

A Trip from “Knowing About” to “Knowing” by Bill Lawrence

For most of my life my Christian walk has been characterized by accumulating biblical knowledge. I discussed and taught that knowledge, praying God would lead others to Himself and, through that biblical knowledge, make me more Christ-like. I can recall a Bible study we had in our home with unbelieving neighbors some thirty or thirty-five years ago. It was based on doctrine, i.e. what facts I'd been taught and had learned on my own — facts about God, Jesus, baptism, the end times, God's kingdom, etc. They were good facts to have but far short of what God wanted me to have, and pretty worthless in leading unbelievers into a relationship with and love for God and His Son Jesus. What a missed opportunity!

My Christianity consisted of storing, sorting, and repeating information about God; in other words “fact-based Christianity” characterized my walk. In my relationship with God I concentrated on gathering knowledge *about* the Lord rather than finding and experiencing intimacy and companionship *with* God. My focus was on accumulating knowledge. This approach led to a life with little or no growth in becoming Christ-like. I gained little or no freedom from my sin of impatience (even with myself). That impatience was expressed in a driving demand, an insistence on accomplishments, Christian and secular, in myself and others. I worked hard at being a good and productive Christian. As I write this I am saddened at my misapplied life, the harm I did and the wrong paths I influenced others to pursue.

God did not intend our spirituality to be reduced to mere mentality. Steve Meeks in his book *Relational Christianity* wisely said, “These promises are meant to be more than doctrines, they are meant to be living experience. We have settled for too little of God's kingdom in our lives.” Only when one is immersed in a relationship with God do the truths of God unfold, not just as doctrine but in our lives. I had settled for too little of God's kingdom

in my life. When I became a citizen of His glorious Kingdom, I could have started to live as an heir, immediately enjoying the blessings of that relationship. I wish I could have experienced that relationship as I did the joy, intimacy, confidence and just plain fun I had as the son of a wonderful earthly father, Joe Lawrence. In Romans 14:17 God declares that His Kingdom is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. All my knowledge — considerable as it was in comparison with most Christians of the world — did not *change* me. Only when I became immersed in a relationship with Jesus did I see any transformation.

Knowledge couldn't change me, only God could. I believe that is true for all of us. The Christian's reward will not come through more changes of structure, doctrine or method. The renewal of a church, of our Church of God, will come through Jesus being manifested in our midst. Our informational instruction shows us the Word of God but does not infuse us with the God of the Word.

My teaching, and my experience with most other teachers, has been almost exclusively informational rather than relational. It consisted of teachings about God's attributes, His character, His promises for everlasting life, etc., but little about how to find intimacy and communion with God through His Son and His Holy Spirit. We can't do it through just rational observation or accumulation of knowledge. Obviously these are good, but incomplete. We must worship and relate to Him in Spirit as well as truth in order to experience “life abundantly.”

When I realized my Christian experience had filled my mind but not stirred my heart, I decided to pursue God. Just as I had run to my earthly father simply for the pleasure of it I am choosing to run to Him. John Wesley said, “Orthodoxy, or right opinion, is at best, a very slender part of religion. Though right relationships cannot subsist without right opinions, yet right opinions may subsist without right relationship.” An intellectual

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understanding of God is neither unnecessary nor unimportant, it is just inadequate. My spirituality and, I believe, the Church of God's, have been limited to a reasoning mind. We have reduced our faith to a matter of thinking, verbalizing and rationalizing.

Steve Meeks says: "Education cannot save us — only Jesus can. We acknowledge that only a personal relationship with Jesus can save us yet we turn right around after we are saved and assume the way to live is by acquiring biblical truth and applying it to our lives. We realize the relational aspect of entering our salvation, but we have missed the relational aspect of living out our salvation . . . Salvation is relational in nature, not informational."

It is not what we believe but whom we believe. Acts 19:15 tells us that even the demons know who Jesus is. However Jesus is not their brother, friend and Lord — these are all relational terms.

I feel frustrated looking back on the years I focused on information without developing a relationship with Jesus — or, more exactly, allowing Jesus to develop that relationship with me through the Holy Spirit. I wasted years pursuing only information and the application of biblical data — not pursuing God and Jesus. Jesus said in John 17:3, "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." I held the false assumption that storing information about God in my mind (and being able to articulate and debate it) meant possessing God in my heart. Thinking, studying, and talking about God is not the same as relating to Him. I had substituted doctrine for nearness, and information for intimacy. Thinking I became wise, I became a fool.

Jesus is our way into God's Kingdom, but He is more than that. He is our way into life, peace and joy. In Him we "live and breathe and have our being." In John 16:33 Jesus says, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Note again: "In me you may have peace." Often I lacked peace because I was working for it instead of finding it in Jesus. Now that I am no longer satisfied with just doctrine and form (but am emphasizing life, Himself, Jesus as the Truth and the Way, the Prince of Peace,) I'm finding more peace. Having the life of Jesus formed in me is probably what true Christianity is all about. For too long I'd accepted a hard heart and empty spirit as normal. No more! Now I'm crying out for a heart of flesh, spirit-filled with the fullness of God!

Jesus made many precious promises to those who would follow Him: "Rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28); "peace" (John 16:33); "life abundantly" (John 10:10); "power from on high" (Luke 24:49); "everything we need

for life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3); "wisdom" (Luke 21:15) . . . I could go on and on. We have doctrines to describe all these things but we have little or no *experience* of them. For most believers these are untested concepts. Psalm 34:8 tells us "taste and see that the Lord is good." 1 Peter 2:3 tells us to long for more "now that you have tasted that the Lord is good." It does not say "now that you *think* the Lord is good."

In John 8:32, Jesus said, "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free." I believe that NOW is the time for the Church of God to be set free for a greater oneness with Jesus and each other, and a greater witness to the world. Our neighbors need to see Christ living in us; they need to be loved by Him through us. We need His life to flow into us as a river of living water, and beyond us to others. I love the truth as our Church of God knows it. Jesus tells me in John 14:6, "I am the truth." I've loved a truth of words, concepts and facts without loving *who* truth is — Jesus. I'm already finding freedom and peace in Jesus as I've changed my focus to seeking Him rather than just facts about Him. In focusing on Jesus I've become more receptive to trusting, obeying and loving Him. It is a relational experience which my employees and family say has changed me. Praise God! Having facts about Jesus was not having Him. What a difference I'm finding. I've ceased to be "always learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 3:1). "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Cor. 8:1). Many times I read that and applied it to others, but God inspired Paul to write that tidbit to me. I'm inspired to keep searching for Him by Jeremiah 29:13: "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." We have not been called to talk about Christianity. We have rather been called to live Christianity, and we must live it if we are to survive as a group.

I end with a quote from Steve Meeks:

Many times the traditional church produces data-based Christians who are good at sorting, retrieving, analyzing, and organizing the biblical information. The result is believers who are pumped full of biblical truth but do not experience that which they believe. Many such believers have made their goal reading the Book, or understanding the Book, or teaching the Book. They think that is Christianity. The Book is meant to lead you into the EXPERIENCE of the God who wrote the Book. □

Bill Lawrence is Chairman of the Board of Directors Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference.

Spiritual Focus

In keeping with this year's spiritual focus that was encouraged at our recent General Conference, we would like to encourage Church of God pastors and members to commit themselves to seek God and Jesus, to know them in a more personal way and to love them with all of our hearts.

It has been brought to our attention that a Church of God member, who wishes to remain anonymous, believes that God is giving specific direction to the people of the Church of God in how to unite as a body and approach the Lord. Below is a summary of that message and some direction should your congregation choose to participate. We encourage you to join this week of spiritual focus, but understand if you choose not to. Some have wondered why the person who proposed this wanted to remain anonymous, and that is a reasonable question. It is our fear that sometimes our membership looks at the name of the person who proposes something, and either readily accepts or rejects it based on the personality of the individual. Therefore, we feel that in this situation there was wisdom in this person remaining anonymous. You may or may not agree and we certainly understand that.

The suggested outline is as follows: A day of prayer is to be set aside by all the congregations in the Church of God. The pastors of the churches are to be present as their members gather with the sole purpose of singing and praying. The mechanics of this are left up to the individual congregations. During this time there should be prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession, and need.

The next day is to be a day of waiting. The pastor, church leaders, and College/Conference staff are not to work on this day. Any members of the congregation who wish to involve themselves in this can "fast" from work that day also.

The following day is to be a day of rejoicing. Each congregation can work out how this will be handled.

Prior to this three-day period, pastors, church leaders, College/Conference staff and those closely associated with the College and Conference serving on boards, etc. will set aside a day of prayer in preparation. This is to occur so that this whole time of prayer will be accomplished in no more than ten days, from the leadership day of prayer to the day of rejoicing.

After the day of rejoicing, individuals and congregations can write or call the General Conference to share what the Lord has said or done in their group. These messages will then be shared with the Church of God as a whole. We feel it best to write or call the General Conference due to their ability to receive the information. We'll be excited to hear and share how God is moving in each congregation.

We would like to see this initiated this coming January, following this schedule:

- January 6 – Leadership day of prayer in preparation.
- January 10 – Day of prayer for all congregations.
- January 11 – Day of waiting for all congregations.
- January 12 – Day of rejoicing for all congregations.

Should you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact one of the Ministerial Association Leadership Team. We look forward to seeing the Lord blessing in and through the Church of God. — Michael Hoffman, Russ Magaw, and David Riley

Action on Morgan Bequest

In August, the Church of God General Conference received a bequest of \$963,000 from the estate of Troy and Geneva Morgan who were long-time Church of God members from Arizona. The Board of Directors received over 20 written suggestions from the membership for the use of this money. Many of the responses suggested that the fund first be used to pay off relocation debts. Therefore, the Board adopted a motion at their recent meeting to pay the remaining relocation loans of \$476,950. The balance of the estate has been invested until further consideration can be given to other suggestions for the use of these funds. The Board will meet in February and in May to continue their discussions.

Church Builders' Appeal #77

The Board of Directors has designated the Church of the Open Bible in Farmington, MO as the recipient of Church Builders' Appeal #77. The congregation has acquired land and two buildings for \$90,000 which will meet their immediate needs and provide room for growth. The church advertises on the American Family Radio station with 30-second advertisements every hour. They also advertise through *TV Facts* and local newspapers. The members and attendees invite their friends. The membership of the Church of God is invited to participate in this appeal to encourage the Church of the Open Bible.

Annual Directory

This issue of the *PROGRESS JOURNAL* contains the Church of God directory for 1996-1997.

We appreciate the assistance of church secretaries in producing an accurate listing of churches, conferences, pastors, and church leaders. Additions or corrections should be sent to: Directory, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.

Atlanta Bible College Campus Chaplain

Pastor Scott Deane served as chaplain on the Atlanta Bible College campus in early November. He serves as pastor of the Pleasant Hill Church of God in Ohio. Scott led a session each morning which helped to strengthen the students spiritually. He also spoke in chapel and participated in classes.

Atlanta Bible College Scholarships and Grants

Many individuals, churches, and conferences continue to provide financial support for students attending Atlanta Bible College. Most students pay less than 1/3 of the actual cost of tuition. We are grateful for this generous support. No deserving serious student has been asked to leave the Bible College because of finances. For information on setting up a scholarship fund or making a one-time gift to help students, contact David Krogh at 1-800-347-4261.

Goal for Giving Update

Thanks to all who have participated in our annual Atlanta Bible College Booster Campaign. Total contributions received for the College/Conference in the first four months of this fiscal year were \$106,272. This is approximately \$18,000 less than the Goal for Giving for this period. We invite each member of the Church of God to consider including Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference in their giving plans. □

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BAPTISMS

ARKANSAS

McGintytown — Jim Smith (8/25/96), Rea Cain and Cody Gibson by Pastor Tom New.

GEORGIA

Morrow — Juan and Carla Baixeras (9/25/96) by Anthony Buzzard.

ILLINOIS

Naperville — Jim and Audrey Philpot (3/24/96) by Elder Gary Smith and Pastor Robert Alcumbrack.

Rockford — Jim Johnson (10/13/96) by Pastor David Cheatwood.

INDIA

Bangalore — Six individuals at St. Thomas Town Church.

INDIANA

North Salem — Allen Charles Osborn, Emily Ann Osborn and Kelly Cowger Jr. (8/23/96) by Pastor Stanley Lawrence.

South Bend — Jennifer Dugger (8/11/96) and Paul Goodyke (9/22/96) by Pastor John Railton.

LOUISIANA

Happy Woods — Chassidy Chatellier (9/8/96) and John Anthon (10/13/96) by Pastor Jeffrey Fletcher.

MICHIGAN

Blanchard — Jennifer Finch (9/8/96) by Timothy Eldred.

MISSOURI

Morse Mill — Ann M. Gerullis (9/1/96) by Pastor Wade Tierney.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Bethel — Jeff Henderson and Tony Shirley (8/4/96) by Pastor Alan Cain.

VIRGINIA

Fort Valley — Ed and Mitzi Tobin (9/22/96) by Pastor Jon T. Welch.

MARRIAGES

MISSOURI

Fredericktown — Kristen Skorseth and Jason Cooper (10/5/96) by Pastor Jon Cheatwood.

ILLINOIS

Macomb — Jeff and Becky Derry (7/6/96); Jeff and Jill Allison (9/14/96) by Michael Brown; Scott and Angela Hance (6/22/96) by Michael Hoffman.

INDIANA

South Bend — Amy Railton and Jason Brown (8/17/96) by both fathers, Pastor John Railton and Pastor Michael Brown.

LOUISIANA

Happy Woods — C. Samuel Bottolfs and Anna Dagro (10/12/96) by Pastor Jeff Fletcher.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Bethel — Terry Burkett and Libby Thomason (9/28/96) by Richard Smith.

DEATHS

CANADA

Fonthill — Charles O. Fletcher, 95, last surviving member of the Bible Training Class of 1925 (pictured in *Historical Waymarks of the Church of God*) (10/1/96) by Pastor Stephen Bolhous.

ILLINOIS

Eldorado — Grace Wiggins, 88, wife of deceased Pastor Walter Wiggins. Grace was a house mother for Oregon Bible College in the 1950s. (10/14/96) by Pastor Leon Driskill.

INDIANA

South Bend — Irene Jamrozy (8/4/96) by Pastor John Railton.

MICHIGAN

Blanchard — Agnes Lint, 85 (9/11/96) by Pastor Richard Eldred.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Bethel — Randolph Smith (8/8/96) by Pastor Alan Cain and Richard Smith;

Bonnie Vaughn (8/30/96) by Pastors Alan Cain and Wally Winner.

TEXAS

Harlingen — Nina Jean Hayes (8/31/96)

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Al Coplan, Dorothy Coplan, Joe Davis, Phyllis Davis, Bonnie Fisher, Judy Hays, Wally Heflin, Janet Laurent, Marlin Lewis, Gladys Lucas, Twila Schrodt, Garry Weaver, Linda Weaver, Loretta Whaley, Macomb, IL; Paul Goodkey, Timberland, IN; Daniel Cain, Karen Cain, Margeaux Onderdonk, Andrew Weaver, Bedford, OH.

PASTORS NEEDED

Farmington, Missouri

The new Church of the Open Bible is seeking church leaders, teachers, members, and a PASTOR.

If you want more information, or are available to help, call Loyd and Donna Cooper (573) 756-4715, Jason Cooper (573) 546-7884, or Harold and Diane Thomas (573) 783-2938.

Fredericktown, Missouri

The Fredericktown Church of God is seeking a pastor. For further information call Florene Thal, (573) 783-3437, or Marvin H. Cooper, (573) 783-3291, or write Florene Thal, RR 2, Box 139, Fredericktown, MO 63645.

Cool Spring, Virginia

Cool Spring Church is looking for a pastor. Contact Robert Coverstone at 13172 Fort Valley Road, Fort Valley, VA 22652, Ph (540) 933-6271 after 8:00 p.m.

Herndon, Virginia

Fair Oaks Community Church would like to secure the services of a pastor. Please contact Carolyn Kohn for more information: 7711 Ivymount Terrace, Potomac, MD 20854.

