



News At a Glance

Recently Baptized Members Surveyed

In order to assess what has been most helpful to those who have been recently baptized and to help plan future media efforts to better serve those who are considering baptism, a survey was sent to 560 recently baptized members. Of these, 204 shared their input. Some highlights of the survey:

- 35.3 percent have been associated with the Church of God less than five years; 54.4 percent have been associated 15 or more years.

- 10.8 percent had their first contact with the United Church of God through *The Good News* magazine and 3.4 percent through the UCG Web sites. More than three quarters had their first contact with family, friends or acquaintances in the Church.

- 44 percent were age 30 or under; more than 40 percent were college graduates.

Of those who did not grow up in the Church of God:

- 24 percent were baptized within 12 months of their first contact; another 36 percent were baptized in one to two years.

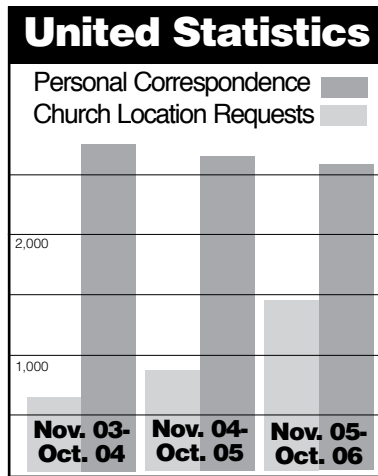
- 55 percent were of a Protestant background; 20 percent, Catholic; and 11 percent, Sabbatarian.

On a five-point scale, 65.7 percent of all respondents rated UCG booklets highest in helping them in their spiritual development and in their decision to be baptized. *The Good News* followed with 32.4 percent.

Respondents highlighted a wide variety of literature, specific sermons, ABC classes and camp Bible studies as particularly helpful in their decision to be baptized.

Many also mentioned how talking to baptized members and hearing their stories was helpful. In this light, we welcome members' stories of their calling

See "News at a Glance," page 2



Beyond Today Grows Rapidly Over Its First Year

■ A look at what goes into planning and producing the Church's video program.

by Janet Treadway

The very first *Beyond Today* programs were recorded Nov. 16, 2005, and the first one was aired Dec. 18. Over the first year 40 programs have been recorded. *Beyond Today* is currently airing on 190 cable-access TV stations and 18 radio stations across the United States. More than 5,000

people have responded by telephone or online.

With the click of your mouse or by tuning into your local cable-access TV station, you can view or listen to programs with varied topics such as "The Four Seasons of Parenting," "The Debt Trap" or "What Next America?"

After the new studio was built and outfitted, a lot of work was put into choosing a name for the program. President Clyde Kilough announced the program's name *Beyond Today: Understanding Your Future*, on Oct. 6, 2005. "Selecting a title



Steve Myers, Darris McNeely and Rex Sexton ready to record

was actually a tremendous challenge, and we evaluated nearly 300 suggested titles!"

said Media and Communications Services operation manager Peter Eddington. With a name and a new studio, production began in November 2005.

Laying the Groundwork

Before production can begin on *Beyond Today*, important groundwork must be laid. This starts a year in advance with a 10-person production team planning programs, hosts and guests for the following year. In October 2006 the production team

See "Beyond," page 7

United Brethren Enjoy Feast at 58 Sites



Touring Ephesus in Turkey; Feastgoers in northern Brazil (photos by Scott Ashley and Wanderson Esquerdo)

"Reports from all over the world have been very positive, and I know it is encouraging to everyone to see the spiritual rejuvenation inspired by the messages and fellowship during this Festival season," said President Clyde Kilough.

More than 20,000 people attended 58 United Church of God Feast sites on six continents.

U.S. sites reported a 6.9 percent increase in attendance

for the first Holy Day and a 10.1 percent increase for the Last Great Day. Offering amounts were up 12 percent. "With the exception of the spring Holy Days in 2002, this is the largest increase that we have experienced since the beginning of the United Church of God," said Jim Franks, Ministerial Services operation manager.

Reports on 54 sites are included in this issue, beginning on page 9. We hope to have the other reports next issue. UN

Option to Give Online Available Nov. 15

■ President announces that donations can be accepted online at www.ucg.org/donation and encourages members who choose to give online to use the electronic check option, not the credit card option.

Excerpts from Clyde Kilough's Oct. 28 letter are reprinted here.

Dear Brethren,
As we all know, technological advancements are rapidly innovating the way we do many things in today's world. Commerce is one major area, with everything from shopping to paying our bills increasingly taking place through the Internet and other electronic means.

Growing numbers of people now pay their bills electronically, and more and more members and coworkers have been asking that we make that option

See "Online," page 7

Kilough, Franks Visit Living Church of God

■ United Church of God leaders accept invitation to visit Living Church of God Headquarters in Charlotte, North Carolina, and extend a similar invitation to the leadership of the Living Church of God to visit Milford, Ohio.

The following statement was prepared in cooperation with and approval of the leadership of the United Church of God (Clyde Kilough and Jim Franks with the support of the Council of Elders) and the Living Church of God (Roderick Meredith, Dibar Apar-

tian, Richard Ames and Douglas Winnail).

After a series of e-mail messages prior to the Feast of Tabernacles, Clyde Kilough (president of the United Church of God) and Jim Franks (operation manager for Ministerial Services, United Church of God) responded to a long-standing offer of hospitality to visit the Headquarters of the Living Church of God in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Visit in Charlotte

Mr. Kilough and Mr. Franks traveled to Charlotte on Monday, Oct. 23, and returned to Cincinnati on Tuesday, Oct. 24.

While in Charlotte, they were host-

ed by Dr. Doug Winnail, the director of Church Administration for the Living Church of God.

The visit was very cordial and included a tour of the headquarters facility and introduction to the staff.

On Tuesday morning, Mr. Kilough and Mr. Franks joined Dr. Meredith, Dr. Winnail, Mr. Ames and Mr. Apartian for an open discussion on a variety of issues facing the Church of God. All involved felt the visit was profitable and were pleased with the opportunity to communicate.

Mr. Kilough extended a similar invitation to the leadership of the Living Church of God to make a visit to the home office of the United Church of God in Milford, Ohio. UN

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and baptism. If you would like to send a 200- to 400-word "Baptism Story," send it to mike_bennett@ucg.org and copy your pastor.

Internet Visitors Increase

Visitors to the Church's six main Web sites increased to 375,640 for the month of August, up from 197,916 in February. This is an increase of 89 percent in just six months. These six Web sites include: www.ucg.org, www.gnmagazine.org, www.verticalthought.org, www.beyondtoday.tv, www.wnponline.org and www.thisistheway.org.

Ongoing improvements and technical advances keep United's Web sites on the forefront of technological advancement and presentation—including more video, webcasting, podcasting and search capabilities.

Peter Eddington

Beyond Today Setting Records

As of Sept. 20, 5,390 people had responded to the *Beyond Today* program, for an average of 138 a week. This was more than double what the average had been just six weeks before. The total for the year includes 1,519 telephone responses to the program on cable-access TV, 461 calls for the radio program and 2,899 responses through the *Beyond Today* Web site. Another 511 were Yahoo or Google Web responses.

The programs with the highest responses have been:

- "The Debt Trap," 275 responses.
- "What Next America?," 265.
- "Where Have All the Fathers Gone?," 264.
- "The Next Superpower," 256.
- "A Place Called Hell," 244.

August was a record-breaking month for responses to the Church's *Beyond Today* video program, with 1,215 in all from telephone calls and the Internet. This is a 63 percent increase over July, and a 38 percent increase over June (the previous record month).

Sept. 6 and 7 saw four new *Beyond Today* programs recorded. Steve Myers was the host of this round of programs:

- "Halloween, Treat or Trick?"
- "Is There Really a Devil?"
- "Why Give Thanks?"
- "Marketing Evil."

If *Beyond Today* is not yet airing in your U.S. town and you have cable-access channels, please contact John LaBissoniere by e-mail at john_labissoniere@ucg.org to become a sponsor.

Please pray for the continued success of our relatively new video efforts.

Peter Eddington

See "News at a Glance," page 24

Council Member Profile: Victor Kubik

Victor Kubik was born in Hannover, Germany, in a United Nations Displaced Persons camp in the aftermath of World War II. He immigrated to the United States with his parents in 1949.

He is married to the former Beverly Skogen. They have three children: Kim in New Jersey, Kevin in Minnesota and Michael in Indiana. Michael is married to Alix Rhodes, and they have one daughter, Alyssa.

Mr. Kubik studied the Bible through his high school years and became convicted of the Sabbath and other truths. He applied to Ambassador College in 1965 before hearing about the Church. He was accepted to the Pasadena campus and later transferred to and graduated from Amba-

sador College in Bricket Wood, England, in 1969. After graduation, he served in the ministry in Sioux Falls and Rapid City, South Dakota; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Paducah, Kentucky.

In 1990, Mr. Kubik was transferred to Pasadena, where he served as assistant director of Church Administration until his resignation from the ministry of the Worldwide Church of God in March 1995.

He was the first director of Ministerial Services in United. In 1996 he and Beverly were transferred to Indianapolis where he pastors congregations in Lafayette and Terre Haute, Indiana, to this day.

He also oversees the work of the United Church of God in Eastern Europe, which includes a congregation in Tartu, Estonia,

and a working relationship with Sabbatarians in Ukraine, and he travels regularly to those regions. He is fluent in Ukrainian and also speaks Russian.

Mr. Kubik has served on the Council of Elders through the entire history of United. He currently chairs the Media Committee and enjoys seeing the dynamics of constantly changing technology being used to proclaim an unchanging gospel message. He also serves on the Education/Ministerial Services Committee.

One of his passions is to help our brethren in developing areas. In 1999 he founded a nonprofit organization, LifeNets, which helps people in practical ways, helps them become self-sufficient and encourages even the poor to focus on others.



Beverly and Victor Kubik

He gives special credit to his wife, Beverly, who has been an integral part of his ministry. Her full-time work is his ministry. "Without the devotion and dedication of Bev to all the things that I try to do, I wouldn't even begin to see the successful outcomes I have experienced."

His pastimes include playing the piano, bicycling and hiking. **UN**

FORWARD! Are You a Tourist or a Pilgrim?

by Peter Eddington



flattened by 30-page *Reader's Digest* abridgments.

It is not difficult in such a world to get a person interested in the message of the gospel; but it is very difficult to *sustain* that interest. Many claim to have been converted, but the evidence for mature, Christian lives is slim. There is a great market for religious *experience* in our world, but there is little inclination to sign up for a *long apprenticeship* in faithful obedience.

What makes for an enduring Christian? Are we following the lead of the Holy Spirit as a *pilgrim*, or are we just sitting on the sidelines like a *tourist*?

Religion in our time has been captured by the tourist mind-set. Religion is understood as a visit to an attractive site—to be made when we have adequate leisure.

Megachurches

People today will try anything—until something new comes along. In the United States, megachurches of 2,000 to 24,000 members cater to the emotional needs of their audiences to ensure the congregation "feels good." Megachurch-phenomenon pastors seek to provide whatever their *membership* says it needs, often only loosely based on the Bible.

"A number of social observers have suggested that megachurches resemble shopping malls in their wide array of *consumer-driven* ministerial offerings . . . This system provides the entire membership with a continuous supply of *appealing choices* that fit *their tastes* . . . As one megachurch member explained, 'It has everything I need in one package'" (hrr.hartsem.edu/bookshelf/thumma_article2.html, emphasis added throughout).

Disciple and Pilgrim

What about us? How convicted is our belief? Why do we attend services? Are we looking for a church that fits *our* ever-changing desires?

Today's passion for the *immediate* and the *casual* makes the work of leading a Christian life most difficult. Everyone is in a hurry. Everyone wants shortcuts and is impatient for results. People have adopted the lifestyle of a *tourist* and only want the high points. The Christian life cannot mature under such conditions.

In going against the stream of the world's ways, there are two biblical descriptions of Christians that are extremely useful: *disciple* and *pilgrim*. *Disciple* says we are people who spend our lives apprenticed to our master, Jesus Christ. We are in a growing-learning relationship, always. A disciple is an active learner.

Being a *pilgrim* tells us we are to spend our lives *going somewhere*, following the path outlined by Jesus Christ. Neither term has the characteristics of a *tourist*. We realize that this world is not our home and set out, as Abraham did, for another spiritual city "whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:8-10).

Abraham looked to God, even when he did not know where he was going. He was a true disciple and *pilgrim*.

In our kind of culture, anything, even news about God, can be sold if it is packaged freshly; but when it loses its novelty, it goes on the garbage heap. This must not be the case for us. We must sustain our interest and faith over the long haul. Worthwhile things are not attained all at once—they take time.

As the apostle Peter wrote: "Beloved, I beg you as *sojourners* and *pilgrims*, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).

This fits in with the theme of this year's Feast sermon video, "Life Anew in a New Land." (You can see it again at www.ucg.org/feast.) Let's continue to be faithful sojourners as sons and daughters in God's family! **UN**

November
2006
Vol. 12, No. 8



United News
News of the United Church of God, an International Association

United News (ISSN 1088-8020) is published monthly except April and October by the United Church of God, an International Association, 555 Technecenter Drive, Milford, OH 45150. © 2006 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. Periodicals Postage paid at Milford, Ohio 45150, and at additional mailing offices. Canada Post publications mail agreement number 1487167.

Editor: Peter W. Eddington Managing editor: Mike Bennett Copy editor: Becky Bennett
UCG/IA Council of Elders: Aaron Dean, Robert Dick (chairman), Bill Eddington, Jim Franks, Clyde Kilough, Victor Kubik, Les McCullough, Joel Meeker, Richard Pinelli, Larry Salyer, Richard Thompson, Leon Walker

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

International addresses:

AFRICA & ASIA (except as listed below): United Church of God, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. E-mail: info@ucg.org

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

BRITISH ISLES: United Church of God—British Isles, P.O. Box 705, Watford, Herts. WD19 6FZ England. Phone: 020 8386 8467 Fax: 020 8386 1999

CANADA: United Church of God—Canada, P.O. Box 144, Station D, Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1, Canada. Phone: (905) 876-9966, (800) 338-7779 Fax: (905) 876-0569 E-mail: info@ucg.ca

CARIBBEAN: United Church of God, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, U.S.A. E-mail: info@ucg.org

EAST AFRICA (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda): United Church of

God—East Africa, P.O. Box 75261, Nairobi 00200 Kenya. E-mail: kenya@ucg.org

FIJI: United Church of God, P.O. Box 11081, Laucala Beach Estate, Suva, Fiji.

FRENCH-SPEAKING AREAS: Église de Dieu Unie—France, 127 rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France.

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

ITALY: La Buona Notizia, Chiesa di Dio Unita, Casella Postale 187, 24121 Bergamo Centro, Italy. Phone/Fax: (+39) 035 4523573. E-mail: info@labuonanotizia.org

MALAWI: P.O. Box 32257, Chichiri, Blantyre 3, Malawi. E-mail: malawi@ucg.org

MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 53, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius. E-mail: mauritiuss@ucg.org

THE NETHERLANDS: United Church of God Holland, P.O. Box 93, 2800 AB Gouda, The Netherlands.

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

NIGERIA: United Church of God, P.O. Box 2265, Somolu, Lagos, Nigeria. Phone: 01-8113644. E-mail: nigeria@ucg.org

PHILIPPINES: United Church of God, P.O. Box 81840, DCCPO, 8000 Davao City, Philippines. Phone: (+63) 82 224-4444 Cell/Text: (+63) 918-904-4444

SCANDINAVIA: Guds Enade Kyrka, P.O. Box 3535, 111 74, Stockholm, Sweden. E-mail: [sverige@ucg.org](mailto: sverige@ucg.org)

SOUTH AFRICA (and Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland only): United Church of God, Southern Africa, P.O. Box 2209, Beacon Bay, East London 5205, South Africa. Phone/Fax: 043 748-1694.

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

TONGA: United Church of God—Tonga, P.O. Box 2617, Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Church of God is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God in all the world, make disciples in all nations and care for those disciples.

President: Clyde Kilough

Scriptural references are from the New King James Version (© 1988 Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers) unless otherwise noted.

Subscriptions: *United News* is sent automatically to members of the United Church of God and is free to all who request it. Your subscription is provided by the generous, voluntary contributions of members of the United Church of God, an International Association, and their coworkers. Donations are gratefully accepted and are tax-deductible. To request a subscription, write to *United News*, United Church of God, P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, OH 45254-1027, or to one of the international addresses below.

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ZIMBABWE: United Church of God, Zimbabwe, P.O. Box 928, Causeway, Harare, Zimbabwe. Phone: 011716273 E-mail: zimbabwe@ucg.org

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The United Church of God, an International Association, has a home page on the Internet's World Wide Web. The address <http://www.ucg.org> gives you access to general information and news about the Church, issues of *The Good News* and *United News*, as well as our booklets. The address <http://www.ucg.ca> accesses the Church's Canadian Web site, <http://www.ucg.org.au> the Australian Web site, <http://www.labuonanotizia.org> the Italian Web site, <http://www.goodnews.org.uk> the British Isles Web site, <http://www.ucg.ph> the Philippines Web site, <http://www.ucgeastafrica.org> the Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda site and <http://www.ucg-rsa.org> the Southern Africa Web site.



News From Around the World

Members Translate Literature Into Many Languages

by Victor Kubik

Did you know that we currently have United Church of God literature available in Russian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Polish, Romanian and Swedish? All of it can be accessed at <http://ucg.org/easteuropean/>.

Several of the booklets have also been printed, such as *Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest* and *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. The *Bible Study Course* is available in Estonian and Russian and is mailed out on a regular basis as requested.

In Estonia we have had more people take the *Bible Study Course* in their native language than receive the English *Good News*. We have found that people's spiritual knowledge develops far more quickly if they study the Bible and literature in their native language—the language they are most comfortable using.

One of our newest items is the Swedish booklet *The Road to Eternal Life*. It is available on the new Swedish page of our UCG site at <http://www.ucg.org/svenska/>. Translation was done by members Solveig Hammar of Stockholm and Kira Spenser of Mjølby, Sweden, with layout by Cincinnati, Ohio, member Linda Saar.

Outside the major languages such as English, Spanish, German and Italian, we started to translate booklets and articles first into Russian in 1996 followed by Estonian and then other languages. How is this done and who does it?

Estonian: the New York Connection

For the Estonian and Russian languages, our most consistent effort was organized by elder Johnnie Lambert of Elmira, New York. Mr. Lambert undertook having the entire *Bible Study Course* translated into Estonian by one of our attendees, Toomas Schvaak.

The text was then sent to Jude Sieker in New York for layout. She has spent countless volunteer hours laying out the text along with graphics using the Quark XPress desktop publishing program, and



Johnnie and Hazel Lambert

then converting them to PDF files. Mr. Lambert purchased a color laser printer and printed the entire study course on it. In addition to being offered on radio advertisements, the study course was offered to *Good News* readers and was requested by most of the readers, who were anxious to read something in their native language. The course was then sent out monthly, one lesson at a time, from Mr. and Mrs. Lambert's home. The process worked very well and more than 180 regularly received it.

Since the publication of the *Bible Study Course*, Toomas Schvak has translated two or three articles from every issue of *The Good News* magazine. With every mailing, the translated articles are photocopied and inserted into the magazine. Since English is not a language known very well in Estonia, the Estonian inserts have been responsible for sparking a significant interest in *The Good News*.

The first mass-produced booklets in Russian and Estonian were printed in western Ukraine by our Sabbatarian friends. Their cost was about one third what it would cost to have it printed in the United States. Also, it saved us on shipping charges from the United States to the readers.

In the Estonian language, besides *The Gospel of the Kingdom* and *Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest*, the *Heaven and Hell* booklet was translated and printed on the Lamberts' printer. Two other booklets in production are *God's Holy Day Plan* and *Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God*.

International Cooperation Produces Russian Literature

Once the Estonian language *Bible*

Study Course was translated, Mr. Lambert proceeded to have it translated into Russian. An Estonian member did the first translation. It was then sent to Basil Kopey in Moscow and Natasha Weatherhead in Barbados for further review with our Sabbatarian friends in Ukraine giving their input as well. It is so important not only to have doctrinal concepts accurately translated, but to make sure that they sound right to the ear in the local language.

Along with Jude Sieker, who has continued to give her time in laying out the new Russian lessons, Carolyn Barker has learned from Jude to do the layout work. Carolyn has done half of the Russian lessons. Because of very substantial cost savings, we have had the printing done in Ukraine.

The Sabbatarians have been so impressed with our *Bible Study Course* that they printed an additional 1,000 copies for themselves in addition to our order of 2,000.

The course is shipped to Estonia where Johnnie Lambert and the members in Tartu are doing the regular mailings.

Two other booklets, *The Road to Eternal Life* and *God's Holy Day Plan*, have also been translated into Russian, and are in the process of being published.

One of our most prolific new languages is Romanian. UCG Church member Dr. Dumitru-Dan Teodorescu of Tampa, Florida, has translated many of our booklets, including *The Middle East in Bible Prophecy*.

Everything we offer is available in printable PDF format on our UCG Web site. Most of the site content is maintained by elder Henrikas Klovas who lives in Kaunas, Lithuania. All material is converted into PDF and is easily downloadable and printable by anyone accessing the Web site. **UN**



Henrikas Klovas



Dr. Teodorescu and his mother Georgetta

Romanian and More

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International News At a Glance

Senior Pastor Visits Mae Sot, Thailand

On June 11 David Baker, senior pastor for Asia, and Fil Olimpo, a member living in Bangkok, Thailand, visited the family of Davidson Lay Beh at their



Davidson Lay Beh and his family

home in Mae Sot, near the Thai-Burmese border.

Davidson Lay Beh contacted the United Church of God in early April to request membership in United. (He was baptized by Victor Kubik during the Feast of Tabernacles in 1993.) He is the son of Saw Lay Beh, a faithful minister of the Church of God in Myanmar until his death in 2000.

Mr. Baker said, "I know that Davidson and his family would greatly appreciate your prayers for God's guidance and protection in a very challenging location and situation."

Baker Visits India and Sri Lanka

David Baker, senior pastor for Asia, visited many members and prospective members in India and Sri Lanka from May 23 to June 8.

May 23 in Delhi, India, he met with Eugene Kumar and his parents, who have been members of the Church of God for many years and recently contacted the United Church of God. May 24 he traveled to Agra to baptize George Samuel, who has been requesting to be baptized for the past two years. May 25 he had "a very profitable discussion" with two *Good News* subscribers in Delhi. They are both receiving sermon CDs from the home office.

May 26 he flew to Pune, India, to spend the Sabbath with United member Prakash Mandora and his family and baptize Prakash's wife, Sara. They were joined for Sabbath services by Sumeet Kumar Vaid, a *GN* subscriber. The next day he met with G.P. Samuel and B. Yohan from Chirala, who had traveled through the night to meet with him.

May 29 he flew to Kochi on the southwestern coast of India to see *Good News* subscriber George Jacob Paul, then traveled to Madurai to meet Simon Daniel, a subscriber who grew up in the Church.

June 2 Mr. Baker flew to Colombo,

Sri Lanka, to spend the Sabbath and Pentecost with the Sri Lankan brethren. Ashraf Rehmat from Karachi, Pakistan, joined them for services. He contacted the home office more than a year ago and has a keen interest in becoming a part of the United Church of God.

June 5 Mr. Baker returned to India and met more *Good News* subscribers in Chennai. That evening he met with Darwin and Jane Paul, a young couple who deeply desire to follow God's way of life. June 6 he met with Vivek Raj and his parents, who have subscribed to the Church's literature since the 1960s.

June 7 he met with subscribers in Hyderabad before flying to Calcutta to meet with Tarun Ghosh, a teacher who is already observing the Sabbath and is beginning to observe the Holy Days. Two representatives from the Church of God Israel from Mizoram also flew to Calcutta to meet with Mr. Baker and continue discussing their desire to be a part of the United Church of God.

Excerpted from July/August United News Asia (www.ucg.org.ph/luna).

Australia Reports Record Renewal; Growth Through the Internet

The largest renewal of *Good News* subscribers ever conducted by UCG-Australia (8,914 subscribers were sent renewal notices) resulted in a response rate of 42.5 percent. This is the highest response rate so far.

UCG-Australia's Google ads were shown 18 million times during the 2005-2006 financial year, resulting in 4,093 new hard copy *Good News* subscribers, up 78 percent over the previous year. Besides the 19 ads being run for Australia, six were run for New Zealand and two for the United Kingdom.

Also, pastors in Australia are being contacted by people who have never received a printed copy of the *GN*, but have received all their knowledge about the Church from the Web site. This is saving the Church printing and postage.

UCG-Australia has also created an interactive *Bible Study Course* quiz for each lesson. They can be viewed at www.ucg.org.au/content/bible_course.asp.

Canada Reports Growth

As of Sept. 30, UCG-Canada received more mail this year than we did in all of 2005. Requests for subscriptions and literature received by e-mail continue to come in at a record pace. By the end of December we estimate to receive from 7,000 to 7,500 such requests. That compares to 5,116 requests received in all of 2005.

Sabbath attendance across Canada from January to August is running about 3 percent higher than last year.

Edwin van Pelt

35 Attend Caribbean Leadership Training Seminar

The Caribbean region conducted its fifth Caribbean Leadership Training seminar Aug. 4 to 7 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. There were 35 representatives from the Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Curacao and Trinidad.

For the first time, wives and deaconesses were included, thus affording them better insight into the scope of the leaders' responsibilities and better understanding of their roles in giving assistance and support to the Church.

Sessions were led by Arnold Hampton and Kingsley Mather, senior regional pastors. Participants were given a comprehensive overview of what the

Church is all about, beginning with the UCG's need to train leaders to replace an aging ministry; the Church's leadership model, based on biblical principles—serving with meekness and building harmony in speaking the same thing; how to "Prepare for Greater Service to God's People NOW"; and "Pitfalls Leaders in God's Church Must Avoid."

Janice Mather and Ann Hampton moderated breakout sessions for the ladies on discretion and "How to Make



Caribbean Leadership group photo

the Sabbath a Delight."

The Sabbath was indeed a delight, as Mr. Hampton and Mr. Mather gave the sermon and sermonette, complemented by vigorous songleading by Osmond Douglas of Barbados.

Madge Thompson and Atheah Turnquest

Kiloughs Attend South African Ministerial Conference and National Council Meeting

by André van Belkum

Clyde and Dee Kilough arrived in South Africa on Aug. 25 to attend a National Council meeting and ministerial conference at a venue in one of the country's wildlife reserves, the Kruger National Park.

Because of flight delays, the Kiloughs missed their connection from New York to Johannesburg, and as a result arrived a day later than scheduled. Another predicament arose when it was discovered that Mrs. Kilough's luggage was not on the flight. However, the bag was traced and delivered three days later.

