New Booklet to Be Distributed at Feast

We’ve recently completed a new booklet, Preaching the Gospel, Preparing a People: This Is the United Church of God, which we plan to distribute at the Feast.

This booklet discusses the mission and purpose of the United Church of God and its connection to the early New Testament Church described in the Book of Acts. Laid out in a magazine format with lots of pictures, this booklet will make a nice informational piece to send to the many Good News subscribers who write in wanting to know more about us.

We are printing enough copies for every household to receive two or three copies, one for themselves and an extra copy or two for friends, relatives or anyone else interested in the Church.

The booklet will be distributed at U.S. and Canadian Feast sites. Those in other countries will receive their copies after the Feast. Those not able to attend the Feast or traveling to international locations will make a nice informational piece of the United Church of God, an International Association.

Ministerial Services Gives Year-End Statistics

Ministerial Services released the following fiscal year-end (July 1, 2001, to June 30, 2002) statistics.

Presently there are 221 congregations in the United States, served by 359 elders of whom 92 are full-time pastors. High attendance is found on the Holy Days (outside of the Feast of Tabernacles). The average for the Holy Days was 12,911 members, families and guests. This is a 5.4 percent increase over last year.

During this past year there were 225 baptisms in the United States. Additionally, 1,118 literature recipients (with no prior Sabbath church connection) requested contact with the local pastor. Many had little or no background. In general, they were and are very new to the faith and therefore find it hard to commit to attending regularly as yet.

During this time, 1,592 Sabbatarians have contacted either the home office or a local pastor. Some are serious inquiries and others are only curious.

Media and Communications Services recently offered 1,872 Bible Study Course graduates the opportunity to have greater contact with the Church through a four-point offer. It includes: 1) a free subscription to World News and Prophecy, 2) regular audiocassettes from a congregation near them, 3) contact from one of our pastors and 4) the address of the pastor and congregation nearest them.

Approximately 33.3 percent, or 624, responded to at least one of the four choices. Many chose to seek pastoral or church involvement. Again, this was another method by which people are making headway toward the Church.

The current distribution of pastors within U.S. congregational circuits is as follows:

• 14 pastors have one congregation.
• 37 pastors have two congregations.
• 34 pastors have three congregations.
• 5 pastors have four congregations.
• 2 pastors have five congregations.

This year the Church will again hold the Feast of Tabernacles at 11 U.S. sites. Ministerial Services wishes everyone a very happy Feast.

Richard Pinelli

First Leadership Workshop Held

A Leadership Workshop was held at the home office as part of the Ministerial/Pastoral Candidate Program. From Aug. 29 to Sept. 2, 18 invited couples from around the United States heard from more than a dozen speakers about ways to better serve others.

Camps Chalk Up Successful Summer

Summer has raced by and with it another successful season of the United Youth Camps. Camp directors have unanimously echoed the sentiment that God has once again blessed us with His protection and favor.

About 300 campers and 340 staff members (including 90 ministers and wives) met in seven locations across the United States to enjoy and benefit from the “Zones.” (There were several international camps as well, and a winter camp is scheduled for Wisconsin in December.)

Camp helps young people model behavior that reflects godly values and helps them relate to the future when God’s government will bring peace and safety to the entire planet.

Greg Sargent, director of Camp Pinecrest, observed, “Each year camp runs more smoothly. On the physical level, I attribute this to the experience of staff that not only serves at Pinecrest but also at other camps. Of course, God’s unseen hand brings us good weather, guards us in the front and in back and an unseen hand brings us good weather, guards us in the front and in back and in the rear, [and] is at the forefront of all our success.”

Ken Treybig, director of Camp Carter, mentioned, “Everything was very uplifting.

Council Reviews Last Year and Looks Ahead

The Council of Elders began its latest round of meetings Aug. 5 with a series of fiscal year-end reports and operation managers’ projections for the next two years.

Gary Antion, as chairman of the Roles, Rules and Ethics committee, read the Council Code of Ethics, as required for the first face-to-face Council meeting of the fiscal year.

President's Report

Council Chairman Clyde Kilough introduced Roy Holladay, the Church’s president, for his report.

Mr. Holladay first described some of the routine of the office staff, including a weekly Monday morning staff meeting, which he opens with prayer and a short “Compass Check” — a reminder of the direction the home office staff is striving to follow. He commented that his remarks to the staff this morning involved stressing that the Council has the oversight of the Church; that the home office staff receives its “marching orders” from the Council of Elders, and then carries out the policies, procedures and plans for the work of the Church.

He organized his report into two basic sections — a summary of issues facing the Church right now, and an explanation of how he is working to carry out the mandates given him in his role as president by the Council and the General Conference of Elders.

The summary of current issues and newsworthy items included:

• The loan for the home office building has been finalized and signed. The Church borrowed $1.6 million (as part of a total outlay of just over $2.65 million, including the price of the land) for 15 years, at an interest rate of 6.1 percent. This was considerably better than the 8.2 percent first envisioned nearly 15 years, at an interest rate of 6.1 percent. This was considerably better than the 8.2 percent first envisioned nearly two years ago, due to interest rate reductions in the industry. The balance of the cost has been paid for from current operating funds.
• The possible assumption of oversight for the work of the Church in Kenya by the South African region, since the arrival of Bill and Cheryl Jahns to serve the churches there.
• Dave Baker, upstate New York pastor who has been serving in the home office staff that not only serves at Pinecrest but also at other camps. Of course, God’s unseen hand brings us good weather, guards us in the front and in back and in the rear, [and] is at the forefront of all our success.”

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Council of Elders Heats Updates and Projections for Growth

Continued from page 1

working with Kenya, could then shift some of his energies further east to parts of Southeast Asia, including helping in the Philippines.

• The operation in the Philippines, where some of the original Australian Council chairman Bill Eddington, Church legal counsel Larry Darden, Council member Bob Dick and Mr. Baker, will be simplified by a review of the ministry's practice.

Fijian elders Ed Macaere and Francisco Siopan were instrumental in requesting assistance in this matter, having discussed it at length with Mr. Kilough.

• The United Youth Camp in Oregon (Camp Davidson) started on schedule Sunday, Aug. 4. The forest fires burning only two miles away made 100 percent completion impossible.

• Mr. Holladay shared his thoughts on how to keep the Council posted on administrative operations. The dilemma, as he sees it, is whether to share a great deal of information on the thinking stages or wait a little longer until plans have been further fleshed out. He leans towards sharing material earlier in the process, asking for the Council's understanding that some issues may be in very early and rather rough stages of development.

In that light, he had a few thoughts to pass on.

• The concept of the Church's forming a foundation, similar to the LifeNets organizational structure, to assist its members who are in need. Is there a way that some foundation could be set up to work closely with LifeNets?

• Further exploring contact with other Sabbatarian groups.

• Facing directly one of the key issues confronting the Church right now—the aging ministry. Within 10 years, 39 of our 91 pastors (in the United States) will be at least age 65; 25 of them will be at least 70. That requires hiring at least four new pastors every year for the next ten years just to try to "hold our own." But replacing an active pastor usually means retiring another man, which also bears a cost. In general terms, between hiring and equipping a new pastor to serve, and shifting his predecessor, the Church can be facing an annual cost of $100,000 for each such replacement (total costs involved for both men). What about financing health care for retirees? Or for the widows of pastors? Current programs can always be reexamined. The Ministerial Candidate program is a good start, but it is just a start.

• What about the Eli Lily grant we are going to be using? This is done in stages. If it is turned down (we will keep on about how we will fund these programs? There are several of our pastors wearing so many "other hats" that they don't have enough time or energy left to pastor. How can we share the workloads more equitably?

• The membership is also aging. What impact will this have on church operations?

• How can we continue to help our youth see the value of following God's ways daily? How can they grow in the knowledge of the faith?

There is much to consider! Mr. Holladay then had a few suggestions that would be a basis for ongoing discussions.

"Continue to promote, evaluate and improve the Christ-centered Servant Leadership (CSL) Program throughout the Church."

This is ongoing, including meetings with home office staff, discussions of the management team and continued work by the CSL task force. Mr. Kilough will make a presentation to the attendees at the Ministerial Candidate program in August; and a combined meeting in December of the Council, regional pastors and home office staff will cover further information, in preparation for further development plans for the ministry and membership.

"Work with the Council, Media/Communications Committee and the Media operation manager to:

a) Implement the Internet resolution. b) Develop a plan for utilizing broadcast media. c) Evaluate the effectiveness of press print media, including GCN circulation, booklets and subscriber development.

The search for a full-time Web site manager continues. The Tomorrow television program now has a team of reviewers and review process in place; further promotion of its use is planned. Research into the possibility of TV ads continues along with web-based offers.

An evaluation process to gauge the effectiveness of print media is planned by July 2003.

"Work with the Council, the Education/Ministries Committee and the Ministerial Services operation manager to develop and execute ministry policy regarding:

a) Transitioning ministers from full-time to part-time. b) The spiritual growth of the brethren/care of the congregations. c) The development of new pastoral/elders. d) Various educational outreach and the brethren. e) Improving the effectiveness of the ministry."

The Ministerial Candidate program is underway to fulfill many of these aspects of the mandate. We will be in October, whether we will receive funds from the Lilly Foundation for our Pastoral Excellence Program. If we do, the program would be implemented in January 2003. If not, implementation would begin in July 2003.

"Promote unity within the Church, ministry and home office." Progress includes emphasis on the CSL (see above) but focus of this is on the unity of the Council focusing on the Council for leadership and regular meetings with the staff and management team (including the weekly prayer and "Compass Check" discussed earlier) would continue on harmonizing all efforts, local and central, in doing the work of the Church.

"Build the image of the Church with the general public." Brainstorming with the Council is needed to establish where we go with the concept of public affairs.

"Develop assessment tools for analyzing the effectiveness and efficiency of all Church projects, programs and personnel."

Target date to have this in place: July 2003.

"Continue a regular presidential letter regarding the accomplishments of UCGIA." This operates now, with a letter from the chairman of the Council one week before the president of the next week and the home office update the third week.

"Give a quarterly report and analysis on the state of the Church (to the Council)." This done at all face-to-face meetings of the Council.

Operation Report—Treasurer

Tom Kirkpatrick presented an overview of the Church’s finances verbally, with much more detail in print for the Council. In general terms, allowing for the costs of home office construction to be included in the Fiscal year ended June 30, 2002, with an excess of income over expenses to the tune of approximately $611,000. This amount was used as part of the down payment on the new home office. Expenses were 1.8 percent over budget, but income was 5.4 percent over the budget of $17 million. In the first five weeks of the new fiscal year, income is up nearly seven percent over the comparable period last year.

What of the future? Mr. Holladay explained to the Council what he had asked each of the operation managers to do present to the Council in their vision of a proposed budget for the next fiscal year (July 1, 2003, to June 30, 2004) for their respective areas. Then he asked them to include a "wish list" of projects—what they would like to do if funds were available. All projections, of course, needed to be accompanied with cost estimates.

