**President Holladay Outlines Goals for New Year**

As the new fiscal year begins, United News asked Roy Holladay, president of UCGIA, about the goals and plans for the work of the Church in the coming year and beyond. The interview was conducted June 30.

**What are the major goals for next year and beyond in the media area?**

I think our goal is to proclaim the gospel to the world with as much power and effectiveness as we possibly can. We are constantly evaluating—and when I say we, I mean Peter Eddington and those associated with the media department—we’re constantly evaluating how to do the job better.

We all realize in the early days Mr. [Herbert] Armstrong was a pioneer in radio and television. In fact, he was such a pioneer that the World Tomorrow program had a major impact in this country. What’s happened since then is that media has become fractured. When the World Tomorrow program was first broadcast, there were few radio stations, and at night, most of the clutter was cleared from the air because they had clear-channel stations that stayed on, so it didn’t matter where you went, you could always hear the program.

But that’s changed dramatically in our age, because in our time every major city has sometimes dozens of radio stations and they all have different formats. Some are news, some are music, some are talk, and some are easy listening, some are rock. Classical, jazz, whatever. And so, therefore, the audience has been fractured. And most of them stay on until late. And so being on radio today doesn’t carry as much clout as it used to.

The same thing was true of television. When we first started on television, there were only three major channels, so if you were on one of them, you could pretty well guess that you had quite a large audience. But today, with cable systems and satellite television, you could have hundreds of television stations and every type of topic you can think of.

So today, as a result of that, we feel that we need to use a multifaceted approach in media. We need to be on radio because there has been a renewed interest in radio with many of the talk radio programs today. But we do not have the money to be able to spend like...
conflict between the Arab world and Israel and its supporters. Several other booklets are in the works, including one on the Old and New Covenants and another on how the true religion of the Bible was transformed over the centuries into the pseudo-Christianity widely extant today.

Scott Ashley

Approved for Interview by
Ministerial/Leadership Seminar

Ministerial Services (MS) has received 23 applications for the Ministerial/Leadership Seminar scheduled for the end of the week. Four were requested to put off application for a later date, and one withdrew his application. Richard Pinelli, MS operation manager, and MS team members are in the process of interviewing the remaining applicants mostly by telephone. Plans are to complete the interviews by mid-July.

“Our focus in the Ministerial/Leadership Program has evolved as our understanding of how to work with our manpower and leadership grows,” said Mr. Pinelli. “This will be a pivotal year as we see what is needed to show us who in the field has the fruits and the leadership to be ordained as an elder and who has the potential for full-time pastoral duties. We are also developing an active program for many of those who attended last year’s leadership seminars. We hope to have this program developed before the Feast of Tabernacles to share with all the pastors and elders.”

Of this year’s applicants, three are elders and 10 have attended Ambassador College. There were more elders and AC graduates last year. “Our emphasis will change from pastoral to ministerial leadership,” Mr. Pinelli said. Though the staff will still be looking for those who might be mentored to become full-time pastors in the future, the seminar classes will be designed to give leadership training that will be beneficial to all the couples and their congregations.

Ministerial Services has hired eight men in the last two years, and has budgeted for three new hires this fiscal year. The annual Ministerial/Leadership Seminar is one tool in the ongoing process of helping to train future leaders.

Caribbean Camp Canceled for 2003

The Caribbean camp planned for Jamaica this year will not be held, camp director Todd Carey announced. “In the course of planning we encountered...”

“Video,” continued from page 1

about 35 miles outside of the capital city, and spent time in the world famous Museum of Anthropology. The local ministry and their wives ensured that Mr. Eddington found his way around the country by accompanying him on the videotaping project. They included Pablo and Tere Dimakis, Enrique and Esther Granados, and Larry and Blanca Royba.

We are looking forward to featuring this small portion of the Mexican brethren in this year’s Feast sermon video, helping each of us to understand our brethren around the world a little better.

Peter Eddington

Frequently Asked Questions About the Sabbath School Program

Where do I find the lessons?

The Sabbath School Teacher’s Outlines are available on the Internet at www.ucgouthou.org/resources/s/. They can be downloaded in PDF format for use by teachers or parents who wish to adapt them for their own children.

Are congregations of the United Church of God required to use these outlines for their classes?

No! These Sabbath School Teacher’s Outlines are being made available for any congregations that desire to use them. They can be downloaded in PDF format for use by teachers or parents who wish to adapt them for their own children. They can also be ordered from the Sabbath School Department. Instructors may use some or all of the outlines depending upon their need.

Are there lessons prepared for each month of the school year? What if you do not meet four times?

If a particular program does not meet each week, the teachers have the option of choosing which lessons they will utilize that month. We recommend, however, that instructors follow the basic progression of the lessons throughout the year since the program has been designed to maintain a flow from one month to the next.

When do you recommend Sabbath school classes be held each Sabbath?

Can they be held during services?

How each Sabbath school program fits into the time allotted for church services and fellowship is to be determined by the church leadership of each congregation. It will depend on the class size, the time available for after services, and some have them during a portion of the service. We do not recommend that classes be conducted during services.

Are teachers permitted to edit or use portions of the outlines, or must they follow them exactly as written?

It is understood that every teacher will not follow the outlines word for word. Adding some personal illustrations, omitting some references and modifying the lessons in a minor way is acceptable. However, since the Church has approved the curriculum and outlines, we ask instructors not to extensively revise the lesson so that the original message developed by the author is still reflected.

What are the primary reasons...

Over 25 different individuals contributed to writing the outlines. Though there were general guidelines for uniformity, we allowed each teacher the latitude to develop the main purpose of the lesson as he or she felt necessary. Thus, the lessons express a cohesiveness and similarity, yet reflect the individual style and abilities of each writer.

How do we arrange our classes if we only have one or two students in a class?

The pastor and Sabbath school coordinators can determine the best way to organize classes and present the material. When making adjustments, some congregations may use some or all of the outlines depending upon their needs. It is understood that every teacher will not follow the outlines word for word. Adding some personal illustrations, omitting some references and modifying the lessons in a minor way is acceptable. However, since the Church has approved the curriculum and outlines, we ask instructors not to extensively revise the lesson so that the original message developed by the author is still reflected.

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How do we arrange our classes if we only have one or two students in a class?
Australia Attains 20,000 Good News Distribution Goal

by Ruth Root

With the deadline of June 30, 2003, fast approaching, the Australian Media and Publishing Committee was pleased to report that the goal for expansion of the Good News mailing list to 20,000 had been reached.

When this expansion goal was approved by the Australian National Council in May 2002, the Media and Publishing Operational Plan listed in some detail the methods that would be used to reach this goal.

National Advertising

At the time of the formulation of the 2002/2003 Operational Plan, there were plans to advertise the long-awaited booklet The Middle East in Prophecy. Since the publication date of this booklet has been delayed, the committee successfully ran a previous advertisement featuring The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy in The Reader’s Digest as well as running it in June in Take Five magazine.

Targeting Tasmania

The Australian Media and Publishing Committee has also successfully incorporated the use of the card-deck type advertising used in the United States into its program in Australia. Horizon Media has given us a considerable reduction in price and we have had successful results from a “Yellow Envelope” drop in Tasmania.

Tasmania was chosen as the site for the distribution as previous tests with this medium have indicated that more acceptable results are achieved by advertising in rural areas. Tasmania is an area with two local elders and a deacon in residence. The members there also enjoy regular pastoral visits from Barry Williams, the pastor for the region. Thus, anyone God calls as a result of this card drop would have a warm and loving congregation to welcome them.

Exciting Results

One advantage of working in the Australian National Office is that we can see first-hand the immediate results these advertising efforts bring. For instance, already some who responded to this Yellow Envelope drop in Tasmania have called back, amazed at the information provided in our literature and enthusiastically requesting additional literature and, in some cases, the Bible Study Course.

A Job for Everyone

As well as the national action steps for media outlined in the 2002/2003 plan, there were many initiatives listed in which Church members could involve themselves. These initiatives included the distribution of letterbox cards and cardholders and the establishment of market stalls and newstands.

As has become typical in the history of the United Church of God in Australia, the members rose to the occasion, far beyond what was expected, with very encouraging results from these programs. It’s impossible to accurately calculate the savings to the Church for which these members have been responsible. As Roy Hickford mentioned in a recent address about media and publishing matters to the Brisbane congregation, “There’s a job for everyone if you want it.”

Volunteers Preach the Gospel at the Toowoomba Market

by Anne Burchard

The recent unprecedented public outcry against the war in Iraq and the constant bombardment of other emotionally charged news coverage gives members a compelling desire to become involved in preaching the gospel. But how? Inspiration came once again from the pages of the United News Australia in an article recording the efforts of members mailing literature stalls at markets and fairs.

Two new stands and over 600 pieces of literature, we set up a stall at 6 a.m. at the Sunday market in Toowoomba, Queensland. Feeling somewhat exposed, we placed ourselves for the frontline stand.

Understandably, interest was conservative but, nevertheless, the response was encouraging, with a varied selection of literature being taken. Inquiries came from people of different religious persuasions with the most prevalent question being, “What do you believe?” This initially caught us off guard and was the classic example of always being ready to give an answer.

The booklet The Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God assisted us greatly.

Interest was expressed by people from other lands such as Brazil, the Balkans, Africa and the Philippines. One person asked us to notify the National Office to update his subscription to The Good News from New South Wales to Queensland.

As the market stalls were closing down, a vendor from a nearby stall took several booklets. The highlight came when an Asian family appeared as the packed boxes were waiting to be loaded. As they began rummaging in the boxes, we informed them they were welcome to anything they wanted. Their reply was that they already had some booklets as they had picked up a Good News at a newsstand at a shopping center two months previously. No doubt the strategically placed signs had caught their eye from a distance and they recognized the familiar advertisement. They took numerous booklets for themselves and their families.

Our conclusion was that the greater the exposure, the greater the response. Toowoomba, in the last two years, has been blanketed with letterbox drops, Yellow Envelope advertisements, Australian Post household drops, and the National Office to update his subscription to The Good News from New South Wales to Queensland.

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UCG–Australia Treasurer Grateful for Surplus

The articles on this page are from the April-June 2003 issue of United News Australia. This report is from the treasurer of UCG in Australia, Drew Ehmick.

We were very blessed during the March quarter with our income for the financial year remaining above the level we had planned. In both February and March, for example, we received $7,000 [Australian throughout] in first tithes and offerings above what we had anticipated receiving in each month. This has been a trend for most of the last nine months.

As a result, over the course of the financial year we have received almost $100,000 more in first tithes and offerings than we expected. Most of these additional receipts were in the July to October period.

Our overall income position remained very healthy as we entered the Holy Day season. The Unleavened Bread offerings were also significantly above the level we had expected. Adding to our receipts have been interest earnings above what we planned. These have more than compensated for the U.S. subsidy receipts, which are lower in our hands as a result of the strength of the Australian dollar.

The Festival Fund and Assistance Fund are the main areas where our receipts continue to be much lower than what we expected. We have received $6,560 less than we expected in the Festival Fund and $3,650 less than expected in the Assistance Fund.

The expenses side of the ledger remains well restrained. Our total expenditure is more than $63,650 below what we had expected by March.