Sabbath services were conducted in Johannesburg, with Mr. Kilough giving general news about developments in the Church, as well as a Bible study and the sermon titled "Vision, Commitment and Sacrifice." There was a record attendance of 110. Many appreciated the opportunity to spend time getting to know our guests better.

Sunday morning was set aside for traveling from various corners of the country to the meeting venue. People came from various countries in southern Africa. The ones who traveled the longest distance were Kambani and Shir-

ley Banda from Zambia, and Gladstone and Alice Chonde from Malawi.

National Council Meeting

Before the start of the ministerial meeting on Monday, Mr. Kilough attended the quarterly meeting of the National Council for Southern Africa. Neil Becker, who together with



his wife, Erlene, and daughter, Leanne, handles



Dee Kilough and Patti Naidoo, Clyde Kilough and Isaac Ixaba in Johannesburg; above, ministers and wives from South Africa with the Kiloughs; lion seen in Kruger Park



The budget for the next financial year was discussed and, again, the financial outlook for the coming year appears rosy.

As usual, time was devoted to discussions of media promotions and projects, and



Ministerial Conference

The next three days were set aside for matters relating to the ministry, especially the future leadership of the Church. In his opening lecture, Mr. Kilough pointed out how God has richly endowed us with various skills that we, in turn, can pass on to others. He emphasized that we need to ask God for greater personal effectiveness so that we can help others assume leadership roles.

He also led an interactive session on what to look for in leaders and how to further mentor those who respond positively, and explained how those in Ministerial Services are introducing various education programs that should help develop a rich crop of future leaders.

As the group was small, there were many opportunities to interact with each other. The result was an exceptional spirit of togetherness and camaraderie. The peaceful setting contributed to the success of the conference, with outings to view the wildlife in the vicinity.

Huge herds of African or Cape buffalo were spotted, together with elephants ominously feeding right next to the road. On one occasion we came across

two male lions that had made a kill on the road, and were lying with extended bellies close to where our vehicles were. Various species of antelope were spotted, as well as zebra, giraffe and gnu.

It was a sad occasion when finally the day of departure arrived, and we left to travel to our various homes in the scattered regions of southern Africa and the United States. However, the goals and purposes of the conference



Gladstone Chonde, Tony Levy and Morgan Kriedeman exchange greetings

were accomplished, and we feel better equipped to handle the enormous responsibilities God has given us to carry out. **UN**

Visiting the Churches in East Africa

by Jim Franks

Sept. 4 through 21, my wife, Sharon, and I traveled to East Africa to assist John and Merrie Elliott. Our purpose was to visit as many members and prospective members as possible in the two weeks that we had available.

During one stretch of 10 days we visited 12 groups of members and prospective members, conducted 12 services and 12 follow-up Bible studies. The groups ranged in size from as few as 10 to over 100.



East African Challenges

Our work in East Africa currently consists of members and prospective members from the three countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The governments are fairly stable in these countries but that is not true of the neighboring countries. On this list are two of the most troubled countries in all of Africa—Sudan and Somalia.

Recently an article appeared in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* that listed Kenya as a country with great potential for terrorist activity as a result of its proximity to Sudan and Somalia coupled with very porous borders.

HIV infection is quite high in this area and there are many orphans because of the high death rate from AIDS. In addition, typhoid fever, yellow fever and malaria all take a toll on the population, especially the young children. Poor sanitation and the lack of good drinking water are the primary causes of disease.

Through the Good Works Program wells have been dug in several areas and Church buildings have been constructed to provide a location for services in areas where the members were previously meeting in outdoor settings (OK in the dry season but virtually impossible during the wet season).

The work of the Church in this region is managed from our Church office currently located in the home of Antonio Ndung'u, a deacon and longtime Church member in Nairobi. He keeps the membership roll updated, answers letters and e-mails and coordinates our literature distribution.

In Kenya we have literature available in the major local languages. This makes it possible for more people to have access to the teachings of the Church and has raised the interest level across the country.

Currently we are working with 780 people throughout the three East African countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Most of these are in western Kenya with a few in Tanzania and a handful in Uganda. Of these 780, we have 93 baptized members in Kenya, eight in Tanzania and one in Uganda, for a total baptized of 102. In an average month we receive 40 to 50 Internet responses and another 50 letters asking questions or requesting a visit.

This year we had over 300 in attendance during the Feast of Tabernacles in Nairobi. Doug and Tanya Horchak and their daughter Becky attended the Feast with the members in East Africa this year while the Elliotts took a year off to attend elsewhere. Mr. Horchak reports that during the Feast there were 15 baptisms and 28 children blessed.

Diligent Deacons

In addition to Antonio Ndung'u, Mr. Elliott has divided the workload of caring for the brethren and prospective members among three other deacons: David Gichuru, Jonathan Otieno and Moses Nyaira. David Gichuru has been a member of the Church since the 1970s. Jonathan Otieno first attended Church with his father when he was 4 years of age and now at the age of 31 he is a deacon serving in the Migori area of western Kenya. Moses Nyaira began attending services in 1996 and was ordained a deacon in 2004.

These four deacons conduct Sabbath services, hold Bible studies and travel throughout the region meeting with prospective members. Moses Nyaira has a full-time job working for the Kenyan post office, and David Gichuru recently retired



from his full-time job. Jonathan Otieno and Antonio Ndung'u are full-time employees of the Church. All four display a genuine love for God's people and a passion for spreading the gospel throughout East Africa.

It was humbling to see the sacrifices made by these men and their families to



Clockwise from top: Jim Franks and Jonathan Otieno; Antonio Ndung'u in Church office; Sharron Franks with Alice and David Gichuru



provide more people with the knowledge of the true gospel. Each week they travel to remote villages and major cities to meet with groups of

See "Africa," page 23

Serving Equatorial Africa

Africa is an intriguing place to visit, but it can be a difficult place for one to live. Unstable governments, religious strife, rampant disease, and high unemployment make daily life a struggle for many Africans, especially in equatorial Africa. Yet God is calling people into His Church from this part of the world.

In the United Church of God we have many members and prospective members in this region scattered from Ghana eastward to Kenya. This portion of Africa is served by three U.S. pastors who have been assigned as senior pastors and two who serve as associate senior pastors.

Melvin Rhodes serves as the senior pastor for Ghana in addition to his U.S. responsibilities—pastor of Lansing, Michigan; managing editor for *Anchor* magazine; and senior writer for *The Good News* and *World News and Prophecy*. Mr. Rhodes is assisted in Ghana by Tom

Clark (pastor of Wichita, Liberal and Salina, Kansas).

Fred Kellers serves as the senior pastor for Nigeria in addition to his U.S. responsibilities—pastor of Nashville and Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and Bowling Green, Kentucky. Mr. Kellers is assisted by Mark Mickelson (pastor of Spokane, Washington, and Coeur d'Alene and Lewiston, Idaho).

John Elliott serves as our senior pastor for East Africa in addition to his U.S. responsibilities—pastor of Phoenix and Yuma, Arizona.

In the United Church of God, areas outside the United States are served in various ways. Some areas have their own national councils to tend to their organizational needs but other areas are administered from the home office. Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda fall into this latter category. Messrs. Rhodes, Kellers and Elliott work with Ministerial Services in taking care of the needs of the members in these countries.

Jim Franks

First-Ever Nigeria United Youth Camp Held Aug. 22-28

Aug. 22 was a day to be much remembered in the minds of the UCG members in Nigeria. It was the first day of the first United Church of God youth camp in the history of United in Nigeria. It had been exactly 11 years since there was a youth camp in Nigeria.

The Nigerian youth camp took place from Aug. 22 to 28, 2006. The location was a quiet and picturesque place at Afobaje Hotel, on the outskirts of an ancient town, Aiyetoro, in Ogun State in the southern part of Nigeria. The camp location was about 25 minutes from one of the tourist attraction in the state called Olumo Rock or "The Rock."

Thirty campers from all the congregations in the country, including 11 boys and 19 girls, attended the youth camp. Also attending were two minicampers, a 2-year-old girl and 5-year-old boy, Rotiwa and Tomiwa Akinbo. They are the children of the associate pastor, Oludare Akinbo, who helped coordinate the camp along with his wife. In addition to the campers, 18 staff members assisted in the goal of creating an enabling environment for these young

people, all but four of whom have had no previous camp experience.

The camp director, Doug Horchak, an experienced camp director and pastor from the Dallas, Texas, congregation traveled from Ghana where he also helped with the youth camp in that country. He, along with Oludare Akinbo, handled the Christian Living classes, prebreakfast Compass Checks and volleyball.

Mr. Horchak was joined by Greg Peoples, a volunteer staff member also from the Dallas, Texas, congregation. Mr. Peoples was on his first trip to Africa. He also added his unique Texan spice to the Team Challenge activity and various aspects of camp. It was a blessing indeed to have him volunteer to come and be with us here.

The activities included soccer, computer appreciation, Christian Living, Team Challenge and volleyball.

The computer appreciation class had each of the three camper teams assist in putting together a camp newsletter that is available for download at the UCG Nigeria's Web site.

On the Sabbath, Mr. Horchak traveled to Lagos to speak and fellowship with the brethren while Oludare Akinbo and Greg Peoples conducted the service at camp.

The last night of camp was a special night in that there was a formal banquet, with the boys having to escort two ladies picked randomly to the banquet. After the wonderful dinner (and dessert of ice cream and cake courtesy of a member of the Dallas, Texas, congregation, Dora Jennings,



American volunteer Greg Peoples with Nandome at camp in Nigeria; above right, a group photo

and her mother, Carmen Avilla), the teams all presented very interesting and wonderful skits.

We thank God Almighty for the gift of being able to organize and hold the camp again in Nigeria for our youths. A number of the staff members who have had camp experience in WCG all felt extremely happy to have the opportunity to participate in passing on to the youths what was passed on to them.

Campers and staff all benefited

immensely, and the comments of the campers were very encouraging. Just like the theme of the UYC 2006 camp video, I believe the first UYC in Nigeria was indeed an "Extreme Makeover" experience for all of the participants! The camp ended with everybody having had a thoroughly wonderful time and looking forward to next year's camp.

The campers and staff all departed for their home areas on Aug. 29.

Oludare Akinbo

Treasurer Visits Central America

by Leon Walker

On Aug. 31 the treasurer for the Church, Tom Kirkpatrick, began a 12-day trip to Central America. He was accompanied by Leon Walker, regional director for the Spanish-speaking areas, and his wife, Reba.

Their itinerary included five days in El Salvador and Guatemala respectively. Dr. Kirkpatrick was able to give a sermon and Bible study as well as a doctrinal lecture in the congregations of San Salvador and Guatemala City.

El Salvador

Dr. Kirkpatrick and the Walkers arrived in El Salvador Thursday evening, Aug. 31. The next day they toured San Salvador. The tour highlighted the great differences between the poorer and more affluent areas of the city.

Having traveled several times to Ghana, Dr. Kirkpatrick was struck by the similarities between these two developing nations. Though they are different nations ethnically, culturally, linguistically and historically, they face similar problems and challenges—especially in the economic arena.

El Salvador is also a nation affected by devastating earthquakes that occur on a much-too-frequent basis. This was highlighted in the tour by evidence of earthquake destruction still remaining as a result of earthquakes in 1985 and 2001. Dr. Kirkpatrick was sobered in viewing the site of loss of life and property from an enormous landslide caused by the earthquake of 2001 in Santa Tecla, a city near San Salvador.

On Sabbath, Sept. 2, Dr. Kirkpatrick gave the sermon in the morning in San Salvador. He spoke on God's great care and concern for us as individual mem-

bers of the Church. After lunch, which was provided for the membership in the hall where services were conducted, Dr. Kirkpatrick presented a Bible study on lessons we can learn from the life of Solomon.

Dr. Kirkpatrick said: "The brethren in San Salvador are quite friendly and made me feel very welcome with their warm greetings! The brethren face great challenges economically, as unemployment is very high (over 50 percent) in their country. The brethren must also deal on a day-to-day basis with the prevalence of political violence, even 15 years after the end of a terrible civil war, which is still very much in the minds of the brethren.

"Despite all this, I was struck by the friendliness and good cheer of the people of El Salvador, and especially the brethren in the Church. In this regard, they set a splendid example of faithful constancy and endurance, which we who have so much more physically and materially can learn from."

The next day, Sunday, Dr. Kirkpatrick conducted a 2½-hour lecture on a doctrinal test that the members had taken before his visit. The brethren had been given a Spanish translation of the test, and a tabulation of the results of their answers had been sent to Dr. Kirkpatrick before the trip. The test, which is a 100-question multiple choice examination, had been given previously to elders and others in Ghana and the Philippines. However, this is the first time that it had been given to an entire congregation.

The purpose of the exam is to help those who take it focus on the plan of God as highlighted in the doctrines ("teachings") of the Church. The exam is constructed in such a way that "almost correct" answers are offered as alterna-

tives to the "best," most complete and biblically-based answers to specific questions. This has the effect of reinforcing God's truth, and also showing how subtle is the enemy's distortions of that truth in many of the traditional doctrinal positions of this world's churches.

Dr. Kirkpatrick went through each question, explaining the correct answers and giving scriptures that support the correct answers. He was quite impressed by the seriousness and concentration of the brethren during this entire process. This was evidence of their desire to more fully understand the precious truths that God has revealed to His Church.

Guatemala

Dr. Kirkpatrick and the Walkers next traveled to Guatemala, which is only a 25-minute flight from El Salvador. Approaching Guatemala City Dr. Kirkpatrick wondered: "How did they build a modern, sprawling city on the top of these green and uneven mountains? It is a beautiful site from the air."

They were welcomed at the now-being-renovated Guatemala City airport by Luis Mundo and his wife, Dorita. Dr. Mundo has served for the past five years as pastor of United's six congregations in Guatemala, totaling over 500 brethren, following his retirement from a career as a pediatrician.

Dr. Kirkpatrick and the Walkers dined with Dr. and Mrs. Mundo Wednesday evening. Though language separated them, Dr. Kirkpatrick was able to get to know the Mundos, with translation assistance from the Walkers, and they enjoyed greatly some deep discussions about the plan of God.

The next day, Thursday, Dr. Kirkpat-



Brethren in El Salvador welcome Tom Kirkpatrick; above right, family in Guatemala greets Reba Walker and Dr. Kirkpatrick

rick and the Walkers spent some time together at the Mundos' home, and at midday—joined by 15-year-old Sharon Mundo (the Mundos' youngest child)—they drove to the colonial city of Antigua, which was the former capital of Guatemala.

Much of the old city of Antigua has been preserved as a historical "museum," where people from around the world come to study Spanish, and its popularity as a tourist site has been enhanced by fine hotels and restaurants. This is the site of the Feast of Tabernacles in Guatemala, where nearly 600 Feastgoers will gather to picture a time when the entire world will be as beautiful and peaceful as this spectacular site.

On Friday, Dr. Kirkpatrick and the Walkers visited two sites in Guatemala City. First they saw an enormous scale relief map of the entire nation of Guatemala, highlighting its rugged volcano mountain topography. Then they visited the grand national palace, which houses the executive offices of the national government.



As a complete surprise to Dr. Kirkpatrick, he was honored by the tour guide with an invitation to participate in the "changing of the roses" ceremony—a daily solemn ritual, during which a fresh rose (symbolizing peace) is placed in the rock-carved hands in the central courtyard of the palace. The two hands symbolize freedom and peace. This daily ceremony has taken place since the end of the Guatemalan civil war in 1996.

Dr. Kirkpatrick spoke on the Sabbath morning in Guatemala City, gave the afternoon Bible study and on Sunday morning presented the lecture on the fundamental doctrines of the Church.

Sunday afternoon the brethren presented a beautiful and lively show of traditional songs and dances. Dr. Kirkpatrick and the Walkers were impressed, not only by the quality and talent displayed, but also by the participation of individuals of all ages. That evening Dr. Kirkpatrick and the Walkers were able to witness the wedding of two young Guatemalan members, with Dr. Mundo officiating.

Dr. Kirkpatrick and the Walkers flew back to the United States the next morning, appreciative of the opportunity to meet with our brethren and ministers in these two Central American countries. UN

United's Financial Statements Again Reflect God's Blessings

by Tom Kirkpatrick, Treasurer

On this two-page spread you will see a copy of the audited financial statements of the United Church of God, an International Association, and the audit report of our independent auditors—Clark, Schaefer, Hackett and Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio, for the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2006. You will also see an accompanying table that summarizes the year-to-year changes in certain key financial indicators.

Once again, we received an “unqualified” opinion on the fairness of the financial statements in reflecting generally accepted accounting principles—the sort of opinion we are pleased to receive. In this context, the term “unqualified” refers to the absence of any expression by the auditors of concern as to the continued viability of the Church, or any failure of the statements to represent generally accepted accounting principles.

We give thanks and honor to God for providing for the financial soundness of the Church. It is by His grace and mercy that we have what we have. We also thank the brethren and others who support the work of the Church for their faithfulness and generosity in tithes and offerings.

Starting from what appeared to human eyes to be a very precarious financial condition a little over 10 years ago, the Church has now been allowed to come to the place where it has a certain measure of financial stability and strength. In the year covered by these statements, we were able to reach at long last the goal of having a minimum of 10 weeks of operating expenses in unencumbered reserves at the low point of the year.

Having met the reserve goal, the Church now is able to devote additional resources to certain mission-critical areas, increasing the budget in those areas by an even greater percentage than the percentage increase in income.

The Council, administration and all operational personnel understand keenly the need for God's continual guidance and help in using the resources that He makes available in a way that will please Him and represent His will. All of us ask for this wisdom and guidance, and for the prayers of the brethren to that end. UN

Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
MEMBERS: CPAs, CFPAs

Independent Auditors' Report

Council of Elders
United Church of God,
an International Association

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial position of United Church of God, an International Association (a nonprofit organization) as of June 30, 2006 and 2005, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Church's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

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, 2006 and 2005, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The Schedules of Functional Expenses on pages 11 and 12 are prepared for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole.

Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co.
Cincinnati, Ohio
August 23, 2006

	2006	2005
Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 7,120,528	6,223,332
Cash designated for retirement fund	865,927	842,784
Total cash and cash equivalents	7,986,455	7,066,116
Prepaid expenses	49,171	44,823
Property and equipment, net	3,278,836	3,224,936
Total assets	11,314,464	10,335,875
Liabilities and net assets:		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	203,907	270,248
Accrued payroll and vacation pay	724,293	568,038
Payroll taxes withheld and accrued	1,209	1,182
Accrued matching thrift plan obligations	58,240	53,316
Accrued insurance obligations	129,390	108,594
Mortgage payable	1,234,181	1,293,012
Total liabilities	2,441,220	2,394,390
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	7,989,835	6,941,998
Unrestricted - designated by Council of Elders	865,927	842,784
Temporarily restricted	17,482	156,701
Total net assets	8,873,244	7,941,485
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 11,314,464	10,335,875

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements
- 2 -

	2006	2005
Unrestricted net assets:		
Revenues, gains and other support:		
Contributions - individuals	\$ 15,014,718	13,579,529
Contributions - local congregations	490,383	412,059
Holy day offerings and festival fund contributions	5,720,836	5,487,861
Estate/personal property donations	139,004	111,270
Dividend and interest income	195,349	169,491
Other income	133,470	127,480
Net assets released from restrictions:		
Satisfaction of restrictions	(213,726)	(72,886)
Total revenues, gains and other support	21,907,466	20,087,576
Expenses:		
Program services:		
Field Ministry / Local Congregations	9,500,434	8,779,323
Festivals	1,019,933	950,617
International	1,987,070	1,770,535
Public Proclamation	4,324,081	4,077,687
Total program services	16,841,508	15,578,162
Management and general:		
Council of Elders / Home Office / Insurance & Benefit Plans	3,931,597	3,899,739
General Conference	63,381	77,618
Total management and general	3,994,978	3,977,357
Total expenses	20,836,486	19,555,519
Increase in unrestricted net assets	1,070,980	532,057
Temporarily restricted net assets:		
Contributions	74,505	229,589
Net assets released from restrictions:		
Satisfaction of restrictions	(213,726)	(72,886)
Increase (decrease) in temporarily restricted net assets	(139,221)	156,703
Change in net assets	931,759	688,760
Net assets at the beginning of period	7,941,485	7,252,725
Net assets at the end of period	\$ 8,873,244	7,941,485

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.
- 3 -

	2006	2005
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Change in net assets	\$ 931,759	688,760
Adjustment to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	157,815	140,887
Effect of change in operating assets and liabilities:		
Prepaid expenses	(4,350)	4,147
Accounts payable	(66,341)	34,748
Accrued payroll and vacation pay	156,255	42,180
Payroll taxes withheld and accrued	27	(85)
Accrued matching thrift plan obligations	4,924	4,609
Accrued insurance obligations	30,796	11,471
Net cash provided by operating activities	1,210,885	926,717
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchases of property and equipment	(211,715)	(43,979)
Net cash used by investing activities	(211,715)	(43,979)
Cash flows from financing activities:		
Payments on mortgage payable	(78,831)	(75,347)
Net cash used by financing activities	(78,831)	(75,347)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	920,339	807,396
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	7,066,116	6,258,720
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	\$ 7,986,455	7,066,116
Supplemental Cash Flow Disclosures		
Interest paid	\$ 85,178	88,667

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.
- 4 -

	Fiscal Year 2005-6	Fiscal Year 2004-5
Cash and cash equivalents	\$7,120,528	\$6,223,332
Total assets	11,314,464	10,335,875
Total liabilities	2,441,220	2,394,390
Unrestricted net assets	8,855,762	7,784,782
Total income	21,907,466	20,087,576
Change in net assets	931,759	688,760

Financial statements continue on next page

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association							
Schedule of Functional Expenses							
Year Ended June 30, 2006							
	Program Services				Management and General		
	Ministerial Services/Field Ministry/Local Congregations	Parish	International	Public Proclamations	Council of Elders/ Home Office/Innocent & Family Care	General Conferences	Total
Salaries and related benefits	\$ 1,729,938	638,360	-	961,372	1,484,073	-	8,813,396
Contracted services and fees	3,815	965	-	49,464	106,756	4,785	356,789
Production media and advertising	-	-	-	509,244	-	-	509,244
Print media and advertising	11,379	18,213	-	1,125,572	28,290	1,931	1,285,385
Postage and shipping	30,512	1,680	-	753,455	25,315	3,304	814,266
Building and equipment investment	-	177,736	-	8,322	86,379	-	272,443
Telephone and utilities	46,291	883	-	6,034	87,249	1,276	161,623
Supplies	36,952	2,116	-	35,665	71,944	4,307	149,384
Travel, mileage, meals, and lodging	1,050,623	47,233	-	33,839	204,721	47,431	1,383,847
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	117,818	-	117,818
Grants and charitable support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
International support	6,128	3,549	1,987,870	817,953	237	371	2,894,119
Domestic support:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance to the needy	925,897	101,240	-	-	-	-	1,027,137
Assistance to local congregations	1,530,529	-	-	-	-	-	1,530,529
Insurance and health care	-	-	-	-	1,618,312	-	1,618,312
Other	79,110	93,812	-	20,728	67,494	995	211,239
Total expenses	\$ 8,700,424	1,028,031	1,987,870	4,254,861	1,901,907	43,780	20,835,480

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD, an International Association							
Schedule of Functional Expenses							
Year Ended June 30, 2005							
	Program Services				Management and General		
	Ministerial Services/Field Ministry/Local Congregations	Parish	International	Public Proclamations	Council of Elders/ Home Office/Innocent & Family Care	General Conferences	Total
Salaries and related benefits	\$ 1,381,246	611,129	-	884,578	1,446,832	-	8,313,795
Contracted services and fees	2,810	190	-	65,757	139,998	5,429	395,384
Production media and advertising	-	-	-	277,293	-	-	277,293
Print media and advertising	19,214	9,030	-	1,882,627	31,132	1,141	1,963,344
Postage and shipping	31,867	5,612	-	782,748	36,247	5,033	855,507
Building and equipment investment	-	129,776	-	8,811	102,684	150	242,817
Telephone and utilities	44,134	350	-	5,308	77,458	3,850	131,300
Supplies	36,284	1,347	-	38,203	35,970	5,746	137,544
Travel, mileage, meals, and lodging	975,208	41,423	-	12,478	207,290	34,038	1,269,519
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	149,887	-	149,887
Grants and charitable support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
International support	16,135	1,203	1,776,535	794,894	683	-	2,387,412
Domestic support:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance to the needy	805,445	113,813	-	-	-	-	919,258
Assistance to local congregations	1,483,218	-	-	-	-	-	1,483,218
Insurance and health care	-	-	-	-	1,615,829	-	1,615,829
Other	75,422	46,778	-	31,218	78,687	1,683	207,970
Total expenses	\$ 8,775,225	976,617	1,776,535	4,077,627	3,899,720	37,618	20,752,512

“Beyond,” continued from page 1 met to decide and outline the second year’s programs, which will run through December of 2007.

There are three hosts for *Beyond Today*: Steve Myers, Darris McNeely and Gary Petty. Each host does four programs every three months for a total of 40 programs per year (four per month except for April and October).

The host is responsible for writing his script and contacting his guests for their input. Then a teleconference is held one to two weeks ahead of the recording date with the host, guests and producer.

Then it is time for the host, the guests and all those involved to begin the production at the home office. A production meeting is held the morning before recording begins. Recording of programs takes place in the afternoon. Editing of the new material takes place over the weeks following the taping.

There are 14 people involved with the actual production of the program.

- Producer—Clyde Kilough.
- Director—Peter Eddington.
- Technical director—Clay Thornton.
- Lighting director—Mr. Eddington.
- Cameras—Lloyd Gholson, Melvin McQueary, Jerry Merritt, Beth Pulliam and Marvin Staggs.
- CamCrane 200—Aaron Booth.

- Audio mixer—Clint Porter.
- Makeup artist—Connie May.
- Teleprompter—Michelle de Campos.
- Scenic director—Mr. Eddington.
- Production schedule coordinator—Steve Nutzman.
- Time buying agent and telephone response coordinator—John

LaBissoniere.

In addition to all this, Howard Davis spends many hours putting together the commercials for the program.

The first year has been very productive, with more than 5,390 people asking for booklets and *The Good News* as a result of viewing the program. **UN**

Some *Beyond Today* Studio Facts

“On Camera” Set and Studio

- Media center studio covers 690 square feet (23 feet by 30 feet).
- Layers and angles of set pieces are specifically designed to give perception of depth to video image seen on television and Internet.
- Six 15-inch LCD monitors mounted in rear side walls are used to broadcast subject theme and *Beyond Today* logo.
- “On set” table finished in Avant Honey formica with Matrix Gray base.
- Four Yorkdale armless, custom chairs with scarlet fabric.
- 24-inch diameter Church seal on right-hand panel for “Church” projects.
- 37-inch HD flat panel LCD TV for display of program subjects behind host.
- Upper ceiling (roof) sprayed with acoustic foam for soundproofing. Ceiling and walls sprayed with black paint to ensure “invisible” space on camera.
- Construction of media center space and three new offices done for \$70,000.
- Outfitting media center for *Beyond Today* with lighting, audio, set, cameras, video editing system and production supplies done for \$110,000.