1996-1997
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- Kirkpatrick, Sydney (Deirdre), 3900 101st Av N, Brooklyn Park, MN 55443 Ph Off 612-493-4158 Res 493-3102 E-mail knph6a@prodigy.com
- Kirkpatrick, Vivian E II (Paula), PO Bx 636, 310 2nd St E, Hector, MN 55342-0636 Ph Off 320-848-6458 Res 848-2387 Fax 848-6572 E-mail vekii@aol.com
- Krogh, David (Lynne), 1992 Tiffany Ln, Jonesboro, GA 30236 Ph Off 404-362-0052 Res 770-603-7506 Fax 404-362-9307 E-mail 102711.2275@compuserve.com
- Lawrence, Stanley L (Hilda), 13263 4th Rd, Plymouth, IN 46563-9735 Ph 219-936-4855
- Macy, Emory, 738 E Main, Weiser, ID 83672-2336 Ph 208-549-3104
- Magaw, Russell (Joyce), 513 Maple St, Bx 496, Eden Valley, MN 55329-0496 Ph Off/Res 320-453-6375, 800-484-9495-2867 Fax 453-6375 E-mail rmedenv@aol.com
- Marsh, J Arlen (Mary), 16609 Chatfield Av, Cleveland, OH 44111-4226 Ph 216-251-6611
- Martin, Joe (Rebekah), 6790 Wendy Jean Dr, Morrow, GA 30260-7000 Ph Off 404-362-0052 Res 770-961-6746 Fax 404-362-9307 E-mail 102503.237@compuserve.com
- Mattison, James (Martha), 250 Stoneybrook Rd, Pelzer, SC 29669 Ph 864-947-6692
- Mattison, Michael J, 666 Gloria Dr, Baton Rouge, LA 70819-3431 Ph Off 504-273-4306 Res 272-7658
- Mayberry, Larry W (Karen), 3351 Fuller SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1444 Ph Off 616-452-3119 Res 241-1313 Fax 452-3110 E-mail lwmpenn@cwnet.com
- McMinn, Harry Lee, Jr, 1017 Oakland Av, Cayce, SC 29033 Ph Off 803-822-5200 Res 791-8817 E-mail lmcjr@aol.com
- Millard, Michele (Scott), 14221 Seward St, Omaha, NE 68154 Ph Off 402-280-2461 Res 492-9082 Fax 280-4773 E-mail mmillard@creighton.edu
- Moore, Jeff (Terri), Rt 1, Bx 184A, Bertha, MN 56437 Ph 218-924-2535
- Moore, Linford W, 3499 W 4th St, Waterloo, IA 50701 Ph 319-233-6918
- Moore, Paul, 338 State School Rd, Gatesville, TX 76528 Ph 817-865-5067
- New, Thomas M (Debbie), 29 Sheila Dr, Greenbrier, AR 72058 Ph Off 501-679-3008 Res 679-3037
- Nunemaker, Donald G, Jr (Sherry), 14375 Nutmeg Rd, Plymouth, IN 46563 Ph Res 219-892-6683
- Partlowe, Hollis (Hilda), 605 Webster, Oregon, IL 61061-1933 Ph 815-732-3723
- Payne, Harry S (Mabel), 123 E Parker, Waterloo, IA 50703 Ph 319-232-3545
- Poland, Earl F (Deanna), 102 Oak St, West Lebanon, IN 47991 Ph 317-893-8257
- Railton, John A (Alice), (mailing address) 16623 St Rd 23, South Bend, IN 46635-1463 (home address: 52233 Cheryl Dr, Granger, IN 46530) Ph Off 219-277-8577 Res 277-3991 E-mail tbcjohn@juno.com
- Ramsey, Dale (Connie), 550 Wilkerson Rd, Rex, GA 30273 Ph 770-474-5539
- Riley, David (Anne), 2107 Tiffany Ln, Jonesboro, GA 30236 Ph 770-603-1886 Fax 404-362-9307 E-mail drileycbc@aol.com
- Ritch, James D (Rebecca), 311 Walt Arney Rd, Lenoir, NC 28645 Ph 704-728-2307
- Ross, Kent H (Cheryl), 6875 Fielder Way, Rex, GA 30273-2416 Ph Off 404-362-0052 Res 770-960-9001 E-mail 102503.232@compuserve.com
- Ross, Scott (Gayle), 7606 Jaynes St, Omaha, NE 68134 Ph Off 402-571-2537 Res 571-7221 E-mail ruhnross@aol.com
- Ross, Seth, 2950 Moorefield Rd, Springfield, OH 45502 Ph 513-342-1485 E-mail soross@juno.com
- Schmitt, Thomas R (Sheila), RR 3, Bx 88, Mt Sterling, IL 62353 Ph 217-322-6161 E-mail 203-7583@mcimail.com
- Scott, Connie S, 6044 W Broadway #31, New Hope, MN 55428 Ph Off 612-493-4158 Res 531-1736
- Smead, Cecil A, 303 W Plum, Raymore, MO 64083 Ph 816-331-3949
- Smith, E Richard (Jeanne), 183 Garrett Rd, Pelzer, SC 29669-9046 Ph 864-947-1600
- Smith, Jeff (Jill), 1252 S Jay St, Kokomo, IN 46902-1751 Ph Off 317-452-5766 Res 452-7202 E-mail jnjjeff@aol.com
- Smith, Richard K (Dorothy), 7100 S Kessler-Frederick Rd, W Milton, OH 45383 Ph 937-698-6393
- Sorenson, R Warren (Irene), 3006 E Hilldale Av, Simi Valley, CA 93063 Ph Off 805-522-5955 Res 527-8441
- Spickler, Tim (Shelly), 2215 Barton Blvd, Rockford, IL 61103 Ph Off 815-964-5683 Res 969-7274 E-mail timfbf@aol.com
- Swartz, Dale H (Cheryl), 6375 S Kessler-Frederick Rd, Tipp City, OH 45371-9654 Ph 937-698-6327 Fax 698-4906 E-mail dswartz777@aol.com
- Swartz, David A (Karen), 5823 Lear Nagle Rd, N Ridgeville, OH 44039-2123 Ph Off 800-321-3040 ext 1914 Res 216-327-6816 E-mail daveswartz@aol.com
- Taylor, Steven L (Jill), 4325 Hillside Dr, Lafayette, IN 47905 Ph Off 317-448-2723 Res 474-6763 E-mail s3j@taylor.mdn.com
- Tschaenn, Mark (Terri), 4005 Willow Dale Rd, Springfield, OH 45502 Ph Off 937-964-1441 Res 964-1972 E-mail markt@holli.com
- Turner, Gary R (Glenda), 302 E Cunningham St, Winnebago, IL 61088 Ph Off 815-964-5683 Res 335-2941 E-mail grtbf@aol.com
- Turner, Jason E (Marcee), 925 Portland Av, Beloit, WI 53511 Ph 608-363-8756
- Vadnais, Mary L (Raymond), Rt 1, Bx 41A, Champion, MI 49814-9717 Ph 906-339-2328
- Wagganer, Craig (Shirley), 2773 N DeWeese Rd, Troy, OH 45373 Ph Off 937-335-2914 Res 335-0709
- Ward, Donald R (Joyce), 500 S Aspen, Raymore, MO 64083 Ph Off 816-761-9551 Res 331-0014 Fax 761-8472
- Welch, Jon T, 845 Ramsey Rd, Fort Valley, VA 22652-9003 Ph Off 540-933-6704 Res 933-6296 E-mail jtwwfcog@shentel.net
- Westlund, Chaplain O A, Ret, 2611 N Busby Rd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277 Ph 206-675-3463
- Winner, Wally (Peggy), 405 Guthrie Grove Church Rd, Pelzer, SC 29669-9097 Ph Off 864-947-9717 Res 947-1307 E-mail wtwj@aol.com
- Wolfe, Vernis D (Iris), 30440 Tamjulon Rd, Albany, LA 70711 Ph 504-567-1837
- Young, Richard L (Kathy Jo), Rt 3, Bx 37, Mt Sterling, IL 62353 Ph Off 217-773-4441 Ext 350 Res 773-2253 E-mail ryoung@adams.net
- Zimbelman, Stephen (Patricia), 3029 17th St, Rockford, IL 61109 Ph Off 815-399-1541 Res 229-6028

REPORT OF BAPTISMS:

2,000 by the Year 2000

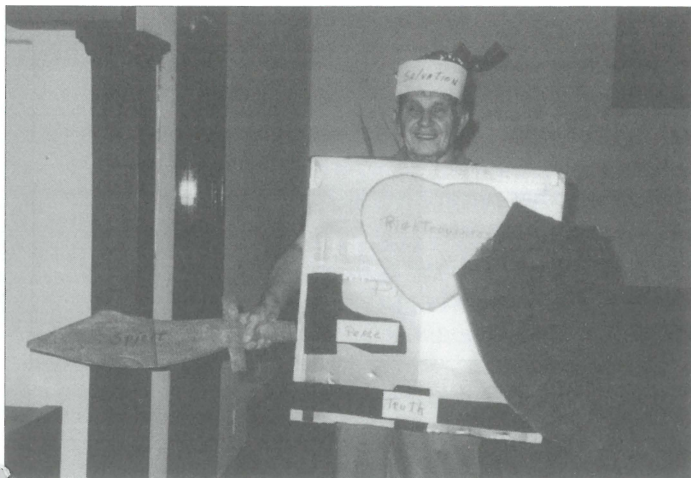
| | | |
|---|-----------|----------------|
| April 1, 1996 - October 31, 1996* | 69 | Total 1,089 |
| April 1, 1995 - March 31, 1996 | 159 | |
| April 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995 | 162 | |
| April 1, 1993 - March 31, 1994 | 142 | |
| April 1, 1992 - March 31, 1993 | 164 | |
| April 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992 | 170 | |
| June 1, 1990 - March 31, 1991 January 1 - May 31, 1990 | 168 55 | |

Jan. 1,
2000

* More complete figures are being collected from non-reporting churches.

Calendar of Events

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| April 6-11 | Christian Workers' Seminar, Holiday Inn, Pigeon Forge, TN |
| April 25-28 | Theological Conference, Atlanta Bible College |
| April 28-May 2 | Annual Ministers' Conference, Atlanta Bible College |
| May 2-4 | Worship Seminar, Atlanta Bible College |
| July 13-19 | Youth Congress, Taylor University, Upland, IN |
| August 4-8 | 77th Annual Summer Conference, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN |
| November 7, 8 | Midwest Men's Retreat, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |



Every fourth Sunday is Deacon Sunday at the Golden Rule Church of God. Don Waddell recently spoke from Ephesians 6:10-20 on "The Full Armor of God."

PRAYER AND PRAISE

December, 1996

- 1 Pray for Seth Ross in his internship at North Hills, OH church.
- 2 **Pray for Francis and Iris Burnett and the Oaklawn Church of God at Koszta, Iowa.**
- 3 Praise God for the dedicated service of College and Conference staff.
- 4 **Pray for the Badillos and the work in Mexico.**
- 5 Pray for Jason and Marcee Turner and the congregation at Beloit, Wisconsin.
- 6 **Pray for contacts around the world produced by literature.**
- 7 Pray for David Riley as he leads the Cornerstone Bible Church of God, McDonough, GA.
- 8 **Praise God for your pastor as he shares God's Word today.**
- 9 Pray for Jon and Sarah Cheatwood and the St. Charles, MO church.
- 10 **Pray for those making preparations for the 1997 Christian Workers' Seminar.**
- 11 Praise God for the ministries of your local church.
- 12 **Pray that God would lead you in the way of righteousness.**
- 13 Pray for those who are leading the work in the Philippine Islands.
- 14 **Praise God for the changing seasons and the beauty of creation.**
- 15 Pray for Dick and Carol Eldred and the Blanchard, Michigan congregation.
- 16 **Praise God for His word.**
- 17 Pray for the believers in India.
- 18 **Pray for Steve and Pam Grant and their work in the Middle East.**
- 19 Pray for radio broadcasts that are presenting God's truth.
- 20 **Pray for Lee McMinn and the members in Columbia, SC.**
- 21 Pray for an individual you know who has not accepted Christ.
- 22 **Pray for Tracy Savage as she ministers in St. Petersburg, Russia.**
- 23 Pray for ABC instructor Joe Martin.
- 24 **Pray for encouragement for those who are separated from family and friends at this Christmas season.**
- 25 Praise God for the gift of His Son, Jesus.
- 26 **Pray for recruitment efforts at Atlanta Bible College.**
- 27 Pray for Stan and Hilda Lawrence and the North Salem, IN Church.
- 28 **Pray for the work of native workers in Malawi.**
- 29 Pray for Jeff and Terri Moore and their work in Minnesota.
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REPORT OF BAPTISMS:

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| April 1, 1992 - March 31, 1993 | 164 | |
| April 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992 | 170 | |
| June 1, 1990 - March 31, 1991 | 168 | |
| January 1 - May 31, 1990 | 55 | |

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- 30 **Pray for revival throughout the Church of God in the coming year.**
- 31 Praise God for the way He has blessed you in 1996.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

January, 1997

- 1 Pray that Jesus will return to the earth soon.
- 2 **Pray for ABC students as they return from their Christmas break.**
- 3 Pray that our membership will be open to God's work in our churches.
- 4 **Pray for the work in Peru.**
- 5 Pray for ABC students as they begin an intensive/block class tomorrow.
- 6 **Praise God that we can be a part of the family of God.**
- 7 Pray for anyone in your church who has a health need.
- 8 **Pray for Warren and Irene Sorenson and the Simi Valley, CA Church.**
- 9 Praise God for a recent answer to a prayer.
- 10 **Pray for the outreach ministries of your church.**
- 11 Pray for Kent Ross as he teaches at Atlanta Bible College.
- 12 **Praise God for those who give generously of their time to further the Lord's work.**
- 13 Pray for the Cornerstone Bible Church of God in McDonough, GA.
- 14 **Pray for the Today's Good News Television Ministry under the direction of Steve Taylor.**
- 15 Praise God for financial and prayer supporters of the College/Conference.
- 16 **Praise God for the freedom to worship God.**
- 17 Pray for someone you know who needs to accept Jesus as Savior.
- 18 **Pray for an opportunity to share Christ with someone this week.**
- 19 Pray for Dan and Amy Kennedy in their work at New Friends Bible Church of God, Morrow, GA.
- 20 **Pray for the congregation in Nashville, Tennessee.**
- 21 Pray for your pastor and family.
- 22 **Pray for teachers in your local church.**
- 23 Praise God for those who give of their time and talents in serving on Conference advisory committees.
- 24 **Pray for your nation's leaders.**
- 25 Pray for Pastor Don and Sherry Nunemaker and the Burr Oak Church.
- 26 **Pray for Gary Burnham as he serves as Controller of the College/Conference.**
- 27 Pray for opportunities to start new churches.
- 28 **Pray for Larry and Karen Mayberry and the Pennellwood Church.**
- 29 Praise God for the direction He provides for your life.
- 30 **Pray for Pastor Steve and Jill Taylor and the New Hope Community Church in Lafayette, Indiana.**
- 31 Pray for "shut-in" members who cannot meet regularly with other believers.

Christian Workers' Seminar 1997

April 6-11, 1997

Holiday Inn — Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

Springtime in the Smokies.
Insightful classes, warm fellowship,
inspiring sessions.

LOW RATES!*

| | Early Bird** | Regular |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 4 to a room | \$185.00 | \$205.00/person |
| 3 to a room | \$205.00 | \$225.00/person |
| 2 to a room | \$245.00 | \$265.00/person |
| 1 to a room | \$355.00 | \$375.00/person |

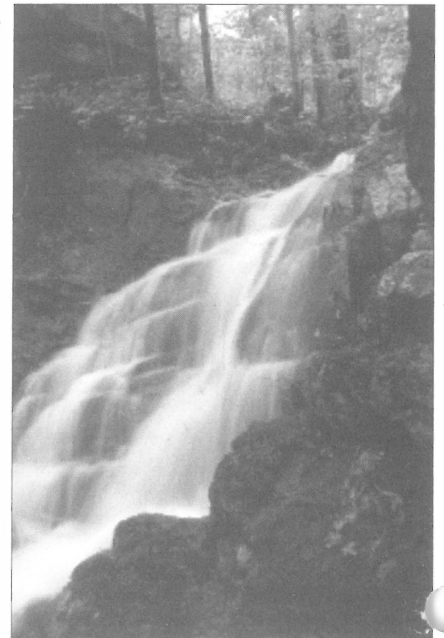
* Breakfast on your own.

** Early bird registration fee (applies through March 4).

There will be classes on prayer, personal renewal, worship, joy, loving God, faith, Bible truths, dealing with abusive situations, leadership, youth groups and much more.

Returnees who bring a friend who has never been at seminar before will receive a 10% discount off the registration fee.

— Kent Ross,
Coordinator



Review of the Sale of Property in Oregon, IL

When the College/Conference moved to Georgia, the campus in Oregon, IL was placed on the real estate market. The current status of the sale of the individual buildings is as follows:

- 1) General Conference Administration Building. This building was sold for \$123,000 in 1992. It was financed for a short period of time. The contract has been paid in full.
- 2) Women's Dormitory. This building was sold for \$257,500 in April 1993. \$40,000 was paid in cash at the closing. The balance of \$217,500 is being financed for a term of 5 years at 8% interest. A balloon payment will come due on April 12, 1998. The buyers are making regular monthly payments of principal and interest. The current unpaid balance is about \$187,000.
- 3) Men's Dormitory and College Administration Building. These buildings were sold in May, 1994 for \$285,500. Approximately \$200,000 of the purchase price was financed at 8% interest for a period of 2 years. After paying the Conference \$85,000 down and \$8,000 in additional principal and \$20,000 in interest, the buyer defaulted on his contract. A judgment for foreclosure and sale was filed in January 1996. The court returned the buildings to the college in May, 1996. The amount of unpaid principal and interest, attorney fees, unpaid real estate taxes and insurance, plus repairs and maintenance needed since that time come to approximately \$245,000. The buildings are currently listed with a realtor for \$318,000. Several parties have expressed an interest in acquiring these properties through the realtor.

All of the cash received from the above sales has been used to pay off relocation loans.

The prayers of the membership are requested for a speedy sale of the two remaining unsold buildings.

Duplex Loans

After the relocation to Georgia, the Board of Directors authorized the purchase of four duplexes on Trammell Road across from the campus. These properties were purchased for a total price of \$308,749.00. Money was borrowed from Church of God members, the Ministers' Retirement Association, and the ABC Development Foundation, at 7% interest. Rents have been used to cover expenses and repay loans. As of September 30, 1996 there was a balance of \$246,638.00 owed on these properties. Annual rental income is approximately \$43,000.00 a year. Operating expenses are less than \$25,000.00 a year including interest. The balance of the income is used to pay off loans. It is the intention of the Board for rental income to continue to be used to reduce the outstanding loans.

All of the debt on the duplexes is secured by real assets.

