

Home Office Update
August 21, 2003

Dear Brethren,

August has been a busy and exciting month for the United Church of God. The United Youth Camps completed their summer program as the final two camps held their sessions. Camp Davidson in Oregon ended on Thursday, August 14, and Camp Heritage in Pennsylvania ended on Sunday, August 17. From all reports, this has been another excellent year for our youth camp program—thanks to the camp directors and the hundreds of volunteer staff who provide such willing and experienced service to our youth! The national camp team is scheduled to hold their annual meetings in Cincinnati in early November, and I look forward to hearing what plans they have for next year. Please be sure to read the articles about the individual camps that have and will appear in *United News*.

The Council of Elders also held their latest round of meetings in mid-August when numerous critical issues were discussed and decisions made on a number of key matters. I hope you have had a chance to read the reports written by Council reporter Don Henson. One decision that I am particularly enthusiastic about was the approval by the Council of a good works program. I presented a proposal for this ongoing effort and after a few modifications it was passed unanimously by the Council. Our treasurer, Tom Kirkpatrick, will oversee its coordination. I want to take a few moments here to give a brief introduction to this project, and show how it will fit in with our current efforts.

Galatians 6:10 states: “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” In both Israel and the New Testament Church, God placed a strong emphasis on helping the widow, fatherless, stranger and others in need. Since its inception, United has striven to fulfill these needs through a variety of means: general assistance fund, festival assistance fund, individuals and congregations donating to international areas, youth camp scholarship fund, congregational work parties and other direct individual labor and help. In addition, many congregations and members have participated with LifeNets projects to help our brethren in many parts of the world. LifeNets has also provided tangible assistance (in ways United could not) to members in various countries from outside donations it has received. All of the above efforts have been most helpful and we plan to continue to use those. The many letters of thanks from around the globe are a tribute to the good fruit that is being produced.

As effective and energetic as these efforts have been, some needs still arise that are not being met. As needs increase and the variety of efforts grows, coordination is required to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency. That is the purpose of this good works program. It does not seek to replace our various assistance funds, nor the projects being accomplished by other humanitarian organizations or individual congregations, but rather to organize our efforts to make sure all needs are being met within our power to do so.

Below is the preamble and text of the approved Council resolution, which gives a detailed description of how this program is to begin and function.

Whereas, there are emergency situations that arise that are administered by National Councils or the home office that fall outside of budgeted items, and

Whereas, the Council desires to establish a process whereby the needs that arise from these emergency situations can be addressed by local fund-raising projects initiated by local congregations of UCGIA, and

Whereas, there is a need to coordinate this activity through a coordinator working with the home office,

Now therefore, it is hereby resolved, that Tom Kirkpatrick is appointed to coordinate the “good works program” and that the coordinator’s duties are as follows:

1. Oversee the accumulation of information about needs and possible projects.
2. Discuss with the appropriate authorities (pastor, senior pastor, National Council, treasurer, Ministerial Services director) the legitimate need and urgency of the project.

3. Communicate, as necessary, that the funds being requested are not to be from tithes and regular offerings.
4. Coordinate the number of local congregations that would be involved with any individual project.
5. Oversee the monies raised by fund-raising and have them credited into the appropriate account.
6. Make sure that the appropriate funds needed are wired to the authorized person handling the project.
7. Ensure that proper accounting of the monies is maintained.
8. Give a regular update (on the Web site and *United News*) of the projects completed and those that are still active.

Your prayers for the success of this program would be greatly appreciated. Please be watching the Web site and *United News* for more information and to learn how you and your congregation can become involved.

Roy Holladay

ABC Sampler—Cincinnati

This year's Cincinnati Sampler attendees comprise the largest group that we have had in the four years we have been conducting samplers. There are 41 eager students ranging from the young—age 16—to those who are grandparents. President Roy Holladay, Dr. Ralph Levy and I are each teaching two classes per day for a total of 30 hours of classroom instruction. The summer students have come from Washington, Florida, Georgia, Wisconsin, Illinois, North Carolina and New York states. There are also several from Ohio. Several are regulars in the sampler program. Since each year different segments of ABC classes are covered, eventually, say in 20 years or so, those who keep coming may complete the entire ABC program! A few others have been here for three out of the four sessions. They are all to be congratulated for their diligence and for their love of God's Word. This year's class has expressed their gratitude for the program and even suggested having another in December, if possible.

The Ambassador Bible Center program is gearing up for next year's class. We have now accepted 27 into next year's program with several months to go before the January 4 orientation date arrives. The final date for receiving applications for 2004 is December 19, 2003. Please remind the brethren that it is good to send in their applications as soon as possible so that we may have the time to review them for admission to ABC. Thank you ministers and brethren for your prayers for the program.

Gary Antion

Anniversary: 40th for Minneapolis, Minnesota, Congregation

The Feast of Trumpets 2003 marks the 40th anniversary of the Minneapolis congregation. We will have a short celebration after services that day. In preparation for this celebration, we are looking for names of the original 230 people who attended that first service. If you can provide us with any names, please contact Tom Hoffahrt by e-mail at nichfinder@yahoo.com or by telephone at (952) 831-3235.

Feast of Tabernacles: Sermon Video

Final edits are being made over the next two weeks for this year's Festival Sermon Video titled: "Being About Our Father's Business." It will be shown at all United Church of God Feast of Tabernacles sites.

