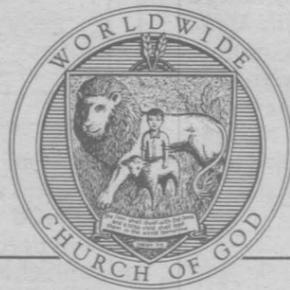


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The Worldwide News



VOL. XXII, NO. 1
JANUARY 4, 1994

Open house draws guests, motivates members

By Paul Monteith

Excited, hopeful, curious and a little nervous was how six pastors summed up the feelings of their congregations as the doors to church services were opened to invited guests Nov. 6.

"Don't stop the program! Let's do it every year! Leave services open to guests," excited members told their pastors after the final open house in this phase of the program, Nov. 27.

The eight churches involved had every reason to be pleased, for more than 870 guests attended over the course of the four open house services.

"The program is a positive way to share the Sabbath with people who are interested in attending our services and becoming followers of Christ," said evangelist Joseph Tkach Jr., director of Church Administration.

"While we have traditionally kept our services closed to the public, we have always opened our fellowship to prospective members. This open house approach welcomes people whom we desire to see become part of our fellowship."

The congregations participating in the program were Hollywood and Miami, Florida, pastored by Craig

Bacheller; Oakland and San Francisco, California, pastored by Bill Bradford; Joliet, Illinois, pastored by Bob Fahey; Washington, D.C., North, pastored by Lloyd Garrett; Kelowna, British Columbia, pastored by Don Mears; and Union, New Jersey, North, pastored by Greg Sargent.

The best kept secret

According to Mr. Sargent, some of the guests attending the Union North services didn't know we had a church and thought open house meant getting acquainted with other *Plain Truth* subscribers for a short lecture.

"One guest and longtime subscriber said the church in Union was the best kept secret of the century," he said.

Mr. Bacheller said a man with tears in his eyes thanked him for the invitation. "He had been a subscriber and viewer for many years and knew that he needed to do something with his life. It was the impact of the invitation that moved him over the 'mark' to follow God, and led him to inform his employer that he would no longer work Saturdays."

Overall, guests expressed the desire for further contact, stayed after services for up to two hours in some

See OPEN HOUSE, page 5

Why the Worldwide Church of God Does Not Observe Christmas

By J. Thomas Lapacka

The Worldwide Church of God is often asked why it does not observe Christmas. We do not teach or command the observance of Christmas because of the silence of the Bible on this topic. Christmas has its roots in pre-Christian and non-Christian traditions, and was never observed in the Bible by the apostles or early Church.

However, it is not just the fact of nonbiblical origins that prompts the Church to avoid Christmas observance. The tradition and teaching of the Worldwide Church of God is to observe religious holidays that have clear biblical precedent, rather than those based on nonbiblical origins, many of which were introduced after the first century.

The Worldwide Church of God observes the biblical holidays that Christ and the apostles observed. These biblical Holy Days focus our attention on Jesus' love for all humanity and are types of the anticipated future fulfillment of God's plan of salvation. They are memorials of God's great acts of salvation in history, and are annual celebrations of the saving grace of Jesus Christ. They are observed as a celebration and worship of our Lord and Savior. We note that the apostles continued to observe these days after the crucifixion (Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8).

Having a biblical mandate to observe these days, we feel obligated to observe them rather than observing religious days about which the Bible is silent.

The Worldwide Church of God respects the differences of belief of all Christians. We do not condemn others, but teach and explain the biblical examples. We appreciate beautiful music, family gatherings and feasting. However, it is our rule of faith and practice to center such activities in and on direct biblical examples of Jesus Christ.

Member named prime minister in Kingdom of Swaziland

LUDZIDZINI, Swaziland—Jameson Dlamini, 61, a Church member, was named prime minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland, Nov. 4.

King Mswati III of Swaziland appointed Mr. Dlamini, known also as Prince Mbilini, to a five-year term. Prince Mbilini served as minister for Works and Construction in the previous parliament.

Prince Mbilini's appointment was announced to a packed royal cattle byre (barn) here. Before the king

made the announcement, he recalled that on countless times he had asked the nation to pray for him and the country.

"So if my hand pointed to a wrong choice, it will mean that your prayers were not good enough," the king said. "We must also bear in mind that everybody has his own weakness and failings. We must, however, pray to God that the man appointed is the right one, who will be dedicated to his duties and work toward the improvement of the country and the people."

"I know as a matter of fact that some people will not be happy about the choice made and others will be

See Prime minister, page 5

This article is compiled from stories that appeared in *The Swazi Observer* and *the Times of Swaziland*.



NEW OFFICIAL—Member Jameson Dlamini (seated fourth from left) is the new prime minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland in southern Africa.



Personal from...

JOSEPH W. TKACH

We need zeal for Jesus Christ

As I wrote last issue, we as a Church need a renewed zeal and enthusiasm for Jesus Christ. We have focused on that need for the past several years, and many in the Church have begun to experience the spiritual joy and strength that comes only from God through deep and active faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul bore witness to the absolute necessity of faith in Jesus and the fact that it is through faith in him that we are children of God. He wrote, "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27). *It is only by faith in Christ that we are able to be children of God. We are baptized into Christ. We are to clothe ourselves with him.*

That is why we have and must put our prime emphasis on Jesus. We must grow in our knowledge of him, that is, in knowing him personally, not just knowing about him. Remember how Jesus described eternal life: "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3). Knowing God, knowing Jesus, *believing* in him, having *faith* in him, *clothing ourselves* with him through the Holy Spirit, is what constitutes our being children of God.

To know God and Jesus Christ is to possess eternal life. That does

See Personal, page 3

Give your children the invaluable gift of values

BOREHAMWOOD, England—“Without being taught virtuous conduct, children cannot understand how to make sense of difficult moral questions,” wrote Anthony O’Hare, professor of philosophy at Bradford University, in the London *Daily Mail*.

“Civilized values, including morality, do not spring naturally from a child,” he continues. “They are, rather, the fruit of centuries of experience and learning, which have to be conveyed to each pupil by patient instruction and example.”

Moral code debated

In an effort to arrest the continuing slide into moral ambiguity among Britain’s children, the government is urging that a moral code be taught in schools.

“Spiritual development is an important element of a child’s education and fundamental to other areas of learning,” says the National Curriculum Council’s (NCC) discussion paper on spiritual and moral development of children.

The aim of this moral code is to provide a sound foundation in right and wrong for children. Schools are encouraged to include aspects of spiritual development in all areas of the

This article is by Julie Wilson, an editorial staff member in the British Office.



curriculum, not just religious education classes and collective worship.

The NCC says that spiritual development needs to be seen as “applying to something fundamental in the human condition.... It has to do with relationships with other people and, for believers, with God.

“It has to do with the universal search for individual identity—with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. It has to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live.”

In an increasingly secular society any effort to instill values and spiritual insight in the future generation is commendable. Britain is a population of low Bible literacy.

Since the 1930s the number of children in regular contact with a church has dropped from about 65 percent to 14 percent today. And as the shift from biblical virtues occurs, so a sense

of right and wrong becomes hazy.

Although moral guidelines and education by schools is commendable, it is of limited value if the foundations for morality and an understanding of right and wrong are not being laid in the home.

“Children need to be introduced from an early age to concepts of right and wrong so that moral behavior becomes an instinctive habit.... Moral development in schools builds on the child’s experience in the home,” says the NCC.

Parental role

Christian parents are obligated to teach their children about God’s way of life and the importance of moral behavior. The Creator God tells parents in Deuteronomy 6:6-7 that teaching their children is a daily process: “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and

when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

In today’s hectic world, children are often neglected. Yet, to teach our children right from wrong, we must spend time with them.

Parents must become teachers. They must educate their children in values such as truthfulness, being responsible for one’s actions, self-discipline and respecting the rights and property of others. They should be encouraged to think of others and be shown the consequences of negative behavior. Parents should take the opportunity, when their children ask questions and are receptive, for teaching and guiding them.

There is no better way to teach our children than by our own example. Children are highly observant and, therefore, parents must themselves live by the values they teach. For if children who have been taught to tell the truth hear a parent lying, then the value, truthfulness, has been undermined.

Educating children about what is right and wrong is a tremendous responsibility. Yet parents must prepare their children to face adulthood as balanced, well-adjusted, law-abiding and responsible individuals—ready to pass on these guiding principles to their own children.

What better gift can a parent bestow upon his or her child?

The Worldwide News

THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

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Letters to the Editor

Letters for this section should be addressed to “Letters to the Editor.” The editor reserves the right to use letters so addressed in whole or in part, and to include your name and edit the letter for clarity or space. We welcome your comments.