Operating Loan

Over the past fifteen years, funds have been borrowed by the Board of Directors from Board Restricted Funds to make up shortfalls in contributions to the Goal for Giving. This total indebtedness currently is \$191,000. The Board has authorized the repayment of this indebtedness through the sale of property owned by the Conference in Colorado Springs, CO, Arkansas City, KS, and income from a trust which will be received in 1997. Over the past several years tight cost controls have been in effect to reduce the annual operating expenses to bring them in line with anticipated income. Staff has been reduced — some employees who resigned have not been replaced and others have been replaced with part time employees. Employee benefits have been reduced. Reductions have been made in many line item expenses. Despite these reductions, contributions for general operations continue to be less than needed to support the budget proposed by the Board of Directors. (See the next page for the status of our budget for the 1996-1997 fiscal year.)

Summary

The current net worth of the College and Conference (assets minus debts) is a little over four million dollars. This includes the ABC Development Foundation, the Investment Fund, all buildings, and the recent Morgan Bequest. It does not include the assets of the Ministers' Retirement Association which are over \$735,000.

With the use of the Morgan Bequest to repay relocation loans, the financial health of the College/Conference is excellent. However, there is an ongoing need to increase the enrollment of Atlanta Bible College and receive contributions sufficient to meet the Goal for Giving.

Questions about the financial status of the College and Conference can be directed to the President or any member of the Board of Directors whose names and addresses are listed in the enclosed directory. A copy of the annual audit is available upon request.

— Board of Directors



Cornerstone Bible Church dedicated its recently acquired 10-acre building site on October 5. More than 100 people gathered for a picnic on the property following the dedication. The property was purchased with assistance from the Church Builders' League.

A Budget Raised by God and His People

The budget for the current fiscal year for Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference is \$631,600. This budget provides for the support of Atlanta Bible College, publications, outreach, youth, and Christian education ministries for 12 months. Of this amount:

\$197,000 is anticipated from earned income (sales, subscriptions, tuition, rent, and interest)
\$62,000 is anticipated from Foundation and interest earnings
\$372,600 is needed in contributions

In the previous fiscal year, \$336,749 was contributed. In a normal year, we would expect contributions to increase by an inflation amount of 3%. With a 3% increase, we would expect to receive \$346,851 in contributions during the current fiscal year. This leaves \$25,749 in additional contributions needed for this year. This amount is needed because ABC enrollment is down, and because we need to make up a shortfall in contributions from the previous fiscal year.

Would you join us in praying and believing that God will provide this extra \$25,749 so that we can complete this fiscal year without indebtedness? We believe that God has led the delegates to adopt this budget to fund ministry during this year. It is a realistic budget based upon: actual enrollment at the college this year; the commitments we have made for compensation to employees; expected investment in outreach projects; grants and scholarships for students, etc.

At this point, we believe that this additional \$25,749 is our faith budget. We already know what we have done in the past. And we know how much of an increase in giving we can expect for this year. But if we are to finish the year without borrowing and reach our faith goal, it will be accomplished by faith in the God who "owns the cattle on a thousand hills" (Psalm 50:10).

We believe that God is sufficient to meet every need. How He will do it is unknown to us. But God will work through servants who are moldable and available to Him.

Please let us know if you will join us in praying for this faith budget.

—David Krogh

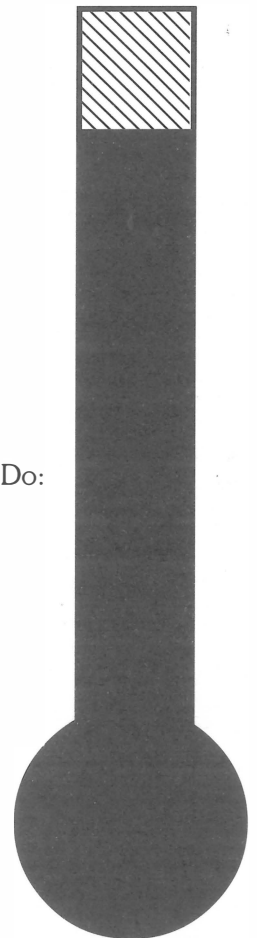
Atlanta Bible College
Church of God General Conference
P.O. Box 100,000
Morrow, GA 30260

Address Correction Requested

Needed in Contributions
This Fiscal Year: \$372,600

Faith Budget:
\$25,749
7%

What We Can Do:
\$346,851
93%



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Nonprofit Organization

Mission to St. Petersburg

by Jason Catlin

It is a delight to share events that took place in Russia this past summer. God moved in many marvelous ways over a couple of weeks, with many witnesses to these things. Six people from the United States shared God's love and a glimpse of His truth with people in Russia.

My experience in Russia is best described by Matthew 9:35-38:

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send workers into his harvest field."

The outreach strengthened my desire for full-time ministry. Having devoted two years to formal Bible education at Atlanta Bible College, it refreshed me to see the Word in action. I had read the passage cited above countless times, but I think I didn't fully grasp its meaning until I was in Russia. You see, in Russia many people are "harassed and helpless"; they desperately seek hope and a national identity. My heart went out to them. Russians are searching for a shepherd to whom they can give their trust. I believe that God used our outreach team, and the church body who supported us, as instruments to lead Russians to understand our Lord and His Kingdom.

I used to think missions entailed going to a third-world country and perhaps wearing a loin-cloth while proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. My experiences this summer broadened my understanding of "missions." Missions is as close as our next-door neighbor. Local pastors, in essence, are missionaries. I was surprised recently to learn that the United States of America is considered the world's fifth largest mission field. Missions is much greater than the externals. All regions of the world need missionary work.

Every opportunity for ministry is a mission, even with our own communities and church families.

Russia has technology and many well-educated people. They hunger to know the Gospel message, yet many are hindered by philosophies which contradict it. In that respect the United States is not much different. Russians, by nature, are deep thinkers. Many Westerners see pictures of the Russian public and conclude that they are depressed. That impression is partly due to our viewing other countries through our own cultural standards. Russians are often quiet and very reflective. They know about true suffering, which is quite foreign to me. I greatly appreciated that materialism is not the driving influence for most Russians, as it is for Americans.

Average Russians cannot afford many possessions and instead invest in their relationships, which are very strong. Russians tend to be kind and generous. They also tend to be excellent listeners, and ask a lot of questions. I told one of our interpreters (a native of Astrakahn, in southern Russia) of my interest in counseling psychology. She said, "It is very rare to find a paid counselor here. If anyone in Russia has a problem, they speak to a friend about it. In fact, I don't believe I have ever heard of a psychiatrist practicing in Russia!"

The people we shared the Gospel with seemed interested in its message. Tracy Savage, who has been serving the Lord in St. Petersburg for about five years, tries to convey that Christianity is not another imported American "good." With the rising popularity of foreign items, people need to be told this. The people we spoke with seemed to enthusiastically accept what we said, showing a hunger for the hope that we expressed in Christ. They asked many questions about God's Kingdom, His love, and Jesus. Children also asked many questions about life in the United States. Though teaching was integral to our mission in Russia, I think that just being there and showing interest in their lives — what they liked to do, where they lived, what they valued — made our "Christianity" real to them. Tracy and our team

(continued on page 2)

held a Bible study one evening with two Russian families. We spent a week with children from a shelter, taking them to parks and playing with them. We also spent a weekend at a children's camp near the Bay of Finland. I was amazed at how God used our skills and talents to bring Him glory. For example, at the children's camp the children wanted us to "autograph" a Russian tract we gave them which outlined our purpose in being there. I drew a silly face on one child's tract. The next thing I knew, nearly a hundred children were lined up to have me draw a picture along with my autograph! It was a blessing to see the children's faces light up with excitement in having their own piece of "artwork."

Our team had to cross a lot of hurdles with some people to share the Message. It was hard to come up against the old indoctrination that "religion is the opiate of the masses," as Karl Marx wrote. We also had to combat the influence of Buddhism, Hinduism, and various cults that are now in Russia. Some Russians reject Christianity because they are unhappy with the Russian Orthodox Church (which is the national religion and most common). Christianity and the Russian Orthodox Church are synonymous to most Russians. Spiritual seekers are often confused by conflicting messages, resulting in the mixing of religious beliefs. Our team tried to correct such misunderstandings. It was inspirational to see Tracy work with people. She is now very proficient in the language, and wastes no opportunity to share God's love and His message.

The Russian Orthodox Church is not meeting people's needs. I don't convey that as a judgment of the organization, just as a fact based on observation. Most cathedrals we saw had beggars in front, mainly old women. Our team stepped inside three cathedrals and visited a monastery in Zagorsky. The cathedral architecture was a sight to behold. Gold and silver adorn the walls and fixtures. The walls and pillars have pictures of saints affixed to them, with candle holders before the pictures. Orthodox believers go to their favorite saint, light a candle and put it in the holder, and pray to the saint for a gift or miracle. Women keep their heads covered in the sanctuary at all times, and shorts are strictly taboo. The services have a liturgical format and consist of chanting, crossing one's chest, kissing icons of saints and lighting candles. People follow the motions, not knowing why they do so, but hoping to gain God's favor. Few of the believers have Bibles, and those with Bibles don't understand the terminology. Words like "salvation," "grace," and "fellowship" are foreign to them. When they are explained, the people easily grasp the concept, but someone needs to do the explaining. My heart went out to them, for it seemed that they are missing the simplicity of God's message — to develop a deep, loving relationship between God and mankind.

My stay in St. Petersburg was blessed by my Russian host family, Victor and Alla. They did not speak a word of English, though they made several valiant efforts to learn. From 7:00 in the morning until 6:00 in the evening I was with my English-speaking teammates, but by supper-time I was with my Russian-speaking family. This intimidated me at first, as I knew no Russian. I have always been fascinated by foreign languages, and have taken classes in four. My study of Greek proved invaluable, as its grammar and Russian's are similar in structure. Victor and Alla were very patient, wonderful teachers. On my first night with them I spent four hours trying to communicate and learn the language. We had many lessons in the days ahead. By the time I left Russia, I understood about every third word I heard, enough to make sense of some sentences. Victor and Alla were great to me, and I think very highly of them.

The outreach made a difference for many people. I think our ministry left an imprint, small though it may be, on the hearts of those we spent time with. Our team encouraged Tracy with her ministry. People in the States with whom I have shared my experience were encouraged in knowing that people around the world are learning about Christ.

I hope to return to Russia to aid the work for a longer period. I encourage you to learn more about the opportunities for ministry in Russia, and get involved in Tracy's work. If you have questions, or want to know more about the ministry in Russia, please feel free to contact Tracy via E-mail at "tracy@savage.spb.su". You can also contact me at "catlin@netdoor.com" or phone me at (601) 829-9067.

I appreciate all of the prayers and financial support that you provided to me. Your love and support touched me, which is how our church body should function. May God bless each of you and grant you the wealth of His love and wisdom! □



Team members and Redkidz in front of the summer palace in Pushkin, outside St. Petersburg.

College/Conference News

Second Quarter Begins at ABC

Students returned to the campus after the holiday break to begin classes for the second quarter on January 6. The quarter began with an intensive block class, Basic Bible Doctrine, taught by Anthony Buzzard. Regular quarter classes began on January 21. Classes taught this quarter are Old Testament II, Pastoral Preaching, Introduction to Evangelism and Missions, Biblical Theology, Church Leadership, Introduction to Biblical Languages, New Testament I, Pastoral Procedures, and Church History II.

Judy Myers, chairperson of the Lord's Harvest International Mission Sending Agency Board, was on campus for a week during January to promote missions and talk about mission careers with ABC students.

Holy Land Trip

Atlanta Bible College will sponsor a trip to the Holy Land on February 11, 1998. This eight-day trip will cost \$1,649.00 per person from Atlanta. A one-day extension to Petra is available, as well as a three-day extension to Egypt. ABC instructor Anthony Buzzard and his wife Barbara will serve as tour leaders. For a brochure, contact Holy Land Trip, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260 or call 1-800-347-4261.

Advisory Committees/Boards Meet

Members of the Youth Advisory Committee met in St. Louis, MO in connection with the National Youth Workers' Convention. The convention was sponsored by Youth Specialties and featured the latest trends and products in youth ministry and Christian music today. Several other Church of God youth workers attended from around the country.

The Ministerial Recognition Board met in Atlanta, December 3-5.

The Higher Education Advisory Committee will meet in St. Petersburg, FL in conjunction with the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges annual conference in February. The committee will be discussing the work of Atlanta Bible College in light of the Institutional Long-Range Planning Study.

The Lord's Harvest International Mission Board met in Atlanta in January. Plans for the development of the work in St. Petersburg, Russia were discussed along with other mission business.

The Board of Directors will meet in Atlanta February 15-17 to focus on the Institutional Long-Range Planning Study and possible recommendations for delegate action at the summer conference. Other matters that should be addressed by the Board of Directors can be referred to the President for inclusion on the agenda.

Marching for Missions

The month of March is Missions Month throughout the Church of God. The membership is encouraged to use the Bible reading calendar which will be published in *The Church of God Around the World*.

Financial Support

On page 4 of this issue is a report of contributions received during 1996. We are grateful for gifts: to the Goal for Giving; special funds; special gifts in memory of deceased family members; and gifts that are provided for scholarships and grants for Atlanta Bible College students.

At the end of December, contributions to the Goal for Giving of the College/Conference were approximately \$4,435 dollars short of the amount needed. Please join us in praying that God would provide not only the regular contributions needed but also the faith budget. □

Needed in Contributions
This Fiscal Year: \$372,600

Faith Budget:
\$25,749
7%

What We Can Do:
\$346,851
93%



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1996 Contributions to Goals for Giving

(For General Operations)

| | | |
|--|-----|------------------|
| Individuals and Families | 583 | 154,036 |
| Churches | 63 | 157,368 |
| Conferences | 10 | 13,472 |
| Groups | 20 | 5,360 |
| Miscellaneous | 21 | 2,107 |
| Total Contributions to Goals for Giving | | \$332,343 |

Contributions to Special Funds

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Library Memorials | 2,150 |
| ABC Foundation | 1,603 |
| Scholarships | 24,514 |
| Church Builders' Appeals | 30,326 |
| Foreign Missions | 970 |
| ABC Alumni Chapel | 647 |
| Russia | 12,945 |
| Conference Ministries Fund | 4,011 |
| Ministers' Fund | 101 |
| Miscellaneous | 9,672 |
| Fund the Dream Campaign | 50,500 |
| Morgan Estate | 963,679 |
| Olympic Literature | 1,980 |
| Russia Mission Trip | 14,565 |
| Total Contributions to Special Funds | \$1,117,663 |
| Grand Total to All College/Conference Ministries | \$1,450,006 |

In Memoriam 1996

During 1996, contributions to the General Conference and Atlanta Bible College were given in memory of the following:

| | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Pastor John Denchfield | Cyril H. Munch |
| Pastor Harold J. Doan | Lucian Murphy |
| John Craig English | Helen M. Pryor |
| Nina Jean Hayse | Orine Robinson |
| Iris M. Kirkley | Pastor Dale Ward |
| Mary Helen Mattison | |

Scholarships and Grants for Atlanta Bible College during 1996

The following grants and scholarships were awarded to Atlanta Bible College students. Other individuals, churches, and groups provided assistance to students in addition to these scholarships and grants administered by the college.

| | |
|--|--|
| Alumni Association | Mary Helen Mattison Memorial |
| Atlanta Bible College Development Foundation | Michigan State Conference |
| Berean Youth Fellowship | Mildred Schroeder |
| Brush Creek Sewing Circle | Ministerial Association |
| Burnham-Stadden | Minnesota State Conference |
| Burr Oak Church | Missouri State Conference |
| Fulton Ramsey Memorial | Monroe Elton Memorial |
| Harold J. Doan Memorial | New Hope Church, Little Rock |
| Harvey U. Krogh Jr. Memorial | Ritenour Trust Fund — In memory of Eliza Boyer Ritenour, Virginia Ritenour Kincheloe, and Seraphine Ritenour Cleek |
| Hattie Bottolfs Memorial | Ruby L. Chaplin Memorial |
| Helen Overholser Memorial | Southeast Conference |
| Iris Elton Memorial | Southwest members in memory of Norman McLeod, S. J. Lindsay, Harold J. Doan, and C. E. Randall |
| James A. Patrick Memorial — Northeast Conference | Stan Ross Memorial |
| Jean Elton Fortney Memorial | Virginia State Conference |
| John and Opal Hayse Memorial | Washington Grove Church, Oregon, Illinois |
| John and Ruth Lewis Memorial | William and Rhoda Hanson Memorial |
| J. W. Williams Memorial | Zelma Weaver Memorial |
| Lawrenceville/Overholser | |
| Lois Blakely Memorial | |
| Lucian Murphy Memorial | |

Bind Us Together

by Don Overmyer*

Jesus has admonished us to “love our enemies” and “do good to those who despitefully use us.” Many people, even Christians, will respond that this injunction was for Jesus’ time and is not humanly applicable to us in our troubled times.

Perhaps they have never fully understood nor accepted what Jesus espoused as “love” — the *agape* love — the standard of having a mindset to desire the very best for others, even “enemies.”

Can we move from a position of hating our enemies to one of tolerance and even respect? We still may not “like” them or their positions but we do not have to remain enemies. “Love your enemies” may not mean a sloppy, sentimental love but a recognition that even our enemies are God’s children. When our ultimate goals and hopes

conflict with others we sometimes label them as our enemies.

But, when we perfectly understand that, no matter how we feel about one another and each other’s goals and methods, then that which binds us together will be greater than the things which divide us into separate camps.

It is our God, the Father, who loves us, gives us a common hope, and is above us all and greater than all of us or any of us. Our respect for this common ground must overshadow all our differences. When we devour one another in anger and malice we grieve His spirit. This is a very difficult lesson for any church to learn.