This way the Council can see what can be advanced in view of its February 2003 deadline what might be accomplished in a new budget year. Its members can then discuss projects with the various operation managers, make suggestions and fine-tune the various "wish lists" before the deadline for presentation of a budget to the See “Council,” page 11

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United News (ISSN 1088-8020) is published monthly except April and October by the United Church of God, an International Association, 555 Techcenter Drive, Mifflin, OH 44519. © 2002 United Church of God, an International Association. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited. Periodical Postal Paba paid at Mifflin, Ohio 44519, and at additional mailing offices. Canada Post publications mail agreement number 1487167.

Editor: Peter W. Eddington Managing editor: Mike Bennett Copy editor: Becky Bennett

UCGIA Council of Elders: Gary Anton, Aaron Robert, Dick Jim, Frank Doug, Horshak, Steve Wood was ordained as a local elder on Aug. 24. He and his wife, Ramona, serve in the Ruston, Louisiana, area.

125,000 Special Issues Being Printed

We have updated and sent off for printing The Good News Special Issue. This is a special issue of The Good News that we send to new subscribers as their first issue. By having these in stock, we are able to get a copy to new subscribers right away rather than wait for them until we get the next regular issue of The Good News, which could take up to two months.

This issue has been updated with a new layout and several new articles and ads. We are printing 100,000 copies for new subscribers and 25,000 as gift copies. We have been printing The Good News Special Issue for several years. For the first time, we will be printing this issue in color.

See “News at a Glance,” page 16

Two Minsters HIred

Two elders, Andy Burnett and Joe Horshak, were recently hired into the full-time ministry in the United States. Mr. Burnett and his wife, Lisa, will continue training in the Roseburg, Oregon, area before being reassigned. Mr. Horshak and his wife, Jacqueline, have been transferred from the Loma Linda, California, area, to Columbus, Ohio.

Both couples also participated in the Leadership Workshop as part of the Ministerial/Pastoral Candidate Program.
Meeting Brethren Around the World, Literally

by Joel Meeker

My wife, Marjolaine, and I had the opportunity this summer to visit brethren on three continents during a two-month trip that took us literally around the world.

Originally we were to visit only our brethren in French Europe, the French-speaking island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean, and South Africa. However when I began looking at airfares, around-the-world tickets were quite a bit less expensive than simple round-trip tickets would have been.

After consultation with then-President Les McCullough, we were able to arrange a visit to our brethren in the Philippines, as well as a stop in Thailand to look in on a possible United Youth Corps international service project site, with the same ticket price.

Since this was going to be such a long trip, I exchanged over a third of a million frequent flyer miles that I've accumulated in past years so that our trip would be more affordable.

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For instance, the flight to Hong Kong before our flight to Manila so decided to take the airport train into the city to have a look. It's only a 20-minute ride into Hong Kong Central. It is striking to see so many skyscrapers bunched together in such a small space. We took the famous Star ferry across to Kowloon, and had a brief look around there as well.

Seminars in the Philippines

The flight to Manila went smoothly.

The Jorge de Campos family kindly met us at the airport and drove us to the hotel where we would stay, which is also the location of the hall used for services. We were all quite exhausted by then since we had been moving for around 30 hours with only about four hours sleep.

Church members Evelyn Soriano and Joy Belga kindly came to meet us around noon on Friday, July 19, to show us a few of the sites around Manila, including a visit to the U.S. military cemetery, the largest outside the United States. The remains of over 17,000 U.S. servicemen and women are buried in this cemetery, most of them having died during World War II. The names of over 36,000 more missing in action (or lost or buried at sea) are inscribed on the walls of the memorial.

The monsoon rains were in full force on the Sabbath, causing some Manila streets to turn into virtual rivers. We enjoyed attending services with the very warm Manila congregation where I had the opportunity to give the sermon. We enjoyed the chance to fellowship afterward with the approximately 50 members who were able to get through the water-filled streets to services.

We spent Sunday with the Evascos and other brethren who took us on a visit to Intramuros, the old Spanish walled city which is the heart of old Manila. Because of the monsoon, there was so much water in the streets that some were impassable.

Early Monday morning we flew to Bacolod on the island of Negros. Bacolod is the site of one of the three largest congregations in the Philippines.

We spent the afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Florante Siopan (pronounced like the French composer Chopin), the pastor of the Bacolod congregation (as well as the congregations on the island of Leyte).

That evening we were guests at a banquet hosted by brethren from the Bacolod congregation. We enjoyed
sharing the meal and making their acquaintance. I showed a PowerPoint presentation on the international structure of the United Church of God, as well as some of our brethren in various parts of Africa. Life in the Philippines, a developing country, is very challenging for many of our brethren. They were interested to learn about other challenges faced by their brethren in Africa.

Tuesday we flew on to Davao City on the island of Mindanao and were met by Ed Macaragen, the pastor of the Mindanao congregations, and his family. They explained to us that the Abu Sayaf danao congregations, and his family, were interested to learn about other challenges faced by their brethren in Africa.

On Thursday we arrived in Bangkok, Thailand, Friday afternoon. I had served on one of the Ambassador College projects in Thailand 20 years ago, but this was my first trip to Thailand since then. We spent four days in Chiang Mai, during which we had the chance to look in on a school that has been set up by a foundation called the Legacy Institute to teach the children of Sabbath-keeping members who live along the Thai-Burmese border and along the Burmese-Chinese border.

We wrapped up the last seminar session at noon on Thursday, and after a quick lunch headed to the airport for the continuation of our trip.

**Potential Youth Corps Project in Thailand**

We arrived in Bangkok, Thailand, Friday afternoon. I had served on one of the Ambassador College projects in Thailand 20 years ago, but this was my first visit to Thailand since then. We spent four days in Chiang Mai, during which we had the chance to look in on a school that has been set up by a foundation called the Legacy Institute to teach the children of Sabbath-keeping members who live along the Thai-Burmese border and along the Burmese-Chinese border.

The United Church of God–Philippines is in the process of reviewing its national documents in an effort to become more effective in doing the work of God. I was asked to present material explaining in detail UC&GA’s structure as well as what our Rules of Association say about the structure of non-U.S. national associations and how they relate to the International Association.

Using PowerPoint presentations, I covered this topic, as well as sessions on administering local congregations, fundamentals of preparing sermons and sermonettes and fundamentals of counseling. Marjolaine and I presented the last session together since the topic was how the wives of Church leaders can best serve in their congregations.

The seminars were all videotaped so that they could be made available to people unable to be physically present. In between the sessions we had time to fellowship and get to know one another better. It was very encouraging to see the dedication and desire to serve among the elders, deacons and other Church leaders present for the seminars.

Students chorale sings special music during Sabbath services at Legacy Institute school in Thailand Bible classes. We also enjoyed spending the Sabbath with this group, and participating in a five-language church service. (The messages in English were translated into Thai, Karen, Katchin and sign language for the deaf.)

The Youth Education Team are considering whether to propose to our administration that the United Youth Corps sponsor teaching at this school as an official Youth Corps project.

**Flood Affects Members in Germany and Czech Republic**

We have three members in the areas affected by the “flood of the century” in Germany and the Czech Republic.

In Dresden, Germany, member Rainier Barth reported that his apartment building remained dry, and his wife’s printing business was also not directly affected by the flood waters. Things in Dresden are returning to normal, but it will take years to repair all the damage.

In the Czech Republic our members Josef and Irene Vylupek live in the city of Brno. Josef’s printing business was also not directly affected by the flood waters. Things in Dresden are returning to normal, but it will take years to repair all the damage.

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**“Camp,” continued from page 1**

We have a growing number of young adults who are getting turned on to serving on staff at Camp Carter, and I hope we can keep that trend going.

Darris McNeely, director of Camp Heritage, wrote to his staff, “During the last seven years, when there was a need for a group of young adults to stand strong in the faith and show by example that God’s way works, you responded to the call. Like Samuel’s response to the Lord, you said, ‘Here I am.’ You came forward to serve where and when needed.”

“Have you ever thought that God specially prepared you for these times? Over the years that you attended Church, the feasts and SEPs, God was preparing you for the role you are playing today.”

Just as God knew what He was doing with Joseph as his brothers sold him into slavery and he bounced around Egypt before rising to the position of second to Pharaoh, so He knows what He is doing with you.

Years later Joseph understood that his life was always in God’s hands. Remember what he said to his brothers? “God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth... so that it was not you who sent me here, but God” (Genesis 45:7-8).

“God is preparing us for greater things ahead in His Kingdom. All that we do now is preparing for an eternal role in His family.”

We see evidence of the cumulative effects of the camp program on the teens in the Church. Since we offer regional camps, teens can attend one or more camps during each year of their high school years. Then many apply to work on the staff.

Each staff of the camp team, I would like to thank all of the parents and brethren for their prayers and support for a most effective program that helps prepare our teens for life.

For more camp reports, see pages 5 to 7.
Campers Learn About Success at Camp Carter

The year 2002 was another successful one at Camp Carter. Camp began with staff members attending services in Fort Worth on the Sabbath of July 20. Ken Treybig (director of Camp Carter) gave the sermon on a “Servant’s Heart,” encouraging staff members to be sure their service during camp would spring from the right motivation of love for the campers. He pointed out that this message applies to all of us throughout the year.

On Sunday afternoon 101 campers (41 boys and 60 girls) from 12 states joined the 37 full-time staff members at camp in search of an enjoyable and profitable camp. Camp was full of successes this year—from streamlining the registration process, much to the delight of those who spent a long time in line last year—to the expanded lakefront activity and rappelling offered to the oldest boys’ and girls’ dorms. Our new Outdoor Living Skills class was also very successful as campers were challenged to complete a mile-long orienteering course in as short a time as possible. The fastest time was recorded by Cory McLeod and Adam Robles of 2B who completed the course in 7 minutes and 43 seconds.

Campers said they really enjoyed doing a half day of high ropes this year instead of the low ropes course. They also commented about enjoying more time spent on trail rides during horseback riding, the improved shoot-outs course and scheduling more dorms to swim at the same time.

Success is a fitting way to describe camp this year, since the theme of Christian Living classes was the laws of success. At orientation Ken Treybig introduced the theme and pointed out that building a better relationship with God is one of the continuing goals of camp and that it is the most important law of success. “Without God in your life, any success you achieve will be very temporary. God wants a personal relationship with each of us, and only by focusing on Him and that relationship will our lives have the greatest ultimate success that is possible.”

On Monday Ken Giese (head counselor) asked, “What do you want on your tombstone?” as he built his presentation on setting the right goal. He pointed out that we should all be concerned about what will be said about our lives and should be thinking about that ultimate goal of what will come after this physical life ends. On Tuesday Mr. Treybig spoke about the importance of education by using the analogy of opportunities in life being made available based on what formal education and skills you acquire. If you lack those keys, you are limited in the choices you can make in life.

On Wednesday, Mr. Giese spoke on good health, encouraging everyone to be careful about diet, exercise, sleep and at-risk behaviors. He gave several statistics about the poor dietary habits of the average young person in America, the pervasive lack of exercise, the poor sleep habits and numerous at-risk behaviors that can severely limit a person’s chance of success in life.

“You have to drive to arrive” was one of the phrases used by Dave Treybig (basketball/football supervisor) in his presentation about drive, in which he encouraged following the Nike slogan—“just do it.” It’s not enough to have ideas and desire to succeed. You must convert that desire into action. Friday morning’s Compass Check was by Britt Taylor (lakerfront/softball supervisor) on resourcefulness, cautioning that in being resourceful one must also think through the consequences of each choice we make.

