of the year.

Also starting in September and running till the end of December is an ad for *The Good News* in a booklet distributed to millions of homes throughout the country. It's a booklet which carries ads with free offers. The *GN* ad fits nicely into this. We have contracted to be in 1 million copies initially. We don't pay for the ads—we only pay for the responses. No responses? No pay!

If this gives a good response, we can look at doing this again with a greater distribution. The company also covers Europe and Scandinavia, so we could think of Sweden some time next year.

Office Coming Together

Our office facilities in Lancashire, about 30 miles north of Manchester, are coming together with a lot of hard work and help from the membership in the area. These offices are in a building converted from cottages that the staff of cotton mills in the immediate area used to live in.

In the offices we have our general mailing area with the usual equipment, postage meters, scales, photocopy machine, dedicated fax machine, etc. We also keep stocks of booklets and *The Good*

News with all the back copies. The *Bible Study Course* is administered from here. Also maintained are office copies of various magazines and literature going back many years as part of a small resource center, together with the main church files and records. In this building we also store youth camp equipment and those items donated by members for sale at car boot sales. This year from several car boot sales we made over 200 British pounds (about \$300) towards the summer camp.

We are planning to use one of the rooms for specific media use. The office also is the registered office for the United Church of God—British Isles and also the registered office for our corporate body, World Tomorrow Media. The accounts department is run by Barbara Fenney from her home in Cheshire and the main database and circulation by Jan Schroeder from her home just outside London.

It is amazing how complicated things have now become in this world and what an infrastructure is needed to do the work. But the gospel must be preached to the world in whatever way we can find that is acceptable to the Eternal God whose work we have been called to do. *UN*

Canadian Office Feels the Effects of Growth

With the July/August issue of *The Good News*, the Canadian office had distributed more magazines this year than in all of 1999. And there are still two issues to be sent out!

Increased Mailings

The Toronto office is handling an increasing number of publication mailings. In mid August, 18 boxes of new literature "cluttered our already overcrowded reception area even more," said Anthony Wasilkoff, operation manager for Canada. "At the same time 72 containers of the waiting room editions of *The Good News* were being prepared for mailing. We find ourselves reaching the maximum capacity of our office space while we still have a year left on our current lease. This speaks to the significant growth of the work here in Canada in the last few years."

To reduce postage costs, lesson 7 of the *Bible Study Course*, the August issues of *United News* and *World News* and *Prophecy* and two new booklets were all mailed together. "It's a somewhat time-consuming and complex task since many people are on various lessons of the *Bible Study Course*, and others receive some of our literature while others receive all of

our literature," said Mr. Wasilkoff. "In the end, though, it still saves time and money over sending up to five separate mailings."

Office manager Ed van Pelt reported, "With over 15,000 names on file, keeping up with changes of address and keeping the mailing list current is becoming a full time job. Not a day goes by without updates to the master file."

Mr. van Pelt also reported on the search for a new hall for the Toronto congregation. "The rates are scheduled to go up about 350 percent starting in September," he said. "However, we have found a few possible locations that might be suitable for our needs, and they would cost no more (less in some cases) than what we are currently paying."

Statistics From First Half of the Year

From January 1 to June 30 of this year, Canadian membership increased by 2.3 percent, the number of donors declined by 2.4 percent and the number of subscribers increased by over 35 percent.

Sabbath attendance for the first six months was up 11.5 percent over last year and Holy Day attendance was up 3.3 percent compared to last year.

Regina Congregation Begins

Glen White, pastor of the Calgary, Alberta, congregation, and Larry DeLong, resident elder of the Lethbridge, Alberta, congregation, conducted the first United Church of God services in Regina, Saskatchewan, June 24 with 17 in attendance. "Plans are underway to establish a regular Sabbath service video group so the local brethren can experience the fellowship and messages weekly," said Mr. White. "We are scheduling a live speaker from the Calgary and Lethbridge congregations to be present on a monthly basis. As schedules can be adjusted locally, we hope to increase the frequency of scheduled speakers in Regina."

"The fellowship was warm, invigorating and lengthy," said Mr. White. "For those who could stay longer, we all gathered at the Teetaert residence after services. At 11:30 p.m. we finally said good-night to each other and went to bed. At least some of us went to bed; some still had two to three hours to travel before arriving home. The Spirit of God already had begun its work of binding us closer to one another." *UN*

This material was compiled from weekly reports from the Canadian office posted at www.ucg.org/a/news/canada.htm.

Youth Corps Volunteers Tour and Dig in Israel

by Joel Meeker

My family and I arrived in Amman, Jordan, June 30 to join the 11 Youth Corps volunteers and David Baker who oversaw the first phase of the Jordan/Israel project (see article below). They had just finished serving at a camp on the outskirts of Amman. We saw that they had done well in the very Spartan accommodations common to this area.

For the next week we toured the Holy Land before beginning work on the archaeological dig at Ashkelon. Friday we all visited the ruins of the Roman Decapolis city of Jerash north of Amman. It was one of the most important cities in the region during the time of Christ, and has been extensively excavated. We then followed the King's Highway south. This is the road sometimes followed by the children of Israel as they

She'an and Meggido, where we toured the excavated walls and gates. We also viewed the valley below Meggido, the famous Armageddon, where great armies will gather before the final battle at Jerusalem (Revelation 16:13-16).

Thursday we drove north to the "mount of Beatitudes," the traditional site where Jesus gave the sermon on the mount, and Capernaum, the center of Jesus' ministry. We saw the excavated fourth century synagogue possibly built on the foundation of a previous synagogue which Jesus may have known. We drove up mount Carmel to see the probable site where Elijah defied the prophets of Baal

and where God worked a great miracle (1 Kings 18:19-40).

Friday we drove through Haifa, Israel's most important port, before continuing on to Nazareth. From there we drove to Caesarea Maritima and viewed a copy of the stone found on the site, which bears an inscription confirming that Pontius Pilate ruled the region during the time of Christ's crucifixion.

first ever find of Philistine writing. This would be quite an exciting development, and we all looked very carefully for inscriptions of any kind on the pottery we found, without further success. Jamie Franks and Lily Miller each found a small stone figurine made to fit on a necklace, apparently the first of their kinds to be found.

At 1 p.m. the buses took us back to the hotel. Following lunch we had some free time, which many used to take a nap, until 4:30 when we met for an hour and a half of pottery washing. Most days at 6:15 p.m. there was a 45-minute lecture by some of the foremost experts in the field.

Since our excavation workweek ended Thursday afternoons, on Fridays we left Ashkelon at 8 a.m. for Jerusalem. On our first Friday trip to the Holy City, we drove through the valley of Elah, and read the account of David's battle against Goliath which occurred there. Our first stop in Jerusalem was the city of David, south of the Temple Mount. We toured the excavation site (many Ambassador College students had participated in the excavation work here in the

1980s). At Warren's shaft, Marjolaine and I were surprised by the photo exhibits on the walls showing the excavation of the shaft and the tunnel in the 1980s. We were surprised because we recognized many old classmates from Ambassador College!

From the pool of Siloam we drove to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust museum, then to Bethlehem.

Sabbath morning after a late breakfast we had a Bible study, during which I covered the Olivet prophecy of Jesus (Matthew 24), and other references to the Mount of Olives. Then we drove to the Israel Museum where we saw the Shrine of the Book where some of the Dead Sea scrolls are exhibited.

During our third and final weekend in Jerusalem, we visited the excavation sites in the Herodian quarter, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Western Wall to watch the Jewish traditions played out at the beginning of the Sabbath.

Saturday morning after a late breakfast we had a Bible study at the Youth Hostel during which I talked about lessons from the life

(See "DIG," page 13)



United Youth Corps volunteers on the Mount of Olives with the Temple Mount in the background. Above, Lily Miller with baboon statuette she found and Kim Mortier digging

moved north toward the Promised Land. We spent Sunday visiting Petra and Monday snorkeling in the Red Sea.

Tuesday morning we crossed into Israel at Eilat. A tour guide met and accompanied us up the Negev to our first stop of the day, Masada. Masada was a fortress palace built by Herod the Great and the last stronghold to hold out against the Romans during the revolt of A.D. 70. We continued up the shore of the Dead Sea to the Oasis of En Gedi, one of the places where David hid from Saul when the latter was trying to kill him (1 Samuel 24). Then it was on to Qumran to learn about the Essene community and the Dead Sea scrolls.

Wednesday, we first had a "float" in the Dead Sea. Then we drove to Jericho, Beit

Sabbath morning we had a Bible study at 7 a.m. on the biblical history and prophecies concerning Jerusalem. After the study we took our bus to the Temple Mount where we visited the Al Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock. From Jerusalem we drove to Ashkelon where we checked into the Dan Gardens Hotel, which was to be our home for the next three weeks.

Our archaeological work began Sunday morning at 5 a.m. Our group had representatives in three of the four excavation areas at Tel Ashkelon, but most of us were in Grid 38. There we excavated the period around the 10th century B.C., which is the period of David and Solomon. One week an inscription was found on a clay tablet which might be the

Caring for Disabled Children in Jordan

by David Baker

On June 14, 11 volunteers from the United Youth Corps embarked on a six-week journey to the Middle East. The volunteers spent 19 days in Jordan before going on to Israel. The volunteers paid their own expenses for an opportunity to represent the Church in Jordan and Israel.

While in Jordan the volunteers served at a summer camp sponsored by the YWMA Center for Special Education. (During the 1980s and early '90s the Church assisted the Center through the Ambassador Foundation.) The campers are students at the Center and are classified as mild to moderate in terms of their mental disabilities. Even though some of the campers were in their late teens, they had never spent a night away from home without their parents. The camp was divided into two sessions; older boys, June 21 to 25, and younger boys and older girls, June 26 to 29.

The group arrived in Amman, Jordan, on Thursday evening, June 15. They were met at the airport by a representative of the Royal Palace, who assisted them with entry formalities. Friday was spent touring. On the Sabbath the group discussed some of the scriptures relating to Mt. Nebo and Madaba and then visited these sites.

The camp activities included making melon and bag lamps, constructing paper hats, making candles, building and flying kites, making cards with rubber stamps, painting stones, making wire cars, gardening, decorating the camp with arts and crafts, a treasure hunt, water balloon toss,

visiting an amusement park and touring the historic town of Salt. The campfire activities included musical chairs, balloon stomp, races, singing and dancing.

The volunteers served with the Center's staff in all aspects of the camp—as activity coordinators, counselors, kitchen staff, etc.

On the Sabbath of June 24, the volunteers took a day off from camp and traveled to the Jordan valley. They saw Tell Deir Alla, Pella and the remains of the Decapolis city of Gadara. From this location the group enjoyed a beautiful view of the Golan Heights and the Sea of Galilee.

The first group of campers returned home Monday morning, June 26. Some of them said they didn't want to go home and were already dreaming of returning to the camp next year. Within minutes of the departure of the first group of campers the second group arrived.

Wednesday, June 28, the secretary to Princess Sarvath and the director of the Center toured the camp and spent some time with the volunteers. Both expressed their appreciation for the work of the volunteers and expressed their desire for the program to continue. They presented a small gift to each of the volunteers as a token of their appreciation for a job well done.