Watch for ruts of disobedience

After reading Neil Earle’s article, “But, I Tried My Best,” in the November-December *Plain Truth*, I was reminded of my own childhood experiences with church attendance. And whether my sister and I like it or not, we were, you might say, raised in the Church.

Upon reaching an age when our parents decided we were mature enough to make our own decision in the matter, we quit going to church, except on rare occasions.

We cannot expect imperfect parents to rear perfect children full of wisdom and the graces of perfection, but we can assure parents that very much indeed depends upon the way in which they train their children as to what kind of men or women they shall become, and whether children shall bring to their parents happiness or unhappiness, sorrow or joy.

It is sad that many parents train up their children in the way they should not go; plant in them the wrong sentiments, which subsequently bring forth characteristics of which they are ashamed, for which they reproach and reprove the children and against which the children, when grown, may be obliged to battle for the remainder of life.

Train up a child to sow wild oats, to go thoughtlessly, irreverently, selfishly, through the world, and when that child is old it will be difficult indeed to turn him out of the ruts of selfishness into the highway of decency, consideration and love for others.

We must admit that ours is a difficult day in which to properly raise children. Nevertheless, parents should show greater diligence, that they may so discharge their duty toward their children as to bless them for life with a proper foundation of character.

California

Through the years, faithful ...

Thank you very much for your continuous service in providing such a fine newspaper for the brethren. I am particularly thrilled this month [WN, Nov. 16] to see a photograph of brethren in Culloden, Scot-

land. It has been 16 years since I had seen them in Edinburgh, Scotland. I spent about six months there as a YOU exchange student.

I’ve been attending God’s Church since I was 7 years old and have been a baptized member for 14 years.

As time passes and many things change, it’s wonderful to know so many brethren worldwide are faithfully continuing to obey God and serve others. I look forward to seeing old friends via *The Worldwide News*. Until we meet again.

Gail Downie
Niagara Falls, New York

... and excited

I just had to write to let you know I

appreciate and thank you, Mr. Tkach, for so courageously making decisions and changes in the Church that Christ leads you to make. I really appreciate the approach of the Church in being honest with God’s word and truth. I also want to thank you for the much updated format of *The Plain Truth* as well as of the newly updated *World Tomorrow* program. I am sure they will be very effective.

Mr. Tkach, I am behind you and support you, the Church and Jesus Christ 100 percent. I have been a member since 1976. I was excited and knew this was the true Church of God then, and I am still excited and believe this is the true Church, even today. Thank you for being willing to let Christ lead you in the direction that is pleasing to him. I know you would not have it any other way.

Raymond Alexander
Albertville, Alabama

“Into All the World...”

Your involvement in the Work produces fruit. In this column subscribers to the Work’s publications and viewers of the *World Tomorrow* telecast express their views and opinions.

Operation survival

Your great magazine has been a spiritual support in my life for the past year and a half. Each month I read every word from cover to cover. Some articles I read with great gladness and some articles with Spirit-filled tears.

In the May-June issue an article struck home to me at the very beginning. The article, “More Than a Miracle,” by Jeff Zhorne, reminded me of my own experience over the past year and a half.

I was admitted to the hospital in January 1992 with a heart attack. I underwent surgery. Then began the road to recovery. I was out of a job during this time, but God provided a small income for my family to live on. I was finally able to go back to work in July 1992 for two months. In October 1992 I was admitted again to the hospital for another operation on the same artery. I was admitted again in November 1992 and again in January 1993. These trips were for 10 days each.

During these times, as I was trying to search for answers as to why me?, God would work in such a way I would know he was the one in control and that I was to keep my trust in him. He let me know he was keeping his promise never to leave me.

During this time of recovery, as the medical bills pile up and creditors ask when they will be paid, life just seems stuck at the bottom, but God still shows himself in many ways.

I have grown spiritually in this time and have seen the miracles that God has performed in my life and my family’s life. Even though we have lost our house and other material things, God has saved our two sons. They have surrendered their lives to him and kept us together as a family.

When times seem to be at their worst, God works another miracle for us through friends, our church or strangers. God will provide me with the health and resources to recover from this difficult time.

Your magazine has been one of many things God has sent my way to help my family survive these trials. Your booklets have helped me to grow and depend upon the Lord for all things. There is no way that I can thank you enough for your ministry of sharing Jesus with a lost world.

I want to send you the enclosed contributions along with my booklet order to thank you for your work. I know it is not much, and it does not even come close to paying the postage of the materials you have already sent me. But one day, as God leads me to restoration, I will be able to express my appreciation more. I pray God will continue to bless your ministry and keep it growing.

T.F.
North Carolina

Renewed zeal for Christ, deeper understanding

Continued from page 1

not mean we are already immortal. We aren't. But we are already possessors, as John plainly wrote, of eternal life: "This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:11-13).

The term *eternal life* is used two ways in the New Testament. It is used for the new life God has given us in his Son, and also for our future immortality. The point is, we must be possessors of eternal life now, in the sense of the new life we have in Jesus Christ, if we are to become possessors of eternal life, in the sense of immortality, at the resurrection.

This radically new life we have entered, begun by the new birth of conversion, comes only from God—and only by faith in Jesus. And only if we remain in this new life until we die, will "death ... be swallowed up in victory," and will we enter into immortality.

It is absolutely essential that we understand the Source of our hope, our strength, our righteousness and our ability to inherit immortality. Pure righteousness is *indispensable* to our salvation. But do we fully comprehend the Source of that righteousness? Do we think our salvation depends on our own righteousness, our own obedience?

If it did, no human could be saved! No person is sinless before God. Paul plainly declared: "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:22-23).

We depend *entirely* on God, on the saving work of Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Do you see why faith in Jesus Christ is so crucial? Do you see why it is so important, so indescribably vital, to *believe* Jesus, to *believe* the gospel? It is through faith in Jesus, it is *only* through faith in him, that we can be saved.

Paul could not have been more direct about that, when he declared: "Who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified" (Galatians 2:15-16).

This is why we must rekindle our zeal and enthusiasm for Jesus Christ. And this is why we must fan that spark into a blazing fire of active faith and love. Our relationship with God is a relationship of faith.

Paul wrote: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1-2).

Paul is telling us that our justification comes, that is, our sins are forgiven, through faith in Jesus. And because we have been justified through faith, *we have peace with God*.

What would you give for peace with God? To know that your sins are forgiven, that God loves you, that your life is secure in his hands, that he accepts you as his child? You can know that. You can know it because

you believe the gospel, you *believe in Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God and that he died for your sins and was raised from the dead*. That is the gospel, as Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5.

I repeat what you have already read above—John's words in 1 John 5:11-13: "This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

Yes, we can *know* that we have eternal life. We can *know* that we are at peace with God. How? By *believing* in the name of the Son of God. By *believing* that he is our Savior. By *believing* that he is our Lord and Master. And our *belief*—our *faith*—if it is real, will result in total devotion to him—we will love him, honor him, be faithful to him and do what he said. We will *clothe ourselves* with Jesus Christ. And we will do so humbly, esteeming others better than ourselves—because we know that our salvation does not come by our works, but by the grace of God through faith in Jesus.

Let's go back to Romans 5:1-2 and look at what else Paul is telling us: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." We have peace with God *through Jesus Christ*. Further, *through Jesus* we have gained access *by faith* into this *grace* in

which we now stand.

We stand in God's *grace*, not in our own righteousness. We stand in God's *grace through Jesus Christ*, and by *faith*, not by our own righteousness. And because of this, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God! Again, can we begin to see how *vital* it is that we renew our faith and zeal in Jesus Christ? Can we begin to see how much we need him? Can we begin to see how much we depend on him? Can we begin to see why we need to come to *him* to have eternal life?

Paul asked the Galatians: "I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" (Galatians 3:2-3).

Paul was challenging the Galatians because of the tendency to depend on—to have faith in—their own keeping of the law as the pathway to salvation. They did not receive the Holy Spirit, he reminded them, by observing the law. They received the Spirit by *believing what they heard*—that is, by believing the gospel—the good news that God sent his Son to die for our sins and be raised to life.

A few verses earlier, Paul emphasized the grace of God and the new life we are called to live by faith in Jesus: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for

nothing!" (Galatians 2:20-21).

As you know, we have called on the whole Church worldwide to pray, with fasting, during the month of January. (I again remind all those with health problems to get advice from a physician before fasting.)

Let's focus our prayers, during this period, on *repentance toward God* (no Christian can continue practicing sin and think he or she is standing in the grace of God; sin will drive God's people to their knees in repentance with faith that he will forgive them through the blood of Jesus Christ) and *faith toward Jesus Christ* (Acts 20:21).