Our surplus is very much better than we expected it to be at this time of the year and we have very much for which to be grateful. Despite very difficult circumstances in the surrounding environment from the drought, the war in Iraq and fears of travel as a result of SARS, we have been given the blessing of a cocoon from which to operate.

Australian Youth Committee Uses Email and Web Site to Serve Youth

Through a variety of initiatives, the United Youth Committee in Australia aims to promote God’s message of hope in various ways to the Church youth and also those who come in contact with the Church youth.

Communicating With Isolated Youth

One initiative that the committee is pursuing is to construct an e-mail list of the youth in the Church, especially those who cannot attend regular services, to help facilitate more regular communication with others of their own age.

Using the Web

A second initiative being planned is for members of the United Youth Committee to work with the Media Committee in regularly updating the youth pages of the Australian Web site and to also develop some interactive facilities for the pages.

At the next Youth Committee meeting in August further discussions will be held as to the ways in which the Youth Committee can help with the Web site, including how youth of the Church could participate.

Kim Mihalec has been appointed the editor of the Youth page, and she will be ably assisted in certain software matters by her husband, Steve Mihalec.

Items young people could contribute include stories with pictures, reports on Holy Days and church events, artwork and articles with links to United Church of God literature, etc. A Youth Committee member from each state area has been appointed to be responsible for collecting and collating these items.

It is important that young members of the public who log onto the site be able to see what we, as a church, do for activities, etc. We sometimes get questions from parents regarding the kind of activities we have for young people, and the Web site could be developed into an informative source for them.

New Summer Camp Location

The Australian Summer Camp will be held at a new location, the Heathcote Scout Camp in the southern part of Sydney, Dec. 19 to Dec. 28. Many campers felt it was time for a change, and we were also informed that the cost of the camp used for the last three years had increased by over a third. The good news is that the cost for camp will remain the same at $240 per camper.

Some of the activities planned include: Christian Living classes, dance, speaking club workshops, life skill classes, canoeing, row boats, mountain bikes in the National Park, hikes within the National Park, craft, football, games room (including table tennis, pool table and soccer game), swimming and sports activities at a sporting complex.

Don Goodger and Bruce Dean
International

Two More Baptisms in Malawi

Bill Jahn, pastor of the Johannes- burg, South Africa, and Malawi congregations, completed a trip to Malawi June 24. Two baptisms were performed (Ruth Ellia and Mesech Chonde) and a sign was placed at the well near Balaka that was funded by LifeNets.

Report From Zambia

Derrick and Cherry Pringle, who run the suboffice in Zambia which also handles literature requests from neighboring Malawi, reported that in May 250 Good News magazines were posted to readers in Zambia, 200 to Malawi and 550 were hand delivered around the Cop- perbelt region of Zambia to clinics, libraries and other establishments in sev- eral towns. They mailed 191 booklets.

“The economy on the Copperbelt is on a continual down drift,” they reported. “In the last four weeks we have only managed to get 80 liters of diesel—there just is none. We have had no water from the Council for 10 days. But life goes on!”

Report From Zimbabwe

Mike and Primrose Mukarati, who handle the mailing office in Zimbabwe, reported that 1,380 copies of the March/April Good News were mailed, as well as 150 booklets.

“We continue braving the worsening economic crisis. Inflation now exceeds 200 percent. The fuel situation is partic- ularly worrying. The congestion and anarchy at fuel stations on delivery days is something one cannot fully describe. Prim and I spent the whole day from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and did not get any.”

South Africa Reports Growth

At the National Council meeting for Southern Africa May 25, the financial report was once again very positive, with substantial increases in income. Total money in the bank was 314,053 rand. The Good News subscription now stands at 11,860, up from 4,600 in November 2000. Average pieces of mail received per month is now 1,495, up 63 percent over the last two years.

U.K. Pentecost Up

Total attendance in the six British Isles congregations was 118 (compared to 101 in 2002) and the total offering was 2,675.30 pounds (compared to 2,477.30 last year, up 8 percent).

United Youth Corps Volunteers Teach in Thailand

Five United Youth Corps volunteers have begun work as teachers at the Lega- cy Institute School in Chiang Mai, Thai- land, Ryan Foster and Heidi Hanisko, Oregon, congregation; Roberta Bauer, from the Akron, Ohio, congregation; Jossa Moser, from the St. Louis, Mis- souri, congregation; Aaron Greider, from the Belleville, Illinois, congrega- tion; and Heather Beyer, from the Kansas City, Missouri, congregation, left the United States on June 2 for the flight to Bangkok via Tokyo. Bill Jahns, co-ordinator of the United Youth Corps, travelled with the group.

The Legacy Foundation was begun by Mr. and Mrs. Leon Sexton in an effort to continue the work Herbert Armstrong began in Thailand in the 1970s. Mr. Sex- ton was intimately involved in the vari- ous Ambassador College and Founda- tion projects in Thailand through the years.

The Legacy school was founded to give educational opportunities to young adults from the Karen and Katchin tribes in northern Thailand. These tribes groups often do not have the same opportunities as ethnic Burmese or Thai. Several of the students come from Sabbath-keeping families living in Bur- ma. The students take classes in English, speech, computers, agriculture and the Bible. Our volunteers are teaching some of these classes as well as participating in an outreach program to local Thai people.

Aftet about 30 hours of travel the group arrived in Bangkok at midnight on Tuesday June 3, with a 12-hour time difference from the Midwest of the United States. After a short sight in a hotel in Bangkok, they went on a whirlwind tour of Bangkok before flying on to Chiang Mai. In Bangkok they went first to the Legacy school building and then to the teachers’ house. They spent about a week in Bangkok before flying on to Chiang Mai.

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The students have a wide range of ability in English. A couple can speak and understand very little and others are pretty good at speaking and listen- ing—especially the second-year stu- dents. They all speak at least two other languages well; some can understand half a dozen languages. I hope to learn at least some Thai and Burmese while I am here. Most of the students know Burmese and there is plenty of opportu- nity to practice Thai around here. Right now I can only say hello, good-bye, thanks, what’s your name? and a few other things, and I can read about half of the Thai alphabet.

“I will try to give you a picture of what [the area] looks like. The school is in a small village called (I think) Baan Mae Sa. It is about a quarter of a mile off the highway heading north out of Chi- ang Mai. We are maybe 15 miles north of Chiang Mai, and 2 or 3 miles south of Mae Rim, which is a small town. Here in Baan Mae Sa there is an open-air mar- ket where fruits, vegetables, eggs and some other things are sold. There is also a small general store, several restaurants, some Internet cafes, two copy shops (i.e., places with a photocopy machine) and some other small businesses. The school is on the corner of the main well road and one of the roads out to the highway.

“The school compound has a school building with a large class- room, a computer lab/classroom and kitchen on the bottom. Upstairs is the girls’ dorm. Across the driveway is the boys’ dorm. Behind that is the hut I am living in at the moment. ‘Beyond the boys’ dorm and my hut are the boys’ bathhouse and the teachers’ house. The teachers’ house has a large living room with two glass walls, which we use as an office. There is a deck attached to the house, and on the deck is a small room we use as a classroom. Around all these buildings is a wall. There are some of the Buddhists) have a separate place to live, then they won’t come live in the main house. People leave little food and drink offerings on the spirits. It is quite ridiculous. There are a lot of these little houses around.

“Speaking of Budhism, one thing that is kind of funny is seeing a bunch of teenage monks in the Internet cafes play- ing computer games.

“Anyway, about a mile down the road the farmland, and this is where the farmhouse is located. This is where the Sextons live and where the students grow crops organically.

“Well, that is about all I have to say for now except that there are a lot of bugs here, it is usually pretty warm and I am learning to enjoy eating rice with every meal.”

Our United Youth Corps volunteers would appreciate your prayers for God’s guidance and protection as they serve in this exciting project in Southeast Asia.

Joel Meeker

UGC–British Isles Holds Sixth Annual General Meeting

The sixth annual general meeting of the United Church of God–British Isles took place in Gloucester June 29.

The meeting was attended by all of the members of the National Council, plus other Church members who are residents of the United Kingdom. In total, 18 people were present, with an additional number participating by means of postalballoting.

After the meeting was opened with prayer, the chairman, Bryan Ellams, addressed the meeting and related how the work of the church had continued through the past year, and concluded with words of thanks to the members of the National Council, to the members of the Church and to the Cincinnati home office of UCGA for its ongoing assis- tance and support.

Following the chairman’s report, the chief executive officer, Peter Hawkins, reported on some of the challenges and successes the Church has experienced in the last year, highlighting some topics that would form the foundation of the business plan he would present.

Next, Brian Penheiro, the treasurer, gave a summary of the Church’s accounts for its financial year ending June 30, concluding that the Church should end its financial year with income ahead of budget and expenditure gener- ally on budget.

In the business portion of the meet- ing, Jan Schroeder, a nonexecutive member of the National Council whose term expired, was returned for a further three-year term; and the Church’s bud- get proposal for its new financial year starting on July 1 was ratifed.

Finally, Mr. Hawkins presented the Church’s plan for the next year, which he summarized under seven headings:

Church: Assigning of pastors; devel- oping speakers, new areas and youth; selection of Feast sites; etc.

Finances: Finding better interest rates; etc.

Office: Evaluation of need for central office; use of mailing fulfillment com- pany for distribution of GN; etc.

Internet: Local content on Web sites, etc.; commentaries; interaction with Europe’s youth; use of search engines; promotion of Vertical Thought magazine.

Good News: Review of The Informa- tion Service for promotion; develop pro- grams members would like to take part in; Reader’s Digest reduced-rate adver- tising; semiannual letters; etc.

Radio: Development of 15-minute programs; recording several presenters; placing on Web site; seeking affordable radio outlets.

In conclusion, Mr. Hawkins encouraged all members to give a good time to the church and to one another.

On the klong in Bangkok: Aaron Greider, Jossa Moser, Roberta Bauer, Heather Beyer and Ryan Foster; Heather with a friendly python; right: Jossa, Bonnie Turner, Roberta, Ryan and Heidi Hanisko discuss curriculum planning (photos by Joel Meeker)
President Holladay Outlines Goals for New Fiscal Year

Good News magazine, and hopefully that’s something we can obtain, but we’re certainly going to set that as a goal to shoot for.

The booklets—we have 30 major booklets that address subjects on almost every topic you can think of.

We’ll also like to emphasize more of appealing not only to the head, but the heart. We do a wonderful job in writing articles that clearly explain and expound what the Bible says, but we’re hoping to be able to write in such a way that it moves people, that people will want to respond. In five years we have the goal of having one million circulation for the Good News magazine . . .

One of the exciting areas that we’re looking into is developing our “first-contact” booklets. These would be smaller publications that a person might be able to put in their pocket, read in 10 minutes and be written with some human interest involved.

So this is an area that we hope to develop. First-contact literature would try to grab people’s attention, direct them towards our Web site or other literature, and then they could order the major booklets, correspondence course and magazines. This is something that in August we plan to bring to the Council. We’re not prepared, then we may miss an opportunity that God provides for us.

