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www.ucg.org

February 2006

News At a Glance

More Baptisms Announced

In addition to the 316 baptisms reported last issue, the following baptisms also took place in 2005, bringing the total to at least 398:

Ghana55
Kenya18
Tanzania6
United Kingdom3

Elders Credentialed and Ordained

Leroy Neff was credentialed as an elder in the United Church of God during the December Council meetings. He and his wife, Maxine, serve in the East Texas, Texas, congregation.

On Dec. 31, Jonathan Pinelli was ordained an elder. He and his wife, Deborah, serve in the Cincinnati East AM congregation.

Jim Cowell was ordained an elder on Jan. 7. He and his wife, Marlene, serve the San Diego, California, congregation.

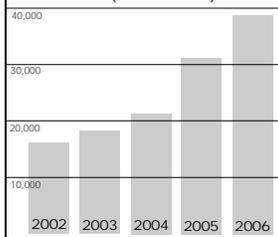
GN Subscriptions Continue to Rise

The total print quantity of the January-February 2006 *Good News* magazine was 401,231. While this is less than our highest print run of 526,173 reached for the September-October 2002 issue, there is an encouraging trend—the number of actual “subscribers” is continuing to rise. Over the past three years, we have made a concerted effort in the United States to replace waiting room program and newsstand program

See “News at a Glance,” page 2

United Statistics

World News and Prophecy
Circulation Up 137 Percent
in 4 Years (Jan. issues)



Managing Editors Seek to Preach Gospel Better

Media personnel meet to assess the media efforts of the Church in order to improve their effectiveness.

Managing editors of several of United’s larger publications, television program and Web sites gathered at the home office Jan. 24 and 25 to discuss ways to assess and improve the Church’s media efforts to more effectively preach the gospel to the world.

The agenda centered around key sections from the Media Philosophy state-

ment the Council of Elders produced to guide the media efforts.

President Clyde Kilough opened the meetings asking if those in attendance were satisfied with what they are currently doing. Of course we can’t be satisfied, he said, since there is always room to improve. “Don’t get me wrong, I’m immensely satisfied with the effort—you have your lives in it,”



David Treybig comments (photo by Janet Treadway)

Mr. Kilough added. “But we don’t want to get in a rut,” he said. “We are not on

a search for new truth. But we are looking for ways to be more effective in presenting the truth.”

Much of the discussion addressed the questions: How do we assess our effectiveness? How do we know we are right? How do we improve?

As an outcome of the meetings, a number of action steps were outlined to improve the publications, continually upgrade the skills of the writers and better evaluate the results of our efforts. A survey of *Good News* readers and a

See “Editors,” page 2

ABC Orientation Launches Largest Class



ABC welcomed 53 students with orientation and a reception Jan. 8 (photos by Janet Treadway)

by Gary Antion

Amidst fish swimming in fishbowls and beautiful décor in the dining area, the seventh class to attend Ambassador Bible Center enjoyed this year’s orientation on Jan. 8. Coming from seven international areas and the United States, the class of 2006 gathered for the first time at the home office for the seventh ABC orientation.

The theme for this year’s class is “Preparing to Serve

and Lead.” After David Johnson opened the afternoon with prayer, David Register emceed the proceedings and brought information about the overall program to the 53 students who were present. Gary Antion and Ralph Levy presented information from their areas of responsibility to help the students become acquainted with ABC.

Four students, Joy Porter (2002), Mark Holladay (2003),

See “ABC Orientation,” page 2

Beyond Today Listed on Google Video

United gets in on the ground floor of a new video search feature to promote the *Beyond Today* program.

by Aaron Booth

The popular online search tool, Google, offers a new video search feature where registered users can upload videos to the Google video Web site. This free service allows visitors to search for posted videos and either view them online or download them.

Currently, we have eight *Beyond Today* TV programs posted on the Google video Web site. In just a few weeks, these programs have been viewed over 1,500 times. The most pop-

Beyond Today Program Gathering Momentum

Program scheduled for 124 TV channels and growing.

In early January a “DVD sampler” of the first four *Beyond Today* video programs was mailed to all pastors. Enclosed was a letter from Clyde Kilough requesting pastors to show some of the programs to their congregations. A second document was also enclosed that outlined how U.S. members can work on getting the program on cable-access TV channels in their own town or city.

On Jan. 11 and 12 four more *Beyond Today* video programs were recorded in the new media center, with Darris McNeely hosting. This brought our total to 12 programs. To date, 124 local community cable TV channels across the



Host Darris McNeely with guests Arnold Hampton and Dave Baker

United States are signed up to air the program, plus our presence on the World Wide Web is gaining momentum. See the article on page 2 for more details.

In the United States, if you are interested in hosting the program on your local town’s community-access TV station, please contact John LaBissoniere

at john_labissoniere@ucg.org or by telephone at (888) 369-9940.

Our multimedia Web site, which hosts these programs, is adding more content each week at www.beyond-today.tv. You can presently view material from the first eight programs. Be sure to visit and watch the video clips! You can view broadband, high-quality clips, plus download dial-up versions if you have a slower Internet connection. QuickTime files are also available for download to video iPods so that *Beyond Today* can be viewed away from your computer.

Please continue to pray for the men and women involved in production of our media efforts that God may grant us the ability to effectively reach this world with the good news of His Kingdom.

Peter Eddington



ular—“Is There Life After Death?”—has generated over 1,000 views.

Thanks to this new feature from Google, we are able to reach more people online with the *Beyond Today* TV program than we would just from the beyondtoday.tv Web site. UN

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News At a Glance

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copies with actual subscribers. Having actual subscribers' addresses on file gives us greater opportunity to directly communicate with our readers with various offers and updates.

In addition, putting less expensive advertising brochures and subscription offers on display in public venues is proving to be less expensive than tens of thousands of actual copies of the magazine itself. The following chart shows the growth of *GN* magazine subscribers over the past 10 years' January-February issues.

Print Run	U.S. Subscribers
1997	39,742
1998	71,030
1999	146,883
2000	261,372
2001	323,568
2002	472,028
2003	434,419
2004	426,671
2005	420,520
2006	401,231

Coworkers and Donors Continue to Increase

Reports show that about 8 percent of United's income has come from those people who do not consider themselves part of UCG. There are 7,323 donors and 3,055 coworkers on the U.S. file. Donors are up 20 percent over the previous year, and coworkers are up 14 percent.

It is very encouraging to see a continued increase from year to year in the number of people who want to contribute to the work of the Church!

Please continue to pray that God will send forth more laborers to assist with the massive work of preaching the gospel of His Kingdom around the globe.

Peter Eddington

Deadline Near for Houston 50th

Feb. 17 is the deadline for dinner reservations and payments for Houston's 50th Church Anniversary celebration, which will be held on the weekend of March 10 and 11.

The weekend will begin with a reception on Friday evening, March 10, at the Houston North Church Hall. Sabbath morning will begin with snacks and socializing, which will be followed by a special service from 2 to 4 p.m. This commemorative service will include a Houston history presentation, special music and a sermon that will be given by former Houstonian Clyde Kilough.

Following services, there will be drinks, dinner and dancing. The buffet dinner entrees are pecan-crusted chick-

See "News at a Glance," page 16

Beyond Today Web Site Visitors and Program Response Reported

Overall, the first two months of activity at the *Beyond Today* Web site, www.beyondtoday.tv, went very well. We had 4,844 visitors to the site in December of 2005, and then a very healthy increase to 13,115 for January of 2006. During January, 132 gigabytes of material was streamed to our visitors. This amount of bandwidth usage is much higher than at either www.ucg.org (35.3 gigabytes) or www.gnmagazine.org (65.8 gigabytes). This is, of course,

due to the larger streaming video files found primarily at our *Beyond Today* Web site.

Beyond Today is scheduled to air on 124 channels at present. However, many of these channels are still working through the transition from airing our previous *Tomorrow* program and *Good News TV* program.

One early survey to our sponsors showed that only about half of the stations are actually up and running with our new program. We expect

that the transition should be complete by the end of February. For example, two of our biggest markets, Chicago and San Diego, are not yet airing *Beyond Today* but will very soon.

This has affected our responses somewhat. During our program start-up during the last week of December 2005 we received 63 responses to *Beyond Today*, and then for January 2006 we received 262. We anticipate that February will con-

tinue to show a steady increase once again as more stations come on board with the new program.

So far, overall response to United's new video effort has been very positive. Some helpful suggestions have been received from some of our members, and so we plan to incorporate new ideas and continue to improve the technical quality and, most of all, the content, of *Beyond Today*.

Peter Eddington

"Editors," continued from page 1

survey of newly baptized members of United are being developed.

Specific plans for future articles and booklets were discussed. Practical tips, effective approaches and new ideas were also shared.

The key agenda items from the Media Philosophy statement were:

- We seek to provide the world with the message of hope for salvation, to help those who believe and repent, and

to warn all of the consequences of sin.

- We must speak and write in a way that challenges our audience's beliefs in a manner that is simple to understand, engaging, convincing and compelling. We must tailor the message to fit different cultural, national, religious and linguistic groups.

- In a spiritually blind world, the deep truths of God are most effectively presented in a manner that leads from "milk" to "meat." For that reason, we must present the truth of God in a way

that does not overwhelm people in either content or quantity.

- We are ambassadors of the Kingdom of God and followers of Jesus Christ. As ambassadors, our message must transcend the ideologies, politics and religions of this world.

Those in attendance at the meetings were Scott Ashley (*Good News*), Mike Bennett (*United News*), Aaron Booth (Internet), Bob Dick (Council chairman), Peter Eddington (Media and Communications Services operation

manager), Clyde Kilough (president), Vic Kubik (Media and Communications Committee of the Council chairman), John LaBissoniere (media buying agent), Darris McNeely (*World News and Prophecy* and *Beyond Today* anchor), Steve Myers (*Beyond Today* anchor), Gary Petty (*Beyond Today* anchor), Tom Robinson (Bible Reading Program and *Good News*), Clay Thornton (*Beyond Today*) and Dave Treybig (*Vertical Thought*).

Mike Bennett

"ABC Orientation," continued from page 1

Daniel Peabody (2004) and Jessa Moser (2005), brought brief speeches encouraging the students to get the most out of and give the most to the ABC program.

Clyde Kilough gave the keynote address encouraging the students to properly orient their lives. He compared life to an orienteering course, and explained that we must use the detailed "map" and "compass" God gives us to navigate the many choices and milestones of life. We must strive to fulfill the purpose for which we're created.

Peter and Terri Eddington and Lisa Fenchel worked very diligently to plan and set up the décor and food for this special occasion. Greg McCloud and



Clyde Kilough addresses the new ABC class (photo by Janet Treadway)

Dave Johnson made the lecture hall ready for the event.

Able assisting with the food were several members of the Church. Laura Fenger, Becky Johnson, Cindy Phelps and Joy Porter served tirelessly. Kathy de Campos prepared all of the information packets, badges and the welcoming banner. Several of the ABC graduates helped with the name badges and handouts as well as the food service.

Delicious hot and cold hors d'oeuvres were served along with delectable desserts. Cold beverages were served to add to the enjoyment and pleasure of the nearly 130 who were in attendance. This was the largest attendance at orientation that we have had as many home office staff attended along with family members

and some friends of the new students.

Several comments by the students were sent to the faculty, staff and volunteers in appreciation:

"Thank you so much. You make it that much more wonderful to be here."

"What a wonderful welcome you gave us all. Thank you so much for all your work and dedication to the students!"

"You have all given us a warm welcome and we appreciate your kindness."

"Thank you for your loving welcome. It has made the transition to Cincinnati easier."

"Thank you for making this feel like a new home."

After such a successful orientation, we look forward to a wonderful year with the class of 2006! UN

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Mission Statement: 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.

President: Clyde Kilough

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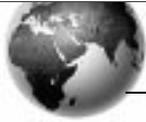
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News From **Around the World**

UCGIA President Visits Germany and Italy

by Paul Kieffer

Nearly 34 years after a two-day visit while a student at Ambassador College, Clyde Kilough returned to Germany on Jan. 26 in his responsibility as president of the United Church of God, an International Association.

On Friday Mr. Kilough and his wife, Dee, had a tour of Köllen Druck und Verlag in Bonn, the printing plant where *Gute Nachrichten*, the German *Good News*, has been printed since 2000.

After the tour, the Kiloughs took a Rhine River ferry to Niederkassel for a tour of the small office. Jesmina Allaoua, who among her many duties is responsible for mail processing and editorial assignments, showed the Kiloughs how literature requests are processed and Internet advertising is monitored. Jesmina explained how articles for *Gute Nachrichten* are edited to make them culturally suitable for German-language readers in Europe. The office also pro-

vides storage for approximately 40,000 copies of 15 booklets and the complete 12-lesson *Bible Study Course*.

The Kiloughs enjoyed dinner Friday evening with 12 members from southern Germany who stayed overnight in the Bonn area on their way to the combined Sabbath service in Dormagen.

On Sabbath, Jan. 28, 75 people from Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland traveled to Dormagen to hear Mr. Kilough's sermon on vision, commitment and sacrifice. Brethren appreciated his sermon and the brief remarks he made in German at the beginning and conclusion of his sermon (he had four years of German in school).

Before the afternoon service, Mr. Kilough had a one-hour question-and-answer session. The questions had been submitted in advance and translated into English. Questions included what the Church is doing to counteract the effects on the Church of the developing rift between the United States and Europe and whether



Clyde Kilough videotapes Jesmina Allaoua during tour of German office

cooperation with other Church of God groups is possible. In the evening everyone enjoyed a catered buffet meal.

On Sunday the Kiloughs traveled to Berlin for an evening meal with seven brethren from the greater Berlin area. On Monday and Tuesday the Kiloughs toured various historical and cultural places of interest in Berlin with their tour guide, Jesmina Allaoua.

Feb. 1 the Kiloughs flew to Bergamo, Italy, to visit the office there. UN

International News At a Glance

Youth Corps Project for Ghana Camp Announced

United Youth Corps volunteers are again needed to serve on the youth camp staff in Ghana from Aug. 3 to 17. Youth Corps volunteers, ideally two men and two women, will serve as activity coordinators and assist as counselors.

Participants must be 18 years of age and high school graduates with a valid passport. The estimated cost to North American Youth Corps participants, including airfare, is \$2,000 to \$2,400. The application deadline is Feb. 25.

For more details, visit the United Youth Corps Web page at www.ucg.org/youthcorps.

Canadian Income Strong, Internet Requests Surging

For the Canadian office, 2005 ended on a positive note in many respects. Canadian income for the month of December—as well as for the fiscal year—was very strong. The year 2005 concluded with an income of 109.3 percent of the projected budget. The month of December saw the income at 133.3 percent of the projected amount.

One of the interesting aspects of the incoming mail for 2005 was the number of Internet requests received.

In 2003, the Canadian office received 1,533 Internet/e-mail literature and subscription requests. That represented 15.7 percent of our total mail received that year. In 2004, we received 3,268 Internet/e-mail literature and subscription requests, representing 23.7 percent of the total mail.

Last year, we received 5,116 requests, representing 45.8 percent of the total mail received. This year is off to another fine start, with a record 601 Internet/e-mail requests received in the first month, out of the record 1,755 total requests.

Edwin van Pelt

Canada Digs Into Its Database

In December the Canadian office staff began sending letters to those on the database who are not currently receiving *The Good News* magazine.

There were 5,223 people in that category. At the end of January, 283 had responded.