This is what Jesus was trying to teach us, not a pretense that all conflicts or differences do not exist but that we can move from where we are, to liking each other better than we do.

We can honor and respect and tolerate our differing views, accepting that the God who created us made us all a bit different from each other. He was saying that we can treat each other fairly and honorably.

This is a relationship that goes beyond sentimentality, sympathy, and friendship. We earn no points for loving those we like. The merit comes from acting decently toward those we do not like or who do not agree with us all the time. This kind of “love” is an action of our overcoming — with His help — not just emotional and intellectual conviction.

Bind us together, Lord, in your perfect love.

*Don Overmyer serves as the Treasurer for the Board of Directors of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference.

PASTORS NEEDED

Farmington, Missouri

The new Church of the Open Bible is seeking church leaders, teachers, members, and a PASTOR.

If you want more information, or are available to help, call Loyd and Donna Cooper (573) 756-4715, Jason Cooper (573) 546-7884, or Harold and Diane Thomas (573) 783-2938.

Fredericktown, Missouri

The Fredericktown Church of God is seeking a pastor. For further information call Florene Thal, (573) 783-3437, or Marvin H. Cooper, (573) 783-3291, or write Florene Thal, RR 2, Box 139, Fredericktown, MO 63645.

Cool Spring, Virginia

Cool Spring Church is looking for a pastor. Contact Robert Coverstone at 13172 Fort Valley Road, Fort Valley, VA 22652, Ph (540) 933-6271 after 8:00 p.m.

Herndon, Virginia

Fair Oaks Community Church would like to secure the services of a pastor. Please contact Carolyn Kohn for more information: 7711 Ivymount Terrace, Potomac, MD 20854.

Wenatchee, Washington

Please help us to find a pastor. We would like a young pastor with energy enough to help us catch the imagina-

tion of our young people and help them envision the Kingdom and live as Kingdom citizens. We need a pastor wise enough to guide the efforts of those among us who wish to share the vision of a returning Christ with our community. We need a pastor compassionate enough to guide us as our lives change from young to old and to hold our old hands and give comfort in our ending days.

Is there someone brave enough to take on such a quest? Please contact: Kirby Davis, ph. 509-663-1025.

— The Wenatchee Church of God, Faith of Abraham

PRAYER AND PRAISE

February, 1997

- 1 **Pray for Pastor Jason and Marcee Turner and the church at Beloit, Wisconsin.**
- 2 Pray for your pastor as he brings God's message to you today.
- 3 **Praise God for your family and friends.**
- 4 Pray for missionary to Russia, Tracy Savage, as she studies at Atlanta Bible College.
- 5 **Pray for the students at Atlanta Bible College.**
- 6 Pray for someone you know who needs to accept Christ.
- 7 **Praise God for the ministry of Pastor Beder Ucanay in Peru.**
- 8 Pray for Pastor Alan and Susan Cain and the Bethel, SC church.
- 9 **Praise God for His daily blessings on your life.**
- 10 Pray for the members of your church family.
- 11 **Pray for the leaders of your government.**
- 12 Praise God for the opportunities He has provided for outreach in Russia.
- 13 **Pray for the ABC staff and members of the Higher Education Advisory Committee as they attend a meeting of the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges this week.**
- 14 Pray for the ministries of your local church.
- 15 **Pray for the Board of Directors as they meet today and over the weekend to consider the Institutional Long-Range Planning Study.**
- 16 Pray for those making preparations for the upcoming Christian Workers' Seminar.
- 17 **Pray for someone you know who is in need of healing (physical, emotional, or spiritual).**
- 18 Praise God for a recent answer to prayer.
- 19 **Pray for the brethren in the Philippines.**
- 20 Pray for Pastor Jeff and Jill Smith and the work at Kokomo, Indiana.
- 21 **Praise God for the work of the Sunday School quarterly editors.**
- 22 Pray for Pastor Dale and Julie Bliss and the work at Rockford, MI.
- 23 **Pray for the staff at the College/Conference.**
- 24 Praise God for the Board of Directors and its leadership.
- 25 **Pray for Jim Graham and youth ministries of the Conference.**
- 26 Pray for the ministry of Pastor Steve and Joyce Bolhous and the Fonthill Church.
- 27 **Praise God for the promise of a new heaven and earth.**
- 28 Pray for the teachers in your local church.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

March, 1997

- 1 **Pray that God will raise up missionary candidates.**
- 2 Praise God for the faithful leadership of the Badillo family in Mexico.
- 3 **Pray for Pastor Tom and Debbie New and the work at McGintytown, Arkansas.**
- 4 Praise God for those who provide prayer and financial support for the College/Conference ministries.
- 5 **Pray for Pastor Greg and Kim Shaw in their ministry at Valley View, Arizona.**
- 6 Pray for those attending College Invitational at ABC this weekend.
- 7 **Pray for those considering attending Atlanta Bible College in the future.**
- 8 Pray that God will provide safety for those returning home from College Invitational.
- 9 **Pray for someone you know who is discouraged or depressed.**
- 10 Pray that God's spirit might be felt at the upcoming Christian Workers' Seminar.
- 11 **Pray for Pastor Michael and Diane Brown and the Macomb, IL Church of God.**
- 12 Pray for Pastor Dan and Amy Kennedy and the New Friends Bible Church in Morrow, Georgia.
- 13 **Pray for Pastor Wally and Peggy Winner and the work at Guthrie Grove in South Carolina.**
- 14 Praise God for all who have dedicated their lives to ministry.
- 15 **Pray for churches seeking pastors.**
- 16 Pray for a special need in your life.
- 17 **Praise God for those who have provided spiritual instruction for you.**
- 18 Pray for an opportunity to share God's love with someone.
- 19 **Pray for those who are searching God's Word for answers to life's problems.**
- 20 Pray for Pastor Earl and Dee Poland and the work at Hedrick, Indiana.
- 21 **Pray for the brethren in India.**
- 22 Pray for Steve and Pam Grant and their ministry in the Middle East.
- 23 **Praise God for your Christian friends all over the world.**
- 24 Pray for ABC students as they begin the spring quarter today.
- 25 **Pray for eyes to see those who are in need and a heart to reach out to them.**
- 26 Pray for the work in Malawi.
- 27 **Praise God for the promise of Christ's soon return.**
- 28 Pray for your pastor and his family.
- 29 **Pray for Pastor Mike and Myra Montgomery as they serve at the Fredericktown, MO Church of God.**
- 30 Praise God for new attenders or members at your local congregation.
- 31 **Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.**

Worship Conference 1997

*"But you are a chosen people,
a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
a people belonging to God . . ."*



For more information, call Dan Kennedy
at 404-366-8739, or E-mail him at
atlbc@ix.netcom.com

*" . . . that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness
into His marvelous light."*

REPORT OF BAPTISMS:

2,000 by the Year 2000

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| April 1, - December 31, 1996* | 84 |
| April 1, 1995 - March 31, 1996 | 159 |
| April 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995 | 162 |
| April 1, 1993 - March 31, 1994 | 142 |
| April 1, 1992 - March 31, 1993 | 164 |
| April 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992 | 170 |
| June 1, 1990 - March 31, 1991 | 168 |
| January 1 - May 31, 1990 | 55 |

Jan. 1,
2000

Total
1,104

* More complete figures are being collected from non-reporting churches.

Calendar of Events

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| April 6-11 | Christian Workers' Seminar, Holiday Inn, Pigeon Forge, TN |
| April 25-28 | Theological Conference, Atlanta Bible College |
| April 28-May 2 | Annual Ministers' Conference, Atlanta Bible College |
| May 2-4 | Worship Seminar, Atlanta Bible College |
| June 15-21 | Midwest Family Camp, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |
| July 13-19 | Youth Congress, Taylor University, Upland, IN |
| August 4-8 | 77th Annual Summer Conference, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN |
| November 7, 8 | Midwest Men's Retreat, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |

ANNIVERSARY BOOK AVAILABLE

In conjunction with the Glad Tidings Church of God's 150th Anniversary, there has been an historical account compiled in book form. It records important names, dates, buildings, and ministries within the church's life in the past 150 years. If you would like a copy of this book, please send a request along with \$5.00 to:

Glad Tidings Church of God
History Book Request
1 Pancake Lane
Fonthill, ON
LOS 1E0 CANADA

DIRECTORY ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

Church of God Investment Fund

Chairman Mr. Bill Burnham, Ph 352-748-6100

Ministers

Kirkpatrick, Vivian E. II, Fax 320-848-6571

Raymond, Jim, 11650 Cherry Ave, Apt 12E, Fontana, CA 92337, Ph Res 909-429-9129

Shaw, Greg (Kim), 4627 E Meadow Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85032, Ph Off 602-952-2823 Res 778-8081

ILLINOIS

Naperville — Rebecca Dauksas, Supt, 67 Breckenridge Dr, Aurora, IL 60563 Ph 630-820-1056

LOUISIANA

Blood River — Tab and Lynette Lobell, Yth Leaders, Bx 625, Springfield, LA 70462

MINNESOTA

Hector — Vivian E. Kirkpatrick II, Ph Res 320-848-2387

DEATHS

ARIZONA

Tempe — Celestia Kitts, 87, long-time member of Lakeshore Bible Church (11/21/96) by Pastor Greg Demmitt and her grandson Pastor Michael Hoffman.

ARKANSAS

Magazine (Clark Chapel) — Sylvia Lorene Sarten, 73 (11/4/96), faithful member of the Clark Chapel Church of God, by Roy Humphreys.

CALIFORNIA

Pomona — Grace Adamson, 103, long-time faithful member of Pomona Church of the Open Bible (11/13/96) by Pastor Delbert Jones.

Pomona — Pastor Delbert Jones (1/5/97) (a more complete obituary will be in the next *Journal*).

ILLINOIS

Macomb — Goldie Payne, 96, (12/15/96) by Pastor Michael Brown.

INDIANA

Hedrick — James F. Reynolds (11/22/96) by Pastor Steve Taylor.

OHIO

Brush Creek — Suzanne Feske (12/15/96); John M. Burke (12/25/96); M. Arlene Burke (12/29/96) by Pastor Dale Swartz.

BAPTISMS

ILLINOIS

Oregon — James Porter (12/1/96) by Pastor Michael Hoffman.

INDIANA

Timberland — Joe and Molly Kanuiga (12/1/96) by Pastor John Railton.

MICHIGAN

Blanchard — Travis and Trevor Rogers (11/27/96) by their father, Terry Rogers, assisted by elders Terry Kunst and Charles Baldwin (Grandpa).

Garden Park — Mike Russell (11/10/96) by Pastor Ray Hall.

MINNESOTA

Bertha — Shari Gary (6/18/96); Paul Rumsey (6/21/96); Shawn Hoemberg, Chad Smith and Stacy Smith (7/30/96) by Pastor Jeff Moore.

OHIO

Cleveland (Golden Rule) — Kevin Meadows (1/12/97) by Rick Phyllis

North Hills — David and Shelly Hawk (9/8/96) by Pastor Russ Dickerson.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Bethel — Ray Gokey (11/24/96) by Pastor Alan Cain.

MARRIAGE NEWS CORRECTION

ILLINOIS

Macomb — Jeff and Jill Klinedinst (9/14/96)

Atlanta Bible College
Church of God General Conference
P.O. Box 100,000
Morrow, GA 30260

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Blocked Minds

by William D. Lawrence

“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life” (John 5:39-40). In reading these words and thinking about the Jews of Jesus’ time, with their minds so set in one way that they couldn’t see another, I began to wonder how often similar mind-sets have limited my view. Recently I read about a forward-thinking President, Thomas Jefferson. I found that in the early nineteenth century he and probably many others felt that man would never move faster than a horse could carry him. For thousands of years that was the greatest speed that man had achieved. It is now hard to imagine that such an innovative thinker as Jefferson could have been so far from the truth.

The Jews of Jesus’ time had ingrained in them a Messiah charging onto the scene on a white horse and rescuing them from Roman tyranny and slavery. How they arrived at that conclusion by studying the Scriptures would be an interesting study, but probably their conclusion rested heavily on their “own understanding” (Prov. 3:5). It seemed right! It was obvious that Jesus knew they thought that just knowing (and thinking they understood) Scriptures gave eternal life. They didn’t see that it meant knowing the man, Christ Jesus.

Mardy and I have been visiting with an elderly man who has his mind made up that “When you die, you die, and there is no more.” For those of us who know Jesus, it is hard to imagine how he could be so blind. In that realm I am certainly not blind, for I know that God has promised eternal life to me. He inspired John to write (to me), “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 5:13).

Back to the history of Jefferson: he and other Virginians, at least white Virginians, honestly believed the blacks to be inferior and created to be slaves of the whites. Of course, again we wonder, “How could they be so wrong?” That

wrong but sincerely held view brought untold suffering and depravation to hundreds of thousands of humans. For the whites, the plantation and their way of life could not exist without slave labor. This actually proved true, but they certainly weren’t willing to consider giving it up. Wrong opinion, no matter how sincerely held, is still wrong.

Mind-sets affect our life and future and our children’s as well. Many young people are told by their parents, “You’re no good. You’ll never amount to anything. You’re the dumbest kid I know.” They receive the message from parents, peers, and even our government: “You are locked into this lifestyle (of poverty and the ghetto).” They often accept and believe this and consequently their lifestyle is programmed to make these statements come to pass. How sad!

These may seem like extreme examples, but they illustrate how common it is for humans to fall into mind-sets. Hopefully, we will be spurred to evaluate whether we have mind-sets that may be as extreme and consequently limiting for ourselves and others.

Until fifteen or twenty years ago, I had a mind-set that if I was filled with the Holy Spirit, I would become a “holy roller,” maybe handling snakes, insisting that I could heal the crippled from birth, or speaking in tongues, babbling what I thought was nonsense. The persons who did these things said they did it because they were filled with the Holy Spirit. I wanted nothing of the Holy Spirit and especially these far-out experiences or activities. God has since opened my mind to what being filled with the Holy Spirit means for me and I have not done any of the above-mentioned! I’ve discovered that the Spirit too is a gift from Him (1 Thess. 4:8b). I have received that gift as His child and I can choose to be open to and led by the Spirit or to block out what is freely offered by God, as when I’m acting in anger, impatience, and self.

In recent years, I’ve enjoyed my freedom with God and my relationship with Jesus more than during my previous fifty-plus years. As I’ve studied about the Holy Spirit (and the Scriptures have

(continued on page 2)

a lot to say about it), I see that the Spirit is leading me. "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26).

Olshausen in Jamison, Fausset, and Brown's *Commentary on the Whole Bible* wrote, "As the Son came in the Father's name, so the Father shall send the Spirit 'in my name,' says Jesus, i.e., with like divine power and authority to reproduce in their souls what Christ taught them, bringing to living consciousness what lay like slumbering germs in their minds."

I can't emphasize enough the "will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I've said." Jesus follows that with "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (v. 27). This is one of my favorites, especially since I'm beginning to find and really enjoy the "peace I leave with you." I am anxious to be taught "all things" and be reminded of "everything" Jesus said. Consequently I'm trying to learn more about the Holy Spirit

and more from the Holy Spirit. I'm asking God to teach me by His Mighty Spirit, telling Him I appreciate His Spirit, and praising Him for giving the Holy Spirit to me. I can pretty accurately assume that I am likely to have some mind-sets that could hinder my learning. So I am also praying for those to be revealed to me (since I certainly can't discover them myself) and praying that I would be willing to have my mind changed in the direction He wants to lead me.

I really appreciate the gift of His Holy Spirit, as I appreciate the gift of eternal life. Salvation into His Kingdom gives me a joyous feeling for life after death. The peace I enjoy from Jesus makes this life full of joy. Instead of the "sour pickle" face, I can radiate joy, for joy is in my heart. The Holy Spirit lifts me when I'm down, comforts me when I feel discouraged, and gives me a positive attitude when the world and my particular circumstances seem doomed. God is so good and so generous in giving us Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Let us draw close to both by opening our minds and letting the Spirit teach us and remind us of what Jesus said. The Spirit can do wonders for all of us.

College/Conference News

Today's Good News Ministry

Steve Taylor, director of Today's Good News television ministry, reports that several thousand dollars of equipment was recently donated to the ministry. This equipment will facilitate copying programs onto the format that cable television companies require for broadcast. Along with the equipment ninety-five 3/4" video tapes were also donated.

A new tape series with Anthony Buzzard has been produced and cablecast in Lafayette, Indiana. A number of positive responses have been received from the listening audience. Churches interested in cablecasting programs in their area may contact Steve Taylor at 317-448-2723.

Focus on the Kingdom

Anthony Buzzard is the speaker on a radio program entitled "Focus on the Kingdom" which is on the air Monday through Friday from 3:15 - 3:30 on a 50,000-watt radio station in Atlanta. The program has been on the air since mid-December. Free literature is offered to those who call in. Each Wednesday the program is live and provides an opportunity to call the station to ask questions on the air. Several Church of God families are underwriting the cost of this experimental radio program.

Beginning in March the program series will be aired in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area, sponsored by a family who has a commitment to the Kingdom message.

Atlanta Bible College Extension Courses

Kent Ross, Atlanta Bible College Vice President and Instructor, conducted a Church History extension course in Southern Ohio on three Saturdays, January 11, February 22, and March 15. Seventeen students were enrolled.

Atlanta Bible College welcomes the opportunity to offer extension courses to interested groups. Please contact the College for more information.