One thing we realize, too, is that we’re all a team. And the Church is working together with all of us collectively—through our prayers, our efforts, our of our congregations. That’s still our aim. And not only just to have a pastor there, but that he would have servant’s heart and that he would love God’s people.

And our ministers do a very fine job in that area. But all of us obviously can continue to grow. The Ministerial Leadership Program was established with this in mind. We realize that as the ministry ages, retires, has health problems, we need to develop more leaders, and more pastors to help guide the flock, feed the flock, love the flock. And so last year we started, I think, a unique program. I don’t know of any other organization that has something like this up and running. We hope to continue this program right into the future, to help train couples in leadership and those who have the potential to become ministers. And as a result of last year’s program, over the last year, we have hired five new men.

So our major goal is to continue to further the effectiveness of our ministry in pastor training and as part of that to help them to continue to improve in all facets of ministry. And also in their speaking.

The health of the ministry is a great concern. And this is something that we constantly are talking about, looking for ways to not burn our ministry out, but to help if it as well as their health. The problem is many of our ministers are multitasking. Even though we have smaller congregations, many are still having to travel as far as the Salt Bath as they used to in the early days. Some of them have three or four churches or more that they’re pastoring.

But not only do our men pastor today. Many of them write, many of them edit. lishes, our offerings, local involve-ment—to be able to get a work done. And so we do appreciate the help of all the brethren.

What are the major goals next year for the ministerial area?

What we must never forget is that God is the one who opens doors. He’s the one who gives us the opportunity for preaching the gospel. He can provide opportunities that we aren’t even aware of presently, that we don’t know anything about.

Well, let me state first that Ministerial Services exists to serve and help the ministry and the Church. You look at the fact that we have the ministry, the membership and the youth within the Church. Ministerial Services exists to serve and to help all of these different groups. Our goal that we have for the coming year, and into the future, is to help the ministry, to provide opportunities that aren’t even aware of presently, that we don’t know anything about.

We want to come to our Web site and do their Bible study, check for news, do research.

We will do this for a year and then we will be going to do research. The idea is to have it in the hands of our young people and basically to start with it will be a magazine directed to the youth of the Church. But as time goes on, it will expand and be made available to the public. Right now, we will only, as far as the public is concerned, try to draw them to our Web site where they can view it there.

What are the major goals next year for the ministerial area?

The home office staff is small, but it’s a very close-knit group. Our goal is to continue to develop and foster that closeness in our working relationship, to improve the skills and abilities of the employees. One thing that we’re doing to foster a closeness is every Monday we have a “compass check” where we cover a biblical principle that pertains to all of our staff and to all of the officers of the corporation and the operation managers. So that means that we have the officers of the corporation, which are the president and the secretary, Gerald Seelig, as well as the treasurer, John and Mary McKnight. And the operation managers—Tom serves a dual function because he’s also operation manager over the financial area—and then we have Richard Pinelli, who serves as the assistant to the president for the operation managers.

We would like to emphasize more of appealing not only to the head, but the heart. We do a wonderful job in writing articles that clearly explain and expound what the Bible says, but we’re hoping to be able to write in such a way that it moves people, that people will want to respond. In five years we have the goal of having one million circulation for the Good News magazine . . .

We’re hoping that we can have outlets by the end of this next fiscal year . . . Basically we need people who can help sponsor it in their own local areas. So we realize that radio and TV are extremely important.

The Good News magazine continues to be our flagship publication. We’re hovering between 450 to 500,000 circulation. And we’re always looking at ways to improve it. Our goal is to make the magazine and our literature as effective as possible in reaching out to this world.

We realize that it has a multifaceted role in itself—to teach, to educate, to instruct, to warn, to be a witness. Our objective is to preach the good news about the coming Kingdom of God, but also to give readers hope now. So one of the things that we want to look at with the Good News magazine is how to make it more positive—so that there is good news, that there are things that people can do now. The Bible, as we know, gives a very practical approach on how to live life. As an example, how to have happy marriages, how to rear your children, how to be successful at work—things like that. The Good News magazine started a new series in the Good News (“Living Christianity”) and the emphasis in this new section is to show a practical application of the Bible to our daily lives. That turns the Good News now and it is good news for the future.

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What are the goals for Ambassador Bible Center?
When ABC was first started, the goal was stated that it is to pass on to the next generation of God’s people the precious truths of the Scriptures. Now, we feel that we’ve been doing that, because Ambassador Bible Center in a year’s time covers the Bible from Genesis 1:1 to the end of the book of Revelation chapter 22. And we feel that this is being done. We also find that ABC will help with the Ministerial/Leadership Program, even though it was not started to be a ministerial training program. But it is there for training of couples who have not had the opportunity to go to Ambassador College. If someone is to be hired and to be trained as a pastor in the Church, we feel that it’s important for them to have this as a background. This year a local elder and his wife, Gary and Janonna McConnaghy, have come and have been taking all of the ABC classes and then will be going out to pastor a church.

We continue to refine and fine-tune the program every year. At the end of the year, we ask the students to evaluate the effectiveness of each class and also the strengths of the presenter and how each of the presidents can improve. We take these evaluations to heart. They show our deficiencies; they reveal our strengths. We hope the strengths are greater than the deficiencies. And so, each year the level of instruction increases because we’re able to build on the previous year.

So far as the administration is concerned, we’re working on improving everyone’s ability to do his or her job and to continue to create a strong working, cohesive group.

What ABC Means . . .
To most people, ABC represents the first letters of the alphabet, a TV network or the name of a nursery. But to us, ABC means Ambassador Bible Center.

ABC means a biblical education among those of like beliefs. For the first time in your educational experience, you can enjoy an institution that is geared to your spiritual needs and that places a priority on the morals that you embrace. It means forming close bonds and friendships with fellow ABC students whom you will be with for seven hours a day, five days a week for seven months.

ABC means an opportunity to enhance your life by being taught living principles. At ABC, we are accepting applications! Write for yours at: P.O. Box 54992, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45254-0992. E-mail us at: Gary_Anton@ucg.org. Or, you may call (513) 576-9796 and ask to speak to Registrar Ralph Levy or Admission Officer Gary Anton about any questions you have.

ABC denotes the beginning. It may mean the beginning of a new experience that will have an eternal effect on your life!
United Youth Camps

Philippine Camp Goes “On to the Highest!”

Thirty-two campers and 25 staff members from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao (the three major island groups in the Philippines) gathered at Eden Nature Park, a peaceful and tranquil mountain resort 2,630 feet above the city, from May 18 to 25 for part one of the Philippine United Youth Camp 2003. Part two (May 26 to 30) was optional and consisted of a climb to the summit of Mt. Apo, the highest mountain in the Philippines, at 10,311 feet above sea level.

The 32 campers were divided equally into four teams or “dorms” (we actually stayed in tents)—two boys dorms (1B and 2B) and two girls dorms (1G and 2G)—of eight campers each. Two counselors served each dorm. Each camper dorm was divided into two teams of five people each, four campers plus one counselor per tent. With nine more tents for the staff, we had a total of 17 tents in our campsite.

Our theme this year was “On to the Highest!” Three years ago we had a theme that was somewhat related, “A View From The Peak,” when 30 of us (17 campers and 13 staff) scaled Mt. Apo. For those who missed out, this year was their opportunity.

The first activity of every day was the Christian living class. Each dorm met with a different member of the ministry staff to discuss the spiritual values revolving around our theme. This included an unflagging commitment to excellence and to seek God’s Kingdom and His righteousness first in our daily lives.

After the Christian living classes, our day activities consisted of basketball, confidence course, campus service, cycling, first aid, inline-skating, riflery, softball, swimming, table tennis, volleyball and wilderness skills. We also had six workshops: art illustration, cooking and baking, electricity, flower arranging, journalism and public speaking.

For the evenings, we all enjoyed a bonfire, a dance clinic, a speech banquet, a dance and variety show and two evenings of Q&A on the Bible and Christian living.

On the Sabbath, we had a “Bible Bowl,” followed by more fellowship time. Selected campers rehearsed “How Good and How Pleasant” for the special music for the afternoon service. After the service, we visited each other’s tents in the open house activity. That evening, the variety show, dance and awards ceremony were held. Many campers stayed up late trying to make the most of their last few hours together.

Then it was time to say good-bye. About half of the campers and staff went home after part one. The other half stayed and prepared for the four-day mountain-climbing adventure to commence the next day. Fifteen campers and 13 staff members (plus one guest) participated in the ascent to the Phillipine’s highest peak, Mt. Apo. The journey was challenging, but the enthusiasm remained high.

On Wednesday, May 28, at around 3:30 a.m., we woke up and started to prepare for the final ascent to the peak from Lake Venado, our base camp. We started the climb at about 4:30 a.m. At 6:57 a.m., the first climber reached the summit. The last climber arrived at 8:54 a.m. We ate our pack lunches at the peak and enjoyed a most spectacular view!

On our way down the mountain, one of our 11 porters remarked that of all the groups that he had known all these years,

The bottom line is this: We lived, we loved, we learned and we left a legacy. We had fun, and we thank God that no one suffered any serious injury the whole time we were there. We also wish to thank our brethren for their prayers, and the home office and LifeNets International for all their support. But all the praise, glory and honor go to our great God and Father in heaven for making it all possible!

Daniel Roy Macaraeg

Best Camp Yet at Pinecrest

“Camp,” continued from page 1 with each group served by a counselor and assistant counselor.

Camp activities included archery, basketball, journalism, rappelling and rock climbing, riflery, a ropes course, volleyball, softball, speedway and swimming. One of the high points of the camp was the all-day, 13-mile canoe trip down the Black River. Campers and staff also participated in a whacky session of Crazy Olympic games on Saturday night after the Sabbath.

Each day started with a “Compass Check” going through one of the Ten Commandments. That theme was continued during the Sabbath sermons and seminars. Each evening campers could have their Bible and Christian-living questions answered by panels of ministers during Christian living classes.

According to the camp director, Greg Sargent, this year’s group of campers was the best ever during UCG’s eight-year history at Pinecrest. There was a “wonderful spirit of respect and cooperation” from the campers he said. He also stated that from his point of view, the high points of the camp this year were “God’s intervention in the weather, the tremendous attitude of the campers, the unity and support of the staff and the fact that all ACA standards were passed.”

The ACA (American Camping Association) visit, part of the accreditation process for United’s camp programs, necessitated many hours of preparation by the administrative staff and by the activity staff as well.

National camp program coordinator, Larry Greider, explained that the examination team was very impressed with United’s camp at Pinecrest. “After a very thorough examination and walk-through, no standards were missed,” he said. “I’ve been able to be present for most of the ACA visits. The common reaction is that these volunteers (who are usually very knowledgeable and have their own programs) are very impressed. The lead visitor, who directed a resident camp for decades and now works for the Red Cross as an instructor, mentioned that we were a very impressive organization.

Another visitor, who runs a YMCA camp, said she learned much from us. The third visitor, a camp manager, just kept shaking his head, as if to say ‘amazing.’

This quest for excellence is something to be thankful for since it reflects the greatness of the God we serve,” said Mr. Greider.

He went on to say, “The entire camp seemed to radiate the sense of excellence that was mirrored in the standards accomplished. There were dozens of ‘coincidences’ that suggested to me that we had unseen help and the spirit of harmony was evident everywhere.”