By Friday afternoon, the promise of a Sabbath rest in the air conditioning of the newly remodeled dining hall and retreat center was beckoning as the temperature hovered around the 100-degree mark.

The last key of success was covered in the first split sermon on the Sabbath, given by Tom Damour (transportation supervisor) in which he handed out pen-cils to the campers and mentioned five points. 1. You can’t accomplish anything unless you allow someone to guide you. 2. Painful sharpenings in your life will make you more useful. 3. Mistakes can be fixed. 4. What’s inside you is most important. 5. You leave a mark on everything with which you come in contact. He pointed out that in order to leave the “right marks” we must persevere toward the right goal of God’s Kingdom, as mentioned in Matthew 6:33.

The always-popular final dance and awards presentation on Saturday night was a fitting conclusion to a very successful camp. For more details and photos, see http://treybig.org/Camp2002.

First-Ever United Youth Camp Held in Ghana

The safe “Zone” promoted at our United Youth Camps in the United States was taught at the first-ever youth camp sponsored by the United Church of God in West Africa. The enthusiasm and appreciation expressed by over 70 young people highlighted the camp experience that took place Aug. 15 to 20.

Maxwell Coffie, a pastor in Ghana, and Doug Horchak, pastor of the Dallas and Sherman, Texas, congregations, organized the five-day camp. It was held on the campus of the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana. Campers stayed in student dormitories and enjoyed three meals of Ghanaian fare (such as jollof rice, fu-fu, red-red, banku and kenkey) each day.

The 74 teens and young adults were organized into four teams of 18 to 20 each. These groups were larger than the dorms or teams we typically have at our U.S. camps and were coed for all the program activities. Three of the Ghanaian pastors and one elder acted as counselors for the teams—pastors Manu Ofur, Richard Dua and Adonijah Blay and elder Eric Amankwa.

Another unique aspect of the camp was the age range. Campers ranged in age from 14 to young adults in their mid-20s. Since the brethren in Ghana had never experienced a camp such as this, the young adults were eager to participate as campers and lend their maturity and experience to the four groups.

The four activities offered to the campers were: football (soccer), volleyball, team challenge and Bible class. Two United Youth Corps volunteers (Kimberlee Franks of Dallas, Texas, and Lori Lambert of Houston, Texas) attended the camp and served on the staff. Lori Lambert taught the volleyball classes with the Ghanaian youth and organized the Novelty Olympics that were held during the camp. Kim Franks assisted Doug Horchak with the team-building challenge class and helped organize the Novelty Olympics, as well.

Two other Ghanaian pastors (Frank Arthur and Joseph Baah) taught the football (soccer) class. Maxwell Coffie and Doug Horchak taught the Bible classes each day. Jim Franks also assisted at the camp. He was in Ghana to conduct doctrinal seminars for the local elders in the congregations.

The home office of the United Church of God subsidized the camp this summer in an effort to “prime the pump” of experience and planning for future camps in Ghana for the youth. In addition, members from the Houston North and Dallas congregations contributed funds to purchase sports equipment for the camp, T-shirts and Bibles for all of the campers. Great appreciation was expressed by the youth and staff for the generosity of their brethren in the United States.

The final night of camp was highlighted by an energized talent show consisting of vocal presentations and skits performed by different members of the four camper teams. At the beginning of camp we told them we wanted the camp experience to be both a historic and memorable one and expressed the goal of sending the teens back to their towns and villages "hungry"—not for food, but for the friendships, camaraderie and vision that they would experience at camp.

The theme of the camp was to build teamwork while strengthening the vision of the millennial rule of Christ for the staff and youth attending the camp. That goal seemed to be successfully accomplished as campers and staff alike said their good-byes and voiced the strong desire to have this be the first of what they hope and pray will be an annual youth camp in the West African nation of Ghana.

Doug Horchak

Above, group shot of campers and staff in Ghana; left, Doug Horchak with new friend, Dominic Ampong

Tim Rickard, counselor of 2B, watershoto by Katherine Turner

Ken Treybig
Kayaking instructor Leah Gibson on Suttle Lake; above, the final dance.

Sports—volleyball, table tennis and dancing and line dancing and various included initiative training, ballroom dance and camping. In addition, three zip lines—including one that started at 60-feet high—were very popular activities. Basketball, flag football, arts and crafts, archery, swimming, camp improvement, volleyball and “Excellence in Living” rounded out the activities program. Participants thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful setting of mountains and forest, right next to a lake.

The evenings gave campers and staff additional opportunities for fellowship and participation in their favorite activities. Each evening at camp concluded with a lively (but fireless) “campfire” program, followed by a “bedside chat” for each dorm with its dorm parents.

On the Sabbath, the campers enjoyed some extra rest, Bible discussions with their dorm parents, Sabbath services and a program of Bible skits and songs. Saturday evening ended with a final dance. Campers were able to take home a copy of The Davidson Days camp newspaper.

Staff and campers “let their light shine” at the new location (which is owned by the Northwest Assemblies of God). The camp managers were very impressed with the respect and courtesy of campers, the caring dedication of the staff and the organized program that focused on developing the full potential of the campers. Their comments were: “Seeing your staff and campers in action would make a person want to become a Christian. You can certainly tell where the Holy Spirit is working.”

But camp did not end there. For the second year, the Northwest camp offered a Wilderness Session for older campers (see article below). Camp Davidson was truly blessed this year, and campers and staff remarked that the new location was a big benefit because of the new activities it offered. The level of cooperation, respect, focus, unity and camaraderie was outstanding.

A great team spirit pervaded the dorms and activities throughout camp. The staff showed godly, selfless leadership in creating an educational and fun experience for all participants.

Matthew Fenchel

Campers Experience Sisters Wilderness

After the main session of Camp Davidson, an extended Wilderness Session was offered to the older campers. The main goal was to climb South Sister, a 10,358-foot mountain in the Cascade Range—a total hike of 15 miles round trip, with an elevation gain of 5,000 feet! In addition, the 32 campers and staff were able to complete a smaller 9-mile hike to mountain lakes and to explore lava caves near Bend, Oregon.

After the main session ended on Sunday, everyone drove to the base camp at Lava Lakes. Tents and the camp kitchen had already been set up. While the conditions were much more primitive than regular camp, the tents were comfortable and the cooking fantastic! Everyone enjoyed looking at the stars on the clear evenings.

On Monday, we hiked up to Green Lakes as a “warm-up” for the main climb. This was a 9-mile round trip, including a 1,500-foot elevation gain and a “refreshing” dip in the freezing-cold glacier lake.

Tuesday was the big day—climbing South Sister. After dividing into three groups, we departed from the trailhead at 7 a.m. The initial route took us past Meriam Lake, located about 3.2 miles from the parking lot at approximately 7,000 feet in elevation. The rest of the hike was going to be nearly all uphill. In some cases, it was quite steep. Because of the very dry weather Oregon had experienced, it was also dusty, sandy and slippery, with loose rocks and gravel. This certainly challenged us mentally and physically.

Almost everyone made it to the top, with the majority arriving in about seven hours. A few people experienced altitude sickness, but recovered by that evening. The views from the top were truly spectacular and inspiring.

Wednesday was a “down day” to give everyone a chance to rest, relax and fellowship. About half of the campers and staff took the opportunity to explore a lava cave 40 minutes away. Others enjoyed the beautiful lake.

Why did they climb? To see the beauty of God’s creation, to build friendships and unity and to challenge themselves. The overwhelming consensus was that these goals were exceeded. Everyone wants to come next year to try a new challenge: maybe Mt. Adams or the Pacific Crest Trail.

Matthew Fenchel

Campers have fun at the theme park despite a little precipitation (photos supplied by J. Richardson)

At camp both young and old were willing to get involved and serve. We made new friendships and renewed and strengthened old friendships. Bonds were built and strengthened.

Tania Ellams

Campers Enjoy Yorkshire During British Isles Family Summer Camp

This year the United Kingdom family summer camp returned to the site we have used before in Yorkshire, a converted bunkhouse close to the heart of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The camp was scheduled for July 26 through Aug. 4. For the first Sabbath we had 28 people present.

This year our trips included a day out to the historic city of York, a trip to a theme park, a shopping trip to Skipton Market and a visit to a local place of natural beauty, How Stean Gorge.

The excitement at How Stean Gorge came when we all put on hard hats and, using only a couple of torches (flashlights), made our way through a dark, narrow and slightly damp 500-yard cave in the rock face. Other activities during the week included initiative training, ballroom dancing and line dancing and various sports—volleyball, table tennis and pool. Slightly less physical, but not less taxing, activities included rebus puzzles, crosswords, Scrabble and cards. Campfires and a sing-along were traditional camp activities, and camp cleanup and catering were important and vital parts to our successful week. Many learned new skills cooking on an old-fashioned Aga stove, and we found several talented barbecuers.

Most days we held forums where discussions and questions were welcomed and encouraged. Subjects covered included “Goals of Camp,” “What Is a Christian?” “Using Wisdom” and “God’s Plan for Mankind as Revealed by the Holy Days.”

During the week there was much artwork and scribbling of verse as we all prepared for a final flourish on our last evening of camp. This took the form of formal dining on the final Sabbath evening followed by our own entertainment.

The room and table decorations were impressive, the three-course meal delicious and the entertainment extremely inventive and varied.
Heritage campers learn about sailing

Camp was held from Aug. 11 to 18. A two-track program, introduced last year and continued this year, divided the campers into Challenger and Adventure groups. The older (ages 15 to 18) campers comprised a Challenger program that included distinct activities geared to challenge them spiritually, mentally and physically. In the orientation session Challenger campers were encouraged (1) to kick up their behavior a notch, (2) to think about others, (3) to look inside themselves and (4) to develop a deeper relationship with God.

These goals were accomplished through classes in modesty and Christian Living. In addition, a white-water rafting trip on the Youghiogheny River provided part of the physical challenge. Class 3 rapids provided plenty of thrills and spills for campers and staff during a day on this river.

Adventure campers (ages 12 to 15) were taken snorkeling into Laurel Caverns, a commercial caving system which has a primitive section where people don helmets with lights and venture into a more rugged experience through sections of the caverns not seen on regular commercial tours. Tight spaces, muddy slides and underground streams were all part of the experience.

Other activities at Heritage this year included swimming and sailing. The campers also enjoyed swing dance. The Adventure group spent time in the Discovery section of the camp where they experienced wall climbing, skeet shooting and tomahawk throwing.

Flag football, softball, volleyball, basketball, tennis, riflery and archery were again offered to round out the activity side of the program.

Christian Living classes were held each day and many campers commented that these were the highlight of the camp. One camper commented that classes this year were the best the camper had heard at camp—basic and right to the point. Among the topics covered were "The Power of Words," "Why We (the Church) Have the Teachings We Do" and "Proving God Exists." Classes were held in the outdoor campsites after breakfast.

On Friday evening both Challenger and Adventure groups held separate campfire programs that included a Bible study in question-and-answer format. Questions on basic doctrine, prayer, individual calling and dating out of the Church were among the many subjects covered in these sessions. A group of four ministers conducted each session and took turns answering questions. Young people face many challenges to their faith in today’s world. Sessions like these help shape and mold their understanding of biblical truth. The foundation laid by parents in the home is therefore strengthened.