Positions on the Board of Directors

The terms of Dr. Donna Deane and Mr. Don Overmyer expire at the 1997 summer General Conference. State/district conferences, local churches, and the Ministerial Association are encouraged to make nominations for these positions. A resume and other information about candidates should be provided by May 1 to be included in the May/June PROGRESS JOURNAL. The positions are for a four-year term. Please see Page 8 for additional information about the responsibilities of Board members.

Advisory Positions

The term of Carol Ring on the Christian Education Advisory Committee will expire at the summer Conference. The term of Dr. William D. Lawrence on the Higher Education Advisory Committee also expires. Churches, conferences, and the Ministerial Association are encouraged to

consider nominations for these two positions. The current members may succeed themselves. These positions are for a four-year term.

Special Conferences Sponsored

Atlanta Bible College will host a Theological Conference, the annual Ministers' Conference, and a Worship Conference April 25 - May 3. Please see Page 5 of this PROGRESS JOURNAL for registration information.

Web Page

Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference has placed a Web page on the Internet. The Web page address is www.ABC-COGGC.ORG. We are grateful to Trevor Brierly of the Washington, D.C. area for assisting in the development of this page.

Summer Ministries

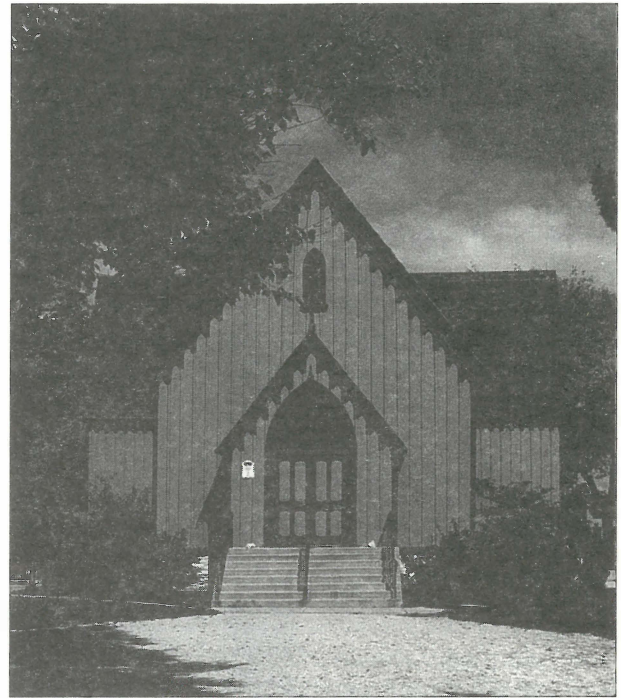
Sarah Buzzard is the director of the Summer Ministries Program for the Church of God General Conference. This program coordinates individuals who are willing to volunteer one or more weeks during the summer to participate in Vacation Bible Schools, calling projects, youth camps, or other activities. Both paid and unpaid workers are needed. Please contact Sarah at 1-800-347-4261 for more information about securing help or offering your services.

R.Y.O.T. '97

The Youth Department of the Church of God General Conference under the direction of Pastor Jim Graham is sponsoring the annual R.Y.O.T. (Radical Youth Overcoming Today) Conference. It will be held July 13-18 at Upland, Indiana on the campus of Taylor University. This conference is a life-changing experience for young people who gather for classes, recreational activities, musical programs, and drama. Many churches provide financial assistance and transportation for young people to attend this special event.

Internet News Group

Jan Stilson of Oregon, Illinois has established an Internet public forum for interested Church of God members. Those who have computer access to E-mail may subscribe without charge. During the first several weeks of operation, more than 200 messages have been filed. For more information about enrolling contact Jan Stilson on E-mail at Jans@sinnfree.org. Thus far there has been a discussion of theological questions as well as sharing prayer requests and general information from around the country.



The Fox Valley Church rents this historic church building in Naper Settlement, Naperville, Illinois. Robert Alcumbrack serves as pastor.

REPORT OF BAPTISMS:

2,000 by the Year 2000

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|----------------|
| | | Jan. 1, 2000 |
| April 1, 1996 - February 28, 1997* | 103 | Total 1,128 |
| April 1, 1995 - March 31, 1996 | 164 | |
| April 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995 | 162 | |
| April 1, 1993 - March 31, 1994 | 142 | |
| April 1, 1992 - March 31, 1993 | 164 | |
| April 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992 | 170 | |
| June 1, 1990 - March 31, 1991 | 168 | |
| January 1 - May 31, 1990 | 55 | |

* More complete figures are being collected from non-reporting churches.

PROGRESS JOURNAL is owned and published by Church of God General Conference, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260. Published bi-monthly. David Krogh, Editor; Daniel Smead, Technical Director of Publishing; Sarah Buzzard, Proofreader. Telephone 404-362-0052 or 800-347-4261; FAX 404-362-9307. E-mail Address: ATLBC@MINDSPRING.COM.

BAPTISMS

ARKANSAS

Forest Hills — Amanda Hill and Brandon Simpson (5/12/96), and Autumn Smith (9/22/96) by Pastor James Hill.

CANADA

Fonthill — Deanna Duff (1/12/97) by Pastor Stephen Bolhous.

INDIANA

North Salem — Rodney Jacobs and Wendy Butler (11/17/96) by Darrell Maddock.

MICHIGAN

Garden Park — Mike Russell (11/10/96); Christopher and John Beattie (12/1/96); and Rodney Beattie (1/12/97) by Pastor Ray Hall.

OHIO

Columbia Station — Melissa, Shane, Bridget, and Candice Darden (2-23-97) by Pastor Dave Swartz.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Pelzer (Bethel) — Keith and Charlene Saylor (2-16-97) by Pastor Alan Cain.

MARRIAGE

SOUTH CAROLINA

Pelzer (Bethel) — Steve Foster and Paula Holiday (2-14-97) by Pastor Alan Cain.

DEATHS

ARKANSAS

Clark Chapel — Lafe Cleafert Robinson, 80 (1/12/97) by Brother Mark Davenport.

CALIFORNIA

Pomona — Delbert Arthur Jones was born in Eagle Grove, Iowa, to Arthur and Mayme Jones on November 1, 1919. He died on January 5, 1997 as a result of a massive stroke in Pomona, California.

He graduated from Eagle Grove High School and attended one year of junior college in Eagle Grove. He graduated with a B. A. Degree from Upper Iowa University, Fayette, Iowa; received a Bachelor of Theology Degree from Oregon Bible College in 1944 and earned a Master's Degree from Pasadena College, Pasadena, California.

Delbert spent fifty-two years as a minister for the Church of God, serving Country Chapel, Michigantown, Indiana; Litchfield, Minnesota; Rockford, Illinois; Hector, Minnesota; Pomona, Glendale, and San Jose, California. He retired from the ministry at the Church of the Open Bible, Pomona, California in 1995.

Delbert was also a teacher as a second occupation for forty-one years. He retired from Bonita High School, La Verne, California in 1986 after twenty-five years as a teacher and counselor.

Delbert loved working with and for others. He followed in the footsteps of his father, A. M. Jones, who was a pastor for the Church of God for over sixty years. Over the course of his life and career as a teacher, counselor and pastor, Delbert had a great influence for good on the lives of many people.

Delbert served on the Board of Directors for the General Conference and served many years on committees for the Bible College and General Conference. The College was one of his main interests in his life.

In 1943 Delbert married Bernedene Macy at the Brush Creek Church of God, Tipp City, Ohio. Their children are David of Elfrin Forest,

California; Philip of Bend, Oregon; Linda Allen of Visalia, California; and four grandchildren.

Delbert sleeps — waiting for the resurrection. Services were conducted by Pastors Warren Sorenson, Kent Ross, Jim Raymond, and Emory Macy.

INDIANA

Timberland — Robert Follin, 78, long-time member (1/4/97); and Mildred O'Neil, 87, long-time member (2/4/97) by Pastor John Railton.

IOWA

Belle Plaine — Max William Cronbaugh (12/31/96), long-time member, born 5/26/25, by Pastor Francis Burnett.

OHIO

Columbia Station — Buck Houston (1/8/97); Scott Bradley, 33 (2/7/97); Edna Cheney, 92 (2/13/97) by Pastor David Swartz.

Pleasant Hill — Eunice Pearson, 90 (1/19/97). Eunice and her husband, Bob, served at Golden Rule Retirement Home for one year, then she was caretaker and matron of Oregon Bible College for five years, teaching Home Economics as well. After the death of her husband, Eunice served 11½ years as a missionary in Nova Scotia. By Dale Swartz.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Bethel — Adger Guthrie (12/17/96) by Pastor Alan Cain, Richard Smith, and Bill Vaughan.

SYSTEMATIC BIBLE COURSE COMPLETION

Sarah Cain, Bedford, OH; Cheri Allison, Macomb, IL.

DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS:

COLLEGE/CONFERENCE

E-mail atlbc@mindspring.com

YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Pastor Timothy Eldred, PO Bx 245, 601 W Home St, Edmore, MI 48829 Ph 517-427-5059 E-mail timcym@powernet.net (1998)

INDIANA, Country Chapel — The telephone area codes for the church, Pastor Ken Howe, Pat Finney, and Betty Good have been changed to (765) from (317).

MICHIGAN, Blanchard — Youthworkers, Terry and Terrie Rogers, 1060 Jefferson Road, Blanchard, MI 49310, Ph 517-561-2527

MINNESOTA, Eden Valley — Pastor Russ Magaw has a new 800 number: 800-758-8714.

MISSOURI CONFERENCE OFFICERS:

President: Dale Brown (as previously listed)

1st VP: Wade Tierney, 588 Bon Oak, Sullivan 63080, Ph 573-468-2745

2nd VP: Fred Gerullis, 8476 Lake, Cedar Hill 63016, Ph 314-274-3541

Treas: George Sheeley (as previously listed)

Sec: Wanda Gerullis, 8476 Lake, Cedar Hill 63016, Ph 314-274-3541

BYF Dir: Bill Dunn, 306 Scenic, Dittmer 63032, Ph 314-274-7177

PASTOR AVAILABLE

Pastor Christopher Seiders and his fiancée Jennifer Knapp will be available to assume the pastorate of a church starting September 1, 1997. The couple has been working with Pastor David and Anne Riley during their internship. They will be married in June. Any church interested please contact Chris at 5823 Trammell Road, Morrow, GA 30260; phone (404) 362-0429; E-mail pastorfurry@juno.com.



Sixth Theological Conference

April 25-27, 1997

Principal Guest Speakers:

David Keyes, Unitarian Universalist Minister who has worked with East European unitarians.

Calvin Pater, Professor of Church History at Knox College in Canada

Allon Maxwell, member of House of the Lord, a biblical unitarian Anabaptist house church in Heathmont, Australia

John Cunningham, biblical unitarian from Northern Ireland

Cost: early bird \$25 (by April 15); \$35 regular rate (Lodging on own)*

Annual Ministers' Conference

April 28-May 2, 1997

Guest Speaker: H. B. London of Focus on the Family

Costs: 1 to room, \$299; 2 to a room \$185; 3 to a room \$160; 4 to a room \$150 (includes program, meals, and lodging at Red Roof Inn)

Worship Conference

May 2 and 3, 1997

Guest Speaker: Kim Cooper Bollinger

Cost: \$15.00 (Lodging on own)*

*A special Conference rate has been secured at a nearby Red Roof Inn; 800-843-7660. Ask for Atlanta Bible College conference rates. Block #B-114000210. Information on other local motels/inns available upon request.

Calendar of Events

| | |
|----------------|---|
| April 25-27 | Theological Conference, Atlanta Bible College |
| April 28-May 2 | Annual Ministers' Conference, Atlanta Bible College |
| May 2-3 | Worship Conference, Atlanta Bible College |
| June 15-21 | Midwest Family Camp, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |
| July 13-19 | Youth Congress, Taylor University, Upland, IN |
| August 4-8 | 77th Annual Summer Conference, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN |
| November 7, 8 | Midwest Men's Retreat, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |

PRAYER AND PRAISE

April, 1997

- 1 Pray for those whose eyes are blinded to the Gospel.
- 2 Praise God for new life in Christ.
- 3 Pray for Rex and Sharon Cain and their work in Bedford, Ohio.
- 4 Pray for Anthony Buzzard's correspondence with truth seekers around the world.
- 5 Pray for your pastor as he prepares to share God's word tomorrow.
- 6 Pray for those traveling to and attending the Christian Workers' Seminar this week.
- 7 Pray for the faithful brethren in the Philippine Islands.
- 8 Praise God for the leadership of your local church.
- 9 Pray for Pastor Craig and Shirley Wagganer and the Troy, Ohio Church of God.
- 10 Pray for opportunities to witness to those without Christ.
- 11 Pray for Steve and Pam Grant, members of Valley View Church, ministering in the Middle East.
- 12 Pray for Pastor Ray and Susan Hall and the Garden Park, Michigan Church of God.
- 13 Pray for the churches in your state/district conference.
- 14 Pray for the students and staff of Atlanta Bible College.
- 15 Praise God for the ministry and service of your church leaders.
- 16 Praise God for the gift of His Son, and the resurrection of Jesus.
- 17 Pray that God might use you to lead the lost to salvation.
- 18 Praise God for dedicated Church of God ministers.
- 19 Pray for Chris Seiders in his ministry internship at Cornerstone Bible Church.
- 20 Pray for the ministry of the Badillo family in Mexico.
- 21 Pray for David Krogh in his position as president of our College and Conference.
- 22 Praise God for His faithfulness.
- 23 Pray for the soon return of Christ.
- 24 Pray for Pastor Darrell and Tara Cardwell and their work at East Peoria, Illinois.
- 25 Pray for those attending the Theological Conference this weekend.
- 26 Pray for decisions that will be made as a result of the Institutional Long-Range Planning Study for the College/Conference.
- 27 Pray for the Board of Directors as they meet today through Tuesday.
- 28 Praise God for the secretarial staff of Atlanta Bible College and the Church of God General Conference.
- 29 Pray for pastors meeting in Atlanta for their annual conference.
- 30 Praise God for the faithful prayer and support partners of the College/Conference.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

May, 1997

- 1 Pray for the editors of our Conference publications.
- 2 Pray for the Worship Seminar at Atlanta Bible College today and tomorrow.
- 3 Praise God for the ministry of Pastor Jim Raymond and the Pomona Church.
- 4 Pray for the ministry of Pastor Ken and Eva Howe and the Country Chapel, Indiana Church of God.
- 5 Pray for Gary Burnham as he directs the College/Conference business office.
- 6 Praise God for students who are preparing for service at Atlanta Bible College.
- 7 Pray for Pastor Vivian and Paula Kirkpatrick and the Hector, Minnesota Church of God.
- 8 Pray for Pastor Greg and Karen Demmitt and the work at Tempe, Arizona.
- 9 Pray for Pastor Jeff and Karen Fletcher and the Happy Woods Church in Hammond, Louisiana.
- 10 Pray for believers who are in nursing homes and hospitals.
- 11 Praise God for your mother and her influence in your life.
- 12 Praise God for the ministry of Pastor Michael and Linda Hoffman and the Oregon, Illinois Church of God.
- 13 Pray for the congregation at Omaha, Nebraska, and Pastor Scott and Gayle Ross.
- 14 Praise God for the strength He provides each day.
- 15 Pray for Pastor Mark Good and his work with Arkansas churches.
- 16 Praise God for new attenders at your local church.
- 17 Pray for the members of the Holbrook, Nebraska congregation.
- 18 Pray for the outreach ministries of New Friends Bible Church, Morrow, Georgia.
- 19 Praise God for the faithful work of Pastor Leon and Delores Driskill over many years.
- 20 Pray for healing for someone you know who is in need.
- 21 Pray for David and Wanda Cheatwood and the ministry at Blessed Hope Church, Rockford, Illinois.
- 22 Pray for your family and friends.
- 23 Pray for the ministry of Pastor Scott and Theresa Deane and the church at Pleasant Hill, Ohio.
- 24 Pray for those who are preparing for full-time Christian service.
- 25 Praise God for the work of Pastor Don and Joyce Ward and the Raymore, Missouri Church of God.
- 26 Pray for the Summer Ministries Program.
- 27 Pray for Roger and Sharon Mattus and the Nashville, Tennessee brethren.
- 28 Pray for Church of God members throughout the world as they minister to others.
- 29 Pray for the brethren in India.
- 30 Pray for Pastor Jon Welch and the Fort Valley, Virginia Church of God.
- 31 Praise God for all that He has done and is doing in your life.

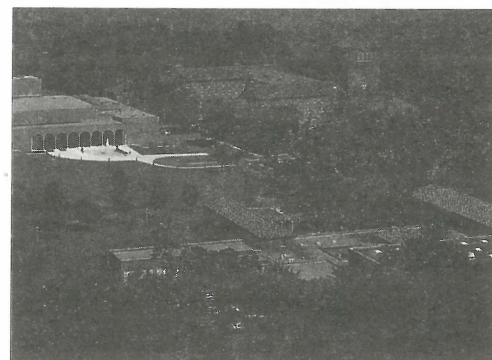
You Are Invited to...