On Wednesday evening the group was presented with a beautiful cake at a party concluding the camp. The following morning the campers loaded the buses and returned home and the volunteers enjoyed some much-needed rest before touring and digging in Israel (see article above). UN

United Pastors, Family and Volunteers Serve in Ghana

by Joel Meeker

As part of our ongoing efforts to assist the Remnant Church of God in their desire to become a part of United, a special project was organized during June in Ghana. We rented a house in Kumasi, the most central place from which we could visit their different congregations and also have the 13 Remnant pastors meet with us for a seminar. Renting the house was less expensive than having everyone stay in hotels. Since I would spend nearly five weeks in Ghana, I was very happy to receive permission for my wife, Marjolaine, and our daughters to accompany



David Jackson and Arnold Hampton carrying rainwater up to their bathroom during a water outage in Kumasi, Ghana

me. It was their first visit to sub-Saharan Africa.

On the ground floor of the house in Kumasi there is a living/dining room that we used for the seminars. There is also a bedroom we used as a classroom and office, as well as the bedroom for our gardener/security man. On the second floor there are four bedrooms, three with their own bathroom.

The first week in the house we discovered that there are power outages (locally called "light outs") there almost every day, sometimes several times a day. Water was also far from constantly available.

The first Sabbath we traveled an hour north of Kumasi where I spoke to two different congregations in the town of Ofinso. I spoke on the New Testament meaning of Pentecost, while Pastor Coffie translated into Twi. The message was warmly received by the members and pastors. The Remnant pastors understand the need to observe the Holy Days and their meaning, and welcome our help in explaining these exciting truths. One local elder had been concerned that keeping the "Old Testament" feasts would mean returning to animal sacrifices. Following the sermon he was both relieved and excited.

On Thursday, June 8, Doug Horchak arrived in Accra with Daniel Mingle and Nathan Albright, our Youth Corps volunteers who had paid their way there to help teach basic computer skills to the Remnant pastors, and young people. (See the article on their visit in the July *United News*, page 8.) June

15 Arnold Hampton arrived with his son-in-law, David Jackson, traveling at his own expense. Mike Blackwell came June 22.

On Sabbaths and Pentecost my family and the other visiting ministers spoke to Remnant Church of God congregations all over the country. These included Tamale, Kuntanase, Obuasi, Makongo, Awisa-Oda, Accra, Elmina, Agona and Kumasi. Some of the trips were quite difficult and memorable.

June 12 the Remnant pastors and their wives arrived for the four-day seminar. Many

subjects were covered. Mr. Horchak made a presentation on what the United Church of God expects of its pastors. Wednesday Mr. Horchak and I covered the organization of services in United. We went through the scriptures on which we base our standard format. We then showed a 15-minute video of the parts of our services from the opening hymns to the closing prayer. The pastors were very impressed by our services. Thursday morning, Marjolaine and I made a presentation on the role of the pastor's wife. This was

very exciting to the wives and pastors both.

We had some final meetings June 25 with the Remnant Church Executive Board, during which we planned for future visits and discussed where we should go from there in our progress toward unity.

In spite of some physical difficulties that had to be overcome this summer, we were all encouraged by how much we were able to accomplish and how much progress we felt we made in the direction of unity among brethren in the Body of Christ. *UN*

A Woman's Observations on Africa

by Marjolaine Meeker

My husband has been going to Africa for about four years, but this was the first time I was able to go with him to visit some of God's people in this very sobering part of the world. I was curious about what life would be like for the people there and especially the women. I had seen many pictures, heard and read many stories, but nothing had the same impact on me as actually spending a month in Ghana with my husband, and my daughters, Fiona and Tatiana.

Running water, gas and electricity are available in larger cities in Ghana (although not necessarily in a reliable way), but outside, life remains less developed. It is common for women in villages to start their day around 4:30 a.m. They may walk a mile or more to fetch the water needed for their families. The women, and sometimes children, carry the water in big containers balanced on their heads. Adding to their loads, many mothers also carry their babies on their backs. The wood for cooking also needs to be gathered and, again, women are responsible for carrying these heavy loads while still carrying their babies on their backs.

Since both parents need to work to afford a bare minimum of essentials, the women then usually go to work outside their homes, selling whatever people will buy: small plastic bags filled with water, peanuts, cassava, plantain.... At the end of a long day of work, women return to their homes to fix something to eat for the family. Many are either too busy or don't know how to use the little time available to teach or play with their children. If the family has many children and not enough money (which is usually the case) the rule is to send the boys to school while the girls work with their mothers. When Fiona and Tatiana heard this, they were very sad for these girls. It was clear to me that women and men are not valued equally by society here, although God's people are trying to change that pattern.

The ladies that I met in the Remnant Church of God were hard-working, helpful and very kind. Two of them, Mrs. Frank Arthur and a woman named Hannah, came regularly to help us. Even when the electricity

went off while we were cooking, these ladies always found a solution.

Laundry had to be done by hand. I had washed clothes that way in the past, but never a whole family load and never on a regular basis. There again, Mrs. Arthur and Hannah were of great help. They do their washing this way all the time.

In Kumasi, the house we rented had electricity and running water (except during outages). At one point, we spent six consecu-



tive days without running water. Thankfully this was during the rainy season so we managed to gather rainwater in large plastic garbage cans and use it very sparingly for cooking, washing dishes and laundry, for sponge-baths and for flushing the toilets. I don't recall praying for clean water before, but I certainly did then, and I couldn't but think that some of our brethren spend their entire lives in such circumstances!

After seeing how busy and difficult their lives were during the week, I was not surprised to notice how the ladies thoroughly enjoyed God's day of rest! Even though many mothers must still care for their numerous children, they clearly rejoiced on the Sabbath. It was obviously a blessing not taken for granted by these women.

The brethren I met this summer live in very difficult circumstances. Yet they serve God wholeheartedly, and with a teachable attitude. They are grateful to God for His way of life, a very precious treasure for which all of God's people can be thankful. *UN*

Ghana Through Children's Eyes

Fiona Meeker, 9, remembers Ghana this way: "What I'll remember is how the people shared what they had, even if it was very little. Their clothes were different, and sometimes they didn't wear lots of clothes. If a family has too many children, the girls don't get to go to school because it costs money. I don't think that's fair. We made some very nice friends near our house; we liked to jump rope with them. I really liked the palava sauce people eat on plantain [a kind of banana, cooked and eaten like potatoes]. The fresh fruit and coconut was delicious.

"I was surprised that people I didn't know would just come up and touch my hair because it's blonde. I'll also remember people staring at us through the windows of the car because they don't see white children very much. It was exciting to walk on the rope bridge high up in the air at the Kakum National Park. Kakum Park was like the kind of jungle you see in make-believe stories."

Tatiana Meeker, 7, said: "What I'll remember the most about our time in Africa was not always having running water, and taking a bath in rain water. Sometimes things

were pretty dirty. We made some friends in Kumasi. They were nice, and we got to visit their house. I liked the canopy walk at the Kakum National Park. You had to make sure you stayed on the rope bridge, because you were pretty high up. We saw pretty butterflies and listened to the birds singing.



"One time I was surprised to see them put lots of cows on the car ferryboat we took across Lake Volta. If a cow wouldn't move, a man would twist and bite the cow's tail. Then the cow jumped. It was kind of funny, but I felt sorry for the cow." *UN*

United Youth Camps...

Teton Challenger Camp

"Time flies when you're having fun."

The Teton Challenger Camp spanned 10 days (July 19 to 28), but once camp got underway, the days just went by too quickly. Every facet of camp this year went very well. God gets the credit and thanks for blessing us with so many favorable conditions and for allowing us to enjoy such a positive experience. "It's like a little preview of the Millennium," one camper wrote. Campers came with a desire to be taught more about God's plan and way of life, in a peaceful and uplifting camp environment. Staff members worked together in unity as brothers and sisters.

The view of the Teton moun-



tains was a beautiful sight every day. But on the day camp ended, smoke from distant forest fires rolled in and the air became hazy. Forest fires were burning during camp in Montana, Wyoming and Idaho. Extremely dry conditions contributed to these fires, and there was even initial concern about fire danger during camp. But much-needed rain came just before camp started, and then again on two afternoons or evenings. These rains kept the fire danger (and dust) down, but didn't hinder camp activities.

This was the fifth year for the Teton Challenger Camp. This year's contingent of 58 campers were all high school age or graduates. They came from Canada, Mexico, Germany, France, South Africa and the United States. Additionally, 42 staff members and several younger children of staff members filled up our "base camp" in the Colter Bay campground with about 110 people.

Days were usually warm, but evenings and mornings were cool enough that a fire burning in the fire ring was popular every morning and evening. The campfire seemed to draw everyone like a magnet. We ate breakfast and dinner around the fire ring, and it was also there that the most important program activity of camp took place. This was the morning "Compass Check," which got

our minds pointed in the right direction for the day, and the evening Christian Living discussion period. As one camper said at the conclusion of camp, "I have a greater longing to study God's Word and enjoy doing it." Said another, "I'm becoming more confident and God's way is becoming more clear."

Daytime program activities included canoeing on the Snake River, rock climbing, hiking, backpacking and white-water rafting. This year a good deal of wildlife was spotted

within the first days of camp—bear, moose, elk, deer, osprey, bald eagles and coyotes. Most campers were able to see most of these. There were three teams



of campers (Red, Blue and Green), and each team spent the entire day at its scheduled activity.

After returning to base camp in the evening, we often hiked to our secluded "beachfront" of Jackson Lake to bathe (quickly...as it is fed by melting snow). At the dinner bell, supper was served up by our own food staff (as were all meals), which worked out of a truck, cooking on propane stoves under canopies and producing the best camp cooking you will find anywhere. Each day ended with personal items being placed into bear-proof storage to discourage bears from smelling odors that would lead them into tents. Campers and staff then zipped themselves into sleeping bags in their respective tents, to prepare for another eventful day beginning at 6 a.m.

Paul Luecke

Camp Carter

Beginning on Saturday night, July 22, 39 staff members from six states and two other countries moved into Camp Carter in northwest Fort Worth, Texas, to begin preparing the facility for the arrival of campers. They were anticipating a week of service to campers in "the zone," a term we use for the millennial atmosphere we strive to create at all United Youth Camps. On Sunday the campers arrived and began to enjoy the healthy atmosphere and exciting activities.

Camp director Ken Treybig said, "We were thrilled to have 112 campers for this first year of camp in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and especially pleased to have such a large international flavor with 16 campers coming from outside the United States." Four staff members also came from the international areas, which was a great help to those campers who speak Spanish. Mario Seiglie, pastor and Council member, came from Chile with his wife Caty, who taught crafts for the girls. Larry Roybal came from Monterrey, Mexico, and Daniel Granados came from Mexico City to travel with and help the campers from Mexico.

Camp Carter is a YMCA facility that has been in operation since 1948. It has 320 wooded acres, a 10-acre private lake and miles of hiking trails. The facility is undergoing an impressive capital improvement process to add a new retreat center with accompanying dorms. The existing facilities are also being renovated. Half the dorms are already remodeled and the other dorms and the dining hall should be done before next summer.

Activities ranged from standard activities, such as basketball, canoeing, crafts, dance, football, softball, swimming and volleyball, to more unique events. Many of the boys especially liked skeet shooting. The extensive ropes course took a whole day to complete and was a favorite activity for a large number of campers.