Let's pray earnestly for *faith* in Jesus. Let's pray for deeper understanding and belief in the *gospel*, which Paul said he was not ashamed of, because it is "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

God is faithful and good. He will give us the spiritual strength and courage we need to do his will. He will see us through our trials and our tragedies, and he will lead us with his Spirit to the joy and peace that is found only through faith in Jesus Christ.

We are living in exciting times, brethren. We are *called out* of a sinful and selfish world that is in desperate need of the gospel of Jesus Christ, so that we may be *sent into* that same world with that glorious gospel! There is so much to do, and we *need* God's power and strong, vibrant faith in Jesus Christ. Let's go to our knees for the faith, the humility, the zeal, the courage and the power of his Spirit to do all that he has in store for us to do.

Auditorium is first choice for international competition

By Paul Monteith

Forty of the world's best pianists came to the Ambassador Auditorium for the first Ivo Pogorelich International Solo Piano Competition Dec. 2 to 16.

Mr. Pogorelich, a gifted and distinguished pianist, has performed in the Auditorium several times and received the Ambassador Award for Excellence from Foundation Chairman Joseph W. Tkach last January.

Mr. Pogorelich's familiarity with the Auditorium led him to choose it for the competition.

"Various cities in Europe, such as Munich and Berlin, had asked him to organize a piano competition for them," said evangelist David Hulme, vice president of the Ambassador Foundation. "But the Auditorium was the only place he wanted to hold it because he enjoys performing here and he knows the staff will take care of the event very well."

Along with his wife, Alice Kezeradze, Mr. Pogorelich created a competition that, unlike other piano competitions, has no upper age limit and gives contestants the freedom to present a repertoire that best suits them and tests their abilities.

Music schools around the world were notified of the competition. About 500 inquiries were received and of those some 300 sent tapes, compact disks, brochures or letters of recommendation. From these, judges selected 46 contestants. President Bill Clinton, Governor Pete Wilson, Pasadena Mayor Rick Cole and others sent letters supporting the competition.

Competitors Edith Chen of the

United States and Michael Kieran Harvey of Australia shared first place in the competition.

Sir Edward Heath, former British prime minister and a renowned musician, awarded Ms. Chen and Mr. Harvey grand prizes of \$75,000 each. The winners also received engagements from the San Sebastian Association of Musical Culture in Spain and the Braunschweig Festival in Germany.

Second prizes of \$5,000 each went to Russians Irina Plotnikova and Evgeny Zarafiants. Four other finalists were awarded \$2,000 each. The prize money was funded by several corporations and arts patrons from around the world. All eight finalists received recording contracts.

The next Ivo Pogorelich International Solo Piano Competition is planned for December 1996.

"A competition such as this, and the concert season in general, gives the Church another way of letting its light shine," said Mr. Hulme.

"It helps us make a connection with the community by providing something for their benefit and so brings people to the Auditorium who have little comprehension of the Church. It's there that the public meets our members who make up the Auditorium's staff." (More than 100 Church members helped staff the event.)

"They don't just tear a ticket in half," said Mr. Hulme. "They demonstrate the Christlike life by showing concern and by making the concerts a pleasant experience for patrons. It might mean making every effort to return a piece of lost property, assisting someone in a wheelchair or helping a motorist with car problems."



TOP PIANISTS—On hand for the solo piano competition are (from left) pianist Ivo Pogorelich; Edith Chen, U.S. first-place pianist; Michael Kieran Harvey, Australian first-place pianist; Mr. Pogorelich's wife, Alice Kezeradze; evangelist David Hulme; and Sir Edward Heath, former British prime minister. [Photo by G.A. Belluche Jr.]

Iron Sharpens Iron

Proverbs 27:17—As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.



Fasting can be a source of joy

By David Gray

One of the Bible's major themes is that God wants us to have peace of mind in our relationship with him. Matthew 11:28-30 shows us God's desire for his loyal and humble followers. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

God wants us to consider his way of life to be a light burden, not a heavy yoke. He doesn't want us to be filled with feelings of guilt and failure about our relationship with him.

One of the major keys to fellowship with God and having peace of mind is fasting.

Misconceptions about fasting

As soon as we start talking about fasting, many people feel guilty, because they haven't done it lately. Most people simply dislike the thought of going without food or water.

Fasting isn't supposed to be a horrible burden, though. Christ did not mention it as a requirement for salvation. It's not supposed to create guilt, even if we haven't done it frequently.

We are told to fast on Atonement, but other than that, the Bible does not give us any standards about how long, how often or when to fast.

The Bible does not tell us that a fast must be 24 hours long. It does not say that missing only one meal is unacceptable to God, or that missing three is the key to God's heart. Nor does it say that we must do it once a month or only on days off from work or school.

Some Christians think that they must spend cycles of an hour each in prayer, study and meditation during a fast.

Unfortunately, many of these arbitrary standards concerning fasting can become oppressive burdens and

obscure the reasons Christians ought to fast.

We should realize that it is possible to have a wrong perspective about fasting. We can think that we are righteous because we fast (see, for example, the parable about the Pharisee in Luke 18:9-14). This erroneous thought is a trap into which some have fallen.

God leaves it up to each of us to determine when, how often and how long to fast—depending on individual circumstances and health. And parents should make wise and compassionate decisions concerning their children when it comes to this subject.

Fasting should be motivated by love, not by command or obligation.

Another misconception about fasting is a little more subtle. Fasting is used in this world as a tool to force governments to make political changes.

Unfortunately, we Christians can unconsciously try to force God to do our will by fasting. We attempt to manipulate him, thinking, if I do this, you have to do that. That, of course, is not the correct approach toward God. And it's certainly not a humble, respectful or an appropriate form of worship.

Yet another misconception is that fasting is penance, something we punish ourselves with for the sins we've committed. God doesn't look at fasting as a form of self-inflicted punishment. The discomfort of fasting may remind us of the sufferings caused by sin, but fasting cannot pay the penalty for sin. Only the sacrifice of Christ can atone for our transgressions and shortcomings; nothing else is needed, and nothing else can be effective. It is Christ's life that saves us and makes us righteous.

Why we fast

First, we fast because we love God and want to spend extra time with our loving Father and our Brother, Jesus Christ. Fasting is an opportunity to be with God in prayer and study.

In essence, we are saying: "I want to have more time with you, my Maker and Sustainer. You are so great and I thank you for giving me spiritual life. Your greatness, charac-

ter and love are overwhelming. Thank you for allowing me to love you. I appreciate what you are doing for me and humanity. I need to talk with you and learn from you."

Fasting is a loving child's humble and respectful approach to our Father out of a sincere heart. It's a time to open the Bible. It's a period to get down on our knees (in attitude even if we can't in fact) and pour out our hearts to God in love and awe. It helps remember that without God we're nothing—we'd die if he didn't provide us with food, water and all the other necessities of life.

Fasting helps us remember that physical life is temporary. Real life—eternal life—comes only from God, so we need a close relationship with him.

In Matthew 9:14-15 Christ said his followers would fast after he returned to our Father. Their motivation for fasting would be love for the bridegroom, not ritual, obligation, guilt, commandment or requirement. It should be the same with us.

Fasting is a time of increased fellowship with God, and that shouldn't be a burden. It's a joy to be called into God's presence through Christ and to appear before God's loving mercy seat.

In Matthew 6:16-18 Christ describes the outward appearance of someone who is fasting properly. This person is groomed and washed. It isn't obvious to others that this individual is going without food or water. He's not doing it for them—it's simply a matter of the relationship between him and God. To this person, drawing close to God is a privilege, not an overwhelming burden.

To many of us, fasting has never been the source of joy that it can be, the joy of wanting to and being able to spend more time with God.

God wants us to rejoice while we draw closer to him. The joy of closer fellowship with God outweighs the minor discomforts. There can be excitement for us to miss a meal, or several, as we increase our conversation time with God about the most important matters in our lives—as we know that he is hearing our prayers about our innermost feel-

See Fasting, page 7

David Gray is pastor of the Montpelier, Vermont, and Plattsburgh, New York, churches.

Don't try to be someone else

In the "Peanuts" comic strip, one of the characters came to Charlie Brown and said: "Abraham Lincoln was a great man. Charlie Brown, would you like to have been Abraham Lincoln?"

"I don't think so," he replied. "I'm having a hard enough time being just plain ole Charlie Brown."

There is a lesson here for us in dealing with anxiety. Don't try to be someone else! God does not expect you to be anyone other than yourself. He expects you to make full use of your abilities and to live a life of integrity and faithfulness before him.

Read Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians 4:1-5: "So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."

"I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge

nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God."

As a friend said: "When I appear before God I will not be asked, 'Why were you not the apostle Paul, why were you not Mr. Tkach, why were you not this or that person?'"

God wants us to be ourselves and deal with the anxieties we face daily in our Christian lives.