They are being sent a letter along with one of the four brochures offering different booklets and a subscription to *The Good News*. Your prayers for the success of this effort are appreciated. It is one way of contacting those who have been sent literature in the past, and it is basically a free way to develop our subscriber list.

We also sent letters in January to those who have not renewed the *Bible Study Course*, and also plan to write to those who did not respond to the two *GN* renewal letters sent in mid and late 2004.

Edwin van Pelt

Feast Biblical Tour of Turkey Announced

Details of the custom-designed 2006 Feast of Tabernacles tour in Turkey were announced in UCG services Jan. 14 and 21. From Istanbul, Feastgoers will fly to Izmir (formerly known as Smyrna), where a tour of six of the seven churches mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3 will begin.

"This tour will be highly educational, focusing on biblical geography, the travels of Paul, early Christian congregations and the life and culture of the early Church," said Charles Melear, Festival planner.

A package price of \$2,975 includes round-trip airfare from New York. More details can be found on the Web at www.ucg.org/feast.

Chichewa-Speaker Baptized

Bill Jahns reported that Gladstone Chonde, an elder in Malawi, baptized the first member in UCG who speaks only the Chichewa language. United started translating the sermons into Chichewa about a year ago (since many of the women speak only Chichewa).

British Isles Ministers Meet

The ministry of United Church of God—British Isles met in Polesworth on Sunday, Dec. 4, for what proved to be a very profitable and productive meeting. A key item on the agenda was to discuss the most effective way to help prospective members who live too far away from regular services.

There was also an assessment of this year's Feast of Tabernacles in Winchester and discussion on next year's site, York.

Senior Pastor Visits East Africa

John Elliott, senior pastor for East Africa and pastor of the Phoenix East and Yuma, Arizona, congregations, along with Monte Knudson spent three weeks visiting congregations in Africa in late January and early February. Their route took them through Johannesburg, South Africa, where they visited Bill and Cheryl Jahns.

"It was very helpful to both of us to share insights and experiences in serving God's churches on this continent," said Mr. Elliott in an e-mail from Kenya Jan. 28.

Meeting With Leaders

Their subsequent tour through East Africa included a two-day leadership conference focused on principles of Christ-centered leadership developed by the Godly Leadership task force. Additional discussions involved maturing phases that the work of God is passing through there.

"A deeper bonding among the leadership was a goal that was reached through applying many scriptural directives," said Mr. Elliott. "Assignments were adjusted to enable 29 congregations to be better served and visited more frequently by the local leadership. Budgets were reexamined and compared to actual costs and anticipated growth in a region that has experienced 38 percent and then 60 percent growth in membership during the past two years."

Two booklets, *Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God and Transforming Your Life*, are rolling off the presses in the local languages of Swahili, Luo and Kisii. "The importance of being able to understand the Bible's major doctrines and the process of conversion in one's own language cannot be underes-

timated," said Mr. Elliott.

As senior pastor for East Africa, Mr. Elliott spent time with each of the ordained leaders and his wife. The itinerary for this trip included several hours of private time where personal issues could be discussed at length. "Deeper understanding on my part and a closer relationship with each couple has resulted, ensuring that this will be part of future visits to the region," he said.

Visiting 10 Congregations

The tour also included holding Bible studies and Sabbath services at the Kenyan congregations of Nairobi, Migori, Kong'ou, Got Kachola, Ochuna Nyahera, Kosele and Madiani as well as Tanzanian congregations of Utegi and Nyanjage.

Two baptisms took place the weekend of Jan. 28 following close behind the 17 who were baptized during the Feast of Tabernacles. Precounseling for baptism is performed by the congregation leaders, who "refer them to me when fruits of repentance are becoming evident," Mr. Elliott said. "The result is that most whom I counsel are already nearing or are ready for baptism. The two men baptized this time each traveled to meet me from distant towns that were not on our route of travel."

Interested New Group

Mr. Elliott also visited a very eager group of 65 people at Ochuna Nyahera who are already very committed to the teachings of UCG.

"Knowing that our local leader in their area, David Ogwenko Owak, had visited them on only three Sabbaths previously, I had not expected the depth of understanding or biblical knowledge they

have," Mr. Elliott said. "Their questions revealed their broad understanding of the Bible and our literature but they wished to better understand certain passages, such as in Acts 10 where some apparently received the Holy Spirit before being baptized. Afterwards we were thankful to have squeezed the meeting with them into our already busy day visiting brethren at distant Got Kachola on the shore of Lake Victoria."

Several other new groups of very committed people are meeting every Sabbath in the Sotik area of Kenya.

Dealing With Famine

The famine continues to plague East Africa since little or no rain has fallen since the Feast. Some areas have had nothing for people or their grazing herds, prompting President Kibaki to ask residents in the capital city, Nairobi, to open their private yards to herdsman who have driven their herds of livestock there.

The Good Works program has provided funding for emergency grain and water-filtering equipment for the members who have little to eat and no remaining sources of clean water. "We have already begun the process of purchasing and distributing grain to them," said Mr. Elliott. "Now that we have two church buildings completed, we will be able to begin purchasing such grain during harvest season at low prices and storing it for emergency use in the future."

"In addition, the church properties will begin to be developed as agricultural plots for the use of our widows and orphans living nearby. David Ogwenko has readily accepted the oversight of the project at Migori with the eager assistance of his wife, Damaris," said Mr. Elliott. UN

Speeches a Highlight of Summer Camp in Chile

Once again we had the summer camp for the youth in the southern part of South America in Paine, Chile. Paine is a small town located only 30 miles south of the city of Santiago, but the facilities we have for camp are so isolated from the city that nobody could imagine we were so close.

The facility for camp is just what we need. No doubt it is a blessing from God. It has cabins, pools, courts for the most popular sports and swimming pools for all ages.

This year we began camp Dec. 23 and finished the 29th. Every year we choose these dates for several reasons, including to isolate our youth from the feasts of this world celebrated during that time.

We can also get very affordable prices due to the lack of demand during that season.

This year we had a total of 90 people attending, of which 82 were campers, mostly from Chile, but we also had campers from Bolivia, Argentina and the United States.

Due to the economic problems faced by most of our families, the Church makes the effort to pay for most of the expenses of camp. Campers pay for a small percentage of camp and their transportation. The cost of transporta-

tion makes it difficult for the youth from Bolivia, Argentina and Brazil to



Sports, speeches, classes and activities all contributed to the unity the campers felt at the end of the camp in Chile

about 10 minutes each on a subject of their choosing.

This year all of the speeches reflected one common subject: They all want to stay in the Church and become baptized someday in order to be protected from the behavior of this world and become children of God. All of the speeches were very inspiring.

These speeches are very good for several reasons:

1. They allow the campers to express themselves without being criticized or laughed at.

2. The campers themselves are able to teach each other in their own language, experience and age.

3. They allow the minister to get to know the campers better and, through that, the minister gets to know the sub-

jects that are in the minds of the youth in order to help them more effectively.

4. When they speak to their peers about a given subject, they commit themselves to support their speech with their example.

Christian Living and Activities

Every day the campers had a Christian Living class given by one of the ministers. They also had an hour called "Remember your Creator." In that hour they prayed, studied their Bibles, talked about the Christian Living class or prepared their speech. After lunch there was swimming and sports such as soccer, basketball and volleyball.

After dinner they had an activity such as dancing, a talent show, organized games, etc.

The camp went by very fast. Fortunately all of the campers went back to the city of Santiago to participate in a church family day Jan. 1. That rounded out the very wonderful time for the youth to be together.

At the end of camp, the campers all



attend, even though they would very much like to be with the rest of the Church youth.

On the Sabbath we had services and a Bible study given by our ministers.

Camper Speeches

In the afternoon of that Sabbath five of the campers presented the first set of speeches. In fact, every day of camp there was a set of camper speeches. These speeches were one of the highlights of the camp. In those speeches the campers were asked to speak for

became more united than ever. They are very thankful to God for providing the means to have the summer camps and other activities for the youth in order to prepare them for the future of the Church and for the Kingdom of God.

Saul Langarica

20 Campers Enjoy Sea and Gorge at South African Camp

The 2005 South African Summer Youth Camp was held from Sunday, Dec. 4, to Sunday, Dec. 11, 2005, at the Glenmore Eco Centre on the Kwa-Zulu Natal south coast.

Twenty campers and three counselors from all parts of Southern Africa experienced a fun-filled week of adventure and beach activities such as sea kayaking, surf rafting, mountain biking, abseiling (rappelling), wall climbing, archery, team building and survivor obstacle courses.

Campers came from Cape Town, East London, Durban and Johannesburg, South Africa, and this year we were fortunate to have one camper

from Zambia and one counselor from Zambia. Bill and Cheryl Jahns (minister and his wife from the Johannesburg congregation) and Neil Becker (minister from the East London congregation) administered the Christian education classes. Grant Chick and his wife, Kim, members from the Durban congregation, served as camp director.



One of the highlights of this year's camp was the overnight excursion to the top of the Umtamvuna Gorge where the campers slept in tents, cooked their own dinners and breakfasts, abseiled, canyoned and mountain biked. As it is prone to do when you are

camping, it rained, but spirits certainly were not dampened at all.

Sabbath services were held during camp. Local members joined the campers and staff for services. Songs were led by Neil Becker and split sermons were given by Bill Jahns and Grant Chick. The services were made special with



Activities from abseiling to surf rafting to sea kayaking make the camp in Southern Africa fun

special music performed by the campers.

The last evening together was spent presenting campers with awards for achievements and showing photos taken during camp, which the campers thoroughly enjoyed.

Plans are already being made for camp in 2006, and we would welcome any prospective campers or staff from overseas who would like to join us.

Grant Chick

54 Attend Australian Summer Camp 2005

The Australian summer camp drew 54 campers, including four from New Zealand, to the new site at the Wambaroo Adventure Centre about an hour south of Sydney.

Camp was held from Dec. 23 until Jan. 1. The campers were served by 18 staff members, including Evan Manning from Canada and Ricardo Villanueva from Mexico.

Most felt that the open spaces and being away from suburbia was a plus for this camp. It was a friendly camp with everyone "waving" to each other (well, some call it the Aussie salute) because of the very friendly and sticky flies.

Relationships and Activities

The typical camp day began with breakfast and a 35-minute Christian Living class. This year's theme was relationships, including with God as our personal Father and with Jesus as our older Brother. Other classes showed that a righteous man chooses friends carefully and showed what it means to be your brother's keeper. We also had three dating seminars for the older campers.

Campers were divided into four teams of mixed ages to do activities during the day. The day was divided up into four periods with an hour and a half break in the middle of the day to eat lunch, play pool or foosball (table soccer) or just hang out with friends.

Activities included a low ropes course, volleyball, touch rugby football, public speaking workshop, dance classes, canoeing, orienteering, crafts (where the campers made toys for disabled children) and archery.

The campers also attended four personal leadership classes where they were taught about the problem of binge drinking and given information on



The annual speech banquet and volleyball were just two of the many activities at the camp in Australia

drugs, body image and relaxation exercises as they visualized their goals for the future.

On Wednesday and Thursday the Outbreak Adventure staff came in to supervise the challenge activities. This was tiring and challenging, especially for those who were not very good with heights. All the campers did very well, and there were some great examples of perseverance and trying things that were hard and scary.

Campers rode on a 150-meter (almost 500-foot) flying fox, scrambled up a vertical climbing playpen, worked around a series of challenges on the high ropes and, the favorite of all, experienced the giant swing. The campers were pulled up by their team, and then they released a type of rip cord and swung through the air. You could hear the screams all over camp. The "girl-

est" scream was by our oldest boy camper from Mackay . . . we know who you were.

Several of the teams also attempted

the milk crate building challenge. Each camper tried to build a tower straight up made of milk crates. As they went higher, another camper would throw up the next milk crate. The Wambaroo Camp's record is 21 crates high and two girls, Penny McQueen, from Victoria and Danielle Tearle, from Queensland, both climbed to 18 crates.

We had a special sports challenge this year. The New Zealand campers and some from New South Wales who had New Zealand parents challenged the rest of the world to a "serious" game of touch rugby. The game began with a *haka* (a war cry New Zealand teams use to put fear in the other team) led by Pau Marshall, from Sydney. The game was close but "unfortunately" the New Zealand team won . . . again.

Evening Activities

After the evening meal we had activities that included seminars, dancing, spotlighting and games in the bush.

On Wednesday evening we had our annual speech banquet. The dining room was decorated and the campers dressed up for an evening of speeches that were only prepared in between activities a day or two before.

A highlight this year was *Australian Idol* with video clips and judges similar to *Australian Idol*—Holden, Marcia



and Dicko. It was a great show with the winning act being Joshua Barton from Queensland playing guitar with Ricardo Villanueva, a staff member from Mexico. They sang "La Bamba."

On the last Friday evening campers made cards to send to members who had made a donation to contribute to the camp. This was followed by hymn singing, with a number of campers leading songs.

Of course the last evening is always a highlight. The four activity teams had added dance steps to a progressive salsa, called a *rueda*, and had a dance off to see which team had created the best steps.

Camper Comments

We asked some of the younger campers what they learned from camp. Here are a few of the responses:

- "I learned how to communicate with guys more, I learned how to push myself on and step out of my comfort zone and I learned how to plan my goals."
- "I learned to be encouraging and have a go at anything. I also learned to trust my team with the harnesses."
- "I learned who a true friend is and what one can do to improve a relationship."
- "I learned about relationships, to avoid drugs and how God sees us."

We received the following comments from a couple of older campers who have been to a number of camps at different locations:

- "I have heard that you have booked the same site for next year. That's great; it was definitely the best out of the three areas I've been to. Even the flies weren't that bad."
- "Once again it was absolutely fantastic and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Why did I miss all those years?! I hear you've booked the same camp for next year. It was a great setting there, and the activities were the best I've ever had."

Finally, thanks to all the campers who came to camp for being such a fine group to serve and have fun with.

Bruce Dean

Letters

"Considering Counseling for Baptism?"

[In the article "Considering Counseling for Baptism? What Are You Waiting For?" in the December 2005 issue, it asked] "Do you believe with every fiber of your being . . .?" When I was baptized, and when I baptized others, I was not asked, and I did not ask others, if they believed with "every fiber of their being." That statement is almost contrived—almost worked up.

Now after 34 years in God's Church, I can calmly and deliberately say to almost anyone, "I believe Jesus Christ is God and my Savior with every fiber of my being." But when I was counseling for baptism, I wanted to believe and asked, after it was shown to me, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24) . . .

The article wasn't bad or wrong, but was it real?

California

Thanks for your letter. Yes, you make a good point in showing that conversion is a process, and that one statement may seem like asking the impos-

sible. But we hope that the main message of the article came across—encouraging prospective members not to wait and think they have to be perfect. As you pointed out, we need baptism and the help of the Holy Spirit in order to grow.

From Disillusioned to Delighted

I was a member of the Worldwide Church of God for quite a long time—observing the festivals of God as He ordained. The Feast of Tabernacles—which was observed in Jesus' time and mentioned in Zechariah that it will be observed after the second coming of Christ—should obviously be observed in the intervening time also. I would like to know of your plans for it.

I continue to be a Sabbath-keeper. The disillusionment came after serving with the project in Sri Lanka in the year 1989, when disturbing changes took place, and thereafter I took to an intensive study of the Word of God by His own calling. On this Sabbath eve, Jan. 20, I chanced upon your Web site

and am delighted to find the remnant church active . . .