Reports on the six other U.S. summer camps will appear in future issues. un
Luke Is Dead, but Never Forgotten

■ God calls people of all backgrounds, and sometimes the results of sins of the past bear a high price. “Luke” wanted me to share his story with you.

by Robert Berendt

The name I have used in the title of this article is an alias. I did have the permission of “Luke” to tell about his life. He gave me that permission and asked me to use his example when he lay on his deathbed.

Meeting Luke

It has always been an important event for me as a pastor to meet a person God is obviously calling. Jesus said in Matthew 22:14 that many are called, but few are chosen. The Bible tells us that only the Father takes the responsibility to save people to Christ (John 6:44). Thus, when a person I meet for the first time is clearly coming to the understanding of God’s truth, I am excited and pleased. Luke was such a man. Our first meeting was unusual in the setting and circumstance, but not unusual in the pattern of the conversation. Luke invited my wife and I to spend the night in one of the finest hotels at his expense. I told him it was not necessary, but he would not hear of that and insisted.

As I found out, he worked in the hotel. He had arranged to have a private meeting room available, and so the setting was unique in my experience. We launched into his concerns in a straightforward manner. His questions had everything to do with the words of Acts 2:38: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Growing Tall Spiritually

Luke began attending church and within a short time became a most loved and respected member. He was about 6 foot 7 and was the tallest man in our congregation.

Luke was tall in more ways than just height. He grew tall spiritually. He was an ardent Bible student. Soon it was obvious that he was contributing much in enthusiasm, warmth and spiritual conviction to the members. Later I found that Luke had great courage and deter-mination in his character. Luke had loved God. We wondered why such a well-spoken, well-traveled, gentle, kind, interesting and handsome man was not married. Luke had never been married, and he had no children.

Luke had many questions as he grew in the understanding of God’s Word. It was a delight to see the zeal and joy reflected in his eyes and demeanor as he found answers to questions that had plagued him for years. He came to know a loving and caring God who had a plan to save all of mankind.

The next two years passed smoothly and Luke continued to be steadfast and pleased with his exciting new beliefs.

A Deadly Diagnosis

That was when Luke became very ill. I appointed him and helped him get to the hospital. James 5:13-15 are verses we discussed a lot over the next few weeks. It did not take long for the doctors to diagnose Luke with AIDS. Luke was ashamed of himself and told of some things he had done before he came into the Savior’s fold. Wild weekends that he hardly remembered. I reassured Luke that the blood of Jesus Christ had washed away all of his sins. We talked about the fact that his deeds before baptism had come back to haunt him. Luke asked me: “Why did God let this happen after I had repented and was baptized?”

I visited Luke often, and it soon became evident that his body was wasting away quite dramatically. I encouraged him to let his mother and sister know. He felt so bad about his condition, that at first he refused. After we talked a while longer, he let me make a call.

I recall so clearly the day I met Luke’s sister at the train station and went with her and an interpreter (she speaks Spanish) to an apartment where she could stay and then to the hospital. It was obvious that she loved her brother deeply. I tried to explain gently and carefully what the illness was and what it seemed the outcome must be. I told her of Luke’s repentance and the wonderful loving man that he was. I also told her that Luke was at ease with this sickness now and at peace with God. It was obvious that Luke was loved by his family.

Bible passages like Psalm 102 were topics of our discussions. Luke indeed was losing so much weight that verse 5 had special meaning for him. Finally he accepted the possibility that God would let him die. Facing the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4) became reality for Luke.

Through his suffering and the haunting look I often saw in his sunken eyes, there was burning brightly a confident reassurance that he would not be forgotten. If death was to come, Luke was prepared to face that. Luke did not want to die. He abhorred the thought, just as almost every human being does. But there came a time that he was so ill and so weak, that death seemed a refugee.

Lessons We All Learned

Luke was dead—that was the message I had to give to the members of the church. But in the meantime we, too, must become champions.

Growing Tall Spiritually

Luke was a man I will not forget. But what I learned from him is the truth of Luke 7:27—“God is a loving and caring God who has a plan to save all of mankind.”

Champion of Misfits

■ “If it had not been for Anne Sullivan, the name of Helen Keller would have remained unknown.” With these remarkable words, Helen Keller paid tribute to a woman who made such a difference in her life.

by Janet Treadway

Helen Keller, who was deaf and blind, published 14 books, met every U.S. president, and was an International Association of the Deaf board member. Helen Keller, turned this wild, hopeless young girl’s life around.

Winston Churchill said, “Helen Keller was one of the most powerful examples of triumph over adversity.” When Queen Victoria asked Helen how she accounted for her amazing accomplishments in life, Helen’s reply was, “If it had not been for Anne Sullivan, the name of Helen Keller would have remained unknown.”

The world knew the stories of Helen Keller and her remarkable teacher, Anne Sullivan, turned this wild, hopeless young girl’s life around.

Helen Keller, who was deaf and blind, published 14 books, met every U.S. president, and was an International Association of the Deaf board member. Helen Keller, turned this wild, hopeless young girl’s life around.

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Remember the Sabbath Day

Does the Fourth Commandment apply only to one day each week? Are we obeying the Sabbath commandment as long as we don't work on the Sabbath? Is it possible to violate the Sabbath command on Thursday?

by Dave Johnson

One of the distinctive doctrines of the United Church of God is our belief in the necessity of obeying God's command concerning the seventh-day Sabbath. For many people, this belief has had a profound impact on their lives. Success in a business or professional field has often been the result of changing careers because their occupation did not allow Sabbath observance. Many have sacrificed in order to obey God's instruction, and in many cases, God has blessed those who chose to put Him and His instructions first.

When we first learn about the Sabbath, much of our focus is upon the 24-hour segment of time—Friday evening and sunset on Saturday evening. The questions we ask and the concerns we have are about which activities are acceptable on the Sabbath and which are not. We are told that we are not to work on the Sabbath day, and we naturally ask questions about what constitutes "work." We ask questions about raking leaves and what is appropriate for ourselves and our children to do on the Sabbath.

We soon learn that attending weekly Sabbath services is not an optional activity, but an integral part of Sabbath observance. We learn that failing to attend services when we have the ability to do so is a form of Sabbath breaking. In the past we may have decided to "go to church" only on the Sabbath day because it was convenient to come to services. We're now gone to the other extreme where attending weekly Sabbath services because "I worked so hard this week, I was just too tired to come." It seems that some routinely skip services because "I worked so hard this week, I don't have the time, but what about the rest of the time? We can easily see that the other nine commandments are applicable all of the time, but what about the Sabbath commandment? Is it possible to avoid doing anything sinful on the Sabbath day and still fail to fulfill the Sabbath commandment?

Looking More Closely

Let's look a little more closely at the commandment and see what we might be overlooking.

Exodus 20:8-11 says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. It is a day of rest, even to the Lord your God. He has hallowed it because He has done there the work of creating the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rest ed the seventh day and hallowed it." The obvious focus of this passage is upon the Sabbath day and maintaining it as a day of rest. The commandment does not have the power to make anything holy, but God has clearly hallowed—made holy—this time, and it is our duty to see that this God-given holiness is not defiled.

In this sense, clearly, doing our "work" on God's Sabbath day would defile or "profane" its holiness. It is important to understand this concept of "holy" versus "profane." Everything that is not specifically labeled as "holy" is automatically "profane" in this sense. When we use the word "profane," what we are referring to something that is not permanently blessed or lacking appropriate respect.

The biblical usage does not necessarily include that same negative meaning. One Greek word translated profane, Choli (Strong's H2455), had an underlying meaning of "exposed." The root word from the Greek, hebelos (Strong's H1892), originally referred to something that is cut open or exposed. Scripture further reveals that when the religious leaders failed to differentiate between the holy and the unholy, neither did the people. Because the people that difference, the people fell into sin by carelessly misusing what God said was holy (Ezekiel 22:26; 44:23).

However, we should also note that the concept of what is "holy" does not begin by defining what can and cannot be done on the Sabbath day. It begins by telling us what we should do the rest of the week in order to be prepared to maintain the holiness of the Sabbath when it arrives.

Remember

We are first instructed to "remember the Sabbath day." The word remember can have different meanings. In this passage it does not refer to "remembering" as opposed to "forgetting." It refers to having a daily awareness that the Sabbath is coming so that work can be planned out and accomplished in such a way that we have completed our necessary work before the Sabbath arrives. This could involve such things as lawn care, housecleaning, preparing and cleaning our vehicles and our clothing, preparing special meals, etc. If we properly "remember the Sabbath day," we can plan and schedule these activities throughout the week in such a way that we are properly prepared before the Sabbath arrives.

The Jewish Soncino commentary makes an interesting observation about the instruction to remember the Sabbath day: "The verbal is infinitive and so is necessary work. Always keep the Sabbath in mind during the week, so that if, for example, you come across a special article of food, set it aside for the honoring of the Sabbath . . . A person should so order his affairs during the week that his mind is completely free of them on the Sabbath" (The Soncino Chunmash, page 440).

Obviously, there is nothing wrong with having a group get-together, a club meeting or some social event. People are summoned to a convocation much in a way a summons is issued to a court of law. A summons is not an invitation, it is an order from the authorities. The fact that this is a "holy" convocation shows that the authority doing the summoning is God. God would certainly want us to eagerly assemble before Him and with His other children, but whether we're eager or not, He summons us to appear. Other scriptures show us we should not attend when we are ill with some potentially communicable disease, and acknowledge that once in a great while, there may be an "ox in the ditch" situation that prevents our attendance.

In years past, manymade considerable sacrifices to be able to attend Sabbath services regularly. At times we may have been overzealous in our efforts. There may have been times when we could have been more balanced in our approach. But have we now gone to the other extreme where seemingly trivial matters may cause us to ignore God's summons?

It seems that some routinely skip services because "I worked so hard this week, I was just too tired to come." Other times events make it so it isn't convenient to come to services. We're not talking about sudden, unexpected, uncontrollable events or important family occasions beyond our control. However, there are many other matters we could anticipate and plan for or cut short. If we fail to do so, are we really remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy in the way God intended?

There is no substitute for weekly Sabbath services. Listening to a tape on some other day is not the same. God has blessed and hallowed the Sabbath day in a spiritual way, not like any other day. The strength we derive from fellowship with God's people cannot be duplicated by some other activity. God blesses us with that opportunity only once each week. If we fail to anticipate and plan in such a way that we can take advantage of that opportunity when it comes, then we are not remembering the Sabbath day in the way God intended.

Remember the encouragement to gather in worship and fellowship recorded in Hebrews 10:24-25: "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, looking more closely at each other's faith in order to strengthen it. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves, for the tabernacle of God is a little temple in every one of us." We see how much more we can anticipate and plan in such a way that we can take advantage of that opportunity when it comes.

Remember the encouragement to stir up love and good works. Looking more closely at each other's faith in order to strengthen it. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves, for the tabernacle of God is a little temple in every one of us.