The 1997 Annual General Conference

Northwestern College
St. Paul, Minnesota

August 4-8, 1997

"Fan the Flame"
2 Timothy 1:6



Campus of Northwestern College

| | Early Bird* | Regular |
|--|-------------|---------|
| 2 or 3 to a room (private bath) air-conditioned (includes 10 meals) | | |
| Ages 11 and up | \$195 | \$215 |
| Ages 7-10 | \$170 | \$190 |
| 6 and under | \$50 | \$60 |
| 1 to a room (private bath) air-conditioned (includes 10 meals) | | |
| Ages 11 and up | \$230 | \$250 |
| Full-Time Commuter | | |
| 10 meals | \$110 | \$125 |
| 3 lunches/ 4 dinners | \$95 | \$105 |
| no meals | \$50 | \$60 |
| One-Day Commuter | | |
| 1 lunch/ 1 dinner only | \$35 | \$40 |
| no meals | \$20 | \$25 |
| all fees include facilities and program charges | | |

* Registration postmarked by July 3, 1997

Selecting and Nominating Members of the Board of Directors

The Constitution and By-Laws of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference state that "the qualifications of each director shall be those given in 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1 and such other Scriptures as teach the qualifications of church leaders. A director may be either male or female." Article II provides a list of various duties of the directors.

Certainly a nominee for the Board should have spiritual maturity and dedication to the work of the College/Conference. They should be filled with God's power and know that they have spiritual gifts from Him. They should be committed to a Christian life and devoted to prayer.

God has entrusted His people with a great mission and task of declaring the Good News to the lost. The Board takes this mission very seriously and we as members must seriously pray and seek His guidance as we seek nominees who have been called to this important work. The Board members are each dedicated to represent the whole body, not just the geographic area where they live.

In addition to spiritual matters, the Board is responsible for nearly \$4,000,000 in assets that our God has provided. A measure of business sense has obviously become of importance. The College has also become an increasingly important responsibility of the Board. Some knowledge of the administration of an institution of higher learning is also important.

A Board member must have courage; there are many very difficult decisions which have to be made that require much seeking of God's will. There can be disappointments and criticism when decisions are made. A Board member must be committed and accountable for attendance during at least three Board meetings per year

as well as the annual General Conference business meetings. There is considerable correspondence and business between meetings. A Board member must not be too busy to attend to God's work.

As you seek nominees for the Board to be elected this summer at the General Conference business session, we hope you will seek God's guidance in much prayer and submission to His direction for us.

— Board of Directors



The board of The Lord's Harvest International Mission Sending Agency met on the campus of Atlanta Bible College recently. Pictured left to right: Judy Myers, Mission Coordinator; Mardy Lawrence, Pastor Vivian Kirkpatrick, Pastor Warren Sorenson, Pastor Dale Swartz.

Atlanta Bible College
Church of God General Conference
P.O. Box 100000
Morrow, GA 30260

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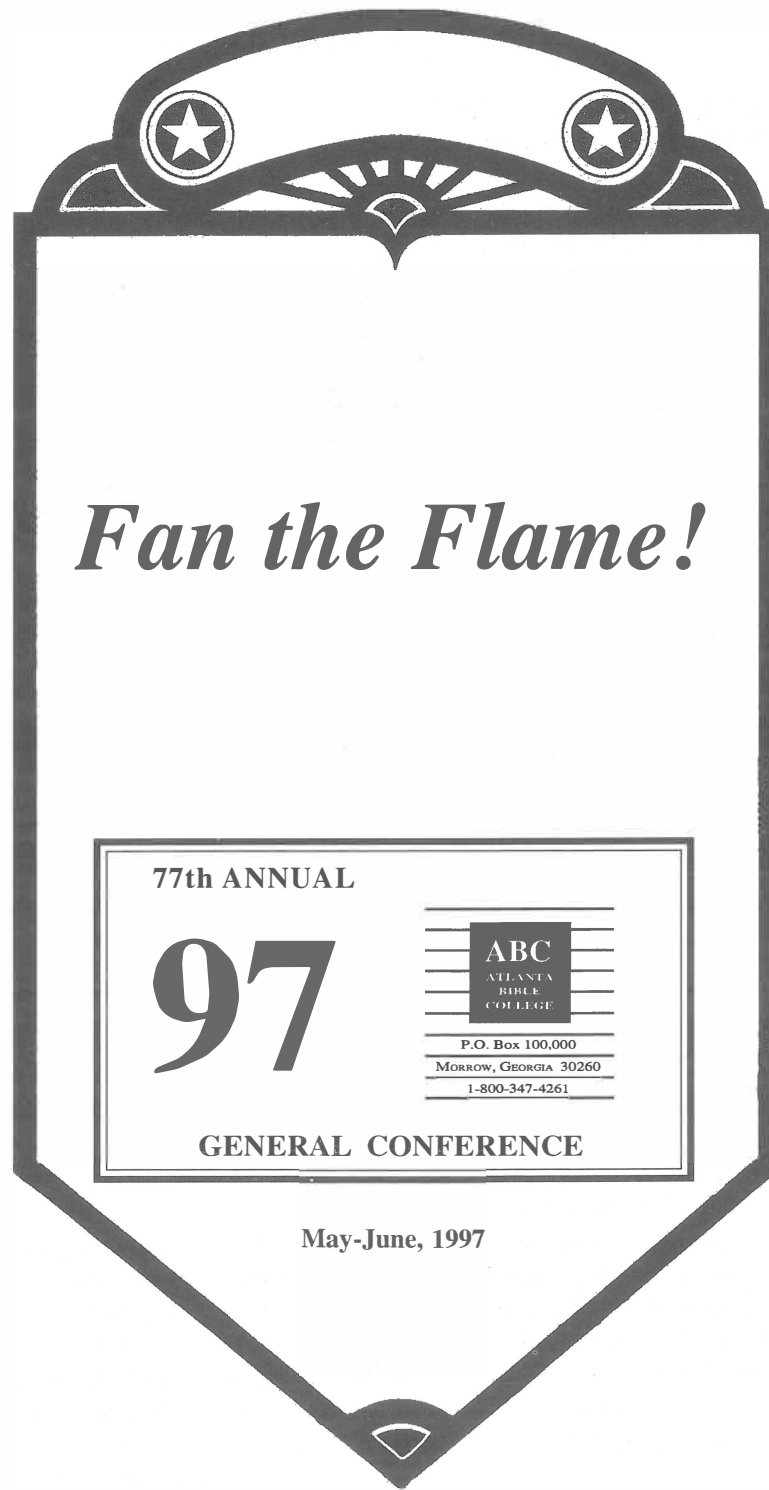
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PROGRESS JOURNAL

Volume 38, Number 4

May, June, 1997

Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference



Church of God General Conference
Annual Report
1996-1997

A Seven Trillion Dollar Transfer

by David Krogh

At a seminar recently it was observed that in the next 15-20 years, seven trillion dollars will be transferred from one generation to another through inheritance. The United States government will collect 70% of this seven trillion dollars in taxes.

An article published by the Institute for Creation Research on stewardship indicated that \$185,000,000 is the estate tax the federal government collected *per week* in 1990 from those who were unprepared to leave their possessions behind. The reason the federal government collected so much estate tax was the failure of people to plan ahead of time to legally distribute their estate to loved ones and/or ministry in a way that would minimize taxes.

Though it is appropriate to give generously to the Lord's work despite the tax consequences, at the present time the United States tax code provides substantial tax benefits to those who give to charity. Many people may not be aware of strategies that could save a tremendous amount of tax while providing a tremendous boost to the Lord's work, such as:

1. A Charitable Remainder Trust — for example, suppose someone has a piece of real estate that produces no income but has increased in value from \$100,000 to \$500,000 since it was purchased. The owner can give it to a charitable trust. The trust sells the property tax-free and then buys a portfolio of investments that earns an average of 8% a year (\$40,000). This income is given to the donor and spouse as long as they live. At the death of the donor and spouse, the charity becomes the sole owner of the \$500,000 of investments. What has happened is that the donor who is receiving zero income from the real estate and would have a potentially large tax liability if the property were sold, is able to receive \$40,000 per year of interest income. If there are heirs who need to be remembered, a portion of the \$40,000 of annual income could be used to purchase a life insurance policy that would pay the heir at the death of the donor.



2. Charitable Gift Annuity — this is an agreement in which a donor transfers cash or appreciated stock to the charity in return for an agreement whereby they receive an income for life. The amount of income depends on their age at the time they receive the income. A portion of the original transfer is deductible from federal income tax and also a portion of the income is tax-free to the recipient.

3. Including the Lord's work in a will is also a wise decision and becomes even more necessary with large estates to help avoid estate taxes. Estate tax begins at 37¢ on every dollar beyond a certain portion that can pass tax-free.

For those who have supported their local church and Atlanta Bible College and the Church of God General Conference during their lifetime, it seems appropriate to remember these works in your estate planning. Since each person's financial situation is different, it is best to consult your own financial planner, or if you would like to be put in touch with a Church of God member who could give you counsel, please contact David Krogh at P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260 or call 1-800-347-4261.

COLLEGE CONFERENCE NEWS

77th Annual Conference

The Church of God General Conference will meet at Northwestern College, St. Paul, Minnesota August 4-8. Included in this issue is information about the program, a registration form, and pertinent information which will be discussed at the conference. Early bird registration must be postmarked by July 3. A special **music camp** for children first grade through eighth grade will be held during the conference. See page O of the center section for more information about this exciting program.

Summer Conference Phone Number

Summer conference attenders may be reached through the Northwestern College switchboard in St. Paul, MN at 612-631-5100.

Nominations Needed

At the summer conference, three positions on the Board of Directors will be filled. Seven nominations have been received for these three positions.

There will also be an election for a four-year term on the Christian Education Advisory Committee and a four-year term on the Higher Education Advisory Committee. Nominations for these two positions will be made from the floor at the delegate sessions.

Pre-Conference Events

The Pine Grove Church will be hosting special pre-conference events on Sunday, August 3. See page 4 for a map to the Pine Grove Church. Sunday School is at 9:00 and worship at 9:50. Other events for the day will be listed in the July JOURNAL. Those planning to attend Sunday activities should check the box on the registration form on the back cover.

Two mini-workshops will be offered on Monday, August 4 from 9:00 to noon

and 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. See page 5 for additional information.

Web Sites

Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference, several churches, and groups have created sites on the internet. If your church or group has a web site, please send the address so it can be published. The sites currently available include:

ABC/Conference: www.abc-coggc.org

Church of the Open Bible, California:
members.aol.com/tolkienjbs

Countryside Bible Church, Missouri:
www.concentric.net/~g2b2w/cbchurch.html

Crossroads Youth Ministry:
www.cyminc.org

Guthrie Grove Church, South Carolina:
www.its-all-here.com/guthriegrave

Hector Church, Minnesota:
www.hectorcog.com

Restoration Fellowship:
www.mindspring.com/~anthonybuzzard

RYOT: www.cyminc.org/ryot.html

Financial Update

At the end of the first ten months of the fiscal year which began July 1, \$280,114 has been contributed. We are grateful for all churches, conferences, and individuals who faithfully provide support for College/Conference ministries. Approximately \$60,000 is needed to cover expenses for the balance of the fiscal year which ends June 30.

Third Quarter at ABC

Following a week of spring break, Atlanta Bible College students returned for the third quarter March 24. Kent Ross is teaching a class on Kingdom Ethics. Anthony Buzzard is teaching Synoptic Gospels, Biblical

Languages, and New Testament Survey II. Joe Martin is teaching Mission Perspectives and the Book of Isaiah. David Krogh is teaching Church and Personal Finance. Students and staff are involved in weekly discipling groups and a chapel service.

Campus Guests

During the end of April and beginning of May, Atlanta Bible College was host to the sixth Theological Conference, the annual Ministers' Conference, and the Worship Conference. Visitors from many parts of the United States as well as Canada and Australia participated in one or more of these events.

The Board of Directors held its annual spring meeting on campus April 26-30.

Motor home parking sites are available on campus for visitors who may be travelling in the southeast United States. Please contact Gary Burnham at 1-800-347-4261 to reserve space.

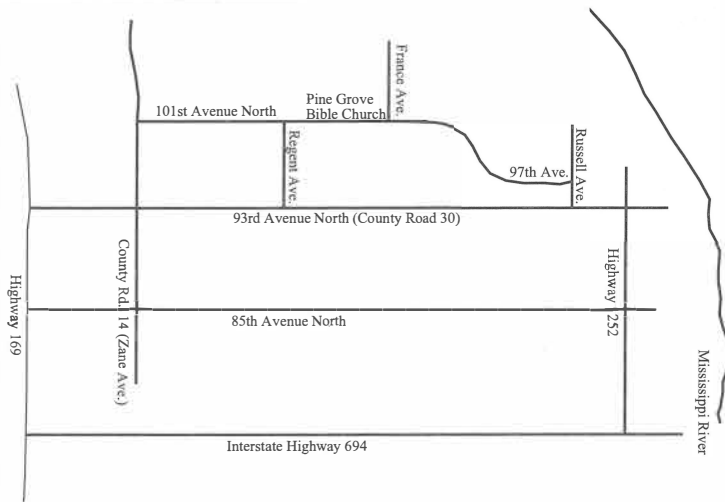
College Graduation

Three students will receive their Bachelor of Theology degrees at a commencement program on June 6. The graduates are Mark Cain, John Nelson, and Tim Spickler. Anthony Buzzard, ABC instructor, will be the graduation speaker. Jeff Osborn and Michelle Turner will receive 1-year freshman foundation certificates and 2-year diplomas of church leadership.



An evening worship service at Calvin College at 1996 Summer Conference.

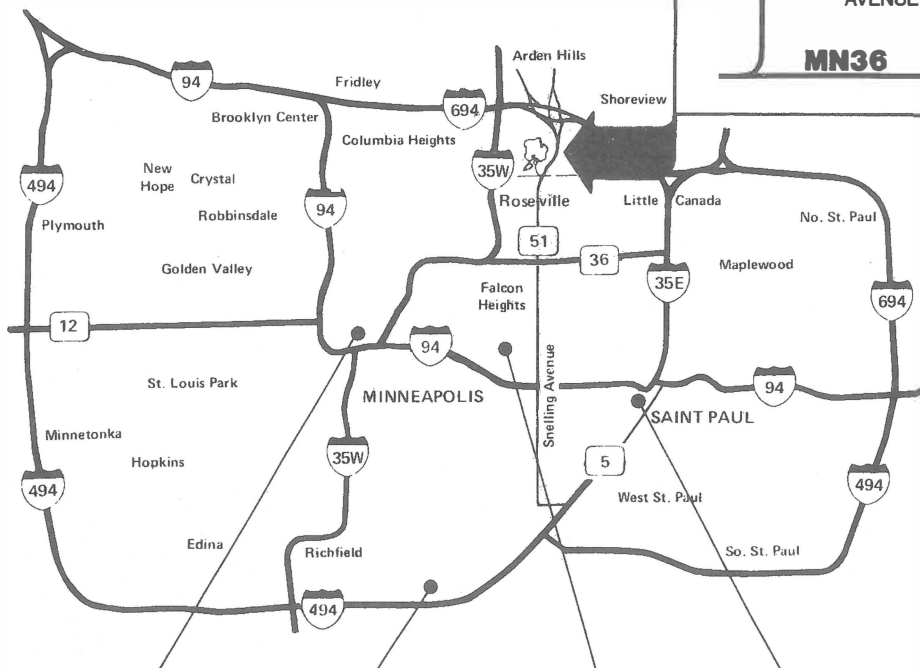
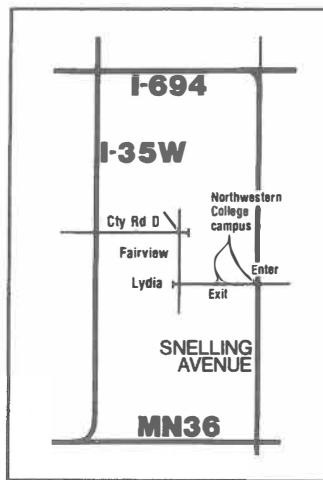
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DIRECTIONS TO: Pine Grove Church
 4000-101st Avenue North
 Brooklyn Park, MN 55443
 (612) 493-4158

Directions to Northwestern College

Northwestern College is located at Snelling and Lydia in Roseville, 2 miles north of Hwy 36 and Snelling or 2 miles south of I-694 and Hwy 51 (Snelling).



