



Peter Eddington, Tom Kirkpatrick, Richard Kennebeck and David Evans look over plans at the building site. Below, Les McCullough and Tom Taubken of Fru-Con Construction after signing contract for the building



Ground Breaking Set for June 4

Construction of the United Church of God home office building begins this month, and is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year. President Les McCullough signed the contract with Fru-Con Construction Corporation May 16. Fru-Con has provided a guaranteed maximum price within the range agreed on by the Council of Elders in March.

"We have received all of our needed permits and the plan is to begin to move dirt next week," said Mr. McCullough in his May 30 letter. "An additional plus is that we have also received the zoning variance that will allow us to conduct church services in the building." The Cincinnati East congregation

will meet in the ABC classroom.

"To have a proper warehouse and an adequate mailroom will be a great blessing," said Mr. McCullough. "Present plans call for four unassigned offices, which will be available for future employees."

In general terms, warehouse space is nearly 7,500 square feet, and first floor office space is over 8,700 square feet (including space for the ABC program). The second

floor calls for about 9,000 square feet of office space, including a radio studio. The plans allow for the building to be extended if necessary to allow for more space.

Plans are to use approximately \$780,000 from the current year's surplus income to pay for all the one-time costs associated with the new facility, including a substantial down payment, environmental study costs and closing costs. *UN*

First Regional Ministerial Conference in Philadelphia

The first of nine U.S. regional ministerial conferences was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 20 to 22.

"The purpose of the conferences is to upgrade ourselves in the work of the ministry," said President Les McCullough. "The conferences are based on input from the field ministry, the regional pastors, Ministerial Services and the Council of Elders."

Subjects covered included two sessions on "Christ-Centered Servant Leadership" presented by Clyde Kilough; counseling presented by Gary Antion; using biblical exegesis by Donald Ward; presentations on ministers' wives and on invigorating the aging minister by Dennis Luker; practical preaching by Ralph Levy; dealing with different generations by Doug Horchak; expository preaching by Jim Franks; and member assistance by David Evans.

Operation manager Richard Pinelli also gave an update on Ministerial Services and discussed the job satisfaction survey sent out last spring to U.S. pastors, and Paul Suckling gave a regional pastor's update for the Northeast region.

The sessions were videotaped by Peter Eddington for use when

necessary in some of the other regions, and the tapes will be made available to the international areas.

Discussions are included in most portions of the seminars, said David Evans, assistant to Mr. Pinelli. "The elders and wives are asked to give input, share experiences and tips and ask questions regarding the presentations. Also, during one of the 'Christ-Centered Servant Leadership' sessions, groups are formed to contribute to comparisons between human-centered versus Christ-centered leadership topics."

The locations and dates of the other regional conferences are:

- Riverside, California, June 3 to 5.
- Dallas, Texas, June 10 to 12.
- Cambridge, Ohio, June 24 to 26.
- Atlanta, Georgia, July 22 to 24.
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 5 to 7.
- Amarillo, Texas, August 12 to 14.
- Jefferson City, Missouri, August 26 to 28.
- Portland, Oregon, September 9 to 11.

"We ask everyone to pray for the success of these conferences as we continue to strive to be better servants to God's people," said Mr. McCullough. *UN*

Good News Print Promotions Top 3 Million for Year

by John LaBissoniere

It has been an exciting year of growth! More than 3 million cards and brochures offering the *Good News* magazine have been distributed in the budget year 2000-2001. Below are some highlights.

Good Neighbor Supermarket Program: From August through October, 250,000 subscription brochures were distributed on "Good Neighbor" displays in 2,000 major supermarkets and discount stores in the top 68 United States media markets. Responses have reached 4,890, providing a 2.0 percent response at a cost per response of \$5.10. From February through April, 515,000 additional brochures were distributed in 4,000 stores.

Direct Mail: Last July a major direct mail test was conducted. Using 23 purchased lists, 279,000 U.S. households were mailed a letter offering a subscription. We received 8,813 requests, equaling 3.16 percent response. A second test was conducted in February to 192,000 additional households. So far, 10,133 subscriptions have been received equaling a 5 percent response.

Card Decks: In September we contracted with National Response Marketing, Inc., a media company that mails card decks to home schooling families. Our insertion cost was only 2 cents per card. We received 2,706 responses from 150,000 cards sent. This is a 1.8 percent response at a cost per

response of only \$1.26. In December we conducted another test. We received 2,374 subscriptions. This is a 1.6 percent response at a cost per response of \$1.43. We tried the program once again in March with good results.

In December we conducted a larger card deck test through American Home Direct, Inc. Our insert was mailed to 250,000 households in their "Rural American Gardening Pack." Response stands at 4,970, a 2.0 percent response at a cost per response of \$0.80. Since then, three other card decks tests have been conducted.

Package Inserts: From February to April we distributed 230,000 brochures in eight package insert programs. In this effort, our

inserts are placed in cartons with books people have purchased from various companies. Response has been very good.

Brochure Display Program: 53 U.S. congregations are participating and 85 individual brethren are involved in areas where there is no congregational effort. So far 50,000 brochures have been distributed on 1,200 clear soft acrylic displays. We have logged 1,068 responses, providing a 2.2 percent response at a cost per response of \$3.22.

Newsstand Program: More than 111,000 magazines were distributed through the efforts of brethren in 20 U.S. congregations. Over 800 *Good News* subscriptions have been generated. *UN*

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Reports From the Field

Dr. Laura Sparks an Unusual Contact

Several months ago, as I was in the car on my way to an appointment, I was listening to the Dr. Laura Schlesinger radio program. A caller wanted to discuss with Dr. Laura a problem she and her husband were having with her husband's ex-wife about what religious beliefs to teach her husband's daughter. The caller mentioned that the ex-wife did not want her daughter taught the husband's beliefs.

When Dr. Laura asked the caller what some of the beliefs were that she and her husband practiced, the caller mentioned their belief in observing the seventh-day Sabbath, clean and unclean meats and annual Holy Days such as Unleavened Bread, Passover and the Day of Atonement. Dr. Laura asked her what church she was a member of and she responded, "the United Church of God." Dr. Laura then continued to give her advice about how to handle the situation.

Later that week, I received a phone call from a lady in southeastern Wisconsin who wanted to know if I was the pastor of the United Church of God in Milwaukee. She explained that she had been listening to the Dr. Laura program a few days before and had heard the United Church of God mentioned along with a few of our beliefs.

She told me that she and her husband had been studying the Bible and had concluded that they should be observing the seventh-day Sabbath and the annual Holy Days, but knew of no church that did so. She had never heard of the United Church of God until the mention on the radio, and she found my number by looking for the United Church of God on the Internet. Since then, she and her family have begun attending Sabbath services in the Milwaukee area and are now receiving and studying literature from United.

Michael Hanisko



Elder Hosted Future President

I was surprised one day last September while watching CNN news when suddenly I saw the face of United Church of God elder Dan Salcedo introducing the man who was to become president of the United States! Before George W. Bush became the U.S. president, Mr. Salcedo hosted and introduced him to students of Santa Ana, California, High School.

Knowing that major news footage is often rerun throughout the day, I kept close watch to see Mr. Salcedo repeat this honor a couple of times. Since I've known Mr. Salcedo and his wife, Esther, for nearly 40 years, I was particularly struck by this unexpected opportunity that came his way. He just takes it all in stride.

Mr. Salcedo holds a master's degree and has been in education all his adult life. He is presently the principal of Santa Ana High School. He is highly regarded among his peers throughout Southern California, not to mention the United Church of God. Kudos to Mr. Salcedo.

Jerold Aust



Q&A: Jehovah or Yahweh Instead of God?

Q. Should we use the names *Jehovah* or *Yahweh* instead of *God*?

A. "Jehovah" is, according to Webster's Dictionary, "an erroneous rendering of the ineffable [inexpressible] name JHVH [or YHVH or YHWH] in the Hebrew scriptures." *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* adds:

"The divine name Yahweh is usually translated Lord in English versions of the Bible, because it became a practice in late Old Testament Judaism not to pronounce the sacred name YHWH, but to say instead 'my Lord' (Adonai)—a practice still used today in the synagogue. When the vowels of Adonai were attached to the consonants YHWH in the medieval period, the word Jehovah resulted. Today, many Christians use the word Yahweh, the more original pronunciation, not hesitating to name the divine name since Jesus taught believers to speak in a familiar way to God.

"The following are other names in honor of the Lord in the Old Testament that stem from the basic name of Yahweh:

"Jehovah-jireh—This name is translated as 'The-LORD-Will-Provide,' commemorating the provision of the ram in place of Isaac for Abraham's sacrifice (Gen. 22:14).

"Jehovah-nissi—This name means 'The-LORD-Is-My-Banner,' in honor of God's defeat of the Amalekites (Ex. 17:15).

"Jehovah-shalom—This phrase means 'The-LORD-Is-Peace,' the name Gideon gave the altar which he built in Ophrah (Judg. 6:24).

"Jehovah-shammah—This phrase expresses the truth that 'The-LORD-Is-There,' referring to the city which the prophet Ezekiel saw in his vision (Ezek. 48:35).

"Jehovah-tsebaoth—This name, translated 'The-LORD-of-hosts,' was used in the days of David and the prophets, witnessing to God the Savior who is surrounded by His hosts of heavenly power (1 Sam. 1:3).

"Jehovah Elohe Israel—This name means 'LORD-God-of-Israel,' and it appears in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the

Psalms. Other names similar to this are Netsah Israel, 'The Strength of Israel' (1 Sam. 15:29); and Abir Yisrael 'The Mighty One of Israel' (Is. 1:24)" (1986, "God, names of").