The way we do that can be found in 1 Thessalonians 5:15-19. These principles can help us develop positive attitudes and overcome our anxieties.

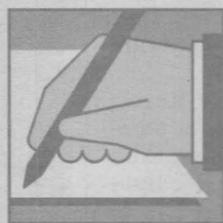
- Be joyful always (verse 16). Remember that even in the middle of turmoil, God is in control. The Christian theme is the kingdom of God and victory. A theology of joy is an antidote to doom and gloom.
- Pray continually (verse 17). Talk

to God about anxieties. He is always with you. Prayer maintains and develops your relationship with God.

- Give thanks (verse 18). A grateful heart is life-enhancing. Make a list of the blessings and gifts God has

God within you. Prayer, gratitude, reconciliation and enthusiasm for God's ways help us handle anxiety.

God has given us hope too. It is his good pleasure to give us the kingdom. Even though life may be uncertain



Just One More Thing

DEXTER FAULKNER

given you, starting with his Son, who died for your sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then give God thanks.

- Resist revenge (verse 15). Evil for evil is negative and destructive. Instead of thinking, I'll get even with those who mistreat me, do them good. A friendly attitude can lead to reconciliation. Don't hold grudges.
- Do not put out the Spirit's fire (verse 19). Rather, stir up the gift of

and trials unending, we have hope for the future. Even in the present he has sent us the help we need in his Son.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

U.S. Ministerial Ordinations

Sterling Barnette, a deacon in the Fort Washington, Maryland, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Ronald Beck, a deacon in the Butte, Montana, church, was ordained a local church elder July 31.

Larry Brown, a deacon in the Meridian, Mississippi, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Ted Budge of the Pasadena West A.M. church was ordained a local elder July 24.

Bill Cosbey, a deacon in the Santa Barbara, California, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Robert Dahms, a deacon in the Washington, D.C., North church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

C.W. Davis of the Pasadena West P.M. church was ordained a local elder Sept. 25.

Thomas Delamater of the Big Sandy A.M. church was ordained a local elder Aug. 21.

Jeb Egbert, a local elder in the Big Sandy A.M. church, was ordained a preaching elder Aug. 21.

David Evans of the Pasadena West A.M. church was ordained a local elder July 17.

Harry Garden, a deacon in the Wichita, Kansas, South church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Michael Germano, a local elder in the Big Sandy P.M. church, was ordained a preaching elder Aug. 21.

Jerry Harris, a deacon in the Dallas, Texas, North church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

William Johnson, a local elder in the Big Sandy P.M. church, was ordained a preaching elder Aug. 21.

Ross Jutsum of the Big Sandy P.M. church was ordained a local elder Aug. 21.

James Kisse, a preaching elder in the Big Sandy P.M. church, was ordained a pastor Aug. 21.

Eddie Kosten, a deacon in the Chicago, Illinois, North church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Rodney Kuntz, a deacon in the

Toledo, Ohio, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Jeffrey Ledy, a deacon in the Lansing, Michigan, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 18.

Ralph Levy, a local elder in the Big Sandy P.M. church, was ordained a preaching elder Aug. 21.

Floyd Lochner of the Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, church was ordained a local church elder July 24.

Gilbert Norman, a local elder in the Big Sandy P.M. church, was ordained a preaching elder Aug. 21.

George Pendry, pastor of the Wausau and Eagle River, Wisconsin, churches, was ordained a preaching elder July 17.

John Pirog, a deacon in the Chicago, Illinois, Northwest church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Dennis Robertson, a local elder in the Big Sandy A.M. church, was ordained a preaching elder Aug. 21.

Charles Russell, a deacon in the Washington, D.C., North church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Kenneth Sitzler, a deacon in the San Luis Obispo, California, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Greg Smith of the Big Sandy P.M. church was ordained a local elder Aug. 21.

Theodore Smith, a deacon in the Atlanta, Georgia, East church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Gary Weckerly, a deacon in the Columbus, Ohio, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Daniel Wetzel, a deacon in the Rome, Georgia, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Kenneth Wilson, a deacon in the Buford, Georgia, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Gary Wolfe, a deacon in the Arlington, Virginia, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Ronald Woodbridge, a deacon in the Wichita, Kansas, South church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

International Ministerial Ordinations

Ruben Apelo of the Santiago, Philippines, church was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Eric Bendall, a deacon in the Abbotsford, British Columbia, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Francis Bernard, a deacon in the Colmar, France, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Paul Brown, pastor of the London, England, South church, was ordained a preaching elder Sept. 6.

George Buchanan, a deacon in the Freeport, Bahamas, church, was ordained a local church elder Oct. 23.

Prudencio Campani, a deacon in the Borongan, Philippines, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Frank Clarke, a deacon in the Nassau, Bahamas, church, was ordained a local church elder Oct. 5.

Paul Farnon, a deacon in the Abbotsford, British Columbia, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Roland Gevers, a ministerial trainee in the Cape Town, South Africa, church, was ordained a local elder Aug. 5.

Eugenio Guzon, a local elder in the Manila and Cavite, Philippines, church, was ordained a preaching elder Sept. 30.

Jonathan Jewell, a ministerial trainee in the Nairobi, Kenya, church, was ordained a local elder Aug. 5.

Yvon Labelle, a deacon in the Montreal, Quebec, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Juanito Logrono, a deacon in the Quezon City, Philippines, North church, was ordained a local elder Sept. 30.

Keith McLean, a deacon in the Cairns, Australia, church, was ordained a local church elder Oct. 7.

Wayne McConnachie, a deacon in the Bundaberg, Australia, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Hans-Juergen Mittag, a deacon in the Munich, Germany, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 25.

Wilhelm Mandel, pastor of the Vienna and Salzburg, Austria, and Munich, Germany, churches, was ordained a preaching elder Nov. 15.

Michael Monaghan of the Manchester, England, church, was ordained a local church elder May 19, 1991.

Danny Nail, a deacon in the Melbourne, Australia, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Gilles Noel, a deacon in the Montreal, Quebec, church, was ordained a local church elder Sept. 4.

Rony Philbert, a ministerial trainee in the Grande-Terre, Guadeloupe, church, was ordained a local elder May 30.

Casely Schandorf, a deacon in the Accra, Ghana, church, was ordained a local church elder March 20.

Renato Vargas of the Makati, Philippines, church was ordained a local church elder Sept. 16.

Pastor General visits Washington, D.C.

Pastor General Joseph W. Tkach spoke to 1,009 brethren Dec. 4 from the Washington, D.C., North and Central; Arlington and Woodbridge, Virginia; and Fort Washington and Frederick, Maryland; churches.

Hosts for the visit were John and Chris Comino, Washington Central, Arlington, Woodbridge and Fort Washington; Lloyd and Malinda Garrett, Washington North; Randy and Roberta Hall, Frederick and Cumberland; and Doug and Martine Ruml, Washington Central and Arlington.

Open house motivates members

Continued from page 1

cases to talk with members about the Church, and some asked for baptismal counseling.

There was satisfaction, said Mr. Mears, in knowing that the gospel had been preached to guests. "Their response to that preaching now lies between them and God. We have planted and watered. God will give the increase in his time."

A greater cause than themselves

One result of open house has been its effect on members. Before the program began the pastors prepared their congregations with sermons about the commission of the Church, discipleship, personal evangelism and friendliness. There were sessions about understanding guests sensitivities and discerning their needs, and how to explain subjects such as repentance, conversion and baptism.

"This helped the members understand that they did not need to confuse or offend newcomers by talking about things like diet or dress," said Mr. Mears.

By the time of the first open house service, members felt more confident and were eager to help whomever came through the doors, Mr. Fahey said of his congregation.

Several members told Mr. Garrett that the open house had motivated them to study and pray more because they saw the impact their

lives could have on others.

"Members felt they were a part of something bigger than themselves," said Mr. Bradford. "Suddenly their personal problems weren't so big once they were caught up in a cause greater than themselves. Open house gave them a sense of purpose."

John Comino, who conducted open house services in June, visited several of the congregations involved. He said he was struck by the friendliness and the enthusiasm of the members. "It's given them a part in preaching the gospel and that has turned them on. They've undergone a spiritual refreshing, they were zealous and very supportive of their pastors."

Mr. Comino, pastor of the Washington Central, and Arlington and Woodbridge, Virginia, churches, was there to learn and share his own open house experiences with them.

Tom Lapacka, Evangelism Support Services manager in Pasadena, who helped the pastors coordinate open house services and provided printed materials, such as a welcome packet for guests, said: "It's not just the duty of headquarters to evangelize, we all have a duty to help fulfill Matthew 28:19-20. God has given us an awesome responsibility to transmit his message in word and deed in our communities. Those involved in open house services find it exhilarating."

Plans are under way to conduct more open house services in the United States and Canada in the spring.