Also offered was horseback riding—a first for a United Youth Camp—and strength training taught by a member who is a high school coach in the Dallas area. Campers also enjoyed games and fellowship during open activities as well as each night before dismissal from the dining hall.

Christian Living classes were held after breakfast each morning to make sure we began each day with a spiritual orientation. The classes this year focused on spiritual values such as peacemaking, self-control, good stewardship and sexual morality. Many campers listed the Christian Living classes as the most helpful part of camp. One camper said, "Camp has changed the way I think." Another wrote, "It has helped me realize the importance of respect, friendship and God's way."

Camp Carter was one of four United Youth Camps to receive a visit from the American Camping Association (ACA) this year and the visitors were very impressed with our staff. They were amazed by the level of dedication and team effort exerted by an all-volunteer staff from such a wide geographic area.

Head counselor David Treybig commented, "We had a wonderful counseling staff this year—one of the strongest I've seen." The campers were also great, as indi-



cated by comments from counselors. One said, "I was very proud of the level of spiritual and emotional commitment that my girls demonstrated throughout the week. They were a beautiful group and I couldn't have

been happier with the results.” Another remarked, “*Really* enjoyed this experience. Most rewarding thing I’ve ever done.”

On Saturday night we had our final dance and handed out proficiency awards to a number of campers who had earned them in basketball, softball and the mile swim. Parting on Sunday was a sad occasion, with many campers saying they wanted camp to last longer.

At the conclusion of the week, campers were offered a CD with hundreds of digital photos for a nominal fee to be mailed to them after camp. Many photos are also on display at the Camp Carter Web site. The URL is www.treybig.org/Carter2000.

“The YMCA staff have all been extremely complimentary of our people and our program,” said Ken Treybig. “They are impressed with our campers and our staff and want to have us back—and we want to return. Next year we would like to add some additional waterfront activities such as water skiing, tubing and a pontoon boat on nearby Lake Worth. But that will depend on the availability of qualified staff and equipment.”

Many campers indicated they gained confidence and made some new friends. This camper comment seems to sum up the success of our first year at Camp Carter: “I think this was the most wonderful thing that I have ever done in the four years of being in the United Church of God. Also the staff and counselors were wonderful!”

Ken Treybig

Camp McKenzie

From July 30 to August 6, 122 campers and 61 staff attended Camp McKenzie in

western Oregon. For the third year, camp took place at the U.S. Basketball Academy along the McKenzie River in the beautiful Cascade Mountains. Right from the beginning, campers and staff were asked to accept the challenges offered at camp—the challenges of building better relationships with God, mentors and peers; the challenge of trying new activities and improving their skills; the challenge of making a solid contribution to the morale and atmosphere of camp. With God’s blessings, this year’s Northwest camp was perhaps the smoothest ever. The weather was sunny throughout camp, no one suffered any major injuries or illnesses, and everyone worked together to create a great seven-day experience.

After the usual wake-up routine and breakfast, every day at camp began with an hour-long Christian Living class. The theme for these Bible-studies and camp overall was “Where Do You Want to Go for Eternity?” The individual classes discussed

God’s purpose for man, the power of choice, what one does when things go wrong, God’s commitment to us and our commitment to God. The Northwest ministry had worked on each subject and an outline was sent to the teens and staff prior to camp, which helped the studies and discussion be even more effective.

During the day, campers had the opportunity to enjoy a wide-range of activities. The usual favorites were offered, like softball, basketball, flag-football, ropes course, arts and crafts, archery, hiking and swimming. Camp again had a newspaper class this year, where the campers were taught the basics of writing, photography and desktop publishing. By the end of camp, each person was able to take home a copy of *The McKenzie Good Times*.

Also for the second year, a class on relationships was offered—one course for the younger campers, and a different course for the older campers. The older campers discussed the differences between guys and girls—and, needless to say, it prompted some lively and long discussions!

New to this year’s list of activities was an additional Bible class, where campers learned how to begin and enhance a relationship with God. The older dorms also participated in an all-day challenge ropes course in Eugene, operated by professional instructors.

The evenings gave campers and staff additional opportunities for fellowship and participating in their favorite activities. Optional evening activities included dance instruction, ultimate frisbee, introduction to self-defense and synchronized swimming. Each evening at camp concluded with a campfire, followed by a “bedside chat” for



Campers From Mexico Enjoy “the Zone”

by Larry Roybal

“The Zone,” as we in the United Church of God have called it, is the place where our youths find a safe learning environment that represents God’s way. It’s also where wholesome fun and true friendship can be found. This year, at Camp Carter, the Zone was spiced up a little with the participation of a small group from Mexico.

Camp is always a great opportunity to learn more about God, meet other youths in the Church, make new friends, learn new skills and just have a whole lot of fun. But for the 12 Mexican youths who attended Camp Carter this year, it was an extra blessing because it involved the added experience of traveling to another country.

Traveling is always exciting, but more so if you have never been out of your own country or even away from home. For the majority of the Mexican campers, Camp Carter was their first experience away from Mexico, and what an experience it was indeed.

For most of them, the food, the people, the language and just the whole environment was “different”—in a good way, of course. One of first things many of them expressed was that the people in the United States truly enjoy many blessings. They were quick to recognize that these were surely God’s promises to His servant Abraham. They are great blessings and should not be taken for granted, they said.

Camp also helped them realize that they need to work on learning another language—English, that is. Most of them can better appreciate how necessary it is to know

how to speak at least a few words in another language. As one of the girls said, “If I ever come back, I will make sure I can speak more English so that I can talk more with the girls in my dorm.”

The “international flavor” at Camp Carter was also beneficial for some of the English-speaking campers who were able to add a few more words to their Spanish vocabulary. “*Mi casa es tu casa*” sounded pretty good. Maybe next year they will be able to communicate a little more in Spanish; however, the international language—the smile—was and always will be the main means of communication between nations. That is one thing we can do all by ourselves without needing an interpreter.

Les McCullough visited Camp Carter and took some time to meet and talk with the international campers, two from Chile, one from Jamaica, one from France and 12 from Mexico, who were very excited and eager to have their picture taken with him and thank him personally for the wonderful opportunity the Church had provided for each of them to be there. They all gave him a big “*Gracias!*” and made him an honorary Latino since they found out that his dog’s name is Jose Cuervo. They got a kick out of that.

After camp, many of the Mexican campers returned back home with a warm place in their heart for the Zone—the Zone with a little salsa that is! They will long remember that special place where nationality, color, race or size are not important, where everyone smiles in the same language. How could they forget, for the Zone is not only a place, it’s a way of life! UN

each dorm with its dorm parents. Saturday evening ended with a final dance.

About mid-week, representatives from the American Camping Association visited McKenzie.

Overall we did very well, scoring 176 out of a possible 178 standards. A great deal of thanks goes to all of the staff who spent many days preparing to make camp the very best possible.

On the Sabbath, the campers enjoyed some extra rest, hymn singing, Bible discussions with their dorm parents and Sabbath services. The first

split sermon was given by Stuart Segall, softball instructor and pastor of the Sedro Woolley, Washington, congregation. The second split sermon was given by Bob Dick, instructor in newspaper and pastor of the Portland East, Oregon, congregation.

Camp McKenzie was truly blessed this year, and many of the campers and staff remarked that it was the best that they had ever experienced. The level of cooperation, respect, focus, unity and camaraderie was outstanding. As one camper stated: “I have gone to camp each summer and have had the time of my life each and every time. I don’t think there are words to describe how I feel about how thankful I am.”

The fruit of six years of United Youth Camps is clear to see in the character, care, actions and faces of the teenagers and staff. But we are not stopping there. Plans are already underway for 2001—with water-skiing, rafting and an extended session all being considered. Photos and stories of the 2000 camp can be found on the Camp McKenzie Web site at <http://cgca.net/campmckenzie>. Keep checking this Web site throughout the year for information and plans for the 2001 camp.

Matthew Fenchel

Camp Heritage

"I think that this camp is basically a small projection of what the world could be



like with God ruling instead of Satan." Camper comments like this captured the general spirit and feel of another United Youth Camp session at Heritage Reservation, Pennsylvania. Once again the beautiful outdoor setting in the Laurel Highlands mirrored the spiritual dimension of the camp program.

Traditional activities, such as volleyball, softball, basketball and riflery, formed the core of the program. Campers attended Christian Living classes each morning in their campsites. Evenings were taken up with open activities, dances and a camp-wide talent show.

A popular new program this year was a class in manners taught by Pam Myers and Colleen Winner. Emphasis was placed on making proper introductions, table manners and other points of etiquette. Many campers appreciated the instruction and the effect was noticeable throughout the camp.

Waterfront activities included canoeing and sailing on Lake Courage. After an introduction to the parts of the sailboat, campers had ample opportunity to test their skills as they set sail into the wind. In addition to learning the basics of canoeing, the class also included a trip across the lake to the "dead forest" to learn about the ecological development of the lake.

After a two-year absence, campers returned to the high and low COPE (Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience) course. Teamwork is a key lesson that campers take from this experience. Fears are overcome and personal courage developed under the experienced hand of the instructors. Heritage was one of four United camps to receive a visit from the American Camping Association to examine the site, activities and organization of the program. Heritage scored 176 separate standards without missing one. The scores of all four camps will be consid-

ered together and a decision on accrediting the program will be forthcoming. Both ACA visitors to Heritage were pleased with the quality of the facility, the staff and the operation.

Many campers and staff commented that this was the smoothest year of all at Heritage. There were 161 campers and 58 staff in attendance and the cooperation of



everyone helped create an atmosphere in which the goals and mission of the camp program were advanced for another year.

One camper commented, "I became closer to God and closer with others who believe the same. Camp helped me realize that there is a lot more to life than hatred. I am more positive." Feedback from campers and staff was largely positive and indicated that our youth are learning that God's way works to create an atmosphere where personal and spiritual success can be realized.

One future staff member summed up the feeling this way, "If I could help show one child the way of God's life through my actions, then I would be happier."

Darris McNeely

Canadian Camp

McGillivray Creek Youth Camp located in the majesty of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, just north of Coleman, Alberta, was a highlight of the summer for 26 teen campers. Campers and the 18 staff members came together from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba as well as Washington, Idaho and Montana to fellowship, have fun and most of all learn more about God's way of life and how to better prepare for the future that God is promising His people.

The comments from the campers about the activities were exciting but did not com-

pare with the positive comments about the Christian Living classes that all campers experienced each morning after breakfast. Campers found it a privilege to gather with other teens and understand the subjects that puzzle, confuse and scare the kids of our generation. It was inspirational, informative and without a doubt the one activity that we will all use every day of our lives.

Our primary Christian Living subject was the seven proofs of God's existence. This subject was discussed over a period of five days. The major focus was on the myriad proofs of God's reality in the creation, design, sustaining of laws, as well as answered prayer and prophecy.

The first day of camp, we plunged into the vast outdoors when the activity staff took us for a hike up to the crest of Turtle Mountain. The view from the ridgeline revealed the sprawling and magnificent creation of God.

During the campfire times we examined the plan of God, highlighting the major time divisions and how they related to the annual Holy Days.

Every day we woke up to the stimulating chill of the mountain air, with a crisp layer of snowy frost each morning. After struggling into our clothing, we sleepily made our journey to the kitchen for breakfast. After Christian Living, the day's schedule started.