YHVH is but one of many names used for God in the Old Testament; its exact meaning, like its exact pronunciation, has been lost. Many other names, reflective of God's character or attributes, are found in the Scriptures. All are appropriate. One important name is "Elohim," which conveys "the sense of the one supreme being who is the only true God" (ibid.).

Jesus Christ used the commonly understood name for God, as did all of the writers of the Bible. (The original text of the Bible contains not only Hebrew and Greek, but also Aramaic and Chaldean.) We follow that example in our publications and our church services, using the commonly understood names for God in our languages, as well as those that refer to His character and attributes.

Cecil E. Maranville

United News

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Editor: Peter W. Eddington

Managing editor: Mike Bennett

Copy editor: Becky Bennett

UCG/IA Council of Elders: Gary Antion, Aaron Dean, Robert Dick, Roy Holladay (chairman), John A. Jewell, Victor Kubik, Les McCullough, Burk McNair, Mario Seiglie, Richard Thompson, Leon Walker, Donald Ward

President: Leslie L. McCullough

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

International addresses:

AUSTRALIA: United Church of God—Australia
GPO Box 535, Brisbane, Qld. 4001, Australia
Phone: 0755 202-111 Fax: 0755 202-122

BAHAMAS: United Church of God, P.O. Box N8873, Nassau, Bahamas
Phone: (242) 324-3169 Fax: (242) 364-5566

BRITISH ISLES: United Church of God—British Isles,
P.O. Box 705, Watford, Herts. WD19 6FZ England.
Phone: 020-8386-8467 Fax: 01257-453978

CANADA: United Church of God—Canada, P.O. Box 144, Station D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1, Canada
Phone: (416) 231-9379, (800) 338-7779 Fax: (416) 231-8238

FUJI: United Church of God, P.O. Box 10-577, Nadi, Fiji
Phone: 723-678

FRENCH-SPEAKING AREAS: Église de Dieu Unifié—France, B.P. 51254, 45002 Orléans Cedex 1, France

GERMANY: Vereinte Kirche Gottes, Postfach 30 15 09, D-53195 Bonn, Germany
Phone: 0228-9454636 Fax: 0228-9454637
E-mail: info@gutenachrichten.com

ITALY: La Buona Notizia, Chiesa di Dio Unita, Casella Postale 187, 24100 Bergamo, Italy. Phone/Fax: 0039-035-582140 E-mail: redazione@labuonanotizia.org

MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 53, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius
THE NETHERLANDS: United Church of God of Holland, P.O. Box 93, 2800 AB Gouda, The Netherlands

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

PHILIPPINES: United Church of God, P.O. Box 4774, MCPO, 1287 Makati City, Philippines
Phone: (+63-82) 241-0150

SCANDINAVIA: Guds Forenade Kyrka, Mailbox 144, 111 73 Stockholm, Sweden

SOUTHERN AFRICA: United Church of God, Southern Africa, P.O. Box 2209, Beacon Bay, East London 5205, South Africa. Phone/Fax: 043 748-1694

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

TONGA: United Church of God—Tonga, P.O. Box 127, Nuku'alofa, Tonga

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Caring for Our Needy Brethren in Developing Areas

God's love motivates us to want to care for those in need. But how can we give in ways that really help?

by Victor Kubik

What is our responsibility to help brethren who live in impoverished areas of the world? To what degree should we help our own members who are without some of the basic needs for shelter and basic health that we take for granted in our developed world? Can we make a difference in another society far away that has a per capita income perhaps 50 times less than we have in ours?

In my many travels around the world with the Church I had always wondered if we were fulfilling some of our basic Christian responsibilities that the apostle John asks about in 1 John 3:17: "But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

In Luke 16 we read about Lazarus, a beggar with sores, lying at the gate of the rich man who ignored his plight. I could not help thinking about the various "Lazaruses" that I have seen.

I realized that having an income 50 times more than a brother in the faith struggling with the basics of food, shelter and clothing does not make me a better a person nor does it make the one who is poor of less value to God. And, the Scriptures do point out that we cannot ignore their plight. Where children of our members in Zambia die regularly, should we not be finding ways to change that? Are their children of less value than ours?

The mission of the Church of God is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God in all the world, make disciples in all nations and *care for those disciples*. When preaching and caring for the poor, it's not only spiritual care that is meant. Physical care eventually becomes an issue.

In the early New Testament Church the apostle Paul made it a church project in the more prosperous Greek areas to send aid to Christians suffering from drought and famine in Judea. He collected life-sustaining humanitarian aid from the more affluent areas and sent it by cargo ship to Jerusalem. Paul speaks of this in the first part of 1 Corinthians 16. Continuing in 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9 Paul again encourages the faltering rich Corinthians to respond as the poorer Macedonians had responded to the difficulties of the saints in Judea. His appeal is strong and direct.

Learning to Make a Difference

I had never given much serious thought to the Church's role in dealing with poverty

until I met British surgeon and elder, Maurice Frohn, at the Feast of Tabernacles in the United Kingdom in 1995. We happened to sit together at a ministerial dinner and started talking about the ongoing suffering of children in Chernobyl 10 years after the world's worst nuclear accident. By the next April the two of us were off to Chernobyl to investigate what was going on.

Maurice Frohn, one of England's top thyroid cancer surgeons, was astounded at what he saw. Not only was it discouraging to see the overwhelming medical inadequacies, the solutions seemed to be beyond anything we could do to make a difference.

When I returned to the United States, I prayed that I would not give up or rationalize away my Christian duty. I prayed that God would help me do something about these needs. Doors quickly opened.

I discovered funded shipping programs to needy areas of the world. I found sources of medicine as low as 5 percent

er, we learned about the work of the Chondes who operated a private clinic they call "Malakia" (after the book of Malachi) in the capital city of Lilongwe.

They described the inhumane conditions they work under. They opened a private clinic so that they could be free to keep the Sabbath. But they had no medicine, few supplies and hardly any equipment—not even simple items like a stethoscope or a means of checking blood pressure.

The Chondes are truly heroic in their work. They are the first providers of health care for a community of 10,000 people in Lilongwe. Many of the people coming to the clinic had already gone to witch doctors.

The clinic was housed in a most unsuitable old movie theater next to a casket maker. (When

United States. Bill Jahns, pastor of five congregations in the mountain states, helped by sending regular medical shipments to Malawi using the inexpensive sources that we used for Chernobyl. This became the only source of medicine for the Chondes' clinic.

Then we found a U.S. Department of Defense program for shipping containers to Malawi in which delivery was not only free but also guaranteed. The Chondes gave us a list of needed life-sustaining items that included blankets, iodized salt, rice and dried milk.

Dyanne Dick, wife of Council of Elders member Robert Dick, came to our aid by collecting blankets in the Northwest. Through other charities we were able to collect medical supplies such as rubber gloves, scrubs,

IV tubing and syringes. Through responsive people such as Tom Kerestes, a UCG member in St. Paul, Minnesota, office furniture was collected and sent on the container. In all about 15 tons of aid that cost us very little was gathered and shipped in November 1998 and was received intact by the Chondes the next April 1999.

We then began talking about providing a better facility for their work. A birthing center was desperately needed. My questions were, how much do we need to get involved in this? How could we possibly ever provide a facility like this? We had never done anything like this before.

Yet, looking at how we had been able to provide other life-sustaining items, and seeing that it indeed could be done with some resourcefulness, I thought it might be worth making the effort. I found that there are many sources of aid available through networking, research and simply letting God direct you to sources of aid. I did not want to burden the Church or do anything to take resources away from preaching the gospel.

The Chondes submitted a beautiful set of plans for a new clinic and bought the land for about \$400. On faith and with the help of friends, we made a commitment to build the new structure. When South African pastor Andre van Belkum and I visited Malawi last winter, we held a ground breaking with the Chondes on July 5. The clinic is about complete for a total cost of \$26,000. To furnish, equip and supply the clinic we have shipped another 20-ton container from Minneapolis, Minnesota that is due to arrive in Malawi at about the same time the building is finished.

Launching LifeNets

In 1999 I founded a nonprofit called LifeNets. I got the best people I could find in the medical profession, business and the fund-raising field to help out. I found go-getters who were not daunted by obstacles and



Clockwise from upper right: Minneapolis, Minnesota, pastor Jim Servidio helps load a container bound for Malawi February 23; Gladstone Chonde at entry to new Malakia clinic in Malawi; a view of the outside of the new clinic; scenes of unloading the container in Malawi

I visited the clinic last July, I found it worse than they had described it.)

of cost. I started talking to ordinary people who helped people overseas in extraordinary ways and found out how they did it. Within months we collected 10 tons of food and medicine. We shipped a high value of aid for pennies on the dollar. And then we did it again. And again.

I then thought, What about the brethren in the Church? What can and what should we do for them?

Desperate Needs in Malawi

For the Feast of Tabernacles in 1996, my wife, Beverly, and I traveled to Zimbabwe. There we met UCG members Gladstone and Alice Chonde who came by bus from Malawi. Over the course of our days togeth-

Malawi is the third poorest country in the world, with an average life expectancy of 36 years, an extremely high infant mortality rate and astronomical birth and death rates. Simple medicines would save the lives of many, mostly children, of those who came to them.

We found it impossible to leave the Feast telling them to be "warmed and filled" and "have a nice day" and do nothing. But, what could we do?

We cannot save the entire world now, but we can help *this* community through our members, the Chondes.