Lighting

- Strand 100 digital lighting console controls twelve 2,400-watt Strand CD80 dimmer packs and 39 lighting instruments.
- All lights turned on at full power use 24,000 watts of three-phase power.
- Colored gels and theatrical patterns (“gobos”) decorate set walls and panels.
- Surge protection and battery backup protects audio, video and editing equipment.

Video Editing

- Apple’s Final Cut Pro HD Studio used for editing projects.

- Apple’s 7-terabyte Xserve disc RAID used for video footage storage.
- Two Mackie HR624 active studio audio monitors used for audio mixing.

Audio and Communication

- Four tan-colored Countryman E6 hardwired earset microphones used on set.
- Two Tapco S-8 studio monitors used for audio playback in studio.
- Mackie premium 16-channel analog mixer with Onyx Firewire card used for mixing live audio.
- Porta-Com six-headset wireless intercom system for producer communication with camera operators.

Cameras and Video Equipment

- Four Sony HVRZ1U high-definition video cameras mounted on Bogen tripods and Vinten dollies.
- Camera number one outfitted with Listec T-2000 teleprompting system.
- Three stationary video cameras and one moving video camera on CamCrane 200 6-foot jib arm.
- Focus Enhancements MX-4DV video switcher sends “switched” program material to Sony DSR 25 DVCAM recorder.
- Each camera also records DVCAM master footage.
- Cameras connected via Firewire to video switcher.
- Marshall Electronics dual-screen and quad-screen rack-mountable LCD monitors used by producer and technical director to view cameras and video composition at producer’s desk.
- *Beyond Today* is recorded in SD (standard-definition digital), but is upgradeable to HD (high-definition digital) when appropriate.

“Online,” continued from page 1

available for them when making donations to the Church. In response to those requests and inquiries, we have recently taken the steps necessary to make it possible for you to make contributions to the United Church of God in this manner.

A new electronic donation option will be available, beginning Nov. 15, which will make it more convenient for many of our members and other donors to make contributions. This is our sole motivation for taking this step. In no way does this represent a change from our adherence to the scriptural command to “freely give” the truth of God to all who desire it, as it was freely given to us (Matthew 10:8). It simply makes another way available for those who wish to make contributions to do so. Nor will it affect our practice of issuing quarterly and annual receipts to all donors for all donations, whether given

by paper check or this new electronic means.

Two avenues are available through these means—either electronic check or credit card. If you choose to donate electronically, we strongly urge you to use the electronic check option and *not* the credit card.

There are several reasons for this. One is that we do not wish in any way to encourage the wrong use of credit cards by our members—including the giving of more money to the Church than they can really afford and actually going into debt (which credit card use can easily lead to) in order to make donations. That is not our intent and that is not wise.

A second reason is that it would be quite costly to United if the membership (which contributes close to 90 percent of the Church’s total income) switched from sending paper checks to using credit cards. For this service we would be charged credit card fees,



Online donations page at www.ucg.org/donation

which are quite high.

So, again for emphasis, if you wish to contribute “electronically,” we urge you to use the electronic check option.

These new electronic options can be used beginning Nov. 15 by logging onto the Internet at www.ucg.org and clicking on the “online donation” link. An input form will appear on your computer screen and several questions will appear that will lead to the secure electronic transfer of funds to

the United Church of God. You will be asked to enter your UCG index code (which is the 11-character PIN beginning with the letter “U” that appears on your *Good News* mailing label and other mailings from the home office), the type of donation being given (first tithe, Festival fund, assistance fund, etc.), and the amount of the donation.

I will stress again that the electronic means is only an option and anyone who wishes to continue making contributions in more traditional ways—chiefly through checks or money orders—may certainly do so. We are neither encouraging nor discouraging anyone to change from sending their tithes and offerings by paper check to sending them electronically. Also, if you are already using your bank’s online check writing feature to send your contributions, are happy with it and wish to continue using it, that is perfectly acceptable. We are simply making this new electronic

option available on our Web site, and if you wish to continue making donations by paper check or money order or other check writing service, that is fine.

All of us on the Council of Elders and in the home office administration never cease to be thankful to all of you for your faithful and generous support of the work of the United Church of God. We are so greatly privileged to have a part in these “latter days” of fulfilling the dual commission Christ gave His Church—preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God to all the world (Mark 16:15) and caring for those whom God calls into the Church (1 Peter 5:2).

Please remember that your effectual, fervent prayers for God’s guidance and blessings on the work of the Church do make a difference, regardless of the amount or the medium of your financial contributions!

Sincerely,
Clyde Kilough

Treasure Digest

50 French Francs

Several years ago, we kept the Feast of Tabernacles in southern France. As with all our Feasts in Europe, we were traveling on a proverbial “shoe-string” and this year we had agreed not to let ourselves exceed our carefully planned budget. We had been very diligent and had thoroughly enjoyed

ourselves, but as we came to the last full day of our visit, we realized that we didn’t quite have enough for our last evening’s dinner. My wife decided to pray about it. We didn’t need much more, so she prayed for 50 French francs—about \$7.

Later that day as we were driving, “something” made my wife put her hand down between the passenger seat and the center console of the car. She brought her hand out with a 50-franc note and stared at it in amazement. It was exactly the amount she had prayed for! She later wondered why she hadn’t asked for more, but 50 francs was what we needed and that’s what God provided.

How did God provide for our needs? To answer that, we have to go back to the Last Great Day. Some people needed rides to the Nice airport, which was just a few miles away from the Feast site. I volunteered to drive a man who was traveling alone to the airport that afternoon. As we got closer to the airport, he started looking for some money to give me for gas for taking him to the airport. He was fumbling a little with his wallet and then we arrived at the airport.

He had to quickly get out of the car and couldn’t find the money. I said good-bye and returned to the Feast site. What had apparently occurred was that when he was fumbling around with his wallet, he accidentally dropped 50 French francs and it fell down beside the passenger seat, which is where my wife found it several days later.

In Matthew 6:8 Jesus Christ is teaching a principle about prayer: “Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.” This exper-

ience definitely demonstrated that. God provided exactly what we needed before we asked. It was left to us to do the asking.

It was a small thing, but answers to small prayers build faith for the big requests. It is a lesson we’ve never forgotten.

Jim Springer

Sacramento, California, congregation

Overcoming Fear

In Revelation 21:8 we read, “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” It is interesting to note that the cowardly, translated “fearful” in the King James Version, will have the same fate as a murderer.

As humans, we experience various fears. However, the only fear that will keep us out of God’s Kingdom is a fear that keeps us from obeying God.

In our Christian life, the first obstacle that usually has to be overcome is the fear of observing the Sabbath. Our society is geared toward observing Sunday rather than the seventh-day Sabbath. And it can be quite a fearful experience to have to tell our employer that we need to have Saturday off so that we can observe the Sabbath. Yet to obey God we must keep the Ten Commandments, including: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work” (Exodus 20:8-10).

Since the cowardly cannot enter the Kingdom of God, we must be brave and overcome any fear that restrains us from obeying God. To overcome this fear, we must first believe that God truly exists and that He is our rewarder (Hebrews 11:6). Secondly, we must love God with all our heart, soul and mind fulfilling the first and great commandment (Matthew 22:37-38).

If we love someone, we try to do the things that will please that person. So if we love God with all of our being, we will keep His commandments because we know that this will please Him. This is verified in 1 John 5:3 where it says, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

To take this a step further, we are told that, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love” (1 John 4:18).



So if perfect love casts out fear, then by loving God with all our being and placing our trust in Him, our fear is overcome.

So the only fear that can keep us out of the Kingdom is a fear that keeps us from obeying God. That fear can be overcome by loving God with all our heart, soul and mind because there is no fear in love.

Bill Faith

St. Louis, Missouri, congregation

Endure Till the End

One bright morning I awoke and went about my normal routine. My drive to the Ambassador Bible Center classroom was a quiet one.

When I arrived, I greeted my classmates as usual. Our instructor arrived; we had our prayer and class started—just a typical day. Around noon, we took a lunch break, and I left to get something to eat.

When I returned, several of my classmates told me the receptionist was looking for me. My sister was on the phone.

I picked up the receiver, and then everything changed. My sister blurted out that my dad had died suddenly and unexpectedly from a heart attack. I was shocked. What had started out as a typical day was not so normal anymore. I was now faced with the prospect of making a long, lonely drive back to Big Sandy, Texas, for the funeral and to take care of my responsibilities.

The reason I want to share this with you is to show we have to endure many things to be a part of God’s family. We must hang on even when we feel at our lowest point. If we endure and don’t give up, we have a wonderful future to look forward to.

Paul wrote, “This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him” (2 Timothy 2:11-12). To endure means to suffer patiently. I learned a lot about that after my dad’s death. The trip back to Texas was one of the longest trips I have ever taken. Two years prior to this, I had been going through some severe personal trials. It was a very dark period in my life. My dad, however, helped provide the support I needed.

I had decided to attend ABC to gain some perspective and determine what direction I wanted to take with my life. The loss of my father, as I was



recovering from the other setbacks, made enduring even harder. I wondered how I could recover from such a feeling of loss.

However, we learn in hard times that God will step in to help. When we go through trials, we can endure by asking for God’s help and studying and praying in order to be closer to Him.

Paul encourages Christians to be “rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer” (Romans 12:12).

As I was traveling home to Texas and feeling the pain of the loss, I had to call upon God to help me drive the truck and help me think of the good times I had with my dad. I found it helpful to remind myself of the following scriptures:

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills—from whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” (Psalm 121:1-4).

I left Ambassador Bible Center in 2002 due to my dad’s death. I was determined, however, to finish, and I returned and graduated with the class of 2003. I became the first student to take two years to finish.

I’m back in Big Sandy now and doing well. I’m grateful for the help and comfort I received from many people during that difficult period in my life.

When trials come our way, it can be easy to feel God doesn’t care, but if we trust and call upon Him, He will help us endure.

We have a wonderful future to look forward to, being a part of God’s family. Paul reminds us that we are “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:17-18).

John also records God’s encouraging words: “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son” (Revelation 21:7).

You never know when your life will take an unexpected turn and trials will come your way. Remember that God will help us endure. Let’s focus on our fantastic future ahead as a part of God’s family.

Terry Shipman

East Texas congregation

Turning the Hearts . . . Giving...a Way of Life

We have completed another year of God’s Holy Days. We pictured the wonderful world tomorrow when God’s way will prevail on this earth, led by Jesus Christ, the King of Kings. One very important facet of godly character is being a giver. God wants to “give” us the Kingdom (Luke 12:32). God gave His only begotten Son, Jesus, for us—with Christ’s full agreement. God gave us His law and His Spirit—precious presents indeed. Every good and perfect gift comes from God (James 1:17).

When we receive a gift from someone, that act is something very special. The giver must take of his or her time to buy or make the gift, and it is touching to the receiver to know that the giver cares. Whether the gift is expensive or inexpensive, the meaning is clear.

In any family or among friends, giving ought to be a way of life. Giving is especially meaningful when it is not expected. When a giver presents a gift unexpectedly to a family member or friend, it carries a special message that the receiver is important and valued.

Try it in your family or with your friends. Buy or make a gift for someone just because you care. Then present it to the person. Watch the person’s face light up as he or she wonders what it is for. When you tell the person it is because you care, he or she will feel honored and loved.

We don’t always have to spend a lot of money on a gift. Phone calls, e-mails or postcards are some inexpensive ways to send meaningful messages to our family members or friends. We may also give of ourselves in service to others and have the same effect (2 Corinthians 8:5). These giving acts will go far in demonstrating the love that we feel for others by actually doing something for them (1 John 3:18).

Having just concluded a wonderful Feast with so many in a giving mood, I wanted to remind us all that giving needs to become a way of life for us now and forever in the Kingdom.

Remember Jesus’ teaching in Acts 20:35, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Gary E. Antion



Children’s Corner Matching: People (and an Animal) Angels Appeared To

Fill in the correct letter from the names on the right to show the people (or animal) who saw angels. If you get stuck, the scriptures can help. An angel (or angels) appeared:

- To _____ as he was burning incense in the temple (Luke 1:11).
 - To _____ after he beat his donkey (Numbers 22:32).
 - To _____ as he prepared to meet his brother (Genesis 32:1-2).
 - To _____ with a drawn sword (Numbers 22:22-27).
 - At Christ’s tomb to _____ (Matthew 28:2-4).
 - In Nazareth to _____ (Luke 1:26-28).
 - To _____ in prison and released him (Acts 12:3-11).
 - In Ophrah where _____ was threshing wheat (Judges 6:11).
 - To _____ who brought spices to anoint Jesus’ body (Mark 16:1-6).
 - To _____ at the tomb seated where Jesus’ body had been (John 20:1, 11-13).
- A. A donkey
B. Roman guards
C. Three women
D. Mary, Jesus’ mother
E. Zacharias
F. Peter
G. Mary Magdalene
H. Jacob
I. Gideon
J. Balaam

—by Mavis M. Jolin, Tampa, Florida, congregation

ANSWERS: 1. E 2. J 3. H 4. A 5. B 6. D 7. F 8. I 9. C 10. G



The Feast of **Tabernacles**

More Than 20,000 Celebrate the Feast With United

Feast 2006 Attendance Figures

Argentina	507
Australia	
Caloundra, Queensland.....	462
Hobart, Tasmania.....	50
Merimbula, New South Wales..	166
Barbados	158
Bolivia	37
Brazil	49
British Isles	162
Cameroon	51
Canada	
Collingwood, Ontario.....	218
Kelowna, British Columbia ..	466
Moncton, New Brunswick.....	27
Regina, Saskatchewan.....	72
St. John's, Newfoundland	72
Chile	188
Colombia	94
Costa Rica	181
Estonia	9
France	115
Germany	165
Ghana	900
Guatemala	601
Guyana	26
Italy	327
Ivory Coast est.	25
Jamaica	384
Kenya	310
Malawi	141
Mexico	378
New Zealand	93
Nigeria	126
Peru	197
Philippines	
Baguio City.....	115
Davao City.....	420
Iloilo City.....	144
Portugal	84
Rwanda est.	60
Singapore	37
South Africa	
George.....	85
Uvongo.....	228
Sri Lanka	26
Togo	35
Tonga	33
Trinidad & Tobago	30
Turkey	123
United States	
Bend-Redmond, Oregon....	1,016
Branson, Missouri	1,337
Cincinnati, Ohio/N. Kentucky.	1,130
Escondido, California.....	780
Jekyll Island, Georgia.....	1,245
Kerrville, Texas	982
Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii.....	800
Lancaster, Pennsylvania	1,372
Panama City Beach, Florida...1,420	
Steamboat Springs, Colorado ...	675
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin...1,312	
Zambia	159
Zimbabwe	33
Shut-ins who received Feast tapes from the home office....	682
TOTAL	21,120

Note: Highest daily attendance figures. Webcast connections (average of 184) include some shut-ins counted above, and so are not added into this total.

Argentina

Mendoza

Five hundred seven brethren representing 12 countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Italy, Mexico, Peru, the United States and Uruguay) came together as one family to celebrate God's Feast in Mendoza, Argentina, this year. Months of hard work and preparation paid off as we enjoyed an abundant feast of spiritual and physical food, fellowship and activities.

The Feast was held at the Hotel Ejército de los Andes, a large complex with plenty of



Mendoza, Argentina (photos by Juan Espinoza)

space for activities and fellowship. Meals were served in a large dining room, and everyone ate together in a warm, family atmosphere. The soccer field was used by nearly everyone, with the feature game being the annual match between the men of the Church and the hotel staff. The warm spring weather also allowed for plenty of use of the pool, something the children especially enjoyed.

The talent show is one of the highlights of the Feast every year. This year over 150 people shared their gifts with music and dancing from around the world. Music was an important part of the Feast as we enjoyed two pieces of special music every day, an *esquinazo* of traditional Chilean music and dances to welcome the foreign visitors, a special concert put on by two bands of youth from Chile and guests from other countries, and a perfor-



Saul Langarica and Leon Walker ordained Cecilia Sepulveda Grez as the first deaconess in Chile

mance by the folk band from Santiago and other musicians to accompany the farewell barbecue.

There were activities for all ages throughout the Feast. The children enjoyed a special party complete with games, treats, gifts and a theatrical per-

formance of the story of Jonah. The youth dance was a great success on Sunday evening and everyone joined in the family dance later in the week. Other activities included a ladies' breakfast with a fashion show displaying the work of the ladies in the Church, a senior citizens' tea and a tour of a vineyard, chocolate factory and park in Mendoza.

The messages were presented in Spanish with simultaneous translation into English. They focused on the fact that

we are pilgrims and foreigners in this world and pointed us toward the world to come and our citizenship in the Kingdom.

We had the blessing of having four ministers and their wives with us: Saúl and Carmen Langarica from Chile; Adán and Rosario Langarica, from Mexico; Fred and Lidia Nance, from the United States; and Leon and Reba Walker, the regional director for the Spanish work.

On the last day of the Feast we had the pleasure of witnessing 15 baptisms and the ordination of a deaconess from Talca, Chile, the first deaconess in the country. Nine children were blessed on the Last Great Day.

Many of the members in South America are isolated and they greatly look forward to this yearly rejuvenation and chance for fellowship with their spiritual family. We all left the oasis of the Feast recharged.

Erin Roscoe

Australia

Caloundra, Queensland

We had a record attendance again this year in Queensland with 462 in attendance on the first Holy Day of the Feast. This is our first year at our new site in Caloundra, and it proved to be an excellent facility and all types of accommodations were in abundance. The modern and newly finished Kawana Waters Community Center hosted our meetings and it still has plenty of room for additional Festival attendees. Therefore we have made long-term arrangements to use this facility for Feasts in the next few years. We again had overseas visitors had from the United States, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Our activities featured a dinner dance, Family Day and young adult get-acquainted activity. The seniors this year enjoyed a scenic boat tour of the inland waterways. There was plenty of sight-seeing and other recreational activities. Hardly a day went by that we did not see whales making their way south for the summer.

The two visiting ministers from the United States, Jim Tuck from Oakland,

California, and Peter Eddington from Cincinnati, Ohio, contributed to the spiritual fare of the Feast. There were comments that we reached a higher level of inspiration and depth in our messages this year. Without exception all messages focused on the changed conditions in the world tomorrow as the Kingdom of God extends its government and our preparation for service in Christ's government. We also featured a PowerPoint Bible study one evening on end-time prophecy.

One of the great hallmarks of our Feast was, as always, the willingness of so many to support the operation of the Feast. The atmosphere created was truly uplifting and inspiring.

Bill Bradford

Hobart, Tasmania

Festival elder Bruce Dean set the theme of the Feast in his opening message for 50 Feastgoers in Hobart, Tasmania, on the banks of the Derwent River, when he spoke of the necessity for God's firstfruits to live His way of life from the heart. Mr. Dean commented that this is just as important as being doctrinally correct. Subsequent messages carried this thread through the entire Feast.

Sermon subjects included the need to maintain the attitude of strangers and pilgrims during this physical life; the benefits of meditation; God's special yearning for Jerusalem, which should also be ours; the ongoing need to remember where and from whom we learned God's truth; and lessons to be learned from Australia's current drought situation.

Peter Eddington, Media and Communications Services operation manager, visited the Hobart site briefly, giving sermons that painted a picture of the work before us when Christ returns and our part in the restoration of God's truth to the earth. In addition, he gave an informative and inspiring PowerPoint presentation on the media initiatives being undertaken by UCG, as God opens the doors and provides the facilities.

Feastgoers enjoyed exploring the beautiful Royal Hobart Botanical Gardens (featured regularly on Peter Cundall's *Gardening Australia*), a scenic harbor cruise from Hobart to the mouth of the Derwent River and food and fellowship at a catered lunch in downtown Hobart. There were further opportunities to break bread together at catered meals at the Festival site.

Elizabeth Barber

Merimbula, New South Wales

Merimbula, a small coastal town situated on the south coast of New South Wales, was considered an ideal setting to experience a foretaste of God's promised millennial blessings and peace by the 166 Church members who attended the 2006 Feast of Tabernacles there.

Some comments included: "What a wonderful setting!" "This is an ideal size

for a Feast site. I've been able to meet everyone." "This site is so friendly and warm and it's so nice to be staying within five- or 10-minutes' drive of other members."

There was also a consensus that the spiritual food provided was superior and, as often happens, the sermons dovetailed perfectly with each other.

Festival coordinator Barry Williams set the tone of the Feast with an opening message emphasizing the feasts of the Lord as holy convocations belonging to God. Ken Skorseth spoke on the need to develop a tenderness of heart toward others if we are to judge with Christ. The theme of restoration continued in sermons from Trevor Huthnance, Don Godger and Geoff King.

Visiting elder Ken Skorseth and his wife, Dianne, traveled from the United States to spend the Feast in Merimbula. Because of the size of the site most members had a chance to get to know the Skorseths, and they received a standing invitation to visit again.

Scheduled activities at Merimbula included a senior citizens' outing and lunch, a get-acquainted evening, a family day activity, a special activity planned for preschool children and a dinner and an evening with a disc jockey for karaoke and dancing that catered to all ages. Those who wanted to fellowship more quietly were able to seek out a peaceful corner here and there.

Several members hosted open house invitations to their homes for get-togethers. These gatherings added greatly to the conviviality and the unity of the Feast.

An organized deep-sea fishing trip did not result in many fish being caught, but provided the opportunity to watch several whales from close proximity. One participant mentioned that the trip was well worth the effort and cost just to see the whales.

In his opening message Barry Williams mentioned that we should ask God to help us put away our worldly cares at the Feast of Tabernacles and be able to leave after the Last Great Day having experienced a surge in our spiritual growth.

Many would agree that God answered these prayers.

Ruth Root

Barbados

Bridgetown

Brethren from Canada, England and the United States met with Caribbean and local brethren at the Grand Barbados Beach Resort, which is located on a popular beach near Bridgetown. It was the site of the first United Church of God Feast of Tabernacles in Barbados 10 years ago when the local participants were less than 10 in number. On the Last Great Day the number of attendees reached 158 including a surprise visit from a group of members from our former association.

The messages by visiting and local

speakers all tied together aspects of learning to be part of the family of God, keeping His appointments and understanding Satan's devices, the latter subject being dramatized on Youth Day. There were also two Bible studies, one for the youth and another for the adults, which many of the youth also attended.

In addition to the spiritual aspect, brethren were able to enjoy several organized activities: a cruise on a catamaran, a submarine dive, a safari tour of the island and a visit to a marine park where miniature golf could be played. The highlight of the activities was provided by the Barbadian members who, on Bajan Night, regaled the visitors with folk songs and steel band music and hearty samples of Bajan cuisine.

Some of the comments from the brethren



Bridgetown, Barbados (photos by Brian White)

concerning the Feast in Barbados were:

- "The Feast has been remarkable, as I will use what I learn to fight the good fight of faith."
- "Awesome Feast—will return to Barbados again!"
- "Very excellent overall and well planned."
- "The Feast was fantastic and totally enjoyable."
- "My first, and it was exhilarating and rewarding."
- "Thoroughly enjoyed the planning and well-prepared messages."

As a capstone of this inspirational Feast, the Barbadian brethren were pleased to receive the news that one of the local attendees was baptized on the last day of the Feast.

Osmonde Douglas

Bolivia

Coroico

This year we were able to celebrate the Feast in the charming and exotic hotel El Viejo Molino—"The Old Windmill"—which is located about one mile from the town of Coroico. The town itself is 61 miles from La Paz, capital city of Bolivia.

Altogether 37 brethren had the blessing to congregate at this Feast site, including visitors from the United States, Peru and Chile.

The weather in Coroico was normally warm, but there were cold evenings. Since some brethren wanted warm and some wanted cool, everyone got what he or she asked for.

Services, meals and most of the activities took place in the same hotel. Each day we had wonderful special music

presented by the members from La Paz and our visiting brethren from Peru.

Every day after meals we were able to fellowship with long and productive conversations. This fellowship took place under the attention of the marvelous hotel personnel, who served juice,



Bolivia (photo by Giovanna Machicao)

beer and wine while the fellowshiping went on and on.

Some brethren went frequently to a place called Las Cascadas—a waterfall close to the hotel—to take walks and to do some exercise. Other brethren preferred to go to the town of Coroico to see the exotic and historic presence of the old Bolivian culture.

During the family dance there was a lot of participation and expressions of happiness among all. During the talent show we had lots of music and dances full of color and emotions. People of all ages participated. All had in mind to bring happiness to the attendees and to the whole environment of the Feast. For the talent show we mainly had folkloric music and dances from Bolivia and Peru.

The warm afternoons were spent in the beautiful swimming pool and in the sauna. Others preferred to spend time playing pool, soccer, volleyball or basketball.

Even though we did not have simultaneous translations into English, we were able to translate the messages in a written format in advance. That way we all shared the spiritual food given during the Feast. Messages were given on unity, our hope for the future Kingdom of God and the final destiny for all humanity.

All assignments given before the Feast were fulfilled with excellence. We want to thank all of the brethren who helped so much in the organization and the execution of the Feast. We want to thank especially God for inviting us to celebrate once again these wonderful Holy Days.

Raul Machicao

Brazil

Maloca

Once again our brethren from the Indian Wapixana community in the north of Brazil came together to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles using their own facilities built by themselves in the year 2000. This year the attendance was 49 instead of the bigger attendance they used to have previously. The reason for the decrease is that the brethren from Guyana now have their own Feast site.

On the opening night, the welcome message was given by Roberto Mathews in their local dialect, Wapixana, which was translated simultaneously into Portuguese by Geraldo de Souza. Both are members of the local congregation.

This year the Feast had even more participation from the local members in

the different responsibilities and activities. Three of the brethren were in charge of leading songs: Nelson, Ricardo and Benedito. During services the brethren sang the hymns in Portuguese, English and Wapixana.

Sermonettes were given by two other local members, Mr. Mathews and Mr. de Souza. They both spoke on the importance of being firm in this way of life based on the understanding of the Holy Days of God.

Most of the main messages were given by Wanderson Esquerdo, who is originally from Brazil, but is now based in Bolivia, and at the moment is working in the north of Brazil. Joao de Carvalho from the United States and Mr. Claude, a visitor from Guyana, also helped with the messages.

The subjects for the sermons were varied: The meaning of the Holy Days of God, different aspects of the Christian life and the ministry of Christ regarding the preaching of the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

For the first time this year we had a talent show, with the participation of all of the brethren. We also had different sports activities, a Bible study and some informal lectures on leadership, which were given by Mr. de Carvalho and Mr. Esquerdo.