Activities included hiking, canoeing, mountain biking, archery, orienteering and also a half day at the shooting range. One of the newest additions to the schedule this year was survival education and practice. We learned how to build emergency shelters, which we slept in overnight, and how to build fires with wet materials.

We experienced all these different activities in preparation for Friday's "Septathalon," a combination of all the things we had learned. This was an all-day event that tested the campers' spirit in teamwork and Christian attitude. As we demonstrated the skills acquired in all activities, our primary rule was the "no knock policy," which kept negativism from spoiling our efforts. At the end of the day, the times and points of the three teams were counted up. The winning team was then announced the next evening.

After a hard, tiring, yet fulfilling week, campers, staff, parents and visitors gathered in a beautiful area of the forest for Sabbath services. Wild flowers were arranged and set on the podium. God gave us another beautiful day to celebrate Him and His wonderful creation. The senior boys practiced and sang one of the more stirring hymns for special music. Drew Yahn, a senior camper, served as song leader and guided the service.

The sermon by Glen White was an eye-opener that made us all see just how important our future goals are to the work we will inherit in the Kingdom of God. God needs many different positions filled. Whether it be a builder, doctor, teacher, carpenter, rancher, fisherman or a minister, we will all have jobs that are necessary to establish a community, in this case a godly community, beginning with rebuilding Jerusalem.

After services a brunch was supplied by the kitchen staff, who again outdid themselves, and created a feast campers rarely expect in a wilderness camp. Later everyone gathered in the classroom trailer where skits were performed by the individual cabin groups. The theme used was that of a biblical story demonstrating a fruit of the Holy Spirit. These were done very well and the humor added gave



everyone a real chance to laugh. This was also an important activity because it took preparation and hard work to organize scripts and then to perform, making the lesson obvious.

In the words of Mr. White, who was the camp director, this was the most fulfilling and successful

year we have experienced thus far.

The coming generation of Christians, as we experienced it at camp, are an outstanding group of young people. Teachable, creative and growing in trust. Is it just possible that we are experiencing Malachi 4:6?

Jolene Drewniak, 16, and Glen White

Future Camp Dates

Winter Camp, Wisconsin	Dec. 26-31, 2000
Pinecrest, Missouri	June 12-21, 2001
Oakhurst, California	June 24-July 1
Woodman, Alabama	July 1-8
Teton Challenger, Wyoming	July 11-20
McKenzie, Oregon	July 15-22
Carter, Texas	July 22-29
Heritage, Pennsylvania	Aug. 12-20

Some in the Church see “social smoking” as OK. What’s wrong with smoking occasionally if you don’t get addicted?

by Don Hooser

My mother died of emphysema. My uncle died of emphysema. My grandfather died of emphysema. Emphysema is a bad way to die. They all undoubtedly would have lived longer lives if they had not been lifetime smokers. You can understand why I deplore the use of tobacco products and feel passionate about this subject.

If you are hooked on smoking, you have my sympathy. You are paying giant penalties for starting something you can’t stop. I pray that with God’s power and your determination, you will be able to quit smoking for good. But the purpose of this article is not to shame you or show you how to quit, but to motivate everyone else in the Church—adults, teens and children—to not start smoking, even occasionally.

When I was a child, my parents and many adults around me smoked, but their example didn’t influence me to smoke. The reason is that most of them shamefully admitted they were helplessly addicted and hated the fact that they had started smoking in the first place. So I had the blessing of developing a healthy fear of any addiction.

But still, in my later teen years, I was a “social smoker,” smoking occasionally with friends or on dates. I figured I could avoid getting hooked if I spaced out my smoking. Why did I smoke at all? For all the usual immature reasons—experimentation, peer pressure, wanting to be accepted and “cool,” youthful recklessness, etc.

Despite my caution, I may have become addicted if I had not received the greatest possible blessing—God’s calling. When I understood that smoking is a sin, I quit it immediately and for good.

Since then, like most ministers, I’ve counseled hundreds of prospective members and members of the Church about overcoming their smoking habits. Some have stopped smoking quickly and easily, and others have struggled for a long time. The main point is most people need counsel and support to quit smoking, and a minister, because of his experience in counseling concerning smoking and study into the subject, as well as his knowledge of the Bible and human nature, should be very helpful to those who want to quit.

Regrettably, in the past some ministers overemphasized the sinfulness of smoking, and lacked patience and compassion. Thankfully, the Church has grown much in wisdom and love.

Recently, however, it seems the pendulum has swung the other way and we have partly neglected to teach the principles of healthful living, including the harmfulness of smoking, physically and spiritually.

This is evident because of a surprising and sad increase in “social smoking” among

Please Don’t Smoke...

adults and teens in the Church, and some are even baptized members. Some, especially some young men and boys, are smoking cigars since this has been the macho fad the last few years. (Some may think that cigars and pipes are less harmful to health, but if the smoke is inhaled, they are more harmful.)

Concerning social smoking, I’ve been there and done that and wish I hadn’t. In the ’50s I didn’t have much knowledge of the harmful physical and spiritual effects of smoking, but today that knowledge is abundantly available.

What’s wrong with smoking only occasionally as long as one doesn’t get addicted? Many things are wrong with it, and some of the main ones are listed below:

1) You may become addicted anyway. Nicotine, the main culprit chemical in tobacco, is a powerfully addictive drug. Some who try smoking aren’t as “lucky” as I was—they get addicted very quickly. And many kids and adults apparently don’t give much thought to what a curse it is to be enslaved to smoking. This tragedy has been the subject of comedy, such as in the old song, “Smoke! Smoke! Smoke! That Cigarette.” Many smokers will do practically anything, including antisocial behavior, to stay supplied with their smokes. Under the thin layer of humor is a whole lot of horror—a world full of sorrow, suffering and death as a result of smoking.

2) The Bible makes it clear that our bodies and minds belong to God, so what right have we to pollute and poison our bodies? “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19–20). God not only created us, but Jesus Christ paid the price of His life for us. We doubly belong to God, and we must not abuse God’s property.

If one smokes only occasionally, the amount of nicotine and tar may be relatively small, but why deliberately put any of these toxic chemicals into our bodies? Every time one inhales, some internal damage is occurring. And even when one doesn’t inhale, many chemicals are absorbed through the

mucous membranes of the mouth and nose.

Today there is a great abundance of information on smoking and its deleterious effects available in publications and on the Internet. It is valuable for guiding and motivating your own decisions as well as equipping you to help others.

3) Your example may influence others to smoke, and you would be partly responsible for their displeasing God. Seeing a Church member smoking can lead another member or child to erroneously conclude that it’s OK to smoke. It is shameful when the bad influences are fellow Church members! And think of the terrible guilt you would have if some of those who start smoking became addicted.

Jesus said, “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6). A “little one” can refer to a child or a spiritual babe in Christ.

4) Many religious people believe it is a sin to smoke, and many nonreligious people believe it is foolish to smoke. If you are seen smoking, those religious people will think of you as a sinner and the nonreligious people will think of you as a fool. You lose credibility and the opportunity to lead them to the truth of God.

We are called to be “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (verse 16). God is judging us by how we live up to this. Smoking is anything but good works.

5) What would Jesus do? We should do as Jesus would do. He certainly wouldn’t smoke or chew tobacco. How do we know, since the Bible doesn’t mention smoking? Because of all the other reasons mentioned in this list. Tobacco was unknown and unavailable where the Bible was being written, but the principles are clear.

6) The Bible makes it clear that we should not copy or try to “fit in” with the wrong ways of the world, no matter how cool or sophisticated they may be. A would-be smoker should examine his motives as to why he wants to smoke. Weak character is

marked by being more concerned about what the world thinks than what God thinks. Let’s have the desire and courage to stand up for what God thinks and for what is right.

Consider these two verses: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:1–2).

7) Smoking is bad for everyone around you and the environment. (See box, below.)

On top of all these factors, if you become a chronic smoker, your risk of contracting many major diseases skyrockets. Information is available from your doctor on the types of damage done by smoking, the many health risks, as well as tips for quitting smoking. An article in the *British Medical Journal* said that it takes between 10 to 15 years from the time a person stops smoking to reduce the risk of lung cancer to the same level of risk as a nonsmoker.

Most articles neglect to say much about smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco and snuff), but there is plenty of scientific evidence to show that these present many of the same dangers as smoking. Some of the differences are in the location of the disease, such as cancer of the mouth instead of cancer of the lung. And marijuana has most of the same harmful effects as smoking tobacco plus additional harmful effects.

Some have used the excuse that occasional smoking is no worse than eating junk food, eating too much, being overweight, etc. It is worse, as the points above indicate. But even if smoking was not any worse, would that be justification for doing something that has no long-range benefits, has many harmful effects and is clearly contrary to God’s will?

Imagine a creature on another planet hearing about a practice on planet earth: “You say they grow a poisonous weed, dry the leaves, roast them, chop them up, then roll them up in paper? And then they stick one end of the tube in their mouths? And then they what? They set the other end on fire! You must be kidding! They suck on it so as to draw the smoke into their mouths? And then they inhale it into their lungs? Deliberately? Even though it is well known that many of them develop a dependence and addiction to this practice? Why do they do this? What do they call these people? Suckers? Oh, smokers. Well, it certainly seems that Earthlings are irrational and self-destructive creatures!”

Rather than imagining what a creature from space would think, let’s ask ourselves what God thinks. He does not want us getting hooked into physically bad and degenerative habits that destroy our bodies, which are the temple of the Holy Spirit. God has given us a great calling and mission. Let’s be busy about our Father’s business, and not do anything to hinder or weaken our effectiveness in His service! Please don’t smoke. *UN*

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Some of the Bad Effects of Smoking

When you smoke, even occasionally:

- Your health is being harmed, and your life is being shortened.
- You cause people around you to inhale second-hand smoke which has been proven to be a major health risk.
- You are wasting your money, perhaps big time.
- You may be taking time away from responsibilities.
- Your breath stinks.
- Your clothing stinks, as does the clothing of others around you.

- Your teeth and fingers may become stained.
 - You cause the area where you smoke (upholstery, draperies, etc.) to stink.
 - You lose part of your ability to smell and taste.
 - You have a responsibility for disposing of cigarette butts, without littering.
 - You run the risk of starting a fire. People have died from fires caused by smoking.
- So smoking clearly is not loving your neighbor as yourself!

Christ in Us—Our Hope of Glory

Major denominations are trying to figure out how non-Christians might be saved apart from Jesus Christ. But can it be done?

by Gregory L. Sargent

A fundamental tenet of all Christianity proclaims that none can inherit eternal life except through Jesus Christ. Therefore it came as a great surprise when two major Christian denominations expressed the possibility of salvation *apart* from accepting Christ as Savior. In a *Midnight Call* report of September 1998, the Presbyterian Church considered how non-Christians, including Jews, Muslims and Buddhists, might be destined for eternal life. The following month, Pope John Paul II stated that “through the practice of what is good in their own religious traditions, and following the dictates of their consciences, members of other religions positively respond to God’s invitation and receive salvation in Jesus Christ, *even though they may not recognize Him as their Savior*” (*The Christians News & Views Newsletter*, Vol. 4, Number 10, October 1998, emphasis added throughout).

In this article, we’ll read how Christ was the sole inheritor of eternal life. And we’ll unlock the mystery of how it is possible for all mankind to become coheirs with Christ.