Attesting weekly Sabbath services is an integral part of Sabbath observance. But there's more to remembering the Sabbath (photo by Janet Treadway)
“Blessed Are Those Who Mourn”

Christ’s statement in Matthew 5:4 seems contradictory. How can those who mourn be happy? But God’s way of life does produce joy (Psalm 16:11; Galatians 5:22). Mourning can be a blessing because:

- It causes us to think more soberly about life (Ecclesiastes 7:2-4).
- It keeps us from becoming complacent (Deuteronomy 8:11-18).
- It helps us to have compassion for others, as Christ did (Hebrews 4:7-9).

There are three situations where we should mourn:

- When we see the suffering of others (Ezekiel 9:4).
- When God’s Spirit convicts us of sin (James 4:8-10).
- When we suffer persecution.

Christ finished His statement by promising comfort to those who mourn (Matthew 5:4). God provides this comfort in many ways:

- Through the Bible (Romans 15:4).
- By David’s example (Psalm 34:4-7).
- Through prayer (Philippians 4:6-7).
- By reassuring us we are not alone in our trials.
- By His promise not to tempt us beyond what we are able (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Remembering that He is on our side (Romans 8:31-39).

• Through the hope of the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14).
• Through one another.

By reassuring us that He is able to save us (Jude 24-25).

Ultimately there will be no more mourning. “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (Revelation 21:4).

(Excerpted from a sermon by Richard Pinelli May 24, 2003, in Cincinnati East, Ohio.)

Prayer: A Sacrifice?

In a recent Bible study our minister went through the book of Malachi, which tells us how upset and disappointed God was with the defiled sacrifices offered by Israel. Our minister said that our prayers are part of the sacrifices we offer to God. More importantly, when we pray we are asking God to join us as husband and wife.

Because marriage is a divine institution, and we are asking God to join us as husband and wife, it is fitting and right that each of you should faithfully promise before God to accept the marriage covenant according to the divinely ordained conditions established by Almighty God.

Do you then [his first name], faithfully promise and covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses, to take [her full name] to be your lawful wedded wife—in sickness and in health, in good times and in difficult times, for as long as you both shall live—to love her, cherish her, honor her and provide for her? [Groom answers.]

And do you, [her first name], faithfully promise and covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses, to take [his full name] to be your lawful wedded husband—in sickness and in health, in good times and in difficult times, for as long as you both shall live—to love him, cherish him, honor him, and provide for him? [Bride answers.]

Since all ordination or setting apart in the Scriptures is by the laying on of hands, would you please join your right hands and, with the laying on of your hands, will you, the Eternal God to unite you as husband and wife?

[Prayer]

By the authority of Jesus Christ, I now pronounce you husband and wife!

Be Ready to Give an Answer: Does the Bible Teach a “Secret Rapture”? 

Millions have read the Left Behind books based on a secret rapture. According to the most common interpretation of the rapture, Christ will appear to the earth, not return to it, to secretly rzeize believers seven years before His actual return. Does the Bible teach this? The basis of the teaching is 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 where Paul says Christians “shall be caught up . . . to meet the Lord in the air.”

Context: Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 after the unexpected deaths of some brethren there to remind them of the hope of the resurrection. Nothing in this passage justifies an understanding other than that it expresses Christ’s second coming. The “shout,” “voice of an archangel” and “the trumpet of God” seem anything but secret (verse 16).

Related Passages: In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul wrote that the resurrection would occur “at His coming” (verse 23) and at “the last trumpet” (verse 52). This is the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15-18, which announces Christ’s second coming, the establishment of His Kingdom and the end of this earth. When Christ returns, he will "meet the saints in the clouds." In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives” (Zechariah 14:4; compare Acts 1:9-11). Matthew 24:36-44 talks of some being prepared for Christ’s coming, and others left unprepared, but it doesn’t say God’s people will be taken to heaven.


Treasure Digest

That’s Not What God Wanted

So often in life we hear the phrase, “That’s not what I wanted.” All of us, including God, can identify. Satan and mankind have chosen to go the way that God did not want them to go. Jesus Christ went to the cross against getting what He wanted. Though He knew it was necessary to fulfill all things, His terrible beating and sacrifice were not easy. He said, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me” (Matthew 26:39).

Still people are choosing to go the way God does not want. Remember this the next time we think, “That’s not what I wanted.” Striving to do what God wants will make it more likely that we will get what we want, now and in the world to come.

C.K. Vanderlaan

Quotable Quotes

“The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails” (William Arthur Ward).

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted” (Matthew 5:4).

Comfort to those mourning (Matthew 5:4). God provides this comfort in many ways:

• Through the hope of the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14).
• Through prayer (Philippians 4:6-7).

• By reassuring us we are not alone in our trials.
• By His promise not to tempt us beyond what we are able (1 Corinthians 10:13).
• By reassuring us that He is on our side (Romans 8:31-39).
• Through the hope of the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14).
• Through one another.

“Love is not looking in each other’s eyes, but looking together in the same direction” (Antoine de St-Exupery).

“If you think that education is expensive, try ignorance” (Derek Bok).

Submitted by Anthony Pacelli, Annette King and Terry Hoffman

Remembering Our Marriage Covenant

Below are excerpts from the meaningful marriage ceremony currently used by the United Church of God:

Surely there can be no greater human joy than to have a happy marriage, filled with giving and sharing. There is no deeper relationship among human beings than that achieved by a husband and wife in marriage.

Marriage is a natural union but a divine institution, ordained of God. It was established by the Creator God at creation and derives its authority from the divine laws of God, immutable and unchangeable.

When God created life upon the earth, He made human beings the pinnacle of the physical creation, fashioning them in His own image. He gave men and women creative minds with the ability to make new creations. Because marriage is a divine institution, and we are asking God to join us as husband and wife, it is fitting and right that each of you should faithfully promise before God to accept the marriage covenant according to the divinely ordained conditions established by Almighty God.

Do you then [his first name], faithfully promise and covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses, to take [her full name] to be your lawful wedded wife—in sickness and in health, in good times and in difficult times, for as long as you both shall live—to love her, cherish her, honor her and provide for her? [Groom answers.]

And do you, [her first name], faithfully promise and covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses, to take [his full name] to be your lawful wedded husband—in sickness and in health, in good times and in difficult times, for as long as you both shall live—to love him, cherish him, honor him, and provide for him? [Bride answers.]

Since all ordination or setting apart in the Scriptures is by the laying on of hands, would you please join your right hands and, with the laying on of your hands, will you, the Eternal God to unite you as husband and wife?

[Prayer]

By the authority of Jesus Christ, I now pronounce you husband and wife!

Protecting Kids From Punishment: Teaching the Wrong Lesson?

A student was kicked out of school for helping someone cheat on the SAT test. Sounds reasonable, unless you are his parents. His family is suing for $1.1 million to compensate for the “loss of invaluable childhood friendships . . . and loss to his reputation,” reports U.S. News & World Report. In a recent article titled “How to Pass a Test” (Why Wed, 2003), the magazine highlighted the lack of parental support in the teaching of morals. “People don’t like to have their children punished,” said Michele Rhude, a principal in Pennsylvania. “No parent wants to see his child go to prison.”

Seeking a way to help students succeed while avoiding the temptation to cheat, some educators found that 3 of 4 high school students admitted to cheating on at least one test during the previous year. Some 38 percent acknowledged stealing something from a store, and 37 percent said they would lie in order to get a good job,” the magazine reported.

But what does God say to parents? “You shall teach [God’s words] diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deuteronomy 6:7).

Share Your Treasures!

Do you have any short items of biblical wisdom, humor or practical information that you would like to share in this section? Or if you have any suggestions, please contact United News, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027 or mike_bennett@ucg.org.
**Half Empty or Half Full? We Don’t Know the Half of It!**

Sometimes, though, maybe our room feels half empty. Maybe there’s nothing that we’re sure was a special gift from God. You don’t even want to say it, but do God’s windows feel tightly shut? Maybe a little better, does your room feel half full? “We have food and a roof over our head, thank God!”

The truth is, if we are faithfully tithing and giving offerings, our spiritual and physical “rooms” are lovingly decorated wall to wall, and God promises He was ready to handle more opportunities, challenges and growth. God ladies blessings overflowing that we too often don’t fully appreciate.

God has allowed too much to come our way, we shouldn’t ask why He has made us way more able than we do. If we cooperate, we can grow to be ready for more service.

Our trials are worth more than gold, explains Peter (1 Peter 1:6-7). “Well, you might joke, “in that case I feel like a millionaire!” All the while, we know that the fruits of the Holy Spirit and righteous godly character are our true wealth.

Did you ‘look for God for wisdom (James 1:5). This means asking God to help us manage and serve effectively in our spheres of influence such as family, job, church and community. And what will be God’s response? A half answer?

No, verse 5 says God “gives to all liberally!”

**Mud or Stars?**

God’s relationship with us is overflowing! Remember the little rhyme: “Two men looked out from the mud, the other stars.”

This concept is thought-changing. More than that, it can be life-changing! Both men stayed in prison. Both windows offered the same view. The ground was muddy. But we want to be the one with vision. The solution was where he chose to look.

Everybody looks at the same water level. The difference is how we choose to evaluate it. What we choose is everything.

“For me, the way it was placed—per-...”

**Overflowing!**

Has God ever done anything halfway? The Creator pronounced everything He had made “very good.” Talk about an understatement! The Big Dipper is a “very good” example!

What does God promise for obedient Christians enjoying offerings? “And try Me now in this,” says the Lord of Hosts. “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10).

Q&A: Why do ministers perform marriages between members and nonmembers?

Thank you for your question about “Courting Compromise: Myths About Dating Outside the Church” (May 2003, page 16). Apparently, there’s a misunderstanding about what the UCG is doing, and we welcome the opportunity such an important issue.

From your letter it seems that you see a contradiction between the article and the fact that some UCG ministers perform marriages between one of our members and a nonmember. The true picture is that we are working together. We’re using United News as one of many ways to communicate the values to which we hold as an organization. What the article said to unmarried members is based on the official teaching of the Church, including every elder of the UCG.

The United News article is part of a united effort to educate our unmarried membership and encourage everyone in the direction that will benefit them the most. In addition to educating people through publications, our pastors and elders teach the same approach in sermons, sermons and counseling, as well as in private conversations. By all of those methods, we strongly advise our members to choose to marry in the faith.

But, what are we to do with one who wants to be a member of the UCG, who, after receiving our strongest recommendations to the contrary, is determined to marry someone who is not a member? Our leadership has given this matter serious and prayerful consideration. A task force was commissioned to produce a study paper on the subject, which we distributed to all of our elders and a multitude of counsel. God sometimes gives us only principles on issues, instead of commandments. We determined after much study that God gave us a principle in this matter, not a commandment. The consensus we reached was that marrying outside the Church is ill-advised, but there’s no scriptural basis for us to refuse to perform the marriage or to put the member out of the Church.

We leave it up to the individual elder to perform the ceremony between a member and a nonmember to decide if he will perform it. In some situations, it promotes the relationship between minister, member and nonmember house.

We assure you that we clearly advise everyone of the potential problems he or she faces in marrying outside of the Church and that we recommend against it. And, we would not officiate at a marriage in which the attitude of the member is defiant against authority. But, if he or she is subject to God and respect-ful of our counsel but expresses that he or she is willing to live with the consequences, we’re left with a decision. Do we perform the marriage in a spirit of love, respecting the member’s difference of opinion and hopefully establishing a relationship with the nonmember? Or, do we refuse to perform the marriage, potentially hurting the relationship with both the member and the nonmember?