This year Heritage was happy to have two visitors from Great Britain. The Church and the Ozzie G. Engelbart Memorial Youth Fund sponsored Joannna and Susanna Karas of the Gloucester congregation.

Heritage is blessed with a core of experienced staff members, 60 percent of whom return each year to serve. All volunteer staff members serve at their own expense and many forego a week of salary while serving at camp. Those who do this throughout our camp system year after year demonstrate a core principle of servant leadership. They are willing to give and serve without expectation of reward. Their service is reward enough.

Two staffers at Heritage were given special recognition for their years of service. Ted and Risa Wilson have served at Heritage for seven consecutive years, all of them on the counseling staff. Other staff members who have served all seven years at Heritage include Lisa Sproul, Frank Dunkle, Jerry Rehor, Debbie McNeely, Ryan McNeely, Mark Winner, Paul Suckling, Doug Johnson, Dave Myers and Pam Myers.

God has provided us with leadership like this to see us through a time of transition and rebuilding in the Church. Together with all the other volunteers of our camps they have formed a unique bridge to the future growth and development of the Church of God. We owe them all our thanks for helping make the good work of camp a reality.

Darris McNeely

Campers and staff at Camp Madge Saunders in Jamaica

United has just completed its seventh year at Camp Heritage in Pennsylvania. The program has continued to mature as part of the Church’s efforts to train and develop the next generation of leadership. This year another layer of experience was applied to the youth and young adults who attended.

The campers were warmly greeted by the pastor of the Kingston congregation, the Rev. Leeford Burke, an elder serving in Jamaica and assistant camp director, was introduced Todd Carey and Arnold Hampton for split sessions. Following services, the Kingston brethren served refreshments, and photographs were taken of the local congregation and the campers.

Camp Saunders officially opened at 11 a.m. the following morning with the overall staff orientation. Todd Carey, the camp director at Saunders, asked everyone to have patience and understanding in dealing with the excitement of the first United camp in the Caribbean. At the same time, the center for the next lecture. Campers were taught the various ways of introducing people and the history of various greetings in nations around the world. Carey was examined as well as cultural differences when it comes to treating people with respect and dignity. Mrs. Carey also modeled and had the students perform the task of setting a table for a special meal. There were variations as the Caribbean campers prepared the table in the style that represented their country or custom.

Prepared to teach the campers the joys of playing basketball, Mark Vreeland, the coordinator, found himself introduced to a little different game called netball. Even the term netball is a little misleading, because although there is a rim, there is no “net.” The game is across between basketball and speed-away, as the ball is never dribbled, but passed from person to person in an attempt to get at position to shoot and score. There are no lay-ups or banked shots, because there is no backboard!

Mr. Vreeland, with help from Mr. Carey and Mr. Hampton, also taught a class that produced much excitement—flag football. After teaching some of the fundamentals to the game, the first annual “Caribbean Bowl” was played with much excitement, laughter and encouragement from staff and campers. Both the male and female campers expressed appreciation and a desire to play this new sport more often next year.

The campers and staff also enjoyed several activities around the Ocho Rios area. Everyone enjoyed a day at Reggae Beach with swimming and various water games to keep cool in the 90-plus-degree weather. One of the most exciting activities involved a trip to historic Dunn’s River Falls. Campers and staff climbed up the waterfalls as guides pointed to the safest and most challenging paths. The climb took almost an hour, and a few hearty individuals decided a second climb was in order while everyone else swam or ate lunch.

The entire camp enjoyed five thought-provoking and biblically-based Christian Living classes that covered a myriad of topics such as peer pressure, the spirit world and relationships between young people. Also a Q&A session was held Friday evening with elders taking inquiries from campers and staff alike.

The final activity was a dance Saturday evening. The Caribbean flavor of camp served to make this a unique environment which shows that love of God cuts across all boundaries. Though the age range was vast (11 to 19) everyone was included, accepted and encouraged to make this camp a shining example to the Saunders staff and the community.

Plans are underway for Camp Saun- ders 2003, and everyone is welcome. Remember, “No worries here, man!”

Todd Carey
Judge or Judgmental?

It is critical for good relationships and for the growth of others that we understand the difference and refrain from being judgmental.

by Gary E. Antion

When Jesus Christ was about to heal a man taken with an affliction, the Pharisees and scribes watched intently to try to find fault with His actions. We read the account in Luke 6:6-11.

“Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered. So the scribes and Pharisees saw Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, ‘Arise and stand here.’ And he arose and stood . . .”

“And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.”

This was only one of several occasions when a judgmental approach was used against Jesus. See Mark 2:5-7, 23-24; 3:1-6; 7:1-5; and Luke 7:36-39. Paul encountered a judgmental attitude when he was “examined” for his activities by the Corinthian members (1 Corinthians 9:5). We sometimes are judgmental ourselves.

When we go to the Feast of Tabernacles, one of the themes is that we will be rulers with Christ and be given the responsibility to judge the world (Revelation 20:6; 1 Corinthians 6:2).

There is, however, an important difference between being a judge and being judgmental. The definition of judgmental is “making or tending to make judgments as to value, importance, etc., often specifically, judgments considered to be lacking in tolerance, compassion, objectivity, etc.” To judge means to get the facts and make an objective decision (obviously, a person would watch the speedometer). It is critical for good relationships and for the growth of others that we understand the difference and refrain from being judgmental.

Under Scrutiny

Do you like to be watched? Have you ever tried to do something under the scrutinizing eyes of another person? Did you do it nervously? Perhaps? Judgmental individuals tend to make others feel uncomfortable since those who are judgmental are looking to criticize. An example might help clarify the difference between judgmental and judging. You are riding with someone in that person’s car. You feel you’re moving along at a rapid pace. You glance at the speedometer and it reads 85 miles an hour. The posted speed limit is 65. You would judge correctly to say the driver is speeding. A judgmental individual regularly and not only the speedometer, but the use of the turn signals, the lane changes, the distance between the car and the vehicle in front of the car. A judgmental person gives a person the feeling of being judged virtually all of the time.

When we’re judgmental at church, we make others feel uncomfortable and uneasy. We make ourselves very unpleasant to be around. Sometimes judgmental individuals get satisfaction in their faultfinding because it means someone else is worse than they are. Sometimes that judgmental attitude takes the attention away from their own personal problems. Sometimes self-righteousness develops, with the attitude, “I am better than you are.”

A person who is subjected to a judgmental person might become a “menpleaser” (Ephesians 6:6) to avoid being judged. The judged person might become angry and feel like quitting. Judgmental people aren’t nice to be around.

Righteousness is a goal that is only accomplished through God’s Spirit working richly in us. To attain God’s righteousness we need His help and strength. Jesus Christ is our righteousness. By working in and through us, He will help us prevail (Philippians 1:11). We stand or fall to our God and His Son to whom we must give account.

When we exercise a judgmental approach to our brothers and sisters, we are really judging another man’s servant (Romans 14:4). Our Father and Jesus Christ do not look upon such an action too kindly. They are quite able to do Their jobs.

We are urged to grow to the perfect example of Jesus Christ. None of us matches up to that measurement. We all have our faults. We need to turn the mirror in our own direction (James 1:22-25). We need to judge ourselves, but not be judgmental—even toward ourselves.

(Galatians 6:4). Those who are self-efacing will judge themselves too harshly. John speaks of this as those whose hearts condemn them when God does not (1 John 3:20).

How to Conquer Being Judgmental

To conquer this ugly trait, we must first of all come to acknowledge that we are judgmental. Then observe it in the actions of others. See that being judgmental brings undesirable results. That trait makes us difficult to be around. We must recognize that it is right to judge ourselves, but we’re not to judge others. That is up to their Master—Jesus Christ (Romans 14:10)! We need to recognize right from wrong, good from evil, righteousness from iniquity, but not scrutinize others to try to find faults in them.

When we see a fault in others, we should seek to help them, instead of judging them. Paul gives the charge to the Galatians that those who are spiritual to help restore a person with a fault and to help that person work through it (Galatians 6:1-2). Being judgmental only pushes others away and establishes self-righteousness in the judge.

The Church of God will have a warmer, welcoming atmosphere and be a more godly body if we learn to conquer the ugly trait of being judgmental. If we all spent more time paying our debts of loving one another, we would have little time to be judgmental. When we feel the need to judge someone, let He be ourselves (1 Corinthians 11:28, 31).

May God help us to root out this fellowship killer, this growth suppressor, the awful tendency of being judgmental.

Giving an Answer: Student Asked to Explain Holy Days to Class

by Laura Beth Childers

I was a little nervous about attending a Church of Christ university, considering the vast differences in our religious beliefs. However, I preferred it over the less Christian environment and influences I might encounter at a public school. Lipscomb University required one Bible class each semester, and freshmen begin with Early Hebrew History. Basically this class was going to be an overview of the Old Testament, but still I didn’t know what to expect.

The class was getting off to a pretty normal start, and it was not until it was time for me to ask off for the fall Holy Days that things began to get interesting. My professor was surprisingly very interested in the fact that I keep God’s Holy Days. He told me to have a wonderful trip, and he asked me if I would mind talking to the class sometime about how and why I observe the Holy Days.

Gulp! The response that came from my mouth was, “No, I wouldn’t mind at all,” but in my head thoughts were whirling in all directions. “What? Me talk to 40 Church of Christ members about the importance of the Holy Days?” Although it seemed terrifying, I knew what a great opportunity it would be.

Weeks passed. I returned from the Feast and before I knew it we were delving into Leviticus 23 in class.

I was beginning to forget about my professor’s proposal to talk to the class, assuming he would give me a day or two to prepare a few notes. However, it was in the middle of our Holy Day discussion in class when he turned to me and said, “Laura Beth, would you mind sharing with the class your beliefs concerning the Holy Days?” My first thought was panic, but suddenly a wave of calmness came over me.

Laura Beth Childers

After a deep breath, I began to tell my class why God’s Holy Days are still important today, how each Holy Day has one or more symbolic meanings and how when put together they form the plan of God.

I described how Holy Days are high Sabbaths, what is usually done on the Holy Days and how they have made my life so much more fulfilling.

I knew that God placed that calm feeling within me and guided my words and thoughts that day, because under normal circumstances I would have been unable to do such a thing.

The reaction from the class was generally as I expected. Many began asking me questions, while others simply wanted to argue. My professor, however, had a very interesting summation of my explanation. He commented that I and other members of my church probably have a much closer and deeper relationship with God since we keep His Holy Days. I was completely shocked to hear this, but it really touched me.

My professor came to a very accurate conclusion, and it is sad to think that even though he realized this, he will most likely never keep God’s Holy Days himself in this life. After the horrific events of Sept. 11, 2001, so many of us needed to be comforted and encouraged. We were all blessed to have the Sabbath, Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles and the Last Great Day follow it so quickly. I am sure we can all agree that the Holy Days were probably even more meaningful than ever.

We must not let anything distract us from the Holy Days and God’s mighty plan. While we mourn over what has occurred in our world, let’s humble ourselves before God, repent and draw closer than ever to Him in fervent prayer, Bible study and fasting, Meditate on and pray for Christ’s return and God’s Kingdom. Keep the vision of the Kingdom at the front of your mind, and let it give you hope and guide you always!”