Inherit the Kingdom of God

God revealed prior to Jesus’ birth that His Son would be the “horn of salvation” who would remember the promise of His holy covenant which God gave to Abraham (Luke 1:68–73). The promise God gave to Abraham was about inheritance and about salvation (Hebrews 11:8–9).

In Matthew 25:34, Christ said those who would be blessed of the Father would inherit the Kingdom. God’s Kingdom will be on the earth, therefore Christ promised that the meek will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5).

The statements above indicate many will inherit God’s Kingdom. Yet, paradoxically, Scripture also indicates that Jesus Christ is the sole inheritor. Both indicators are true. Understanding this paradox will absolutely prove how and why salvation comes by no other name than Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ—Sole Inheritor

As we look into the Scriptures, take special notice of *who* God gives claim to His Kingdom. From the cradle to the grave, God’s Word depicts Jesus Christ as the possessor of His Kingdom.

Before Jesus was born, Luke 1:33 relates the prophecy spoken by the angel Gabriel to Mary, “And He [Jesus] will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of *His kingdom* there will be no end.” Before His death, Christ told Pilate, “*My kingdom* is not of this world” (John 18:36).

Many scriptures are very convincing concerning Christ’s sole inheritance. The account in Luke 19:12 describes the analogy of Jesus Christ (a nobleman) going to a far country “to receive *for himself*” a kingdom. When Christ spoke about some of His disciples seeing the Kingdom of God in a vision, He defined it as “His kingdom” (Matthew 16:28). Also in Colossians 1:13, the Kingdom is called “the kingdom of the Son of His love.” We read in 2 Peter 1:11, “...the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

God appointed Jesus Christ as heir of all things (Hebrews 1:2). He is the official heir to God’s Kingdom. And Christ rewards us, for “...from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ” (Colossians 3:24). He cannot reward us with an inheritance that doesn’t belong to Him. But the Kingdom of God does belong to Christ, as we have just seen.

What About God?

Lest we misunderstand Christ’s role in the plan of God, it is important to highlight the fact that *God is the one who gives the Kingdom to Christ*. That’s why we find the term “kingdom of Christ and God” also used in the Bible (Ephesians 5:5). As explained in 1 Corinthians 15:27–28, all things have been put under Christ, but it is understood that God is not under the authority of Christ. God is the One who put all things under the feet of Christ.

Christ will rule until the last enemy, death, is destroyed. “Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:28). Christ will at that time deliver the Kingdom to the Father (verse 24).

What About Us?

Up to this point, we have seen that Jesus Christ is the recipient of God’s Kingdom from the Father. But where does this leave the rest of us? Why is Christ the sole inheritor? How can He share it with us?

How you and I receive inheritance involves a mystery that few understand. This mystery proclaims once again why salvation can come only *through* Jesus. But in order to understand this mystery, we must recognize why, technically speaking,

we are not qualified to receive inheritance but Christ is.

Death Negates Inheritance

Let’s look at inheritance from a human standpoint. We all recognize that a child’s promised inheritance from a parent would be useless if the child were to die before receiving that inheritance. From God’s point of view, that’s why you and I could not receive the inheritance: we are worthy of eternal death. And the dead cannot receive anything!

Romans 6:23 tells us, “the wages of sin is death.” In explaining how we died, Paul wrote that the commandment, which was meant to bring life, brought death because sin deceived us and killed us (Romans 7:10–11).

How you and I receive inheritance involves a mystery that few understand. This mystery proclaims once again why salvation can come only through Jesus.

He explained further that it was *not* the commandment that caused death. Rather it was sin—*breaking* commandments (verse 13). James writes a similar statement, “Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death” (James 1:15). We understand then, that because we deserve death and are looked upon by God as being as good as dead, we cannot receive an inheritance, of and by ourselves. This brings us to the intriguing question: How can we be delivered from death and receive an inheritance?

Quoting Paul again, “Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—*through Jesus Christ* our Lord!” (Romans 7:24–25). Eternal life is a gift *through* Jesus Christ. Along with Paul, the apostle Peter understood that “there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Abraham and His Seed

Jesus Christ is the only person, albeit the only begotten Son of God, who never sinned (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5). He, unlike all mankind, does not deserve the death penalty. Therefore, He is the only one qualified to inherit God’s Kingdom.

With this in mind, it should come as no surprise to discover that the promise to

inherit the Kingdom of God was given to only *one* of Abraham’s descendants. Writing about the subject of inheritance (Galatians 3:18), the apostle Paul made the following assertion, “Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but *as of one*, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ” (verse 16).

Paul here specifically called attention to the fact that God *did not mean* many seeds. He meant only one Seed. Inheritance comes to the one Seed, Jesus Christ. Verse 19 of Galatians 3 substantiates this point when he says, “...till *the Seed* should come to whom the promise was made...” Again we read of only one Seed—Christ!

Jesus Christ in Us Makes Us Alive

We read above where Paul said that Jesus Christ would deliver us from death. Herein lies the mystery. How does Christ accomplish this deliverance and insure our inheritance? *Understanding this mystery is the only way to completely understand salvation through Jesus Christ and what God requires of us if we are to be saved.*

Remember that God considers us dead because of our sins. Why, then, can we share in Christ’s inheritance? Notice the scripture containing one of the greatest keys in the entire Bible: Paul “became a minister...to fulfill the word of God, *the mystery...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory*. Him we preach...that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Colossians 1:25–28).

The mystery of inheritance is Christ in us! If we are “in Christ,” we have now actually become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Notice what an oft-memorized scripture, Galatians 2:20, states, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is *no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me*; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” The very mind and actions of Jesus Christ are being duplicated within us. This is also explained in Galatians 4:19, Philippians 1:20, Romans 8:9–10 and 2 Corinthians 4:11.

It now naturally follows that since we have Christ’s new name, we are rooted and built up in Him, His life is shown in us and Jesus Christ is magnified, formed and living in us, then we can be inheritors with Him. Paul concludes the same when he writes, “if you are Christ’s, then are you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29).

It is *only* because Christ is in us that we share His inheritance. Despite what any theological source dictates, recognition of Christ living His life in us is a precursor to salvation.

This important mystery bears repeating. We could not receive eternal inheritance because we sinned and brought upon ourselves eternal death. Dead men and women receive no inheritance. But Jesus Christ is the special begotten Son of God who was prophesied to receive the Kingdom, did not sin and did not reap eternal death! Therefore He is the only Seed of Abraham eligible to receive eternal inheritance. However, since Christ is in us, we can be “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17).

Inheritance and God's Spirit

Some of us may be familiar with parents who have given their full inheritance to one child, leaving the other children with nothing. No doubt, in the eyes of the parents, the one had qualified for the inheritance and the others had not. If the other children had the same character traits, all the children would have shared the inheritance.

God makes it possible for us to have the same character traits as Jesus Christ. He has literally given us the mind to think and act like Jesus Christ. “And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Galatians 4:6–7). The Spirit of God is given to us through Christ when we repent and are baptized for the remission of our sins as Peter stated on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38).

The good news for all mankind is that we can be blessed with inheriting God's Kingdom through Jesus Christ! When we have faith in Christ and live according to God's laws, as Christ did, with the Holy Spirit in us, that Spirit is one of promise which guarantees our jointly inheriting His Kingdom (Ephesians 1:13–14).

Satan's Deceptive Gospel

Now, doesn't it seem an oddity that, through the power of Christ's mind in us, we can actually attain an eternal inheritance at the resurrection from the dead, and yet some say it is not only unnecessary but also impossible to keep the very laws that Christ kept?

In this lawless world, it becomes necessary to remember a truth Jesus expounded in the Sermon on the Mount. *Only the righteous will possess the Kingdom* (Matthew 5:10). The Spirit of God, the mind of Christ in us, not only guarantees inheritance, it also convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8). Paul made it extremely clear that through Christ *“the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit”* (Romans 8:1–4).

Satan has deceived the world into thinking that Christ obeyed the law in our stead. That's why the “gospel of Christ” has been so misunderstood by the world

today. Did Christ obey the law for us? Are we no longer obligated to obey the Ten Commandments?

Absolutely not! Faith in Christ does not void God's law! “On the contrary,” Paul clarified in Romans 3:31, “we establish the law.” *Jesus Christ did not obey the law for us; we obey the law of God through Christ in us!* Through the Holy Spirit, Christ empowers us to live the way of love for God and love for neighbor that is embodied in God's laws (Romans 13:8–10).

The major difference between the Old and New Covenants is that through His Spirit, God places His laws in our hearts and minds rather than on tables of stone (Hebrews 8:7–13). Without God's Spirit, we have no chance to obey God, no chance of an immortal resurrection, no chance to inherit God's Kingdom, no chance for sal-

vation. On the other hand, we can yield to the conviction of God's Spirit, obey Him and live for all eternity.

Blessings Through Christ

When God told Abraham, “In you all the nations shall be blessed” (Galatians 3:8), He really meant it. Through the one Seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ, the blessing of salvation would be possible for all. And so we have the blessing pronouncements by Christ Himself in His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3–11):

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.”

All these blessings would come through the one speaking these words—Jesus Christ. So let us be acutely aware that God has centered His entire plan of salvation in Christ. Without Him as our Lord and Savior, there is no chance for salvation, “for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:9–10). *UN*

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The Azazel Goat and Atonement

by Bill Jahns

The Day of Atonement is a very important Holy Day. We have always understood that it pictures the putting away of Satan the devil, preventing him from influencing mankind for a thousand years. A critical part of this connection involves understanding the meaning of the *azazel* goat in Leviticus 16. Some have tried to reinterpret this goat as a symbol of Christ and not the devil.

Is there evidence that the *azazel* goat was a symbol of the devil or a demon?

In Leviticus 16:5 we see that the priests were to select two goats. One was to be taken as a sin offering and the other was to be offered as a “scapegoat.” Another way to express it would be “escape” goat. Many translations such as the New Revised Standard Version simply use the word *Azazel* in the text. The Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate translate *azazel* as “goat of departure.”

Often when interpreting what a word in Scripture means, it is necessary to look at what the meaning of the word is in literature outside of the Bible. Consider the following resources that discuss the meaning of *azazel*:

“This name was used for that of an evil demon.... The name *Azazel*... is also used by the Arabs as that of an evil demon” (William Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 617).

“The high priest...cast lots upon the two goats. One was to be for the Lord for a sin-offering. The other was for *Azazel* (the completely separate one, the evil spirit regarded as dwelling in the desert), to be sent away alive into the wilderness” (F. Watson, *The Cambridge Companion to the Bible*, 1893, p. 161).

“*Azazel*... was probably a demonic being.... Apocryphal Jewish works, composed in the last few centuries before the Christian era, tell of angels who were lured...into rebellion against God. In these writings, *Azazel* is one of the two leaders of

the rebellion. And posttalmudic documents tell a similar story about two rebel angels, *Uzza* and *Azzael*—both variations of the name *Azazel*. These mythological stories, which must have been widely known, seem to confirm the essentially demonic character of the old biblical *Azazel*” (Union of American Hebrew Congregations, *The Torah—a Modern Commentary*, p. 859).

The word *azazel* is also used outside the Bible in the book of Enoch. This book is apparently quoted in the New Testament in the book of Jude. Jude verse 14 states: “Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints.’” A similar statement is found in the book of Enoch 1:9.