What would Christ have us do? It’s not an easy decision. It’s a weighty chal-lenge to be a faithful minister of God, teaching people what we believe is the best way for them to live and yet continuing to serve them when they make unwise choices. Yet, there are many examples in the Bible of God continu- ing to work with His people, in spite of the fact that they chose not to fully follow His advice. These examples encourage us to realize that we sometimes need to do the same.

It is our standard procedure that all of the above take place before any marriage ceremony. It may seem on the surface that the ministers were in agreement with what you read in the United News article, for you would not know all that went on in the counseling process before the marriage.

I hope this clarifies that the entire UCG ministry is in agreement on this issue. We solicit your prayers for God to give us the wisdom that we need to serve Him and His people.

Cecil E. Maranville

**Follow-up to Article on Dating Outside the Church**

Several letters, E-mails and tele-phone calls came in response to the article “Courting Compromise: Myths About Dating Outside the Church” in the May issue of United News, page 16.

To the Married

A number of those who responded pointed out that the article could be seen as offensive and “devoid of sym-pathy” for those who are already mar-ried, especially the many mates who attend United Church of God services but who are not baptized.

We are truly sorry that the article came across that way to some who are already married. As managing editor, my heart goes out to those who felt offended by the article. Those who are already married are in a much differ-ent situation than those the article was addressed to. Those mates who are attending church, interested in reading the literature, perhaps considering baptism, are certainly in a much differ-ent situation.

We did run a “Q&A” in the same May issue that was more directly to those who are already married (page 18). For this different audience and situation, a much different approach is called for.

We respect and honor all who choose to attend services with us and we give our sincere apology to any nonmember mate for any unin-tentional offense this article may have caused.

To the Unmarried

The article was written and intend-ed for those not yet married, and the author was trying to approach the sub-ject in a straightforward way to reach those not yet married who had some of those questions.

Though the approach was straight-forward and pulled no punches, its underlying teaching is based on the “Marrying Outside the Faith Church Policy Paper” approved by the Coun-cil of Elders in January 1998.

The full text of the paper can be read or downloaded from the study papers page of the United Web site at www.ucg.org/papers.

The Q&A included here addresses another question we received in response to the article, and covers sever-al elements of the policy paper as well.

**Church Teen Makes Headlines by Not Running on Sabbath**

“Bridgette Sexton is one of the premier high school sprinters in Washington. However, she won’t win a state track title today, and she wouldn’t have it any other way,” reported the Vancouver, Washington, *Columbian* newspaper Saturday, May 31.

“Sexton, competing at the Class 2A state meet, posted the fastest preliminary time in the 400 meters and also qualified for today’s finals in her other three events. However, the La Center junior said she will remain faithful to her religious beliefs and not compete today while observing the Sabbath,” wrote reporter Howie Stalwick.

It turns out Bridgette’s time in the preliminaries on Friday of 58.30 seconds in the 400 meters was faster than the state champion on Saturday (58.46). Her dedication to her religious beliefs made several headlines. The May 31 *Columbian* article quotes her as saying:

“‘I just wanted to come out here and make a statement,’ said Sexton, non-denominational Christian and member of the United Church of God, whose Sabbath runs from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. ‘There’s something more than winning.’”

An earlier article in the May 24 *Columbian* was titled, “Sexton will let her times make statement: beliefs prevent her from running in the 2A state finals.” Reporter Andrew Seligman wrote:

“Where Sexton would finish at state is something of a mystery. Every year, she qualifies. Then, she withdraws before the championship round. Why? She’s willing to sacrifice a medal, not her religious beliefs. . . .”

“My goal is to go to state, run my hardest, make a statement and walk out,” Sexton said. “If I give up now and I don’t follow my beliefs, what was this all worth?”

“It’s not easy though. There is is temptation. Team members would prefer she run on Saturdays, but they would never pressure her to do so. It wouldn’t work, anyway.”

“It’s really cool that she does that, but sometimes it’s disappointing because . . . we don’t have her,” teammate Sarah Davis said. . . .”

“Her coaches and directors all accommodate her. They know the rules. No games out the Sabbath. No rehearsals. No concerts. Not even state championships.”

Bridgette is the daughter of Rex and Patty Sexton, who pastor the Tacoma and Olympia, Washington, congregations.

**Family Weekend Held in Phoenix**

Brethren from several states gathered at a delightful Family Weekend on March 29 and 30, 2003. Sabbath services were held at the Phoenix East congregation’s meeting facility. Sermons by Randy Schreiber and Robert Dick were about communicating with our Heavenly Father and with Jesus Christ as our future “husband.” The combined Phoenix Choir sang very inspiring special music.

After services a variety of educational seminars were given on family-related topics varying from grief management to choosing a mate God’s way. A panel of members from the Northern Arizona congregation held an open informational forum about the “Growing Kids God’s Way” program they had just completed. That program has been recommended by area members who have participated in it.

Brethren met the next morning at the South Mountain Preserve State Park in Phoenix. In a gorgeous Sonoran Desert environment they enjoyed hiking, biking and a delicious pancake breakfast prepared by Phoenix brethren. After breakfast four more enlightening and uplifting seminars were held outdoors. Brethren heard advice on how to let go of emotional “baggage” and better relate to their spouses. The pastors presenting the various sessions were well prepared and inspiring, and it was enjoyable for all who attended.

What a blessing to be able to gather and remind ourselves of the importance of the family!

Denise Dix and Helen Braman

**Bismarck High School Senior Receives Director’s Award**

At the last performance of the Mandan High School Concert Choir on May 18, 2003, 18-year-old senior Brandon Schulz, who attends the Bismarck, North Dakota, congregation, was presented with the Director’s Award by choir director Keri Hess. This award is given to one choir student at the end of each year.

For Brandon the award was extra special because it had never been given to anyone before for the reasons it was awarded to him. Brandon was chosen to be the recipient of the award because he went above and beyond what was required to participate in choir. Specifically, he received the award due to his diligence in adhering to his religious beliefs and the fine example he set for his fellow classmates in choir during his four years at the high school.

Barb Schulz, Brandon’s mother and longtime member of God’s Church, said that she was speechless and that seeing Brandon receive the award was a “very moving experience.” Through the years it has been challenging to rear children in God’s way. It’s not easy for youth in God’s Church to be different. Something like this makes it all worthwhile; that kind of recognition is rare.”

The choir director, Keri Hess, stated, “I have the utmost respect for Brandon and the sacrifice he made. He held onto his religious beliefs and did . . . not infringe on anyone else’s beliefs.”

Ms. Hess was impressed with Brandon’s dedication to the choir despite his religious beliefs, which prevented him from singing Christmas and other seasonal songs. He acknowledged the way things were and accepted them.

“Due to the way he acts, everyone respects him for it. They don’t think it’s a weird way to live; and it’s not. It is just a way to live your life. Kids were standing up for Brandon, too. Other kids respected him, too.” Ms. Hess concluded, “I could talk for a long time about Brandon because I just like him so much.”

Pam Redline

**Dallas Seniors’ Luncheon: Blast From the Past and Present**

Our much anticipated Dallas Seniors’ Luncheon was held on Sabbath, April 12, in the Fellowship Hall of Unity Church where we meet for services. A first for the now combined Dallas North and South churches, the theme was Dallas Teens’ Big Band Sounds! Most of our teens joined our older members to enjoy a fine catered meal. Teens arrived early to be ready to pin flowers on all our honored brethren. The rest of the teens greeted our seniors and escorted them to their tables.

Our pastor, Doug Horchak, offered a hearty welcome to our seniors and provided introductory remarks to get the luncheon off to a rousing start. After a prayer of blessing on the meal, teens at each table provided each of our seniors with a delightful plate of Italian food and drink.

During the luncheon everyone enjoyed decorations and memorable big band sounds of the ‘40s. After dinner we were all treated to lovely musical presentations from several of our teens: Katie Collins, Becky Horchak, Chelsea Glasgow, Amanda Richards, Emily Sandlinands and Amber Benedict (photos by John Lunk)

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Amanda Hendee and Colby Vaughn escort Sarah Prado at the Dallas Seniors’ Luncheon; above, two of the performers, Katie Collins and Amber Benedict (photos by John Lunk)

**Beloit Honors Gary and Gale Black**

The Beloit, Wisconsin, congregation gave a surprise tea in honor of Gary and Gale Black being hired into the full-time ministry following Sabbath services on May 24. Mr. Black has also been named as the new pastor of the St. Paul, Minnesota, and Eau Claire, Wisconsin, congregations. Their transfer will take place later in the summer. Their official hire date was June 1.

It is a wonderful opportunity for the Blacks and their three daughters, Kristen, Kelsey and Kaitlyn, but the Beloit and Wisconsin Dells congregations are going to miss them very much. Following their graduation from Ambassador College in 1988, the Blacks have been strong pillars of faith and service in the local area.

Taped congratulatory telephone messages were played during the tea.

Gary and Gale Black, and their children Kristen, Kaitlyn and Kelsey, were surprised with a tea in their honor by the Beloit congregation.
Engelbart, Louise Winant and Wayne Carpenter. John Lusk moderated as they answered many questions from the teens about their own lives as teenagers, the lessons learned growing to adulthood and the influence of God’s way throughout the years. We feel it was very educational and informative for our teens, and an opportunity to share years of experience with them even in such a short time.

After concluding remarks by Mr. Horchak and a list of thanks to many who helped make this a fine luncheon, another Dallas teen, Amanda Hendee, sang a final song and everyone was dismissed for our regular Sabbath service. Thanks again to all our teens and to these brethren who helped make our Senior Luncheon a success: Rick and Diane Bennis, Kris Brooks, J.J. Brooks, John Bynum, Justin Glasgow, Dora Jennings, Matthew Jennings, D.J. Pala cios and David Treybig.

**May Family Weekend Held in Twin Cities**

On May 17 and 18 the Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, congregations hosted the annual Family Weekend in St. Paul. More than 300 people, including families from across the region, joined together for fun, fellowship and learning. The theme for the weekend was “Unsinkable Faith” and focused on strengthening the faith of all ages.

On Sabbath, Steve Myers delivered a young adults Bible study in the morning. Guest speaker and UCGA president Roy Holladay spoke at services. Following services, Arnold Mendez gave two presentations on Noah’s ark and early man. Saturday evening the teenagers and young adults attended a dinner and prom. Others stayed at the St. Paul church hall for a potluck dinner and games.

On Sunday a midday picnic was held at Kaposis Park. Everyone had a great time enjoying several activities, including softball, football, eating, singing and just plain old talking.

Mr. Salcedo also was the honored recipient of the Administrator of the Year Award on June 10 at the Santa Ana Unified School District Board meeting. The award winner is chosen annually by the SASAA (Santa Ana School Administrators Association) members.

**Australian Regional Youth Weekend Includes Dance and Car Rally**

On the Labour Day long weekend, the Brisbane, Queensland, congregation hosted a Regional Youth Weekend for young adults in Brisbane and surrounding areas.