Statistics at a Glance

	United States	International	Total
Members	67,727	30,310	98,037
Congregations	469	367	836
Full-time ministers	482	277	759
Local church elders	822	285	1,107

Prime minister of Swaziland

Continued from page 1

happy," the king continued, "but let us all pray to God that the choice is right even though you may not like it. Let us join hands in our prayers."

Prince Mbilini's appointment was

greeted with a deafening "Bayethe!" (shout of acclamation to royalty).

Prince Mbilini is one of the few remaining Swazis in the country with direct ancestral lineage to King Mswati II. Prince Mbilini is the son of Prince Hheleba, a son of King Mswati II.

SWAZILAND

Swaziland, formerly a British colony, is a landlocked country of about 17,000 square kilometers (6,700 square miles). It is sandwiched between South Africa on the west and Mozambique on the east. Its nearly one million inhabitants are mostly farmers, though sugar and forestry are also important industries there.

Swaziland is home to 22 members of the Worldwide Church of God, and a Bible study with an attendance of 45 is conducted in the capital, Mbabane, every month.



Announcements

BIRTHS, ENGAGEMENTS, WEDDINGS, ANNIVERSARIES AND OBITUARIES

Births

BECKER, James and Madeline (Raymakers) of Crystal Lake, Illinois, boy, Jerome Eduard, Nov. 30, 10:40 a.m., 9 pounds 1 ounce, now 2 boys.

BEEM, Jesse and Robin (Branam) of Hornick, Iowa, girl, Carlina Alise, Dec. 4, 7:07 p.m., 6 pounds 11 ounces, now 1 boy, 1 girl.

BRADSHAW, Greg and Janine (Ellis) of Auckland, New Zealand, boy, Michael Ellis, Sept. 30, 4:01 a.m., 6 pounds 8 ounces, first child.

BRASSELL, Michael and Elizabeth (Lindly) of Pasadena, boy, Alexander Michael, Aug. 15, 7:04 a.m., 7 pounds 3 ounces, first child.

BRISTEIN, David and Sherry (Mercante) of Washington, Pennsylvania, boy, Zachary David, Sept. 9, 9:15 a.m., 7 pounds 2 ounces, now 2 boys.

BUTLER, Nic and Kaye (Eastwood) of Melbourne, Australia, boy, Dylan George, Nov. 14, 7 pounds 6 ounces, now 3 boys, 1 girl.

CHISUM, Henry and Kathy (Donovan) of Huntsville, Texas, boy, Christopher Edgar, June 29, 4:20 p.m., 9 pounds 8 ounces, now 3 boys.

CRAIG, Nikita and Veronica (Rose) of Manhattan, New York, girl, Sarah Leanna, June 28, 6 a.m., 7 pounds 3 ounces, first child.

DANIELS, Dwight and Connie (Brown) of Red Deer, Alberta, twin boys, Matthew Gerald and Scott Eric, Oct. 15, 8:36 and 8:37 a.m., 7 pounds 3 ounces and 5 pounds 9 ounces, now 2 boys, 1 girl.

DEVRIES, Rod and Judith (Docker) of Winnipeg, Manitoba, boy, Aaron Miles, Sept. 15, 12:12 a.m., 6 pounds 12 ounces, now 3 boys.

DIMES, Melvin and Sandra (Horton) of Cleveland, Ohio, girl, Alyssa Emrys, July 8, 10:55 a.m., 7 pounds 7 ounces, first child.

DOWD, Jeffrey and Kerri (Miles) of Lancaster, California, boy, Conor Brian, Dec. 14, 5:29 p.m., 8 pounds, now 2 boys.

EWIN, Glenn and Kathryn (Harper) of Mapleton, Australia, girl, Chelsea Hannah, June 28, 1:57 p.m., 4.12 kilograms, now 2 girls.

FAJKIS, Kevin and Janet (Connell) of Manchester, England, girl, Elena Julia, Nov. 26, 9 pounds 1 ounce, now 1 girl, 1 boy.

FERNANDEZ, Jorge and Esther (Mares) of Pasadena, boy, Andres, Dec. 1, 12:08 a.m., 7 pounds 10 ounces, now 4 boys.

GRIGGS, David and Judy (Morris) of Schneider, Indiana, boy, Kenneth Raymond Nolan, Oct. 9, 12:47 a.m., 10 pounds 5 ounces, now 3 boys.

HERNANDEZ, Ismael and Martha (Rivera) of Miami, Florida, girl, Rebekah Sarai, Sept. 11, 11:26 a.m., 9 pounds 8 ounces, first child.

HERNANDEZ, Ronald and Zenaída (Duka) of Quezon City, Philippines, girl, Daphne Dale Duka, May 5, 6:49 a.m., 7 pounds 6½ ounces, first child.

HOLLADAY, David and Leanne (Bradford) of Oakland, California, boy, David William, May 31, 3:30 a.m., 8 pounds, first child.

JOHNSON, William and Dawn (Larson) of Nashville, Tennessee, boy, Jonathan William, June 30, 8:17 a.m., 10 pounds 4 ounces, now 2 boys.

KANIS, Gert and Corina (Schenk) of Vianen, Netherlands, boy, Robin Sebastiaan, Nov. 15, 3:30 a.m., 3.6 kilograms, now 2 boys.

KELLEY, Jackey and Sarah (Hall) of Paducah, Kentucky, boy, Justin Riley, Nov. 26, 9:25 a.m., 8 pounds 15 ounces, now 1 boy, 1 girl.

MERRITT, Keith and Sondra (Fire) of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, boy, Christopher Nathan, Aug. 24, 8 pounds 9 ounces, first child.

MITCHELL, Jeffrey and Sherry (Long) of Baltimore, Maryland, girl, Hannah Grace, Nov. 5, 5:33 p.m., 7 pounds 2 ounces, now 1 boy, 1 girl.

MORRIS, Gary and Barbara (Markland) of Houston, Texas, boy, Jason Daniel, Nov. 3, 12:27 p.m., 7 pounds 5 ounces, first child.

MURALLA, Sumakwel and Rosanna (Pena) of Quezon City, Philippines, boy, Joseph Angelo Israel, May 28, 7 pounds, first child.

MUIRHEAD, William and Raneé (Cruser) of Union, New Jersey, girl, Claire Anne, Nov. 29, 11:16 p.m., 8 pounds 6½ ounces, now 1 boy, 1 girl.

OCEGUERA, Robert and Tabetha (Kirchoffner) of Tucson, Arizona, girl, Brooklynn Marie, Oct. 18, 8 pounds, first child.

OCRAH, Charles and Esther (Konadu) of Kumasi, Ghana, boy, Brian Kwame MacOcrach, Sept. 11, 1:15 p.m., 2.2 kilograms, now 3 boys, 3 girls.

ONYEUKWU, Charles and Josephine (Okon) of Owerri, Nigeria, girl, Josephine Amaka, Nov. 11, 11 p.m., 3.5 kilograms, now 2 boys, 2 girls.

PEARCE, John Jr. and Tracy (Hogan) of Lafayette, Louisiana, girl, Brittany Evelyn, Aug. 31, 12:45 p.m., 7 pounds 15 ounces, now 2 girls.

PETTY, Brian and Leah (Hunter) of Houston, Texas, boy, Hunter Harrison, Dec. 4, 3:20 a.m., 8 pounds 8 ounces, now 1 boy, 1 girl.

ROTH, Gary and Paula (Perich) of Pasadena, boy, Michael Joseph, Oct. 11, 2:03 p.m., 7 pounds 5 ounces, first child.

SHIPMAN, Toby and Jean (Edelbach) of Big Sandy, girl, Cresciana Marie, Dec. 1, 8:21 p.m., 7 pounds 6 ounces, now 3 girls.

SMITH, John A. and Roxanna (Hoover) of Chico, California, boy, Jacob Jonathan, Nov. 10, 5:28 p.m., 7 pounds 9 ounces, now 4 boys 1 girl.

SUMMERS, Brian and Janine (Davies) of Pasadena, girl, Savannah Leigh, Sept. 3, 2:55 a.m., 8 pounds 14 ounces, first child.

THOMPSON, Glenn and Robin (Burns) of Blytheville, Arkansas, girl, Hannah Ruth, Aug. 4, 8:10 p.m., 6 pounds 13 ounces, first child.

VANBLAIRCOM, Bret and Ellen (Robinson) of Mobile, Alabama, girl, Kathleen Ann, Nov. 24, 1:18 a.m., 7 pounds 10½ ounces, now 1 boy, 1 girl.

VAN WORMER, Robert and Sandra (Strickland) of Moore, Oklahoma, boy, Scott Eric, Aug. 13, 1:26 p.m., 6 pounds 1 ounce, now 1 boy, 2 girls.