Doors Open, Members Pitch in

Doors opened after we returned to the

who got things done. Suzan Johns and Guy and Jennifer Swenson took the lead, working through challenges. Our mission was to develop programs offering practical assistance to promote the well-being and self-sufficiency of needy people throughout the world. The vast majority of the beneficiaries would be our own brethren.

LifeNets became eligible for funded government programs, matching funds, grants, direct medical purchases and now is being offered high-value medical and dental equipment by donors who would like a tax deduc-

be done. In several discussions with Leon Walker, director of our Spanish-speaking churches, I was able to learn about some vital needs of our brethren and to devise a plan to do something about those needs. Our Spanish-speaking areas have the largest number of people living in poverty.

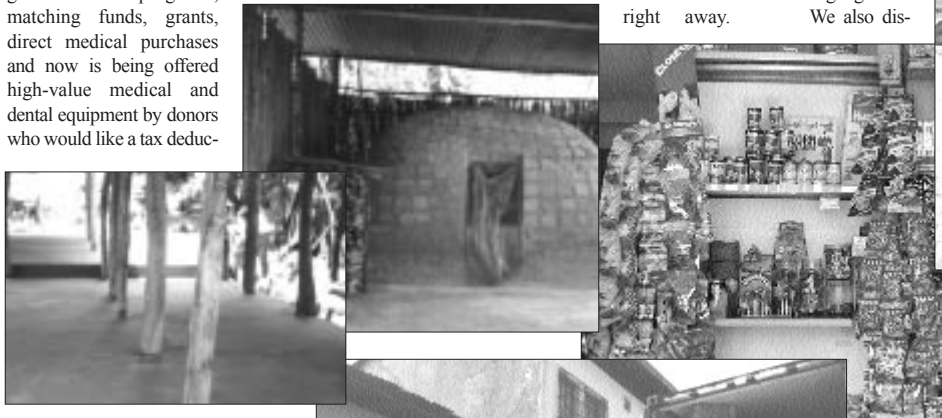
It's not always apparent what's needed because some people do not disclose their real needs right away.

A top priority in discussions with Mr. Walker and Saul Langerica, pastor of the congregations in Guatemala, was installing concrete floors in the homes of 15 brethren who lived on dirt in unsanitary conditions. To date we are completing the first seven floors and have funded the remaining eight.

We also dis-

can be with her children when they return from school. Business has been brisk. She is currently expanding her kiosk.

We also sent sewing machines, tools and other income-generating items to Central America. Many of these things were sitting in people's garages and not being used. For example, elder Jack Elliott's radial arm saw was gathering dust and rust. Off it went to Guatemala, and now it is a viable tool for a Guatemalan carpenter who can support his family better. Belinda McCloud, who learned about these needs while attending ABC in its first year, helped coordinate these collections for a container that left from Houston this February.



Clockwise from below left: Unloading the container of humanitarian aid in El Salvador; concrete floors and a commercial bread oven in Guatemala; widow's kiosk in Guatemala; cattle like those that will be provided to brethren who lost their cattle in Zambia

tion. We saw that once people found they could trust you, they would trust you again and again. Volunteers from around the world joined hands to provide meaningful, practical aid to qualified needy people.

In the past two years we have helped with the following needs: clothing, medicine, scholarships, eyeglasses, wheelchairs, cattle restoration, youth camps, dental care and hygiene, vaccination program, clinics and computers.

Caring for Central America

I began looking at other areas of need within the poorer areas of the United Church of God and wanted to determine what could

Some had been promised aid in the past, but it had never materialized. Others received things they did not need. It takes discussion, listening and planning fair distribution programs to provide the kind of aid that really makes a positive difference.

cussed how to help with providing the means to generate income in a country where the average wage is about \$120 a month. We have funded the construction of a commercial bread oven with which three families in the La Tinta area of Guatemala can make a living by baking bread and selling it to their neighbors. Also, we were

able to help a widow with four young children set up a kiosk from her home. With an initial outlay of \$350 she has been able to purchase the original stock, sell it and replenish it. She has been able to quit her job at the factory and make a living from home so she

Heifer Project

One of the major projects is in Zambia where we are restocking cattle to our brethren who lost *all* their livestock to disease about three years ago. The cattle had provided a source of draft power for plowing and a source of dairy protein. Our families have been reduced to subsistence farming with wives and children pulling plows. With animal draft power they could greatly increase their cultivation and raise crops for cash.

We are working with Heifer Project International, which includes a program of education designed to change the circumstances that brought on the catastrophe in the first place.

Our education program is just starting and will help our people learn better grazing methods and proper veterinary care of the animals. Within a year we plan to have 24 head of cattle and a bull for our brethren living in two communities about 15 miles apart in the Mumbwa region of Zambia. Elder Kambani Banda has registered LifeNets in Zambia and will oversee this project.

We have looked at other areas of the world where our brethren live in challenging conditions and have tried to find ways to provide things they really need. In the Philippines we have helped with camp equipment the past two years along with other requested items, such as Bibles and medicine.

We cannot save this world, but we can be ready to start rebuilding this earth when God's Kingdom returns. Being prepared by starting to help in needed areas is vital to that process.

If you want to find out more about what LifeNets is doing and how you can make a difference, go to our Web site at www.lifenets.org and read our annual report at www.lifenets.org/report2000. UN

Avoiding Aid Mistakes and Ensuring Healthy Results

It has been rewarding to find ways of helping our own with the help of enthusiastic volunteers. In the process, we have learned a number of vitally important lessons that have ensured that our aid indeed brings healthy results.

These lessons help neutralize objections often made about charitable work, such as:

- Aid won't go to intended recipients.
 - It will make people more dependent.
 - We don't really know who the recipients are.
 - We are feeding a handout mentality.
- To avoid these problems we have learned the following:

- *There must be a genuine need before aid is given.* This takes careful and thoughtful appraisal. Often those needing help most are not the ones asking. And those asking may not be the priority.
- *Provide only the kind of assistance that will result in self-sufficiency and not in dependency.* Mistakes can be made by giving

cash grants to people that result in them asking for more. This kind of help can actually defeat an aid program. The most successful contributions are those for the greater good of a group, income-producing methods, microloans, helping children or in-kind benefits. There should never be a never-ending promise to keep on helping. We believe in a hand up, not a handout.

- *Aid must be distributed in a fair and equitable manner.* A group receiving aid can be destabilized by favoritism. People quickly find out who's getting what and from whom. It's vital that there be local coordination by the pastor or a responsible individual to oversee agreed-upon equity.

- *Recipients must be accountable for the aid received.* Beneficiaries of aid must make plain how the aid has been used and how it has improved their condition. Often small loans are best because the repayment process teaches accountability. A loan should be made for income-producing purposes.

- *Those receiving aid must be willing to be educated in how to better themselves—they must do their part.* In Zambia, for example, we are initiating an education program for proper care of the animals that are being donated. People must be willing to change methods that caused failure and be willing to adopt methods that will ensure success.

- *Aid must be culturally appropriate.* We must not bring aid that draws undue attention to the donors or beneficiaries. Again using Zambia as an example, we must help the people plow better with animals and not introduce tractors that are nowhere to be seen in the area.

- *Give what is really needed and make sure it's in good condition.* It is irritating and wasteful to give people things they cannot use or something that is not in working condition which they have to dispose of. It is far better to treat people with dignity and respect, as we would like to be treated. UN

International News...

Pastor Takes Spring Holy Day Trip Through Sub-Saharan Africa

by Joel Meeker

During the Spring Holy Day period I visited or met with members from Kenya, Cameroon, Benin, Togo and also participated in a seminar with pastors of the Remnant Church of God in Ghana.

Kenya was not originally part of my plan but it turned out to be less expensive to fly to Cameroon via Nairobi rather than directly from Europe. After two nights on planes, and a day's layover in London, I arrived in Nairobi on Wednesday April 4. That afternoon I met with David Gichuru and Antonio Ndongu to work on plans for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Most of the people who will be attending the Feast in Kenya are subsistence farmers with little festival tithe available in cash. We needed to find a site where it would be possible to keep the cost low for festival attendees. We have found a site in the village of Rongo in the Lake Victoria region of western Kenya which should be workable. Both men had visited the site and feel it will be suitable. There is also a hotel nearby suitable for visitors from Western countries, which our Kenyan brethren hope will join them again for the Feast of Tabernacles 2001.

Passover in Cameroon

Thursday morning I was up at 4 to catch my plane to Douala, Cameroon, with a brief layover in Kinshasa, Congo. I arrived in Douala in the afternoon to be met by Mr. Mabout and Mr. Andang.

Friday afternoon we made our preparations for the Passover weekend. That evening 18 people participated in the Passover ceremony. Several others were taking the Passover in their homes since they were too far away to come to Douala.

The next day we had an afternoon Sabbath service during which I gave a Church news update followed by a sermon on the importance of faith. Faith is, of course, important to all Christians, but for our brethren in the developing world, difficult physical as well as spiritual trials are a constant daily occurrence.

Following services we shared our Night to Be Much Observed meal: several kinds of salads, beef, plantain (cooked banana), potatoes, spicy sauce and beer (which many people in Cameroon prefer to wine). The feast was very enjoyable for all present. Before the meal we had a brief Bible study about why we gather on that evening. I asked questions so that members gave the explanation themselves as we looked at both the Old and New Testament significance of the evening.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread we had a service in the morning, and shared another meal at noon. Then we set our chairs in a circle and had an interactive Bible study.

This allowed them to ask questions on marriage, prophecy, various "ministries" that Paul mentioned, tithing and first fruits.

I asked them questions on how they go about making the Sabbath a "delight" (as it says in Isaiah 58), health laws the Bible gives us (also especially important in the developing world), what the Bible says we're to do when we're sick, the difference between the letter of the law and the spirit, and how members should participate in the work of the Church. There was very lively and informative give and take.