I would appreciate information about your congregations and Feast of Tabernacles sites. Thank you.

Internet

"Welcome Home"

Thank you so much for a thoughtful, thorough and—most importantly—a caring response to my question.

I'm also pleased to report that I will be attending Sabbath services regularly . . . Not having a car right now, I had to use public transportation to get there, so I arrived after services, during the fellowship period. However, as I had expected, the brethren immediately demonstrated the love of Christ. More than once, someone said to me, "Welcome home!" They even took me out to dinner, and someone arranged transportation for me to next week's services.

I am truly thankful to our heavenly Father for being merciful to me as I struggled all these years with doctrinal changes and not wanting to be "tossed

and fro by every wind of doctrine." He gave me time to "prove all things" again. It was through the sound doctrine found in the UCG media that the gray areas were cleared up for me. This is where the work of God is, and I can support it with my tithes and offerings, confident that I'm being a good steward of what God has entrusted to me (I just finished listening to Mr. Kilough's sermon, "Entrusted With the Gospel").

Again, thank you, and I love you all with the love of Christ!

Internet

Request to Reprint: "Should Be Shared With Everyone!"

I have been a recipient of *The Good News* for several years and have kept every issue ever received. Though I am a member of the First Baptist Church, Tipton, Oklahoma, and have taught Sunday school for 57 years, I often use your materials as resources in preparation for my Bible classes. Too, I am a speaker/presenter for inspirational writers' workshops and refer to mate-

rials in your publications when conducting sessions.

I also write and edit our church newsletter and am currently publishing an online magazine, *Victory Herald* (www.victoryherald.com). The article, "How Can We Pass Our Faith on to Our Children," by Jim Servidio, in the January/February 2006 issue of *The Good News* is an article I'd like to share with my readers. I'm requesting permission to use verbatim the sidebar, "Teach Your Children How to Pray." That idea is one that should be shared with everyone!

Thank you for your materials.
Oklahoma
The request was granted.

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

Snow and "the Zone" Descend Upon Winter Camp

Campers had been hoping for snow in time for Winter Camp, and snow they got! The 11th annual Winter Camp began on Dec. 21 and ended Dec. 26. Campers from 13 states enjoyed the winter activities of tubing and cross-country skiing. The 48 campers and 33 staff members enjoyed five days together building bonds and learning more about God's way of life.

Relationships were emphasized in daily Compass Check Christian Living classes. Topics included "Inclusiveness in our Relationships" by Steve Nutzman and "Words That Hurt and Words That Help" by Victor Kubik. Dawn Familetti conducted a class for the young ladies on "Growing From Girlhood to a Feminine Woman." Gary Black spoke to the young men on the topic of "Ambition."

Special guests were Vic and Bev Kubik, who instructed in indoor team challenge. A lively question-and-answer session allowed the campers to ask questions about the Bible and practical situations in life. Daily dorm inspections encouraged campers to keep their dorm rooms and personal items clean and neat.

Dance class helped the campers to learn new dance steps that they displayed at the dance on the last night. Other activities included floor hockey, basketball, volleyball, outdoor team



Winter Campers enjoy the snow with cross-country skiing and snowballs; upper right, part of the indoor challenge class—the guys have to figure out how to raise themselves up as a unit without falling over

challenge, snow football, open game night and arts and crafts.

The camp activities and classes are designed to assist campers in their spiritual and emotional growth. One camper wrote that camp "has helped me develop more self-confidence and has brought my spirits up." Another camper wrote, "Camp gave me new friends and a new attitude on life for a new perspective."

The dedicated camp staff generously gave of their time and talents to these future leaders. And for that, we offer our deep thanks for a job well done.

After directing Winter Camp for nine years from 1997 to 2005, Steve Nutzman is retiring from his duties as

camp director. Overall United Youth Camp coordinator Larry Greider has asked him to help with ACA accreditation this summer. Former Winter Camp assistant director Gary Black will now be the camp director of Winter Camp.

What does camp mean to the youth?



"To help us to become closer to God and create a 'Zone' environment."

"Camp always helps me feel more loved and more outgoing. It's such a great investment of time and money."

We certainly see evidence that the United Youth Camps are training, mentoring and

inspiring the next generation of servants for service in God's Church. This truly is exciting!

Steve Nutzman



Three campers responded this way: "To help develop godly character and work on relationships (human to human and God relationships)."

Young Adults Learn Service, Leadership at Challenger II

Thirteen young adults from seven states and Germany gathered in southern Arizona from Dec. 25 to Jan. 1 to participate in the Challenger II Rock Climbing program. We were blessed with excellent weather—cool nights and warm days—as we camped in the desert, climbed in the mountains and talked about leadership, responsibility and personal growth at the campfire at night.

Climbers' skill level ranged from experienced mountaineering to amateur, but all formed a solid team based on friendship and encouragement. The program emphasized challenging each individual to greater spiritual growth and leadership. Following is one participant's report.—James Capo, director

by Caleb Janicich, with Andrew Beattie

As a poor college student needing to earn money over the winter break, I hesitated about attending this camp. I knew the program had a focus on leadership and challenge, but it was a letter from Mr. Capo that convinced me the lessons I could learn from attending—lessons that would benefit me for a lifetime—would be much more valuable than the little bit of money I could earn in a week. So I decided to go.

Before camp, I had started to question my role in the Church. I know that sometimes young people feel like they don't really have a role in their congregation, but this is an attitude and perception that needs to change. The camp placed an emphasis on servant leadership, and how as a group we need to accept ownership and responsibility in the Church. Now, at this very moment, young adults can help lead the Church in the right direction, not through positions or appointments or ordination, but through our willingness to serve and get involved. I believe this applies to everyone, not just to the young adults.

The Church of God is a family and a body. We are made up of many members, and we all have different abilities, skills and areas where we can serve. Having recently moved to a new church area, I had been waiting around for someone to ask me to do something.

What this camp helped me to see is that we do not need to wait to be given a job or position, but rather we need to find existing places where we might be able to serve, and then eagerly fill in where needed. This may be as simple as helping with coffee, greeting an unfamiliar face with a smile and a handshake or visiting the shut-ins or elderly.

An inspiring spiritual focus of the camp was on the correlation between rock climbing and our spiritual climb

toward the Kingdom of God. Continual focus was placed on the overall camp theme: conviction, commitment and courage. In rock climbing you need to have a conviction of purpose and desire to climb, commitment to that conviction and the courage to continually advance on your climb.

In climbing, if you don't go for the next move, you will get burned out. Your arms and legs start to burn,



and eventually you fall off the rock. The same thing can happen in our spiritual lives when we are trying to move forward. Sometimes we don't "trust the rock"—the next move looks a little scary, so we just sit in one spot waiting for a better hold, and we burn out. In our spiritual lives, we must have the courage to move forward even when

the going is tough. Trust the rock, and commit to the move.

Sometimes going up to meet someone is scary. Sometimes raising your hand when the minister asks for volunteers is scary. But if we can take courage in the support of our brethren and the sup-



port from our great God, and volunteer, then we have taken the first step in truly becoming servant leaders.

Another lesson was that we need to learn how to make our holds/trials positive. In climbing and in life, we can encounter an overhang, a crack or a bump in the rock, and we have to make a nonintuitive move to make that hold "positive." We might have to lie back, "undercling" or "crimp" (a way to hold on to even tiny ledges).

These are all things that we don't do naturally. They are deliberate and forced actions, but they enable us to hang on and move up. We must trust that the rock will hold us, and have confidence that our belayer will catch us if we do fall.

This camp was meant to change our lives, and it showed me that the time to lead and to serve is now. We learned servant leadership, unity and "tie in"

with those we can trust who are belaying us spiritually. Challenger II also taught us that part of our responsibility in the family of God is to "be there" for God and each other, that we can each belay our brothers and sisters in Christ, to continually help each other upward toward our final goal, the Kingdom of God.

Each participant is now planning a service project in his or her local congregation to begin acting on the lessons learned in this program, and I encourage other young adults in the Church to step into their own service roles. UN



Michael Hobbs on the first day; atop Hitchcock Pinnacle; the group (photos by James Capo and Michal Lisa Capo)



From the Word

“Quality Time” With Your Kids

■ We’ve all heard the term. It’s banded about as the magic, fix-all solution for busy parents with children. Is this true? If so, how can you insure the time you spend with your children truly is “quality time”?

by David Treybig

“I’m really looking forward to spending some quality time with Dad this weekend,” said 6-year-old Bill to his same-age friend, Joe. “Yeah, me too!” exclaimed Joe. “Even though I haven’t really talked to my dad in a month, some good quality time this coming Sunday will fix everything. It will be like we’ve been together every day.”

Whoa! What planet is this conversation taking place upon? Are these kids human? Everyone knows this isn’t reality. Young children don’t talk about spending “quality time” with their parents. For them, all time spent with their parents is important, and they don’t generally rate how good (or bad) their time with their parent or parents was. As children mature, however, they do understand whether the time spent with their parents was enjoyable or not.

Consider the case of 16-year-old Susan. She hasn’t had a meaningful conversation with her parents for months, but her folks promised they’d spend some quality time with her on the weekend by going to a movie or something.

“Oh no,” thought Susan. “Just what I need: an embarrassing trip to the movies with my folks followed by an inquisition about my friends. What a nightmare!”

From her parents’ perspective, the outing may have been a nightmare for them, as well. Unfortunately, this hypothetical example is reality for many young people and their parents.

Today, the concept of spending “quality time” with children has permeated discussions about parenting. For busy parents who are juggling demanding careers and heavy workloads with raising children, “quality time” has become an important concept.

It’s easy to understand why. Studies now indicate that the typical amount of time a working parent spends with his or her young children is about 30 minutes per day.

And this amount of time diminishes as children mature. A typical father will spend less than three minutes per day alone with a child who has reached his or her teenage years (Robert Evans, *Family Matters*:

How Schools Can Cope With the Crisis in Childrearing, 2004, p. 78).

Of course, these stats show the total amount of time spent with children and don’t measure how effective those minutes are. No wonder parents want to make the small amounts of time they spend with their children as good as possible. They want this time to be *quality* time. So what can you do to make your time with your children or grandchildren as effective as possible?

Defining “Quality Time”

Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo, in their *Let the Children Come Along the Virtuous Way* parenting program, define quality time as “an activity that promotes communicating and sharing” (*Leader’s Guide*, p. 79).

According to this definition, many activities such as going to a movie or playing games are not really quality time. In fact, the Ezzos “challenge the contemporary notion of quality time and quantity time with the view that time is not the best measurement, but the caliber of relationship is. This can be gauged by how often children turn to Dad for advice and counseling” (*Leader’s Guide*, p. 91).

The goal in spending time with children is to promote and facilitate a deep, heart-to-heart relationship. These kinds of relationships are characterized by a child revealing his or her innermost thoughts, ambitions and even worries.

When this occurs, it is like being allowed into a special, private place that is located behind closed doors. Being invited in requires trust. And adults have to be sensitive to and respectful of a child’s vulnerability

Studies now indicate that the typical amount of time a working parent spends with his or her young children is about 30 minutes per day. And this amount of time diminishes as children mature. A typical father will spend less than three minutes per day alone with a child who has reached his or her teenage years . . . No wonder parents want to make the small amounts of time they spend with their children as good as possible.

when they are invited in or they won’t be allowed to return.

It’s at this intimate level of heart-to-heart communication that a parent can be most influential in teaching both physical and spiritual concepts. Before offering advice, a wise parent will have abundantly paved the way to this position through love and concern for the child. It’s much easier for children to hear a parent when they know the parent loves them, treats them with respect and goes out of his or her way to do things for them.

Sometimes parents have to prime the pump for meaningful conversation

with their children by first spending time with their children doing things they like to do. As a result of this personal interest, children often then open up and share what they are thinking. Good discussions can’t always just be ordered up. They must be natural, and they come about because a good relationship already exists.

Some parents have found that they can have good heart-to-heart communication with their younger children when they put them in bed for the night. At this time it is easier to have a quiet, reflective conversation about the good things they did that day and about how God is pleased and we are blessed when we obey Him.

Teenagers can also be reflective and desirous of talking about their futures with their parents just before going to bed. While the temptation may be for parents to say, “I’m tired. Let’s talk about this in the morning,” teens may not be as ready for the conversation at a later time. It’s often better for parents to take advantage of the times their teens want to talk, if they can do so.

Quantity Is Important Too

It’s also important to understand that the quantity of time spent with children is not irrelevant. One good experience with a child is easily cancelled by weeks and months of neglect. Perhaps it is best said that our time is our life. When we give quality and quantity of time spent with children are both important.

In principle, we all understand that our time is our life. When we give some of our time to our children, we are telling them that they are impor-

tant to us—that we value them highly.

While parents might think they are showing their child love by working an extra job so they can provide their child more physical possessions and opportunities, a child doesn’t understand this. He or she may feel neglected and unloved. Our time truly is one of the most valuable gifts we can give.

To have more influence on our children, we need to look for ways to spend more time with them. Consider eating dinner together every evening and discussing the day’s activities. Preparing the meal and



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cleaning up afterwards also provide opportunities for conversation.

If you are going to watch television or a movie, do it together so you can verbally challenge and discuss ungodly thinking or actions. The discussions you have with a child can teach him or her critical thinking skills. He or she can learn firsthand that we don’t just accept any and all values that we see or hear. Instead, each must be weighed in light of God’s Word.

Riding in an automobile can also be a time for meaningful conversation. While today’s trend is for young people to have their own music and for younger children to be entertained by a movie while riding in a vehicle, time spent in traveling can be reclaimed. Why not use this time to talk about life, learn about your child’s interests or help plan his or her future?

You’re in, Now What?

Before closing, let’s assume you’ve established a good relationship with your child—you’ve been invited into his or her private world. You are truly experiencing the best “quality time” possible with your child as he or she opens up with his or her innermost thoughts and feelings.

Now what are you going to say? How can you make sure you’ll be invited to return to this level of communication? Here are a few points to consider:

- **Offer praise.** Praise the young person for his or her willingness to discuss things on this level. This type of communication is special. Let your child know you enjoy and appreciate being able to talk about things with him or her on this level.

- **Reaffirm your love.** If you hope to influence your children, they will likely be influenced to the degree that they know they are loved.

- **Suggest a course of action based on God’s Word.** Be a salesperson for a godly course of action. God told the ancient Israelites to tell their children how following Him had benefited them. In short, we should explain that doing things God’s way is “for our good always” (Deuteronomy 6:20-25) and that it will be for our children’s good as well if they likewise choose God’s way.

- **Let your child take ownership.** Encourage, but don’t force, your child to choose God’s way. This is especially important as a child grows older. It shows respect for the child’s right and responsibility to make his or her own decisions.

- **Let your child know you’d like to discuss this again.** Sometimes children can get the idea that there can be no further discussion. If a child is leaning toward an unwise decision, you might ask a child to think about some questions or to do further research on a possible course of action. Suggest that you continue the conversation when you’ve both had more time to gather information and think about the possible courses of action.

- **Express confidence in your child’s ability to make good decisions.** Children often live up to our expectations of them. Express confidence in them, showing that you believe as they mature they will follow God, stay in the Church, be baptized, marry someone within the faith and eventually raise children who also make godly choices. Tell them this is what you foresee them doing because you know they will be happier if they make these choices.

Quality time spent with our children is one of the great joys of life. Use these tips to have more of it and to influence your offspring to follow God’s way of life. UN

Philippine Youth Essay Contest: What Would You Do to Stir Up Zeal and Urgency?