This article first appeared in the US Teens magazine, issue 2, 2002.
Complaints, Complaints

Complaining kills contentment, and the Bible has a lot to say about both.

by Robert Berendt

As I look back over my life, I realize how very blessed I have been. Even when the disappointments have come, one of the major blessings has been the contentment to not dwell on them too long. I have been able to move ahead with my life and feel joy and happiness in that living.

Paul had some strong words to say about the subject of contentment. In 1 Timothy 6:6, Paul tells us that “godliness with contentment is great gain.” He goes on to say that “we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we cannot carry nothing out.” There is much wisdom in these words. Some people are able to survive the loss of everything and start all over again with nothing and thrive. These people seem to be winners all of the time.

Paul was also inspired to write in Philippians 4:11-12 that he had learned to be content in whatever state he was in. He learned to be content with plenty and with little. Paul did not go out of his way to suffer need, but when he could do nothing about it, he accepted the situation and moved forward. At times he found himself in prison, hungry and cold, forsaken (yet not alone), marooned and shipwrecked. This learned ability to stay content is one of the most precious gifts one could have with which to face each day.

Paul makes a third statement along this line in Hebrews 13:5 when he says to be content with such things as you have. We know that Paul would have liked to have had a wife (1 Corinthians 9:5). It seems this was not to be for Paul, and though he expresses the wish, he had learned to be content without one.

Coveting and Complaining

One of the most interesting of the Ten Commandments is “you shall not covet.” Coveting is the result of not being content with one’s lot in life. It is the desire to have something that belongs to someone else. We can waste much of our lives and all of our opportunities by not applying this important principle of learning to be content.

We humans are able (it seems) to develop a great skill in complaining, criticizing and finding fault. Self-control is needed in us all. To be able to force our thoughts in a godly manner is a skill that can be learned, but the choices to make. The key is in what we allow ourselves to think. The more we allow ourselves to think in the negative mode, the more negative we become. The more we list, the more we allow ourselves to complain, the more we do complain.

I recall living in a union town. The union bosses got the men thinking they were winners all of the time. But yet, most of them were not winners, probably good jobs with good pay where they were, but someone had sown a root of complaint in their minds, and they believed they were being mistreated. The more they thought negatively, the more they believed they were. Soon everything was continually wrong.

Murming and complaining lead to a strong belief in the supposed (and magnified) inequalities in life. We can convince ourselves that our boss, job situation, spouse and even our God are not fair. We feel sorry for ourselves.

Living in the greatest nations on earth, with many gadgets that make life easy, the ability to travel, education for all, good homes and an abundance of food—all of this and more does not lead to contentment. Far too many people in our nations drink or drug themselves into an early grave. Suicide is a major problem and restlessness is rampant. Many people simply are not content.

There are many tales of those who were not content—those who felt they deserved more. God records some of these sad moments for us. In 2 Samuel 12:8-14 we read about King David. He had a number of wives, but wanted the wife that Uriah had. His repentance and tears are recorded in Psalm 51.

King Solomon was given wonderful gifts from God—but they were not enough. He took for himself 1,000 wires, 30,000 jewels, 500 gowns, and finally his head was turned away from the very source of all his gain. He had it all, but somehow felt unsatisfied and convinced himself he could have more. His complaints are stated in the book of Ecclesiastes 2:18-23 and 4:1 (among other verses).

Need for Action

There is a time for complaining. Some complaints can bring good results. Complaints that take the form of constructive criticism are sometimes even appreciated. An honest and positive input to change that is good. The kind of complaints that are harmful are those that arise from a constant contemplation of the things one does not like. Harm comes when no action is taken outside of the complaints. The mind is trained to be discontented in time. Marriages fail, and the complainer becomes someone who has few, if any, friends.

Learning to be content does not mean just staying in a situation forever, no matter how uncomfortable. My first job was unloading boxcars of salt, watermelons (often rotten), boxes of canned goods and almost anything else that can be shipped in a boxcar. My salary was very low, and it was hard to save anything, I was content, but I continued to work toward improving my lot in life.

Complaining is a negative reaction that brings no positive returns in most cases. Action will bring changes. How many of the great inventions came because someone decided not to complain but to do something about a problem?

Complaints slow us down and give us cause to look back. Jesus told us to look ahead. In Luke 9:62, Jesus said that one who is plowing and looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God. A farmer knows that when you are plowing, the furrow will only remain straight as long as the plowman looks ahead. Looking back will throw you out of the track.

Considering all this, it is clear why God tells us that godliness with contentment is great gain. It is the only way to progress and move towards eternal life.

The next time things seem to go wrong (as they always do), make lemonade out of the lemons. Study what some others have said on complaints that go on and on. Lift up your eyes to the future—to the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33). That is where the things that truly matter and that are solid, permanent and lasting reside. Take to heart the words of the old song that said, “Accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative . . . and don’t mess with Mr. Inbetween”!

Complaining, Complaints

by Andy McClain

Preparing for the Feast? Don’t Forget Your SOCKS!

by Andy McClain

The Feast of Tabernacles is the pinnacle celebration of God’s Holy Day season for most of us. We anticipate traveling perhaps hundreds of miles to hear God’s truth taught to us. Many of us start to plan for the next Feast shortly after keeping the current Feast. A tradition in our household is to get the suitcases out of the attic the day after Trumpets. Then, the packing begins.

We start setting aside clothing items that we want to take with us. Our suits and dresses are dry-cleaned so they will look their best. Items such as our toothbrushes and comb are essential for daily preparation. What we pack to appear before our Father on His Holy Days is important. However, our spiritual preparation and our conduct during the Feast are much more important.

There is concern that can help remind us that we are preparing to be kings and priests for the coming Kingdom of God. Socks. Yes, remembering the five-letter word SOCKS can be an important key to keeping the Feast.

Study. The Feast is a training seminar for God’s truth. Those speaking at the Feast have spent much time and prayer in preparation for their messages. We should plan to use these eight days to also spend time in additional study. Take the time to study scriptures about the Kingdom and Millennium.

Review the messages taught each day. If a particular sermonette or sermon strikes an interest, spend time studying the topic further in personal study. Maybe it is a special trick resource that you can take with you. Leave time for studying, as 2 Timothy 2:15 says we should be “diligent to present yourself approved to God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.”

Outlook. Our outlook on the Feast should be much more than that of a vacation. While work and life often become hectic prior to the Feast because of distractions initiated by Satan, we should do our best not to come to the Feast worn out and exhausted. We should try to focus on the great hope that mankind has because of God’s mercy in sending Jesus Christ back to the earth to establish His Kingdom. We need to strive to live righteously so we can be an instrumental part of the Kingdom.

If we are Kingdom-focused, it should help us keep the Feast with a positive attitude. God commands us to rejoice at His Feast in Deuteronomy 14:26. Our citizenship in heaven and we should constantly strive to focus on God’s Kingdom (Philippians 3:13 to 4:1).

Conduct. Our daily conduct during the Feast is extremely important. We should strive to live in a Christ-like manner. Do we maintain our patience at restaurants when service may not be quite to our liking? Are we patient with the help in the bathroom? Remember that we are witnesses of God’s Kingdom as we strive to set an example every day of our lives, but especially during the Feast. This is our communication with our Father. We should be striving to become closer to Him during His Holy Days.

We should pray for the safety of the brethren. We should pray for those planning and serving at the Feast site. Thank God for their sacrifice of time and energy since we are probably benefitting from it in some way. Pray for those on the speaking schedule, including the song leaders and those performing special music. Reflect upon the words of the songs and how they relate to the messages. Pray for guidance, friendliness and openness in your fellowship.

Pray for an open mind that will hear the messages and not wander to the afternoon activities. Our focus at the Feast should be to learn God’s truth which can only be learned through the help of God’s Holy Spirit. We should stir up that Spirit through dedicated prayer. We should have much to talk about with our Father during this time. Our prayers ascend to God’s throne like incense (Revelation 5:8).

Serve. Make the opportunity to serve in some way at the Feast. Many tasks are required at each location for the site to run smoothly. Volunteering before the Feast helps the coordinators plan more efficiently. Serving can involve ushering, parking, handicap assistance, counting the offering, singing in the choir, working on the sound crew or setting up.

However, if you are unable to serve physically, spiritual service is vital to the Feast’s success also. Prayer and fellow-ship are service also. Share time with a new family or widow. Send a card or gift to those who must remain at home. Christ wants us to learn to serve. Re-read Matthew 25:31-40 before the Feast.

The first letter in each of the above points spells the acronym SOCKS. We all pack at least one pair of socks when we travel to the Feast. As you prepare for this year’s Feast, let this simple item be a reminder of the tremendous responsibility we have to prepare as the first fruits for the Kingdom of God.

Andy McClain is a member in the Indianapolis, Indiana, congregation.

Unpublished Church of God, an International Association

United News

September/October 2002

9
Audited Financial Statements Reflect God’s Blessings

by Tom Kirkpatrick

Accompanying this short article are photographic reproductions of the auditors’ report and the audited financial statements of the United Church of God, an International Association, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002. In its report, the Church’s independent auditing firm (Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co.) concludes, “In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of United Church of God, an International Association as of June 30, 2002 and 2001, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.”

God blessed the Church with a good year financially. We are grateful to Him as well as to the brethren and others who support the work of the Church with tithes and offerings. According to a preapproved financial plan, during the course of the last fiscal year the Church paid for the construction of its new home office building near Cincinnati, Ohio. For that reason, the cash balances at June 30, 2002, were lower than a year earlier. In July of this year, the Church closed on a 15-year loan (secured by the home office building) for $1.6 million, the proceeds of which restored the Church’s cash reserves.

Below is a table summarizing some of the key financial totals and ratios from these statements. For comparison purposes, similar totals and ratios for the previous year are also provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>June 30, 2002</th>
<th>June 30, 2001</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$3,421,512</td>
<td>$4,888,458</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property and equipment, net</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted net assets</td>
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<td>5,688,319</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total revenue, gains and other support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total expenses</td>
<td>17,657,697</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>392,493</td>
<td>1,775,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash provided by operating activities</td>
<td>725,397</td>
<td>870,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities/Total Assets</td>
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<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Ratio</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tom Kirkpatrick is treasurer of the United Church of God, an International Association.
General Conference of Elders. The process will be repeated in December.

Dr. Kirkpatrick was the first to tackle this in his presentation. He explained some of the factors that will impact the budget. One major area will be health care premiums the Church pays for its employees. The insurance industry as a whole has taken a huge "hit" in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and the costs tend to be spread throughout the industry. In addition, the employees are all aging, and that has its effect on health care costs, which are passed on in premium increases.

In considering its coverage, the Church must pay $49,000 of the first $50,500 for an individual employee’s health care costs in any given year, before our insurance takes over (the employee pays the other $1,500)—our program is self-funded to that extent. The lowest premium increase we have had quoted for next year’s coverage is $8,000 per month—or nearly $100,000 more for the overall budget. Though the cost of living and medical costs by the Church, which are increasing cost of handling the growing volume of personal correspondence and producing a printed version of the ABC magazine.

Richard Pinelli gave an overview of the various operations of the Ministerial Services area in the past year, including regional conferences, personal correspondence work, festival administration and education programs updates. Of note here is the implementation this summer, for the first time, of stage four in the Pastoral Assessment tools package—the input of the congregations.