The book of Enoch gives insight into how the word *azazel* was used in the centuries before Christ. In the book of Enoch 8:1–3 we find: “And *Azazel* taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the metals of the earth.... And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways.” The book of Enoch describes *Azazel* as one of the angels that corrupted man at some time in the past. As a result we see in the book of Enoch 10:4, “And again the Lord said to Raphael: ‘Bind *Azazel* hand and foot, and cast him into the darkness; and make an opening in the desert, which is in *Dudael*, and cast him therein.’”

Notice how well this understanding of *Azazel* fits with the fate of the demons. In Revelation 20:1–3 “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years

were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.”

This is very similar to the statement in Leviticus 16:21. “Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.” This is a symbol of the angel that is to take Satan away and isolate him from mankind.

The Bible states over and over that God is just and fair, that He ultimately takes care of evil. Psalm 7:11 states: “God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day.” Doesn't it make sense that a just and fair God would ultimately put the sins of the world on the one who introduced sin into the present world in the Garden of Eden? Satan is the one who from the very beginning lied to Eve and led mankind astray.

The Day of Atonement then should be understood as a day of justice! A day when God will remove the evil influence that is at the core of the problems of this present world. The Bible states that there is an evil power—“the prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2)—that is constantly trying to thwart the plan of God and attempting to cause mankind to lose out on salvation.

The fact that the devil and his cohorts will be removed from power will result in a world that no longer has an unseen evil power causing problems. Satan and his demons have separated mankind from God since the beginning. His removal will result in mankind as a whole finally being able to have contact and direction from God. Let's be thankful that God is indeed just and fair and has commanded us to keep the Day of Atonement as a memorial in advance of the removal of evil from the world. *UN*

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“Even So, Come, Lord Jesus!”

Facing family tragedy, there was a haunting familiarity in my grief. What I've learned has changed my outlook on the world, and the future.

by Janna Thomas

In 1999, I kept a deathwatch at the bedside of two remarkable women—my mother and my brother's wife. The experience was life altering and profoundly sadening. Afterwards, I felt older in a way that had nothing to do with the passing of years. I acquired a personal understanding of Ecclesiastes 7:2-3, which says, “Better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men; and the living will take it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, for by a sad countenance the heart is made better.”

My mother had been ill for many years and had suffered a great deal. At the last, she was spending more time in the hospital than at home. She began to resist the almost weekly trips that had become torturous for her.

The family prayed for God's guidance. We knew that her life was His alone.

Perhaps we could have held on a little longer with more hospitals, needles and machines—all the things that had become so unbearable to her. We began to feel selfish, hanging on at her expense. She seemed to require our permission to stop fighting a fight she no longer held a hope of winning.

God guided us to an arduous decision that no one wanted to make. She died at

home, under the care of hospice, with family in attendance. God's presence throughout those last days was almost palpable, dramatizing for me Psalm 48:14. “For this is God, our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death.”

A Second Encounter With the Enemy

My sister-in-law's death stunned everyone. She collapsed at home, and within 48 hours was on life support. We prayed for a miracle. For reasons only He knows, God did not grant one. She died within hours, leaving my brother with four school-age children.

Both women were strong and tenacious, possessing a determined resolve to beat death. If it were possible to do so, I know they would have. My sister-in-law was renowned for her devotion to her children. Only 24 hours before she died, she insisted resolutely, “Don't worry. I intend to see my girls walk down the aisle.” But she was wrong.

The Bible tells us that the last enemy that will be destroyed is death. Death certainly was the enemy to us. Yet as I watched these strong women in agony, their bodies failing them, I found myself begging God for it, knowing they could no longer ask it for themselves. I had learned that there are indeed worse things than death, like ceaseless suffering, heart-wrenching indignities and the ravaging of the human spirit.

My emotions were turbulent like a maelstrom. To adequately describe them is impossible. I felt the visceral anguish of impending loss; guilt, real and imagined; sorrowful regret for missed opportunities; and pain like a lava ocean—deep and hot.

Capping it all was intense empathy for their suffering. Life was teaching me that sometimes, loving best is letting go.

Learning to Recognize the Pain

There was a haunting familiarity in my pain that I couldn't examine until some time had passed. With God's wisdom and patience, I have since come to recognize it.

God first called me in the early '80s, when I learned about the Kingdom of God, Christ's return and His ruling kingship. I read verses about the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdom of our Lord, and that He will reign forever and ever! I began to understand the thrilling promise of Revelation 21:4-5 concerning the new heaven and the new earth.

It was wonderfully exciting news, this Kingdom of God. There was just one problem. If all things were to be made new, life as I had known it would have to go. No more life in the fast lane, with 1.5 kids, two cars and a mortgage. We were talking about culture shock on a major scale.

So I spent a lot of time feeling guilty, experiencing shameful unease whenever I heard an earnestly expressed desire for Christ's return. I did want Him to come back. I just didn't want Him to come yet. I asked myself if I could really be the only one not looking forward to seeing everything I was familiar with—my lifestyle, my country, my culture—destroyed, even for so wonderful an event?

Clinging to the Familiar

According to psychologists, we cling to the familiar, even when it is to our detriment. This is a major reason we return to abusive situations, drugs, alcohol and other destructive lifestyles. We find comfort in the known, and are usually quite resistant to change. My world was far from perfect, but it was the only one I had ever known. Even the promise of Utopia—God's Kingdom—didn't completely quiet my unease.

The early Israelites themselves certainly fell victim to this very human trait. God worked unparalleled miracles on their behalf, both to release them from slavery in Egypt, and to sustain them afterwards. He promised to bring them to a land flowing with milk and honey. The life He offered must have sounded almost as perfect to them as God's peaceful Kingdom does to us today.

Yet they often complained, desiring to return to the familiarity of the life they had left behind. “We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic,” they grumbled in Numbers 11:5. Would I really react any differently?

So, I took my concerns to God, telling Him that I wanted to look forward to Christ's return with my whole heart and

soul. I did not want to be like Lot's wife, looking back at the crucial moment.

Time has passed. The world continues the relentless pursuit of sin and depravity that has occupied it for roughly 6,000 years. The end is surely coming, with each day bringing us closer than the one before.

Empathy and Grief

Watching pain in others is something I find extraordinarily hard to do. Yet, thanks to the nightly news and other technological wonders of the age, I have had an open window to the world. And the world is in pain and suffering.

I cried for its abused and murdered children, for its evil regimes, genocide, war crimes and other atrocities. Meanwhile, I began to be aware of a feeling I couldn't name, a strange mixture of sorrowful sadness and empathy. At first it was intermittent, but soon it was nearly always there, underlying everything. I became accustomed to it, like a leaky faucet you never get around to fixing. Still, I couldn't name it. Now I know that it was because I had no frame of reference for it.

What I was feeling was grief—anticipatory grief for a dying world. I was keeping a death vigil, watching helplessly as the disease process ran its course towards a certain end. Sin is a terminal disease—a cancer for which there is no cure except the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. It is often a silent killer, showing itself in all its ugliness only when the end is near, after it has conquered and consumed virtually all that is healthy and good.

Our world today works sin and suffering. The wage it earns is death. God, because He is merciful, will not allow it to remain in its sin forever. The time is rapidly approaching when, like my mother and sister-in-law, the pain of holding on will be greater than that of letting go.

Death, albeit the enemy, won't be the victor because God's gift to us is eternal life. As 1 Corinthians 15:57 says, He “gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Isaiah 26:19 describes that victory:

“But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead” (NIV).

God is infinitely patient, answering prayers in the fullness of His time. He knows that suffering is necessary for our growth, and that we grow by putting faith and trust in Him.

In the final chapter of Revelation, John says, “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming quickly’” (22:20). It has been a long process, but I can now kneel and pray with fervent sincerity, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” *UN*

Janna Thomas is a member in the Sherman, Texas, congregation.

“Please, Thy Kingdom Come!”

It's amazing to me how you can start out with one perspective in the morning and God can change your thoughts by evening, if you're paying attention.

My day started out the usual hectic way, getting everyone out the door to school and work. On my long drive to work I was talking with God. I told Him how we needed a new garage door and didn't know how we would pay for it. We had the insurance due right now and the car was making a new noise. I was feeling a little pressured and discouraged by the everyday hassles of living.

I work with a contractor who rehabs homes. The neighborhood we were working in wasn't middle class, but it wasn't one of the worst either. Two little boys came through the door. I asked why they weren't in school. They said, “Ahh, we didn't want to go today.” “How old are you?” my boss asked. “Second grade.” “Does your mom know you're not in school?” “No, she's at the bar.” It was only 10:30 a.m. One said he stole the bike he was riding, then said he was

kidding. We couldn't tell when he was telling the truth.

A little later I looked out of the front window. Two little girls, about age 4 or 5, were playing with a cat. They were trying to feed it Prestone Antifreeze. Behind them a young man was throwing up over the porch railing. Out a back window I saw a neighbor getting out of her car with a bottle of wine. All this before noon.

That night when I talked with God, my perspective had changed. I thanked Him for the house He has blessed me with, the job I have, that I could be home to put my daughter on the bus and be back home to take her off the bus. I thanked Him for my squeaky car and the garage to put it in. Most of all I thanked Him for His truth that there is a better world ahead. As I thought of those little children living in your average Midwestern town in the most blessed country on earth, I prayed “Please, Thy Kingdom come!”

The author, Rhonda Richmond, is a member in the Canton, Ohio, congregation.

Member's Recovery Featured in Newspaper

The following article appeared in the Vero Beach, Florida, Press Journal on August 6. Used with permission of the author.

by Shelley Canup

"911. Is this an emergency?"

"Yes. I need an ambulance. I'm burned. I accidentally threw gasoline on a pile of trash and it ignited the whole wide world—it exploded. I have a bad cold. I didn't smell the difference... I thought it was diesel fuel. I literally doused the pile."

"OK. Where do you need an ambulance?"

"I'm driving home, in my truck."

"You're driving?"

"Yes. I'll be home in a minute."

"Give us your address and stay on the line."

About two minutes later, former Fellsmere City Councilman Dale Carter pulled his truck into his driveway, the dispatcher still on the line.

He remembers being in a lot of pain. His skin burned, his face and beard blackened and his hair scorched, he stumbled and then rolled onto the ground in pain. Within a few minutes, the ambulance arrived. It was October 21, 1999.

Within minutes, Carter, 53, was in a helicopter and being transported to the Orlando Regional Medical Center's burn center. He remained awake during the less-than-hour-long flight in what he describes as a "painful, but not totally unbearable state thanks to some painkillers."

At about 7 that evening, the doctors told Carter's wife, Diann, and his parents, Lee and Mary Carter of Fellsmere, they couldn't guarantee he would live through the night with his second-degree burns on his arms, legs and feet.

Thankfully, his beard and hair helped protect his face and head, Mrs. Carter said.

"His face was all swollen up... ugh, to

see him looking like that," Lee Carter said shaking his head while cringing. "We sat up with him all night at the hospital, and the next day, he came around pretty good."

Diann Carter stayed with her husband around the clock for three weeks. She learned from the doctors and nurses how to clean his wounds and change his bandages.

Then, during the second week, Carter's conditions took a nose dive. He eventually dropped from 220 pounds to 170 pounds and he stopped breathing. It took two attending physicians to resuscitate him, and they saved his life.

But he still had several health obstacles to overcome. Carter was weak, experienced breathing problems and had a weakened immune system.