Last year the Church in the Philippines sponsored an essay contest for youth, ages 13 to 19, based on the question posed during Clyde Kilough's May 14 sermon: "What would you do to stir up zeal and a sense of urgency in the Church?"

A panel of judges composed of the Philippine National Council (including regional pastor David Baker and all the Philippine ministry) judged the entries without knowing who wrote them.

Cash prizes were awarded to the Gold, Silver and Bronze Level winners, along with four consolation prizes to Stella Mae B. Cambare, Saraine Gem Nagtalon, Jonathan Sagayno and Terelou R. Cabugwas.

The Gold Level Award essay is printed below, along with excerpts from the Silver and Bronze Level Award essays. The full essays can be found at www.ucg.org.ph/youth/contest.

Gold Level Award: Beyond Expectations

by Aunell Ross R. Angcos, 15, Manila



The world is not becoming better. If we are feeling its hostility against us today, expect to have more of it tomorrow. We Christians, as part of the 21st-century Church, are commissioned to cry out to the hostile world and expound the hope and warning from God and also to prepare a people such as ourselves who have the potential to be part of the first harvest. We are expected to carry that baton of responsibility through the most difficult time in history—the end time. But the question now is, Are we capable of fulfilling that responsibility?

Our persecuted and martyred brethren had one thing in common. They had zeal. They had that powerful driving force and passion in doing their responsibility no matter what. Zeal is what we need. Zeal is one of the most important ingredients that would enable us to accomplish our task effectively even through the most difficult times.

So knowing all these things, how can I, as a young man in the Church, answer the call to stir up zeal and a sense of urgency in the Church?

Lack of years is often associated with weakness and treated as a liability. To many points that is true. But it is not an excuse for not doing the things that we know are right and fitting.

In terms of answering our "call of duty," I came to this idea. Because of my age, not much is still expected from me by the people around me. I am not expected yet to accomplish great deeds done by older people. But God is my judge and not them. So what hinders me now if I strive to go beyond their expecta-

tations and show forth a light into a greater intensity that is uncommon for my age? In other words, one way I can positively impact the Church is by starting in my own life, stirring up godly zeal in me and showing forth an example.

"Action speaks louder than words." If I want to be a great example, I should go first and start at the basics of my life. As Paul commands young Timothy, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12).

In My Word

This has to do with saying and not saying. The not saying part is the basic part of it. It has something to do with gossip, idle expressions, bad words and many more in different forms and ways. But saying truthful, edifying words is a must for us! To stir up zeal I must always initiate the talk about the things that would spiritually recharge us especially during the Sabbath fellowship since we have the tendency to deviate from what is the "proper conversation" for the Sabbath (Isaiah 58:13). I should always bear in mind that God is in our midst, listening and writing a book of remembrance, as we meditate on His name (Malachi 3:16).

Another point is in terms of talking with the people in the world. We have a common weakness to conform to the world especially on the way it speaks. Yes, we are in the world but we are not of it! As true Christians, we should not allow ourselves to be negatively influenced by people around us but, if possible, we should practice leadership in terms of influencing them towards the right side and not us being influenced towards the wrong side.

In My Conduct

Our conduct should always be honorable and worthy of the gospel of Christ. If I were to be an example in my conduct, then I should start working first within me because what is seen in me is coming from what is inside me. As an ambassador of God, I should always bear in mind that I am representing God's name to the world; and if I am not careful with my conduct, I might blaspheme His name to the unbelievers. I can effectively preach God to them and expound His warning if they see that I live it.

In My Love

The perfect definition of true love is the way of give. But we should also watch our attitude in doing this. To be an example in my love I should not only focus on serving and giving, but I should carefully watch my attitude. Am I loving and serving others to serve myself? Or am I doing these because God first loved me and I am just merely responding to that love through others? I know it is impossible for us humans to love unconditionally if we haven't felt loved like that before. We are not ignorant about God's love for us and the sacrifice that serves as an evidence to that. It is just a

matter of how we recognize that love, how we value it and how we act it!

In My Spirit

Since I am not yet baptized, I should be vigilant enough to guard myself from being spiritually passive. I may find it a reason for compromising what I believe in. I should always instill in my mind that even though I am not yet baptized, I am not exempted from the application of the things I know. True Christianity is not measured on rituals alone. It is measured on how each individual fulfills his or her commitment to God made during that process. Even though I may not yet have that "portfolio" of baptism, I can inspire others, even the baptized ones, to be more zealous by provoking them through the example of spirituality at my young age by actively using the Holy Spirit that is with me through my sanctification.

In My Faith

Faith has two sides—first the knowledge, and then the translation of that knowledge into action. Since I am still young, I lack much wisdom and understanding. So I should keep on learning more. I know that many challenges and trials await me in this arena of powers. I should prepare for it now.

I should dig into the Wisdom of the Ages as written in the Bible and, as much as possible, learn from it. And application should always follow to make my faith valid. I can be an example in my faith by doing the things that are right and proper and shunning the things that are ungodly amidst all the pressure, always bearing in mind God's unseen promises. I should always understand that life is full of choices and it is just a matter of prioritizing.

God is oftentimes allowing us to experience all these things to see His rank in our life, whether He is our first priority or we tend to compromise since we fear humans more than God. Let us always remember that once you get attached to someone or something (like school, job and other things) that is somehow overlapping God in your life, prepare, for God will soon test you regarding that matter!

In My Purity

Young as I am, I should now start practicing being pure mentally and physically. If I want to prevent the effect, I should stop the cause. The physical act is just the reaction to the thought that is sown in the mind. To prevent the action, I should strive to be mentally pure always. I should not make my mind a fertile place for bad seeds to grow by always thinking pure thoughts and meditating on God's ways.

To My Fellow Youths

Treat your age as an asset. Give much time in learning God's ways. Be conscious about your spiritual appearance. Be serious in your character building. Don't make your age a hindrance in accomplishing great deeds for the sake

of God's glory to help stir up the much-needed zeal in the Church.

We should always bear in mind that the baton of responsibility will in time be passed on to us by our elders. There are many possibilities in our generation. We might form the era of the Church that will usher in the final preaching of the gospel to the world. It's just up to us if we will end up Philadelphians or Laodiceans. We should now realize the veracity of our role today and the heaviness of our responsibility tomorrow.

Let's now ask the question: How well are we preparing to be worthy and capable of that responsibility? The world is not getting better especially for true Christians. But all of these sufferings and trials we are experiencing and shall be experiencing are not worthy to be compared to the reward waiting for us if we overcome.

When all is said and done, which statement would you like to hear from Christ? "Depart from Me you unfaithful servant" or, "Well done, good and faithful servant, you are faithful in doing your responsibility even from your youth, enter into My rest?" You choose!

Silver Level Award: Starting the Spark of Zeal

by Audrey Ruth R. Angcos, 19, Manila



Excerpts:

Having an enthusiasm to serve others is very easy if they reflect back the same with appreciation to the service rendered. But when God brought me into a situation where people are complacent and lethargic, that was the time when I learned the real meaning of zeal! . . .

I am a person who almost fell into the pit of discouragement when I saw brethren who did not do things that are godly and edifying. I almost lost my enthusiasm when I saw brethren who were complacent! In my thoughts, I was already judging others for not being a light to the world, not realizing that I myself was already casting darkness by the mere act of accusing them! It was God who eventually rescued me. He made me realize that I was very busy trying to remove the speck from my brothers' eye instead of removing that plank from my own! God made me realize that selfishness was eating me up . . .

I ran to God and asked for His help and forgiveness. That was the time that I committed my life to Him. By that time, my outlook in life became different. I started thinking outside the box. Instead of asking, "What can my brethren do for me?" I am asking myself, "What can I do for my brethren?" That was the time that I realized zeal is something that a person can only get from God, not just for yourself but also for others as well. It

is going away from self-centeredness leaning towards genuine love and concern for others . . .

My goal in this life is not to be in the limelight, but to be a light in this darkened world. I do not want to do things to be praised by men, but I will do things that would cause men to praise God.

Even though how little are the things I am doing to stir up the zeal and sense of urgency in God's Church, as long as I have God to help me, I am positive that it can start a spark that can eventually ignite a fire in the belly that can engulf God's Church someday!

Bronze Level Award: The Keys I Have

by Shiena Rose A. Castillano, 19, Tacloban City



Excerpts:

I had very little . . . involvement in the Church. It wasn't until my family gave a go-ahead to send me to the United Youth Camp that . . . I had a fresh, eager start.

Youths like to have fun . . . Why don't we let them have fun in God's place? Let us break and prove the myth wrong that the last place the young people would enjoy is the Church. Organizing an interactive Bible study is just one of the many ways . . .

Also, it is important for them to socialize (I prefer to call it interact), and meet people their age. It is overwhelming to see the youths of God gathered in one place, doing things together, enjoying everyone's company. Youths in a congregation should spend some time to create a special bond called friendship . . .

Hanging out with people who share the same faith as yours would mold you into a better, more spiritual person. Mind you, they can be a major influence. When I went to the UYC, I was more than astonished to find rare persons there who were a year or two my junior, but knew the Bible a lot better than I and had a stronger faith and closer relationship to the Lord. I became ashamed . . .

I'm doing a small part . . . yet I've learned that zeal is contagious and rubs off on others.

Participation and involvement . . . are the keys to heat up the engines of the youth to drive into the road leading to His promised eternal life. It is only when we young adults start taking part in the Church that we see colors in our spiritual journey . . .

The Church is like an already-running big car and everyone in the Church is in it. As future drivers, we should be in the passenger's seat, watching for ourselves how the current drivers steady the wheels to be able to reach God's Kingdom. If we are just seated uninvolved in the back seat, who then [will be ready]? UN

Treasure Digest

Kicking the Worry Habit

Worry is a bad habit—like smoking. So I have found a substitute for it that I will share for all my fellow worrywarts. Each day I take a scripture out of Psalms or Proverbs and mull it over all day long—when I am driving to the grocery store or when I catch myself starting to worry.

Yesterday's example is a good one to show you what I mean.

Psalms 5:8 says, "Lead me, O LORD, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; make Your way straight before my face."

As I mulled this over on the way to the swimming pool, I realized that I have no enemies, so I could eliminate that part—but not until I gave thanks to God for making my life enemy-free. Then the verse said only, "Lead me, O LORD, in Your righteousness; make Your way straight before my face."

On the way home from the swimming pool, I realized that meant the same thing as straight before my eyes. Then the verse began to impact me as a prayer I should pray. I now paraphrase it like this: "Lead me, O LORD, in Your righteousness and set it in front of my face so I cannot miss seeing it."

This works for me and keeps me from worrying myself into an early grave.

Jim Smith
Jefferson, Georgia, congregation

Nothing Like It in the World

Have you ever seen a large map of the interstate highways or the railroad system for the United States? If so, you know that they're quite impressive. These systems have enabled transportation on an immense scale, and are a vital part of the infrastructure that allowed America to become a world superpower.



Now, momentarily erase that map from your mind, and imagine that there is . . . nothing. Not one road or track capable of transporting any form of motorized vehicle from one coast to another. This is the setting described in the book *Nothing Like It in the World* by noted historian Stephen Ambrose. In this work, he tells the wonderful story of how the unfathomable goal of creating a railroad from coast to coast was achieved.

It is fascinating to learn how the leaders and laborers of the Union Pacific Railroad, who built west from Omaha, Nebraska, and the Central Pacific Railroad, who built east from Sacramento, California, completed the transcontinental railroad. Despite daunting obstacles, these men prevailed at a seemingly insurmountable task.

This piece of American history offers several great spiritual lessons and hearkens to the future as well. At times the road we travel to the Kingdom of God can seem quite difficult and discouraging. Like the building of the railroad, it has many challenging obstacles. However, like the courageous laborers on this monumental project, we also must "endure to the end."

Another lesson is learned through the character

of Theodore Judah, an ambitious young engineer who played an important role in the story. Unfortunately, he never saw the culmination of the railroad, which he had made his life's work. He was a visionary who truly believed in the need for the railroad before nearly anyone else did. Though he did not witness it in his lifetime, the nation reaped the fruits of his labors.

Like him, we also must be fully committed to a lofty goal and a glorious vision that we know will be accomplished.

In Isaiah 35:8-10, the Bible speaks of a much more important road, a "Highway of Holiness," and its description is wonderful. Those who travel on it will do so with singing, joy and gladness. God has given us the awesome opportunity to be visionary men and women like Theodore Judah. He has called us to see the need for the road, to believe it will happen and to do everything we can to prepare to help those who will one day travel it.

On a much greater scale than the Transcontinental Railroad, the Highway of Holiness will be a critical element of the growth of the heavenly country for which we all wait, the wonderful Kingdom of God. There will have been nothing else like it in the world!

David Cobb
Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation

Treasures in Your Attic

The majority of us have a designated place to store items we intend to use at some point in the future. Often it will be the attic of our home. It is not unusual for items to be stored for decades, collecting dust and depreciating.

We often forget the items are stored and forget that someone could make good use of them if we were thoughtful enough to put them where they were needed. Material goods are of no value to anyone while stored. Their value is realized when used for their intended purpose.

For example, a truck sitting out in the weather rusting and depreciating is of little value, but if it is put into the service it was made for, to haul loads, it can be of immense value.

Good intentions can be like dusty items stored in our attic (our minds) if we are not careful. We know that we should help others; we believe that it is our Christian duty to do so. We probably know someone who is having a trial, and we have a thought that we should call or send a card or go to visit.

We delay; we store it in our mind's attic, intending to do it later. Is dust gathering on our intentions of good works? Remember that pleasant words will make the heart glad and can be health to the bones (Proverbs 12:25; 16:24).

I recently experienced the enormous value in receiving get-well cards, notes and assurances of prayers from over 150 brethren across the United States and internationally after a prayer request was posted on the Church's Web site. I was encouraged off the top of the scale!

Don't be too concerned about what to say to encourage. I once had a dear friend who fell sick and continued to deteriorate over time. I knew I should go to visit him, but I so dreaded to do it. What could I possibly say to a person so sick to uplift him?

Guess what happened. After visiting and talking, I was the one who was pumped up!

We are blessed when we give. When we have pity on the poor (down-trodden spirit), we are lending to the Lord. When we do good works to others, it is equated as doing it to our Savior (Matthew 25:34-40).

God is very pleased with our good works for other people. We need to be zealous in our efforts (Titus 2:14). A record is being written (Revelation 20:12; Malachi 3:16).

In conclusion: When the thought comes to mind to do something for someone, don't delay. Make that call, write that note or visit that friend. It might be the Holy Spirit sending the thought. Lay up treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20), not in your attic.

R.J. Ridenour
Knoxville, Tennessee, congregation

God's Book of Jewels

When we first met Mrs. W., she lived in a senior citizens' high rise. She had relocated from Texas, and was unable to attend church.

We were fairly new in the church area we were serving, and she was new to us—but not new to the old-timers there. We learned that she and her husband had been quite active in the Church years earlier, attending services, visiting and participating in numerous service projects. When they moved out of state, the members lost track of them until several years later when Mrs. W., now a widow, returned to live out the rest of her days.

It struck me then that we shared such a small segment of her life—mainly her struggles with aging and loss of independence. The years of dedicated energy and service were things of a faded or, for us, an unknown past.

As we got acquainted with more of the congregation, things from their pasts began to emerge. Some had been charter members of newly forming congregations like St. Louis and Kansas City, sometimes traveling many hours to attend services every Sabbath, as well as Bible studies, Holy Days and Spokesman Clubs. Some remembered three services on a Holy Day or three-hour sermons.