Our brethren in this part of the world live a simple life based mainly on agriculture. They are people blessed by God in many ways. They do not lack food or water. They all have a house to live in. Three years ago the government of Brazil extended the ownership of the territory



Brazil (photo by Wanderson Esquerdo)

to the whole Wapixana community. The brethren also periodically receive other benefits from the Brazilian government due to the fact that they are an Indian reservation community.

The Feast was a marvelous opportunity for fellowshiping with our brethren from that part of the world. We all learned more about each other in preparation for our living eternally together in God's Kingdom.

Wanderson Esquerdo

British Isles

York

Some 162 brethren kept the 2006 Feast of Tabernacles in the historic city of York. With a good portion of those attending coming from the United States, brethren attended from as far afield as Australia and South Africa, with others from countries closer to home such as the Netherlands and Sweden.

The spiritually rich messages and inspiring music highlighted a positive future for mankind and our participation in it. Other activities included tours of the beautiful Yorkshire countryside.

The Feast saw a good number of youth activities, initiated by the younger members of the Church. There was also a young people-oriented Bible study, which was well attended.

The success of the Feast can be attributed to the excellent teamwork of all those involved in organizing the Feast, not least of all the help from the younger generation of the Church.

We in the United Kingdom wish to thank all the brethren and elders who played their part in making the Feast in York a success.

Gerhard Marx and Frank Jarvis

Cameroon

Douala

This year 51 brethren from three areas of Cameroon, Douala, Nkoteng and Eséka, were present for the Feast in Douala.



Douala, Cameroon

The Festival site was the newly finished church hall in Douala. This building, financed by the United Church of God Good Works Program, contains a large meeting hall and several bedrooms where brethren coming from afar were able to lodge during the Feast. Meals were prepared in the church kitchen and shared in the church hall as well.

Several activities took place during the Feast. There was a family activity evening, a talent show during which young people performed such skits as "the hypochondriac," "the Bible thief" and "the true friend." There was also an anonymous exchange of Feast gifts.

The rich and varied sermons for the Feast were played from MP3 CDs. We were able to watch this year's Festival video thanks to a translation sound track prepared by the French Office in Cincinnati.

It was a wonderful Feast!

Moïse Mabout

Canada

Collingwood, Ontario

The Feast in Collingwood was attended by 218 brethren from across the United States, Canada and beyond. The weather was beautiful for most of the Feast and the fall colors looked spectacular against the Blue Mountain in the background and Georgian Bay in the foreground.

The highlight of the Feast included a delicious Thanksgiving dinner and lively dance, a stimulating seniors' brunch, a talented variety show, an interesting singles' meet-and-greet seminar, a scenic family boat cruise luncheon, a panoramic tour of the Scenic Caves and an interactive Bible study for both the teens and the young adults. The children's choir warmed our hearts by singing two songs.

The atmosphere at the Feast this year was best described by a member from Winnipeg, Manitoba, who said that he

felt the warmth and friendliness when he arrived on Friday evening and it carried through for the whole Feast. Many brethren



Collingwood, Ontario (photo by Robbie Guzman)

ren were heard to say that it was either their best Feast ever or one of their best Feasts. Everyone enjoyed the inspirational hymn singing with the youth ensemble, the quality of special music and the beautiful voices of the Festival choir.

The brethren left a very positive impact on the community by donating two barrels of food and over \$500 in cash to the Collingwood food bank.

Our teens left a wonderful impression during their afternoon of bowling. The manager of the bowling alley told our group leader how much the staff enjoyed having our teens at their facility because they were "so well-behaved and well-mannered." What a tribute to our teens who were in Collingwood picturing the "godly character" of the world tomorrow!

Last but not least were the inspiring and interesting messages throughout the Feast. It was noticeable that brethren gathered together after services to discuss the messages and make their plans for the day.

Based on the comments from both American and Canadian brethren, Collingwood is a wonderful site for the Feast of Tabernacles. It is our desire to return there again in 2007 if that is God's will.

Dennis Horlick

Kelowna, British Columbia

Delightful stage decorations, a variety of beautiful music and inspiring messages, along with fun activities and unseasonably warm and dry weather contributed to a wonderful Feast in Kelowna. "We were blessed with good weather," said Festival coordinator Rainer Salomaa. Rain began after the Last Great Day was over.

The high attendance at Canada's westernmost Feast site came on Thursday with 466. The local newspaper ran an article about the Feast before the opening night.

Canada's director of operations Tony Wasilkoff spent the first half of the Feast in Kelowna, before heading for Regina, Saskatchewan. David Palmer spent the last half of the Feast in Kelowna, coming from Regina.

Flowers, projection screens and towering columns encircled with lights were part of the daily stage decoration. The screens projected the words of the hymns as well as various photos related to the sermons.

Friday's youth day featured a lectern dressed up as a jeep, surrounded by dozens of stuffed animals, which were later given to the children. The last sermon on the Last Great Day by Howard Davis featured dramatic lighting, music and photos ranging from the creation to the end of Revelation.

The messages were webcast through-

out the Feast, and the entire audience greeted those receiving the webcast several times.

"The Feast was very nice. The people were very friendly," said Gloria Harden from the Boise, Idaho, congregation. "They had some of the prettiest decorations I've seen—it really made it nice."

"In addition to inspirational messages every day, the beautiful surroundings and the nearly perfect weather, the friendships that we made at this Feast in Kelowna will always stay with me and my wife," said Steve Minard from Southern California.

Joe Sheperd, an elder from Vancouver Island, British Columbia, also mentioned the perfect weather and the spectacular beauty of the Okanagan Valley and added that "the highpoint [was] the Feast messages, painting a glorious picture of man's destiny in the coming Kingdom of God."

Activities included a variety show, a penny carnival and Canadian Thanksgiving potluck dinner, a family dance, a teen activity and a senior citizens' luncheon.

Mike Bennett

Moncton, New Brunswick

For the first time, the United Church of God held the Feast in New Brunswick.

Just before the Feast Gary Steeves, Maritimes UCG elder and Feast coordinator, became very dizzy and could not stand up. He was in the hospital from Oct. 5 to 12. They did numerous tests and the neurologist found he had a stroke that affected his balance and his left eye. He is now walking with a cane and his vision has improved. We pray that all the side effects will disappear.

There was a slight beginning hiccup when Gabriel Vautour couldn't get the laptop to work for the cybercast download. So he tried a member's laptop and it was successful. We are glad we had Gabriel's electronic expertise to rely upon. The cybercasts worked well, and it was great to be included in the Cincinnati Feast congregation.

Our high attendance was 27. We enjoyed potluck meals in members' homes, cybercast and DVD services and trips to the zoo and St. Martins on the coast.

A ladies' tea was coordinated by June Kundert and a turkey dinner was provided by the Moncton ladies.

We certainly were well fed spiritually through the cybercasts from Cincinnati. It was a wonderful week even though it was hectic with our elder in the hospital.

June Steeves

Regina, Saskatchewan

The Regina Feast site on the Canadian prairies had a high attendance of 72. Brethren from across Canada and the United States attended. The small Feast site provided a close-knit family atmosphere.

Inspiring sermons were given by the Canadian elders as well as three elders from the United States. Wilbur Berg was choir director.

A Rolling Stones' concert in the city the opening night of the Feast drew 40,000 people. Hotels and restaurants were very busy and caused a bit of inconvenience for Feastgoers. Another concert was held on Sunday afternoon drawing thousands more people.

A seniors' dinner was held in the Regina Floral Conservatory. The beautiful flowers and trees provided the background for an evening of delicious food and great fellowship. Canadian Thanksgiving fell during the Feast this year, so a meal was arranged at one of the hotel banquet rooms. Because of the cool temperatures, most of the activities were inside.

One of the elders arranged a tour of an open-pit coal mine at Estavan, Saskatchewan. "Big Bertha," a monster dragline, digs 100 tons of overburden with each bucket load. The visitors had a bird's-eye view from the operator's cabin. The operator set the bucket on the parking ramp so pictures could be taken of the men in its jaw.

Donations were collected for the local food bank and teddy bears were given to various women's shelters throughout the city.

God once again blessed the Regina Feast site with a spirit of togetherness and cooperation.

Bruce Bird

St. John's, Newfoundland

A successful Feast of Tabernacles was



St. John's, Newfoundland, Choir

held in St. John's again this year. We had a maximum attendance of 72, and the smaller number of people again made for a more family-style Feast. It was God's Feast, and it showed in the cooperation and outgoing concern of attendees.

There were many positive comments about the Feast in St. John's, including one man who said that of 37 Feasts he had attended, in many areas of the world, this was definitely the best he had ever experienced! There was good cooperation from the attendees with regard to avoiding the use of fragrances, as we had two people with severe allergies. One comment was that in eight Feasts of Tabernacles, this was the first time that a particular person could sit in the congregation.

Sermons were well presented and enthusiastically received, and gave us a better vision of God's wonderful Kingdom, as well as anticipation of and instruction in preparing for that glorious time. Steven Shafer, who pastors several Michigan congregations, had an interactive session with teens and young people attending the Feast, getting their input on what we can do to make the Feast more beneficial and enjoyable for young people, as well as how they can be more involved in their church areas. The seniors' luncheon was well attended, and Mr. Shafer gave a brief address. Two soloists also added to the occasion.

Special music was coordinated by Dan Salcedo, an elder from Anaheim, California. The Festival Choir was directed by Mr. Salcedo, who also did solo performances. We also enjoyed solo presentations from several others.

The Family Day at Lavrock Centre was well attended. The sing-along before dinner was the best ever and many people enjoyed the dance afterward. The Last Great Day was ushered in with a delicious Newfoundland traditional dinner and good fellowship.

A variety show was well attended and enjoyed by all. We were entertained by various singers, an Irish dancer and a clown act. Sam Parson was emcee and entertained us between acts with humorous stories.

Donations were given for LifeNets, a wonderful organization that helps so many people, particularly God's people in impoverished areas of the world. A donation of \$774.78 was made by Feast attendees, and the staff at Best Western Traveller's Inn added a donation of \$75, for a grand total of \$849.78.

There were some tears at parting time, but we can be reassured that as we are members of God's family, the time will come when we, with all of His other children, will be together forever in His wonderful Kingdom.

David Smith

Chile

Lican Ray

By the beautiful landscapes of the Villarica Volcano, a group of 188 brethren, mainly from the south of Chile, congregated in the Complejo Turistico El Conquistador—a tourist complex—to keep the Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day. We were visited by brethren from the United States, Brazil, Argentina and even from Isla de Pascua—Easter Island.

In a harmonious and relaxed environment we were able to celebrate our best Feast ever. We had different activities such as ladies' night, tea for the elderly, youth and children's activities, a recreational afternoon and a barbecue at Vergara Hot Springs, close to the Feast site.

Teamwork was evident in every activity. Many brethren agreed on the fact that this was a most inspiring Feast. The rain of the south of Chile made the environment an ideal place for meditation and prayer. It was also an ideal environment



Chile (photo by Manuel Iturra)

for sharing a cup of coffee or a glass of wine with different brethren in the cabins.

When we began having the Feast in this area four years ago, we had an attendance of 66. The next year we had 77. Last year we had 109 and this year we had 188.

It is true that at the end of the Feast we often say this was the "best ever." I personally can say this was "even bet-

ter than the best Feast ever." I hope the experiences and teaching we received this Feast give us the strength to continue in the faith this coming year and the next and the next, until God sends His Kingdom to this earth.

Jaime Gallardo

Colombia

Santa Marta

It was a very interesting and inspiring Feast this year in Colombia. At the beginning of the Feast a doctrinal test was distributed to be answered during the Feast. On Thursday members turned in their answers, and on Friday we went over the answers. It went very well. (For more information on the test, see "Treasurer Visits Central America," page 5.)

For all the brethren the Feast represents the highest moment of the year. It is the very special occasion to be with God and our spiritual family all together. Brethren from Ecuador, Venezuela and from different regions of Colombia met together in Santa Marta, on the north coast of Colombia. The highest attendance was 94.

The sermons given by Eduardo Hernandez—site coordinator—and the videos sent by Ralph Levy and Saul Langarica gave the spiritual food needed in order to continue with our struggle as Christians in this world.

On the physical level we had several activities that gave us the happiness and joy of sharing in unity and harmony.

As an additional blessing, two new members were added to the family God is forming now.

María Hernandez

Costa Rica

Puntarenas

The United Church of God held the Feast at the beautiful Fiesta Resort, an all-inclusive hotel complex in Puntarenas, Costa Rica. Puntarenas is located on the Pacific coast side of Costa Rica, about a 90-minute drive west of San José, the capital city.

This year 181 people came to keep the Feast. It was truly an international gathering, with seven countries represented, including Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama and the United States. There were four baptisms during the Feast.

Messages included inspiring subjects such as the Kingdom of God, a world without fear, marriage as a representation of Christ and the Church, King David's character, the power of the tongue and the meaning of the Last Great Day. Services alternated between Spanish and English, with brethren sharing their radio receivers, so they could hear the translation in their own language.

Because brethren were all housed in the all-inclusive resort, there were many opportunities to fellowship, both at the organized activities and over meals. Activities included a ladies' tea, a family dance, beach trips, an excursion to the Arenal Volcano and the Feast video, viewed on the Friday night that began the Last Great Day.

After the Last Great Day, we

watched a video presentation with pictures of the Feast, prepared by Andre Delgado and his family, visitors from Monterrey, Mexico.

The language barrier was surmounted by the bond of God's Holy Spirit, and many wonderful friendships were formed, as we celebrated the coming Kingdom of God at this beautiful Central American location.

Ralph Levy

Estonia

In 2005, 60 people kept the Feast in Tartu, the land of the Vikings, and of those, 21 were Eastern Europeans. But in 2006, the Feast site was not advertised, and there were no foreign transfers, so this was a very small Feast site of nine people.

The spiritual theme of the Feast, was "God Completing His Creation in Us." With one speaker giving all the messages, it was possible to design a theme with messages that relate to each other throughout the seven days. All messages were designed to show that God will bring about a new world, and in a similar way, we also will become new creatures.

Translation, a very important part of being able to conduct a Feast in Estonia, was mostly done by Imbi Kuuskasalu.

Toomas Schvak organized a three-day trip to Haapsalu, a small city on the shore of the Baltic Sea. The 100-mile drive in a mini-bus, driven by Andrus Rips, through the *vaga roheline* (very green) Estonian countryside was interesting to all. Haapsalu's historical roots and cultural diversity reflect the coming Kingdom of God. More importantly was the opportunity for all to share this time together as a part of God's family.

Johnnie Lambert

France

Collonges-la-Rouge

One hundred fifteen people gathered in the beautiful Perigord region of France to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles 2006. The picturesque red-stone town of Collonges-la-Rouge, named one of the most beautiful villages of France, was host to the Festival. Attendees stayed at the Vignottes vacation colony where lodging and multicourse meals were included in one low fixed price. Services were also held on the site, so brethren were all together almost all the time.

Seven new French-speaking Europeans were present for the first time at a United Church of God Feast of Tabernacles observance, a very encouraging development. High points of the Feast included the wedding of Chad Demarest from the United States and Laetitia Bernal from France. Since our francophone brethren are scattered throughout several countries and gather only at the Feast of Tabernacles each year, having the wedding at this time allowed everyone to rejoice in this special occasion.

Excursions were organized to the cities of Rocamadour, a medieval pilgrimage site, and Sarlat la Caneda, a well-preserved medieval and Renaissance town complete with stone building and picturesque winding cobblestone streets. Las-

caux, site of world-famous prehistoric cave paintings, was also a destination, as was Collonges itself, which is well known throughout all of France.

Other high points of the Feast were the talent show evening and a special folklore dance evening to which all were invited.

Most mornings, francophone brethren gathered early in the meeting hall to sing and record UCG hymns. The recordings will be made available to help our brethren in French-speaking Africa learn the



Collonges-la-Rogue, France

hymns that are new to them. This service will be much appreciated by African members.

Collonges-la-Rouge has already been reserved as the Festival site for 2007. Why not join us next year?

Joel Meeker

Germany

Schluchsee

The Feast of Tabernacles in Schluchsee was truly a feast in every sense of the word. As we arrived in the famous Black Forest of southern Germany, our eyes feasted on the beauty of the area. The weather was sunny with comfortable temperatures that added to the absolute beauty of the area. We met in the City Hall for services each day. The lobby and the frequently visited restaurant next door offered us a gorgeous view of the lake surrounded by trees with changing colors and evergreens.

Opening night of the Feast began with music and Scripture reading in a candle-light setting, giving us time to reflect on the awesome gift from God—the Feast and all it means. The sermons throughout the Feast were filled with inspiring messages on some aspect of the Kingdom of God, now and in the future. The messages were simultaneously translated into English (or German if the message was in English). Roy Holladay gave two ABC seminars on “The Continuation of the Church.” Special music was a part of the worship service every day. It was performed three times by youth.

The Feast attendance in Schluchsee was 165 this year. This included the Germans, Dutch and German-speaking Swiss brethren as well as visitors from other countries. We were privileged to have with us again the only member of the United Church of God in Armenia. Mr. Poghosjan, who had much difficulty obtaining his visa and considered it a miracle to be here. His wife was not granted a visa and so was not allowed to travel with him.

This year the United Church of God—Germany celebrated its 10th anniversary. A slide show of the progress in preaching the gospel and preparing a people was presented. The brethren also gave Mr. and Mrs. Paul Kieffer a gift in recognition of their service to the Church.

This was also truly a feast of fellow-

ship as we spent a lot of time enjoying the fine German cuisine in the restaurant next door whose owners kindly prepare a special menu with no unclean foods for the entirety of the Feast.

The first activity was the welcome evening after the first Holy Day. The youth enjoyed an afternoon racing go-karts. The seniors participated in a Bible study discussion followed by coffee and cake. There was bowling for the youth and arts and crafts for the children.

The bus trip outing this year included a visit to the village of Blumberg and a steam train ride along the Rhine River followed by a visit to the Rhine Falls in Shaffhausen, Switzerland. The ladies enjoyed a special breakfast together. The dance evening was a lively activity for all as we were entertained by a live band, Enricho & Mario.

The Feast concluded with a good-bye evening after the Last Great Day, giving us an opportunity for some last fellowship before departing for our homes.

Susan Miller

Ghana

Accra, Kumasi and Elmina

Ghana hosted three sites for the Feast of Tabernacles in 2006—in the capital city of Accra; in Kumasi, the second largest city in the country; and in the seaside community of Elmina. All totaled, between 800 and 1,000 attended these three sites.

In both Kumasi and Elmina a facility was rented that included housing accommodations for the brethren and a meeting room. This allowed almost everyone to stay together, giving everyone time to renew old friendships and build new ones. And since most require financial assistance to keep the Feast, this is the most efficient way to help with housing expenses.

In Accra we experienced some of the difficulties that are often encountered in third-world countries. Since a place with both meeting and housing facilities could not be secured, the Church rented a building in which to meet, and then another large building for the brethren to stay in during the Feast.

After the First Holy Day everyone went to the housing quarters only to find that the original owner had taken the rental money from the Church and then promptly sold the building. Written contracts often do not carry much weight in this part of the world, so as often is the case, the arrangement was sealed with a



Ghana (photo by Thomas Clark)

handshake and the payment. As it turned out, the new owners were not aware we were going to use their building, and would not permit it. By 10 p.m. armed police had arrived at the building and everyone was escorted from the premises.

With no other options, the brethren were bused back to their home villages and kept the remainder of the Feast at home. They were only able to gather again on the Last Great Day, when buses were sent out once again to bring everyone back into Accra.

The brethren in all three sites were very grateful for some special gifts from U.S. congregations. The Bloomington, Illinois, congregation raised some funds that were used to provide ice cream or frozen yogurt for everyone in attendance. This is a special treat most would never be able to have or purchase it on their own.

Also the Macon, Georgia, congregation gathered up and sent nearly 250 neckties. We were able to provide a necktie to nearly every adult man in attendance. When asked what the ladies might like in the future, one older woman in Kumasi stated that she is a widow, and on our next trip she would like us to bring her a husband!

Thomas Clark

Guyana

Lethem, Rupununi

Once again brethren from the Rupununi region of Guyana in northern South America assembled at the conference room of the Savannah Inn Hotel to celebrate God's Feast. For the first service there were 23 in attendance. This included children and five visitors, four of whom had never attended a service before. One visitor was affiliated with another Church group, but has since revealed his intention of fellowshipping with UCG members.

Maxwell Victor was also present and spent four days with us before departing for the Tobago site. He conducted the teen Bible study, which proved to be a hit with the young people. He, too, seemed well pleased with the participation of all in attendance. After serving at the site in Brazil, John Carvalho and family from Seattle, Washington, arrived. They were able to put on the finishing touches to the Feast and spent the Last Great Day with us. There were 26 present for the last service.

All in all everyone enjoyed the days spent together. The children loved the Feast video and were amazed at the animals that exist in that part of the world. The Eternal blessed us with excellent weather and the brethren are grateful for the assistance rendered for transportation to and from the Feast site.

We are all looking forward to next year's gathering. One visitor has indicated that he intends to be present for all the days next year.

Gary Atkinson

Italy

Sabaudia

Our heartfelt thanks goes to all the brethren who celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles with us in Italy. We had an average attendance of 312 out of 327 participants (including children) from the United States, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Ghana and, of course, Italy.

During the Feast we were spiritually nourished by very inspiring and powerful messages by UCG ministers. Also, cultur-

al tours to Pompeii, Rome and the Vatican museums were offered, as part of our Feast educational program in relation to ancient Christianity vs. paganism. It was history becoming alive before our eyes.

Furthermore, we had wonderful weather all eight days of the Feast. This allowed memorable social activities, such as the Family Day on the beach, then an amusing talent show and an enjoyable evening dance. The brethren of all ages, both singles and families, had the opportunity to renew their long-time friendships as well as to make new friends by spending time in Christian fellowship.

On the last day of the Feast, Giacomo Massimo Pizzuti was ordained as a local elder. This needed ministerial addition will be of further help to the future of the Church in Italy.

At the end of the Feast there was a send-off toward the blue sky to say “good-bye” to the brethren before their departure from the Feast site. They were moving and unforgettable moments. Many brethren have written to us in appreciation. Yet we are the ones who need to sincerely express our gratefulness for their presence, friendship and support. There are not adequate words to thank all the brethren, adults and children, who have contributed with their presence and their joyful singing voices in making the Feast a memorable one, once again.

With the hope to see many other brethren next year, with renewed anticipation, our heartfelt thanks and invitation goes to all our brethren around the world.

Carmelo Anastasi

Jamaica

Montego Bay

A warm group of about 400 observed this year's Feast in Jamaica's second capital, Montego Bay. This year United held the Feast at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort. Sisters and brothers in Christ from Jamaica, elsewhere in the Caribbean and North America met for uplifting, challenging and encouraging messages that look forward to the coming of God's Kingdom and its meaning for us and for all of humanity.

This year's high attendance was 384 on the first Holy Day. Services were studded with an inspiring array of special music from the combined choir, the Jamaican choir, a youth ensemble and the children's choir. The musically talented shared their gifts generously, and on most days we enjoyed honoring God through two special music selections.

In the afternoons following services, Feastgoers enjoyed a variety of outdoor activities in Jamaica's beautiful setting. Events included a family fun day, a catamaran cruise that afforded snorkeling opportunities and a trip to the town of Ocho Rios, where the more daring climbed up Dunn's River Falls, a refreshing 600-foot waterfall.

Evening activities included teen and young adult Bible studies and a family fun show. While most visitors from outside the country stayed at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, many of the Jamaican members stayed at other properties nearby. This year, the local young people organized a dinner dance for those ages 14 to 25, which allowed Jamaican and visiting youth to get to know each other

better—and gave the visitors a chance to try out a few Jamaican dances.

The Last Great Day ended on a high note with a rousing closing hymn and a group photograph, which was available for Feastgoers to get copies of to take back to their homes. Although it was sad to part company, we look forward to meeting again!

Janice Lynn Mather

Kenya

Nairobi

This year 310 of God's people met for the Feast of Tabernacles in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. Nairobi's high elevation (5,400 feet) insured pleasant October weather in this beautiful part of East Africa.

Brethren from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda met for eight days at the Amani Center outside of Nairobi. Bible studies, leadership workshops and songleading instruction added to the educational opportunities for those attending—since so many live in remote areas and have no opportunity for such training apart from the Feast of Tabernacles.

Other activities included a tour of the Kenya Railway Museum in Nairobi, a tour of the Karen Blixon home (*Out of Africa*) and a game drive through Nairobi National Park for those interested. Family Day was highlighted by soccer, volleyball, face-painting and Frisbee games. The afternoon was capped off by ice cream for all of the brethren compliments of members in the United States.

During the Feast, 15 new converts were baptized and 27 little children were blessed—underscoring the growth that God has granted His Church in this special part of the world.

Doug Horchak

Malawi

The Malawi brethren had a great Feast this year. The location was near Mangochi in Malawi on beautiful Lake Malawi. We again set a new record for attendance with 141. The weather was mild and many of the brethren stayed on the Feast site in tents.

Mr. and Mrs. Victor Kubik attended also and added a great deal to the Feast. Mr. Kubik gave sermons about the uniqueness of God's Holy Days and a sermon about marriage. Other messages discussed education in God's Kingdom and the resurrections.

Because of the generosity of several congregations in the United States, the Malawi brethren were able to enjoy a special meal served at the Nkopola Lodge. All 141 attended the special meal, which consisted of traditional dishes with chicken and fish. Every evening a special “braai” was prepared where they were served barbecued goat and fish. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Khembo from the United States attended the Feast in Malawi and helped make it a joyful celebration.

A special evening of entertainment was prepared by the Malawi brethren. Young children recited verses from the Bible and other stories were told.

The Feast in Malawi was a great success.

Bill Jahns

Mexico

San Miguel Allende

This year, the Feast in Mexico took place once again in the city of San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato. For a second consecutive year, brethren enjoyed this beautiful site in the central part of Mexico, with a temperate and mostly dry climate.

We had visitors from the United States and a family from the Dominican Republic. The Feast was held once again in the



Blessing of the children, Mexico (photo by Jorge Garduño)

Hotel Real de Minas. Lauro Alberto Roybal Herrera, regional pastor in Mexico and Feast coordinator, gave the opening night message, titled "Today, Time for Healing." He welcomed everybody and exhorted the brethren to let go of any burden, to fellowship with the brethren and share the blessings that we received during the year.

God provided spiritual delicacies. There were Bible studies, which started at 9 a.m. during the first three days of the Feast. The topics covered were: "Healing Is a Process," "The Cities of Tomorrow, How Will They Be?" and "Why Must Christians Suffer?"