Monday Mr. Mabout, Matthias Banoumb and I headed out of Douala to look at Feast sites for this year. We visited two sites which had been used previously for the Feast, and finally settled on the village of Buea, about an hour and half north of Douala. Buea was the colonial capital of Cameroon when the region was under German control, before World War I. It is on the flank of Mount Cameroon, with a cooler climate and fewer mosquitoes. This will be a French-speaking site; any francophone visitors would be most welcome for the Feast.

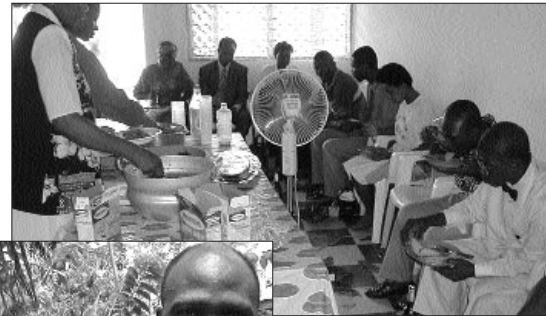
We then hurried back to Douala to the church hall where we were to have our inaugural meeting of the first-ever Cameroon Spokesman Club. This was a new experience for the 11 men present, and the excitement they displayed after the first meeting was very encouraging to see.

Tuesday, I met with three people who traveled several hundred miles by bush taxi to begin counseling for baptism. One lady has never had the chance to learn to read in either her tribal language or French, so she cannot personally study the Bible. I outlined some subjects and specific passages to study, gave them additional literature on key concepts about baptism and encouraged the three of them to study together and especially to read to and translate for the non-reader. I asked them to write down any questions they have, and I will meet with them again during my next visit to Cameroon.

Kidnapped?

Wednesday I was kidnapped by Cameroon Airlines. Well, not really, but nearly so. I was to leave at 2:30 for an hour-and-a-half flight to Cotonou, Benin, for the continuation of my trip. The flight was to make one quick stop in Malabo on an island just off the coast from Douala. Instead we left after 5 p.m. and flew first to Brazzaville in the Congo (nearly two hours due south of

Douala), and then to Lagos, Nigeria (a flight time of two hours). I began to wonder if the plane would just keep flying around Africa until it ran out of fuel. We arrived in Lagos at 10:45, waited another hour and finally took off for Cotonou. The flight that was supposed to arrive at 4 p.m. finally came in well after midnight! The stewardess thanked



Members having lunch together on the first day of Unleavened Bread in Cameroon; left, Mr. and Mrs. Pierre Kloutse with their son, Daniel, from Togo

us for our patience, apologized for any inconvenience that "might" have been caused, and hoped to see us soon on another flight....

Meeting With the Brethren From Benin and Togo

After a short night I met the next day with Church members from Cotonou. Mr. Ogoudele and one of his sons came to the hotel on their motorbike. We had a long talk about news of the Church as well as how the members in Benin and Togo are faring. The members here only receive one or two visits a year, so they deeply appreciate every occasion to fellowship with brethren. We agreed to meet again the next afternoon (Friday) when the members from Togo would arrive. We planned a Bible study for that evening. The rest of Thursday and Friday I spent in the hotel getting caught up on "office work" since I was able to receive my e-mail.

The three members from neighboring Togo didn't arrive until fairly late in the evening and they were quite tired from their journey, so we decided to postpone the Bible study and meet in the morning for services on the last day of Unleavened Bread. During the morning service I gave a Church news update, a message about the offering and a sermon.

At noon we shared a lunch of beef in a bean sauce, with fresh fruit for desert. In the afternoon we had an interactive Bible study, which I have found is one of the best ways to

use time spent together when such time is limited. It was quite a wide-ranging study, covering topics like why we count to Pentecost from the day after Passover this year and not from the day after the last Holy Day, how to help our young people prepare for baptism, the administration of second tithe (the faithfulness in tithing of our

brethren in Benin and Togo in spite of often difficult economic circumstances has been most encouraging to see). Altogether the study lasted for more than two and half hours.

After the study we drove out to the seashore to see how the waves are eroding the coastline. Houses built on the coast are falling into the ocean as the beach line recedes under pressure of

strong ocean currents carrying away sand. Looking at an unfinished house which had been rented some years back as a Feast of Tabernacles site, and which had recently had its front half collapse into the water, reminded me of the parable Christ gave about the importance of building on rock and not sand.

Sunday we met again in the morning for a Bible study. Among other things we talked about current events in the Middle East and what is prophesied to happen. We also made plans for the Feast of Tabernacles. I was happy to ask God's blessing on Mr. and Mrs. Kloutse's 1-year-old son Daniel during the study as well. I also anointed Mr. Ogoudele's mother who is suffering from partial paralysis due to a stroke and one of the young ladies in the group who was suffering from malaria.

After lunch five of us drove a few kilometers out of Cotonou to the jetty from where one can take a small sail or motor boat to the lake village of Ganvié. Ganvié is a large village where most structures are built on posts in the middle of a large seawater lagoon (there are also a few islands). It was quite a fascinating and informative visit. The first people moved out to Ganvié several hundred years ago to escape tribal wars. Now the people of Ganvié live by fishing (and a bit of tourism) and make a good living from it. After this excursion we said our good-byes.

Togo to Ghana

My flight to Accra, Ghana, was to have left on Tuesday morning at 7:30 a.m., but it was rescheduled for 11 p.m. When I and a few other travelers arrived at the airport around 9 p.m., there was no one present from

the airline. We waited until nearly 11 p.m. before we were informed that the flight had just been canceled.

At this point I was standing behind a businessman from Japan who was waiting for the same flight. Through his assistant who spoke French, we discussed the possibility of traveling overland from Cotonou to Accra the next morning, since there would be no more flights for several days. Back at the hotel, which still had several free rooms, we were able to track down a car and driver willing to

take us to Accra. My new Japanese friend was on his first business trip to West Africa and had already had a piece of luggage stolen, and three flights cancelled. At this point, he was happy to have a traveling companion who at least somewhat knew the region. He didn't speak much English, but it was infinitely better than my nonexistent Japanese!

We left around 7 a.m. the next morning

for the trip which would entail us driving through the country of Togo which is between Benin and Ghana. It took nearly eight hours including four customs checks (and baggage searches), four passport controls (leaving Benin, entering Togo, leaving Togo and entering Ghana) and checking the taxi's registration documents. These each lasted between 10 minutes and an hour.

The driver became impatient and wanted to speed things along by slipping a little "dash" to the appropriate officials (some of them move very slowly so as to encourage such "generosity"), but I told him I preferred to take a few extra minutes and not encourage the practice. Upon our arrival, my traveling companion was so pleased to have had assistance during the trip, that he generously paid for the entire cost of the vehicle, even

though we had agreed to split the cost.

After a much-needed rest overnight, I started out at 6 the next morning for the drive



A member prepares the noon meal for the last day of Unleavened Bread in Cotonou, Benin; above, the lake village of Ganvié, Benin



up to Kumasi, where I was late for a seminar which Jim Franks and Melvin Rhodes were holding for the pastors of the Remnant Church of God. They had met with the executive board of the Remnant Church of God and then spent several days covering various topics with the 13 pastors. Subjects covered included: an overview of UCG history and development, how local UCG congregations are structured, how the Holy Days illustrate God's plan of salvation, an overview of our understanding of prophecy, understanding God's calling and how this affects the way we preach the gospel, and biblical principles for prayer.

I arrived at 9 a.m. (I believe the driver set a new speed record) just in time for the start of the last morning session. I gave a brief

evaluation of our progress toward each other, and explained that we would be making a presentation to our General Conference of Elders at our May meeting to keep our eldership fully informed of progress. I also laid out our proposed schedule of visits for the rest of 2001 and took questions. Jim Franks then took the rest of the morning session, covering the topic of heaven and hell.

We had a delicious Ghanaian lunch at the house and then several of us ran some errands in Kumasi. Charles (Chuck) Stevens, a member from Houston, Texas, who at his own expense had traveled to Ghana with Mr. Franks, generously donated many Bibles in the local Twi language, as well as some Bible helps in English which he had purchased in Kumasi. Mr. Stevens had been very generous with his help all through this trip, and his aid and encouragement was much appreciated by our brethren in Ghana. During this time Melvin Rhodes had the chance to renew some old friendships with people he knew from his years as the pastor in Ghana.

Thursday morning most of the Remnant pastors came to the hotel (these pastors had filled up the Church house during their stay in Kumasi), to see us off as we started the four-hour drive back to Accra. As we said our good-byes, we all expressed how thankful we were to have been able to spend time together and encourage one another in the faith. The van we were using (there were six of us traveling back to Accra) broke down twice, but each time the driver was able to get it running again, and we were not delayed too much in reaching Accra.

The next visit by UCG elders to our friends and brethren in Ghana is planned for June. *UN*

Keep Praying for the Brethren in Zimbabwe

With recent news of violence in Zimbabwe, many have asked about our brethren. Our members are most concerned, as they are unsure how the violence will escalate in the months ahead. One member wrote: "We have to put our trust in God. I don't know how anyone who does not believe can possibly cope with things as they are now. Please continue to pray for us."

One positive recent development is that the government has clamped down on the self-styled "war vets" who are attacking certain selected businesses in the cities (not those who have occupied farms). The president has instructed the police to arrest certain ones who have beaten business owners. This is possibly due to pressure from the South African government. This is unexpected and, I believe, an answer to our prayers and the love and concern expressed by so many of our brethren around the world. So far our members have escaped the violence, and have not been physically harmed. We are also most grateful that the one member who owns a dairy farm has not had his property occupied.