Minneapolis Bus Depot Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport Amtrack Train Station St. Paul Bus Depot

Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota

MONDAY, AUGUST 4

- 8:00 Board of Directors' meeting
- 9:00 Mini-Seminars (until noon)
- 1:00 Mini-Seminars cont. (until 3 p.m.)
- 2:00 Registration
- 5:00 Dinner
- 7:00 Evening Service, "Rekindling the Flame," Gary Turner
Communion
- 8:30 Welcome Reception

Schedule
1997 Annual Conference
August 4-8
"Fan the Flame"

TUESDAY, AUGUST 5

- MISSION EMPHASIS
- 7:00 Breakfast/Fellowship
 - 8:30 Morning Devotions — Warren Sorenson; and General Mission Session —
Children's Class
 - 9:15 Break
 - 9:30 Workshops
Youth Classes
 - 10:30 Coffee Break
 - 10:45 Ministers' Meeting
Priscillas' Meeting
Adult Class *map*
Youth Classes
 - 11:45 Lunch
 - 1:30 Prayer Session
Children's Class
 - 1:45 *Business Session*
 - Welcome by Chairman
 - Chairman's Message
 - Preliminary Business
 - Nominations for three positions on Board of Directors
 - Nominations for one position on Higher Education and Christian Education Advisory Committees
 - Review Reports
 - Long Range Planning Recommendation
 - 3:30 Prayer Session
 - 3:45 Free Time
 - 5:00 Dinner
 - 7:00 Evening Service, "Preparing the Lamps" Kent Ross
Junior Church, ages 3-12
 - 8:30 Free Time

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6

- 7:00 Breakfast/Fellowship
- 8:30 Morning Devotions —
Michael Brown
Children's Class
- 9:00 Break
- 9:15 Workshops
Youth Classes
- 10:15 Coffee Break
- 10:45 Ministers' Meeting
Priscillas' Meeting
Adult Class *map*
Youth Classes
- 11:45 Lunch
- 1:30 Prayer Session
Children's Bible School
- 1:45 *Business Session*
 - Reading of Tuesday's Minutes
 - President's Message
 - Election of three Directors
 - Election for Advisory Committees
 - Discussion of Budget
 - Long Range Planning Recommendation
- 3:30 Prayer Session
- 3:45 Free Time
- 5:00 Dinner
- 7:00 Evening Service
Licensing of New Pastors
"Guarding the Flame" Dale Swartz
Junior Church, ages 3-12
- 8:30 Free Time

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7

- 7:00 Breakfast/Fellowship
- 8:30 Morning Devotions
Children's Class
- 9:00 Break
- 9:15 Workshops
Youth Classes
- 10:15 Coffee Break
- 10:45 Ministers' Meeting
Priscillas' Meeting
Adult Class *map*
Youth Classes
- 11:45 Lunch
- 1:30 Prayer Session
Children's Bible Class
- 1:45 *Business Session*
 - Installation of Board
 - Reading of Wednesday's Minutes
 - General Business
 - Adoption of Budget
 - Reading of Final Minutes of 1997 General Conference
- 3:30 Prayer Session
- 3:45 Foundation Board Meeting
Free Time
- 5:00 Dinner
- 7:00 Children's Musicales, Connie Scott, Director
Evening Service, "Spreading the Flame," David Riley
- 8:30 Free Time

1997 GENERAL CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Tuesday, 9:30 a.m.

1. The Will of God for Missions — Warren Sorenson

This workshop will deal with the Bible-based process of missions presenting God's vision for His creation and how He equips mankind through His spirit for the task.

2. Creatively Presenting Missions — Judy Myers

This workshop will provide creative ideas for presenting missions to all ages through projects, object lessons, visuals, games, displays, and bulletin boards.

3. The Kingdom of God: Jesus' Message of Hope — Dale Swartz

The Kingdom of God on the earth is not a popular topic of most religious radio programs or TV evangelists, yet it was Jesus' message to His disciples. What should be our message?

Wednesday, 9:15 a.m.

1. Ministering to Generation Next — Jim Graham

"No ministry in the church is more important than the one we have to those whose minds are still open." Most decisions for Christ are made before age 21 and yet most churches have marginalized youth ministry in their budget and program. Subjects that will be addressed: development of a biblical world view, determining youth ministry philosophy, understanding the world of kids, the role of prayer, leveraging your resources, and teaching in a manner that motivates learning.

2. Getting What You Want and Wanting What You Get? — Jodi Werhanowicz

Have you been achieving fulfillment and satisfaction in every area of life? If you need a boost this highly motivational and very applicable workshop will help.

3. How and Why the Abrahamic Faith Is Different — Anthony Buzzard

This will be a biblical and historical discussion of the roots of the Church of God of the Abrahamic faith.

4. Handling Grief and Loss — Shelly Millard

At one time or another, we all experience some kind of loss. It may be when the children leave home, from down-sizing at work, or losing a loved one to death. With any kind of loss comes a time of grieving. This workshop will explore the different stages of grief, the differing styles of grief and ways of maintaining hope while in the midst of the process of "letting go."

5. Principles of Financial Planning and Deferred Giving — Robert Johnson

This workshop will deal with financial planning and

ways of giving to the Lord's work, taking into consideration tax laws which will benefit donors.

6. Speaking the Truth in Love — ABC Staff

There seems to be concern over how we can be evangelistic and reach those with different or more orthodox beliefs without compromising Bible teachings. Ways will be given to boldly proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom in an attractive way that encourages others to come to Faith. (CEU credit for pastors.)

Thursday, 9:15 a.m.

1. Crossroads Youth Ministry — Dale Bliss

This workshop will introduce Crossroads Youth Ministry whose mission is "to provide resources, encouragement, opportunities, and support to: churches; youth ministries; youth workers; parents/guardians and youth, so young people may come to know Jesus Christ as Lord."

2. Computer-Generated Music for Worship — Greg Shaw

Learn how to provide music accompaniment for your church, if you are lacking in musicians, through the MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface).

3. It Really Does Matter What You Believe! — John Railton

This will be a "hands-on" workshop/Bible study. You will discover yourself just what Jesus and His apostles had to say about the importance of right doctrine.

4. The Joy of Adult Bible Study — Jim Ring

This is a repeat of a very popular workshop offered at the 1996 General Conference. The success of learning and retaining information comes when we enjoy what we're doing. Bible study should never be boring if your example is the "master teacher" — Jesus. Bring your Bibles and we'll have a joyous Bible Study together.

5. The Abrahamic Faith — Francis Burnett

The promises made to Abraham are fundamental to an understanding of Christianity. This class will focus on the Abrahamic covenant and how it relates to the church today.

6. Lives of Integrity — Kent Ross

This workshop will examine how integrity has been compromised even in the church. The world pushes Christians to actions that bring into question their walk of faith. Ministers/church leaders need to constantly examine their words and actions to be sure they walk and talk the way of Christ. (CEU credit for pastors.)

ANNUAL REPORT OF ATLANTA BIBLE COLLEGE/ CHURCH OF GOD GENERAL CONFERENCE

The Church of God General Conference completes its 76th year of service to the membership of the Church of God with thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness. The past year was filled with many significant events but three are most prominent and will seemingly have the most far-reaching implications for our work in the years to come if the Lord tarries.

Institutional Study

First is the Institutional Long-Range Planning Study that was authorized by the delegates at the 1994 summer Conference. Dr. Donna Deane and Kent Ross, co-chairpersons of the study, compiled a 168-page report for review by the Board of Directors. This information included a review of what is happening in the Church of God and at the College and Conference currently; a review of what is happening in ministry, other Bible Colleges, and spiritual needs of the people in today's world; results of a survey indicating the needs of our churches; results of a survey indicating directions that our membership feels the College and Conference should take in the future; as well as a compilation of information from interviews and discussions with groups of Church of God members, advisory committees, students, staff, and faculty.

All this information was compiled into proposals that were discussed by pastors and other interested individuals. Enclosed in this issue of the *PROGRESS JOURNAL* is a recommendation to be considered by the delegates at the Summer Conference.

We offer our heartfelt thanks to every individual who took time to share their views in meetings, in response to surveys, or in letters to the Board and study committee. The success of our organization depends upon effectively knowing and responding to the needs and the wishes of the membership. Special thanks go to Donna Deane and Kent Ross who have led this important project.

Decisions made by the delegates this summer will result in the focus of financial and human resources on those issues that need to be addressed over the next 5-10 years if the Lord tarries. Building on the strengths of the past we will engage in programs and projects that will take us into the next century and millennium. The earnest prayers of the membership for God's leading in the final stages of this process are needed.

Morgan Bequest

The second major event of this year which will shape our work in the future was the generous gift of \$963,000 from the estate of Troy and Geneva Morgan, long-time members of the Church of God. After receiving input from

the membership, the Board responded to the wishes of many to repay \$476,950 of relocation indebtedness. This action has enabled us to conclude the relocation chapter of our history so we can focus on the future and our service to the membership. The balance of the Morgan funds are being held in short-term investments until the delegates act on recommendations that will shape our future.

Focus for the Year

The theme of our association of churches for this past year has been to focus on seeking God and Jesus, to know them and love them in a greater way. Through prayer, fasting, and study of God's Word, many of our members have grown spiritually and grown in their understanding of God's will. We have seen God at work in the lives of members, in churches, at the College, and throughout our Conference. Since God is more concerned about our relationship with Him than in what we do for Him, the strengthening of our spiritual foundation during this year will impact our work in the future. As we become more sensitized to where God is working in the world today, as we understand His plans better, as we become more obedient to His will, we can be confident of His leading and blessing on our future work.

Before reporting on specific activities of the past year, it is important to review the principles and values that undergird our organization.

Principles and Values

According to the Constitution and By-Laws the purpose of the College and Conference is "to assist Church of God members, churches, and conferences to perform their commission, which is to make disciples by bringing the lost to Jesus Christ, and by leading the believer to maturity by providing leadership, resources, and services."

The General Conference is an association of churches and state/district conferences that have voluntarily agreed to work together to accomplish common goals. The Conference serves 79 member churches, 10 non-member churches, and 11 state/district conferences with a membership of a little over 5,000 baptized believers. The Conference also serves the public at large by disseminating Bible truth.

A member church is a Church of God which adheres to the statement of faith contained in the Constitution, which has on record at the General Conference office a statement of affiliation with the General Conference, and that has been approved for membership by the Board of Directors.

Delegates and interested members of the Church of God meet annually in July or August to confer on matters pertaining to the spiritual life and business of the churches. Each member church of 15 or more members, which has held at least six preaching services during the year, is entitled to one delegate for each 50 of its active members or fraction thereof. Members of the Board, one delegate from each state or district conference, and ministers licensed or ordained by the Ministerial Recognition Board are considered delegates at large. These delegates are, under God and Jesus — the head of the church, the ruling body of the Church of God General Conference. These delegates elect a Board of Directors which is responsible to the Conference delegates for the operations of the College/Conference. The Board employs a President who employs a staff and oversees day-to-day work.

The Conference has no authority over local churches. Local churches elect/appoint their own officers, hire/remove a pastor, buy/sell property, establish policies, regulate individual members, and carry out their work as they see fit. The General Conference becomes involved in the affairs of the local church only upon specific invitation from the officials of the church.

In 1888, an effort was put forth to organize a General Conference. Other attempts were made in the early 1900s. In 1921 the Conference was officially organized and a Declaration of Understanding was adopted which stated the following:

1. That we are a voluntary association of members and churches who meet to confer on matters pertaining to Christian welfare, working toward better understanding of truth and more unity where differences of faith exist, evangelization, pastoral work, church organization according to Bible teaching, printing and dissemination of literature in books, charitable and benevolent work, and all other Christian activity.

2. The purposes for which the organization shall be incorporated are:

a. That evangelistic work be extended to meet the needs of the church everywhere, and to open up new fields of missionary activity.

b. That publishing facilities be provided under capable editorial supervision for the issuance of all necessary literature, such as books and booklets, tracts, and



Paul Moore being licensed at 1996 Conference.

systematized lesson leaflets, either for sale or free distribution.

c. That facilities be provided to aid in the education of those desiring to prepare themselves for the ministry, Bible teaching, or other religious work.

In addition, a statement of faith was adopted which formed the biblical foundation for the association of churches, as follows:

(a) That there is "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:6).

(b) That "God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9).

(c) That "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

(d) That "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3, 4).

(e) That God "only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16).

(f) That God "will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life" (Rom. 2:6, 7).

(g) That "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many"; as our High Priest He now sits "at the right hand of God"; "and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

(h) That "when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another" (Matt. 25:31, 32). And He shall "judge the world in righteousness" (Psa. 9:8). "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet (1 Cor. 15:25).

(i) That we "are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of [us] as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ . . . And if [we] be Christ's then are [we] Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:26, 27, 29).

(j) That "we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

(k) That all who are new creatures in Christ Jesus "should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:15).

(l) That Jesus Christ is to return to the earth "in like manner" as He went away, following which event "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever," and there shall be "given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Luke 1:32, 33; Dan. 7:14).

(m) That "now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:22, 23).

(n) That "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

(o) That "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

In reviewing the history of our movement, it is clear that aside from these items listed in the original statement of faith, there was considerable difference of opinion on other biblical and organizational matters. It appears that there may have been considerable latitude given in regard to Bible understanding. In fact, delegates at the 1889 General Conference cautiously recommended that "each church be encouraged to adopt some articles of faith, but they not be so detailed as to cause controversy or to hamper freedom of conscience or private interpretations of the Scriptures."

In regard to that action, Harold Doan, former Executive Director of the General Conference, wrote in 1967:

the struggle between protecting the faith from heresy and the right of individual believers to come to personal conclusions about the Scriptures, was evident and still persists. It should not be thought remarkable to us that each new church generation must wrestle with this matter and decide upon policies.

To our knowledge, no church has ever completely solved the problem. Some authoritarian groups find themselves unable to apply their detailed rules of faith and overlook all but the most obvious and blatant heresies and wink at the presence among themselves of dissenters. Some liberal groups eliminate standards one by one or remain willingly ignorant of the fact that the constituency has departed from the faith. Some have devised elaborate articles of faith where dissent means disfellowship and the result has been a fracturing of the group into innumerable parts at issue over minor points.

Somewhere is the fine biblical line between "contending for the faith" and "trying the spirits" which can result in "unity of the faith."

How wonderful it would be if we could speak as a people on all biblical matters with "one mind and one mouth" (Rom. 15:6)! . . . The fact is that in those matters of consequence in which we always have been agreed, we do speak with one mouth and we are of one mind! There are always new phases of truth coming to the surface through the diligent study of men and women of God. There are new points of emphasis and expanded understanding and new depths of appreciation reached by personal and group study and discussion, but essentials remain intact (Harold Doan in December 1967/January 1968 CHURCH OF GOD PROGRESS JOURNAL).

We affirm today that the statements from the Declaration of Understanding and the doctrinal statement adopted 77 years ago represent the very same principles that direct our work today. We continue to speak with one voice in our statement of faith while permitting differences on other biblical and organizational matters.

As you review the following report, you will observe that the programs and activities of the College and Conference today are performed to serve individual members, churches, and state/district conferences so that they can be as effective as possible in the conversion and spiritual growth of individuals. In reviewing the work of the past twelve months, the College/Conference has served you, our constituency, in the following ways:

COLLEGIATE SERVICES

Oregon Bible College (renamed Atlanta Bible College in 1991) was started in 1939. There are more than 500 individuals who have attended the Bible College for at least 16 credit hours.

Atlanta Bible College offers three academic programs: a one-year Foundation Year Certificate consisting of 45 credit hours; a two-year 90 credit hour Diploma in Church Leadership; and a four-year 211 credit hour Bachelor of Theology Degree with a fifth year of internship.

Students receive their general education courses at Clayton College and State University located adjacent to the campus of ABC. Clayton offers many two- and four-year programs of study. Incoming students are tested to assess their competency level in several areas. A Department of Learning Support offers college preparatory instruction for students lacking in critical basic skills. These valuable resources enhance the educational program of ABC.

During the past year Anthony Buzzard, Joe Martin, and Kent Ross were the primary instructors and David Krogh, Lynne Krogh, and Gary Burnham were part-time instructors.

Two seniors graduated at the end of the 1995-96 school year: Christopher Seiders is currently serving as an intern at Cornerstone Bible Church, McDonough, Georgia under the supervision of Pastor David Riley. He is seeking a church for this fall. Carolyn Smead is an active member of the New Friends Bible Church, Morrow, Georgia and is the wife of Conference employee Daniel Smead.

Enrollment at the College this year is the lowest it has been for a number of years. This is partly due to the declining number of high school graduating seniors in the Church of God. Twenty-one students have been enrolled for one or more classes. Based on full-time equivalency (FTE — the total number of credit hours pursued by students, divided by a normal full-time course load of 15 credit hours), students were enrolled at ABC 8.87 FTE and they were enrolled 4.46 FTE at Clayton College. Recruitment of students who are interested in preparing for lay or professional ministry is an ongoing concern. More students are needed to meet the leadership needs of the Church of God and to maintain the College as a viable institution. Recruitment efforts are in the capable hands of Julie Driskill and these efforts consist of personal, tele-

phone, and written communications with prospective students; promotion of the College at the annual R.Y.O.T. (Youth Congress); and the hosting of an annual College Invitational Conference to which prospective students are invited. The March, 1997 invitational brought 35 prospective students and sponsors to the campus where they participated in classes, servant evangelism outreach projects, personal interviews, and other programming.

During the winter quarter, Kent Ross conducted a Church History extension course in southern Ohio on three Saturdays. Eighteen students were enrolled. The College will continue to make available extension courses as needed and the College is exploring ways of delivering courses through the Internet and/or by correspondence with non-resident students.

The highlight of the school year was an introductory retreat at the beginning of the school year at a beautiful retreat center west of Atlanta. Jodi Werhanowicz of Phoenix, Arizona was a guest teacher during the retreat. Other sessions were led by Kent Ross and David Krogh. The retreat was an opportunity to lay a spiritual foundation for the school year and for students and staff to get well acquainted. Small discipling groups were organized at the retreat and they continued through the year.

In addition to academic work, students are required to participate in practical ministry at New Friends Bible Church or Cornerstone Bible Church, both located in the Atlanta area. Through the year, students have been involved in teaching and leading children's classes, youth ministry, worship service preparation and leading, evangelistic phone calling, door knocking, servant evangelism projects, helping construct a house with Habitat for Humanity, nursing home visitation, and counseling. Some students have been involved in gospel team visits to local churches, and some have participated in the Summer Ministries Program, assisting with Bible Schools and calling in churches around the country. These practical experiences improve learning in the classroom and the development of more skilled workers for our churches.

The spiritual life of the college was enhanced by weekly chapel services. Guest speakers, as well as students and staff, led the worship services. Also, evening devotions are held weekly in the apartment building.

Joe Martin continued his academic work during the year on his Doctoral Degree from Columbia Theological Seminary. This spring, he will complete his classroom work and will begin his dissertation.

In addition to being involved in ministry in the local churches, faculty and staff have also been involved in community activities including the Kiwanis Club, Habitat for Humanity, and the Chamber of Commerce.