VONDERHAAR, John and Tonya (Cookman) of Chandler, Arizona, boy, James David, Nov. 16, 12:44 p.m., 6 pounds 2 ounces, first child.

WATSON, Stephen and Avril (Leathem) of Waringstown, Northern Ireland, boy, David James Dynes, Sept. 1, 6:55 p.m., 7 pounds 13 ounces, now 2 boys, 1 girl.

WELCH, Richard and Judy (Sorenson) of Spokane, Washington, girl, Amanda Chandra, Dec. 9, 12:36 a.m., 7 pounds, first child.

Engagements

Paul and Sharon Dillard of Kent, Washington, and Oliver and Hope Brecto of Eugene, Oregon, are delighted to announce the engagement of Cami Dillard to Mark Brecto. A September wedding is planned.

Cary and Betty Salter of Rockledge, Florida, are pleased to announce the

engagement of their daughter Kasey to Marcus Gene Yulfo, son of Roger and Sheila Yulfo of Howard Beach, New York. A September wedding is planned.

Mr. and Mrs. Martin Manuel of Charlotte, North Carolina, are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter Janet to Colin Steven Richards, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur S. Richards of Birmingham, England. A March 20 wedding is planned.

Christine Denny, daughter of Lesley Denny of Greenmount, Australia, and the late Dick Denny of Prescott, Arizona, and David Kenevan, son of Barry and Sue Kenevan of Bundaberg, Australia, are delighted to announce their engagement. An April wedding is planned.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Gates of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, are happy to announce the engagement of their daughter Caara to Mark Anstis, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Anstis. An April 17 wedding is planned.

Weddings



ROBERT & MACHELE OVERALL

Coreen Kay Ness and Beverly C. Ness of Valinda, California, are pleased to announce the marriage of their granddaughter and daughter Machele Jean Sander to Robert G. Overall, son of Bob and Helen Overall of Santa Barbara, California. They were united in marriage Feb. 13 by Dennis Wheatcroft, pastor of the Glendora, California, church. Annemarie Reno was matron of honor, and Clay Rushing was best man. The couple live in Buellton, California.



CHARLES & BRENDA HART

Brenda Eileen Hoke, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Hoke of Thomasville, Pennsylvania, and Charles Jay Hart, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hart of Pasadena, Maryland, were united in marriage April 25. The ceremony was performed by John Foster, associate pastor of the Indianapolis, Indiana, North church. Joann Duttera, sister of the bride, was matron of honor, and Fred Caribardi was best man. The couple live in Manassas, Virginia.



RICHARD & LEIGH ANN ROPER

Leigh Ann Cook, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mike Cook of Dothan, Alabama, and Richard Robert Roper, son of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Roper of New Orleans, Louisiana, were united in marriage July 11. The ceremony was performed by the groom's father, a local church elder in the New Orleans, Louisiana, church. Rachel Fuller was matron of honor, Bethany Welch was maid of honor and Jeff Hernandez was best man. The couple live in Mandeville, Louisiana.



THOMAS & MARISOL MOYCIK

Marisol Sanchez, daughter of Rosa M. Sanchez, and Thomas Michael Moycik, son of Thomas and Pauline Moycik, were united in marriage Sept. 26. Marilyn Gomez, sister of the bride, was maid of honor, and Mathew Moycik, brother of the groom, was best man. The ceremony was performed by Kenneth Peterson, pastor of the New Haven and Norwich, Connecticut, churches. The couple live in Stratford, Connecticut.



KIRK X & MARCY VANBLAIRCOM
Marcy Jane Litz, daughter of Bob

and Nancy Litz of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, and Kirk X VanBlaircom, son of Walter and Carole VanBlaircom of West St. Paul, Minnesota, were united in marriage Sept. 18. The ceremony was performed by Michael Hanisko, pastor of the St. Paul church. The bride was attended by Nancy Byboth, Tricia Hoffart and Amy Zutz. The groomsmen were Bret VanBlaircom, Shannon Bontrager and Mark Bielski. The couple live in Inver Grove Heights.



CHARLES & SUELYNN HARTNESS

Suelynn J. Yee, daughter of Nedra Carter and Mon Yee, and Charles Hartness Jr., son of Ferridia Yeager and Charles Hartness Sr., were united in marriage May 15 in Big Sandy. Rick Sherrod, chair of the History Department at Ambassador College, performed the ceremony. Maejean Hammar, sister of the bride, was matron of honor, and David Hopper, cousin of the groom, was best man. The couple live in Memphis, Tennessee.



JAMES & KAREN NEWBY

Karen Ruth Davies, daughter of Peter and Eileen Davies, and James Anthony Newby, son of Raymond and Verna Newby, were united in marriage Aug. 29. The ceremony was performed in Bricklet Wood, England, by Andrew Silcox, Dunstable and Watford, England, pastor. Roberta Mazurenko was maid of honor, and Troy Todd was best man. The couple live in Bricklet Wood.



HOWARD & MARIE HEYL

Marie Christine Meldrum, daughter of Peter and Darlene Meldrum of Algonac, Michigan, and Howard James Heyl, son of Ralph and Louise Heyl of Sterling Heights, Michigan, were united in marriage Sept. 18. The ceremony was performed by Dwight Dean, a local church elder in the Detroit, Michigan, East church. Elizabeth Meldrum was maid of honor, and Paul Pfannes was best man. The couple live in Madison Heights.



ROLAND & ADORA BARNACHEA

Adora G. Angel, daughter of Estella G. Angel, and Roland S. Barnachea, son of Mr. and Mrs. Raymundo Barnachea, were united in marriage Sept. 5. The ceremony was performed by Pedro Melendez Jr., pastor of the Manila, Philippines, church. Loida Angel-Alvarado and Aurora Parcasio were maids of honor, and Reynante Alvarado and Paulito Barnachea were best men. The couple live in La Union, Philippines.

Anniversaries



EZELL & BESSIE WILDER

Ezell and Bessie Wilder of Kenton, Tennessee, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary Dec. 21. They have two children, Elysia Wilder and Falola Potter; one son-in-law, Tracy Potter; and two grandchildren, Tracy Jr. and Tramaine.



ELGIE & BARBARA GIBSON

Elgie and Barbara Gibson of Bothell, Washington, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary Dec. 27. They have three children, Elgie Jr., Mechele and Lance; two daughters-in-law, Leah and Kari; one son-in-law, Steve Luker; and seven grandchildren, Chelsea, Zach, Connor, Chad, Kennedy, Ashleigh and Hannah.



EDWARD & LIZZIE BUTLER

Edward and Lizzie M. Butler of Union, New Jersey, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary Oct. 26. They have two children, Edward IV and Cristal Ann.



ALLEN & KAY BUSH

Allen and Kay Bush, deacon and deaconess in the Chicago, Illinois, Southwest church, celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary Dec. 25. They have one daughter, Gloria; two sons, Curtis and Gregg; and one son-in-law, Mike Little.

Russell and Dottie Skidmore of Cincinnati, Ohio, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary Dec. 26. They have three daughters, Vickie Buhl, Terry Collett and Beverly Hill; two sons-in-law, Jim Collett and Stephen Hill; and five grandchildren.



JAMES & LINDA BRANN

James and Linda Brann of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary Nov. 2. They have three sons, James Jr., Jeff and Justin; one daughter-in-law, Wendy; and two grandchildren, Jonathan and Jennifer.



VERN & DELFINA SCHAEFFER

Vern and Delfina Schaeffer of Roanoke, Virginia, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary Sept. 20. They have two daughters and sons-in-law, Joy Hofstad and her husband, Jeff, and Nancy Smith and her husband, Jerry; and four grandchildren.



MARVIN & GLORIA CURRY

Marvin and Gloria Curry of West Palm Beach, Florida, celebrated their 25th anniversary Dec. 8. They have two children, Ronald and Larise; and three grandchildren, Casey Wayne, Aaron De Wayne and Courtney Lynn.



MIKE & FRANCES COOK

Mike and Frances Cook of Dothan, Alabama, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary June 3. They have

two children, Leigh Ann Roper and Shaun; and one son-in-law, Richard Roper.



JOHN & LINDA ROPER

John and Linda Roper of Mandeville, Louisiana, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary June 4. They have one son, Richard Roper, and one daughter-in-law, Leigh Ann. Mr. Roper is a local church elder in the New Orleans, Louisiana, church.



KARL & GLENDA LEWISCH

Karl and Glenda Lewisch of Westlock, Alberta, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary Sept. 21. They have one son, Gregory.