André van Belkum

Dutch and German Brethren Meet Together

UCG-Holland hosted brethren from the nearby Dormagen congregation in Germany for a special combined Pentecost service in Arnhem, the Netherlands. A total of 67 brethren met in the Mercoure Hotel on the A12 freeway near Arnhem for all-day services.

For the first time ever, Dutch and German brethren met together and heard one sermon each in their own language with a simultaneous translation into the other language, using UCG-Germany's Sennheiser infrared translation equipment.

In the morning, Martin Arends spoke in Dutch on key aspects of the Holy Spirit. His sermon was translated into German by Albert van Dijk. Following a buffet lunch in the hotel restaurant, UCG-Holland and UCG-Germany pastor Paul Kieffer gave the afternoon sermon in German. His sermon was translated into Dutch by Jamie de Moei.

Brethren commented positively on the warm fellowship and Feastlike atmosphere at the special service. *UN*

Canadian Work Continues Growth Trends

Weekly Sabbath attendance in Canada has been on the rise. A record of 555 was set on April 7. The average attendance for Sabbath services in April reached 504. The average weekly attendance for the first four months of this year was up more than 6 percent.

The month of April saw the number of members increase 1.4 percent, the number of donors increase 9.9 percent and the number of subscribers increase 3.7 percent. From January through the end of April the Canadian office distributed close to 40,000 pieces of literature. This pace is well ahead of last year, and if the trend continues the staff should distribute about 12 percent more literature this year than last.

The fiscal year for the Church in Canada ended March 31. "We ended the last fiscal year on a positive note," wrote Ed van Pelt in *The UCG Canadian Report*. "We exceeded our budgeted income for March, and we also exceeded our budgeted income for the year. We are very grateful for this as we work to spread the gospel to the rest of Canada."

Canadian Camp

Application forms for Camp McGillvary in Alberta, August 10 to 19, are now available on the Canadian Web page at www.ucg.ca/yth. Just click on the 2001 link and it will take you to the page with both camper and staff applications. The application deadline is July 1. Tuition is \$125 Canadian, which is about US\$80 to \$85. Arrangements can be made to pick up and return campers or staff to the airport in Calgary.

National Council and National Conference Meetings in Winnipeg

Canadian National Council meetings began March 8 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Committee meetings and reports made up most of the agenda for March 9. "These meetings were open to the local brethren," wrote Anthony Wasilkoff, operation manager for Canada. "As a result, a handful of members were able to attend most of the sessions. They were welcome not only to observe, but also to participate, which they did!"

Winnipeg ordinarily has about 17 for Sabbath services, but 59 attended March 10. Council-related guests accounted for 19 of the extra attendees, and the balance of the visitors were from the Winnipeg area. "Various fellowships were significantly represented," said Mr. Wasilkoff.

On Sunday, March 11, the National Conference meetings got under way. (Two members of the National Conference were listening to the proceedings by telephone hook-up.) The Canadian Strategic Plan, Operations Plan and Budget were ratified by the members of the National Conference.

"The National Conference appointed three people to the National Council," said Mr. Wasilkoff. "Rainer Salomaa was selected by acclamation. Daniel Berendt was selected to replace David Palmer. Carol Livermore (from the Ottawa congregation) was selected to replace Daniel Berendt. We congratulate each of the new appointees and thank those who have served faithfully on the National Council." *UN*

The UCG Canadian Report is posted on the Web at www.ucg.org/a/news/canada.htm.

Philippine Camp: Teens Explore Life Under the Sea

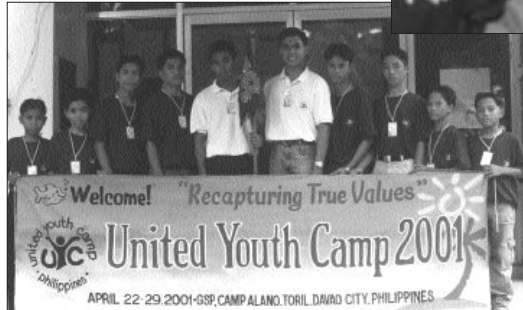
by Edmond Macaraeg, camp director

Last summer, campers climbed the Philippine's highest mountain. This year, campers enjoyed a swim to one of the country's most beautiful natural aquariums—the majestic, quiet, and colorful world under the sea.

Sixty campers and staff took part in this year's United Youth Camp in the Philippines held from April 21 to 29 based at the GSP Regional Training Camp in Toril, Davao City. Included were 36 teens (16 boys and 20 girls) from eight church areas. Eight young adults served as counselors and assistant counselors, while another 16 volunteer staff served in various activities and workshops.



Princess Balugo and Ryan Julag-Ay dance; above, Cheryl and Laurie Macaraeg, Paulette Cebrian and Obed Balugo; left, dorm 2B



Day activities consisted of Christian living classes, confidence course, dance, fishing, rowing, snorkeling, swimming, table tennis, volleyball and wilderness skills. Each camper also attended three of six workshops offered: carpentry, computers, cooking and baking, electricity, journalism and photography.

After breakfast on the Sabbath, campers had a "Bible Bowl." During church services, Edmond Macaraeg gave a sermon on the lessons from Daniel and his friends as may be applied in "modern Babylon." Two campers participated in the services by giving the opening and closing prayers. After services, campers and members visited the dorms in an open house activity.

Evening activities included an orientation night, novelty games, movie night with pizza and ice cream (the show was *Cast Away*, an island adventure movie starring Tom Hanks), sing-along, open forum, formal dinner, a dance night, variety show and an awards ceremony.

The highlight of this year was the adventure camp-out at De La Paz Island in Samal. Survival challenges present were sharp coral rocks (footwear was required), absence of fresh water (we had to bring our own supply) and no electricity. Campers had to cook using firewood. They also had to pitch their tents on Bermuda grass after diligently removing all the stones and coral from the ground. In this

challenging but peaceful environment, campers enjoyed fellowship, games and a sing-along after dinner—all done by ingeniously magnifying the brightness of flashlights!

This island was the venue for the rod-and-reel fishing, swimming, snorkeling and boat-



and other sea creatures unique to warm, tropical waters.

For many of the campers, the two-day camp-out was not long enough—everyone had such a great time. As Ryan from Bacolod City (from Dorm 2B) said: "I like this year's camp although we had limited time for fishing and other activities in Samal. I like the dorms and the fellow campers as well. I had the time of my life!"

Many campers learned a great deal from the camp: Joseph from Manila (from Dorm 1B) said: "The youth camp taught us how to become strong physically and spiritually—and prepare for the future. We learned new skills, learned to set our priorities, developed new friends, and learned to form godly relationships."

Cheryl from Polomolok (from Dorm 2G) said: "I love this year's camp. The camp is one of the greatest experiences I've ever had.

I developed and learned new skills, just like snorkeling and rowing. Camp has taught me how to survive. I also gained new friends. All were kind—from warm welcomes to sad good-byes. The fair treatment of the staff,



Dorm 1G goes snorkeling and rod-and-reel fishing

and their challenging lessons, gave us a guide for our daily lives. I hope to be one of the campers again next year!"

Princess from Davao City (from Dorm 1G) said: "I thank the people who made the camp a success. Most of all, I thank God for providing us with the means to attend this camp. I'm looking forward to next year's camp, and I hope it will be even more educational and fun."

For more information, see the Philippine Web site www.ucg.org.ph/youthcamp.htm, which includes more photos, stories, testimonials and personal experiences of campers and staff, as well as the on-line version of the latest Philippine camp publication, *United Teens Philippines*. *un*

U.S. Preteen Camps Offer Fun, Sun and Education

In order to provide fun educational experiences for our preteens and to take some of the pressure off of the numbers attending our teen camps, several church areas across the United States have organized summer camps for children ages 6 to 12.

These camps include a variety of activities such as swimming, canoeing, sports, arts and crafts, hikes and outdoor games.

Local Efforts

Many preteen camps have been organized and running for the past several summers. Typically, a preteen camp is organized and run on a local level and is smaller in scale than a United teen camp. Rather than being one week long like our teen camps, preteen camps are limited to three nights and four days away from home.

Most of the staff members are usually made up from among the parents of the campers.

As of this printing the following

camps have been organized. Feel free to contact any of them for more information.

Lewistown, Pennsylvania, hosts a preteen camp June 24 to 27. This year's theme centers around the story of Moses. Contact pastor Dale Schurter at (610) 865-2599, send e-mail to Dale_Schurter@ucg.org or contact director Renita Brummett at (570) 374-5076 or by e-mail at renita@uplink.net.

Northeast Ohio hosts Camp Highlands for kids ages 6 to 12 from July 29 to August 1. Download all the information from www.ucgakron.org (click on AYOUTH@ for camp information) or e-mail director Dave Myers at dave_myers@ucg.org or call (330) 686-5881.

Southwest Ohio hosts a preteen camp in Cincinnati on a members' property July 15 to 18. For more information contact camp director Jim O'Brien at (513) 755-0040 or by e-mail at jim_o'brien@ucg.org.

Central Missouri hosts preteen Camp Galilee at Bull Shoals Lake July

9 to 12. For more information you can contact director Mike Blackwell at (417) 886-8204 or by e-mail at michael_blackwell@ucg.org.

Southern Minnesota hosts Ironwood Springs Camp August 19 to 22. For more information contact directors Steve and Kathie Myers at (507) 288-5717, by e-mail at kathemyers@aol.com or check out the camp's Web site at www.ucg-calm.org/preteen_youth_camp.htm.

