

United Church of God, *an International Association*
Council of Elders Meeting Report
Thursday, May 8, 2003 – Cincinnati, Ohio

The final day of this round of Council meetings was convened promptly at 9 a.m. The first order of business was the passage of a resolution establishing a task force to work on a new study paper, followed by a Doctrine Committee update presented by Jim Franks. The morning meeting also included a discussion of plans for the Council meetings in August. In the afternoon session Richard Pinelli reported on the status of the supplemental hymnal project. The meetings concluded with an executive session.

Study Paper Task Force

Jim Franks proposed a resolution to establish a task force to be chaired by Doug Horchak for the purpose of producing a study paper on the subject of evangelism:

Whereas the mission statement of the United 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” and,

Whereas the Council of Elders is entrusted with the oversight of the United Church of God, and

Whereas the Council of Elders desires to define the terms used in preaching the gospel,

Now therefore, it is hereby resolved that a task force be formed to do a thorough study of the Bible on the subject of evangelism and how it applies to the Church and its mission today.

It is further resolved that the task force be chaired by Doug Horchak. Names for members of the task force will be brought to the Council by Mr. Horchak for Council approval.

And it is further resolved that the goal of the task force will be to produce a study paper to be reviewed and approved by the Doctrine Committee of the Council of Elders for publication to the ministry and the Church

And it is further resolved that this paper should provide:

1. A clear definition of the term “evangelism” and related terms.
2. Specific proposals for application of these terms to the Church today.
3. A suggested terminology for future Church programs.

The motion passed by unanimous consent (Richard Thompson absent, teaching ABC class).

Doctrine Committee Update

Mr. Franks, chairman of the Doctrine Committee, gave an update on the status of several projects and also led the Council through a final doctrinal review of a study paper on the subject of the resurrections.

Five doctrinal projects have been completed and will be presented to the Council for review in August:

1. Nature of God and Christ
2. Tithing
3. Is it Biblical for Balloting in the Church?
4. Role of Women in the Church
5. Music in the Bible

Five more study papers are scheduled to be completed later this year:

1. Voting and Running for Political Office
2. Middle East in Prophecy
3. Who is Assyria?
4. Hebrew Calendar and Postponements
5. The Sacred Name

Two additional projects are currently underway. One is on the question of applause for special music at the Feast of Tabernacles. The other is on the subject of the correct understanding of Genesis 6:9.

Mr. Franks led the Council through a final doctrinal review of a study paper titled “The Resurrections.” This paper maintains the traditional teachings of the Church on the subject of the three resurrections. A few minor wording changes were suggested. The Council made no doctrinal changes to the paper. There is not a need for any further doctrinal review. The paper will undergo a final stylistic edit, which should be complete by the time of the Council’s meetings in August.

Miscellaneous Items of Business

Robert Dick was named provisional chairman of the Ethics, Roles and Rules Committee. The committee will select a permanent chairman at the Council meetings in August.

Dave Evans, on behalf of Ministerial Services, summarized the manpower situation at various Feast of Tabernacles sites for Council members’ planning needs.

Mr. Kilough questioned whether there would be enough time at the next scheduled Council meetings to complete all the business at hand. After some discussion,

the Council decided to add one more day of meetings. The revised schedule calls for committee meetings to take place Wednesday and Thursday, August 6-7 and for Council meetings to begin on Friday, August 8. Council members will attend the Ambassador Bible Center graduation on Sunday, August 10. Council meetings will continue Monday-Thursday, August 11-14.

Following the lunch break, Richard Pinelli gave the Council an update on progress of the supplemental hymnal project. When the Council assigned Mr. Pinelli this project, he wrote a letter to all U.S. pastors asking those who were already using a supplemental hymnal to send him a copy. Four copies were sent to him, each of which had some 60-70 hymns. Mr. Pinelli called on church pastor Steve Myers, because of his extensive background in music, to oversee the development of the supplemental hymnal. Mr. Myers selected five members to assist him in the project: Janel Johnson, Dr. David Hoover, Jim Brandenburg, Mark Graham and Dan Anderson. Mr. Myers and his committee will work with the supplemental hymnals developed by congregations and other material to produce a supplemental hymnal for use throughout the Church. Legal counsel Larry Darden will work on copyright issues. The project is on track for completion in time for Feast of Tabernacles, 2003.

The Council concluded its business in executive session. The meetings were adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

A Special Thanks to Gary Antion

Just before the final executive session, Mr. Kilough, on behalf of the Council, paid tribute to the contributions of outgoing Council member Gary Antion. Mr. Kilough thanked Mr. Antion, a member of the Council of Elders since January, 1996, for his dedicated work. In particular, he cited Mr. Antion's understanding of and adherence to the founding documents of United. Mr. Antion was described as a hard worker, a man of conviction who served conscientiously – his "fingerprints" on much of the work the Council has accomplished. Mr. Kilough concluded that, "It will seem strange to see you sitting in the audience rather than at this table. But we will continue to use you as a reference and advisor. We genuinely thank you for the service you've rendered."

In accepting a card and gift, Mr. Antion acknowledged the help of his wife, Barbara, during his years of service on the Council. He also assured the Council that he would continue praying about and for their continued efforts.

-Don Henson

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