The sermons and sermonettes focused on the meaning of the Feast and the healing that God offers. They focused on how to truly enjoy the Feast, on understanding that our bodies are temporary dwellings and that the Feast represents only the beginning of the Kingdom of God and that it is the time when Christ will reign over all the earth and the whole world will be reconciled to God. The messages were very inspiring and moving to the 378 people who attended here.

Feast activities included a singles' activity, with the participation of more than 30 youngsters and young adults, and a ladies' tea with the theme, "Women's Importance in the Church." There was also a family dance in which everybody danced and laughed and enjoyed each other's company. Another activity was a trip to the city of León.

Other activities included the performance of a musical group whose members dress in colorful regional costumes and fill the atmosphere with their beautiful regional music. There was also a children's party in the children's play hall of a restaurant called Pollo Feliz ("Happy Chicken"). At the end of the activity, each child happily received a small gift provided by the Church for the occasion.

On the Last Great Day, there was a special staff breakfast, which was planned as a small way of saying "thank you" to all those who served during the Feast.

During the Last Great Day, God also blessed us with a baptism of a young lady from the Mexico City congregation. And the blessing of 15 children took place

during the morning services. Five ministers and one deacon participated in this ceremony.

Bible studies, sermons, sermonettes, Bible classes for the children, one conference given by Dr. Judith Lira (titled "What do books teach about sexuality?"), special music, dances, meals, recreational activities and much Christian love were all part of this memorable Feast.

Mr. Roybal gave the closing sermon of the Last Great Day. He reminded us of the motives that we have in keeping the Feast year after year. As has been customary in past years, at the end of the Last Great Day, pictures of most attendees to the Feast, taken throughout the whole Feast in the various activities, were projected on the screen. Brethren were filled with emotion, some with tears, and embraced each other as they said "good-bye" and "God willing, until next year."

Jorge Ivan and Pablo Dimakis

New Zealand

Taupo

Taupo, with its majestic lake and snow-capped Mt. Ruapehu in the background, truly reflected an impressive millennial setting for the 93 brethren gathered in New Zealand for this year's Feast. The many visitors from Australia, Canada and the United States gave the Feast an international flavor. Indeed, all but one of the sermons was given by visiting ministers.

Sermons and other messages concentrated on the return of Jesus Christ and His coming Kingdom. The attendance of visiting pastor Bill Winner and his wife, Carolyn, was especially valued. Many attendees commented that Mr. Winner's sermon on 1 Corinthians 13 will always be remembered, not only as an outstanding message, but also as a pivotal remind-



Group shot of Feastgoers in Taupo, New Zealand (photo by Brendan Gates)

er that love is the greatest quality in our Christian walk.

Lake Taupo, replete with brown and rainbow trout, presented excellent recreational opportunities for the fishermen and fisherwomen in our midst as well as for the sightseers. Other activities included a luncheon for those over 50 at a winery in the hills just above the lake, a dinner/dance, horseback riding and visiting the nearby thermal region with its impressive geysers and hot pools.

One of our visitors commented at the end of the Feast: "This Feast has given me a clear vision of the World Tomorrow"—a sentiment shared by all attendees.

Art Verschoor

Peru

Huanchaco

A lively group of God's people gathered together in harmony to celebrate

the Feast in the peaceful coastal town of Huanchaco. Several countries were well represented at this Feast site. We had brethren from Belgium, Chile, Ecuador, Germany, England, the United States and, of course, Peru. It was quite interesting to see that in spite of our cultural differences, we all felt like a united family.

We had a variety of activities for the whole family. We had three family dances; for the first time we had a "Peruvian Night," where dances from many parts of Peru were performed for our visitors; we had our traditional talent show, where our brethren present the fruit of their year-long preparation in dances, singing or any musical talent they have. We also had our always enjoyable children's party and our beach games.

On the spiritual side, we had inspiring sermons, sermonettes and special music. Sermons and sermonettes helped us focus on our goal, the Kingdom of God, and how to keep walking steady toward the fulfillment of our calling.

The 197 brethren who celebrated the Feast here let their light shine brightly. The managers of the facilities we used commended us for the fine and friendly people we are, and asked us to return to their community next year.

On the evening of Oct. 14 we had to go back to our home towns. We were a little sad to have to say good-bye, but happy to have made new friends and strengthened our old ones and, above all, we were very determined to make our calling and election sure.

Manuel Quijano

Philippines

Baguio City

Baguio City once again was one of three Feast of Tabernacles' sites for the

helped us sharpen our focus on our future as glorified sons of God and what we will be doing in the Millennium.

We were very happy to view this year's Festival video featuring our brethren in New Zealand and Australia. It helped us realize more deeply that no matter where we may be in the world, as God's people, we all share in that very same hope pictured by the Feast.

The Festival show this year featured



Baguio City, Philippines

folk dances from different countries around the world and a variety of songs presented by the brethren. Several pieces of native Filipino music were likewise performed by brethren playing native stringed instruments similar to the mandolin called *bandurias* and *octavinas*, accompanied by a guitar.

Among the other Festival activities were the youth day and Family Day, as well as the seniors' night where the teens and young adults organized themselves to serve a special dinner for our senior Feastgoers. There was also a film showing and "videoke" after the Family Day.

With all the fine fellowship, enjoyment and spiritually inspiring messages we received, we again felt the Feast had ended quite abruptly. Nevertheless, everyone present felt that, with the greater feeling of unity experienced by everyone at this Festival site, this Feast was truly the best spiritual Feast ever.

Rey Evasco

Davao City

Davao City—adjudged "The Most Livable City in the Philippines" by *Asiaweek* magazine—hosted 420 members, affiliates and children from 17 congregations in Mindanao, as well as guests from Luzon, the Visayas, the United States and New Zealand, at the GSP Training Camp in Toril.

The Festival video, *Life Anew in a New Land*, was played on the opening night. Compelling messages, great weather, pleasing special music, delicious food and seemingly nonstop fellowship characterized the Feast. In order to streamline registration and Festival administration, everyone was issued a bar-coded and plastic-laminated name tag that kept track of attendance, accommodations and meals.

Free lunch was served every day of the Feast. Also, on both Holy Days, a roasted calf was added to the menu. One member also sponsored ice cream following the last service on the Last Great Day.

Other highlights included a night of fun, fellowship and games on the first day; city tours on days two and six, leadership seminars for three consecutive nights for the local leaders; a challenging seven-station outdoor game for the teens and singles simultaneously held with the seniors' social on the third day; livelihood

workshops (virgin coconut oil production, herbal soap making and flower-card making) on the fourth day; baptism counseling and a Bible study forum on the fifth day; a colorful and entertaining variety show on the sixth day; and a fun-filled sports day and fruit festival on the seventh day.

Later that evening, a leaders' dinner was held in appreciation of the men and wives who help serve the Mindanao



brethren. Finally, on the Last Great Day, after more individual counseling, six people were baptized: Steve Budoyan, Jesusa Dique, Iyarmoon Dulay, Liza Evaristo, Jonathan Sagayno and Mervyn Samuel Tonog.

While space does not permit us to detail all the things that made this Feast so memorable, two things stand out: the sermons and the people. Both were, and are, unforgettable.

Daniel Roy G. Macaraeg

Iloilo

This year 144 people, including several foreign guests, have learned to fear God and rejoice for eight days in the beautiful and scenic resort of Punta Villa, Iloilo, for the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day.

Services started on the First Holy Day with a full day of services. We had daily morning services after that and a variety of wholesome outdoor activities in the afternoons.

Activities included were the Family Day, Youth Day, Seniors' Night and Dance Night. An added feature that enhanced the festive mood of the celebration was during the Family Day when a number of members shared a roasted calf and ice cream with all the brethren.

Feastgoers also had the privilege to witness the wedding ceremony of Church members from the United States and Sabah, Malaysia.

The brethren were especially blessed with the presence of David Baker, the senior pastor of the Philippines, and his family who kept the Feast with us for three days.

The management and personnel of Punta Villa Resort gladly welcomed us. We've heard that the United Church of God is considered the only group of resort visitors that is well-behaved, humble and orderly.

This year's Feast was truly one of the best. Thank you to everyone, particularly those who spent most of their time in the

preparation for the Feast. Most of all we acknowledge and give credit to our loving Father in heaven who made this Feast wonderful and memorable.

Florante Siopan

Portugal

Costa da Caparica

The quaint fishing village of Costa da Caparica was, once again, the host of this year's Feast in Portugal. Eighty-four brethren from different countries, such as the United States, the Netherlands, Canada, England, Scotland, South Africa, New Zealand and Portugal, enjoyed eight sun-filled and inspiring days here.

The soon-coming Kingdom of God was evident in the many inspirational messages given at the Feast. Steven Wood's message was how we need to use the beatitudes as outlined in the Sermon on the Mount as effective tools to overcome. "Our challenge," he mentioned, "comes from human nature and the world around us."

Ray Blouin and Jaime Campos gave messages of encouragement to show how God's hand is on and with us. If God can create something as intricate as the "simple" cell and as awesome as the universe with all of its vastness, how much more does He know each one of our needs?

Our Festival week was highlighted by the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Joel Meeker and their two daughters, Fiona and Tatiana, in the middle of the Feast. Mr. Meeker's messages were both inspirational and encouraging. He expounded on the need to keep the vision of the Kingdom alive. He also mentioned our need to be prepared and to help in the mission of fulfilling the gospel. "We need to ask ourselves the question: What have I done today to hasten the return of Jesus Christ?"

Members and guests also had the opportunity of experiencing and learning about Portuguese culture and history through the various tours that were organized. A day trip to Sintra and Estoril and a dinner show at Luso, to experience typical Portuguese cuisine and music, were among the afternoon tours.

A new tour organized this year went to the Arrabida mountains and included wine tasting and viewing the historic castles of Sesimbra and the Pousada do Castelo in Palmela. Another stop was to view the making of the famous ornamental tiles, called *azulejos*, and pottery.

The ordination of Jaime Campos as a deacon on the Last Great Day was a great gift to us all.

The ladies also enjoyed a special breakfast and got to know each other a little better during the Feast.

"I found the Feast area very peaceful; an area where you really could sit back and see God's plan where we will live abundantly," said Leon Melville of Calgary, Canada.

As the sun began to set on the Last Great Day, we all gathered on the beach to watch the beautiful sunset and to say good-bye to one another once again.

Jorge and Kathy de Campos

Singapore

We were struck immediately by the beauty as we traveled from the Singa-

pore airport to the Orchid Country Club. Just miles from the equator, the tropical city is clean and manicured, without the graffiti and garbage we often see in big cities. The expansive guest rooms had lots of hardwood and marble, and we met in a modern and comfortable theater. Our rooms included breakfast—so each morning the members met and enjoyed the breakfast buffet.

Eleven countries were represented by people attending—Canada, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore and the United States. Thirty seven people attended our meetings, conducted in English.

Our Singapore brethren are gracious and happily shared their lovely city—including great restaurants and cultural locations. Activities included three banquets, a bowling party, walking tours and trips to interesting places: Little India, China Town, botanical gardens, the colonial district and Arab Street.

On Sunday, we had an open house for *Good News* subscribers and five came! Two visitors came on the last Holy Day. A man who found us on the Web traveled all night from Malaysia, arrived on the third day and stayed the remainder of the Feast. Hotel management was pleased with our group; they overstocked our buffets with



Singapore (photo by Fil Olimpo)

extra menu items that thrilled us—rice dishes, noodles, curries and other flavorful Chinese, Indian and Malaysian dishes with chicken, beef and fish. They invited us back for next year—which is in the works, according to Jeff Caudle, the Feast coordinator.

The city is very safe and we saw people of all ages, from young to very old, traveling without fear on the trains and buses. Singapore has a diverse population, which is also reflected in the congregation, largely made up of people from Chinese, Indian, Malaysian and Indonesian descent. We traveled all over the city on the modern and safe transportation system. Everyone spoke English and we were blessed to be able to share our lives and experiences and come home with a feeling of really knowing and understanding our brethren spread throughout East Asia.

Linda Register

South Africa

George

This year 85 brethren enjoyed an exciting Feast in George, which is known as the "heart of the Garden Route"—a beautiful stretch of land on the southern coast of South Africa. Festival messages expounded on the eagerly awaited Kingdom and soon-coming rule of Jesus Christ. Special music was exceptional and the Feast was full of unity and joy in service to God and each other.

Church services were held in a beau-

tiful wood-decked hall on the immaculately kept grounds of the Nelson Man-



Dirk van Loggerenberg and daughter, Mia, petting a baby elephant; Oliver Hooser riding an ostrich (photos by Claire Gordon)



del Metropolitan University, Saarsveld Campus. The peaceful acres of rolling green lawn, bright flowerbeds and forests of trees, crowned by the majestic Outeniqua Mountains, created an inviting millennial setting. The hall has been reserved for next year.

Warm sunshine and blue skies encouraged both young and old to enjoy a variety of activities including a pre-Feast road trip along the Garden Route, ostrich riding, the Tree Top Canopy Tour in the Tsitsikamma Forest, a visit to the Cango Wildlife Ranch (which included crocodile cage diving and petting cheetahs) and a trip to Knysna to hand feed elephants. God's glory shone brightly through the variety, beauty and complexity of His creation.

A thoroughly enjoyable dance and entertainment evening was highlighted by learning interesting facts about each other and having to guess to whom each fact applied.

For more information and photographs from the Feast, please visit www.fotrsa.co.za

Claire Gordon

Uvongo

Once again a wonderful and uplifting Feast of Tabernacles was experienced by over 200 adults and children from around South Africa.

A number of people commented on the happy and relaxed atmosphere throughout the Feast.

We were blessed with fine, cool weather—the humidity being a lot lower than in previous years.

The average attendance for the Feast was 218, with the highest attendance being 228 on the first day.

André van Belkum, pastor of the Durban congregation and chairman of the South African National Council, gave the opening night's sermon and the sermon on the first day of the Feast. We were encouraged to consider our personal involvement in the coming Kingdom of God—to look forward to, and wait expectantly for, the return of Jesus Christ.

Herb Teitgen joined us in Uvongo for three days, speaking on all three days as well as treating us to special music each day.

On Monday we were able to spend an enjoyable family morning on the Uvongo beach with games for the children and

volleyball and soccer for the adults and youth.

The traditional seniors' lunch was once again a resounding success with outstanding food and fellowship. It was at a restaurant on the banks of the Umzimkulu River at Port Shepstone.

The youth were able to test their driving skills at a local go-karting venue, and it was decided that parents should hold on to their car keys!

On Monday evening the Festival video was shown, a very fine and inspiring account of the work in Australia and New Zealand.

On Wednesday Mr. Teitgen left Uvongo and returned to the George Feast site and Mr. van Belkum left for Zimbabwe where he spent the remainder of the Feast.

Thursday we welcomed Bill and Cheryl Jahns to Uvongo. They had spent the first half of the Feast in Malawi.

Mr. Jahns gave the final sermon, "The Miracle of the Last Great Day," a fine conclusion to a happy, focused and ful-



Bill Jahns speaks in Uvongo; Durban youth perform special music (photos by Steve Serfontein) filling Feast 2006.

Neville Smith

Sri Lanka

Beruwela

Twenty-six brethren from Sri Lanka, India, Australia and the United States enjoyed the Feast of Tabernacles 2006 in Sri Lanka. The location was once again the beautiful Neptune Hotel located in the village of Beruwela along the shoreline of the Indian Ocean. The Neptune Hotel is an all-inclusive beach resort with a friendly and courteous staff offering Feastgoers a wonderful example of South Asian hospitality.

The weather was perfect for enjoying the pool and beach, featuring warm,



Sri Lanka (photo by Valerie Waddle)

sunny days and tropical nights with very little rain.

The brethren enjoyed many amusing activities, including a talent show, Family Day, Bible baseball and a day trip to Galle Fort and a turtle hatchery.

Family Day took place on the beach just behind the hotel. There were games such as cricket, balloon toss, tug-of-war and rides on an elephant. Several nights during the Feast we played the favorite game of Bible baseball. It was not only fun but it helped us learn about the Bible and brought us closer together.

Brethren also enjoyed the outing to the Kosgoda Turtle Hatchery and Galle Fort. At the turtle hatchery Feastgoers were allowed to hold sea turtles that had just hatched the previous day and would be released into the sea the following day. Also those who were able and willing held enormous mature sea turtles.

Galle Fort was originally built by the Portuguese in 1589. The present fort was constructed by the Dutch in 1663. Brethren toured the museum and walked along the fort wall overlooking the Indian Ocean.

One of the highlights of the Feast was the talent show. Almost everyone present participated and the Sri Lankan brethren did an outstanding job in sharing their musical talents.

The activities were not the only excellent part about the Feast this year. The food, both spiritual and physical, was exceptionally good. The hotel provided many tasty meals featuring Sri Lankan curries and international fare. Most dinners featured entertainment with a live band playing Western and Sri Lankan music.

The sermons were stirring and inspirational, and the fellowship was warm and loving. By the end of the Feast everyone felt truly like family, and seemed eager to someday be together again. All aspects of the Feast of Tabernacles 2006 in Sri Lanka were superb.

Brianna Waddle

Togo

Kpalimé

The Feast 2006 was celebrated with great joy in Togo, in West Africa.

When we arrived at the site, a boarding school in the city of Kpalimé, on Friday, Oct. 6, we made an unpleasant discovery. Because of the financial difficulties in the country, even schools like the one we use for the Feast are suffering. To our surprise, we found it no longer had any mattresses on the beds or chairs in the classrooms. The school director had not informed us of this prior to our arrival, so we were unprepared. He sent us to another school nearby where we were able to rent mattresses and chairs.

Other than this unexpected event, everything went smoothly and well. We were 35 people including seven children. The members from the rural village of Momé Hagou who came, brought their Festival tithe in the form of produce from their fields. This provided many meals during God's Feast.

Offerings were very good at the Feast this year. They will help us complete the outer plaster on our new Lomé Church hall, built through gifts of the United Church of God Good Works Program.

During the Feast, one Festival attendee, a health-care professional, improved our health education by showing and commenting on several health videos. We appreciate the help and support from our brethren overseas and hope someday

to have visitors for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Kossi Fiaboé

Tonga

Mu'a

The Feast kicked off in the Friendly Island with some wonderful decorations and dazzling light on the opening night, which set the atmosphere for this year's Festival. Thirty-three brethren attended this year. We were blessed with some visitors from Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

We had rainy weather throughout the Feast, but it never dampened the spirit of the brethren. The services were blessed by powerful and inspiring sermons, along with some wonderful special music performed by the youth.

Although our activities were affected by the recent death of our late king, nothing stopped us from enjoying the best we could. Once again our youth stepped up and hosted one of the highlights of the Feast, which is the welcoming *umu* (which involves cooking foods in an underground oven). We also held a lunch at the beautiful Liku'alofa Beach to com-



Mu'a, Tonga

memorate the importance of family in this Festival. In addition our visitors and locals also had a taste for the first time of our Tongan kava, and learned how to drink it formally.

We finished the Feast this year with a very emotional farewell dinner that lasted for a long time. The truth is, no one wanted to leave the Feast, but it encourages us to keep on enduring and striving for the truth, because what we see in these eight days is just a glimpse of the wonderful world tomorrow that we are looking forward to.

Heamasi Ta'ifo'ou

Trinidad & Tobago

Tobago

This year's Feast of Tabernacles was held on the beautiful, tropical island of Tobago. There was a maximum of 30 persons in attendance because of limited space, and we were blessed to have Kingsley and Janice Mather and John and Merrie Elliott visit here. We all had fun—from special music to hall set up, the brethren were always ready to serve.

This is what some of the brethren had to say:

"Celebrating the Feast in Tobago was a wonderful experience for me and my wife. We enjoyed the beautiful island, the picnic, the outings, the coral reefs, the wonderful food and the friendliness of the local people. The most rewarding experience in keeping our great God's feast days was being with the brethren from Trinidad and Tobago. They have been very warm, friendly and helpful in

every way possible. It would be a wonderful experience for anyone to keep the Feast in Tobago"—Lynox Blackwell, Michigan.

"I learned a lot about God and His way. This was my first international Feast, and I learned a lot about the people. It was neat to learn so much about a new and completely different country. It was fun to meet such interesting people who I could never have met otherwise. It was one of my best Feasts ever!"—Amanda Rupp, 14, Pennsylvania.

"This year's Feast has had numerous blessings. Top on the list is meeting such wonderful brethren and learning their way of living and culture. God's Spirit was everywhere—at services, activities and fellowship"—Eleanor La Casse, Michigan.

"I enjoyed seeing a sea turtle, sticking my feet in the sand, snorkeling to see the trumpet fish. I like the parrots and geckos"—Jacob Richardson, 5, Arizona.

"Having observed and participated in the Feast for the first time, it was a vivid lesson to me of how it symbolizes God's restoring mankind to his original state of peace, harmony and love with Him. The thought of a world of peace with the justice of Jesus Christ reigning for a thousand years reinforces my faith and hope in God, and gives me everything to look forward to in the life to come"—Ann Solomon-Kerr, Tobago.

"A truly family atmosphere where brethren dwell together in unity. The children's Bible study was appreciated and the kids really enjoyed the activities, especially the boat ride to the Buccoo Reef"—the Bissessar family, Trinidad.

The Last Great Day came all too soon and everyone felt a sense of sadness to leave one another. What a wonderful day it will be when all people learn God's way and experience a joy even greater than at the Feast!

Steve Basant

Turkey

This year 123 people celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles in the "other holy land," i.e., modern-day Turkey where the seven churches mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3 can be found. Three full touring buses accommodated our travels to visit sites where familiar biblical characters like the apostle Paul, the apostle John and Timothy once walked.



Feastgoers tour Sardis (photo by Scott Ashley)

All the messages were spiritually uplifting and educational as they blended the theme of the Feast of Tabernacles with the message of Christ to the seven churches of Revelation.

The Feast opened in historic Istanbul,

formerly Constantinople. From Istanbul we flew to Izmir and on to the port city of Kusadasi in a beautiful setting along the Aegean Sea.

Besides the seven churches of Revelation, our group visited the ancient pagan city of Aphrodisias and Colossae, which is not yet excavated, and Hierapolis (Colossians 4:13). Members relaxed in the hot springs near Hierapolis (modern Pamukkale), which provide the hot water mentioned in conjunction with Laodicea.

The extensive and well-preserved ruins of Ephesus were the highlight, and our group picture was taken in the actual theater mentioned in Acts 19:29 where the city protested against the activities of Paul.

The Feast ended with a gala Turkish dinner overlooking the port of Izmir (from another angle you could see the ruins of ancient Smyrna). Presentations to our tour guides and staff were given and sad good-byes began as some left for home later that evening.

Charles Melear

United States

Bend-Redmond, Oregon

Over 1,000 Feastgoers enjoyed one of the best Feasts ever at the Bend-Redmond



Bend, Oregon (photo by Tom Taylor)

site. Weather was nearly perfect—warm, sunny days with temperatures ranging from the mid-60s to upper 70s Fahrenheit. The nice weather allowed members to enjoy the many scenic attractions Central Oregon has to offer. As happened last year, cold, rainy weather set in the day after the Feast was over.

Attendance was very consistent, peaking at 1,016 on Sunday. The webcast connections peaked at 101 on the Last Great Day. Many commented that the messages were especially good this year. One prominent theme was personalizing our destiny during the millennial rule of Christ.

A wide range of activities was available for teens, singles, young adults and seniors. Our family dance and fun show were very well-received and both attended by more than 500. Family Day was held at a children's museum, which had many hands-on activities, and a fun center, which had go-karts, miniature golf, bowling and indoor games.

Brethren donated 1,300 pounds of food and \$915 in cash for the local food bank.

Larry J. Walker

Branson, Missouri

Our Great God abundantly blessed over 1,300 of His people gathered in Branson to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The messages were very inspiring, painting a clear picture of our future and

encouraging us to continue to prepare for that future. There was a wonderful spirit of unity and peace that seemed to grow with each passing day. High attendance was 1,337.

The weather was picture perfect, with the fall colors becoming more vivid as the Feast progressed. We had rain on two nights during the Feast that began after the day's activities and stopped before services the next day. (After the Feast it started raining on Sunday morning and rained for two days.)

Teens enjoyed an activity at Table Rock Lake State Park that included games and pontoon boat rides on the lake. A total of 368 senior citizens enjoyed a wonderful buffet lunch and then played a game of music and movie trivia from the 1940s and '50s.

Members gave a wonderful Holy Day offering on both of the Holy Days, with the last offering being the largest ever in Branson. The Feast choir sang several inspiring numbers and the soloists did a wonderful job of adding to the Feast. Many members commented that this was "the best Feast in a long, long time!"

Mike Blackwell

Cincinnati, Ohio/Northern Kentucky

This year 1,130 of our family members spent time together in Northern Kentucky for the Feast and Last Great Day. For the first time since the home office was moved to Cincinnati we were able to have the Feast nearby and offer tours.

Other activities ranged from a successful family dance to Family Day at the zoo and botanical gardens, from successful teen activities to a seniors' dessert reception followed by a pipe organ concert at the Cincinnati Museum Center. One of the world's top organists was flown in from Philadelphia specifically to perform for us on the 4,000-plus pipe organ. It was truly a unique and beautiful experience for the 400 in attendance.

The highlights of the Feast without a doubt were the sermonettes, sermons, seminars and studies. Messages covered many historical and millennial topics focusing us clearly on God's coming Kingdom. Each service was also made available on the Internet where many people from around the world were able to join in.

It was also interesting to see that the copies of Church literature present were snapped up in very short order. More literature was brought in, and it too was gone quickly. So even more was brought in and that also disappeared in no time.

I couldn't help but chuckle to myself as I noticed in the barbershop and shoe shine store that the gentleman shining shoes had picked up copies of our booklets and was reading them when I went in for a shoe shine. He said he was planning on teaching what he was reading at his church that next Sunday. I wonder what the response will be?

Temperatures ranged from sunny and in the 70s to cool and in the 30s, giving everyone the opportunity to break out some of their winter wardrobe for the first time this season. Everyone headed home at the end tired, but spiritually filled.

Mark Winner

Escondido, California

This year 780 brethren assembled

together in the lovely Performing Arts Center of Escondido to hear encouraging and uplifting messages regarding the coming Kingdom of God. Robert Fahey opened the Festival by encouraging us to truly come to learn to fear the Lord always and rejoice (Deuteronomy 14:23 and 26) in this unique time of spiritual instruction.

This year's special Bible study featured Randy Schreiber discussing "What Does It Mean to Be Perfect Just as Your Father in Heaven Is Perfect? (Matthew 5:48)." Dave Myers offered a very encouraging message regarding the Last Great Day focusing on the theme of God's great mercy and how we might incorporate that now in our daily walk with God.