"One thing that really kept me going was that I received more than 200 get-well cards," Carter said. "That encouraged me."

The community's response didn't surprise Indian River County Commissioner Fran Adams.

"Dale is a super, super guy with a big heart," Adams said. "Everyone looks to him as a role model because they know he works hard and gives back to the community."

After three weeks in the hospital, doctors allowed Carter to go home. As part of his recovery, he said, he exercised daily and ate plenty of food to help regain the weight he lost while in the hospital.

His wife, who teaches scuba divers how to become scuba-diving instructors, took time off from her job to care for her husband 24 hours a day.

"She never left my side," Carter said. "She's wonderful."

There was a time when he wasn't sure if he'd be able to return to work or what portion of his medical bills he would be responsible for after his insurance company settled its portion of the claims.

Carter is self-employed and owns Affordable Land Services, a land-clearing

business. So the health-care bills concerned him, especially the \$6,000 helicopter ride.

That's when he said he received the surprise of his life.

Last December, Fellsmere residents Jerry and Laura Smith, Charles Hampton, Leonard Hearndon, MESA Park officials and a host of other folks organized a benefit at the park. Those attending enjoyed the food, the music, the truck and tractor pull, and they raised about \$4,000 for Carter's medical expenses.

"He has always been here to work or volunteer, and always, beyond the call of duty," said Fred Augenstein, director of marketing for MESA Park.

"The benefit was a bit humbling," Carter said. "When something like that happens to you and then you find out so many people care and are willing to do something about it, it's mind-boggling."

As it turned out, the fund-raiser covered all of Carter's out-of-pocket expenses with a little left over. The Carters donated that money to their place of worship, the United Church of God in Port St. Lucie.

Carter's mother said she is very glad her son survived the ordeal and that he has so many friends and loved ones who supported him. "I'm praising God every day," she said. "Dale is coming along good."

The Carters have long been known in the community as a close and loving family....

As for any future plans in politics, Carter says the answer is no. Since the accident, the way Carter wants to spend his time has changed.

"In our daily, lives we get caught up in the world out there," he said. "We stray. Our attitudes change. A trauma like this focuses you. It lets you realize family and friends are what's important."

So today, when Carter isn't driving his green and white Ford pickup into town or clearing land with his bulldozer, you might find him with his family or friends



This article appeared in the August 6 Vero Beach, Florida, Press Journal

fishing, snorkeling or sailing on his 43-foot sailboat.

"I plan to do extensive cruising all over the Bahamas," he said. "We plan to do some extensive sailing—all around the world."

At home, he watches less TV and takes more time to enjoy the wildlife outdoors.

"We have all sorts of pets—raccoons, ducks, birds, squirrels and a little alligator we call 'Suitcase' in the pond behind the house," Carter said. "I love it outside."

He's also considering a gig as a stand-up comedian, he joked. "I love to laugh. I take more time to laugh now."

But what has changed the most, Carter said, is the relationship he wants to have with God.

"I now realize that your relationship with God, your family, friends and the manner of person you are—those are the things that are the most important in life," he said. "If you take care of those things, all the rest of your needs will fall into place." UN

"DIG," (Continued from page 4)

of Hezekiah, and gave some background about the Garden of Gethsemane and the valley of Hinnom which we visited later in the day.

During our last week excavating, the supervisors took the time to sum up what had been accomplished during this year's dig. Most of our efforts were concentrated on three different structures from one of three different periods corresponding to the earliest Philistine period. The findings seem very much in line with biblical statements about the Philistines.

On the last Thursday evening we were invited to an exposition of all the finds of this year's excavation. The rarest find of the year came from a period much later than David. It was a coin bearing the likeness of Queen Cleopatra. It is only the fifth such coin to be found, and the first to be found "in context." One of the four other coins was sold to a pri-

vate collector apparently for around \$100,000! "Our" coin will go to a museum, but this gives an idea of the excitement aroused by this particular find. There were also quite a number of other coins found, as well as beads, scarabs, figurines and several complete or nearly complete vessels of clay pottery or alabaster.

Following the exposition the whole excavation team had a final reception and dinner including entertainment in the form of skits and music.

One of the grid supervisors told me during the reception that our Youth Corps volunteers had done very well. He said they occasionally have Christian groups participate in the excavation, but that they often don't blend in well or work harmoniously. "Your group is different—they blended in well and worked well in the teams," he told me.

During the dance following the meal, one of the assistant directors of the excava-

tion asked me about our Church origins and beliefs. When I explained a bit about the origins of United and mentioned our previous affiliation, he said, "Oh yes, Herbert Armstrong, I remember that group very well." He also expressed appreciation

for the work done by our Youth Corps volunteers.

Our volunteers set a very fine example of hard work and service, and we hope to be able to continue offering such opportunities to our young adults. UN

United Youth Corps Israel/Jordan Project Volunteers

Patricia Dobbins
Jamie Franks
Stan Grabowski
Shannon Guy
Greg Horchak
Sarah Janicich
Lily Miller
Kimberly Mortier
Shaun Tuck
Jason Watkins
Jaime Welch

Williamstown, West Virginia
Cypress, Texas
Laramie, Wyoming
Warren, Ohio
Windsor, Colorado
Aumsville, Oregon
San Diego, California
Eldorado, Wisconsin
Phoenix, Arizona
St. Louis, Missouri
Kellyville, Oklahoma

Local Church Updates...

Houston Celebrates Grads

The Houston North, Texas, congregation honored 13 graduating seniors on May



Graduates (from bottom left): Melissa Tate, Crystal Whitley, Elizabeth Hudson, Emily Orsak, April McLeod, Kimberlee Franks, Ressie Deselle, Ruben Followell, Mark Meitzler, Rachel Rodriguez, Megan Grabara, Melissa Gabrielides. Not pictured, Erika Salvesson

20 during services. There was a video presentation showing pictures of the seniors from childhood through their senior year. They were also presented with a gift from the congregation. After services the congregation celebrated with cake and punch.

went on, a member family pushed the matter by saying they would personally donate, beyond their normal tithes and offerings, a substantial part of the cost of the building."

This donation of \$100,000 plus fruit sales, other fund-raisers and contributions funded the building without outside financing.

Following the policy at the time (1997), the Houston North congregation contacted the administration at the time (including the president, treasurer and Ministerial Services). After receiving support from the administration, the matter went to the Council of Elders. The Council agreed that the proposal was appropriate.

The property at 20737 Broze Road in Humble, Texas, was purchased in January of 1999, and ground breaking for the 10,000-square-foot metal building was October 26,

1999. The property will be deeded to the United Church of God, an *International Association*, and will be held in trust for use by the local congregation.

"I think we can all be pleased that the brethren in Houston have been blessed in this way," Mr. McCullough said.

Chicago Honors Faheys

The 35th anniversary of Bob Fahey's ordination and the Faheys 35th wedding anniversary were honored by members of both Chicago congregations July 1.

Mr. Fahey was ordained an elder in June 1965 at Brickett Wood, England, upon graduation from Ambassador College. Since that time the Faheys have pastored congregations in Australia, Canada, Scotland, South Africa and several locations in the U.S. He also served as regional director in several areas.

Between Bible study and afternoon services the Faheys were honored for their 35th wedding anniversary with a special cake. Following services, they were presented with several gifts, including a porcelain wedding

figurine and a crystal desk set. The congregation shared many memories with the Faheys, recalling the many events that have occurred during their time in the Chicago area.

Jack D. Pickett



ABC Sampler students hear Les McCullough in Cincinnati August 15

Young Writer Receives Award

Megan Fooshe, age 7, was one of five first grade students to receive Honorable Mention in the Reading Rainbow Young Writers and Illustrators Contest in Tennessee.

Megan's story was titled "The Ladybug With No Spots," and she was honored at a special ceremony sponsored by Nashville Public Television. Megan is a home-schooled student and is entering the second grade this fall.



Megan Fooshe, 7, receives award at PBS ceremony

Houston Dedicates New Building

After almost three years of work, the Houston North congregation dedicated a new church building on the Sabbath of July 29. President Les McCullough and treasurer Tom Kirkpatrick joined the brethren of Houston North and Houston South in a combined service for the special event. There were 540 in attendance.

After services a reception was held to celebrate the completion of the project. More than 100 brethren worked on the building.

Mr. McCullough said, "The circumstances that brought this building about are unique. Houston has an especially difficult time in finding a place to meet...because of the size of the congregation. Another unique factor is that as the talk about their needs

Preteens Learn by the Lake at Camp Galilee, Arkansas

Preteens from nine states gathered at Camp Galilee, on the shore of Bull Shoals Lake in northern Arkansas, for the first central region preteen camp, July 10 to 13.

Forty youths joined with an excellent staff of 35 volunteers, including several pastors and wives and many teens, for three fun-filled and educational days participating in a variety of activities. Our staff included food service personnel. Meals were designed to be both nutritious as well as popular with the children by a very dedicated staff of wives, mothers and grandmothers.

Activities ranged from swimming, canoeing and fishing to crafts, Christian Living classes on the Ten Commandments, field games and challenge games.

In the evenings campers participated in a novelty Olympics, went stargazing through several borrowed telescopes and enjoyed a cookout with a sing-along. One

highlight of the camp was an afternoon pontoon boat ride, with swimming in the middle of the lake, where each dorm

got to go out for an hour cruise and swim.

Even though the weather was hot, the air-conditioned dorms and dining hall provided a welcome relief from the heat.

One project during crafts class was making individually designed stepping



Scenes from Camp Galilee preteen camp at Bull Shoals Lake

stones. Each camper designed and made his own stepping stone, and was able to take it home to use.

At the conclusion of the camp, all the campers wanted to stay another three or four days (though the staff was pooped!) and were sad to leave so many newfound friends. Many parents expressed appreciation for the camp after their children returned home, some even commenting on things their children learned. Plans are already underway for an even larger and better camp next summer.

Michael Blackwell

Announcements...

Births

Michael and Shari (Styer) Fooshe are pleased to announce



Marissa Sail Fooshe with Megan and Mariah

the birth of their third daughter, Marissa Sail Fooshe. Marissa was born on June 7, 2000, and weighed 8 pounds 3 ounces. Her older sisters, Megan and Mariah, are thrilled with their new baby sister.

Thomas and Kristie (Weiss) Rocheleau, of the Phoenix NW,



Thomas Edward Rocheleau

Arizona, congregation, would like to announce the birth of their first child. Thomas Edward arrived July 25, 2000. He was 7 pounds 8 ounces and 20½ inches long. All are doing well.

Andrés and Jannett Cisneros, of Monterrey, Mexico, are pleased



Iván Andrés Cisneros

to announce the birth of Iván Andrés. Iván, the first baby to be born in the Monterrey congregation in seven years, came into the world on Saturday, August 12, 2000. He weighed 3.36 kilograms (7 pounds 6½ ounces) and was 54 centimeters (21 inches) long. Mr. Cisneros is an employee in the UCG office in Monterrey.

Eleanor Wendolyn Finney (Nora) arrived December 21, 1999. She weighed 8 pounds 7



Eleanor Wendolyn Finney

ounces and was 22 inches in length. She is the first child born to Phillip and Wendy (Bozarth) Finney of Grenada, Mississippi. Grandparents are Ben and Vi Finney of Jasper, Georgia, and Jim and Sue Robbins of Nashville, Tennessee.