The weekend started out on Saturday morning with a youth Bible study by Stephen Clark. The study highlighted the similarities in Daniel’s and Joseph’s experiences to that of youth today. We discussed how both Daniel and Joseph were placed in foreign cultures, and needed to prove and maintain their commitment to God in a society that did not embrace God’s way of life. Their demonstrated commitment and faith provides an example for us today.

Following a light lunch, regular church services were held—again with a youth-focused theme. David Maczek gave the sermonette, which highlighted the importance of improving our character through ensuring that we have the right attitude. We then heard from Mr. Clark again, who spoke on the importance of family life in society and the impact that our family relationships have on the overall condition and state of the world in which we live.

After services, a potluck dinner was held prior to a bush dance that was enjoyed by the young and young-at-heart. The musical talent of the band for the evening—Crossfire—was much appreciated by all and provided the boot-scooting rhythms for the dancing throughout the night!

The highlight of the weekend was on Sunday morning with the commencement of the car rally. After weeks of announcing the big event, we were all rather curious to see how the day proceeded and, of course, whether we would be successful in the quest to complete the clues with the minimum amount of assistance. The rally was held throughout the suburbs of Brisbane, taking about three and a half hours to complete. Cryptic clues—provided by Evan Ware and Russell Barnett—were given for each mystery venue and points allocated depending on the amount of help needed to successfully establish the destination. After much deliberation over adding up the score, our successful car was the Maczek family finishing with the least amount of points.

The car rally finished in the Mt. Coot-tha parklands, where a BBQ and games were held.

**“Elvis” Appears at Eureka Variety Show**

After Sabbath services March 29, the Eureka, California, congregation enjoyed a delicious potluck meal and in the evening we experienced our 12th annual variety show. There was quite a variety of acts, including singing, lip-sync, knock-knock jokes, songs by our local “Elvis” (pastor Wayne Dunlap), a skit titled “Amazing Ants,” accordion music played by Vern Maugh ey, etc.

There were participants of various ages. The youngest was 22-month-old Sarah Goodrich, who can talk like the animals. The most hilarious act was the appearance of the “Soggy-­Bottom Boys” from the movie “O Brother, Where Art Thou?” (played by our own Jerry Bilyeu and sons), which kept us all in stitches! But all was

**Baptisms in Roanoke, Virginia**

In January 1996, a number of members living in Virginia and Jim Haeffle, now a pastor in North Carolina, formed the Roanoke congregation of the United Church of God. Seven years later, just prior to Passover this year, we had our first baptisms. The four people baptized were Bob Born, Robert Worsham, Norma and Roy Holladay and Gary and Barbara Antion who celebrated their 40th anniversaries in June and were honored by the home office staff.

Matthew Fenchel did the honors of presenting each couple with a dozen beautiful yellow roses from the staff and ABC students.

What is the glue that has held their marriages together? Mr. Antion said, “I would say having God in our lives is the number one factor. Besides that, great factor is safe communication—knowing you can talk to each other about anything and receive understanding. Finally, truly enjoying being with each other. When you spend virtually 24 hours a day together when becoming a pastor without an assistant, you’d better like being with each other. Sharing fun occasions helps us enjoy being with one another.”

Mr. Holladay said, “That is not an easy question to answer—certainly not in one sentence. I would say love, respect and appreciation of one another are part of that glue. We have tried to not just love the spiritual side and have continued to date and court during all those years. God’s Spirit and God’s laws governing our marriage helped immensely. It helps to build a marriage on the right foundation to start with and then use the proper building materials after that.”

Terry Edington and Lisa Fenchel worked to put this activity together.

**Home Office Staff Celebrates Two 40th Anniversaries**

On June 23 the home office staff honored two couples with cake and punch for their 40th wedding anniversaries. Roy and Norma Holladay and Gary and Barbara Antion celebrated their 40th wedding anniversaries in June.

**Minneapolis**

Minneapolis elder Lonnie Gjesvold pitching at the picnic May 18 (photo by Pete McNair)

**Australian**

A senior panel of Tina Engelbart, Louise Winant and Wayne Carpenter, with moderator John Lusk, fielded questions from teens in Dallas; above, John Holmes enjoys his meal compliments of Justin Sandilands.

**Principal Receives Awards**

Dan Salcedo, principal of Santa Ana High School, Santa Ana, California, and an elder in the Garden Grove congregation, was the recipient of the Vision of Excellence award presented by Project Tomorrow. Project Tomorrow annually recognizes outstanding efforts and accomplishments in the field of science. The event was held at the Beckman Center on the campus of University of California, Irvine, on the evening of May 3.

According to the Project Tomorrow Web site, “Awards were based on outstanding instructional leadership, focus on student learning, evidence of a collaborative professional learning ability to engage the community... Mr. Salcedo... was honored with a letter from the Governor and a $5,000 check.”

Santa Ana High School, with 4,000 students and 200 certified staff members, has the highest enrollment of any school in Orange County.

Al Mijares, superintendent of the Santa Ana school district, wrote: “Dan Salcedo represents the highest ideals of school leadership. He richly deserves the recognition and accolades for his excellence, enthusiasm and love for students, parents and staff. Dan consistently demonstrates that ‘high expectations bring high performance.’ Additionally, he continues to display the highest degree of character and integrity.”

**Eureka**

Brisbane, Australia, hosts a youth weekend including a barbecue and car rally.

**Robert Worsham**

Bob Born, Robert Worsham and Kirk and Jenny Spitzer II were baptized by Don Shaw and John Foster.

Kirk Spitzer II and his wife, Jenny (Ears) Spitzer. Don Shaw, elder, and John Foster, pastor, conducted the baptisms.

**John Lusk**

**Wendy Lister**

**Janet Treadway**

**Kandy K. Goodrich**

**John Foster**
Announcements

Births

Makana Kay Stores

Rich and Rachel (Veling) Averett of Dallas, Texas, are very proud and very blessed to announce the birth of Hallie Elizabeth Averett. Hallie and Micah were born on Feb. 3, 2003, at 6:33 p.m. and 6:37 p.m., respectively. Hallie weighed 6 pounds and was 18 inches long. Micah weighed 5 pounds 9 ounces and was also 18 inches long. Big brother, Ethan James, is really happy to have a brother and a sister both at the same time! Hallie and Micah are the second and third grandchildren for proud grandparents, Richard and Nancy Veling of the Dallas congregation, and the sixth and seventh grandchildren for proud grandparents Jim and Jannette Averett of Greensboro, North Carolina.

Abraham and Cathy Stores of Portland, Oregon, are pleased to announce the birth of their first child, Makana Kay Stores. Makana was born on April 9, 2003. She weighed 7 pounds 8 ounces and was 19 inches long. This precious gift from God is welcomed by the Portland East congregation and proud grandparents.

Engagements


Weddings

Mr. and Mrs. George T. Allen Jr. of Springville, Alabama, and Mr. and Mrs. Dan Summy of Mingo Junction, Ohio, are very pleased to announce the marriage of their children Rachel Caroline Allen and Michael David Summy. The wedding took place on July 28, 2002, at the Historic Carriage Room and Courtyard in Springville, and was officiated by Bruce Gore. The bridesmaids were Sarah Allen and Melanie Yates. The groomsmen were Scott Summy and Fred McDougle. A dinner and dance reception followed the ceremony. The couple resides in Springville and attends the Gadsden, Alabama, congregation.

Mr. and Mrs. George T. Allen Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. Steve M. Hicks Sr. of Springville, Alabama, are very pleased to announce the marriage of their children Sarah Letitia Allen and William Vernon Hicks. The wedding took place on Aug. 25, 2002, at Matthews Manor in Springville, and was officiated by Bruce Gore. The bridesmaids were Rachel Summy, Melanie Yates, Andrea Shipman, Whitney Satterfield and Cindy Gore. The flower girl was Sydney Burton. The groomsmen were Steve M. Hicks Jr., Isaac Shultz, George T. Allen III, Gabriel Satterfield and Michael Summy. A reception and dance followed the ceremony. The couple resides in Springville and attends the Gadsden, Alabama, congregation.

Raymond Blank and Vivian Smyda exchanged vows on May 24, 2003. The ceremony was held in Cedar Hill, Texas, in the home of James and Linda Smyda. The couple will reside in Biloxi, Mississippi.

John and Winifred Kieviet, deacon and deaconess in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, congregation, celebrated their 50th anniversary on May 22, 2003. They were surprised on May 10 with a party given by their children: Bruce and Debbie Kieviet of Cincinnati, Ohio; Cindy and Fred Slikkers of Michigan; and two grandchildren, Angela and Robert Whittaker of Cincinnati. On May 30 they were surprised on May 10 with a party given by their children: Bruce and Debbie Kieviet of Cincinnati, Ohio; Cindy and Fred Slikkers of Michigan; and two grandchildren, Angela and Robert Whittaker of Cincinnati. On May 30 they were surprised on May 10 with a party given by their children: Bruce and Debbie Kieviet of Cincinnati, Ohio; Cindy and Fred Slikkers of Michigan; and two grandchildren, Angela and Robert Whittaker of Cincinnati.

Baptisms

Barbara Dean Catoe, 70, of the Kingsport, Tennessee, congregation, died May 18, 2003. Mrs. Catoe is survived by her husband, Harvie; three daughters, Jenny Lynn Morgan, Karen D. Lodden and Sonia Paulette Catoe; one son, Allen Russell Catoe; five grandchildren; and one great-granddaughter. She was preceded in death by her mother, Louise P. Wallace, and a brother, Jimmy Wallace. A memorial service was conducted May 23 by David Dobson.

Barbara Dean Catoe

Sarah Rynerson died at home on Jan. 12, 2003. She was born Sept. 23, 1914, in Georgia. She was one of six children and was home schooled at an early age. After serving in Chicago area schools for many years, Ken and Barbara relocated to the Atlanta area in 2001, where they were living at the time of his death after a long illness.

Kenneth Edward Ellis

Rudolph V. (Rudy) Anderson, 98, passed away May 3, 2003, in Spring Hill, Florida, after a brief illness. He was born March 7, 1905, on a farm in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. His parents and grandparents migrated there from Sweden during World War II. After the war ended, he met John Rynerson through being a POW in the Pacific theater. They were married Jan. 6, 1946. In 1965 they came in contact with the Church of God and attended in various congregations in Indiana, Tennessee, Alabama, Arizona and Utah.

She is survived by her husband, John; children, John III and Willis; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Kenneth Edward Ellis died May 2, 2003. He was born July 26, 1933, in Chicago, Illinois, the eldest of seven boys. After working his way through college with a teaching degree, he married Barbara Lynn and they soon moved to Puerto Rico, where Ken was assigned to teach trainees for the Army.

Daughters Barbara Lynn, Elizabeth Karen and Becky Alesia were born between 1957 and 1962. In 1964 the family moved to Pasadena, California, where Ken was offered a position at Imperial Schools. In 1972 a son, Christopher, was born.

After serving in Chicago area schools for many years, Ken and Barbara relocated to the Atlanta area in 2001, where they were living at the time of his death after a long illness.