RALPH & MARY DOWD

Ralph and Mary Dowd of Hamilton, Ohio, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary Sept. 8. They have five sons, Rick, Dave, Dan, Jeff and Ed; four daughters-in-law, Melinda, Charlotte, Roxanne and Kerri; and six grandchildren, Lauren, Emily, Joey, Christopher, Brenden and Conor.



JIM & DOLORES HEIM

Jim and Dolores Heim of Brighton, Illinois, celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary Dec. 21. They have two daughters, Sherry and LeAnn, and two sons-in-law, Randy De Vilbiss and Joel Nickelsen. Mr. and Mrs. Heim serve as deacon and deaconess in the Alton, Illinois, church.



HERMAN & HELEN ZOELICK

Herman and Helen Zoellick of Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary Dec. 4. They have 13 daughters, seven sons, six sons-in-law, seven daughters-in-law and 29 grandchildren.



DAVID & JANIECE HARPER

David and Janiece Harper of Nambour, Australia, celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary Sept. 21. They have six children, Mark, Kathryn Ewin, Anita Blumer, James, Andrea and Rowena; a daughter-in-law, Tanya; two sons-in-law, Glenn Ewin and Michael Blumer; and two granddaughters, Holly and Chelsea.



FRANK & SARAH ASHFIELD

Frank and Sarah Ashfield of Garner, North Carolina, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary Dec. 21. They have two daughters, Ruth Glass and Lesley Steward; and two sons-in-law, James Glass Jr. and David Steward.

Anniversaries Made of Gold



JOE & WINIFRED ALLENDER

Joe and Winifred Allender of Santa Fe, New Mexico, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Oct. 8. They have two sons, one daughter, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



GEORGE & GISELE MATTIOLI

George and Gisele Mattioli of Montreal, Quebec, celebrated their 50th

wedding anniversary July 31. They have three sons, Gino, Roger and Tony; two daughters, Diane and Linda; and nine grandchildren.

Ray and Virginia Ragland of Tipp City, Ohio, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Nov. 4. They have two sons, John and Tom; one daughter, Rosemary; and five grandchildren.



JOHN & MARTHA ANDERSON

John and Martha Anderson of Anderson, Indiana, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Sept. 8. They have three sons, John Jr., Jerry and Jeff; five daughters, Pam Prater, Linda Gradeless, Diana Edmonson, Jeannie Klepfer and Margret Ann (deceased); 18 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Obituaries

KARSTENDIEK, Robert E., 70, of Rayville, Louisiana, died Sept. 22 after a lengthy illness. He is survived

by his wife, Charlotte; a daughter, Pam; two sons, Mike and Rob; and two grandchildren, Malissa and Kayla.



BEN HOFER JR.

HOFER, Ben Jr., 43, of Kelowna, British Columbia, died Oct. 14. He is survived by his wife, Renee; a daughter, Nancy; and a son, Blake; his parents, Ben and Esther Hofer; five brothers, Jerry, Mike, Rick, Rob and Jonty; and four sisters, Esther, Maggie, Helen and Dalia.

GARDNER, Marvin A., 64, of Chicago, Illinois, died Oct. 16 after a year-long battle with cancer. He is survived by his mother, his wife, Leona, sons, daughters, a brother, a stepson, step-daughters and step-grandchildren. He was preceded in

death by his first wife, Patricia.

ROVNEY, Richard Harold, 66, of White Water, California, died Nov. 17 after a long battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Barbara, four sons and four daughters.

ABLAHANI, Lucille "Lee," 81, of Baltimore, Maryland, died Oct. 26 after a lengthy illness. She is survived by her daughter, Sharon Pederson, and two grandsons, Bruce and Carl.



SYLVIA DANIELS

DANIELS, Sylvia, 60, of Green Bay, Wisconsin, died of cancer Nov. 18. She is survived by her husband, Richard, four sons, three daughters, three daughters-in-law, three sons-in-law, 12 grandchildren, one sister and two brothers.

HILLS-BRIGHT, Jeni, 57, of Manchester, England, died Sept. 27 after

a short illness. She is survived by her husband, Cyril; three daughters, Susan, Lucy and Sarah; and one son, Richard.

SHILLONG, Don, 80, of Melbourne, Australia, died Dec. 9 after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, Katherine, and eight children, Maureen, Elizabeth, Jennifer, Noel, Edward, Mary Anne, Joan and Virginia, and many grandchildren.



ELFIE STEVENS

STEVENS, Elfie (Honbeck), 84, of Jefferson, Oregon, died Oct. 7. She is survived by a son, Raymond Honbeck, and his wife, Evelyn; three daughters and sons-in-law, Geraldine Dugger and her husband, Andy, Susan Lawson and her husband, Don, and Ora Starkey and her husband, Richard; 17 grandchildren; 45 great-grandchildren; one brother, Eldrie Tierce; and four sis-

ters, Ena Sanner, Ela Roberts, Alta Combs and Virginia Bidwell.

SMITH, Carolyn, 48, of Valley, Alabama, died Nov. 7 of cancer. She is survived by her mother and two brothers; her husband, Floyd Smith; three sons, Weyman, David and Paul; and one daughter, Rebecca.



CLIFFORD MOSS

MOSS, Clifford E., 69, of Syracuse, Nebraska, died Dec. 11 of emphysema. He is survived by his wife, Lorraine; five sons, Scott, Grant, John, Paul and Eric; and four grandsons.

CLEGG, Joyce, 65, of Tarooma, Australia, died Dec. 9 after a seven-month battle with cancer. She is survived by her husband, Edwin, and a daughter, Elizabeth Demaron.

Fasting shows that we hunger and thirst for God's righteousness

Continued from page 4

ings, gratitude and praises.

Another reason to fast is illustrated by Daniel 9:17-19. Daniel fasted and prayed, but his prayer was not for himself. Daniel reminds God that his petitions for help are not based on the people's righteousness, but on the fact that Jerusalem and its inhabitants were called by God's name. Daniel asks for God's help in order to preserve respect for God and his name. Daniel didn't want God to be known as a God who just punishes and then never forgives.

In other words, if God didn't help the people, then Daniel was afraid that no one would honor God for his limitless attributes. Their thoughts of God would be of a stern, punishing and unmerciful God.

We can fast for a similar reason. We want God's name and character to be known.

We want people to know about God's mercy, love, forgiveness, power, salvation and plan. We want everyone to know that God can be relied on. He can be trusted to help his people. He is faithful.

A third reason for fasting is that we are asking God to give us his righteousness, because we realize our own sinfulness. Fasting can be a spiritual S.O.S. to God: "Send help fast! I know I am a sinner and I need you."

As Christians, we see our own inadequacies and therefore desire that Christ produce more godly fruit within us. We want to confess particular sins and ask God to work in us to overcome those sins. Fasting doesn't show our righteousness—it shows that we hunger and thirst for God's righteousness more than for physical nourishment.

Daniel's confession, repentance and sorrow are obvious (Daniel 9:1-16). He sought God's forgiveness, favor and

help. He poured out his heart to God, admitting what was done wrong and what the people had become.

And just like Daniel, we ought to fast as a result of attitudes of repentance and humility. Fasting can be a time of personal mourning and grief, motivated by genuine sorrow over sin.

We have a continuing need for God's grace and his divine nature to make us new creatures. Fasting shows God our desire to rely on his love, and reminds us that we need to do God's will and grow in his right way of thinking and living.

In Isaiah 58:3-7 God reminds us that a major goal of fasting should be to change our behavior. From this passage we see that a fast doesn't gain us God's pardon or make us look good to God. It is an admission that we need God's help to change in the way we must.

Fasting can also be a humble appeal for God's interven-

tion in particular situations and trials. That includes sickness and health trials, accidents, prayers for others, and other situations we are deeply concerned about. By fasting, we can emphasize our need for God's love, attention, guidance, wisdom and kindness. We are also expressing our care for others.

But fasting is not a hunger strike to get our own way. No matter how long we fast, we cannot force God to answer our request in the way that we want. Rather, fasting should humble us and help us draw closer to God and be willing to accept whatever his answer is. We accept the fact that he wants the best for us and that he knows precisely what is best for us.

In Esther 3:13; 4:3, 15-17 we see fervent and diligent petitions being made to God because of an extreme emergency. Seeking God's urgent intervention was top priority. God's children have all

fasted at appropriate times. They didn't approach it as a ritual, obligation, commandment or outward show of their spirituality. It was simply a tool to draw close to God in order to bear up under trials.

Their fasts were sincere and wholehearted. Their emphasis was on prayer and understanding God's will. They requested that God's will be done in their own lives, in his Work and for others. They also respectfully asked God to change his mind or change their or other's circumstances.

Fasting properly gives us peace of mind in our relationship with God. We know that our fasts are motivated by love and a sincere desire to spend more time with our Father and Jesus Christ. We know that we need God's help in our spiritual development, and that all fellow Christians also need God's intervention for various trials.