The Escondido Feast site experienced eight straight days of gorgeous autumn weather hovering around the mid-70s. This city lies in an interior valley of northern San Diego County. Within 30 to 40 minutes of each direction, you can either be headed into pine-clad mountains, on a sandy beach, touring the major attractions of San Diego or walking through the vineyards of nearby Temecula. Each year nearly 40 to 50 percent of our people stay in the nearby beach communities of Oceanside or Carlsbad and commute to services.

Throughout the course of the week, our people were able to experience young adult and teen drop-in socials, a teen beach party at Oceanside and a senior citizens' banquet. The most popular event continues to be the old-fashioned Family Day picnic at nearby oak-shaded Felicita Park that brings all the brethren of God's family together, no matter how old or how young, to experience in type the peaceful harmony of the wonderful world tomorrow.

Robin Webber

Jekyll Island, Georgia

Historic Jekyll Island continues to be a popular site for brethren who desire to observe the Feast of Tabernacles in a peaceful environment. Over 1,200 brethren filled the Hartley Auditorium in the Deep South's only oceanfront convention center. The highest attendance of 1,245 exceeded the projected attendance by over 100. Excellent weather with temperatures in the high 70s, clear to partly cloudy skies and no rain enhanced the joy and unity of this year's Festival.

Richard Thompson's inspiring opening-night sermon set the tone for the messages that followed. Many brethren commented that the messages were on target and inspiring. The congregational Bible study was supported by 515, not including the 100 who attended the young adult and teen studies conducted the same evening.

Most brethren rented accommodations on the island. Hosting large gatherings of hungry Feastgoers to fish fries, barbecues, ethnic meals and potlucks was common. Many enjoyed the island's beauty by cycling or walking. Sighting whitetail deer that populate the island was common.

This year 318 seniors, guests, ministers and wives enjoyed food and fellowship during the senior citizens' luncheon in the convention center's Caldwell Hall. Live entertainment by talented members enhanced the meal.

At the traditional Family Day beach

party, grilled hamburgers and hot dogs were enjoyed by approximately 450. Following the meal, many enjoyed beach activities such as football, sand sculpting, playing on the beach and children's games and races.

Other activities during the Feast included youth instruction classes, teen and young adult hospitality rooms and the delightful children's choir. Brethren donated items and cash to shelters for battered women and homeless children. Golfers enjoyed a four-person scramble



Jekyll Island, Georgia

tournament. Approximately 500 brethren shared a buffet lunch together at the convention center on the Last Great Day.

A guided bus tour of St. Simons Island along with lunch and shopping was an option enjoyed by some. Others chose to visit the sites of Jacksonville, Florida, or the historic city of Savannah, Georgia, both only slightly over an hour's drive from the Feast site.

God's favor and blessings were obvious this year at the Jekyll Island Feast site. The messages were inspiring and timely and the fellowship was pleasant and rewarding.

Don Waterhouse

Kerrville, Texas

The fourth year in Kerrville met and exceeded our pre-Feast high expectations. God truly blessed the 2006 Feast of Tabernacles. Once again the hill country of Texas was a big draw for our Texan brethren and for those who transferred in to be with us.

The first Holy Day was our highest attendance with 982. This was nearly 100 more than the preregistration numbers. Attendance for the entire Feast was consistently high and greater than anticipated with the exception of one rain day where some of the outlying bridges were not passable.

Sermons were exceptional this year with many commenting how inspiring all the messages were. In addition to the sermons and scheduled Bible studies, this year we were able to offer two seminars, one by Gary Petty and the other by Donald Ward. Both were well received and inspiring.

Our weather was clear with bright blue Texas skies. The temperatures were in the mid 70s and low 80s, with a cool front the last part of the Feast that brought cool evenings and fall-like days in the low 70s.

A well attended country-and-western family dance was held Saturday night, after the first Holy Day. It proved to be a great opportunity early in the Festival to fellowship and dance to genuine "Texas Swing." Family Day, at a real working ranch, was replete with barbecue, a world renowned trick roper and entertainment provided by a professional disc jockey.

One of the host hotel directors told me

several times how much the staff appreciates having our brethren and that our group was the best group they have ever had.

It is to God we give thanks and the credit for the example set and for His wonderful Feast of Tabernacles.

Britton M. Taylor

Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii

The Feast in Maui went off quite well but proved to be challenging with an earthquake right after the Feast. Thankfully, except for the momentary concern and flight delays, everyone was OK and returned safely to their homes. God's bubble of protection was there for the entire Feast, but the following day, with the quake and unexpected rains, we realized the Feast was definitely over!

We had a record attendance of 800. During the Feast the weather was sunny and warm, enabling all the activities to be carried out without any problems. We had a record number of youths, and several activities were programmed for them, such as a get-together meeting, a dance, different games during Family Day at Kapalua Beach and a farewell lunch.

The messages were inspiring, and activities were held for all ages, including a luau attended by 550 brethren. The beauty of Maui served as an excellent backdrop for both a physical and spiritual Feast filled with wonderful messages and memories.

Mario Seiglie

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Lancaster hosted the Feast for the first time ever, and the response from the brethren was overwhelmingly positive. The area boasts a wide variety of activities for people of all ages. Church services were held at the Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center. The Lancaster Host staff was impressed with how smoothly each activity proceeded without major complications and praised the Church for its professionalism and adaptability.

The highest attendance came on the first day of the Feast when over 1,350 people were in attendance. The messages given by the ministry were inspiring and continually pointed toward the fulfillment of God's plan for man. In addition



Lancaster, Pennsylvania (photo by Charles Larkin)

to the daily messages, two seminars were presented this year, and were heavily attended by the brethren.

Because the area has many recreation choices and places to tour, the Family Day was turned wide open to the brethren to go and see all that the Pennsylvania Dutch country had to offer. Whether it was a tour of an Amish farm or sitting for a fine dinner served by the Amish, everyone expressed

how kindly they were treated.

Many brethren wanted to assist the Amish families who lost children in the tragic shooting that occurred on the Day of Atonement. Because the Amish enjoy making scrapbooks, the brethren donated funds to purchase scrapbooks and other materials. They were presented to a representative of the families who then presented them to the families.

Following the Family Day, the brethren reassembled back at the Lancaster Host for an evening of music, comedy and skits at our annual Family Fun Show.

Over 600 brethren made their way to the Sight and Sound Theatre to see the production of *Ruth*. The breathtaking scenery and effects, along with countless animals, magnificent sets and an original soundtrack were well received by those in attendance. Other activities included a singles and young adult outing, a tour to New York for a Broadway show and a most successful seniors' luncheon.

Many brethren voiced their hope of returning to Lancaster next year to keep the Feast.

Todd O. Carey

Panama City Beach, Florida

This was our seventh year to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the tropical setting of beautiful Panama City Beach, Florida. The weather was picture perfect with clear skies, emerald-green waters and sugar-white sandy beaches. We were all appreciative of being able to keep God's Feast another year in peace and safety.

The 1,420 brethren were fed an outstanding spiritual banquet about God's soon-coming Kingdom and our part in assisting Christ in reeducating the world. The messages were inspiring and spiritually fulfilling this year. Special music was exceptional and the performance on Youth Day of the 86-member children's choir was delightful. The 51-member teen choir gave a fantastic rendition of "Awesome God."

All of our planned activities were successful and well attended. We had 140 in attendance at the bowling/skating activity for our teens and 205 seniors attended the luncheon held in their honor. A new addition this year for Family Day was "Beach Olympics." Over 200 brethren participated in a variety of events sponsored by the singles and young adults.

We all left Panama City Beach spiritually and physically rejuvenated.

Harold Rhodes

Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Steamboat Springs experienced wonderful fall weather, with only a little rain and one refreshing snowfall, leaving plenty of time to enjoy this small town atmosphere, the Yampa River and the surrounding mountains.

Attendance at services was consistent, with a high of 675 brethren on the eighth day. The seminar and Bible study met with enthusiasm as members gathered to learn about the different characteristics of men and women from UCG president Clyde Kilough and God's future use of the people of Gog from Roger Foster. The wide variety of sermon topics all focused on aspects of God's plan as revealed in these Feast days.

Fellowship and activity highlights included a well-attended family dance, a Colorado site tradition, and the annual fun show, enjoyed this year by about 70 percent of Feastgoers. Young people participated in activities at the hot springs pools and waterslides, bowling and pizza parties. Some brethren even ventured to enjoy their first hot-air balloon ride in the crisp air just after sunrise.

One pastor's wife, buying stamps at the hotel desk to send cards to brethren back home, evoked this response, "You people buy more postcards and stamps than any group we ever have."

Larry Salyer

Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

Three words summarize the Feast at Wisconsin Dells in 2006—unity, inspiration and joy. The theme of many messages focused on keeping the vision of God's Kingdom alive. Many brethren commented on how meaty the messages



Wisconsin Dells choir and orchestra (photo by Shirley Buckmaster)

were this year. Attendance held strong during the Feast with a high attendance of 1,312 on the first Holy Day.

A children's carnival was a popular addition to the Family Day activities. Other Family Day activities included sports, games and numerous outdoor amusement activities.

Special music has always been a highlight of the Feast in Wisconsin Dells. Brethren were inspired by music from the 65-member Festival choir, the 40-member orchestra, a children's choir and several smaller vocal and instrumental ensembles.

A nice sit-down hot luncheon meal was enjoyed by 235 seniors. Our own Festival family dance band played several hours of pleasurable music at the ever-popular family dance. Brethren brought hundreds of pounds of nonperishable food and household items to the dance so they could be donated to a local food pantry. A dinner boat cruise was enjoyed by 35 singles and young adults. Festival youth classes were attended by around 100 youth.

The weather varied from nice Indian summer weather to a cold front that brought snow showers one afternoon.

A big thank you to all the brethren who served at the Dells Feast site and to all who attended. We all thank God for blessing us with such an inspiring and encouraging Feast in the Dells of Wisconsin.

Steve Nutzman

Zambia

Lusaka

For the second year running, the Feast

was held at Paray's Game Farm, 23 kilometers west of Lusaka on the road to Mumbwa where most of our members live.

Attendance was a record 159, even though some 25 people kept the Feast at home. We ate together and stayed in tents. Members came to the Feast on a truck donated to us by LifeNets.

Victor Kubik, a Council member from the United States, spent the last four days of the Feast and delivered inspiring sermons describing and pointing members to the Kingdom. On Thursday, Mr. and Mrs. Kubik, my wife, Shirley, and I took a day trip to a Feast site where we met a group of 105 people who left our former affiliation and want to become members of United. The day was most inspiring.

A highlight of the Feast was the addition of two members to the family of God. Emily Hikaumpa and Wilfred Nchima were baptized on the Last Great

Day. Other activities included a family day, dance, variety show and lots of fellowship.

We thank the brethren from overseas who funded the Feast expenses through the home office.

Kambani Banda

Zimbabwe

Lake Chivero National Park on the shores of Lake Chivero, 49 kilometers south of the capital city of Harare, was the Feast venue for up to 33 brethren in Zimbabwe.

This beautiful, unspoiled site features a tranquil African bush environment with scenic views of the lake and rolling granite hills.

Members were housed in fully equipped, thatched-roof self-catering lodges.

Visitors from New Zealand and minister André van Belkum from South Africa added international flavor to the site.

Activities included fishing and a game of soccer. Regular sights on the lakeshore and the surrounding savannah bush were white rhinos, giraffes, eland, zebras, kudu, impalas and the ever-present rock rabbits and monkeys.

With unemployment at 80 percent and the rate of inflation well over 1,000 percent, attending the Feast was a demonstration of commitment and faith by brethren. However, all felt the sacrifices made were well worth the rewards obtained from attending the Feast.

On the whole, this was an inspiring Feast characterized by inspiring messages, profound joy and brotherly love.

Mike Mukarati



From the Word

After the Millennium, Then What?

■ What will we do after the Millennium is over? The Bible gives some hints about what eternity holds for us.

by Tim Groves

The Millennium is over. The Great White Throne Judgment has ended. Multiple billions of humans have been made spirit beings—the children of God. What does our future hold now? After all, eternity is a long time.

Many years ago Herbert W. Armstrong said, “God is reproducing Himself!” What will it be like to be a member of God’s family? In 1 John 3:2 we are told that we will see God and be like Him.

Being Like God

Genesis 1:26 says we were created in the image and likeness of God. As humans, we look like God and have mind powers like God. Right now we are on a much more limited scale than God. But as spirit beings, our talents and abilities will be greatly multiplied. As humans we have the ability to create like God. That ability will be increased when we become spirit.

God does not get weary nor sleep, and neither will we when our change comes (Psalm 121:4; Isaiah 40:28). All the aches, pains and physical limitations will be gone when we are spirit. We will be full of energy. In spirit form, both the Father and Christ shine as the sun in full strength. We, too, will shine like the sun (Matthew 13:43).

Christ said that He and the Father work (John 5:17). We will work too. God’s past work includes the creation of the universe for His purpose (Revelation 4:11). Part of that purpose includes bringing many sons and daughters to glory (Hebrews 2:10). God enjoys the fruit of His labor (Isaiah 55:11). God wants us to enjoy the fruit of our labor now (Ecclesiastes 3:13). As spirit beings, we will continue to work and enjoy the results of our work, just like the Father and Christ.

Part of our work as spirit beings will start during the Millennium as kings and priests. As firstfruits, we have the first opportunity to reign in God’s Kingdom. But that rulership is not limited to us. All of mankind is destined for greatness.

Destined to Rule

From the time man was created, God intended for us to rule. In Genesis 1:28 God told Adam and Eve to “fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (emphasis added throughout).

Continuing in Genesis 2:15, “Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep

it.” God also brought all the animals to Adam, and had him name them (Genesis 2:19).

As humans, our dominion is limited to the earth. Psalm 115:16 says, “The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD’s; but the earth He has given to the children of men.”

The earth is a training ground for man. We are to learn to rule what God has given us now before we can rule more. Christ said in Luke 16:11, “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?”

God ultimately intends for man to rule the universe! Notice Psalm 8:3-6; “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have ordained, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet . . .”

The New Testament quotes this passage, and adds, “. . . But now we do not yet see all things put under him” (Hebrews 2:5-8).

Restoring and Ruling the Universe

The universe seems limitless, and scientists believe that it is still growing! In Isaiah 51:16 God says, “. . . That I may plant the heavens . . .” Indeed, the word *plant* implies a growing universe. God has been busy creating a universe that He is going to give us!

Today scientists believe the universe is at least 13 billion years old. In 2003, scientists estimated that 70 sextillion stars could be seen with modern telescopes. This number (7 followed by 22 zeros) is, according to some estimates, more than all the grains of sand on all the world’s beaches and deserts.

With that thought in mind, we read in Jeremiah 33:22, “As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured . . .” The size and contents of the universe are beyond our human comprehension. But as spirit beings, we will not only comprehend it, we will rule it!

There are an estimated 125 billion galaxies in the universe. We have seen people’s reactions when a new home has been built for them on the show *Extreme Makeover, Home Edition*. Imagine the expression on our faces when God gives us our part of the universe!

In the parable of the talents, Christ rewarded those who developed their talents and grew. Notice Matthew 25:21, “His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”

What is God’s joy? Seeing His children become spirit beings and inherit the universe (Luke 12:32)!

What will we do with the universe? For starters we will restore it from the state of decay it has been in. We are told in Romans 8:19-22 that the entire creation is waiting for us to renew it. In Acts 3:21 this is referred to as the “restoration of all things.” We read in Psalm 102:25-26 that the universe will be “changed” or renewed. The ultimate manifestation of renewal is found in Revelation 21:1: “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . .”

We will also be adding to God’s creation. As Herbert W. Armstrong said many years ago, the creation is like a cake. We are to put the icing on the cake. We will use our creative talents and abilities to make the entire universe like a beautiful Garden of Eden.

Saints to Be Leaders in God’s Kingdom

As firstfruits, we will have different positions from the rest of God’s children. Throughout the Bible, firstfruits were set apart. And, remember, firstfruits did not choose to be firstfruits. God chose His firstfruits.

In Malachi 3:16-17 the saints are referred to as God’s “jewels.” This Hebrew word is also translated “special treasure.” This word was used several times in reference to ancient Israel. A jewel or special treasure is set apart.

In 1 Peter 2:9, the saints are referred to as “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people.” The saints had to overcome Satan and the world. Specific positions are given to the saints in the book of Revelation.

In Revelation 3:12 the saints (overcomers) shall be pillars in the temple of God in the New Jerusalem, and will have on them the name of “My God” and the name of the “city of My God.” Christ also says that He will write on these saints His new name.

It appears that the earth will be the home base of the saints. We will work directly with the Father and Christ. Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 that the saints will always be with Christ.

In Revelation 20:6 the saints are given the title “priests of God and of Christ.” Also note that in Revelation 21:14 New Jerusalem is said to have 12 foundations. The names on the foundations are the apostles.

Yes, the firstfruits will have special positions of service in God’s Kingdom. As leaders in God’s Kingdom, we will continue to serve others (Matthew 20:26-28).

Grasping Eternity

Eternity is a difficult concept to understand. God says He *inhabits* eternity (Isaiah 57:15). We want to live forever, as God has put eternity in our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Yet our minds cannot understand a world not limited by



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time. Neither can we understand living as spirit beings. These secrets belong to God (Deuteronomy 29:29).

But God has revealed many mysteries to us that the world does not know. God’s Word says in 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit.”

Yes, God’s Holy Spirit has given us some understanding. The world doesn’t have a clue that they will one day be with us ruling the universe. God has revealed that secret to us through His Spirit.

Yet there are still many secrets that God has not revealed to us about our future. John said in 1 John 3:2 that “it has not yet been revealed what we shall be . . .” And Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:12, “For now we see through a glass darkly” (KJV). Most of the details of our future we must take on faith.

David tells us in Psalm 16:11 that there will be pleasures and joy forevermore with God in His Kingdom.

We are told in Isaiah 9:7, “Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.” We can speculate whether we will create life as God made us, but we just don’t know. God hasn’t revealed it to us. And He hasn’t revealed many other things because we cannot grasp them. God says in Isaiah 55:9, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

We will not be limited by time. God has spent perhaps 13 billion years working with the universe as we know it. How long will it take us to restore the universe? We won’t be in a hurry, and

can take as long as necessary. Time won’t matter.

We will never get bored doing the things we enjoy. God created the physical world as a model of the spirit world (Romans 1:20) Many things we enjoy in this life we will enjoy as spirit beings. We will have forever to get to know all of God’s family. We will enjoy life—life without end.

Yes, eternity is hard to grasp. But what we can grasp and hold onto is that God wants us to be like Him, to share eternity with Him and be one with Him (John 17:20-26). Let’s do our part in being faithful and obeying Him, and trust in Him to work out the details.

Take time to look at the night sky and ponder your future. As you look at the heavens, remember you are looking into your eternity. An eternity full of work and pleasure. An eternity of enjoying the fruit of your labor. An eternity of close relationships with billions of sons of God. And an eternity of an intimate relationship with God, who wants to reproduce Himself.

Let’s remember the words of Paul in Romans 8:18, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

God wants us to live forever, and has prepared a future we cannot fully comprehend. As Christ said, “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). Yes, the day is coming when Christ will say, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthews 25:34). **UN**

Tim Groves is from the Jefferson, Georgia, congregation.

Teach Your Children Godly Morals and Modesty

■ Satan is waging a cultural and spiritual war to destroy our children through sexual sins. Parents must protect and prepare them well!

by Don Hooser

Children are a challenge, but a challenge to cherish! And having children brings never-ending joys (Psalms 127 and 128; Proverbs 23:24).

God “seeks godly offspring,” so parents serve as God’s stewards in preparing their children for membership in God’s family (Malachi 2:15). By far the greatest heritage we can pass on to our children is God’s truth, faith in God and godly character. Inspire your children to have the highest goals and aspirations for this life and the next.

But Satan the “destroyer” (Revelation 9:11) is out to seduce our youth while their hormones are up and their defenses are down. Diligent parents must be the daily antidote to his poison. As parents, your own previous sins do not lessen your authority and obligation to teach what is right. It is unnecessary and often harmful to “confess” to children past sins for which you are ashamed. Hopefully your influence will result in your children not making similar mistakes.

First of all, *pray* for your children! As a parent, be as diligent as if it all depends on you, but pray as if it all depends on God!

More than ever, godly parenting is a full-time responsibility, especially in “this present evil age” (Galatians 1:4). But our children can survive and thrive if they have a parent or parents deeply devoted to “train up [each] child in the way he should go” (Proverbs 22:6).

“The way he should go” is revealed in the Bible. Be diligent to have God’s words “in your heart” (Deuteronomy 6:6). Then “you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (verse 7).

Our Church highly recommends family prayer and Bible study. When families do this on an almost daily basis, it can be a warm bonding time as well as a wonderful habit that can continue until the children leave home. (See “Teach Your Children With Family Bible Study” in the March/April 2006 *Good News* magazine.)

But teaching must not be limited to once per day. Deuteronomy 6 tells us to take advantage of every teaching opportunity, and having numerous opportunities requires *time* and *being* together.

Much of the teaching is simply by “talk.” Encourage conversation about anything and everything. Emphasize and reward honesty so your children will be open and honest with you about everything that happens in their lives. Be respectful of all questions and don’t overreact to anything.

There are many excellent books and articles on parenting and Christian morality. “Let the wise listen and add

to their learning” (Proverbs 1:5, New International Version). And encourage your children to be avid readers of good books and magazines. For teens and young adults, we of course highly recommend *Vertical Thought*.

A Top Priority: Teaching Godly Morals!

Teach every godly virtue, with God’s standards of sexual morality being a top priority. It’s interesting that morality includes other virtues beginning with the letter *m*—maturity, manners, modesty, moderation, meekness and, for the boys, masculinity and manliness. Incidentally, it’s disgusting that filthy entertainment is labeled “mature” or “adult.”

For a large part of what needs to be taught, we strongly recommend parents read the three previous articles on sex in this *United News* series, beginning with the May issue.

This article does not address the subject of teaching young children about “the birds and the bees.” This article focuses on teaching morality, especially to preadolescents and adolescents, but the job is much easier if your children have been having wholesome age-appropriate teachings about sex all along. *Preparing for Adolescence* by Dr. James Dobson is an excellent book to read and then discuss with each child *before* he or she reaches puberty. Dr. Dobson has also written several other very helpful books on parenting.

Teach by Your Godly Example

Above all, be good role models. Attitudes are *caught* as well as *taught*. Children automatically tend to imitate their parents. Words mean little if you don’t practice what you preach. Any inconsistency or compromise with godly standards will undermine your credibility and effectiveness.

Even silence sends a message. If parents are too embarrassed to talk about anything sexual, that sends a negative message that there is something shameful about our bodies and sexuality. Children will be reluctant to ask questions or discuss anything with their parents that they think might embarrass them.

It has often been said that the best thing a father can do for his child is to love his mother. A child is immensely blessed when he has two parents who clearly love each other, love their children and are affectionate. (With great diligence, God’s help and hopefully support from extended family and friends, a single parent can also have great results.)

For example, a major factor that tempts teens toward promiscuity is their feeling starved for affection because they didn’t receive it from both parents while growing up. Likewise, parents, usually fathers, who are absent or emotionally cold greatly increase the likelihood of children experiencing gender confusion (versus proper sexual identity) or same-sex attraction (homosexual tendencies). A valuable resource for understanding same-sex attraction and its solutions is *Anchor*, published online by United Church of God at www.anchorhelp.com.

True love has a firm side (rules and discipline) as well as soft side (affection and praise). A mature parent is fun and fun-loving, but is also clearly in charge, not a pal or buddy.

Flee Sexual Immorality!

The penalties for breaking God’s laws concerning sex are many! They include being infected with one of the many terrible types of STDs, an unwanted pregnancy, damaged reputation, failure to achieve desired goals, financial loss, legal problems, grieving parents and broken hearts. Adultery breaks up marriages. Mental and emotional scars from fornication commonly hurt one’s future marriage relationship.

According to the Bible, sexual immorality is the most self-damaging sin mentally and spiritually, and often-times physically (Proverbs 6:24-35). The apostle Paul paraphrased Proverbs 6 and said, “Flee sexual immorality!” (1 Corinthians 6:18). Later he wrote to Timothy, “Flee also youthful lusts” (2 Timothy 2:22). Stay completely away from sexual temptations!

A teenager might complain to a parent, “You don’t trust me!” A parent could reply by saying no human being can be completely trusted, and especially not when he is in a tempting environment! Jesus strongly emphasized that everyone should do whatever is needed to avoid tempting situations (Matthew 5:27-30).

Jesus also strongly warned against tempting someone else, such as by immodest dress or suggestive conduct (Matthew 18:6-10; Romans 14:13, 21).

We recommend you read a two-part online editorial by Dennis Prager titled “Why Young Women Are Exposing Themselves” at www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=37160 (the URL of the second part ends in 37274).

Almost every book in the New Testament warns about the evil of sexual immorality, so the writers knew that Church members and their children would face strong sexual temptations—temptations to intentional acts and impulsive acts. Depending on the particular translation, the Bible warns of adultery (extramarital sex), fornication (premarital sex), lasciviousness, lewdness, licentiousness, sins of the flesh, uncleanness, whoredom, sodomy and lust. All illicit sex adulterates (pollutes) one’s marriage or future marriage.

In the Greek New Testament, the main word for all forms of sexual immorality is *porneia*, from which we get the English word *pornography*. A recently published book, *Porn Generation*, by Ben Shapiro, accurately describes today’s culture.

The easy availability of pornography on the Internet and elsewhere is vile and despicable, leading countless men and boys into a terrible addiction to pornography. And much of what is on TV and in movies is soft porn that often leads to hard porn. (Most businesses are willing to be a bad influence on kids if that’s what it takes to make more money.)

If you have children living at home,

please buy software to block porn sites, and if you have cable TV, please arrange for blocks on MTV and all other objectionable sites. Some parents even get rid of TV reception and merely have players and monitors for rented and purchased videos.

Things to Teach

The first nine chapters of Proverbs focus largely on morality versus immorality. At times, it is good to read Proverbs to your children, but it is more important that parents read it over and over again to learn *what* to teach and *how* to express it (using modern terminology).

Important strengths to impart to your child are *confidence, courage and a willingness to be different*—so “if sinners entice you, do not consent” (Proverbs 1:10). Our kids need to be prepared to say no to many things, including smoking, alcohol, drugs, crime, dirty language and sex. Explain how alcohol or drugs contribute to lower inhibitions and reckless decisions. Boys and girls both need strong moral boundaries as they have to cope with sexually aggressive boys and girls.

Girls should be especially careful to avoid risky situations—not being alone in unsafe places, not riding with strangers, not being immodestly dressed, etc.

Instill in them a desire to please God more than any human being. Doing wrong to gain “popularity” often doesn’t work at all, and when it does, it is short-lived. The Bible emphasizes choosing your friends wisely, because we are strongly influenced by our companions, plus our reputation depends largely on our associations (1 Corinthians 15:33; Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 2:16; 5:3; 7:5; 9:13; 13:20; 14:7; 28:7). Peers with good character will exert good peer pressure!

