



# United Church of God *an International Association*

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March 16, 2017

Dear fellow elders and brethren,

We know that we are living in critical, crucial times. We are bombarded everyday with the conflicts that are extant in the world. God and Christ have commissioned the Church of God to cry aloud and serve as watchman during these tough transitional times. The peoples of the world are filled with a sense of anxiety and discontent.

In times like this we need to draw as close to God as we possibly can. The apostle James writes: “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:8-10, King James Version).

We know that *fasting* is one of the principal ways for us to afflict our souls, humble ourselves and seek God with all our being. When we fast we are denying the flesh and everything that Satan has to offer. He challenged Jesus to turn stones into bread, to tempt God by jumping off the temple, and he further tempted Him by offering Him the kingdoms of this world. At that time, Jesus was fasting, and He rebuked Satan’s temptations with the Word of God.

When we fast we are in essence saying, “Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:10, KJV). Jesus was not fasting to get—He was fasting to *draw close to His Father* so that he might do the will of the Father who sent Him, to die for the sins of the world.

Brethren, we all want to do the will of God and serve Him with all our heart, mind and strength. We need God to help us as never before. All of us deeply desire to do the will of God and finish the work He has given us to do. Note the words of the apostle Paul, “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as *wise*, redeeming the *time*, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand *what the will of the Lord is*” (Ephesians 5:15-17, emphasis added).

Each one of us needs to ask ourselves: “Am I discerning the times”? Am I one of the wise virgins or am I one of the foolish virgins? We all want to be one of the wise virgins and have our lamps filled with oil.

And so, at this time, we humbly ask the entire United Church of God to join the Council of Elders and the administration *for a day of prayer and fasting* to beseech God for the necessary *wisdom* needed to *understand His will*. **The Council has set the date for this fast for the Sabbath of April 22**, which we pray is a day when we can all fast and beseech God together as a

church. There is a great synergy created when we all fast together for the purpose of humbling ourselves and drawing closer to our heavenly Father. We are not fasting to get, *but to give*; that is, to be able to more powerfully proclaim the coming Kingdom of God.

The purpose of fasting is to humble ourselves before God, examine our shortcomings and ask God to hear our prayers. Note the words of Isaiah:

“Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke?”

“Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?”

“Then your light shall break forth like the morning. Your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’”

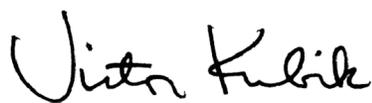
“If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul. Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday.

“The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones. You shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail” (Isaiah 58:6-11).

We will all be fasting with these passages in mind. We want to root out finger pointing and evil surmising and break the yoke of wickedness. We want to be reconciled to God, Christ and each member of the Body of Christ, for we are all members of one another (Romans 5:12). It appears that fulfilling the foregoing is a prerequisite for God answering our humble petitions to bless us and lead us.

So please join us in earnestly asking God to help us discern what we should *all* be doing. From John 6:44 we know that no man can come to Christ unless the Father calls them. We cannot convert one single person. That is literally an act of God. But God places upon us the responsibility to preach the gospel, and to teach those who come to conversion and to care for them. That is a summary of the work we do. We are asking God to show us what we should do better or differently.

In Christ’s service,



Victor Kubik



Donald L. Ward