Many had stories of sacrifice and blessings, disappointments and renewal. And all remembered when they first came into the Church and why. They were still there, still faithful, still serving when we transferred into that area—living links with the Church's past.

Now 20 or so years later, most of them have died, and few remember what positive influences they

were in the congregation. Sadly, as human beings we are greatly limited in our capacity to remember and to know a person's entire context.

That's what makes Malachi 3:16-17 so comforting. God is not limited. He knows us in our entirety. And He remembers and takes note:

"Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. 'They shall be Mine,' says the LORD of hosts, 'On the day that I make them My jewels.'"

Karen Meeker
St. Louis, Missouri, congregation

Pillars of Wisdom: Integrity

Integrity—it's what we all demand of our leaders, sales people, doctors and pastors. Politicians claim to have it. But what is it?

Stephen Carter, in his book *Integrity*, makes this observation: "The word *integrity* comes from the same Latin root as *integer* and historically has been understood to carry much the same sense, the sense of *wholeness*: a person of integrity, like a whole number, is a whole person, a person somehow undivided."

The Hebrew word in the Old Testament translated "integrity," *tom*, has the same meaning of completeness or wholeness. Notice these uses of *tom* in Proverbs:

Proverbs 10:9: "He who walks with integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will become known."

Proverbs 11:3: "The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them."

Proverbs 19:1: "Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool."

Proverbs 20:7: "The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him."

Simply stated, the more consistent a person is in knowing what he actually believes, articulating what he believes and conducting his or her life based on those beliefs, the more integrity he or she

Turning the Hearts . . . Correction With Affection

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). We are all desirous of having our children become successful in life. We all realize the need to give them assistance as they grow up and mature in life. God's Word speaks about correction and guidance and teaching from parents to their children.

When my wife and I had no children for five years of marriage (and thought we might never be blessed with them), we watched how others treated their children. We saw some wonderful examples and some, well, not so wonderful examples.

In the early years, we thought if we would just correct and discipline (spank, rebuke and punish is what that was taken to mean) our children, they would turn out to be loving, merciful, kind, caring obedient children. However, I saw one major area that was often missing along with correction—*affection!*

You see, if a child receives attention only when he or she does something wrong, then the negativity sets in. But, if a child is loved and appreciated for what he or she does right and is shown appropriate affection, then the correction (which will inevitably come because we are not perfect yet) will be more meaningful and will be in the context of a loving relationship.

Children who are regularly loved will take the correction in a way that will affect them more deeply. After all, the correction comes from a parent who loves them (Hebrews 12:6). They will not feel good to be out of sorts with the one who provides them the affection we all need in life.

So please remember that though we should correct and, yes, spank our children when they need it, we also need to show them the love and affection that will enable them to receive the correction more deeply. And we can teach our children mercy by sometimes not exacting the full punishment, especially when we discern that they are truly sorry. Let them know that you are showing them mercy as God shows mercy to us all.

Your children will benefit by correction with affection, and it will enhance their opportunity to become successes in life.

Gary E. Antion



has. Yet, we must admit, it is possible for someone to base his or her conduct on a false belief. The person may be sincere and consistent; but does he have integrity?

Stephen Carter concludes that integrity “requires three steps: 1) *discerning* what is right and wrong; 2) *acting* on what you have discerned, even at personal cost; and 3) *saying openly* that you are acting on your understanding of right and wrong.”

Points to Build On

When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, He answered: “And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength” (Mark 12:30).

God requires integrity in our relationship with Him in that we are to love Him with *all* of our emotions, life, intellect and energy. When we compromise with sin, wrap thoughts and emotions, or expend our energy in ungodly endeavors, we are divided in our loyalty and our integrity is compromised.

On another occasion, a young man came to Christ, asking, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” Jesus answered by telling him to obey the commandments. The man answered, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?”

Matthew records what happened next: “Jesus said to him, ‘If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.’ But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions” (Matthew 19:16-17, 20-22).

This man obeyed God in many areas of life. Jesus didn’t argue that he wasn’t keeping the commandments. The young man had compartmentalized a segment of his life—his possessions—and it was in this area that he maintained full personal control instead of submitting to God.

It is common for people to deal with guilt by “compartmentalizing.” A man committing adultery may appear to be a fine husband and father; and when he is with his family, he strives to fulfill those roles. But as soon as he is with his mistress, he forgets his wife and children.

We see people who are honest in personal relationships become cutthroats in money matters claiming “business is business.” They live by two conflicting codes of conduct, but maintain a semblance of balance by role-playing.

Sports is another area in which a person who is otherwise kind and law-abiding may participate in dirty play and cheating.

Application

Strive to base your life on sound biblical principles. A principle according to *Webster’s New World Dictionary* is the “ultimate source or cause . . . a fundamental truth, law . . . in which others are based.” The search of God’s Word must be a search for God’s integrity, the principles on which He builds His laws and instructions.

Strive for integrity in your personal life. We must incorporate these principles into every thought and action. In order to accomplish this, a person must maintain balance in all four arenas of life: spiritual, physical, social and mental. If a person neglects his or her own spiritual development, physical health, relationships or mental growth, eventually all areas of life will be affected. Learn to set aside the time necessary for personal growth, family relationships and spiritual development.

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

The Other Prayer List

So much to pray about. From the coming of God’s Kingdom to a better job—the list goes on and on! Who can remember it all? That’s why so many of us keep our own personal prayer list. As God answers one request, we thank Him, cross it off our list and move on to the next. But as time passes, we can forget His perfect answers to those prayers.

This is where that other prayer list—the *answered* prayer list—comes in. When we put it to use, it has several benefits:

First, it reminds us of the many times God not only answered, but greatly exceeded, our requests (Ephesians 3:20)! This can be a reminder to also add to our list totally unrequested interventions—His blessings (Deuteronomy 28:1-14; James 1:17).



How about that unexpected raise, the friend who “just happened” to call when we needed encouragement, etc.?

And just as we appreciate the heartfelt thanks of others, so does God (Psalm 69:30-31). One good thing leads to another: God accepts our gratitude and grants us true peace. We don’t have to worry about the outcome (Philippians 4:6-7)! Indeed, the more we stay focused on Him, the greater is that peace (Isaiah 26:3).

It’s often been said that seeing is believing, but as we continue to reflect on God’s answers to our prayers, we can also realize that believing is seeing (Mark 11:24). Time after time God reveals His knowledge of our needs (Matthew 6:8). We are continually brought back to the realization that He knows us far better than we know ourselves (Matthew 10:30).

These, then, are just some of the benefits of an answered prayer list. If you haven’t already done so, consider beginning your own. As this other prayer list continues to grow, may it help you grow as well.

Nicolas Nick
Dayton, Ohio, congregation

What Does the Word Christian Mean to You?

The word *Christian* has been in existence since soon after the first-century Church began. Many people in this 21st century claim that they are Christian without really knowing what the Scriptures say about who the followers of Christ really are (Matthew 7:21-23).

The word *Christian* will be confusing to anyone who does not have a biblical understanding, because so many nonbiblical beliefs and ideas are called Christian today (Isaiah 29:13-14; Matthew 15:8-9). Few realize that these ideas are not pleasing to God (Proverbs 16:25; Revelation 22:18-19).

We can avoid the trap of being wise in our own eyes (Proverbs 3:7; 12:15). We can search the Scriptures daily, careful to find out what God says about our own ideas, so we can truly claim that we are following Jesus Christ’s instructions in worship and festival celebration.

We are the chosen of God (1 Peter 2:9). We are called out of this world and have the opportunity to live by every word of God (Matthew 4:4).

By searching the Scriptures daily to know what God says about His people, we will not follow the deceitfulness of Satan the devil (Revelation 12:9; Colossians 2:8) that is all over the world!

Samson Osajie
Benin City, Nigeria, congregation

It’s Not Fair!

It’s one of the first sentences many of us learned to say as our siblings were getting the better end of the deal: “It’s not fair!”

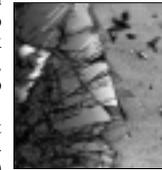
Those words became all too clear for my daughter, Michelle. She had her car parked in a very nice neighborhood, but when she went to get her car, the glass was smashed in and all her Feast photos were taken, along with everything else of value that they could find.

It was not a week later that Michelle had her car stolen right in front of her house! The police called her a week later and said they had found her car, and she had to go to pay \$100 to get it out of the impound. The thief took her car for a joyride, trashed the car, burned out the clutch and now she had to pay to get it back!

What made matters worse was that the insurance would not cover the damage. My daughter spent over \$1,000 repairing the damage out of her own pocket. Because of the theft, my daughter decided she had to move to a higher rent area.

Where are the crooks? Probably free and stealing from someone else! Is life fair? Ask my daughter.

A few days later, in a moment of despair, Michelle found that all was not lost. While cleaning the trash out of her car, she reached underneath the front seat and found her most prized possession. All scrunched up and with its pages twisted, she found her Bible that she had thought was stolen too. The thief took her valuable pen, but kicked her Bible under the seat.



Of all the things that she thought were gone, that was the one thing she wanted back. The thief took everything but the most valuable thing of all, the Bible that holds the truth that will keep her focused and pressing on when things are just not fair.

Life is not fair, but my daughter’s Bible helped put everything in focus for me and for her. God has given us something that no one can take from us, His valuable truth and promises.

God is just! He sees everything that you and I are going through. He does not forget! Hebrews 10:30-31 says, “For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. And again, ‘The LORD will judge His people.’ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

Life is not fair, and we do get kicked in the stomach from time to time, but we must get back up and press on toward the mark. For God will make it all come out OK in His time. In the meantime, just as my daughter put great value on her Bible, we too must put everything in perspective and place great value on His promises. We must

always remember that no one can take away the promises and truth that God holds out to all of us who love Him and keep His commandments! No one can take our crowns unless we let them!

We may not have control over everything that happens to us, and we all will suffer many unfair things before it is all over, but we do have control over whether we get discouraged and quit!

Press on! For there is a world coming where life will be fair, and you will have the opportunity to use those unfair things that have happened to you for the good of mankind.

Janet Treadway
Cincinnati East, Ohio, congregation

Question and Answer: What Calendar Do You Use to Calculate the Holy Days?

Thank you for your interest. Every calendar has idiosyncrasies, and God doesn’t reveal many details about the subject in His Word.

Which calendar should the Church use was a question that the late Herbert W. Armstrong addressed in the 1940s. There was division with the Church of God (Seventh Day) at the time, which led to questions within the congregations Mr. Armstrong pastored. In the spring of that year, he wrote to the membership, announcing that extensive study (with the assistance of some of the members in the Eugene, Oregon, congregation) led him to conclude that the Church of God should use the Hebrew calendar to determine the Holy Days.

Controversy over the same issues that the Church addressed in the 1940s resurfaced in recent years. In the spring of 1996, the United Church of God prepared a preliminary study on the subject and invited those who wished to submit papers for consideration. After approving a doctrinal study paper on the subject, the Council of Elders mailed a copy to the entire UCG ministry in February 1997. Here is the conclusion:

“After a study of all the issues and papers, the Council of Elders has come to the conclusion that the Hebrew calendar is a valid calendar for Christians to use in setting the dates for the observance of God’s Holy Days. While major issues seem to revolve around the four rules of postponement (*Dehioth*), the conclusion of the Council is to accept the calendar using the current calculations and rules. The rules of postponement are used in the establishment of the first day of Tishri. Once the first day of Tishri is established, then the calendar can be set, and the first day of Abib can be determined. This, in turn, makes it possible to establish the dates for the Holy Days. It is incorrect to refer to the rules of postponement as ‘moving’ the Holy Days. While we must always be willing to listen and learn, in the absence of any new information, the Council has chosen to confirm its support for the use of the Hebrew calendar as the official position of the United Church of God, an International Association.”

The following quotation illustrates just how accurate it is, as well as the need to make slight adjustments occasionally:

“The calculation of the calendar was transmitted to the sages in an unbroken chain going back to Moses . . . According to the ancient calculations, the exact time between one new moon and the next is 29 days, 12 hours, and 793 chalemim ‘parts of an hour’ (the hour is divided into 1080 parts). In other words, one lunar month has 29.53059 days. It is interesting to note that according to NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), the time between one new moon and the next is 29.530588 days. Of course, NASA has at its disposal the most advanced and sophisticated telescopes and computers. Nevertheless, the difference between NASA’s figures and that used by Hillel II, which originated more than 3000 years ago, is .000002 or two millionths of a day, calculated for the period one month” (*The Essence of the Holy Days—Insight From the Jewish Sages* by Avraham Yaakov Finkel, 1993, p. 141).

For More Information, see the reprint article “Did God Give a Calendar?” (www.ucg.org/reprints) and the study paper “Hebrew Calendar Summary” (www.ucg.org/papers).



Local Church Updates

Brethren Help Member Clean Up Katrina Damage

On Dec. 4, brethren from the New Orleans and Covington, Louisiana, congregations and friends gathered at the home of Dorothy Lewis to tear down and clean out her back shed that was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

The 16-person wrecking crew made short work of the shed and its contents and were even able to down a few Krispy Kreme donuts in between loads. Her shed had housed her washer and



Members help Dorothy Lewis (center, front row) tear down a shed destroyed by Hurricane Katrina (photo by Rick Avent)

dryer as well as her hot water heater. Flood waters ruined everything in her shed. The water rose to the porch of her home (4½ feet) before receding. Thankfully her home didn't flood.

Prior to the storm, Mrs. Lewis evacuated to a three-story building nearby, where she was eventually airlifted from the roof by helicopter to a highway overpass. Later she was taken to a shelter in western Louisiana where she contacted family in San Antonio, Texas, with whom she stayed until she was able to return in November.

With donations received from Katrina Good Works and LifeNets funds, we have been able to purchase replacement appliances for her and will be assisting her financially in the building of another shed.

The brethren deeply appreciate the kindness bestowed upon them by loving members around the world.

Andy Burnett

Reno Congregation Enjoys "Dinner and a Movie" Event

After Sabbath services and a thought-provoking interactive Bible study Jan. 7, over 40 brethren from the Reno, Nevada, congregation enjoyed "Dinner and a Movie" together.

Hamburgers and hotdogs were barbecued on-site. Tables were prepared and food was served with an outpouring of generous help from many. After rel-



Volunteers barbecued hamburgers and hotdogs for the Reno "Dinner and a Movie" event

izing there was no ice to keep drinks cold, resourceful brethren chilled and served beverages in tubs filled with snow collected from around the building!

Later, the front rows of seating in the hall were removed to make way for sleeping bags and beach chairs. Movie-style popcorn and candy was handed out. All were entertained by a screening of some movie trivia, a few homemade commercials and, finally, the feature presentation of Disney's *Snow Dogs*.

Kelly Dack

95-Year-Old Reads the Bible Through Again

The New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts and Vermont brethren honored Ethel McMullen when she reached 95 years old.

She shared some of her experiences with us. One of her important accomplishments is reading the entire Bible from cover to cover. She began her reading program five years ago when she was 90 years old. She has completed this project eight times and has begun a ninth



Ethel McMullen, 95, pictured with longtime friend and deacon Walter Warren (photo by Vinny and Becky Del Signore)

reading. It is her hope that the example she sets may challenge others who have never read the Bible completely before. It is never too late to "read the Book."

We all wish her many more complete readings!