There is “a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing” (Ecclesiastes 3:5). God’s will is that passionate kissing and petting (intimate touching) are pleasures reserved only for married couples. God intended them as a natural prelude to intercourse—as part of a married couple’s foreplay. When single people indulge in this, no wonder they are tempted to “go all the way!” That is the process that God designed for married couples!

Children must be taught vision to foresee long-range consequences—that they will reap what they sow, good or bad, even if the harvest comes many years later (Galatians 6:7-10). God’s laws are absolute, which means law-breaking will absolutely and automatically bring consequences (Proverbs 6:24-35; Jeremiah 2:19; 4:18). How wonderful it is to wait till marriage to “know” a partner (Genesis 4:1), and not suffer with any regrets.

At the same time, parents must emphasize how merciful God is, very willing to forgive any mistakes and sins when a person truly repents and conforms to God’s ways.

Emphasize the Positive

Explain the terrible consequences for sin, but spend at least as much time

explaining God’s wonderful plan for being sexually pure before marriage and passionate in marriage. Help boys feel good about being male and help girls feel good about being female, each having awesome potential. Encourage plenty of wholesome activities to occupy their time. As a family, be very active in your local congregation and with church youth activities.

God told Adam and Eve that they could eat of every tree in the Garden of Eden except one. It may not always seem that way, but God says *yes* to many more things than He says *no* to. Don’t lust for forbidden fruit. God knows what is best for us! When God says no to something, He is saying yes to something better!

When someone who is called by God is picking a mate to marry, the most important requirement is that the mate is also called by God. The apostle Paul wrote you can marry whom you wish, “only in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 7:39). Many other scriptures corroborate this. Therefore, all serious dating should be with people in God’s Church. One benefit of this is that the people one is dating usually have high standards. But don’t be overly trusting just because someone is supposedly “in the Church.”

The rewards for remaining a virgin until marriage are well worth the wait! It’s wonderful to see many groups emphasizing sexual abstinence until marriage, promoting “proud to be pure” and encouraging pledges to “Save Sex,” “True Love Waits,” etc.

For those who desire to be married, who faithfully put God first and wait patiently for God to be the Matchmaker, God will greatly reward them. Those rewards usually include marriage, but not always. Living a single life can have spiritual advantages, as Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 7. Whatever sacrifices we suffer in this life will be tiny compared to our glorious life in God’s Kingdom (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17)!

Teach your children this: “Trust in the LORD, and do good . . . and He shall give you the desires of your heart” (Psalm 37:3-4).

Marriage is sacred. It is a type of “Christ and the church” (Ephesians 5:32). And one’s sexuality is sacred. Teach each child not to give away the most precious thing he or she has to offer to a future wife or husband—“not to awaken love until the time is right” (Song of Solomon 2:7, NLT). **UN**

Recommended Books:

Secret Keeper—The Delicate Power of Modesty, by Dannah Gresh.

Feminine Appeal, by Carolyn Mahaney.

Sex Is Not the Problem—Lust Is, by Joshua Harris.

Every Young Woman’s Battle, by Shannon Ethridge.

Christian Modesty—The Public Undressing of America, by Jeff Pollard.

Sexy Girls—How Hot Is Too Hot? by Hayley DiMarco.

True Sexual Morality—Recovering Biblical Standards, by Daniel Heimbach.

Parenting: The Terrible Twos? -or- The Terrific Twos!

■ With all the stereotypes about 2-year-old children, are there strategies that can make this year terrific?

by Nancy Capo

Don't touch! Put that down! No! Wait! Stop! (CRASH . . .)

Sound vaguely familiar? Hmmm, you must have a 2-year-old in the house—or at least remember what it was like in days long gone.

A few stereotypes come to mind when talking about the twos: turbulent, testing, tantrum, terrible. But what about *terrific*?

Terrific twos? Is that even possible? With a little strategic parenting and the blessing of even remotely cooperative genes, yes, the twos can be terrific!

A 2-year-old child's development is exploding on all fronts—language, motor, cognitive and emotional. This God-designed stage of rapid learning and exploration is an exciting time for your child, but coping with this incessant curiosity can be exhausting and sometimes frustrating for a parent.

This is a time when your 2-year-old may surprise you with unexpected tenderness; when he or she squats down to examine the “broken” flower, or rushes to the side of an injured playmate with a gentle pat and a concerned tilt of the head.

The next moment she may shriek with indignation while placing a stranglehold on her stuffed bunny that big brother is teasingly trying to steal away. The parent of a 2-year-old can experience parental whiplash—unless you know how to expect the unexpected.

Personalities are often evident from birth. Some children are born protesting, and continue to carry a chip on their shoulder for the next couple of years. Some are easier, more compliant children. Genetically, you get what you get, and a parent's job involves shaping the rough materials through consistent loving discipline.

Is your child one of those strong-willed kind? Congratulations! Yes, you'll have your work cut out for you, but strong children can grow into strong adults who, once committed, will not veer from God's way. These are the types who often grow into bold, adventurous leaders—the Joshuas, Deborahs and Peters.

So, how about some strategy? Let's start with basic needs. Ross Campbell, in his book *How to Really Love Your Child*, explains that children have four basic needs: 1) eye contact, 2) physical contact, 3) focused attention and

4) discipline. When these four areas are met, your child's “emotional tank” gets full.

The result is a connection between you and your child, where your child is more eager to please. It doesn't mean there won't be conflict and challenge in your child rearing, but even for those bold types, it builds a strong foundation of love and greater willingness to respect parental boundaries. This book is a “must read.”

Foreseeing the “Evil”

With that as a foundation, let's build on top. Much of parenting a 2-year-old involves the principle of “foreseeing the evil” and avoiding it (Proverbs 22:3).

For example, one of the biggest mistakes parents of 2-year-olds make is ignoring them and then getting upset when they do something “bad.” Two-year-olds explore. It's part of their job description. The twos are full of discovery, and they are busily learning about everything around them—that baby brother's pacifier makes a splash when you drop it in the dog's water dish, Legos fit in the VCR and things disappear when you flush.

One of the most fun parts of parenting a 2-year-old is opening up the world of learning and exploration to them. It involves proactive parenting, joining in the excitement and guiding those learning experiences in constructive ways. It absolutely involves setting clear limits of what your 2-year-old is and is not allowed to do or to touch, but a child's every move should not be accompanied by a harsh shout of “NO!” Instead, take charge. Be your child's teacher.

Consider this example: You're in the backyard with your 2-year-old, and he picks up a rock. You know he will a) throw it, b) eat it or c) conk the dog on the head with it. Being the wise and loving parent you are, your instincts tell you to a) grab it away as quickly as possible, b) shout “Put that down! Dirty!” or c) call the vet.

How about alternative “d”: in a whispering, excited voice, as you reach one hand around your toddler and the other around the rock, say, “Wow! What did you find? Is that a rock? Cool. Oh, look! It sparkles. Are there any more just like it?”

At which point you may end up gathering a whole rock family—daddy rock, mommy rock, brother and sister rock. You get the picture. With his full attention, you can then teach that rock are not for throwing (or eating). At 2, he may not fully register that, but you are using a receptive moment for positive instruction.

Will your child become a geologist because of this experience? Maybe not, but by taking charge in a positive, proactive way, you keep your child's curiosity ignited and direct his actions—and avoid a trip to the doctor or the vet.

Another way to “foresee the evil,” so to speak, is to keep your expectations within your child's developmental abilities. For example, a mother gives her 2-year-old a cup without a “sippy” lid, and spill after spill leads to frustration. “Why can't you just . . . !” Yes, eventually a child will need to learn to drink without the lid, but it will come when the fine motor skills are ready.

There are many books available on what to expect at each stage of development, as well as Web sites such as www.parentcenter.babycenter.com that are loaded with articles on toddler development. Just like our Heavenly Father never gives us more than we can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13), we should extend the same courtesy to our children and not burden them with expectations outside their abilities.

A third thing to foresee is the notorious “meltdown.” There are several reasons a child can fall into a whining, crying, angry heap. Not to dismiss the possibility that your child, complete with human nature, is simply having an ornery moment because he isn't getting his way—something every parent must deal with—but there is often fuel for that fire that can make it rage out of control, resulting in the embarrassing meltdown.

The fatal combination is expecting *too* much from a child who is *too* stimulated and *too* tired. This combination is the true “terrible twos.”

If you are struggling with behavior issues, are the “*toos*” a contributing factor? Begin by taking a second look at how much quality sleep and quiet time your child is actually getting. Are you occasionally skipping afternoon nap times? Is the rest of the day loaded with hyperstimulation of kids' TV shows, DVDs, playgroup or tumbling classes? Does your child eat on the run, nap in the car seat and stay up in the evening until you drop from exhaustion? Chances are *neither* of you is getting enough sleep (Psalm 127:2).

At times like these, even a simple parental directive can tip an overstimulated, overtired child out of control. He can feel frustrated and overwhelmed, and react with something akin to PMS, toddler-style.

Correction and Punishment

Finally, times will come when dis-



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cipline (meaning “training by instruction and practice”) requires correction and sometimes punishment. Correction alone is suitable when your child has simply made a mistake or had an accident. Toddlers are walking accidents. They haven't quite merged their cognitive and motor capabilities yet. A parent can use an accident as a teaching opportunity: “Next time, let's remember to . . .”

Punishment, however, needs to accompany correction when it's a matter of your child's obedience and attitude. The goal of punishment isn't to crush the child's spirit, but to begin the lesson of cause and effect—or consequences. It is to plant the seeds of wisdom, self-control and foresight of their own thoughts and actions. It also is to build trust in the parent/child relationship. Privileges that come later are earned as a result

of the “trust” bank that a child builds with his parents.

It is vitally important that a parent retains calm self-control, and doesn't deal with his child's intentional misbehavior out of frustration and anger. We often get most frustrated when we feel like it's not a good time to deal with them. That's when some parents try counting: “I mean it! . . . 1, 2, 3 . . .”

But your child knows you don't mean it. And “threats” like this encourage testing, challenge and defiance. If you say it, mean it the first time. If they don't do it, act on it—lovingly, but swiftly and surely.

When your child is unruly or disobedient, that's the most important time to stop what you're doing and be a parent first. It may mean leaving the full grocery cart in the store and going out to the car or home to teach your child proper conduct and attitude. Or stopping a conversation at church to take your child aside for correction. This stuff is inconvenient and takes time—but, guess what? Parenting is not convenient. It's vital.

The toddler years, especially the twos, are intense. But by choosing to proactively parent with knowledge, excitement and love during the twos, the twos can be terrific! **UN**

Nancy Capo is married to James Capo, pastor of the Tucson and Sierra Vista, Arizona, and El Paso, Texas, congregations. They have three children.

NO!

Sometimes a plain, simple parental “no” is in order. But often “NO!” flies out harshly and needlessly. Two-year-olds, being the little sponges that they are, absorb both the word and the attitude, and easily wring them out right back at you.

A toddler will certainly learn and use “no” all on his own—it's part of his developing autonomy. However, how about expanding his vocabulary a bit? Try being more specific in your meanings. “Don't touch,” “Be gentle,” “Stop” (or “freeze” if you prefer). These words carry authority and instruction, but they are not as likely to be parroted back at you in an angry attitude of hostility or defiance.

How Many Hours of Sleep Does a Child Need?

Age	Nighttime Sleep	Daytime Sleep	Total Sleep Hours
12 months	11¼	2½ (2 naps)	13¾
18 months	11¼	2¼ (1 nap)	13½
2 years	11	2 (1 nap)	13
3 years	10½	1½ (1 nap)	12

(Excerpted from www.babycenter.com/general/toddler/toddlersleep/7645.html)



Local Church Updates

Charlotte Ladies Share a Tea

"Women Sharing and Fulfilling Titus 2:3-5" was the theme for the first UCG Charlotte, North Carolina, ladies' tea Aug. 26. The theme was taken from the General Conference of Elders 2006 women's sessions.

The tables were beautifully decorated, covered with lace tablecloths, trimmed with fresh ivy, and adorned with creative pink and white balloon topiaries and flower centerpieces. Several of the ladies contributed their beautiful china sets. Each of the ladies was presented with a gorgeous handmade corsage, giving the final touch.

The approximately 40 ladies in attendance were treated to a magnificent array of dainty finger sandwiches, tea cookies and cakes. Several of the young adults took on the responsibility of serving, exemplifying the theme of the tea. They followed the examples of the older women and set the example for the younger girls.

Audio presentations were played from two of the women's sessions at the GCE 2006. During Dyanne Dick's presentation, "I'll Love You Forever," more than a few ladies grew misty-eyed as we heard Mrs. Dick speak of an enduring love between a parent and a child.

Equally as interesting and thought-provoking was Jane Suckling's "How We Process Our Emotions," pointing



Ladies of the Charlotte, North Carolina, congregation gather for a group photo at the tea (photo by Larry Lambert)

out that the part of our brain that controls our wide range of emotions is only about the size of an almond!

After the presentations, the ladies enjoyed fellowship and discussion of the meaning of Titus 2:3-5.

Amber Pettigrew

Miami Has Second Sabbath School Graduation

The Miami, Florida, congregation held its second Sabbath school graduation on Aug. 19. The graduating class included Jorge Elias Cardenas Gomez, Matthew Johnson and Emory Douglas Mongbeh. Teachers Carol Volkers, Faye Mongbeh and Nancy Seay presented each graduate with a certificate of completion and a Bible.

Also on Aug. 19 Miami had its first

teen Bible study. The guest speaker, elder Howard Wills, spoke to the teens about "Making Right Decisions."

Along with Jorge, Matthew and Emory, attendees included Natalie Amore, Seth Alexander Mongbeh and Zachary Seay, the first graduates of Miami's Sabbath school.

Faye Mongbeh

Young Adults' Day Held in Miami

For the first time ever, Miami and West Palm Beach, Florida, young adults combined to serve at the Miami



Miami and West Palm Beach, Florida, young adults fellowship after Young Adults' Day

congregation's Young Adults' Day. The young adults served by ushering, taking attendance, songleading, giving opening and closing prayers and performing a guitar duet for special music.

The sermonette was also given by a Miami young adult about the Eighth Commandment, stealing. Illegal Internet downloading was mentioned as an offense to the commandment that many people may overlook.

The sermon was given by our pastor, Roy Demarest, with a theme of planning and caring for your future without sacrificing your youth. The day concluded with warm fellowship and fun with a group lunch at Romano's Macaroni Grill.

Kim Rivers

110 Teens and Young Adults Enjoy Southern California Weekend

On the weekend of July 13 to 16, approximately 110 teens and young adults gathered for the second Southern California Teen/Young Adult Weekend. The activities began on Thursday night with a pool party at the home of John and



Teens and young adults at open gym night in California (photo by Perry Weis)

Carolyn Anderson (members of the Los Angeles congregation).

Friday activities began with a little basketball (for the boys) and shopping in downtown Huntington Beach (for the girls). Later that afternoon everyone met at the beach to play volleyball and fellowship during a meal of hamburgers and hotdogs. The Sabbath was welcomed in with s'mores and plenty of fellowship by several bonfires, with a beautiful sunset background.

Sabbath morning everyone met for a brunch at the home of Perry and DeAnn Weis (Garden Grove congregation), followed by an interactive Bible study given by Mario Seiglie (pastor of Garden Grove) and four young adults.

Regular Sabbath services were held in Garden Grove with guest speaker Clyde Kilough giving the sermon. After sundown the teens and young adults enjoyed a pizza party and open gym night.

On Sunday the youths joined another 300 brethren at Doheny State Beach, for Garden Grove's annual beach party. The weather was perfect and the kids had a chance to surf, play volleyball, swim or sunbathe. The weekend came to a close with a farewell dance.

Special thanks go to the Garden Grove congregation for their generosity at the bake sale/auction in March, which raised \$2,300 and made this weekend possible.

DeAnn Weis

Fairview Heights Camps Out

Brethren from the Fairview Heights, Illinois, congregation gathered at Carlyle Lake June 9 to 11 for a weekend of camping and fellowship. For many of the small children, it was their first camping trip.

Everyone helped in some way: pitching tents, watching the children or barbecuing dinner. Friday evening we gathered under the pavilion for a tasty dinner of buffalo, steak and other treats.

The Sabbath was restful and relaxed. The men cooked a breakfast of scrambled eggs and fried potatoes. Afterwards, 57 brethren attended services, which were held outside under the pavilion and in lawn chairs in the shade nearby. Doyle Heim accompanied hymns with his accordion.

After services and lunch, many brethren walked down to the lake to enjoy a bit of God's beautiful creation. That night, after a successful hot dog and s'mores campfire roast, some were scared away by impending storms and went home. Others stayed

and took shelter in campers as the rain pelted down with heavy winds. God protected His people, and all brethren returned home safely after an enjoyable weekend.

Angela Barbeau

Teen Named Student of the Year

Daniel Martinez of the San Luis Potosi, Mexico, congregation was named Student of the Year in June 2006. He, along with about 70 other students so honored in the state of San Luis Potosi, were awarded a trip to Oaxaca.

Daniel also received the honor in 2003 and on that occasion had the opportunity to meet President Vicente Fox in Mexico City.

Daniel is 15 years old and attends services with his family. He assists with the sound system at church. Daniel is very grateful to God for all the blessings he has received, and his desire is to serve God all his life.

Reba Walker

New England Member: Less Than Two to Go

Sara Speed has passed her 98th birthday and is doing well. She is lucid, but hard of hearing. In two years the brethren in New England are hoping to hold a celebration of her reaching 100! Her



Sara Speed turns 98

mother reached 101! She has children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren—so it should be quite a party.

Although a little frail, she manages quite well. She enjoys reading and watches almost no TV. She was born in Massachusetts June 27, 1908, and has lived in New England all her life.

Paul Suckling

Portsmouth Couples Celebrate 123 Years

Two Portsmouth, Ohio, couples, Red and Naomi Ruggles and Ralph and Mildred Smith, have been married 60 years or more. On the Sabbath of Sept. 2, the congregation honored them for their years of marriage together.

Red and Naomi met as a result of Red's brother setting up a date for them. They were married in Annapolis, Mary-

land, on Nov. 28, 1943. They had been married for one month when Red was sent to Europe during World War II.

Upon his return from the war, Red began playing music, going to college to learn accounting and working at the steel mill in Portsmouth. Red continued to work at the mill for 30 years until retirement, and Naomi became a housewife.

Red and Naomi had two sons and, with Red working at the steel mill during the day and playing music seven nights a week, life was difficult at home.

In 1973, Red and Naomi learned of the Church and things began to change for the



Ralph and Mildred Smith and Naomi and Red Ruggles

better. God's truth helped them learn to work together and work things out in their marriage so that it has lasted 63 years.

Besides their two sons, Red and Naomi have five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Red was eventually ordained as a deacon and has served in songleading, in giving sermonettes and in helping coordinate the local church area. Through the years, Red and Naomi have faithfully served the congregation.

Ralph and Mildred Smith were married in Greenup, Kentucky, on Aug. 9, 1946. Their relationship blossomed as a result of an introduction by friends. This year they reached their 60th anniversary.

They came into the Church in November 1969 and have been faithful members since. Ralph and Mildred now serve as deacon and deaconess.

Ralph and Mildred have two children, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Ralph has served the congregation in giving sermonettes and is known for his love of God's truth and enthusiasm for teaching it. Mildred has faithfully helped year after year in food and social setup and in many other ways.

Red and Naomi and Ralph and Mildred are loved by the congregation and many more years of marriage and service are anticipated.

Gary Smith

Local Church Updates: If your congregation's news and events are rarely covered in *United News*, why not check with your pastor and write something for him to send in? We're looking for 100- to 300-word articles and photographs with captions. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Include the author's and photographer's names and your phone number. Please double-check the spelling of names. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give the material to your local pastor** to forward to *United News*.

Announcements

Births

David and Lynn Sandland are thrilled to announce the safe and healthy arrival of their seventh grandchild, Charlie Benjamin Egan, who entered our world on Sept. 13, 2006. Charlie weighed in at 9 pounds, a



Charlie Benjamin Egan

week earlier than expected. He is the fourth child of our daughter, Michelle Egan, and her husband, Tim, who live just down the road from us here on the Gold Coast of Australia. Charlie joins siblings Stephanie, Jacob and Max.

James Floyd Guy III arrived Dec. 18, 2005, to parents Jimmy and Lily Guy Jr. of Columbus, Ohio. First-time



James Floyd Guy III

grandparents Skip and Suzanne Miller of San Diego, California, and Jim and Carla Guy Sr. of Warren, Ohio, were there to happily welcome baby James into the world. All agree, he is a handsome little man.

Sarah Beth Sanders was born on April 22, 2006, to Adam and Keri Sanders of the Columbus, Ohio, congregation. She weighed 7 pounds 7 ounces and was 19 inches long. Her twin big sisters, Abigail and Chloe, absolutely adore her and love making



Sarah Beth Sanders

her laugh. She is the granddaughter of Wayne and Elsie Sanders of the Covington, Louisiana, congregation, and of Gary and Jane McConnaughey, pastor of the Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo and Cadillac, Michigan, congregations. Mom and Dad so far have thought this has been a piece of cake after having twins first.

Autumn Renee Ray was born Aug. 17, 2006, to Brian and Judy (Jedamski) Ray. She weighed 8 pounds 8 ounces



Autumn Renee Ray

and was 20 in long. This is Brian and Judy's first child. Maternal grandparents are Ralph and Cheryl Jedamski. Parents and grandparents attend the Cape Girardeau, Missouri, congregation.

Engagements

Charles and Gay Oren of Dallas, Texas, are pleased to announce the



Jessica Yandle and Joshua Oren

engagement of their son, Joshua Daniel Oren, to Jessica Martha Yandle, daughter of Bill Yandle of Rochester, Washington, and Terri Gray of Rudy, Arkansas. The couple plans to reside in the Dallas area, where Josh works as a logistics traffic analyst and Jessica works as an executive administrative assistant. A May 2007 wedding is planned.

Weddings

David and Pam Blue of Boise, Idaho, along with Rick and Jody Birk of Moscow, Idaho, are pleased to announce the marriage of their children, Ryan Blue and Alisha Birk. The outdoor wedding was held in Moscow at the home of the bride on June 17, 2006. Both Ryan and Alisha are graduates of the University



Alisha and Ryan Blue

of Idaho. The couple resides in Ft. Meade, Maryland.

Carol Monson of Buford, Georgia, and Rosalee and John Massie of Mattawana, Pennsylvania, are pleased to announce the marriage of their children, Lindsey Elizabeth Monson and Lee Charles Massie, on June 18, 2006.

The wedding took place in the Massies' field on a beautiful summer day and was performed by Dale Schurter.

Lindsey's bridesmaids were her



Lindsey and Lee Massie

sisters, Amber Charles and Courtney Monson, along with her good friends, Shea Bradley, Laura Quesinberry and Katrina Charles. Lee's groomsmen were his brothers, Justin Massie and Ben Massie, along with his good friends, Jason Pack and Matthew Rutherford, and his cousin, Adam Charles.

Lee and Lindsey now reside in Fairfax, Virginia, and attend with the Columbia, Maryland, congregation.

On Sunday, Aug. 13, 2006, Johanna G. Kerr and Nick D. Thompson



Nick and Johanna Thompson

were united in marriage at Skylandia Beach, Lake Tahoe, California. With 11 family members present, Heather

Schwartzrock, sister of the bride, and Jessica Huetteman, sister of the groom, attended the couple and Sophia Schwartzrock, niece of the bride, was flower girl.

After Sabbath services on Aug. 12, the Reno, Nevada, congregation hosted a farewell party for the soon-to-be Mr. and Mrs. Thompson. Both Johanna and Nick are graduates of the University of Nevada, Reno.

After a Sept. 4 outdoor reception/bon voyage party held at the home of the bride's parents, Dean and Mary Kerr of rural Tallula, Illinois, the couple will reside in the United Kingdom. Johanna will continue her employment as an environmental engineer with V Point (a Nevada-based engineering firm), and Nick will pursue his doctorate in geological research at Bournemouth University in Bournemouth, England.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lee Kirkpatrick have the honor of announcing the marriage of their daughter, Caroline Kincaid, to Ryan David Luecke, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Robert Luecke, on Aug. 7, 2006, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The maid of honor was Tarah Kirkpatrick, sister of the bride, and the best man was Issam Koleilat, friend of the groom. The bride's other attendants were Bonnie Kirkpatrick, sister of the bride; Leslie Bryant, friend of the bride; and Rachel and Sara Luecke, sisters of the groom. Groomsmen were Daniel Miller and Brandon and Devin Schulz, all friends of the groom, and Tyler Rice, cousin of the groom. Flower girls were



Ryan and Caroline Luecke

cousins of the bride, Masheala and Ashley Dodge. Jonathan Baker, friend of the couple, served as the ring bearer.

The bride graduated in June with a bachelor of arts in English from the University of Cincinnati. The groom graduated earlier this year with a bachelor of science in electrical engineering from Penn State University and is currently employed as a product development engineer. The couple resides in Dover and attends the Canton, Ohio, congregation.

Robert David Teitgen and Amber Dawn Tucker were joined together in holy matrimony on May 29, 2005, at Cogshall Park, Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Bill Jones and Carl Bean were groomsmen, with the latter being the best man. Heather Leahey (the bride's sister) and Carla Erickson (the groom's sister) were the bride's attendants and



Amber and Robert Teitgen

Brooke England was the matron of honor. The wedding was officiated by Herb Teitgen (the groom's father), who, along with Paul Suckling, said a blessing on the couple. Just as the ceremony was to occur the rain subsided and the sun came out. The couple said their vows at a small amphitheater by a gazebo on the lake.

Loveness Chisemula and James Luwanja were married on Oct. 1, 2006,



James and Loveness Luwanja

in Lilongwe, Malawi. Victor Kubik officiated at the ceremony. The parents of the bride and groom are Rhoda and Yasin Chisemula and Roselyn and Thomas Luwanja.

The couple attend the Lilongwe, Malawi, congregation.

Anniversaries

Family and friends are happy to announce that this year marked the



Bobbie and Clyde Hubbard

50th wedding anniversary for Clyde and Bobbie Hubbard, longtime members of the Church of God. They celebrated on Feb. 28 with a small party of friends after an ice storm canceled church for their local congregation in Coleman, Texas. They celebrated again the following week with their church family, and once more in July with their extended family. They have five children, 16 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



Patti and Knute Josifek

The Los Angeles, California, congregation celebrated the 45th anniversary of Knute and Patti Josifek and presented them with a decorated cake and red roses.