What lies ahead? At least six new hires need to be made in the field ministry, in order to continue the basic level of service to God’s people that has marked the United Church of God. The Ministerial Candidate Program must go ahead. Regional conferences need to be held again—there were none budgeted for the current fiscal year. And there will need to be some transfers—probably about the same number as this year (11), plus transfer costs for those men replacing retiring pastors (perhaps four more). And then there is the “wish list”—things like salary adjustments based on merit and/or seniority, a new church hymnal, replacing worn-out equipment, the increasing cost of handling the growing volume of personal correspondence and the possibility of one or two European-style “retreat-type” Feast sites in the United States.

By far the most pressing issue is the fact that our ministry is aging, and we are now seeing the first efforts to train new pastors to replace those who will be retiring in the next few years.

We have already had a large attrition rate. In 1999, the United Church of God began with 123 pastors employed to serve the needs of the U.S. brethren. That number is currently 96. By the end of this fiscal year, after retirements, the number will be 91. Four will have resigned from the full-time ministry in the last two years; two have died. Five have been retired in the last year, and more will retire this year. Three have gone to serve in international areas, but one has only moved from international to U.S. service.

The trend is in place, but must be reversed. Two men have been recently hired—Andy Burnett and Joe Horchak. More are expected to come from the Ministerial Candidate Program. Mr. Pinelli asked the Council to reflect on all these factors as they mull over the budget proposals for fiscal 2003-2004.

Peter Eddington presented the report for the Church area of operations. As he said, "without going through a tedious line-by-line review of the 2001-2002 Operation Plan, it can safely be stated that all major projects and categories were more than met or even exceeded.” A quick glance at his handout material certainly confirms that overview—from the growing booklet list (now 28, with the addition of Who Is God?) to the Good News print run (now over 500,000); to the Bible Study Course enrollment (over 9,700); to responses to Good News radio, the cable access TV programs and our Internet presence; to the increasing World News and Prophecy circulation—all continuing to reach out in the proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom.

Looking ahead to 2003-2004, Mr. Eddington’s projections include increasing Good News circulation to 650,000 copies, printing four new booklets, encouraging local congregation involvement in cable access TV, increasing to 25 stations airing the Good News radio program (15 as of Aug. 10), printing five or six booklets in Brazil, continuing to develop response to the Bible Study Course and producing a printed version of the currently on-line only Youth United magazine.

The “wish list” could include increasing the GN to 10 issues a year from the current six, upgrading digital editing equipment, constructing a video recording studio at the home office and going to two-color covers on United News. As well the Ministerial Services and Treasurer’s presentations, “price tags” were attached for the Council to consider.

ABC—Future Projections

Gary Antion presented an update on the Ambassador Bible Center program, which has just completed its third year of operation. Fifty students graduated on Aug. 4, bringing the three-year total of those who have completed the program to 113. Two new faculty members were added to the adjunct teaching staff in the past year—Melvin Rhodes and Matthew Hrench. Mr. Antion continued to serve in numerous capacities in the Cincinnati area and beyond.

The ABC staff will continue to present the mini-sampler ABC programs in our churches and investigate the feasibility of increasing from three to four per year. The library resources will be expanded, and work will continue with an accredited institution to try to obtain transcript credit for students for some of their ABC classwork. One major goal is to try to obtain permission from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to admit international students on student visas. Material will be shared with the ministry in an ongoing educational effort. Hiring two teaching assistants from each year’s class would aid both resident and adjunct faculty.

Expanding into future recommendations, a video explaining the ABC program could be developed, much like the promotional videos many colleges use to describe their programs. The Council of Elders might consider sponsoring one international scholarship per year for a student to study and work at the home office to gain skills that could be of service in his or her home country upon completion of the program. And efforts could be considered to try to consolidate regular housing for students in fewer locations.

New Committee Chairmen

In wrapping up the news of the day, Mr. Kilough announced that the Education/Ministers Services committee had chosen Richard Thompson to serve as its chairman; the Doctrine committee has asked Jim Franks to serve as its chairman.

The Council of Elders spent the bulk of the second day of meetings Aug. 6 in executive session to discuss a member appeal to the Council, ordinations and credentials. They briefly addressed three doctrinal topics to close the day.

Doctrine Committee

Leon Walker, as the outgoing chairman of the Doctrine Committee (Jim Franks has been selected as the new chairman), moderated a discussion of three doctrinal issues.

The Council gave its unanimous approval (all 12 members present) to a study paper on the covenants of God. Further work is needed along minor editorial lines, as the paper is a result of the work of several authors. Mr. Walker will send the paper to Mike Bennett in Media and Communications Services for editorial improvements before it is submitted to the ministry in its final form.

Unanimous approval was also given to a study paper on John 7:37-39 and the subject of the Last Great Day. This paper deals with technical concerns of the text, and involves no change in our practice of Holy Day observance or our understanding of the meaning of the day. It will be available shortly for distribution.

On day three of the meetings, Aug. 7, the Council dealt with issues arising from its committees—the Ethics/Roles and Rules Committee, the Media and Communications Committee and a discussion on the evolving role of its committees. They concluded the day’s business in executive session, discussing international personnel issues and Council committee personnel issues.

Ethics/Roles and Rules

Gary Antion led the Council through the material from the Ethics/Roles and Rules Committee. Several topics comprised the committee’s business.

The Council first reviewed two possible amendments to the Church’s Bylaws. Section 7.1 deals with the annual meeting of the ministry (the General Conference of Elders); the Council unanimously approved recommending an amendment that clarifies the nomination process leading up to the meeting (all 12 members present).

Section 9.1 of the Bylaws deals with officers of the Church (president, secretary and treasurer). To date, the practice of the Church has been to allow the president to serve on the Council if he so choose, but the Bylaw as written implies that the secretary and treasurer may not serve on the Council. This amendment would simply state that no officer could serve as a member of the Council, except...
Corpus and Harlingen Celebrate Balds’ Service

A milestone was celebrated by one of God’s ministers and his congregations. John Bald and his wife, Nancy, along with the Corpus Christi and Harlingen, Texas, congregations, celebrated over 40 years of their devoted service in the ordained ministry with a special surprise retirement party and Sabbath service on June 13, 2002.

Song leader Larry Duett Jr. introduced a presentation of sacred music selections by the United Church of God Houston Chorus. Among the 12 selections sung by the choir was “The Holy City” by Stephen Adams, performed by the combined choruses with soloist Richmond Hill. “The Prayer,” composed by C.B. Sager and D. Foster, was performed by a vocal duet, Bill and Kari Crow. Pam Sutton accompanied the piano; Vanessa Grandy, on flute; and Mark Sappington, on guitar solo, entitled “Concerto Poloniz” by George T. Tellman was the next part of the retirement celebration. The Corpus congregation then presented gifts to Mr. and Mrs. Bald: a framed picture of the couple and a gavel to the Thomas Kincade picture gallery.

Mr. Giese presented a crystal plaque engraved with words of appreciation and dedication to the congregation then presented two gifts to Mr. and Mrs. Bald. A framed picture of the couple and a gavel. The Houston North congregation, won the Houston North Musician Wins Awards.

Joshua Chisum, who attends the Houston North congregation, won the 4-H music contest for the Houston district in Navasota, Texas, in April.

Joshua Chisum

4-H music contest for the Houston district in Navasota, Texas, in April.

After Sabbath services concluded, Arnold Mendez Sr., acting as Master of Ceremonies, read and presented Mr. Bald with letters from the young people in the Corpus Christi congregation, which expressed their own unique words of appreciation for all that he has done. A summary of Mr. and Mrs. Bald’s years of service to more than 20 congregations was then highlighted. A violin solo by the Corpus Christi congregation’s own Sean Ashcraft entitled “Concerto Poloniz” by George T. Tellman was the next part of the retirement celebration. The Corpus congregation then presented gifts to Mr. and Mrs. Bald: a framed picture of the couple and a gavel to a Houston North congregation had the opportunity to present a crystal plaque to the Thomas Kincade picture gallery.

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Arnold Mendez with a cross section model of Noah’s ark (1/32 scale) created by Arnold Mendez Sr., a deacon from the Corpus Christi, Texas, congregation. The general public was invited to attend, and the various visitors and brethren enjoyed a double Sabbath service. A sermon was presented in the morning followed by a meal break and then the Noah’s ark seminar was presented that afternoon.

Mr. Mendez, a chemistry instructor at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi who has been studying the evolution-creation controversy for more than 30 years, delivered the morning sermon on the subject of evolution and creation. This sermon showed the falsity of evolution and how it affects our everyday life and culture. It presented scientific evidence showing that creation and the events in the book of Genesis are better explanations of our origins.

The sermon also highlighted the following points: Genesis is a recreation account; evolution violates many laws of science; evolution is not a theory but a philosophy; and biblical creation agrees with the laws of science and geological evidence.

Following a luncheon break, the members and guests gathered for the Noah’s ark seminar. On display were various models that Mr. Mendez had constructed. These included a six-foot 1/75 scale model of Noah’s ark. Another model of Noah’s ark was a 36-inch 1/32 scale model of a cross section of the ark. This cross section model displayed the interior of the ark. It contained models of animals and caging systems. Displayed for comparison purposes were a 1/75 scale model of Christopher Columbus’s ship Pinta and a railroad stock car. The models were a big hit with the congregation, allowing them to get an idea of the size of the ark as described in the book of Genesis.

Other tables contained fossil skulls (casts) and examples of various types of sedimentary rocks. One large table was devoted to various books and literature on the subject of creation and evolution. Among the points and questions discussed were: Did the Flood of Noah occur, and can we believe the Bible? Could the ark carry all the animals? What did the ark look like? Has the ark been discovered? Are the dating systems reliable? Did pre-Adamic men exist?

After the seminar concluded, a question-and-answer session was held for 45 minutes. After that Mr. Mendez answered more questions for another hour. The interest in the seminar by the brethren, visitors and those connected by the local cybercast was very positive. Future plans are to invite Mr. Mendez for a return visit when he will present another seminar on the subject of “Early Man and the Genesis Record.”

Mr. Mendez, who has presented these seminars to more than 30 UCG congregations in the United States, may be contacted at acm@arnoldmendez.com or you may access more information on Victor Kubik’s Web site at www.kubik.org.

Victor Kubik

42 Camp Out at Castle Rock, Idaho

Families from the Spokane, Washington/Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, and Kennewick, Washington, congregations gathered for a campout June 21 to 23 at Castle Rock, Idaho. With the help of the teens, camp was prepared for a delightful weekend. Activities included Ping-Pong,激光, swimming and fishing.

Sabbath services were held under a tarp-covered pole structure. Teens led music and ran the sound system. The theme of the sermon by pastor Mark Mickelson was “The Church Is a Family.”

The “family reunion” at Castle Rock was so important to a family from Richland, Washington, that they traveled 400 miles to attend. They had heard about the adventures that took place there in the ’80s and ’90s, when the big red barn served as a dance hall for the campers and the river was somewhat gentler. The camp is still held on the property of Church member Grace Myers. Though the barn is gone now, the daisies were again in full bloom in the meadow and campfires were warm and friendly at night, bringing back memories of years gone by.