Gary and Margie Jacques

Little Falls Says Farewell to Servidios

The Little Falls, Minnesota, congregation had a farewell party and potluck meal following James and Judy Servidio's final service with them Dec. 17. After 12 years of tending the local flocks as pastor as well as regional pastor, the Servidios have been transferred to Houston North, Texas.

Parting gifts included a lovely nature scene painted by Richard Prunty and a



James and Judy Servidio cut farewell cake in Little Falls, Minnesota

drawing of the Servidio house by Ken Bery.

In addition, a historical novel, named *Up the Creek*, was cowritten by two other Church members, Jeane Lewis Simpson and Ralph Mayer. Linda Edgell created a gorgeous cake for the occasion.

Ralph Mayer

Barbados Celebrates and Builds Camaraderie

For the second consecutive year, the United Church of God (Barbados) has taken the opportunity on Nov. 30 to have a Family Day activity among its members and their friends in celebration of the Independence Day of the island nation of Barbados. Some 35 persons were in attendance.

A couple of enterprising ladies donated for sale cookies and crocheted doilies in order to raise funds for LifeNets. This venture realized BD\$125 or the equivalent of US\$63.

The Hospitality Committee arranged a potluck meal with a treat of conkies, a type of cornmeal pone wrapped in banana leaves that was once part of a November tradition. There were also board games in which young and old participated.

In keeping with the theme of Old Barbados, two handmade scooters were provided to the delight of the youngsters, and later in the evening there was the singing of folk songs and the recita-

tion of original poems by the church bards.

The focus on fellowship through the sharing of meals, local talent, skills and the introduction to the youth of simple pleasures of the past are all part of the efforts of the Activity Committee led by Steve Holland under the guidance of deacon Osmonde Douglas to foster a spirit of camaraderie among brethren as befits the family of God.

L.E. Salazar



Texas. Luke Skywalker, Buzz Lightyear and Jasmine ran around not knowing what to do first.

It was a night of fun for children 12 and under in the Dallas congrega-

Preteens Serve Sherman Senior Luncheon

Dec. 10 was a very special Sabbath day for the Sherman, Texas, congregation. The preteens in the congregation recognized and honored the senior citizens by performing special music and afterwards hosting a wonderful luncheon.

The children served the seniors



Dallas preteens dress up and enjoy carnival booths like the fishing game

tion, and the parents were running the show. Booths lined both sides of the room containing carnival-type games where the children played for tickets. Once they received enough



Preteens serve the senior citizens in Sherman, Texas

(which turned out to be nearly the whole congregation!) a sit-down meal and acted as waiters and waitresses tending to everyone's needs. All attendees had their own personal place cards and settings.

The food was delicious, including Texas-smoked brisket, chicken and all the trimmings.

The luncheon ended with a few of the senior members giving words of encouragement and advice to the children and their families who served the wonderful meal.

Mary Jane Adam

Dallas Has Preteen Costume Carnival

Games, candy, prizes and balloons were wall-to-wall on Dec. 10 in Dallas,

tickets, they were able to run over to the prize tent and cash in their tickets for toys.

This was the second year the Dallas congregation had put on a Costume Carnival for the children. The night began at 6:30 p.m. with open games and balloon animals.

Halfway through the night the dessert table opened up, allowing everyone to enjoy the desserts the kids made. The children were asked to enter a dessert contest where everyone wins. Medals were handed out to each child for all his or her hard work.

After the dessert break, the game booths opened up again till about 8:30 p.m. By the end of the evening, all the tickets had been turned in and the kids were able to walk out the door with a balloon in one hand and a bag of candy and toys in the other.

Molly Kobernet

Over 250 Attend All-Ambassador Reunion

The Farmington Room walls were bulging with Ambassadors from the '60s through 2005. The largest gathering yet—over 250—attended this yearly event in connection with the Winter Family Weekend in Louisville, Kentucky, Dec. 24.

After Sabbath services the room



Faces of the All-Ambassador Reunion: top, Michelle Zollner (ABC class of 2003); above, Ambassador College graduates Marjolaine Meeker (middle) with Loma and Eric Evans; right, Shak Balroop (ABC class of 2006) poses with the AC seal (photos by Gary Antion)

began to fill as Ambassador College, Ambassador University and Ambassador Bible Center graduates and students fellowshiped with one another. Hugs, "war stories," collegiate experiences and current happenings were shared with one another.

The room was tastefully and hastily decorated by Kathy and Jorge de Campos, Marjolaine Meeker and Dave and Becky Johnson. There were two tables filled with *Envoys* and pictorials for any who cared to see how they looked in their earlier years. AC, AU and ABC mugs, T-shirts and sweatshirts were also on display. Gary and Barb Antion served as greeters.

Seven o'clock came all too soon as the event came to a successful conclusion. Before the evening ended, however, gifts were given in recognition of the earliest graduates and those who came the greatest distance. Richard Pinelli, class of '61, was the earliest graduate in attendance. Robert Fahey, class of '65, received the runner-up gift.

Those who came the greatest distance were from California. Dan and Debbie Bates received one award and Jonathan Reimann received the second gift. The prizes were ABC mugs filled with Hershey's chocolates.

Next year, David Johnson will be coordinating this event, since he is now working at ABC with alumni affairs.

We look forward to seeing most of you again next year and others who desire to renew old acquaintances and make new ones at the All-Ambassador Reunion.

Gary E. Antion

Young Adults Attend Leadership Conference

This year's Upper Midwest Young Adults Leadership Conference was held on the shores of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, over the Labor Day weekend (Sept. 2 to 5). The theme of the conference was "Learning Effective Leadership."

Attendees enjoyed many physical blessings as well as spiritual nourishment. Gary Black conducted several Bible studies on the leadership lessons



found in the book of Nehemiah. The young adults also had an opportunity to explore the ways in which secular society has impacted the respective roles of men and women in the Church, with Mike and Zeld Hanisko leading breakout sessions on these topics.

Jim Servidio led a lively discussion on the importance of doctrine in today's pluralistic society, with suggestions on how to withstand challenges to it. One of the young adults, Andrew Lausted, gave the Sabbath sermonette about servant leadership, while Mr. Hanisko presented his sermon about discovering and properly using our individual spiritual gifts.

Sunday, all learned the value of communication as we worked together in several team-building exercises. There were many opportunities for us to use our various gifts to serve the brethren, whether at the conference or those abroad. Every breakfast and lunch was overseen by Bob Fahey, pastor of the Chicago, Illinois, congregation, as several young adults would volunteer to help with the cooking and clean up afterwards.

Sunday we participated in the service project, preparing Feast gift bags for children in Costa Rica, which generous members presented to them at the Feast in 2005.



At the Upper Midwest Young Adults Leadership Conference, several young adults enjoyed a walk around Lake Geneva, where they discovered the Winter Camp facilities not covered in snow! Right, a child in Costa Rica enjoys Feast gift bags prepared by the young adults

We also enjoyed the great outdoors during the weekend, taking walks around the lake and enjoying pontoon boat rides. Every night gave us the perfect opportunity to fellowship around the campfire, retiring afterward to the main house to play cards once "quiet time" had arrived. Sunday and Monday, many could be found engaged in lively games of volleyball.

Overall, the weekend was the perfect way to transition out of summer and into the Fall Holy Day season, with great fellowship between old friends and new.

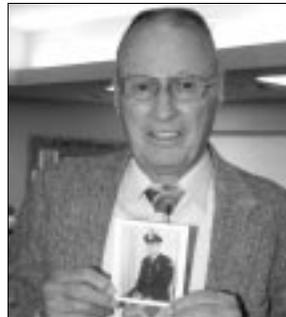
The Third Annual Young Adults Leadership Conference is planned for the same location over Labor Day weekend, Sept. 3-6, 2006.

Aimee Lemen

Corpus Christi Sponsors Mexican Dinner and Talent Show

On the Sabbath of Jan. 7 the Corpus Christi, Texas, congregation hosted their first Mexican dinner and talent show.

Immediately after the afternoon Sabbath services concluded, the brethren enjoyed a Mexican dinner. Members provided and enjoyed a mouth-watering meal that included many traditional



Mexican dishes. Foods included Spanish rice, charro beans, enchiladas, tacos, chalupas, mesquite-grilled fajitas, bar-

becued pollo (chicken) and homemade tortillas.

After the meal, an extensive selection of desserts was served, including pies, cookies, cakes, fruit dishes and the traditional pandulce, or Mexican sweet bread.

Under the able hand of Raymond Hernandez, the master of ceremonies, the first annual talent show was held later that evening. Brethren enjoyed Dorin Vaughn's piano composition, Sean Ashcraft's

violin solo, Charlotte Mallia's flute solo and Arthur Suckling's unforgettable rendition of "The Prodigal Son in F."

Interspersed among these presentations, the audience listened to chorale performances by the Ladies' Ensemble and the Children's Choir. The members of the Ladies' Ensemble included Jeanine Ashcraft, Tina Hernandez, Janie Mendez, Marsha Suckling and Sandra Vaughn. Dorin Vaughn accompanied the ensemble on the piano. The Children's Choir, under the direction of Colleen Mallia, was made up of Shelby and Garron Dueitt and Katrina and Sabrina Morin. They sang "God's Top Ten Commandments."

As part of the talent show, pictures of "senior" members were displayed in a slide show developed by Jonathan Sitarski. In this presentation, pastor Jack Hendren invited everyone to try to guess who was in the picture. (Most of the photos showed them when they were in their teens and 20s.)

After his or her identity was guessed, each senior member was invited to say a little bit about when and where the picture was taken. This activity helped all members of whatever age to realize that we all have much in common.

On this interesting and high note the evening came to a conclusion.

Arnold Mendez Sr.

Coleman Celebrates 10th Anniversary

On Nov. 19, 2005, 60 people gathered to celebrate the 10th anniversary of United Church of God in Coleman, Texas. Services began with the current pastor, Britton Taylor, who has pastored the Coleman congregation two times, giving a summary of the past 10 years. Greetings were read from Richard Rand and Don Hooser, who also was pastor two times.

Special music was performed by Laura Anderson from Fort Worth, Texas. Ken Giese, regional pastor, was the main speaker.

At the original service there were 23 present and seven of those attended services on Nov. 19.

After services Mr. Taylor offered a toast of sparkling juice for the continued well-being and growth of the Coleman congregation. A delicious meal prepared by the brethren was served, and a slide show of church photos and

a scrapbook were available for viewing.

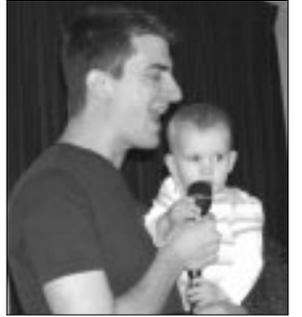
Bobbie Hubbard

Cincinnati East Enjoys Games, Pizza and Karaoke

Jan. 14 the Cincinnati East congregations (now AM and PM since the beginning of the year) sponsored a fun-filled family evening that offered a variety of activities, along with plenty of pizza to eat! Karaoke, card games and lots of laughter filled the evening, which was well attended by about 200.

All the tables were filled with people playing cards while local members and new ABC students sang to the tunes of their favorite songs. It was nonstop singing the whole evening as people took their turns on the stage.

There were many group acts, along



Cadence Phelps, 15 months old, performs with her dad, Troy (photo by Janet Treadway)

with solos, but Cadence Phelps, 15-month-old daughter of Troy and Cindy Phelps, stole the show while performing with her dad.

Kevin Treybig was the announcer for the evening while Peter Eddington was in charge of the karaoke CDs. The evening also provided a great opportunity to get to know the new ABC students.

Janet Treadway

South African Teen Scores 100

Damian Nathan Naidoo, son of Col-in and Meena Naidoo of the Durban, South Africa, congregation, received a perfect score of 100 percent in physical science, placing him among the top students in his region.

According to the newspaper *The Rising Sun Chatsworth*, this score is unprecedented in the final. "Damian's 100 percent in physical science is not a surprise. In fact he had an exceptional interest in this subject, scoring near perfect marks throughout his high school career," the paper quoted S. Moodley, physical science teacher at Apollo Secondary School, as saying. The paper called him a whiz kid and said he "made history by being the first pupil to achieve 100 percent in a subject."

Damian also received 96 percent in mathematics, 97 percent in accounting and 93 percent in computer studies.

Announcements

Births

Stephen and Lori Amber (Schoolfield) Mapes of the Denver, Colorado, congregation are pleased to announce the birth of their son, Miles



Miles Walter Mapes with big sister Alden

Walter. Miles was born in Vail, Colorado, on July 29, 2005, weighing 7 pounds 9 ounces and measuring 21 inches long. Miles was welcomed home by big sisters Jessica, Elizabeth and Alden and his niece, Sierra Johns.

Mike and Amy Wood of Poland, Indiana, and of the Terre Haute, Indiana, congregation, are pleased and proud to announce the birth of their first grandchild. Luke Allen Mishler was born Dec. 29, 2005. He weighed in at 8 pounds 5½ ounces and was 21½ inches long. The



Luke Allen Mishler

proud parents are Bryan and Amanda (Wood) Mishler also of Poland, Indiana.

Jenean and Joe Rivers of the Dallas, Texas, congregation are excited to announce the arrival of their first child, Cambria Jean Mackenzie Rivers. Cambria was born on June 19, 2005, at a whopping 2 pounds 7 ounces and 14¼



Cambria Jean Mackenzie Rivers

inches long. She was three months early due to Jenean having a severely ruptured appendix. Today Cambria is a thriving 12-pound adventurer. Jenean has also fully recovered, especially now that Cambria is letting her sleep more!

Proud grandparents are Bruce and Melissa Rivers of the Elkhart, Indiana, congregation and Bill and Jenny Bradford of the Brisbane, Queensland, congregation. Jenean and Joe would like to thank everyone who supported them with prayers and cards through their difficult situation.

Malcolm and Cassidi (Chapman) Murray would like to announce the birth of their fifth baby, Griffin Christopher Murray. He was born Dec. 18, 2005, weighing 8 pound 14 ounces and measuring 21 inches long. He joins his lov-



Griffin Christopher Murray

ing siblings Michael (7), Samantha (5), Wyatt (3) and Malcolm (18 months). Paternal grandparents are Malcolm and Francie Murray. Maternal grandparents are Christopher and Andi Chapman. The entire family attends the Flint, Michigan, congregation.

Weddings

Fred and Susan Crow of San Jose, California, and Wilda McGaughey of McKinleyville, California, would like to announce the marriage of their children, Tamara Lynn Crow and Joshua Ray Reynolds.



Tamara and Joshua Reynolds

The wedding took place on the cold, but beautiful evening of Nov. 26, 2005, amidst the majestic redwoods of the Santa Cruz mountains. Clyde Kilough, president of the United Church of God, performed the ceremony.

Tamara's matron of honor was Tracy Ogaz, sister of the bride. Katelyn and Caroline Roybal, cousins of the bride, and Shannon Smith were attendants. Joshua's best man was Tim Proctor. Tim Eldridge and Allen Merrow were attendants.

Tamara and Joshua are members of the Tucson, Arizona, congregation and reside in Tucson.

Doug and Tanya Horchak of Dallas, Texas, are happy to announce the marriage of their daughter, Christine, to Jere-



Christine and Jeremy Sehler

my Sehler of Fort Collins, Colorado. Christine and Jeremy were united in marriage on Oct. 8, 2005, in Dallas.