The **South Central Region** hosted a preteen camp in the Houston, Texas, area June 3 to 6. For more information about next year's camp, contact director De Lynn Buchanan at (281) 852-8179 or by e-mail at ELBUCH@aol.com.

If there is no preteen camp listed near you, check with your pastor to see if there may be a camp in the planning stages in your region this summer—or ask how you might go about organizing one.

There's no better classroom to teach God's way than the great outdoors!

Dave Myers

Once in a great long while—and these days are far too seldom—we have an opportunity to sit quietly and contemplate some of the great wonders of nature. We all recall warm summer days as children when we would lie on the grass and just watch the clouds roll by. We'd imagine creatures or faces being formed by passing clouds. How rarely this happens when we grow up.

Recently my wife and I spent a week on the island of Maui. It has been more than 20 years since I had enjoyed such a visit. I had the time to watch clouds and listen to the waves crashing on the shore. It was the season for whale watching. To see an 80,000-pound creature rise out of the sea until almost all of its body is arching through the air is a sight that leaves me in awe!

People from various parts of the world board small boats and travel out to see the sights of whales breaching, diving or raising their huge pectoral fins. Sometimes only the head comes up out of the water up to eye level—just as though the whale is taking a peek at the spectators.

Always there are gasps of awe and amazement as a whale performs before this audience. These are the humpback whales and, though not the very largest, they are magnificent to say the least.

In Genesis 1:21 we read that God created great whales. It struck me that God has created these enormous creatures and they are completely at His command (as are all other creatures). Whales do not know why they migrate for thousands of miles to mate and calve off of Maui.

In Job 41:1 God asks: "Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook?" In verse 3 God asks: "Will he speak softly to you?" It struck me that although theologians



argue over what creature God is referring to here, the greatest creatures on earth respond to God's commands. God controls them. He indeed does have a spiritual hook that draws these huge mammals to Maui each year.

Furthermore, these huge creatures make soft sounds that we cannot understand and often cannot hear. Our ears are

limited in ability. God hears their songs and soft messages. He can and did make these huge creatures do just that!

Whales are known to "sing" under water. I recently watched a program on the



Discovery Channel showing that great elephants who can roar and trumpet mightily, also communicate with their young in "soft words." When I take time to watch God's amazing

creation, the words of the song "How Great Thou Art" come to my mind.

Wonders All Around Us

Man cannot program the Canada goose to head north or south at prescribed times. He cannot program salmon to come back to the streams of their birth to spawn and die. Man in his limited way can and should observe these wonders and know that God is the Creator!

A Whale of a Call

The call of the wild—the wonders of creation—can help us appreciate our calling by the Creator.

by Robert Berendt

Job was awestruck with what God showed him. When he took time to ponder and observe and then to really appreciate the presence of God, Job was humbled. Our responsibility within this great cre-

in Hebrews 1:3 it says that Jesus is the express image of the Father. What an incredible future God intends for mankind. Psalm 37:9 boldly states that "those who wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth."

Right now the earth belongs to God. He hears the sounds of His creatures and He rejoices in their response to His call. How can we not appreciate our calling? Animals don't stop to think about what they are doing. They just do it because they were programmed to be that way by the Creator. Only man is allowed to choose, to think, to ponder

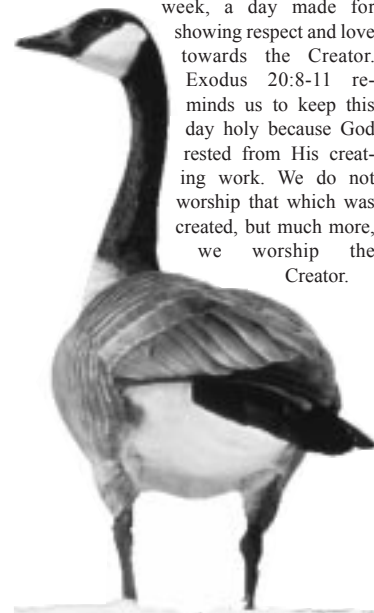
and to determine his way—up to a point.

God is our Father and He wants to share all He has with His children. He will first make sure those children have learned to love His creation and take care of it according to His way.

Seeing an 80,000-pound creature joyfully doing what God has called it to do helps me stand in awe of His majesty and greatness. Like Job, there are times when the best thing to do is just put your hand over your mouth and watch.

The Sabbath and Our Calling

There is a day God gave for humans to do just that. It is the seventh day of the week, a day made for showing respect and love towards the Creator. Exodus 20:8-11 reminds us to keep this day holy because God rested from His creating work. We do not worship that which was created, but much more, we worship the Creator.



Through the extra time available to us on the Sabbath day we have the opportunity to appreciate our Creator's calling, and to make that calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10). What an awesome privilege! *UN*

God's Intent

When we learn the benefits of and love the creation, we will become much more like-minded with God the Creator. That is His full intention.

Paul writes of God's intended plan. In Romans 8:16-17 he was inspired to write: "The Spirit [itself] bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

He says in verse 29 that humans are to be conformed to the image of His Son and

When God gave His law to the ancient Israelites, He told them to observe the Ten Commandments as well as certain additional ordinances and rituals. To ancient Israel and to first century Jews this was the Law, the Torah. To them, the Bible consisted of three parts: The Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. When Jews talked about the Law, they were referring not only to the Ten Commandments, but to that section of the Scriptures we call the Pentateuch—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Regarding the precepts found in those books, Jesus Christ said, “For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled” (Matthew 5:18). When He uttered these words, the Jews of His day took Him to mean the whole section they called the Torah.

How Can We Know What Applies?

Since Christ has not returned, and we do not have the promised new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21:1), we know that all has not yet been fulfilled. Therefore, the Law—the Torah—remains in effect, although today we do not observe everything listed in the five books of the Law. However, should contemporary Christians be responsible for observing every ordinance and ritual in the Torah? If not, how can we know what applies and what does not?

There is a logical and simple way to address this issue, for while nothing has passed *from* the law, there have been three critical changes *in* the law, and those changes all have to do with the way the law is administered. Once we thoroughly understand these changes, we gain a better grasp of how God intended to magnify His law and make it more honorable (Isaiah 42:21). Christ kept that promise. He said, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill” (Matthew 5:17). That is, through His life and teachings, He filled the law full, clarifying its original spiritual intent and magnifying it.

Circumcision

In the early years of the Church, people from every walk of life came into fellowship with the brethren, and the apostles had to define the Christian approach to the law for them. Acts 15 tells us that some believing Pharisees saw the strong scriptural admonitions regarding circumcision, and claimed that in order to be a Christian a male had to be circumcised (verse 5). That was the law.

But the apostles discovered that God had decided otherwise. We see this starting in Acts 10 when Cornelius received the Holy Spirit. In time the apostles accepted what God had done and administered God’s decision. They saw more clearly Christ’s spiritual intent in the regulation regarding circumcision. They realized that God wanted more than a mere physical act to be performed. In that regard, Moses had told the ancient Israelites, “Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer” (Deuteronomy 10:16).

Has the Law Changed?

While nothing has passed from the law, there have been three critical changes in the law, and those changes all have to do with the way the law is administered. Once we thoroughly understand these changes, we gain a better grasp of how God intended to magnify His law and make it more honorable.

by James F. Guy Sr.

In addition, God inspired Ezekiel to write, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26). God wants willing obedience. To achieve that in His people, He promised, “this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jeremiah 31:33).

Having Christ’s magnification of the law in view and understanding that circumcision merely pointed to God’s spiritual intent of circumcising the hearts of His people, the apostles administered God’s ruling that physical circumcision was no longer necessary. Peter summarized this decision when he said, “So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them [the gentiles] by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they” (Acts 15:8–11).

Our hearts are purified by repentance, submission to God and the receipt of His Holy Spirit. This is the circumcision that defines and identifies a Christian. His Word tells us, “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His” (Romans 8:9). No longer would physical circumcision be required, but rather a spiritual circumcision of the heart through repentance and living the way of loving obedience and submission to God. The first change, then, was to change the administration of circumcision of the flesh to circumcision of the heart.

Civil Regulations

The second change involves the civil commands God gave the Israelites. We cannot administer these regulations since the civil government of God no longer exists and these laws can only be administered within the civil government whose head is God.

Christ made it clear that His followers were not to be a part of this world when He prayed in the garden just before His crucifixion, “I have given them [His followers] Your word; and the world has hated them because

they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world” (John 17:14). Christ’s Kingdom—the Kingdom we must prepare for—is of the world tomorrow, not of this present world. He told Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36), most certainly because the world is evil (Galatians 1:4).

Since God has called us out of this evil world and has not given us civil authority today, we don’t have the responsibility of enforcing civil regulations. That duty now goes to worldly rulers, as Paul wrote, “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil” (Romans 13:1–4).

God has given limited authority to the rulers of this world. When He gave the Israelites that responsibility, they failed to enforce it properly, and those in authority today are failing. That’s one reason Christ is returning to implement His Father’s rules correctly.

One aspect of the civil law was the administration of the death penalty (2 Corinthians 3:9–11). The Church does not condemn, but administers the righteousness of God. And godly righteousness leads to eternal life.

Sacrifices and Rituals

One final area of change in the law involves the sacrificial and ritualistic regulations associated with the temple service.

When Titus destroyed the temple in A.D. 70, Jews and Christians alike had to adjust to the changes in their lives this tragic event caused. Christ said it would happen: “Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, ‘Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down’” (Matthew 24:1–2). When that happened, it necessitated a change in the way Christians worshiped their Creator.