Ken was an educator with a master’s degree in natural science from the University of Idaho, and was credentialed for public safety and driver education, which he taught at Imperial High, along with biology. His interests included fishing, camping, water sports, watching football and baseball, reading and sharing his love of learning with his children and six grandchildren.

A 42-year member of God’s Church, baptized in 1960, his faith was strengthened over the years. Married to his college sweetheart for 47 years, he was dearly loved by his family, friends and thousands of his students.

Rudolph V. (Rudy) Anderson
Tribute: Werner W. Krebs

Werner W. Krebs, 74, a longtime elder in God’s Church, died unexpectedly of natural causes on May 23, 2003, in his home in Crestview Hills, Kentucky, just south of Cincinnati. He was born on Nov. 3, 1928, in Cincinnati, Ohio, the firstborn son of German immigrant parents. He grew up working in his father’s bakeries in Cincinnati. He graduated from Walnut Hills High School in 1946, and entered the University of Cincinnati’s College of Engineering in the fall of that year.

Werner met Emily Gilberg of St. Mary’s, Ohio, on a blind date in Dayton, Ohio, and they were married on Dec. 17, 1949, in St. Mary’s. Werner graduated from the University of Cincinnati with an electrical engineering degree in 1951 and went on to head the engineering departments of several companies over his career.

After 40 years of engineering work, Werner returned to the University of Cincinnati in 1978, spending two years helping to establish six faculty positions in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. He married Emily in 1981.

Werner, Emily and their sons began attending services in the Church of God in July of 1967. He was ordained an elder in the spring of 1973. Werner had been a faithful servant to God and to the church for 30 years. His service was greatly appreciated, and he will be sorely missed by his family and friends.

Werner is survived by his wife, Emily; their two sons, Greg and Ken; a brother, Ralph; a sister, Elsie; and five nieces and nephews.

Werner Krebs

Tribute: Ray Francis Bloom

Ray Francis Bloom, 72, an elder serving the Bowling Green, Kentucky, congregation, died at home June 14, 2003. He returned home from the General Conference of Elders in Cincinnati May 5 and suffered a massive stroke May 13, sending him to the hospital where he suffered a second stroke. He remained in the hospital 26 days, after which he was sent home to die. He remained 11 days at home.

Ray was born Feb. 4, 1931, in Connellsville, Pennsylvania, one of 11 children. He is survived by his wife, Patty; three children by his first wife, Kay; and two stepchildren: Jonathon Jett and his wife, Linda; and Gina McClady and her husband, Rick. Ray also leaves seven grandchildren.

On the Sabbath of June 21, Bowling Green pastor Fred Kellers and elder Stuart Martin conducted a memorial honoring Ray. Gary Evans, a longtime friend and elder in Portsmouth, Ohio, conducted Ray’s graveside service in Chillicothe, Ohio, June 28.

Ray traveled extensively during the 18 1/2 years of his Air Force career. At the time God called him, Ray was a year and a half from retirement and chose a discharge as conscientious objector to answer God’s calling. He had begun his education while in the military, receiving his bachelor’s degree from the University of Omaha in 1964. His master’s degree in special education was achieved in 1974 from Ohio University. He retired as education supervisor of Pike County, Ohio, in 1995.

Ray began attending the Church of God in 1966 in California. He was baptized Aug. 13, 1966. He was ordained a deacon in April 1984 and an elder May 26, 1985. Ray attended church in Pennsylvania from 1966 to 1972. In 1972 he moved to Ohio and served there until 1995. From then until his death he served the Nashville, Tennessee, and Bowling Green congregations, prior to Sabbath services.

Ray dedicated his life to God and to the congregations he served. He deeply loved and cared for his brothers and sisters in Christ. He will be greatly missed by family and the many friends who truly loved him.

Ray took very seriously the admonition to follow God diligently and carefully. He was steadfast to the truth once delivered and remained true to the end. He died in the faith and now awaits the resurrection.

Ray Francis Bloom

Bible Reading Program

My wife and I would like to thank you and your team for the superb effort you are putting into producing the BRP. We attended the first year of ABC and found that an eye-opening and excellent year to say the least, and we still carry very, very fond memories of the experience and learning that we took back to Australia.

But both Sue and I are so grateful for the information and conclusions and lessons that you and your team tease out of the Scriptures. We have extensive notes from ABC in our Bibles, but your BRP “fills in the gaps” and goes on from where ABC was. It is not as though ABC didn’t complete the picture, but that the BRP adds to the picture and the two are so complementary.

Sue and I sit down most mornings and work through the BRP for quite a while before breakfast. We find it almost compulsive reading and, like a good book, can hardly wait to get to the next section.

Please express our gratitude to your team and yourself for putting together such a fine publication that is jam packed with gems of information and lessons.

United Church of God, an International Association

Wife of a Clergyman Writes

Thank you for the subscription to The Good News and the pamphlets: Time of the End, The United States and Britain and The Book of Revelation Unveiled.

I can’t begin to tell you how much I have appreciated reading these and the information that they gave to me. I was the wife of a clergyman for 35 years, until his death, and have never read and learned what I received from these commentaries. I had found a copy of the Good News magazine in a beauty shop and then sent in the enclosed card.

I would appreciate receiving a copy of the literature listed in the enclosed order blank and also the Bible Study Course.

I am enclosing a small gift. Thank you and may God bless you as you continue to serve Him and His Kingdom.

Illinois

“Your Magazine Is Our Church!”

Many, many thanks for a lovely informative magazine. I also thank you for allowing us to receive it free of charge and with no pressure for a donation.

We are on a disability pension and find it hard to go to church, so your magazine is our church. We have so much faith and we thank God every day for what he has given us: our eyesight, food, water, children, etc. Even when things get really tough and I pray to God, not long after my prayers are answered, and it’s not luck, it’s faith.

Thank you, and God bless all involved in the magazine. Also thank you to those who do send in donations to allow this magazine to be printed and sent to people like us who can’t afford it and otherwise would miss out on such a great magazine.

Australia (reprinted from United News Australia, April-June 2003)

Best He’s Read

Please accept this small contribution. I enjoy your magazine so much every two months. I’m 83 and so thankful to God for being blessed by Him. Your magazine is the best (very best) denominational publication I’ve ever read.

Louisiana

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.

United Church of God, an International Association

United News July 2003
Continued from page 2

some challenging problems that prompt-
ed us to take a look at the feasibility to
run an effective camp at Madge Saunders
this summer,” he wrote to applicants.

Gerald Seelig, United’s cash manager,
announced preliminary U.S. Pentecost
Holy Day offering information June 18.

The reported offering of $687,807.13 is
da 2.8 percent increase over last year. The
reported attendance of 12,105 is a 2.2
percent increase.

“Once the offerings that are mailed by
individuals who could not attend a con-
gregation are banked, this figure will
reach $700,000,” Mr. Seelig said.

At a Glance

news

What’s New on the Web?

On www.ucg.org

■ UCG Commentary on This Week’s
News
Weekly commentaries by the United
Church of God written on world news and
trends, from a biblical perspective. Read
these recent commentaries and more:
“Thero’s More Than a Crack on the Bell”
“What’s Behind the Troubling Rise in Anti-
Semitism?”
“What’s Behind the Rising European
Superstate?”
“America the Ugly?”
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 July Virtual Christian Magazine includes
“Archaeology in Acts, Part 1,” “One Nation
Under God?,” “You Are Free” and more.
www.ucg.org

On youthmagazine.org

■ The July-September Youth United has articles
on friendship, such as “The Most Powerful
Friend,” “Making Peace,” “Ending a Friendship,”
“A Special Friend,” careers, “News for Youth”
and the ever-popular Q&As.
youthmagazine.org

Please contact the respective pastors
for further details.

Gary Antion

New Ontario Site
Open to Transfers

Still unsure about where to go for the
Feast this fall? Horseshoe Valley Resort
has opened its doors to us. It is located
just north of Toronto, approximately a
1 1/2-hour drive from the Toronto airport.
Nestled among ski hills, it has much to
offer: golf, hiking, biking, tennis,
squash, in/outdoor swimming pools,
sauna, hot tub and horseback riding.
The resort has four restaurants and a
spa on site and even though it is in a qua-
et country setting, shopping is just min-
tutes away in Barrie or Orlinia.
To view the resort’s Web site, go to:
www.horseshoeroseort.com

ABC Sampler Set for Aug. 18 to 22 in Cincinnati

Have you ever wished you could attend
Ambassador so you could receive the bibli-
cal instruction offered there? Perhaps time
and costs were a factor. Now you may experience
time a taste of the Ambassador Bible Center pro-
gram and see why the Ambassador Bible students are so
enthusiastic about the school.

The fourth ABC Sampler seminar will be
held at the ABC Lecture Hall in the new
home office building in Cincinnati, Ohio,
Aug. 18 to 22. Gary Antion, Roy Holladay
and Ralph Levy will present material from
some of their classes—all for the low cost of
$50 per person.

Mr. Antion will bring instruction from Joel,
the “Pentecost Prophet,” and from the lead-
ing apostle of Christ’s day, Peter, in the book
of Peter. Mr. Holladay will bring material
from the Epistles of Paul—the book of Galat-
ians, which contains many seemingly diffi-
cult sections regarding justification and the
law. Dr. Levy will present the book of Job and
the lessons that we may glean from it.

Sampler students are responsible for their
own housing and meals. There is reasonable
lodging in the vicinity.

To hold a seat, please send a letter of intent
in Cincinnati.

ABC Mini-Samplers
Announced

For the past several years, the United
Church of God has used “card pack”
print promotions to reach potential Good
News subscribers in the United States. Through
this inexpensive yet effective advertising
method, our insert cards, along with pro-
motional materials from other advertis-
ers, are bundled in cellphone packages
and mailed to individual households.

This budget year (July 1, 2003, to
June 30, 2004), card packs are again cen-
tral to our print advertising efforts. Using
the services of four commercial pub-
lishe,s over 3.7 million GN insert will be
produced. Our inserts, which cost less
then 2 cents each to print and distribute,
will feature a photo of a lion and a lamb
and asks the question: “Looking for Some
Good News?” This year we expect to add over 27,000 new sub-
scribers at under $2 each.

John LaBissoniere

Ambassador Bible Center Mini-
Samplers are being planned for the fol-
lowing areas:
• Sept. 6-7 in Cambridge, Ohio (instructors Ralph Levy
and Matthew Fenchel).
• Sept. 13-14 in Boston, Massachusetts (Gary Antion
and Don Ward).
• Nov. 15-16 in Seattle, Washington (Mr. Antion and Roy Holladay).
• Nov. 15-16 in Jefferson City, Mis-
souri (Dr. Levy and Melvin Rhodes).

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Please contact the respective pastors
for further details.

Gary Antion

Women’s Twin
Cities Conference
Set for Nov. 2

“Fulfilling Your Life With Joy” is the
theme for a women’s conference sched-
uled for Nov. 2, 2003. Discussions will
focus on growing the fruit of joy in our
lives. The day will feature the keynote
speaker, Tanya Horchak; a lively sym-
posium, delicious luncheon and several
break-out sessions. It will be held in the
beautiful Radisson Hotel located in Ply-
mouth, Minnesota. For more details,
please contact Colene Erickson at (651)
714-4054 or cerickson@visi.com.

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