Mike and Debbie Murdoch, members of the Brickett Wood, England, congregation, are pleased to announce the safe arrival of their first child, Conor James. Conor was born on May



Conor James Murdoch

24, 2000, weighing 7 pounds 14 ounces and measuring 21 inches. The proud grandparents are John and Anne-Marie Murdoch, and Eddie and Sandra Johnson, deacon and deaconess in the Maidstone, England, congregation.

Wedding

Mark and Brenda White of Spanishburg, West Virginia, would like to announce the mar-



Thomas and Cassandra Bayless

riage of their daughter, Cassandra, to Thomas Bayless. The couple were united in marriage in Princeton, West Virginia, on August 6, 2000. The happy couple now reside in Houston, Texas.

Obituaries

Rose McCauley, 52, a member of the Corpus Christi, Texas, congregation, died August 9, 2000, after a long struggle with cancer. She is survived by her husband, Robert, and her daughter, Gina. The family also attended the Victoria congregation, so John Bald and Burk McNair conducted the memorial service in Rockport, Texas. Interment was privately done at Live Oak Cemetery in Olgaby, Texas. She will be sorely missed by all who knew her. Her splendid example through this extreme difficulty was an inspiration to all who were privileged to see it.

Sara Villareal, 83, died July 31, 2000, after a long illness. She had been a member of the Harlingen, Texas, congregation for many years and will be sorely missed. Her encouragement and enthusiasm were an inspiration to all who knew her. Graveside services were held in the Highland Memorial Park in Weslaco with her pastor, John Bald officiating.

Frank O. Harper, 95, died July 19, 2000, after a short period of failing health. He was a member of the Sacramento, California, congregation, but moved to the Oakland area around 1994. Because of age-related problems, he was unable to attend services. His wife, Virgina, also a

member, preceded him in death December 31, 1999. He was fondly known as "the candy man" by the brethren. He is greatly missed.

His funeral was conducted by Bill Bradford. He is survived by daughter Jerri Anderson of Pleasant Hill, California, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Christopher Carl Partin, 47, of Tucson, Arizona, died September 11, 1999, at home after many years of ill health. He was born January 7, 1952, in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he became a member in December of 1970. Chris is survived by his wife, Marsha; five children: Benjamin (and his wife, Sarah), Kevin, Renee, Anthony and Melinda; and two granddaughters: Leanna and Ashley. His mother and stepfather, Barbara and John Sutton, live in Cincinnati along with his six brothers: Greg, Randy, Lenny, Jeff, Mark and Dan; and three sisters: Kim Kelly, Val McMullin and Jennifer Lynn.

Memorial services were conducted on September 18, 1999, by Steve Buchanan, pastor of the Tucson and Sierra Vista, Arizona, congregations.

Penny S. Howard, 48, of Circleville, Ohio, died March 16, 2000, following an extended battle with cancer.

She is survived by her husband of 30 years, Darrell; daughter, Heather; and three grandchildren. Penny and Darrell have been members of God's Church since 1984, attending the Athens, Ohio, congregation. Memorial services were held March 20 with Bill Winner, pastor of the Athens and Marietta, Ohio, and Morgantown, West Virginia, congregations, officiating.

Glen Richard Thompson, 81, died June 30, 2000, in Brookings, South Dakota. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, and he has been a member of the Elks, American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. He enjoyed playing keyboard at senior citizen centers and nursing homes.

Survivors included his wife, Laura; six children: Glen Thompson, Anita Redemeyer, Lauren Cook, Bill Cook, Tony Cook and David Cook; 11 grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and a brother, Donald Thompson. He was preceded in death by his parents, two uncles, two aunts and a great-grandchild.

Don Wise, 65, of Fredonia, New York, died August 1, 2000. Mr. Wise was baptized in July 1969 and was a very active member of the Buffalo, New York, congregation.

He is survived by his wife, Betty; daughter, Susan Kelley; son, Donald II; stepdaughter, Mary Woleben; stepson, John Miller; and three grandchildren. Mr. Wise was a member of the North American Gladiolus Council and he developed the "Fredonia," an award-winning strain of gladiolus which he hybridized. His funeral service was held in Fredonia on August 4 with David Baker officiating.

After an extended illness, Henry Charles Sharp, 57, died peacefully in the hospital August 13, 2000. Charles was born on April 12, 1943, to Roy B. and Georgia (Flemens) Sharp in New Hope, Arkansas. Charles lived in southwest Oklahoma for the past 35 years. He married Ruth E. Mincey on December 24, 1975.

Charles worked as a barber for 30 years before retiring in 1988. Charles had many hobbies, including woodworking, oil painting, photography, fishing and joke-telling. He played guitar and was a model train operator. Charles was an inspiration to all who visited him during his lengthy illness with diabetes and congestive heart failure. His wife, Ruth, was a devoted, loving wife and an excellent caregiver. Charles and Ruth had a special "spark" and had their wedding vows renewed a few years ago. His funeral was August 16, 2000, and Mark Welch officiated. Ruth's address is 616 Jefferson St., Lawton, OK 73501.

Long-time member Isaac De Jong, 93, of Gosford, New South Wales, Australia, died peacefully in his sleep April 16, 2000. He had been unable to attend services for the last few years. He will be remembered as a happy man who enjoyed a good joke and was a very hospitable member of God's Church in Sydney.

Mildred Burton Jones, 80, died in an automobile accident in Ruston, Louisiana, August 19, 2000. She is survived by sons, Clayton McKaskle and Bobby Dale Jones; daughters, Kaletah Whitman and Debbie Hamilton; and step-children, Billy Wayne Jones, Joyce Wofford and Mary Ann Bates. Services were held in Ruston August 22 with Donald Ward officiating.

News at a Glance...

What's New on the Web?

- Listen to a Real Audio file of the current *Good News* radio program, posted each week. Also available is the broadcast-ready .rm file you may save on your local congregational page.

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

- Check out the local multimedia efforts by United congregations: *Tomorrow* television by Portland, Oregon; *Good News* television by Beloit, Wisconsin; *World News and Prophecy* radio by Donald Ward; and *The World Tomorrow* on MANX radio on the Isle of Man.

<http://www.ucg.org/a/local/multimedia.htm>

- The September/October edition of *The Good News* is online in both PDF (2.0MB) and HTML formats.

<http://www.ucg.org/html/literat.shtml>

- The September/October *Virtual Christian Magazine* is available.

<http://vcmagazine.org>

- A new video sermon by Les McCullough titled "Faith" has been posted to our Sermon Archives page.

<http://www.ucg.org/RealAud/index.html>

- Three new sermon transcripts are available: "Redeeming the Time," by Larry Greider; "Five Steps in Noah's Walk With God," by Robin Webber; "Stick Like Glue," by Gary Antion.

<http://www.ucg.org/deafhh/transcripts.html>

- The September/October edition of *Las Buenas Noticias* is available in PDF (1.1MB) format and the August *El Comunicado* is online in HTML format.

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

- Regular updates from the president and home office staff, plus news of the work United is doing, are posted on our news page.

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

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

YOUTH United Online Magazine to Be Launched

An online magazine for teens and young adults is scheduled to be launched by October 1 at www.youthmagazine.org. The magazine is scheduled to be posted to the Web quarterly.

"The audience is not meant to be exclusive to Church youth, but all youth," said Doug Horchak, who has spearheaded the launch of the magazine for the Youth Education team. "In a sense, it's an additional tool for preaching the gospel to the world, but targeting a specific age group."

Les McCullough wrote in the editorial for the first issue: "YOUTH United is another result of the long-term commitment by the Church of God to serve the younger generation of this world and to help lead them in their responsibility to become leaders in God's Church and in the world tomorrow.... We hope you will make this your magazine. You can be a part of the action with input, comments, suggestions and articles. We're depending on you to help us make this exciting new project a success!"

Parking Tight at Panama City Beach Site

We need the help of everyone with parking in Panama City Beach this year. Those staying at the Edgewater Beach Resort property on either side of Front Beach Road (the Towers, Leeward, Windward or Golf Villas), please walk, if physically able, or ride one of the courtesy trams to the Conference Center. There is also a crosswalk bridge from the beach side condos that crosses over Front Beach Road to the Conference Center for your convenience.

The shopping center parking lot on the east side of Beckrich Drive is to be used by those staying at other properties in the general area. You may either walk from that parking lot or ride an Edgewater Beach Resort shuttle van to the Conference Center. For those who can, car-pooling would also be helpful.

The parking area adjacent to the Conference Center will be reserved for the handicapped. Your help in this area will be greatly appreciated.

Harold Rhodes

Quebec Feast: Whale Watching, Dancing and Volunteering

Demand for the whale watching tour at the Feast in Mont Sainte Anne, Quebec, has been high enough to book a second bus and extend the deadline to September 29. If you have not already ordered your ticket, there is now more time and sufficient space to do so. This excursion includes a scenic bus ride of

approximately an hour and a half from the Feast site along the north shore of the magnificent St. Lawrence River to the cruise ship dock in Tadoussac.

Bring plenty of clothes to dress very warmly as it will be cool out on the deck. Of course, it will be toasty warm inside the ship,



but you can't see the marine life too clearly from that vantage point.

Family Dance: A family dance has been scheduled for Mont Sainte Anne on Saturday night, October 14, from 8 to 11. Music will be supplied by a disc jockey who will include some local French music and dancing. Dress will be Sabbath wear.

Volunteers Needed: Volunteers are needed to serve at the Quebec Feast site in areas such as ushering, choir, offering processing, etc. Please phone (416) 231-9379 or send an e-mail to alwasilkoff@ucg.ca.

Anthony Wasilkoff

ABC Announces Post-Feast Seminars

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, will host an ABC seminar November 11 to 13. ABC instructors Gary Antion and Ralph Levy will be teaching classes Saturday evening, November 11; all day Sunday, November 12; and Monday evening, November 13.

Mr. Antion will present Acts 25 to 28, focusing on Paul's journey to Rome and the end of his ministry as recorded in the book of Acts. Mr. Antion will also teach 2 and 3 John and Jude, with verse-by-verse exposition of these three short but fascinating General Epistles. Dr. Levy will teach "The Law in the Covenants," explaining the meaning of a covenant, exploring the Sinaitic ("old") and Christian ("new") covenants, and the continuity between the two.

To register, send your name, address and a check for \$8 U.S. or \$12 Canadian for each student, to United Church of God—Canada, Box 144, Station D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1, Canada.

Tampa/St. Petersburg, Florida, will host the final ABC seminar of the year December 23 to 25. Presenters will be Ralph Levy and one other instructor. Watch for more details in a future *United News*.

Ralph Levy

Mail Continues Double Last Year

Through the end of August, 164,584 pieces of mail had been received at the home office in 2000, an increase of 115 percent. Literature cards made up 115,413 of the total, with 19,802 cards arriving in August. There have been 7,692 Internet responses for the year, up 53 percent.

The June subscriber development letter (formerly called the semiannual letter) brought in 11,294 cards, a 13 percent response.

There were 95 new donors and 39 more coworkers added in August, bringing the total to 2,226 donors and 896 coworkers on file.



Tom Kirkpatrick takes the first call in response to the *Good News* radio program August 12. Volunteer Barb Fouch and supervisor Laura Peabody August 13

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