Prior to its destruction, Christians frequented the temple and even participated in

many, if not all, of its services. They continued “daily with one accord in the temple” (Acts 2:46). Paul prayed in the temple (Acts 22:1–17). At one time he even went there with four men who were under a Nazarite vow (which called for an animal sacrifice, Numbers 6:2–11) and who had to fulfill the requirements of their pledge, for the brethren of that day were zealous for the law (Acts 21:21–24). These early Christians cherished the temple and their relationship with it.

But now it was gone. This problem is addressed in Hebrews. The sacrifices and rituals of the temple are no longer necessary because they all pointed to Christ, “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4).

Christ’s blood, however, could because He was God in the flesh and lived a sinless life, “For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Hebrews 9:24–26).

Christ’s priesthood now supercedes that of the Levites (Hebrews 7:11–28). Everything that pertained to them foreshadowed Christ, which required a change in the law (verse 12). This portion of the law is now administered by Christ instead of the Levites.

Notice, however, that there has been no change regarding the observance of the annual Holy Days and the Sabbath, for example. Paul wrote that we should “let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (Colossians 2:16–17, King James Version).

No *man* should judge us, Paul contends, because God is our Judge and He has ordained that we keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days. Why? Because these things *are* (not *were*) a shadow of things to come. They can only foreshadow future events if they exist in the present, so God established these requirements apart from the regulations modified as a result of Christ’s life and sacrifice.

Christ’s words, that nothing would pass from the law until all has been fulfilled, remain intact, although the application (administration) of that law has been changed because God has given His Holy Spirit so His people can have a greater spiritual understanding. But those changes have been limited to only three: circumcision, civil regulations and the temple services.

When we keep these facts in mind, understanding what part of the law we must follow and what part of it is no longer binding becomes easier. We can, then, return to “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3) and keep the whole law as magnified and fulfilled by Jesus Christ. *uv*

James F. Guy Sr. is a deacon in the Youngstown, Ohio, congregation.

Local Church Updates...

Hospital Recognizes Member's "Spirit"

Polly Burrow, a member in the Cape Girardeau, Missouri, congregation, received the O.D. Niswonger Spirit of Southeast Award March 28. Southeast Missouri Hospital Administrator James W. Wente presented the award to Mrs. Burrow, who has worked at the hospital for nine years.

Mrs. Burrow has been a member for 33 years and has been battling ovarian cancer for 5½ years. "It was truly a surprise and an honor for me—I am working only two days a month now because of the cancer," said



Polly Burrow receives award from James W. Wente, hospital administrator

Mrs. Burrow. She also praised the brethren's "tremendous support" in her trial and said, "All of the cards and notes have really been an inspiration."

The hospital newsletter ran six positive comments from people who know Mrs. Burrow, including these:

"Polly has a wonderful work ethic. Over the years that Polly has worked at Southeast I know there have been days when she had to push herself to be here, yet I have never heard her complain about anything. Polly has the capacity to identify with patients."

"Polly is a very compassionate person. She always seems to know when a patient needs a little extra TLC and is always willing to spend extra time with that patient and answer her questions. No matter what kind of a day Polly is having, she takes care of her patients as though they were her only concern."

"Polly is like an angel. The minute she walks in the door you know you are going to have a great day, because no matter what the day brings, you know Polly will make the day better. She is the spirit of Southeast and the spirit of the Radiology Department. God broke the mold when He made her!"

Twin Cities Host Families for God Weekend

The Twin Cities congregations of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, hosted a Families for God Regional Weekend for the fourth consecutive year on May 19 and 20. The weekend focuses on our society's most embattled institution as it seeks to reinforce the importance of both our individual and spiritual family relationships.

The weekend began with Sabbath services featuring Bob Fahey and Dennis Luker as guest speakers. Mr. Fahey gave a sermonette reminding us that love should be at the center of our relationships. In the sermon Mr. Luker shared recent scientific research that reveals some interesting parallels between our physical and spiritual hearts. The St. Paul choir provided special music between the two messages.

Following some snacks and fellowship three different seminars were held. LeeAnn Luker spoke on "A Helper by Design." In this presentation Mrs. Luker emphasized God's unique purpose for *all* women in His great plan, and explored a broader understanding of what it means to be a helper.

Tony Kuczynski, a Church member from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, gave an interactive seminar on the "Dysfunctional Family." His seminar delved into symptoms and origins of dysfunctional patterns in families. It included how God can give healing and hope amidst all the confusion family members sometime face.

Bob Fahey presented "An Introduction



Steve, Arik, Alyse and Helen Howie with Steve Zutz at the family dance at the Families for God Weekend in Minnesota; above, Sunday picnic (photos by Bill Ellison)

to Financial Management." He showed why some people enjoy financial stability while others continually struggle to keep their financial heads above water. It included seven drawbacks to financial success and how to overcome them.

That evening a semiformal dance was

held for all ages. The dance included unique costumes worn by some attendees, as well as lively dancing to music provided by a professional DJ.

The weekend concluded Sunday with a picnic and visit to the zoo at Como Park.

Jim Servidio

Minneapolis Raises Funds for Wheelchair Lift

April 22 the Minneapolis, Minnesota, UCG outreach committee hosted a pancake breakfast and bake sale benefit that raised over \$6,200 to assist one of its members, Wade Malwitz. The benefit provided funding to adapt Mr. Malwitz's van with a wheelchair lift.

Many companies and community organizations, including the local Wal-Mart, American Legion, Lutheran Brotherhood, Aid Association for Lutherans, Knights of Columbus and Jenny O', donated food, money and supplies. The benefit provided an opportunity for Church members and companies to work towards a common goal.

Cheryl Kunde and Linda Torgeson

Prom Brings Great Lakes Teens "Together"

The theme of this year's Great Lakes Regional Prom, held April 28 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was "Together." And how appropriate, considering that this was the time 110 teens from all over got together with old friends and new. Teens came from as far south as Florida and as far north as Canada.

Unlike some dances, people here actually danced. I guess this has to do with the music, played by DJ Mark Winner, pastor of the Louisville and Henderson, Kentucky, congregations.

This was a record year for high school graduates. We recognized 23 seniors and gave them a memento of the evening. Congratulations to the Class of 2001.

Sunday, April 29, the group enjoyed an after-prom brunch and group games.

The anticipation of reuniting with friends always make activities and dances more fun and special. Along with many others, I am looking forward to next year's prom. Even more memories will be created then, when good friends come together.

Hazel Tranquada

Milwaukee Congregation Surprises Minister

On the Sabbath of May 12, 2001, the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, congregation held a surprise "thank you party" for the pastor, Michael Hanisko, and his wife, Zelda. They were honored for their faithful and tireless service to the Milwaukee area. A decorated



Zelda and Michael Hanisko surprised in Milwaukee May 12 (photo by Leone Burns)

cake was ordered and greeting cards were made by the members.

The coordinator of the event was Brian Krueger. Not even the Hanisko's children knew what was going on, so when the announcement was made after services, their faces were very surprised.

Many "jobs" can be thankless—especially when all goes right. Few are ever praised for a job well done. The job of the ministry is often demanding. How wonderful to have the opportunity to, in a small way, thank the Haniskos for their years of service.

Leone Burns

Garden Grove Plans Women's Enrichment Weekend

The Women's Club of the Garden Grove, California, congregation, invites all ladies to attend our Women's Enrichment Weekend to be held January 18 to 20, 2002, at the Country Inn & Suites in Costa Mesa, California. (This is the Martin Luther King holiday weekend.)

The theme of the weekend is "Discover Your God-Given Gifts." Special speakers will include LeeAnn Luker and Dianne Clark. Dennis Luker will be guest speaker for the Sabbath service.

Cost for the weekend is \$150 and includes Friday and Saturday night lodging (double occupancy), full breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, Saturday dinner and Sunday lunch. Other rates for three or four to a room are available.

For more information (brochures are available) or to make a reservation, please contact Jean Updegraff, 3040 Grant Ave, Costa Mesa, CA 92626; (714) 546-4695; or updegraffs@worldnet.att.net. You may also visit our Web page at www.ucg-gg.org.

Space is limited. We are looking forward to a wonderful time of relaxation and spiritual inspiration in a beautiful environment.

Esther Salcedo

Announcements...

Births

Terry and Tracy (Suecroft) Cunningham of Bruce, South Dakota, are delighted to announce the birth of Amber Rose. Amber was



Amber Rose Cunningham

born April 15, 2001. She was 8 pounds 12 ounces and 21 inches tall.

Proud grandparents are Harvey and Liane Cunningham of Brookings, South Dakota, and Shirley Suecroft of Edmonton, Alberta.

Eddie and Janet (Hubbell) Dungan of Brewton, Alabama, are very excited to announce the birth



Jennifer Naomi Dungan with Bonnie

of their second daughter, Jennifer Naomi. Born February 17, 2000, "Jenny" weighed in at 8 pounds 9

ounces and measured 20½ inches long. Bonnie Glenn, age 4, loves her baby sister very much and is thoroughly enjoying "showing her the ropes."

Proud grandparents are George and Sheila Hubbell of Baytown, Texas, and Eddie Sr. and Marcia Dungan of Campbell, Alabama.

Engagement

Bill and Jenny Bradford of California are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter



Jenean Bradford and Joe Rivers

Jenean to Joe Rivers, son of Bruce and Melissa Rivers of Indiana. A July 29th wedding is planned in Seattle, Washington.

Anniversaries

Robert and Ginny Cole of Perkaskie, Pennsylvania, celebrated their golden anniversary April 21, 2001, after services with the brethren. They were married April 23, 1951, in Maryland.