The wedding party included John Sehler, Jason Beers, Greg Horchak, Lisa Tymkovich, Becky Horchak and Jamie Sehler. The couple resides in Fort Collins.

Johnathan Steven-Nelson Arnold and Chancy Paige Earles were united in marriage Nov. 26, 2005, in Critz, Virginia.



Chancy and Johnathan Arnold

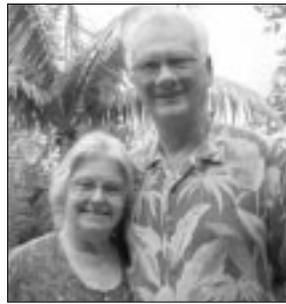
The ceremony was performed by John Foster, pastor of the Roanoke, Virginia, congregation.

Bridesmaids included Kelly (Good) Diamond and Amy Earles. Maid of honor was Keturah Craft. Groomsmen included Joe Diamond and Nick Bizic. Best man was Joshua Arnold. In attendance were 151 friends and family members. The couple now resides in Martinsville, Virginia, and attends the Roanoke congregation.

Anniversaries

Al and Vera Gordon had their 50th wedding anniversary Jan. 6, 2006. They have been blessed with seven wonderful children, Leslie (deceased), Christy, Todd, Andrew, Susan, Renee and Robert; and nine awesome grandchildren.

They were baptized in 1964 in the El Monte, California, congregation. They



Vera and Al Gordon

currently host the southernmost congregation in the United States in their home in Pahoehoe, Hawaii.

A surprise dinner was held in their honor with the Big Island brethren.

On Jan. 7, the Bend, Oregon, congregation had a surprise 25th anniversary celebration for Pastor Larry Walker and his wife, Karen, in place of their usual potluck. The actual date of their anniversary is Jan. 10.

The small but mighty group secretly pulled together a wonderful chicken dinner with all the trimmings. It lacked only dessert. Now, anyone knowing Larry Walker knows how he loves to eat and has a special affinity for dessert. Being the ever-observant shepherd he is, he whispered to Karen during the meal that we must have all forgotten to bring a dessert.

Unbeknownst to them a beautiful cake sat waiting in another room along with a basket of flowers, similar to their wedding bouquet. A poster of wedding



Karen and Larry Walker

pictures was on display. Many friends and family members sent cards of congratulations and well-wishes.

One card in particular, from two of the Walkers' children, contained a very special gift—arrangements for Larry and Karen's overnight stay at the Sunriver Lodge, including champagne, chocolate-covered strawberries and breakfast the next morning. And best of all, it included a private sleigh ride on that snowy Sunday morning escorted by a costumed driver who furnished cozy blankets to keep them warm.

Member Barb Dundon wrote a special poem for the Walkers, championing their 25 years together in love, commitment and service to each other and the Church:

The road less traveled is the life you have chosen,

Not often paved with contentment and ease.

But the potholes of life teach us patience and pardon

Through the miles and years of trying to please

The ones we love most and the ones we love least.

May mile upon mile and year upon year

Bring comfort and happiness

And abundant good cheer

To the road you have traveled for 25 years.

Ken and Carol Rageth of Cottage Grove, Minnesota, will celebrate their 50th anniversary on Feb. 4, 2006. They have five children, Jeffry, Becky, Randy, Jerry and Barry; and eight grandchildren. They have been members of the



Carol and Ken Rageth

Church of God for 42 years and attend the St. Paul, Minnesota, congregation.

Obituaries

Maria E. Ostrom of the Coos Bay, Oregon, United Church of God congregation, died Nov. 10, 2005. Maria was born Aug. 4, 1946, to Serafina and Teodora Gutierrez who preceded her in death (as did her brother Felix). She married Lowell Thomas Ostrom Dec. 17, 1978, in Pasadena, California.

Maria is survived by her loving husband, Lowell; her mother-in-law, Wilma, and brother-in-law, Ed, of Long Beach, California; sisters, Ampie, Cecilia and Marion, and two brothers, Henry and Arthur, of Yucaipa, California, as well as brothers Raymond, Robert, William and Richard of San Bernardino, California, and David of Hanford, California; and many nieces and nephews.

Maria worked as a secretary, and at home she enjoyed sewing, knitting, needlework, doll making and numerous crafts. Maria is remembered as a wonderful and devoted wife. Maria loved her God and was close to her brethren, loving all. She was a friend to everyone and will be deeply missed.

Jacob B. "Jack" Smith, 81, died peacefully on Dec. 22, 2005, after a year-long battle with cancer. Jack was born on Oct. 4, 1924, in Baker, Montana, to Jacob and Pauline Smith. He grew up on the family farm and attended school in Mott, North Dakota.

After he graduated from high school in 1943, he entered the U.S. Army. From 1943 to 1945, he worked with West Construction Co. in Whitehorse, Cana-



Jacob B. "Jack" Smith

da, and in the Aleutian Islands, Alaska, for the Department of Defense. Later Jack attended trade school in Wahpeton, North Dakota, to become a linotype operator.

Jack married May Swift on June 24, 1950, in Glen Ullin, North Dakota. He worked in the printing trade for various newspapers in the region from 1945 to the mid 1960s.

Early in their marriage, Jack and May lived in West Fargo, North Dakota, then moved to Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, in 1956 where they owned and operated the Sun Lite Grocery on Little Floyd Lake.

Then after working in the printing trade, Jack also worked for Detroit Township as an independent maintenance supervisor until his retirement. For many years he owned and operated a rototilling business.

Jack was a Minnesota DNR fire warden for almost 40 years, was active in AARP and was a Minnesota ombudsman for nursing home residents.

Jack had a strong work ethic and believed in maintaining and leaving property in better condition than he found it. Jack and May remodeled three homes and built two new homes in the Detroit Lakes area. After health challenges took their toll, Jack and May moved to Moorhead, Minnesota, in 2005 after selling their home in rural Detroit Lakes.

Jack's hobbies included gardening, traveling, writing, studying nutrition and maintaining his prized Massey Ferguson 35 tractor. He was an active writer and had many articles published in *Prime Life*, a newspaper for senior citizens in northern Minnesota. Jack had an inquis-

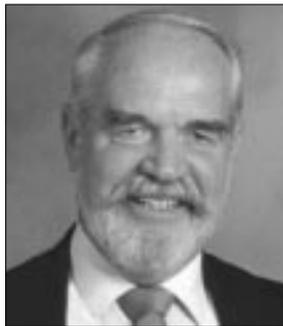
itive mind and always felt he could learn and share something with everyone he met. Jack made several trips to Germany and Spain to visit his mother's family.

Jack was a longtime member of the Church of God, and he and May attended the United Church of God congregation in Fargo. As Jack faced his final days, he openly expressed his love and appreciation for his wife, family and friends, and for God's calling and hope of the coming Kingdom.

The funeral service held on Dec. 26 was well attended by family and friends.

Jack is survived by his wife, May; two daughters, Laurie Laney, Pasadena, California, and Jill (Jeff) Berg, Barnesville, Minnesota; one son, Garner Smith, Beijing, China; and two grandchildren, Sheena Berg and Sasha Berg.

Darwin Ruggless, 72, a longtime member of the Church, died suddenly at his home in Arcadia, California, of a heart attack on Dec. 12, 2005. He was born in Prairie City, Iowa, June 3, 1933, where he grew up and went to school.



Darwin Ruggless

Darwin later joined the U.S. Army for two years and then moved to California while serving in the U.S. Air Force for another four years from 1959 to 1963. There he was called into the Church through an Air Force friend's interest. He then met and later married his wife, Julia Cooper, in 1964.

He began working for the College/Church in Pasadena in 1968, where he remained for many years as an electrician, then in air-conditioning and other maintenance as he was needed.

Darwin was much loved and respect-

ed by many. He was known for his hearty laugh, his generosity and his ability to fix or build anything. He was always fixing every kind of appliance and mechanical equipment for brethren, widows or just anyone who crossed his path who needed help, often without asking anything in return.

He was preceded in death by a son, Shawn. He is survived by his wife, Julia; four children, Jacob, Jon and Rebecca Ruggless and Amber Roos; three grandchildren, Jaryn and Jack Ruggless and Nicole Scoggin; and two great-grandchildren, Kelli and Aiden Scoggin.

His memorial service was conducted Dec. 18, 2005, by Robin Webber. As in his life, Darwin's memorial service cut across all barriers and brought together many people from every walk of life.

John Patrick Perez died July 29, 2005, from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. He was 40 years old. John had grown up in the Church in Louisiana and was a much-loved member of the Chattanooga, Tennessee, congregation.

He was employed by Chattanooga Business Machines, where he was employee of the year, and he was a Boy Scout leader with Pack 3256.

Survivors include his wife, Tammy; children, Ashley and Joshua; father, Orey Perez; mother, Margie Hebert; brothers, Gerald and wife, Melinda, David and wife, Rhonda; sisters, Vickie Abu-Shmais and Elizabeth and husband, Andy Borque; a brother-in-law, Michael and wife, Crystal O'Neal; father and mother-in-law, Danny and



John Patrick Perez

Gloria O'Neal; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were conducted on

Aug. 1, 2005, by Roy Holladay and Dennis Wheatcroft. John will certainly be missed by all of us in the Chattanooga congregation who knew him.

Kay Hirschler of Aurora, Missouri, died Dec. 16, 2005. She was 67. Kay was baptized in 1969. She was married to Dan in 1958. He died in an auto accident in 1997. At age 58 she graduated from nursing school and began working in in-home nursing with premature babies and Alzheimer patients.

She is survived by six sons, Tim, Jesse, Vince, Mark, Brian and David; and six daughters, Wendy (White), Jolyn (Tate), Linda (Ross), Laura (Radtko), Lisa (Cross) and Lois (Rowell); along with 28 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Pastor Mike Blackwell officiated at graveside services in Verona, Missouri, on Dec. 20.

Wendall "Bill" Meek died Dec. 12, 2005, at his home near Forsyth, Missouri, following a long battle with emphysema. He was 87 and a longtime member of the Springfield, Missouri, church. Bill moved to the Ozarks after

retiring from his TV repair business in Washington state and enjoyed fishing in area lakes. He is survived by Kitty, his wife of 25 years.

Juanita Merial Brewer, 76, died Aug. 27, 2005. She had been a member of God's Church since November 1974 and attended the Huntsville, Alabama, congregation. Mrs. Brewer had numer-



Juanita Merial Brewer

ous health problems and situations over the years, but it was rare for her to miss services. She was always there if at all possible. She set an outstanding example of perseverance. The Church was family to her, and she is sorely missed as we await the resurrection.

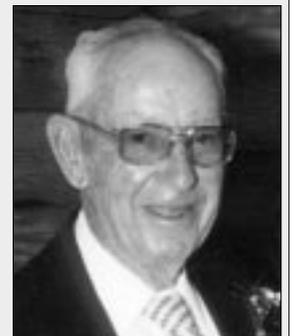
Tribute: Elmer Conley

Elmer Conley died Dec. 30, 2005, at the age of 86. He was a longtime member and elder of God's Church.

Mr. Conley was born Oct. 14, 1919, in Blue Mound, Oklahoma. He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during World War II. In the summer of 1944 he received the Bronze Star for bravery during the battle on the island of Saipan in the Pacific.

Mr. Conley owned and operated a cement construction company from 1956 until his retirement due to failing health in 2000.

He is survived by one son, Bill Conley and his wife, Laura, of Clarksville, Arkansas; four daughters, Patricia Forrest and her husband, Rodney, of Big Sandy, Texas; Donna Surratt and her husband, Alec, of Cincinnati, Ohio; Barbara Burke and her husband, Guy, of Wichita Falls, Texas; and Ruth



Elmer Conley

Roberts and her husband, James, of Booker, Texas; 16 grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Elsie, who died July 1, 2004.

His son-in-law Guy Burke conducted the graveside service Jan. 3, 2006.

Donna Surratt

Tribute: John S. Robinson

John S. Robinson, 60, died Jan. 5, 2006, in Austin, Texas, from complications of prostate cancer. He was born Feb. 11, 1945, and was reared in the faith since age 5. Most recently he served as chief executive officer of Dynamic Resource Group, a company that oversees the publishing and fulfillment companies owned by the Muselman family of Berne, Indiana.

For almost 35 years he had been involved in the publishing industry in a variety of positions. Mr. Robinson was founding editor of *The Worldwide News*, and later *In Transition*. In addition to his business pursuits in the 1980s, he served on the faculty of the University of Texas at Tyler, teaching

journalism, public relations and graphic arts classes.

His undergraduate degree is from Ambassador College, Big Sandy, 1966, and he served on the faculty there. He also earned a master's degree in journalism from Texas A&M University, Commerce, and had completed other graduate work at the University of Southern California. After moving to Berne in 1989, he was an adjunct professor in journalism at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, teaching a magazine class.

UCGIA President Clyde Kilough writes, "John was a great teacher in everything from photography to writing to newspaper layout. I learned a tremendous amount from him, as both a journalism instructor and a boss, when *The Worldwide News* first got off the ground, and count those days among

my most memorable at Ambassador College."

Scott Ashley, managing editor of *The GoodNews* and booklets, writes, "John Robinson was a crucial and visionary figure in Church of God publishing efforts. He helped shape a generation of writers and publication professionals who have gone on to successful careers in many fields. I appreciate John most for his deep love of truth—for the commitment to accuracy and excellence he instilled in those of us who worked for him as well as his commitment to the truth of God to which he had dedicated his life."

Mr. Robinson, who was born in Glasgow, Scotland, was a U.S. citizen as well as a British subject. He was a member of the United Church of God in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

He was ordained in 1969 and pas-



John S. Robinson

tored several congregations in Texas and Ohio. He spoke fluent Spanish, and listed travel as his principal hobby. He

has spent time in all 50 states of the United States and has traveled to 25 countries on five continents.

He is survived by his wife of 38 years, the former Alice Rothery; his mother, Margaret Robinson of Tulsa, Oklahoma; sons John David and Stephen and daughter, Rachel, all of Austin; brothers Mark Robinson of Plano, Texas, and Robert Robinson of Palestine, Texas; and sisters Felicity Reedy of Tyler and Mary Robinson of Tulsa; and seven grandchildren.

Indianapolis and Fort Wayne pastor Darris McNeely officiated at the funeral Jan. 9 in Austin, and burial was in the Robinson family section of Latham Cemetery, near his hometown of Alice, Texas. Preferred memorials are to the American Cancer Society. The Robinson family receives mail at 3521 Mocha Trail, Austin, Texas 78728.

She is survived by her husband of 45 years, Edward, a member; a son, Donnie Graham and his wife, Gloria; three grandchildren, Michael Graham (and wife, Amy), Matthew Graham (and wife, Laura) and Maria Graham; and five great-grandchildren, Makayla Graham, McKinley Graham, Lydia Graham, Leann Gillespie and Maria Gillespie.

The services were officiated by Rick Beam, pastor of the Huntsville, Alabama, congregation.

Doris Foote, a member of God's Church in Vancouver, British Columbia, died Oct. 6, 2005, after a long stay in a nursing home. She was 99, having been called by God around the age of 78, after the death of her beloved husband, Fred. She was very sad at that time, having no family to comfort her and being away from her much-loved country, England.

She saw Mr. Armstrong on the television at that time, and it turned her life around, not only spiritually, but also physically, for she became part of several families who visited her and took care of her. She was a faithful member of the Church, but eventually she was unable to attend due to her age. Nevertheless, a visit with her was to feel very loved and privileged to know such a lady, who was

so caring and of a very positive outlook. She then kept in touch with other ladies of similar age around Vancouver. Through the phone they encouraged one another through numerous health problems and family ups and downs.

