

**United Church of God, *an International Association***  
**Council of Elders Meeting Report**  
**May 6, 2004 – Cincinnati, OH**

The final day for this round of meetings opened with a report on Doctrine Committee activities by Jim Franks. The Council spent late morning through mid-afternoon in executive session. It completed its business by adopting resolutions on matters that had been discussed earlier in the week and selecting a chairman for the next two years.

**Correction**

Two attendance figures were given for the wrong year in the report on the meeting of May 4. Pentecost and Feast of Tabernacles attendance given for 2004 were actually for 2003. The report should have read as follows: “In 1999, Pentecost attendance was 11,053 and in 2003 it was 12,015.” And in reference to the Feast of Tabernacles, the report should read: “In 1998 attendance was 10,333. And by 2003 it had risen again to 11,489.”

**Doctrine Committee Update**

Mr. Franks distributed an update from the Doctrine Committee which listed papers and study projects currently underway, questions and papers generated from sources outside the Doctrine Committee. He also discussed other proposed doctrinal projects and ideas.

Five papers and study projects are currently underway, two of which were discussed in more detail during today’s meeting.

- A study paper titled “The Nature of God and Christ” has been written by a task force assigned to the project and is nearing completion. Mr. Franks read to the Council the first 13 pages of this study paper, soliciting their comments and input. The balance of the paper will be presented at the meeting in August.
- A statement and study paper on interracial marriage is being produced by the Committee on Race Relations. It has been reviewed by the Advisory Committee for Doctrine. The Doctrine Committee plans to review the paper, make suggestions for edits as necessary and present it for Council approval in the August 2004 meetings.
- The Doctrine Committee has been asked to review 152 letters that have been written by UCG elders in response to questions on a wide variety of topics that have been sent to the Church. The letters will be given to the Advisory Committee for Doctrine for their review and editing suggestions.
- The Family Life Studies Committee has written a series of papers on the subject of marriage and divorce. The Doctrine Committee agrees that this material is doctrinally sound. The papers will be sent to the Divorce and

Remarriage Committee for a final review. The papers will then be given to the administration for their decision on how to make use of them.

- “The Beginning of the Sabbath in Extreme Northern and Southern Regions” is a doctrinal statement prepared by the Doctrine Committee. Committee member Tony Wasilkoff reviewed the statement with the Council. Some comments and suggested edits were offered. Mr. Wasilkoff will incorporate the input into the statement and it will be sent to the Council for final review.

The Doctrine Committee is also processing five additional research papers on four different topics. A research paper on the subject of the new moons is being studied by members of the Doctrine Committee and will be sent to the Advisory Committee for Doctrine for their consideration. Two papers on the subject of the calendar, with emphasis on the postponements, were submitted by separate individuals. The Advisory Committee will prepare a response to a paper questioning the validity of Matthew 28:19 (“...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”). And a paper presented by another individual on the 70 weeks prophecy is also being studied by the Prophecy Advisory Committee.

Regarding upcoming projects and ideas, Mr. Franks mentioned that some elders have requested that there be a broader review of doctrinal material prior to publication. The Doctrine Committee plans to send a request to the General Conference of Elders for any who would desire to be included in the review process.

Mr. Franks also mentioned that through the General Education Program, the committee is collecting information to help the ministry in addressing issues that have been identified as “hot topics.” Articles and papers that have already been written on a particular subject will be compiled and offered as a study packet. Examples of topics that are in various stages of development include the calendar, answers to questions on observing the Sabbath in particular situations, sacred names, marriage and divorce and the proper date for observance of the Passover.

Suggestions were also made for study projects on the book Galatians, Jesus Christ being in the grave for three days and three nights, an explanation of “legalism” showing that UCG is not legalistic and for video sermons on doctrinal topics.

The Council met in executive session from approximately 11:30 a.m. until 3:45 p.m.

### **Marketing Philosophy for Preaching the Gospel**

Following up on yesterday’s meeting, Victor Kubik presented the Council with a resolution which recognizes the historical marketing philosophy of the Church for preaching the gospel and establishes that the Media and Communications committee will use those principles as the basis for preparing a marketing philosophy for United. A media policy will be developed and proposed from that marketing philosophy by the committee in concert with the Council, the president and the media operations personnel.

The Council unanimously adopted the resolution (Joel Meeker was not present for the vote).

### **Sexual Misconduct Policy and Youth Protection Guidelines**

Richard Thompson presented the Council with the draft of the document titled “Sexual Misconduct Policy and Youth Protection Guidelines.” Mr. Thompson carefully and thoroughly reviewed the edits that had been incorporated as a result of the Council’s review of the document in a meeting earlier this week (May 4). The Council made several additional suggestions and edits.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Thompson presented a resolution to adopt the document, as edited, as the official policy of the United Church of God. The Council resolution passed unanimously (Joel Meeker was not present for the vote).

The policy statement will be distributed as soon as possible to the ministry by Ministerial Services, along with appropriate sections of the United Youth Camp Manual as referred to in the document.

### **Selection of Council Chairman**

Since Mr. Kilough’s two-year term as Council chairman expired at the end of this week’s meetings and in accordance with Bylaw 8.2.1, the last item of business of this session was to select a chairman. The election is held in an open Council meeting and is conducted by Council Secretary, Gerald Seelig. The chairman is selected by a secret ballot and requires a two-thirds majority.

No Council member received the required two-thirds majority on the first ballot. On the second ballot, Mr. Kilough received the necessary majority and was selected to fill another term as Council chairman.

The Council session adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Don Henson

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