A potluck meal was held after Sabbath services, and the evening was filled with fun—dancing on a cement slab. Two of the teens were deejays and did a marvelous job. Pancakes and turkey sausage were served hot off the grill Sunday morning. The finals of the Ping-Pong competition also occurred with a teen defeating Mr. Mickelson.

Florence Maine

Teacher of the Year: Shelly (West) Jenkins, a member of the Houston South, Texas, congregation, was named Teacher of the Year at Walt Disney Elementary in Alvin, Texas. She has been teaching for 12 years and teaches fourth, fifth and sixth grade math.
Boise Sabbath School Constructs Tabernacle Model

The Boise, Idaho, Sabbath school class completed a miniature model of the tabernacle and outer court that God instructed Moses to build.

The class used the instructions given in UCG Sabbath School Teacher’s Outline Level 5, Unit 6, Week 1 (www.ucg.org/resources/ssl LEVEL5/LSU2WK1.pdf) and the UCG Bible Reading Program as a guide.

They studied the use of the furniture and what was expected of the priests and the people.

They took four Sabbath periods, cutting, pasting, painting and putting it all together.

“Visitors” to the theme park would see attractions such as the Testament Train, Garden of Eden Paradise, Noah’s Ark Petting Zoo, Joseph’s Egyptian Adventure, Manna Diner, Elijah Hiding Game, Red Sea Railway, Miracle Hut, Seven Trumpets Concert Hall and the Chariot of Fire ride.

An article with more details of this project appeared in Us Teens magazine, issue 2, 2002 (www.ucginc.org).

Leslie Schwartz

San Jose Children Create Bible Theme Park

The six children in the San Jose, California, Sabbath school program, along with teachers Leslie Schwartz, Tammy Schwartz and Frankie Nixon, built a Bible Theme Park featuring their favorite Bible stories. The completed project was displayed during the Spring Holy Days for the congregations in northern and central California.

The project began when one little girl suggested that we study our favorite Bible stories. We took that idea even further and decided that while studying different stories, we could also construct a three-dimensional theme park, where each story could be represented by an amusement park ride or attraction. This was a huge project for the kids, ages 4 to 10, to put together; but after weeks of hard work, those who saw it felt the finished product was spectacular.

Rachel and Jessica Jackson with the model of the tabernacle they constructed in Sabbath school class in Boise, Idaho.

It was a very interesting project, and the Sabbath school class felt a great sense of accomplishment upon completion.

Gloria Harden

Freeport Turns 7; Has Family Fun Show

The Freeport, Bahamas, congregation celebrated its seventh anniversary on the Sabbath of July 27. The day began with Sabbath services followed by a potluck meal. Invitations sent out to surrounding congregations and the addition of about 60 visitors, church attendance numbered 263.

After services, the St. Petersburg and Tampa congregations served a potluck meal. Invitations sent out to surrounding congregations had informed all guests that the hosting congregations would be providing the food. All visitors would need to do was show up.

Prior to a dance that was held later in the evening, a family forum-style Bible study was moderated by David Treybig, pastor of the Tampa Bay congregation. Those attending were divided into nine smaller groups and given common dating scenarios to discuss and recommend appropriate Christian responses.

Spokespersons for each group then reported their group’s recommendations to the reassembled audience. After the reports from the groups, a ministerial panel composed of Eric Evans, Jack Fike, Ralph Levy, Michael Machin, Chris Moen and Braden Veller gave additional comments. Several members mentioned how much they enjoyed this style of presentation and remarked how fast the time went.

A family dance was then held between 9 p.m. and midnight. Chris Moen provided a pleasant variety of dance tunes as he served as the deejay for the evening. Festive decorations and the refreshment table reflected the island paradise theme for the evening.

The next day, a beach party was held at the beautiful Fort DeSoto Beach near St. Petersburg. This beach was recently named the fourth best beach in the United States because of its beautiful white sand and clear water. The weather was perfect with sunshine and a pleasant breeze. Activities began with a sand-sculpturing contest and were quickly followed by a hamburger/hotdog lunch, beach games, volleyball and a buried treasure hunt for youth.

Prizes were given for the best sand-sculptures, the oldest (and most modest) swimsuits and to the person who traveled the farthest to attend. As the party concluded and guests began to leave, rain began to fall. It seems that we were blessed on many fronts, including inspiring messages, encouraging fellowship and excellent weather.

The Tampa Bay congregations plan to host this event again next summer. Plan now to join us.

David Treybig

Two Baptized in West Michigan

Two new members were baptized in West Michigan Jan. 27. Donald Little, longtime attendee of the Kalamazoo congregation, and Douglas Collison, a new attendee of the Grand Rapids congregation, were baptized in the home of Charles and Sharon Bailey. Pastor Kenneth Graham II and elder Charles Bailey performed the baptisms.

Servants Added in St. Petersburg

On Pentecost, May 19, Mike and Nancy Fike and Joe Terry, members of the St. Petersburg, Florida, congregation, were ordained by David Treybig as deacons and deaconesses during combined services with the Tampa, Florida, congregation.

Mike and Nancy Fike with Kathy and Joe Terry.
Announcements

Births

Ron and Janet (Preston) Barker of Dayton, Ohio, would like to announce the birth of their second child, Lillie Nicole, on March 1, 2002. Lillie weighed 6 pounds 5 ounces and was 20 1/4 inches long. Big brother Luke, age 4, is very happy to have a baby sister. Lillie is the fourth grandchild of Charles and Betty Preston of Cincinnati, and the fifth grandchild of Ronald and Nancy Barker of Cleveland.

Keith and Christine (Novak) Tomes of Agoura Hills, California, are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Julia Michelle, on June 7, 2002. She weighed 9 pounds 1 ounce and was 21 inches long. Christopher, Kyle, Stephanie and Caleb are thrilled to welcome their little sister into the family.

Stephanie and Caleb are thrilled to welcome, Julia Michelle Tomes, the 21st grandchild for Steve and Nancy Barker of Cleveland.

Charles and Betty Preston of Cincinnati, Ohio, are delighted to welcome, Luke, age 4, is very happy to have a baby brother. Lillie Nicole Barker, the 21st grandchild for Charles and Betty Preston.

A reception followed the service, which was held at Hillcrest Manor, a place used by Betty on many occasions to host and entertain her friends. Those gathered sang Betty’s favorite songs that she taught her children.

She is survived by three sisters, four children (Karen Alexander, Mary Williams, Daniel Biedler and John Biedler), 10 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

Engagements

Neil and Isabella Wallis from Pretoria, South Africa, are happy to announce the engagement of their eldest daughter, Monique, to Jason Ragan Webster of New Zealand on June 26, 2002. The wedding is planned for early January 2003.

Weddings

Charles and Linda O’Grady of Nashville, Tennessee, are pleased to announce the wedding of their daughter, Elizabeth, to Basil Kopy of Laurel, Maryland, son of Vera Kopy and the late Alexander Kopy.

Charles and Linda O’Grady of Nashville, Tennessee, are pleased to announce the wedding of their daughter, Rita Marie Disman, to Neil Scott Crane, son of Walter and Kitty Crane of Gladewater, Texas, on May 26, 2002. The marriage was performed by David Myers, pastor of the Akron congregation. The couple attend the East Texas congregation and reside in Gladewater.

Bill and Betty Torode have been married for 50 years.

Obituaries

Elizabeth Modupeoluwa Onguntoya, 51, of the Lagos, Nigeria, congregation, died suddenly on July 19, 2002, and was buried on July 26, 2002. She was baptized into the Church of God in 1984. She was an amiable, outgoing and caring lady. An elegant lady, she was an inspiration to the youths and ladies of the Lagos congregation who will dearly miss her encouraging and tender disposition. She is survived by her husband, Samuel Olutunji Onguntoya, and four children: Deborah Ohuwotayo, Joseph Ohuwasegun, Samson Ibukunoluwa and Rebecca Ohuranti. O. Akin-Ogundeji, a deacon in the Lagos congregation, conducted the funeral services.

Lerald Henderson of the Wichita, Kansas, congregation, died July 28 in a watercraft accident at the age of 31. He was the director of Information Systems at SemperCare. He graduated from Ambassador College in 1993 with a degree in Information Systems. His father, Gerald Henderson, preceded him in death.

Bill and Jean Burnett has been a baptized member of the Church since 1966 and Jean since 1967. The congregation rejoiced with them as they rejoiced.

The marriage of their daughter Rita Marie Disman to Neil Scott Crane, son of Walter and Kitty Crane of Gladewater, Texas, on May 26, 2002. The wedding was performed by David Myers, pastor of the Akron congregation. The couple attend the East Texas congregation and reside in Gladewater.

The couple attend the East Texas congregation and reside in Gladewater.

Bill and Jean Burnett have celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

The Flint, Michigan, congregation happily celebrated with Bill and Betty Torode their 50th wedding anniversary a week early with a surprise dinner on Aug. 10, 2002. They were presented an anniversary clock with the inscribed date of Aug. 17, 2002, honoring their 50 years of marriage. They have been members of God’s Church since 1964. Two of their grandchildren who attend with them were there to participate.

Lerald (Larry) Henderson of Rowlett, Texas, son of Gerald and Arlene Henderson of the Wichita, Kansas, congregation, died July 28 in a watercraft accident at the age of 31. He was the director of Information Systems at SemperCare. He graduated from Ambassador College in 1993 with a degree in Information Systems. His father, Gerald Henderson, preceded him in death.

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“Council,” continued from page 11

as provided in Section 9.5 of the Bylaws (which allows the chairman of the Council to serve temporarily as president under certain circumstances). After some discussion, the Council decided to wait until next year and review the proposed amendment then.

Also discussed was the Member Appeal Form and made a minor modification, approving the result unanimously. In a related matter, they agreed to create two separate committees to review member appeals for inclusion. The second appealed elders’ appeals—the Expelled Elders Appeal Committee has been functioning in both categories. The suggested names will be brought forward later.

Finance

Robert Dick introduced a discussion on how the committees of the Council operate. He pulled the threads of the presentation together by stating that the discussion was intended to outline what the subject is, and point to the way a complete evaluation of where we are in the actual function of the Council, through its committees. Some of those committees, he said, have “moved into administrative roles on multiple fronts.” He recommended the establishment of a task force “for the Council of Elders to undertake a comprehensive review of its role and its committees’ roles” with key questions in mind:

• What do the governing documents say regarding our role?
• What was the intent of the Translational Board when it created the governing documents?
• What do the auxiliary documents say that specifically relates to the role of the Council?
• In actual practice, what are the committees of the Council doing?
• Are the minutes of the Council and its committees functioning according to parliamentary norms, and to what degree should they be expected to do so?
• Would greater adherence to parliamentary norms help the Council do its business more effectively?

The magnitude of work involved led to Mr. Kubit’s suggestion that a task force be set up to deal with it. The Council approved the following resolution unanimously:

thermore, its aim is to preach the gospel in a focused, practical and collaborative effort that is guided, inspired and blessed by God. At our January 2003 Cincinnati meeting, our focus will be to discuss how the ministry’s role in evangelism can be expanded as we work with our traditional media methods.