Knute and Patti were married Aug. 19, 1961, in Baltimore, Maryland, while Knute was in the U.S. Navy. Both of them were baptized together in 1967. Knute was ordained a deacon in 1972. They adopted a baby girl in 1974, Tamara (Tammy), who is married. She has three children and lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Knute is an electronic engineer with a passion for ham radio, while Patti has a career as full-time homemaker. She is well known for her recipes.

Tony and Diana Garcia celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary Aug. 21. Tony and Diana met at a high school



Diana and Tony Garcia

football game in Beeville, Texas, in 1966. They were married in 1971. Diana was baptized in 1973 and Tony in 1981. He was ordained a deacon in 1997 in Corpus Christi, Texas, where they lived until last year when they moved to Duarte, California.

Their son, Isaac Garcia, is married to Michelle Hierman. They have two children, Malena (2½) and Rowen (6 months). They live in Altadena, California. Tony and Diana also have a daughter, Sally, who lives in Dallas, Texas.

Erwin and Gladys Knuth celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with



Gladys and Erwin Knuth

their brethren in the United Church of God in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, on Sept. 2, 2006. Gladys and Erwin were married Sept. 1, 1956, in Meadow View, a small town in northwestern Alberta.

They lived in Edmonton until 1961, and then bought a farm by Barrhead, Alberta. Much later, they sold their farm in order to farm the home quarter of Gladys' parents, who retired to Edmonton. Erwin has worked in construction, as a mechanic, a truck driver and, of course, as a farmer (which includes all of the other jobs).

Erwin and Gladys have been members of God's Church since the early 1960s. Erwin was baptized in 1964 by Ron Miller and Dean Wilson, and Gladys was baptized in 1965 by Richard Pinelli. They started reading *The Plain Truth* magazine in 1962.

After coming into the United Church of God, Erwin and Gladys were ordained as deacon and deaconess. They have lovingly and faithfully served God and His people for many years. Erwin frequently gives sermonettes in the Edmonton congregation.

Gladys and Erwin have two daughters, Debbie Corbin (Albert) and Valerie Schafers (Darren, deceased), and four grandchildren: Cassie, Tresa, Justin and Sabrina. They have retired from farming and now live in Edmonton. But that doesn't keep them from going out to the farm and helping their families whenever they can.

Their love for God and His way of life is evident in the kindness, hospitality and love they show to the brethren, their family and their friends. They are a wonderful example of demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit to all in the Edmonton congregation.

Obituaries

Mary Andrews of Kinston, North Carolina, died on Aug. 28, 2006, at the age of 53. Mary's death came as a real surprise to the Church brethren, as well as to her family. She had attended a Bible study service on Sabbath afternoon, Aug. 26; on Sunday night she began to have chest pains, was taken to the hospital and died early Monday morning.

Mary was born in the Kinston area, but she lived many years in the Wash-



Mary Andrews

ington, D.C., area. She was baptized in 1982, and moved back to her home area, Kinston, in 2003. She was a charter member of the new congregation in Kinston, which started in June 2005.

Mary was a very warm, friendly and outgoing lady. She will be greatly missed by everyone. It is not surprising that at her funeral

Tribute: Jack Wayne Williams

Jack Wayne Williams was born on Dec. 20, 1930, in Rattan, Oklahoma. He was the son of John Franklin Williams and Velma Ila (Langley) Williams. Jack had four brothers: Louie, Wilburn, Jimmy and Benton. All the brothers are still living.

Jack's father did general labor jobs, so Jack traveled with the family. His father worked in California, Oregon and Oklahoma. Jack's father was working in the Forestry Service in Battiest, Oklahoma, when Jack met his future bride, Wilma McBride, while attending high school. Jack and Wilma were married on Feb. 17, 1950. Both were 19 years old.

Jack and Wilma moved to Oregon and worked there until 1956. Then they moved to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where Jack worked for The Fleming Company. In 1973, they moved back to central Oregon where Jack did crop farming. They stayed there until 1995, when they moved to Wilma's parents' home in Muse, Oklahoma.

Wilma was the first one to listen

to Herbert W. Armstrong. She started studying in 1953. She came to see that the Holy Days should be kept. Jack's parents were members of the Church of God (Seventh Day), so Jack did not readily accept the Holy Days. Their first Feast of Tabernacles was kept in Big Sandy, Texas, in 1955. Jack and Wilma were baptized while at the Feast in 1956 by Mr. Armstrong, Rod Meredith and Gerald Waterhouse.

Jack was ordained a deacon in 1964 and an elder in 1969. Jack and Wilma were in Oklahoma City at the time of his ordinations. After they moved to central Oregon in the 1970s, Jack was giving sermonettes and sermons. He was employed by the Church for a period of time serving as a pastor's assistant. In 1995, Jack and Wilma became a part of the United Church of God and moved to Muse, Oklahoma. They served in the Mena and Fort Smith, Arkansas, congregations. Jack continued speaking and helping in the Church until the summer of 2006, when Lou Gehrig's disease kept him from continuing in speaking.

Jack died on Aug. 27, 2006. He is survived by his wife, Wilma, and four children: Frank Williams, 55,



Jack Wayne Williams

of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma; Carol Hampton, 54, of Cleveland, Oklahoma; Becky Royer, 53, of Santa Rosa, California; and Sam Williams, 51, of Madres, Oregon. There are also eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Jack was loved by all he served, as evidenced by the large attendance at his graveside service. He will be greatly missed. We look forward to seeing him soon in God's Kingdom.

Roger West

service the hall was filled with family members, Church members and friends.

Mary is survived by her husband, Dennis, by two sons and a daughter, by 11 grandchildren and by six brothers and two sisters.

Morry Porter of the Olympia, Washington, congregation, died Aug. 11, 2006. He was born in Anchorage, Alaska, in 1941 and was the oldest of nine children. His parents operated a small grocery store in Anchorage and homesteaded on Kachemak Bay. Morry lived in Kenai and Seldovia where he worked as a commercial fisherman for over 20 years. He also worked as an automotive mechanic.

Morry loved sailing and in 1977 purchased an 85-foot schooner in Florida. He sailed it through the Panama Canal and back to Alaska where he used the boat for a charter business. Morry married his wife, Florence, in 1975. The family, including two daughters from his previous marriage, lived aboard the schooner for several years, taking trips to Hawaii and Seattle.

Morry and Florence were baptized in Alaska in 1978. They attended 27 Feasts of Tabernacles and various church congregations in the western United States. The Porters moved to Shelton, Washington, in 1990 due to Morry's arthritis and declining health. He was active in church activities and enjoyed discussing the Scriptures with anyone who was willing.

Attending services was very important for Morry. He almost never missed a Sabbath despite severe health challenges. During the past three years he often used a padded reclining chair in the foyer in order to be with God's people. Some Sabbaths he was in so much pain after driving to the church hall that he had to remain in the car in the parking lot. The sound men made sure he had a speaker so that he was



Morry Porter

able to listen to services, and one by one members went out to his car to visit with him.

Morry is survived by Florence, his wife of 31 years, four sons, two daughters and many grandchildren.

Arthur W. Docken, a longtime pastor in the Worldwide Church of God, passed away March 29, 2006, at his home in Jackson, Missouri. He was 81.

Mr. Docken was born Dec. 13, 1924, in Edina, Minnesota, son of Arthur Hunter Docken and Lila Annie Winter Docken.

During World War II, Mr. Docken served in the 220th engineering battalion as a radio operator in France, Germany and Austria, sending and receiving Morse code.

Mr. Docken attended Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, from 1959 to 1961. He and fellow student Marie Coverdell married on Nov. 23, 1960, and enjoyed 45 years together. Mr. Docken was ordained into the ministry in 1965, and spent the next five years in the Philippines, helping establish church congregations and conducting numerous baptizing tours throughout Southeast Asia. Mr. Docken then served in Australia for two years as a pastor and administrator, before returning to the United States where he pastored congregations in

Nebraska, California and Indiana. During his ministry, he served on the WCG Board of Trustees. He retired after 40 years, and moved with his wife to Jackson.

Mr. Docken is survived by his wife, Marie; a son, William Benjamin (Richelle) Docken of Cincinnati, Ohio; four daughters: Abby (Jeff) Williams of Jackson; Judith E. Docken of Calgary, Alberta; Lila "Betsy" (David) Bauman of St. Louis, Missouri; and Carrie (Mike) Goff of Lake City, Michigan; and a brother, Thomas Winter Docken of Wayzata, Minnesota.

He is also survived by 10 grandchildren: Zandra Docken; Nathan and Naomi Williams; Joshua, Kyle and Aaron DeVries; Scott Bauman; and Emily, Annie and Clayton DeForge. Mr. Docken is also remembered fondly by two former sons-in-law, Dan DeForge and Rod DeVries.

He was preceded in death by his parents; a sister, Lila Agnes Docken; a daughter, Cassie Docken; and three grandchildren, Joel DeVries, Ruth DeForge and Austin Williams.

Rosemarie Schurter Finlay died on July 20, 2006, in Roanoke, Illinois. She was born on Feb. 23, 1935, near Burlington, Oklahoma, to Vernon C. Schurter and Anna Marie Kislung Schurter.

In 1953, Rosemarie married Curtis Blue and they had three sons, Tony, David and Curtis. Later she married King Finlay and became a loving stepmother to his five children.

Rosemarie is survived by three sons: Tony Blue of Winnsboro, Texas; David Blue of Boise, Idaho; Curtis Blue of Arlington, Washington; three stepdaughters: Dee Kilough of Cincinnati, Ohio; Dianna Stalnaker of Beaverton, Oregon; Stephanie Ross of Orlando, Florida; two stepsons: Gary Finlay of Pasadena, California; John Finlay of Orlando, Florida; and

their father, King Finlay of Quaker-town, Pennsylvania.

Survivors also include two brothers: Dale Schurter of Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania; and Sam Schurter of Burlington, Oklahoma; two sisters: Doris Daughhettee of Burlington, Oklahoma; and Darlene Brown of



Rosemarie Schurter Finlay

Anaheim, California; 12 grandchildren and step-grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Rose deeply loved her family and her God. She was faithful to Jesus and our Heavenly Father, and a giving, serving, active member of the Body of Christ during her life of accountability.

After tragedy struck some 29 years ago, Rose was left virtually incapacitated both physically and mentally.

Rose now awaits the resurrection, at the return of her Savior and ours.

Sandra Joy Tenney, 64, a member of the Morgantown, West Virginia, congregation, died May 2, 2006, at her home in Kingwood, West Virginia, surrounded by family.

Baptized June 6, 1984, she attended the Clarksburg, West Virginia, Akron and Canton, Ohio, congregations prior to attending in Morgantown.

Sandra was known as being a kind, caring and hospitable Christian who in her spare time enjoyed gardening and animals. She retired from the USDA-Rural Development in 2002 with more than 25 years of service for the federal government. She also served as a tutor for Preston County Literacy Volunteers for several years.

She is survived by her husband, Cody, who attends the Morgantown congregation; four daughters; two sons; one sister; one brother; and many grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, one son and one brother.

Services were officiated by United Church of God pastor Tim Waddle and a local minister. Musical selections were played from CDs from Anita Hamill, Robin Wojcik and Richard Allen.

Heartfelt thanks are extended to those who sent cards of hope and encouragement, to those who sent much appreciated music CDs and



Sandra Joy Tenney

to the United congregations of Morgantown, Marietta (Ohio) and Athens (Ohio) for their full support during Sandra's illness.

Charles Harris, 85, of Portsmouth, Virginia, died Sept. 3, 2006. He was a member of God's Church since December 1980. A longtime member of the church chorus, he sang for weddings and other special occasions.

He served in the U.S. Marines and 25 years in the merchant marines. He retired as chief of security of Tower Mall in Portsmouth.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Rachel; a daughter, Sylvia Teartl; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

Services were held Sept. 8 by Todd

Carey, pastor of the Williamsburg, Virginia, congregation.

Clara Davidson passed away peacefully at her home in Novato, California, Sept. 22, 2006, at the age of 87. Clara was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, where she raised her seven children. In the early 1960s Clara moved to Phoenix, Arizona, where she became a member of the Church of God, having been baptized by Vernon Hargrove.

In 2000, Clara developed early signs of Alzheimer's disease and moved to Pasadena, California, to live with her grandson, Tim, and his family.



Clara Davidson

Clara is survived by her children, Jim, Sharon, Dan and Ellery; multiple grandchildren; great-grandchildren; and a few great-great-grandchildren.

A private service was held in Novato.

Nancy Lou Stewart, 74, passed away April 3, 2006, at Faith Haven Senior Care Centre in Jackson, Michigan. She was born April 9, 1931, in Bluffton, Ohio, the daughter of Levi and Mildred (Cotant) Frankhauser.

She married Don D. Stewart on Oct. 2, 1955. Don was a World War II veteran in the U.S. Army and preceded her in death on Jan. 17, 2000. Nancy was also preceded in death by her son, Richard, and sister, Becky Lein.

She is survived by her children, Stephanie Stewart, Kathy Stewart-Carlson and Daniel Kevin Stewart; grandchildren, David Paul Dempe, Morgan Jean Stewart and Daniel Richard Stewart; great-grandson, Caleb Dempe; and sister, Ruth Lewis.

Announcements: Members are welcome to submit announcements of the births, engagements, weddings, significant anniversaries (25, 40, 50, 60, etc.) and obituaries in their families. Please include a self-addressed envelope if you would like photos returned. Most items are 50 to 100 words and should not exceed 250 words. Please **e-mail (preferred) or give them to your local pastor** to forward to *United News*.

"Louisville," continued from page 24

something for everyone. Both baby-sitting and Sabbath school classes will be provided on the Sabbath during the seminar time frame so parents can soak in the seminar information.

Sports and Activities

This year you can choose to participate in any of the following sports: basketball, volleyball, speedaway, wall climbing, indoor tennis, indoor swimming, flag football, cardio center and weight room, organized children's games, dances and two musical jam sessions.

The family fun fair will include games and rides such as miniature golf, first down, mechanical bull, moon bounce, obstacle course, twin spin, dance dance revolution, sumo wrestling and many more. A large family novelty Olympics will also be held. Cards and board games will be

available for check out at the sports facilities.

Dances

A "Disco Night" theme is scheduled for the teen dance, as the teens will take a trip back to the '70s. Prizes will be given for the best costumes. Anyone choosing not to come in costume may come in nice jeans or better (no offensive clothing).

The theme of this year's young adult dance is "Knight out on the Town." The decor (and dress for those who would like to dress up) will be that of a grand gala in 16th-century England. Prizes will be given for best costumes. For anyone choosing not to come in costume, the dress is semiformal or formal. There will not be a dinner before the dance this year. Cost for the dance is \$6 and can be paid in advance or at the door.

There is no theme for this year's family dance—just plan to come and

have a good time with us. (Nothing offensive or immodest, please, and no shorts or tank tops.)

Register Now!

As always **WE NEED YOU** to help make this a successful event. Please take time to register in advance at www.ucg.org/familyweekend. This helps us plan for each activity as well as gives us volunteers to make sure we have all the help needed at each venue.

For those participating in sporting events the early registration fee is \$14 per person or \$45 maximum per family of four or more. The deadline for early registration is Dec. 15. Any registrations after that date can be taken, but the fee will be collected at the door and is \$20 per person or \$50 maximum per family of four or more. Anyone who cannot register online, please pick up a copy of the online registration form from your



pastor. The venue for wall climbing is a separate fee of \$10 per person for a four-hour time block.

Hotels

The main hotel and conference center is the Clarion. Our secondary property is Holiday Inn Hurstbourne (same exit).

- Clarion (\$40 + tax) (866) 246-2021 or (502) 491-4830.
- Holiday Inn (\$44 + tax) (502) 426-2600. This property will hold your reservation with a *nonrefundable* one-night deposit.

If you haven't already, call now and make your reservations.

More Information

For more information on "Singles in the Middle" activities, please contact John Dean at jdeanpe@yahoo.com or (828) 243-6669.

We do encourage parents not to send their teens without appropriate supervision for their own safety and protection.

Pack your camera and bring your smile as there will be numerous photo opportunities throughout the event and many memories made to last a lifetime. See you in Louisville this December!

Continued updates can be found at www.ucg.org/familyweekend.

Mark Winner

"Africa," continued from page 4

people. They travel by public transportation (buses and vans), but in most cases they must walk several kilometers to reach the destination for a Bible study or meeting with prospective members.

Travel in East Africa is never easy. We experienced firsthand the poor road conditions and in some remote areas we were made aware that there are no roads. We traveled in our own rented vehicle (four-wheel drive Land Rover); therefore we did not have to worry about the schedule of the public transports nor did we have to worry with the many dangers of traveling by this method. Some buses are robbed so often that it is expected

as one of the hazards of travel. The four deacons face these obstacles on a weekly basis.

"Our Calling"

One of the great challenges of East Africa is identifying those who are truly being called and focusing our attention on them. In each location that we visited we covered the subject of "our calling" either in the sermon or during the Bible study or question-and-answer period. We discussed Christ's statement in John 6:44, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..." Time will tell how many will progress to baptism and membership in the Church. Currently we are con-

centrating on teaching the fundamental principles of God's truth.

There is good potential for the Church to grow in this region of the world; but with limited resources, we must be careful not to get ahead of ourselves. Our approach for the future throughout this region of Africa can be characterized by Peter's words in Acts 3:6: "Then Peter said, 'Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you...'" The most precious gift that we have to offer is the truth of God's way of life. We don't have unlimited amounts of money, but what we do have is being used to print literature and provide for the preaching of the gospel to Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. It is an exciting time, as the response has been excellent!

The Good Works Program has been a great help by assisting with the physical needs—wells, buildings, mosquito nets, etc.

Much Work to Be Done

Mr. Elliott will be returning to Kenya in December for our second annual youth camp. Each year he makes at least four visits to oversee the work of the deacons and monitor the growth of the Church. His wife, Merrie, travels with him at least twice each year.

There is much work to be done and each trip is filled with activity. I can attest to the fact that there is little downtime when you travel to East Africa. We traveled from the modern city of Nairobi to villages with

mud huts and dirt floors. We conducted services in many different venues, from a well-appointed room on a college campus to an open field in the middle of a remote village.

My wife and I look forward to returning to Kenya in the near future to assist with the work that is being done by Mr. and Mrs. Elliott along with the four deacons and their wives. This trip was rewarding and also sobering. We already miss the new friends and family members that we were introduced to.

Please pray for the brethren in East Africa and the work that is being done. It is exciting to see the enthusiasm for God's truth and to assist new people who are being called to God's way of life. **UN**

News At a Glance

Continued from page 2

Pastoral Transfer Announced

Ministerial Services announced Sept. 2 a new assignment and transfer for Steve and Melania Nutzman. Mr. Nutzman will be assigned as pastor for the Boise, Idaho, congregation beginning after the Feast of Tabernacles. He will continue to pastor Beloit and Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, until their home sells and he and his wife are able to move to Idaho.

Ministerial Services hopes to assign a new pastor for Beloit and Wisconsin Dells whenever the Nutzmans actually move. If the move takes place before a replacement can be named, Dan Dowd will become the pastor of Wisconsin Dells (adding to his current congregations of Milwaukee and Oshkosh, Wisconsin) and Bob Fahey will become the pastor of Beloit (adding to his congregation in Chicago, Illinois). Earl Roemer will continue to pastor Baker City, Oregon, until the Nutzmans are able to move into the Idaho area, when his situation will be reevaluated. This will give the Roemers time to address a serious health concern that has arisen for Mr. Roemer.

Mr. Nutzman is from Idaho and Mrs. Nutzman has family in the West, so both are excited about moving to this part of the country. Their children are also currently living in Las Vegas, Nevada. Once the Nutzmans move to Idaho, there will be a realignment of the congregations. The plans are for Mr. Nutzman to pastor Baker City; Twin Falls, Idaho; and Las Vegas in addition to Boise.

Columnist Plugs Good News Again

Syndicated columnist Herb Denenberg extolled *The Good News* magazine and especially Melvin Rhodes' article "Radical Islam: An Arc of Extremism

That Threatens the Globe" in the September/October issue. In his Sept. 15 column in *The Evening Bulletin* in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Mr. Denenberg praised the *GN*'s coverage of the Middle East and gave the Web site and mailing address for the magazine.

He wrote, "Here's a magazine few of you have probably ever heard of, a magazine that is distributed free of charge, yet it easily outdoes *The [New York] Times* . . . a freebie way outscoring an expensive daily." Mr. Denenberg gave seven points about the article, including a number of quotes from the *Good News* article.

Mr. Denenberg has given contact information for *The Good News* and other free literature before. This was previously reported in the May 2005 and February 2004 *United News*.

Mr. Denenberg is a former Pennsylvania Insurance Commissioner and professor at the Wharton School.

Three Safe After Holdup

Raul Villacote, elder in the Tacloban City, Philippines, congregation, together with local leaders Jose Campos and Vicente Noriega, encountered a holdup July 23 on their way home from meetings in Pagadian City.

Thirty minutes after they left Pagadian, three passengers boarded the same bus they were on and later declared a holdup. They revealed they were armed with a pistol and a hand grenade. The robbers took mobile phones and other valuables, and accidentally shot a student passenger in the arm during the incident.

"This encounter caused some delay in their travel home, but most importantly, it reminded them of the greatness of God's love and protection, and how powerfully prayers could help," wrote Jose Campos in the July/August *United News Asia*.

Elders Credentialed and Ordained

In August the Council of Elders approved the credentialing of Laurie Nyhus as an elder. He and his wife, Sarah, are serving in Edmonton and Grande Prairie, Alberta, and surrounding areas.

Gregory Czech was ordained into the ministry on the Feast of Trumpets, Sept. 23. He and his wife, Nancy, serve in the Spokane, Washington, congregation.

Also on the Feast of Trumpets, John Perry was ordained into the ministry. He and his wife, Marsha, are serving in the Houston North, Texas, congregation.

Garden Grove Plans 40th Anniversary

The Garden Grove, California, congregation will be commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Orange County, California, churches on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2007. The Church of God began in Anaheim in December 1966. The first pastor was Al Portune Sr., and the current pastor is Mario Seiglie. Many other ministers have served our brethren during the intervening years. Brethren will enjoy fellowshiping, reflecting and enjoying glimpses of our past.

Services will begin at 2:30 with guest speakers Dennis Luker and Robin Weber, former pastors of the congregation. The evening celebration will begin at 5 p.m. with a dinner hosted by the Garden Grove congregation, plus a program including a slide presentation, reflections and picture/memorabilia displays.

If you would like a flyer or further information, please contact Jean Upde-

graff at (714) 546-4695 or e-mail her at occhurch40th@sbcglobal.net
Jean Updegraff

Branson Family Weekend Feb. 16-19

The Southwest Missouri congregations will host the 12th annual Midwest Family Weekend Feb. 16 to 19, 2007, in Branson, Missouri. The weekend will feature plenty of activities and fellowship for all ages.

It will begin with a fellowship evening on Friday, Feb. 16. On Sabbath, Feb. 17, there will be several informative, family-oriented seminars by area pastors and our guest speaker. Sabbath services on Saturday afternoon will be followed by a special dinner for everyone.

Saturday evening will feature a family dance and a talent show. On Sunday there will be more family seminars, a skating party, another meal and a luau pool party followed by games and fellowship.

The motel price for the weekend is \$35 per night per room (including a free breakfast). Additional costs will be very nominal for skating and for the two meals. For more information, contact Mike Blackwell by e-mail at michael_blackwell@ucg.org, or Paul Carter at paul_carter@ucg.org.

Mike Blackwell

■ **2006 Feast of Tabernacles Video.** Watch or download the 2006 Feast video, *Life Anew in a New Land*, online at www.ucg.org/feast/

■ **Vertical Thought.** Read the latest October–December 2006 issue of *Vertical Thought*. Inside are informative articles focusing on friendship. Access online at www.verticalthought.org/issues/vt13/



■ **World News and Prophecy eNews.** Our world is being shaped by a constant stream of events. Information is abundant, but making sense of it can be a challenge. The *WNP eNews* is designed to help you put today's world in context by providing you with useful and accurate information, analysis and commentary in a short, easy-to-navigate package. Sign up today at www.wnponline.org/newsletter

■ **UCG Commentary**

"Today's Plugged-In Generation"
"Holy War and the Future of Mankind"
"Is Now the Time for a New Middle East Peace Initiative?"
www.ucg.org/commentary/

Featured Link

■ **Youth** and young adults' Web site. ucg.org/youth

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



Calendar of Events

Nov. 13-15: Regional pastors conference.
Nov. 16-17: Camp directors meeting.
Nov. 18: Milwaukee 50th Anniversary (see article July issue, page 16).
Nov. 18-19: ABC Continuing Education Seminars, Morton, Illinois.
Dec. 4-5: Northwest regional conference for pastors, Portland, Oregon.
Dec. 8-13: Council of Elders meeting.
Dec. 22-26: Winter Family Weekend, Louisville, Kentucky (www.ucg.org/familyweekend).
Dec. 27-Jan. 1, 2007: Winter Camp, Montello, Wisconsin (see article, September/October issue, page 16).
Jan. 12-14: Women's Enrichment Weekend, Garden Grove, California. Jean Updegraff (714) 546-4695 or jeanupde@sbcglobal.net.
Jan. 13-14: South Central Regional Women's Weekend; "From the Heart—Building Relationships That Matter" (ucg-houston.org/womensweekend).
Feb. 10: Family Dance, Receptions Eastgate, Cincinnati, Ohio (FouchB@greatoaks.com).
Feb. 16 to 19: Presidents' Day Ski Weekend, Salt Lake City, Utah. (801) 495-0412 or larry_salyer@ucg.org.
Feb. 16-19: Midwest Family Weekend, Branson, Missouri (see article, left).
Feb. 23-28: Council of Elders meeting.
Feb. 24: 40th Orange County, California, anniversary (see article, left).

Winter Family Weekend Details Announced

Make plans to set aside Dec. 22 to 26, and join 2,000 of your closest family and friends for four days of education, fellowship, fun and games in Louisville, Kentucky. This year promises to be the most exciting ever, with an even greater concentration of seminars, sports, music, dances and family fun games.

Seminars and ABC Continuing Education

The educational theme of this year's Winter Family Weekend is "Learn to Discern; the Narrow Path or the Super Highway." Just why do we do what we do? What makes us different from mainstream Christianity? Is this a good thing? Does it really matter to God? More than 20 speakers will be giving

presentations throughout the weekend.

ABC faculty will also be giving three full days of ABC Continuing Education for any and all wishing to attend, which is a first for this event. Gary Antion is planning to cover "Building and Nourishing a Lasting Marriage." David Johnson's presentations will be based on themes from the book of Acts, and Ralph Levy plans to cover topics in the book of Genesis. Clyde Kilough is also scheduled to teach three sessions. We are excited to be offering this for our attendees.

As always, there will be more activities to choose from than one can actually participate in. We make it a goal to provide

See "Louisville," page 23



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