She died very peacefully to await her reward, but she will always be in the hearts of those privileged to have known her. She would have been 100 this April.

James Edwin Gayman, 68, died Aug. 18, 2005, at his home in Roswell, New Mexico. He was born in Seneca County, Tiffin, Ohio, Oct. 31, 1936, to Lowell W. Gayman and Mildred A. Royer, who preceded him in death, as well as a brother, Lowell R. Gayman.

James was a construction electrician and plant engineer. He also served in the U.S. Navy from January 1955 to June 1957 as an electrician's first mate aboard the submarine U.S.S. *Clamagore*. He stayed in the reserves until 1962 and was recalled to serve on the surface ship U.S.S. *Greenwood* from October 1961 to August 1962.

Jim is survived by his wife, Louann Noble Gayman, whom he married June 22, 1968, in Mansfield, Ohio, as well as their son, Aaron James Gannon, and his wife, Michele, of Anthem, Arizona;



James Edwin Gayman

daughter, Diane Renee, and her husband, Wade C. Higgins, of Weiser, Idaho; and two sisters, Alverna J. Hentges of Toledo, Ohio, and Alice C. Kress of Mansfield, Ohio. Jim also leaves behind four precious granddaughters, Kaitlyn R. Higgins, Christy J. Higgins, Rose Marie C. Higgins and Chelsea B. Gannon. He leaves two nieces and four nephews.

Jim was baptized in Cleveland, Ohio, in October 1972 and attended services there, in Akron, Ohio, and Mansfield, Ohio, before moving to Roswell in October 2000. He loved the Lord and enjoyed sharing that love with others. He had a positive attitude in spite of a severe trial

and expressed his thankfulness to God for a good life and his faith and his love.

A memorial was held Aug. 21 in Roswell, conducted by Tom Damour, his pastor, from Lubbock, Texas.

Thomas Lee Fox, a longtime member in Ann Arbor, Michigan, died Nov. 7, 2005, right after returning home from the Feast. He had fulfilled a lifelong dream of keeping the Feast in the Middle East and visiting Israel. His death resulted from a heart attack induced by a blood clot.

Tom was born on May 7, 1948, and was a lifelong resident of Ann Arbor. He is survived by two brothers and a sister. Tom was baptized in January 1972. Like the apostle Paul, Tom was a tentmaker, being employed at a family-owned tent



Thomas Lee Fox

making business his entire adult life.

Tom loved studying the Bible and owned an extensive library of Bibles and Bible helps. His other great joy was to attend services and the Feast and to fellowship with God's people. Tom was a quiet, loving man who will be missed and remembered by family, friends and brethren.

Clayton Sweatt, 80, of Bethel, Maine, died Dec. 27, 2005. Born Jan. 8, 1925, Clayton lived for most of his 80 years in the house in which he died.

He led a very busy and successful life devoted to his three main interests: Mary, his wife of over 30 years; his service as a deacon in God's Church; and his love of electronics and all things electrical.

He served his country in the Navy during World War II and afterward attended a radio electrical school. Following a career in electronics as a TV and radio repairman, he worked for the town of Bethel for some 15 years.

Clayton will be long remembered as an avid collector of "stuff." Many people who needed something knew that they could go to Clayton's home and probably find it.

He is survived by his wife, Mary; his younger brother, "Skip"; two nephews, Jeff and Dale; a niece, Sharon; a half brother and two half sisters from his father's second marriage; and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

Ada Cardott died on April 1, 2005, after a long battle with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Ada attended and served in the Church in the Portland, Oregon, congregation.

Ada was born at home on July 17, 1938, to William and Francis Morris in the small town of Elk Two Mile, West Virginia. She grew up there until the age of 5, when her parents moved the family west to Vancouver, Washington, where Ada finished growing up along with four sisters and two brothers.

Ada attended a local business college and worked at a bank before marrying and starting her family. As her children grew, she went back into the work force and continued her education in accounting and accounts payable.

Ada met her husband of nearly 46 years, Perry Cardott, in high school. He was attracted to her outgoing nature and infectious laugh. Ada and Perry married in August 1959 and continued living in the Vancouver area. They started their family in the fall of 1960 with the first of four children, a son, Neil Cardott, who was followed by three daughters, Nicole Wubben, Natalie Cardott and Nadine Messerly, all of Vancouver.

Her love for her family grew with the addition of each son and daughter-in-law and each of her 11 grandchildren. She was a wonderful mother who encouraged her children to seek God and His truth. She loved to see them become accomplished in their endeavors and truly loved to see their happiness in life.

She was active in the Church and would organize the potlucks, coffee crews and food for wedding and funeral receptions. She also wrote a local church newsletter to keep everyone abreast of events and how to contact the local elderly members who were unable to attend.

She loved God and His truth passionately, and it reflected in her faithful service at church and for the people. She cared deeply about each of them and always made it her goal to know each of them personally.

Ada's service to her husband, her family and God never wavered until her health began to fail her in the fall of



Ada Cardott

2001. She continued serving even as she started to need the use of a walker and began to endure what would be a year of tests, doctors and uncertainty. Neither Ada nor Perry retired from work until January 2003 when Ada's declining health forced the issue for them. She did not receive a diagnosis of ALS until March 2003. Her husband made looking after her care his full-time job, which he did with such love and compassion. He was helped in her care by all of their children. Ada and Perry were always greatly encouraged by the constant cards and prayers from the brethren.

At the beginning of this final trial, she wrote a letter to her family. She expressed her deep love for them all and her love of God and His way of life. She loved everything about her life but was able to accept this final road with her characteristic strength and poise. She was looking forward to the Kingdom and being healed so she could walk again with her husband and all of those she loved.

The funeral was officiated by minister and friend Robert Dick.

Tribute: Harold Louis Treybig

Harold was born on the family farm in Oldenburg, Texas, to parents Ewald and Aline (Stork) Treybig on Oct. 22, 1920. His parents were of German descent and Harold spoke German at home and had to learn English in order to attend school.

Harold spent his youth working on the farm, where the family raised hogs, chickens, cattle and a variety of crops. His father plowed with mules and Harold remembered his most difficult job as a young boy—picking cotton!

After graduating from high school, Harold moved to Houston, where he began attending business school. His first job in the big city was at Allbritton's Cafeteria as a breakfast cook. He slept on a cot at the cafeteria in order to be on site to open for business each morning. After a full morning of cooking, it was off to school in the afternoon and evening. He eventually was able to purchase a car and visited home on the weekends.

Harold later went to work as a stenographer for Corbett Corporation, a supply house for pipe and pipe fittings. When World War II broke out, he was drafted and, due to his office skills, he was assigned to the Army Air Corps and eventually ran teletype machines and worked with communications. Near the end of the war, he served in Italy, where he remembered being so cold that, in spite of sleeping in his clothes, he caught pneumonia.

Following the war, he returned to Houston and attended the University of Houston on the GI Bill. He and three of his war buddies decided to become accountants and, of the four of them, Harold was the only one who became a Certified Public Accountant.

Like most people of German



Harold Louis Treybig

descent, Harold grew up as a Lutheran and continued in that tradition through his college years. It was there that he would meet his future wife, Jeanette Brandt, a young lady from Columbus, Texas. Harold and Jeanette were married on April 10, 1948, and blessed with three children: David, born in 1950; Kenneth, born on Mother's Day in 1952; and Karen, born in 1956.

The young couple's contact with the Church came during a visit Jeanette made to her parents' home, where she happened to pick up a copy of *The Plain Truth*. Soon after that, they began listening to the radio program and receiving literature themselves.

They attended their first church service with the Radio Church of God in May of 1953, during Pentecost weekend, in Big Sandy, Texas, where they were baptized by Rod Meredith and had the opportunity to meet and talk with Herbert Armstrong.

Since there was no congregation in the Houston area, Harold and Jeanette studied by themselves for several years, traveling to Gladewater about once a month to attend services (a six-hour drive each way at the time).

In the fall of 1953, Harold and

Jeanette attended their first Feast of Tabernacles in Big Sandy, Texas. Not knowing what to expect, they left their two young sons with Jeanette's parents. They were pleasantly surprised to find other children attending the Feast and brought David and Ken the next year.

Finally, on March 9, 1956, a congregation was started in Houston by Wayne Cole. Houston was to become part of a three-church circuit consisting of San Antonio, Corpus Christi and Houston. Fourteen people were present at that first service, including the Treybigs and their two sons. Karen was born in December of that year and has the distinction of being the first baby born in the Houston congregation.

Shortly after the local church was established, Harold and Malcolm Martin were ordained as deacons. In 1964, Harold was ordained as an elder—the 100th elder ordained in the modern era of the Church. Over the years, Harold served the Church in many ways, including as a member of the Board of Regents for Ambassador College (later, University). He served as business manager at various Feast sites and was the treasurer for his congregation.

Harold was a devoted husband and father, a hard worker and a thoroughly committed member of the Church. Beginning with his first Feast of Tabernacles in 1953, he never missed a Feast and rarely missed a Sabbath service. As a pillar in the Houston congregations and the inspiring patriarch of the Treybig family, he will be sorely missed.

Harold finished his race on Dec. 18, 2005, and is survived by his wife of nearly 58 years, Jeanette, of Houston; son, David, of Tampa, Florida (pastor of Tampa and St. Petersburg); son, Kenneth, of Gladewater, Texas (pastor of East Texas and Texarkana); and daughter, Karen Doig (wife of Glenn Doig, elder in Houston North); seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

en breast and chef-carved prime rib. The dinner will cost approximately \$25 for adults and \$7 for children under 10. The dance will include a local band and will be supplemented by a DJ.

If you have not already located a reservation form on one of the Houston Web sites, please contact your local pastor for the appropriate paperwork.

Local hotel listings can be accessed on the Web sites as well, at www.united-church-of-god.org or www.ucg-houston.org, or you may call Frank or Nelda Pierce at (409) 945-6256.

Sharon VanSchuyver



What's New on the Web?

On www.ucg.org

■ Compass Check

See video of home office weekly meeting.
www.ucg.org/about/homeoffice/compasscheck.htm

■ UCG Commentary on This Week's News

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

"How Life Began: The Never-Ending Debate"
"The New Pulpit: 'Let Us Make You Feel Great!'"

"The DaVinci Code: Not Just Unbiblical but Anti-biblical"

www.ucg.org/commentary/

■ Current World News & Trends

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

www.ucg.org/worldnews/

■ E-mail Updates and UCG eNews

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

www.ucg.org/contact/updates.htm

On vcmagazine.org

■ The February *VCM* has articles on "Overcoming Adversity," "Sticks and Stones," "Sauerkraut," communication and more.

vcmagazine.org

On verticalthought.org

■ New articles posted on the Web site for February are "Credit vs. Debt" and "What Do You Know About Credit?"

verticalthought.org

Featured Links of the Month

■ *World News and Prophecy Online* with blogs on the days news, podcasts and more.

www.wnponline.org

■ *UCG News pages* with Council meeting reports, letters, Home Office Updates, etc.

www.ucg.org/about/council

www.ucg.org/about/homeoffice

If you have questions, contact: webmaster@ucg.org

ABC Upgrades

The Ambassador Bible Center student computer lab has been upgraded with new computers, and the cataloging of the 2,500 volumes in the ABC library is nearly completed. "We are very thankful to the Blackwell and Hoeh estates for their contributions to our ABC reference library," said Dave Register, director of educational programs.

Five applications have already been submitted for the 2007 ABC year. "For any who may be interested in attending ABC next year, please consider sending your application early," said Mr. Register. Applications are at www.ucg.org/abc.

town musicians and a larger crowd. Musicians who wish to participate can use stage equipment provided by local musicians including a drum set, amplifiers, keyboards, congas, bongos, timbales, microphones and monitors; guitars may be available by special arrangement.

Musicians interested in participating in the Houston Music Festival should



Scene from 2005 Houston Music Festival

contact David Buchanan by e-mail at BuchananEnvironmental@earthlink.net (please use Subject: Houston Music Festival) to avoid deletion of your correspondence, or by telephone at (281) 852-2438, no later than June 30.

Musicians must be members or attending one of the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God—exceptions will be made for nonmember musicians in a backup role. All musicians must conform to Church standards for dress, grooming and conduct.

For attendees who must avoid the sun, several canopies will be erected, but most will bring a chair or blanket and sit on the lawn, which should accommodate over 600 people. Local brethren will bring extra lawn chairs for visitors. Our concessions stand will sell food, drinks and snacks.

Festival entry is free; however, donations will be accepted to defray expenses. Extra funds will be donated to the United Church of God. Hotel accommodations may be found in Humble, Texas, approximately five minutes from the church building. In the event of rain, performances will be held in the building auditorium.

David Buchanan

quality time by way of music and give praise to God.

For more information about cost, camping, directions and registration, see the Web site at www.mom07.com. Or contact Tony Pacelli by e-mail at mom0007@verizon.net, fax at (765) 447-7051 or mail at Melody of Music, VisionQuest Production, P.O. Box 5314, Lafayette, IN 47905.

Tony Pacelli

Members Welcomed to Submit Hymns and Suggestions

The UCG hymnal team is seeking hymn submissions for inclusion in our upcoming hardbound edition. If you would like to suggest a hymn or if you have composed a hymn that has not previously been evaluated, we would like to review your recommendations.

Rather than just sending us the title of a song, sheet music should be submitted as a PDF file and e-mailed to steve_myers@ucg.org or a hard copy of the sheet music can be mailed to Steve Myers, 25897 655th St., Kasson, MN 55944. **The deadline for suggestions is March 1.**

Steve Myers

Houston Music Festival Set for Sept. 3

The Second Annual UCG Houston Music Festival will be held on Sunday, Sept. 3, 2006, Labor Day Weekend, at 20737 Broze Road, Humble, Texas. Last year's outdoor music festival was a tremendous success: 225 people including 36 musicians enjoyed a full day of rock, folk, country and blues music while visiting and relaxing.

This year we anticipate more out-of-

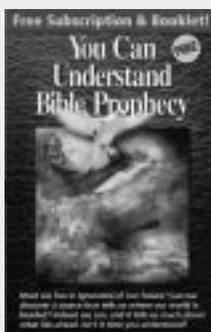
Lafayette Plans Fourth of July Melody of Music

The Lafayette, Indiana, congregation would like to invite brethren of all ages to the Fourth of July Melody of Music July 2 to 4. This event will include two and a half days of Christian music, camping and fellowship. Attendees will experience a variety of Christian music in folk, country, blues, jazz, rock and traditional styles. The mission is to share

Members Boost Good News Brochure Program

Since Jan. 1, 2005, over 300 brethren and congregations have participated in the updated *Good News* subscription brochure program. In the past 12 months, members have distributed over 108,000 brochures on 1,500 clear acrylic display units. This is a large increase over 2004 when just 14,000 brochures were distributed on 300 displays.

This "take-one" distribution program has proven to be a very cost-effective means of reaching new people with the gospel. Brochures cost less than 4 cents



each to print and distribute. Over recent years, subscriber response has reached an excellent 3.7 percent at a cost per response of only \$2.43.

Currently we have about 95,000 subscription brochures in inventory awaiting distribution. We highly encourage many more brethren to become involved in the program.

To request a supply of materials, please e-mail John LaBissoniere at john_labissoniere@ucg.org or call him toll-free at (888) 369-9940.

John LaBissoniere



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