Clyde Kilough, chairman of the Council of Elders, and Roy Holladay, president, each give an up-beat, inspiring message that focuses on the Feast of Tabernacles. They also show why we are being prepared as the people of God and how this relates to the Kingdom of God. You'll also see and hear about the day-to-day work in which we are involved and see what United is doing to accomplish the Church's mission.

This year we will also focus on one international area, Mexico, and see what is being done to preach the gospel and prepare the people in that region of the world. The impact of God's people has influenced many around the globe to start living God's way of life. Brethren from two of the congregations in Mexico, Mexico City and Monterrey, openly discuss their backgrounds, calling, love of the truth and warmth of their congregations. You will see and

hear how they are about our Father's business in Mexico. We hope to focus on an area outside the United States each year from now on.

In this year's sermon video you will meet a new member as she shares her thoughts about coming into God's Church. Each of us has a unique story to tell about our conversion. It's inspiring to hear how God works in each of our lives. We trust that this year's message will be inspirational and motivating for our 20,000 members gathered for this year's Feast.

Peter Eddington

Feast of Tabernacles: Space Available in France

Our brethren in French Europe are experiencing a shortage of visitors transferring to the site in Nouan-le-Fuzelier this year. Each year we contract for space at the Festival site so that visitors can enjoy the fellowship, the cultural enrichment and the fine cuisine of the Feast in France. So far this year, it appears we will not be able to meet our prepaid contractual obligations by about 50 people, which would represent an important financial shortfall for the church in France.

If you have not yet made your decision about where you will attend the Feast, and would like to travel internationally, please consider observing the Feast with us at this all-inclusive site, one of the least expensive in Europe. Lodging, meals and church services are all located on the same site. Nouan-le-Fuzelier is located about 100 miles south of Paris, very near the fabulous Renaissance castles on the Loire River, several of which can be visited on coach excursions during the Feast. Services will be in both English and French with simultaneous translation.

For more information, or to request a registration packet, please contact Joel Meeker at joel_meeker@ucg.org, or at (636) 561-4026. *A bientôt!*

Joel Meeker

Ministerial Candidate Program: Leadership Workshop

Ministerial Services will host its second annual Leadership Workshop on the weekend of August 28 through September 1, 2003, for 44 invited guests from the local congregations all over the United States, Jamaica and Australia. The program is developed as a "leadership seminar." The men and their wives will have the opportunity in the five days to receive over 30 hours of instruction, interaction, testing and Q&A in topics such as:

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| - Role of the Home Office | - Leadership in the Church |
| - Teaching as We Have Been Taught | - The Heart of a Leader |
| - Finances and Local Congregations | - Developing Wisdom and Judgment |
| - Appreciating Differences: Understanding Yourself and Others | - Principles of Research |
| - UCG Congregational Structure | - Principles of Counseling |
| - Working With Your Pastor | - Role of Deacons and Elders |
| - Working With Youth | - Relevance in Speaking |
| - Selecting and Developing Preaching Material | - Media Development and Evangelism |
| | - History and Overview of UCG Documents |

The above topics will be presented by a variety of speakers from the home office and numerous pastors from the field ministry. The purpose of the program in passing the baton of truth to others in the United Church of God is threefold:

1. The development of local leadership.
2. The development of leadership toward possible ordination.
3. The development of elders to become pastors in the future.

Your prayers for the ongoing success of this program toward future leadership development is greatly appreciated.

Richard Pinelli

Internet

Requests for the *GN* magazine and other literature during the 2002-2003 fiscal year totaled 52,665 through our Web sites (an increase of 9 percent over last fiscal year). The average request is for four pieces of literature, so this represents approximately 210,000 booklets and magazines leaving our mail room to go to these Internet users. Of course, these are all in addition to those requests received by regular mail!

Our advertising at Overture.com is still working very well. We receive new subscribers for around \$1.75 each, and these are usually people who have browsed our Web site and understand the type of literature they will receive. Overture is also partnering with most other major search engines on the Internet, and so our keyword listings appear in many places. In addition, we do receive thousands of new *GN* subscribers each year at no cost. These are people who sign up for the *GN* after finding our Web site through various search engines, from TV ads, radio ads, etc.

Every time someone fills out an online literature request, we ask him or her two questions. Here are the results for July 2003. You'll notice that only 2 percent of respondents are Church members. Also, you'll notice the effect a referral from a friend has.

Question 1: *How did you find out about the United Church of God?*

Response	Total number	Percentage
Banner Ad	1,362	28%
From this Web page	738	15%
From a United Church of God publication	567	11%
From an advertisement	419	8%
From a friend/family member	1,250	25%
From a previous affiliation with the Church	69	1%
From the <i>Good News</i> radio program	49	1%
From an affiliated local congregational or National Web site	21	0%
Other	203	4%
I am a member of the United Church of God	120	2%
From a publication in a waiting room	145	3%
Total	4,943	100%

Question 2: *How did you find this URL?*

Response	Total number	Percentage
Banner Ad	1,362	28%
From the <i>Good News</i> magazine	1,322	27%
Another United Church of God publication	200	4%
From an advertisement	355	7%
From a friend/family member	961	19%
Surfing the World Wide Web	523	11%
From the <i>Good News</i> radio program	34	1%
Other	31	1%
I am a member of the United Church of God	94	2%
From a publication in a waiting room	61	1%
Total	4,943	100%

The Internet is proving to be a valuable and cost-effective tool for the Church to use. Please continue to pray that our development and success in this media will grow and become even more fruitful.

Peter Eddington