They have one son (deceased), two daughters, four granddaughters and two great-grandsons. They have been in the



Ginny and Robert Cole

Church 40 years and serve as deacon and deaconess.

Obituaries

Madeline Helen Sbrilli, 58, died March 24, 2001. She was a deaconess in Somerset, New Jersey, where she and her husband were very active members.

She was preceded in death by her brother, William. She is survived by her husband of 40 years, Gary; a daughter and son-in-law,



Madeline Helen Sbrilli

Tina M. and James H. George of Middletown, New Jersey; sisters, Susan, Luann and Anabell; brother, Steven Gerzsaly Jr. and sister-in-law, Eleanor; brothers Robert and

Alan Gerzsaly; and grandchildren, Jessica and Jamie George. In lieu of flowers, contributions were sent to the Church.

Laura Reimann, 56, of Arcadia, California, passed away May 11, 2001, after battling breast cancer for some time. She was a longtime member of God's Church since 1967. She graduated from



Laura Reimann

Ambassador College in Bricket Wood, England, in 1971 and worked many years in the Festival Department. She is survived by her mother, Velma Wright; brother, Ken Wright; and children, Janine Sanchez, David Reimann and Jonathan Reimann.

Vickie Cantrell, 72, of Dallas, North Carolina, died May 16, 2001. She was a member of the Charlotte, North Carolina, congregation for 15 years and is survived by four children, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The funeral service was conducted by David Mills on May 18.

The funeral of Irene Payne, 90, was conducted on the Isle of Man May 24, 2001. Attending were her

sons, Roger and David, grandchildren and members of the congregation on the Isle of Man. Mrs. Payne was baptized in 1964 at the Feast in Prestatyn, North Wales.

She was born Irene Brooks in Manchester in 1910. She had a sister, Amy, and a brother, Alan. Her brother also came into the Church and was ordained into the ministry. He died several years ago. On leaving school she worked in Manchester and then later in London and Birmingham. There she was introduced to Tom Payne. Tom and Irene were married at the beginning of the war in 1939. She was always proud of the fact that she was one of the few people who was bombed in both world wars.

At the end of World War II Tom and Irene moved to Manchester where they lived with their two sons until 1958. An opportunity arose for them to begin farming in the Isle of



Irene Payne

Man, which they did until Tom retired. He died in 1986.

She was a dedicated, converted and very supportive member of God's Church. She was an example to all of encouragement and a positive attitude.

Letters...

Pentecost Visitor Impressed

On Sunday, May 27, I came as a guest to the church service being held at the Holiday Inn, in Naperville, Illinois. I came for the afternoon session, and had to leave after only about 15 minutes, to keep a previously made commitment. May I say that I was very favorably impressed with the beautiful, traditional hymns, and especially by the fact that everyone brought their Bible and wrote notes during the sermon! That's precisely the kind of church service that I would like to attend more often, and I promise you that I shall!

Illinois

Spot Ads Lead to Church

This report is from a UCG pastor in the Mid-West.

A lady called asking about the time and location of Sabbath services. She had a history with WCG, but had dropped out over 20 years ago. Due to events in her life, she had been pondering what place religion really had in her life. She specifically prayed for God to lead her where He wanted her, and then she saw one of the spot ads for the GN. She found the Web site, and after checking out the Church, called and asked for the information on Sabbath services.

Another young man called and asked to

come to services because of the TV ads. He had attended a short while, but then left without seemingly much interest in the Church. After seeing the ad he felt compelled to call and see if services were still at the same time and place, because he wanted to return.

These two we can directly link straight back to the TV ads. We have also had several calls, and at least two families currently attending because of the GN waiting room program. Some good things are happening around here!

Eager Volunteer

We received the May issue of *United*

News today, and I was very excited after reading the article about volunteer transcriptionists for the deaf and hard of hearing tape program.

I feel like a little kid in class, frantically waving both arms, shouting: "Pick me, pick me!" This is a terrific program...can I please help?

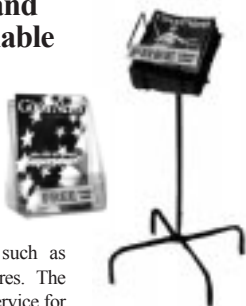
Ohio

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Comments and suggestions to improve *United News* welcome. Mail to: *United News*, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, or e-mail mike_bennett@ucg.org.

News at a Glance...

New GN Newsstand Display Now Available

A brand-new addition to the *Good News* Newsstand Program is the pedestal display. It is 36 inches high, weighs only about three pounds and holds 100 magazines. It can be used in high-volume distribution locations such as supermarkets and discount stores. The countertop display has been in service for about 18 months. It is made of soft-acrylic clear plastic and holds about 25 copies. It can be placed on countertops and vending machines in many stores and shops.



Above, new pedestal display. Left, countertop display

Currently 21 congregations are involved in distributing newsstand copies of *The Good News* in free locations throughout the United States. Additional congregations are welcome to participate. See your pastor to express your interest in getting your congregation involved. For more details call John LaBissoniere at (888) 369-9940 or e-mail him at john_labissoniere@ucg.org.

John LaBissoniere

Church Saves Thousands With Electronic Address Updates and Bulk Mailing

The Church will save at least \$40,000 a year in postage costs through taking advantage of technology and two U.S. Postal Service programs.

The Church saved about \$2,600 on the May-June *Good News* by using technology to receive address changes electronically from the U.S. Postal Service. Previously the Postal Service would return the back cover of the 5,000 to 7,000 *Good News* magazines sent to subscribers who had moved without giving us their new address. The fee was 60 cents for each one, but with the electronic system, the charge is only 20 cents. The savings for six issues could top \$15,000. Besides this saving of money, the new process will save untold hours of data entry time.

With the increased volume of mail going out, employees have also been able (with additional sorting and paperwork) to take advantage of bulk mailing savings for booklets sent out each week. This comes to an average savings of at least \$500 a week, or \$25,000 a year.

Ministers Make Big Moves

Bill and Jenny Bradford, who currently pastor the Oakland and San Jose, California, congregations, will be moving to Australia to serve after the Feast of Tabernacles. "Mrs. Bradford is Australian and they have pastored there twice before," said Les McCullough in his May 18 President's Letter. "They will serve in Australia for five years and then return to the States."

Mr. McCullough also announced that Earl and Carol Roemer will be moving from Hawaii back to the U.S. mainland.

Other manpower changes will be announced when available.

ABC Offers Samplers

The Ambassador Bible Center (ABC) is pleased to announce a week-long ABC Sampler to be offered in the ABC classroom

in Milford, Ohio, the week of August 13 to 17. Classes will include portions of the seven-month-long ABC program and will be taught by the resident ABC faculty. Details of class offerings will be announced in a future issue of *United News*. The tuition will be \$50, and those who are interested may register by writing to Gary Antion, ABC, P.O. Box 54992, Cincinnati, OH 45254-0992.

Tentative plans also call for weekend ABC mini-samplers in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota (September); Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (November); and Southern California (December).

Ralph Levy

Dozen Congregations Hold Open Houses

A dozen congregations in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and Nevada had Open House services in mid-March, tied in with advertising on a seventh-day Sabbath endorsing television network, Primetime. Reports from the areas showed at least 27 new people attended, along with 13 more who had previous contact with the Church. Overall there were more than 30 requests for sermon tapes.

"In addition to the contacts made, the effect of this effort has been important for our congregations," said Dave Treybig, who was pastoring in West Texas and New Mexico at the time. "Members have appreciated helping stuff envelopes with invitational letters. In fact, we have a few newly baptized people from previous Open Houses who were delighted to help with the mailings knowing that this very effort helped bring them to the Church a few months earlier."

"What was really interesting was that we had put our local Internet address in the letter and we had around 120 hits on the site in the 10 to 12 days prior to the Open House," said Gary Petty, San Antonio, Texas, pastor. "This is quite a bit higher than our average."

"We look positively on the fact that now the current readership of the *GN* in our area knows we are a church, where and when we meet and the pastor's address and phone," said Britton Taylor about the Coleman, Texas, Open House.

What's New on the Web?

On www.ucg.org

- Listen to split sermons by Council members Gary Antion and Don Ward from May 5 (GCE) in Cincinnati. Special music performed by the ABC Choir. <http://www.ucg.org/RealAud>

- Check out the first issue of *ABC Times* (PDF 288K), a publication bringing news of Ambassador Bible Center, produced by the students. <http://www.ucg.org/abc>



- Bylaws as amended by the GCE on May 6 can be viewed at: <http://www.ucg.org/articles/bylaws.htm>

- German *Interns* can be downloaded in PDF format from the German page: <http://www.ucg.org/html/deutsch.shtml>

- Check out the new Update Notification utility under Utilities. This automatically sends you an e-mail about the latest news. <http://www.ucg.org/update.html>

On ucgyouth.org

- Information has been posted on a Preteen Youth Camp near Rochester, Minnesota. Also United Youth Camp and United Youth Corps information and applications. <http://ucgyouth.org>

On vcmagazine.org

- The June *Virtual Christian Magazine* has articles on: Time to Be a Father, Child Abuse: What Kids Are Doing to Kids, Sing a Song!, There Is No God? and The Gift of Life. <http://vcmagazine.org>



Other Helpful Links

<http://www.ucg.org/radio> (*Good News* radio program site. Listen to Real Audio files of the program and see the radio log.)

<http://youthmagazine.org> (*Youth United* e-magazine site.)

<http://gnmagazine.org> (*Good News* Web site. Sign up for e-mail notification!)

<http://www.ucg.org/a/local/multimedia.htm> (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/news/news.htm> (News page with Council of Elders meeting reports, President's Letters, Home Office Updates, etc.)

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

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