Then he spoke about the Editorial Board, a panel of the Media Committee that helps determine content for our publications. Eugene and Roseburg, Oregon, pastor Randy Stiver has gleaned preliminary input that will prove helpful, through services with young adults in the Church in Cincinnati and Eugene. They suggested having a body of literature that would be designated “first contact literature.” Their consensus was that the church’s leaders would need to read a factual, goal-focused, interesting and relevant literature that would be designated “first contact literature.” Their consensus was that the church’s leaders would need to read a factual, goal-focused, interesting and relevant literature that would be designated “first contact literature.”

The Council discussed possible additions to the Amendment Committee, since it is short one member, following the hiring of Joe Horchak (members of the Amendment Committee are chosen for one year and need to be re-elected as a committee member and an alternate will be released once the individuals are contacted and agree to serve.

Media and Communications

Mr. Kubit updated the entire Council on this committee’s operations. He handed out a chart showing the progressive increase in the amount budgeted for public proclamation of the gospel—from just over $2.05 million (representing 14.87 percent of the budget) in fiscal 1999-2000 to $3.18 million (17.44 percent of the budget) in fiscal 2002-2003. That’s an increase of 55 percent, while the entire budget has increased by just over 32 percent. So not only the actual dollar amount, but also the percentage of the budget devoted to this area of the Church’s work has increased steadily.

He reviewed the Council’s resolution of this past February that called for the hiring or subcontracting of a managing editor of the Church’s Internet presence. We wish to greatly enhance our various Web sites, now reaching a growing number of people who search for and rely on this avenue for spiritual knowledge. We plan Web-based E-learning modules and the care of local congregations. Pursuing this, it is to preach the gospel in a focused, practical and collaborative effort that is guided, inspired and blessed by God. At our January 2003 Cincinnati meeting, our focus will be to discuss how the ministry’s role in evangelism can be expanded as we work with our traditional media methods.

Mr. Kubit spoke about the work of the Integrated Media/Evangelism Oversight Committee. The goals of this committee have been to create an integrated structure for evangelism that would include the church’s leadership, media (electronic and print), ministerial evangelism and the care of local congregations.

Feast Impressions

We wish to greatly enhance our various Web sites, now reaching a growing number of people who search for and rely on this avenue for spiritual knowledge. We plan Web-based E-learning modules and the care of local congregations. Pursuing this, it is to preach the gospel in a focused, practical and collaborative effort that is guided, inspired and blessed by God. At our January 2003 Cincinnati meeting, our focus will be to discuss how the ministry’s role in evangelism can be expanded as we work with our traditional media methods.

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Conviction About the Feast

I like to see Mr. Stiver and others working at keeping the Feast days throughout September. I have become convinced that this is the will of God for me in my life, and therefore I would love to receive a call or a letter or E-mail, advising me what is the best thing for me to do now.

How Thirsty I Have Been!

Thirst God for the survival of His Church!

Soon I want to find a place to worship with others who believe as I do. I have felt so alone. I cannot get enough of your literature. How thirsty I have been!

Due to the volume of correspondence, our response will be your quick response. My husband is enjoying your correspondence. The newspaper has brought him into the loop of Church activity and he enjoys the articles. Thank you for the Feast Activity sheet. Have a good festive season.

into the Local Church

The Council finished its meetings early, with several stated that it gave a good basis for continued discussion. The Ethics/ Rules and Rules Committee will work with the Council on the ethics/ rules and rules committee to help determine content for our publications, and finalized several items of business.

2003 GCE

David Register joined the Council meeting by phone from southern California to give a report from the Advisory Committee for the 2003 Annual Meeting of the General Conference of Elders, which he chairs. The committee consists of Diane Bailey, Peter Eddington, Larry Greider, Joe Horchak, Charles Melear, David Register, Randy and Kay Schroeder, Doug Horchak, Thomas J. Wasilikoff and Robin Webber.

Roughly one month before the Advisory Committee had sent a survey regarding the 2003 General Conference of Elders to all elders. Eighty-four elders returned surveys, representing about 20 percent of the General Conference. Several comments and suggestions came in, among them the following:

• Explore some way for the Church to partially finance expenses.
• Allow more time for social functions (for casual interaction of elders and wives); for instance, add a Saturday night barbecue or Sunday pancake breakfast hosted by Council members.
• Hold an open Q&A with the Council and give more time to discuss ballot issues with the elders.
• Continue the international reports, but focus more on human-interest material rather than on statistics.
• Eliminate break-out sessions.
• Combine the repetitive parts of the annual business meeting.
• Hold a session for ministers’ wives.
• Focus even more on a positive and proactive approach, leaving attendees positively motivated.

Even so, the Council decided that it would be released once the individuals are notified of their assignment, which is where the presentation of this issue of United News may end.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Comments and suggestions to improve United News are welcome. Mail to: United News, P.O. Box 54127, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, or E-mail mike_bennett@ugc.org.

United Church of God, an International Association

Letters

September/October 2002

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United News

Youth United E-magazine.

• Annual budget for the program (just over $19,500, not counting the United Youth Camps).

Miscellaneous Business

The Council spent a brief time in executive session covering input on job performance of the president and chairman. The Council recommended a discussion of a related matter, they agreed to take this matter to the next meeting. The motion carried. Some wished to invite an “outside” motivational speaker. A few suggested that speakers at the Sabbath service be elders who are not Council members.

Respondents suggested three themes: “Maximizing Your Ministry,” “Doing the Good Work” and “Stewardship: How to Survive the Stewardship-Related Challenge.” The Council members liked all three, and several stated that it gave a good basis for early planning.

The Advisory Committee made its report.

Select a theme and appoint the Advisory Committee to recruit speakers and presenters for Council approval.

• Approved a suggested line.

• Undertake a discussion of how to encourage those elders who do not participate to consider resigning from the GCE, but remain an elder in good standing in the Church. Perhaps a letter from the president and chairman would be helpful in explaining this procedure.

• Have the president and chairman write a letter to all elders about eldership responsibilities in United.

• Have the committee write an article about the survey results to try to stimulate participation in the 2003 GCE.

• Promote the GCE with several notices and announcements. This could include a personal invitation for each elder, sending a color brochure (tri-fold style), and displaying banners with the theme outside the meeting hall and over the stage at the GCE itself.

• Plan the Saturday night barbecue or Sunday morning pancake breakfast as suggested by survey respondents.

• The Council thanked Mr. Register for the committee’s efforts. The Ethics/ Roles and Rules Committee (Gary Antion, chairman) will work with Mr. Register to move the project forward.

Youth Programs

Doug Horchak presented an update on Church youth programs for the Council. The material gave an overview of some of the following areas:

• The Youth Education Team’s curriculum: Jim Servidio, Larry Greider, David Trebyg, Joel Meeker, Doug Horchak.

• A brief history of the program and development, working from the Education Committee of the Council.

• Preteen Sabbath school curriculum.

• Feast of Tabernacles education.

• Teen Bible study guides.

• Parenting seminars.

• United Youth Camps.

• United Youth Corps.

• Young adult seminars/weekends.

• E-mail ucyouth.org Web site.

Youth United.

• Annual budget for the program (just over $19,500, not counting the United Youth Camps).

Youth United.

Youth United.

The magnitude of work involved led to Mr. Kubit’s suggestion that a task force be set up to deal with it. The Council approved the following resolution unanimously:

The Council thanked Mr. Register for the option, with further environmental testing, not to exceed a cost of $15,000, to be carried out. The motion failed 7-5, with Messrs. Dick, Franks, Horchak, Kilough, Kubib, Thompson and Walker balloting against it; and Messrs. Antion, Dean, Jewell, McCullough and Seigel in favor.

• Suggestions have surfaced on the Elders Forum about procedures of processing and announcing Holy Day offerings results. The topic was remanded to Ministerial Services for a suggested resolution.

• A resolution suggested by the Amendment Committee pertaining to letters of concern about proposed amendments to the Church’s governing documents will be studied and discussed at a teleconference or the next meeting.

• An adjustment to the Council’s Relocation Policy regarding mileage reimbursement was passed 10-0.

In recognition of Mr. McCullough’s recent retirement (the continues his service as a Council member), the Council presented an acrylic plaque inscribed with a message of appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. McCullough for their 40+ years of service to God’s people.

The Council will meet next in Cincinnati the second week of December.

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Camp in Oregon Protected From Forest Fire

A 4,200-acre forest fire that came within 3 miles of Camp Davidson in Oregon nearly forced the cancellation of the United Youth Camp there in early August. “In fact, if Camp Davidson had been scheduled just one week earlier, we could not have had camp,” wrote Matthew Fenchel, camp director. “God showed His power and love by intervening.”

The fire was 100 percent contained Aug. 2, so Mr. Fenchel with the pastors in the Northwest made the decision to proceed with the camp which began Aug. 4. For a report on Camp Davidson, see page 6.

25 Congregations to Test GN Gift Copy Promotion

Since it was announced Aug. 8, 25 U.S. congregations have volunteered to participate in the test of a new Good News member participation project. In the project brethren are encouraged to provide, anonymously, gift copies of The Good News to friends, relatives and others.

At the end of August these congregations were sent a total of 5,000 surplus gift copy cards for distribution among the brethren. They were also sent samples of the Good News gift copies for display on the information tables at Sabbath services. Special “cover-wrapped” magazines like these will be mailed from the home office to people for whom the brethren have provided names and addresses. Each magazine includes a letter of invitation and a bound-in reply card which a potential subscriber can use to request his or her own full subscription. The volunteer congregations were also sent flyers and handouts for the information tables and an announcement about the project to be read at Sabbath services.

This project should be an opportunity for Church members to further participate in helping spread the gospel. Many brethren, especially those who are a bit older, could easily find time to get involved. In many cases, they have accumulated a lifetime of friends, acquaintances, neighbors, family members, business and professional associates, fellow employees and others. All of these people could greatly benefit from a Good News gift copy.

There is still room for others to participate. If you want to get involved, contact John LaBissoniere by E-mail at john_labissoniere@ucg.org or call toll free (888) 369-9940.

30 Attend Third ABC Sampler

Ambassador Bible Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, completed its third ABC Sampler program during the week of Aug. 12 to 16. Thirty enthusiastic students attended from as far away as California, Florida, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Colorado, New Mexico, New Hampshire. There were several who have been in the program each year.

The program was conceived to give individuals a “sample” of the seven-month program by actually being on location and having seven-hour days for one week. The students receive instruction from actual classroom material given in the regular ABC program. Some material is condensed to bring closure to the topic.

This year, President Roy Holladay brought the class material from the “Pastoral Epistles—1 Timothy.” Ralph Levy brought two subjects: “Deuteronomy—a Second Look” and “The Book of Ruth.” Three shorter topics were delivered by ABC Coordinator Gary Antion: “Teens and Seniors,” “Zephaniah and the Day of the Lord” and “Your Neighbors—The Jehovah’s Witnesses.”

The program is usually scheduled one week after the ABC program concludes—the second full week in August. The cost is $50 and helps cover the cost of the snacks and other amenities. The topics presented each year in the 30 hours of biblical studies are different so that repeat attendees may glean more information on the Scriptures and related topics.

We are inspired by the enthusiasm the students displayed for the Word of God and the ABC Sampler program. It is our hope that many others will participate in this successful program in the future.

Chairmen Chosen

Two new committee chairmen were chosen at the Council of Elders meeting Aug. 5. Richard Thompson will serve as chairman of the Education/Ministries Services Committee, and Jim Franks will serve as chairman of the Doctrine Committee.