Church prints black-and-white Philippine Plain Truth magazine

By Bernard Schnippert

Philippine Plain Truth subscribers received the first 16-page, black-and-white edition in November. Members there will continue to receive the 32-page, full-color edition.

This new edition will save the Philippine Office thousands of dollars a year. (The color edition costs about 13 cents a copy to print. The black-and-white edition is about 7.5 cents.)

The idea for a black-and-white edition came from Paul Kieffer, regional director.

Although the smaller, black-and-white edition is a product of the difficult global economic situation in which the Church does its work, there are advantages

beyond that of cost savings.

One advantage is editorial freedom. Because the Philippine edition has only 16 pages the Philippine Office is able to select the articles

most appropriate to the area.

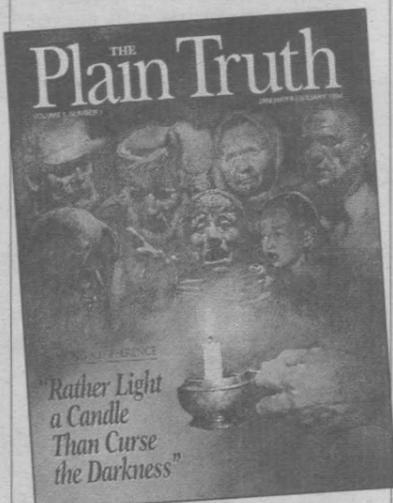
Because the Philippine edition is black and white and the circulation is only 20,000, Publishing Services in Pasadena is printing it in-house. The Church has not printed any version of *The Plain Truth* in-house for 20 years.

Although the first issue of the new Philippine Plain Truth had mailing labels attached, the Church's Postal Center will ink-jet the names and addresses of subscribers on the cover-wraps of future issues. Once they are ink-jetted, the magazines will be bulk-shipped to the Philippine Office, where they will be mailed.

The Church is saving an additional cent per copy in freight because the Philip-

pine Plain Truth is printed in Pasadena instead of in Saratoga, New York, where

several other international editions of *The Plain Truth* are printed.



Philippine Plain Truth

How to Use Wills and Trusts to Give to the Church

Many members and co-workers have requested information on how best to make a gift to the Worldwide Church of God, either during their lifetime or upon death, through wills, trusts or other means.

If you desire to receive information regarding such gifts, the Legal Department of the Church is available to aid you in this regard without cost or obligation. Please write to Ralph K. Helge, Worldwide Church of God, Box 111, Pasadena, Calif., 91129.

The Legal Department regrets that, because of the variance in laws of other countries, such legal information is only applicable to residents of the United States and Canada. However, in regard to other countries it will furnish whatever limited information it may have available.

Update

NEWS OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS

From seamstress to centenarian

ST. LOUIS, Missouri—The St. Louis North church honored **Sarah Ann Reece** Dec. 18, one day after her 100th birthday.

She was born Dec. 17, 1893, in Hillsboro, Alabama. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. **Randolph Vaughn**, had 21 children, Sarah being the 15th.

Her first job was at a fac-



Sarah Ann Reece

tory in Chicago, Illinois (where she lived for 27 years), working as a seamstress for \$5 to \$6 a week. Sarah married **Charley Jones** from Mississippi March 3, 1912, in Arkansas. They had three children.

Casaline, one of Sarah's daughters, heard **Herbert W. Armstrong** on the radio in 1948 and was baptized three years before Sarah. Sarah was baptized in a Tennessee river in 1959, then moved to St. Louis.

South African SEP

In lieu of a fully fledged Summer Educational Program (SEP) in South Africa this year, 71 teens from the province of Transvaal met for a camp-out at deacon **Braam Mathee's** farm outside Randfontein Dec. 5 to 10.

The girls were housed in the main farmhouse, while the boys stayed in another farmhouse, some 20 minutes walk across fields, where the whole group also had their meals.

Codirectors **John Bartholomew**, pastor of the Johannesburg Central church, and **John White**, pastor of the Pretoria church, felt that the camp was a great success in cooperation and fellowship. The atmosphere was intended to be much more relaxed than normal summer programs.

The campers took an excursion to the Sun City hotel and leisure resort in Bophuthatswana. Campers and staff also had morning tea in the parlor of the mayor of Randfontein, and cleaned up the grounds and cottages of a senior citizens home. Several residents exchanged addresses for future corre-

spondence between young and old. **John White**.

Geneva church marks 30th anniversary

GENEVA, Switzerland—Brethren from French-speaking Switzerland marked the 30th anniversary of the Geneva church July 10.

Colin Wilkins, regional pastor for the French region in Canada, and Geneva pastor in the 1960s, gave the anniversary service sermon, during which he outlined the beginnings of the Geneva church.

After services, a slide show featured Geneva church history. **Olivier Carion**, Geneva pastor, gave a gift to **Louis and Edwige Bleichner**, the first members baptized in Geneva in 1962.

Henry Sturcke, pastor of the Zurich and Basel, Switzerland, churches, along with a number of German Swiss members, also participated in the celebration.

Honors for quarter century of service

Pablo and Aurea Gonzalez received plaques and watches for 25 years of service to the Church Dec. 1. Mr. Gonzalez pastors the San Juan, Puerto Rico, church.

Reg Wright, media and mail processing manager in the Australian Office, and his wife, **Joan**, received a plaque and watches Sept. 4.

Writer honored with literary scholarship

WILMINGTON, North Carolina—**Dawn Evans Radford**, a 1992 summa cum laude graduate of the



THE WORLD TOMORROW
TELEVISION PROGRAM

New Station

Station/Location	Air Time	Channel
WZDX Huntsville, Alabama	Sunday 9:30 a.m.	54

Renewals

KPRC Houston, Texas	Sunday 9 a.m.	2
WKBT La Crosse-Eau Claire, Wisconsin	Sunday 9:30 a.m.	8
WKBW Buffalo, New York	Sunday 8:30 a.m.	17
WSVN Miami, Florida	Sunday 7:30 a.m.	7

University of North Carolina at Wilmington, won the \$3,000 Sherwood Anderson Literary scholarship.

Mrs. Radford won the national award for her short story *Uncle Jim*, based on her childhood in a north Florida fishing village.

Mrs. Radford was at first reluctant to pursue a formal university education. "I was afraid that the institution would take my voice away, and I knew I had something," she said. "I was afraid if I came to school and tried to write the way I wanted to, the way I felt that I had to write, I wouldn't do well."

Her professors, though, have encouraged her to write in her natural voice.

Member encourages task force to redeem and reclaim

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—**Jean Redlinger**, a member here, addressed a task force meeting in the office of **Donna Shalala**, secretary of Health and Human Services,

in Washington, D.C., Dec. 1.

Mrs. Redlinger was asked to address the group for her work on the Teen Defense Network and the Domestic Defense-Net.

The meeting on Youth Development and Violence Prevention was chaired by **Peter Edelman**, counselor to Ms. Shalala; **Philip Heymann**, deputy attorney general; and **Madeleine Kunin**, deputy secretary of the Department of Education.

According to Mrs. Redlinger: "One thing is certain, that we must keep working, piloting, redeeming and reclaiming what we seem to be losing as a country. We seem to be losing our God, our families and our foundational values."

Mrs. Redlinger has worked with her husband, **Ronald**, as independent investigators doing criminal and civil investigations for insurance companies and lawyers. Mrs. Redlinger is treasurer of the Minnesota Association of Private Investigators and Protective Agents. **Nancy Litz**.



FROM OUR

Brethren Worldwide

Injury leads to convalescent care program

By Wesley Webster

GEORGETOWN, Guyana—The church here has set up a program to assist **Garner James**, son of a member, who is in the hospi-

tal for an extended stay waiting for an operation to reset his leg, which he broke before the Feast.

Garner is the son of **Wilfred and Agnes James**, native American Indians of the Arawak tribe, who live in Wakapou Creek, which can only be reached by boat. After Garner broke his leg he received medical attention

from the limited hospital facility in Charity and then was sent to a hospital in Georgetown.

After the Feast we put into action a rotating schedule in which Church members visit Garner daily and provide a second meal for him each day. The hospital only provides one meal a day.

Our aim is to help Garner

as much as possible, providing companionship and food, as well as washing his clothes and providing for his other needs.

We purchased a hot and cold thermos, we provide a pillow and sheets and we wash his clothes for him. We also keep him supplied with reading material.

So far we have about 14 households serving in the program. This means that members serve about once every two weeks.

We are planning to continue the program even after Garner leaves the hospital, at which time we will serve other needy people who are

hospitalized, especially those who have come in from outlying areas and who have no relatives in Georgetown.

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Sa Khan Gyi, Myanmar—Feast of 1993



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