During the year, Sarah Buzzard served as Librarian; Julie Driskill as Apartment Director; Gary Burnham as Controller; Lisa Ikner as Secretary to Vice President Kent Ross; Diane Redd as Secretary to the President; and Merry Peterson as Receptionist and Secretary. The maintenance staff consists of Glyn Craig and Tracy Swartz.

The College sponsored a trip to the Holy Land October 22-30. Instructor Joe Martin led the group of eight Church

of God travelers. Another trip is scheduled for February 11, 1998 with Anthony Buzzard as tour leader.

John Nelson served as Student Government President this year. An Activities Committee scheduled many picnics, trips, sports activities, and other social events for the student body and staff.

For the past seven years, in cooperation with the Ministerial Association, pastors have been invited to serve as campus chaplains for a week at a time, usually one per quarter. The Ministerial Association graciously helps to fund this program. Pastor Jeff Fletcher of the Happy Woods, Louisiana Church of God was on campus in May of 1996. Pastor Scott Deane of Pleasant Hill, Ohio was on campus in the fall quarter. In January, the Lord's Harvest International Board, consisting of Judy Myers, Mardy Lawrence, Pastor Warren Sorenson, Pastor Vivian Kirkpatrick, and Pastor Dale Swartz, were all on campus. They had opportunity to visit with students and to attend classes along with spending time in their meetings. Pastor Warren Sorenson spoke in chapel that week. We appreciate the willingness of pastors to serve in this way, we appreciate the support of the Ministerial Association for the program, and we are grateful for the churches that permit their pastors to be on campus for a week.

The Higher Education Advisory Committee, consisting of Kent Ross, Chairman, Dr. Donna Deane, Dr. John Guthrie, and Dr. William Lawrence, met along with David Krogh for an extended meeting in conjunction with the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges annual meeting in St. Petersburg, Florida in February. Considerable time was spent discussing the work of the College in light of the Institutional Long-Range Planning Study. Several sessions at the AABC meeting regarding the delivery of classes over the Internet were particularly helpful.

We are grateful to all of the churches, groups, individuals, and families who have provided financial aid to ABC students during the past year. In addition to over \$20,000 received in annual contributions for financial aid, we currently have nearly \$300,000 of restricted scholarship endowment funds that have been established in memory or in honor of Church of God members. These invested funds provide grant and scholarship funds for students based upon criteria established by the donors. In addition to scholarships and supplemental grants, a generous basic grant, funded by contributions to the general fund, is provided to all students who attend the College. As a private college, we and our students are ineligible for federal financial aid. Therefore, the generous aid provided by supporters of the College makes it possible to keep the cost of enrollment reasonable for our students.

PASTOR/CHURCH SERVICES

The Conference provides many services to strengthen and assist existing churches and to facilitate the starting of new churches.

Youth

The annual R.Y.O.T. (Youth Congress) was held again at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, July 22-26. The

theme was "Radical Youth Overcoming Today." This theme was based on 1 John 5:4 which states that "Every one born of God overcomes the world." The attendance was 244 youth, youth workers, and staff. Fifteen individuals made decisions to accept Christ and many experienced renewed commitment. These people were prepared to make these decisions in local churches through the efforts of pastors, S.S. teachers, and youth leaders. Zachary Ross won the ABC Scholarship based on competitive testing. The state of Michigan had the largest attendance of 31. Arizona and Illinois tied for second place with 30 each. The state of Arkansas won the 1996 Quiz Championship.

Pastor Jim Graham, Youth Coordinator, publishes a monthly newsletter for pastors and youth workers. He also participated in a youth retreat at the Northeast Conference last spring at which 97 were in attendance. Members of the Youth Advisory Committee assist him with his work: Pastor Dale Bliss, Pastor Tim Eldred, and Mr. Joe James.

Missions

Judy Myers serves as Mission Coordinator. She and members of the Lord's Harvest International Board, consisting of Pastor Vivian Kirkpatrick, Pastor Warren Sorenson, Pastor Dale Swartz, and Mrs. Mardy Lawrence, oversee foreign mission work. In order to more effectively develop policy and carry out programs in mission fields, the Board has designated two types of mission projects:

Mission Fields — these will be fields where a Church of God trained individual will go to establish a new work. The goal will be for the missionary to establish the work and reach lost individuals who will be nurtured and given responsibility for carrying on the work. These missionaries will secure prayer and financial support from their home church and conference, from individuals, and from other church groups. Funds are channeled through the Conference for record-keeping purposes and to facilitate the disbursement of funds.

Other projects will be called Teaching Fields. These are countries that have established churches, workers, and a congregation. Efforts will be put forward to help native workers understand the Scripture better and to be more effective in ministry. Normally these fields will be helped with short-term mission teams.

Mission fields, such as the one being carried on in St. Petersburg, Russia by Tracy Savage, require ongoing financial assistance. Teaching fields will need funds only when a team is formed to visit the country.

In the summer of 1996 a team of six individuals, Pastor Richard Eldred, Michelle Turner, Jason Catlin, Zuaquis Alford, Nicole Wegner, and Judy Myers, spent 2½ weeks in Russia assisting Tracy Savage in her work there.

During the summer a team consisting of Jim and Martha Mattison, Joe and Rebekah Martin, and Anthony Buzzard traveled to Malawi to encourage the brethren.

Dean Moore, representing the Lord's Harvest International Board, traveled to Mexico to encourage the church in Labor Vieja.

We continue to have contact with Church of God members in India, Peru, and the Philippines.

Marching for Missions was observed again during the month of March. Church of God members focused on missions with special Bible readings and prayer.

Media

From the very beginning of our organization, the publication of literature has been a foundation of our work. *The Restitution Herald*, now in its 86th year of publication, predates the founding of our Conference in 1921. *The Restitution Herald* provides a variety of articles on Bible truth, the spiritual life, evangelism, worship, etc. The number of paid subscriptions continues to decline by about 9% per year. Pastor Jeff Fletcher is the editor. Current circulation is about 750.

A curriculum for Sunday School is available for six age levels. The editors are: Kindergarten — Irene Sorenson; Primary and Junior — Paula Kirkpatrick; Junior High — Warren Sorenson; Teen — Terri Moore; Adult — Russell and Joyce Magaw.

Daniel Smead is the Technical Director of Publishing, Sarah Buzzard is Proofreader, and Chris Seiders helps several hours a week with layout and design. Technology is rapidly changing the publishing process. The use of desktop publishing software and computers makes a smooth transition from the writers to the printer. Two part-time positions in the Publishing Department are no longer necessary because of new technology.

Several Church of God families are funding an experimental radio program called *Focus on the Kingdom*. Anthony Buzzard is the speaker Monday through Friday for a program that airs in the Atlanta area from 3:00–3:15 p.m. The programs are also being broadcast in the Dallas–Fort Worth area. As the name implies, the series deals with the Bible teachings regarding the message of the Kingdom and the return of Jesus Christ. Several responses are being received each week.

The Journal from the Radical Reformation has been published for six years. Many contacts with theologians are generated through this scholarly work. Kent Ross and Anthony Buzzard serve as senior editors, with Jeff Fletcher and Scott Deane as associate editors.

Christian Education

Gayle Guthrie serves as the coordinator of the Christian Education Advisory Committee. Carol Ring, Christy Ross, and Pastor Billie Kennedy serve on the committee. A manual of ideas for Sunday School superintendents, teachers, and other Christian education leaders continues to be published. Efforts continue to provide an alternative young adult curriculum.

The Advisory Committee sponsored a Christian Education Day at the 1996 summer General Conference. Outstanding Christian educators in the Church of God were recognized for their service.

Special Events

Several special conferences were held during the past year for the benefit of pastors and lay workers in the Church of God:

The fifth Theological Conference was held May 3-6, 1996. Guest speakers included Alan Eyre of Jamaica and John Cunningham of Northern Ireland. The conference was planned by Anthony Buzzard and Kent Ross.

The annual Church of God Ministers' Conference was held May 6-10, 1996. Pastors met on the campus of Atlanta Bible College for their program on the theme "That We May Be One." The program was planned by the Ministerial Association.

Christian Workers' Seminar was held April 6-11 at the Holiday Inn in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee with 140 in attendance. This is the largest attendance in many years. Kent Ross is Seminar Coordinator.

Other Services

Church Development Aid — The General Conference provides financial aid to churches that meet requirements established by the Board. Several years ago the policy was changed to permit aid to be granted to churches that are adding staff beyond the senior pastor. The following churches have received aid during 1996-97: Beloit New Life, Wisconsin; Cornerstone, Georgia; Blessed Hope, Rockford, Illinois. Up to \$21,000 is available, spread over five years.

Church Planting Aid — The General Conference also provides financial assistance to help new churches begin. Three churches received aid during the past year: New Friends, Georgia; Beloit New Life, Wisconsin; Cornerstone, Georgia. \$12,000 is available spread over four years.

Church Builders' League — Appeal No. 76 issued in the spring of 1996 went to Cornerstone Bible Church which acquired 10 acres of land for a new building. Appeal No. 77 issued in the fall of 1996 went to the Farmington, Missouri Church of the Open Bible to acquire their own meeting place. Approximately 592 individuals contribute \$25 or more per appeal to assist with church buildings, acquisition of land, etc.

Summer Ministries — The Church of God General Conference Summer Ministries Program was started in 1993 with a twofold purpose: first to provide assistance to local churches and state conferences by conducting Bible Schools, assisting with classes at state camps, and assisting with evangelistic calling and outreach. The second purpose is to provide opportunities for young people to gain experiences in ministry and to grow spiritually.

Since the program was started by Christy Ross, it has continued to grow each year under subsequent leadership by Amy Berry Berner, and currently, Sarah Buzzard. The following churches and conferences were served last summer: Macomb, Illinois; Minnesota State Camp; New Friends, Georgia; Cool Spring, Virginia; Pennellwood, Michigan; Columbia Station, Ohio; Washington State Camp; and Brush Creek, Ohio. Ten individuals were involved in one or more of the ministry teams.

Lending Library — Atlanta Bible College has an extensive collection of video and audio tapes and other re-

sources that are available for loan without charge to churches. A variety of topics are covered including: church and society, creation vs. evolution, evangelism and church growth, finances, leadership, missions, relationships, spiritual growth, Sunday School training, theology and preaching, and youth ministry. A catalog of all of the materials is available from the College/Conference.

Miscellaneous Services — The General Conference provides other assistance to local churches and pastors which are reported in this JOURNAL under Reports of Related Organizations and Boards (ministers' retirement, Christian conciliation, licensing of pastors, loans to churches).

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

The Business Office provides a wide variety of services to the membership as well as serving the organization internally. Gary Burnham is the Controller and Michelle Turner is the Assistant to the Controller/Supervisor of the Mailing Department. Aaron Wells served as on-site Computer Coordinator until September. He now lives in Illinois, but continues to assist our computer operations by modem. The Business Office handles all accounting and financial records, purchases, sales, student housing, rental property, computer operations, maintenance, and the College bookstore.

Fund the Dream Campaign

The Board of Directors recommended and delegates at the 1996 Conference approved a motion that we focus only on Phase I of the Fund the Dream Campaign which deals with the repayment of relocation loans. The motion stated that the rest of the Fund the Dream Campaign would be brought back at a later time for reconsideration in view of the Long-Range Institutional Study. As of March 31 we have received commitments of \$206,022 toward relocation loans. Of this amount \$124,351.46 has been received in cash. When the Board allocated \$476,950 of the Morgan estate to be used for repayment of loans, it was with the understanding that those who had already made commitments for the Fund the Dream Campaign would complete those payments. We are deeply grateful to the 136 individuals, families, and groups that are participating in the campaign.

Contributions

Sixty-three of the 79 churches that are members of the General Conference contributed to the general operations Goal for Giving in 1996. We are grateful for each church that contributes a portion of their income to support Atlanta Bible College and the General Conference. Non-contributing churches have been encouraged by the Board of Directors to become regular supporters. We are also grateful for the nearly 600 individuals and families who contribute nearly half of the funds needed to support general operations. We also are thankful for the state conferences and groups that contribute regularly.

At this point in the fiscal year, contributions to the Goal for Giving are 2% less than last year at this time.

Sale of Property in Illinois

The Golden Rule Administration Building is the only remaining part of the Illinois campus that is unsold. We have accepted an offer on the property with closing to take place by July 15.

Indebtedness

During our relocation effort, the College/Conference has never owed money to an outside financial institution. All current debt of Atlanta Bible College and the Church of God General Conference is covered by commitments of contributions, or it is secured by contracts, or by real estate, as follows:

Relocation Loans — approximately \$350,000 of relocation loans will be repaid as follows: \$100,000 anticipated from the sale of the Administration Building in Illinois; \$183,000 from a contract for deed on the sale of the Women's Dorm in Illinois; the balance from Fund the Dream commitments.

Operating Loans — Over the past 15 years, funds have been borrowed internally to cover operating expenses when contributions have fallen short of the Goal for Giving. Currently these loans total \$163,641.51. This indebtedness will be repaid from the following sources: a contract has been accepted on a 5.4-acre parcel of ground which the General Conference owns in Colorado Springs in the amount of \$75,000. The Board has also designated the proceeds from the sale of the Arkansas City, Kansas church building which was deeded to the General Conference to be used to repay this indebtedness. The property is currently listed for \$24,900. The balance of this debt will be covered by a portion of a trust which will be received in August of 1997. No general operating loans have been needed this year.

Duplex Loans — After the relocation to Georgia, the Board of Directors authorized the purchase of four duplexes on Trammell Road across from the campus. These properties were purchased for a total price of \$308,749. Rents are being used to cover expenses and to repay the loans which were taken out for the purchase. There is a current balance of \$234,638 owed on these properties.

Restricted Funds

Though contributions to the Goal for Giving (operating funds) continue to be a little less than needed to cover current expenses, the College/Conference continues to increase the assets of restricted funds. Restricted funds are funds that have been given by the donors which are earmarked for specific projects or activities, or where the donor specifies that the principal is to be preserved and only the interest earnings are to be used.

The larger restricted funds are as follows:

•Atlanta Bible College Development Foundation — \$1,118,000 — only the interest earnings may be used to assist Atlanta Bible College.

- Ministers' Voluntary Retirement Association — \$803,614 — earmarked for retirement benefits for Church of God pastors and College/Conference staff
- Atlanta Bible College Scholarship Funds — \$290,199 — funds given in memory of various individuals to be used for scholarships for Atlanta Bible College students
- Elton Fund — \$124,064 — designated to be used to help provide scholarships for Atlanta Bible College interns
- Mission Endowment Fund — \$209,695 — designated by the donor to be used to assist with special mission trips and projects
- Investment Fund — \$77,000 — funds to be used to make loans to churches
- Canadian Development Fund — \$64,912 — to be used for church work in Canada
- Hearp/Delap Loan Fund — \$60,000 — to be used to make loans to churches
- Church Planting Fund — \$24,844 — to be used to assist church planting projects
- Annuity Fund — \$151,384 — investment income is used to pay interest earnings to annuitants, until their death at which time the funds are released to be used at the discretion of the Board of Directors
- Savage Endowment Fund — \$20,000 — interest earnings to be used to assist Atlanta Bible College

In addition, there are a multitude of small funds for the Russia mission work, other mission fields, the Ministers' Loan Fund, publishing reserve fund, vehicle replacement fund, radio ministry fund, etc.

We appreciate the individuals and groups that have generously contributed funds over the years which have given financial stability to the College and Conference and which provide ongoing support for programs and activities.

Net Worth

Over the past ten years, the net worth of the College and Conference (the total value of all assets minus all debts) has nearly doubled from \$2,098,843 in 1986 to slightly over \$4,000,000 today. We praise God for His faithfulness in providing the financial resources necessary for our work, and we are grateful to all of God's people who have responded to needs and opportunities.

CONCLUSION

We are grateful for our heritage and realize that it is the seed that will bring forth a harvest in the future. Working with the mighty God of the universe, Church of God members and congregations will be fruitful in ministry until the return of Jesus to establish the Kingdom of truth and righteousness on the earth. Maranatha!

— This report was prepared by President David Krogh. It was reviewed by the Board of Directors at their meeting on April 26-29. It is presented to you as a report of the Board to the membership of the Church of God.

SPECIAL REPORTS

Ministers' Voluntary Retirement Association

The mission of the Retirement Association is to increase assets to provide retirement benefits for Church of God pastors and employees of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference and their families. During the past year we continued to increase our financial strength. Assets have increased nearly 13% over assets on hand a year ago after making a sizable lump sum distribution. Through a wide range of investments, the association has experienced steady growth. Current members have a little over \$1 million accumulated and benefits of \$471,000 have been distributed since the beginning of the program.

The association membership consists of 34 active and four inactive pastors/staff, 45 churches, and six conferences. Five pastors and eight spouses are drawing benefits. Twenty-five members have withdrawn from the association and received lump sum settlements.

The association is administered by trustees Gary Burnham, Bill Gaspar, and David Krogh.

Pastors and churches not currently enrolled are invited to participate. Additional information can be secured from any of the trustees.

— David Krogh, Secretary

Church of God Investment Fund

The Church of God Investment Fund exists to make loans to churches for the purchase of property, remodeling, constructing buildings, purchase of parsonages, etc. As of March 31, 1997 the fund balance was approximately \$77,000. Six churches have outstanding loans from the fund. Additional money is available. Please contact David Krogh for a loan application.

The trustees of the fund are Bill Burnham, Robert Smith, William D. Lawrence, and David Krogh.

— David Krogh, Secretary

Atlanta Bible College Development Foundation

The Development Foundation exists for the purpose of providing financial support for the programs of Atlanta Bible College. The original goal was to raise \$1,000,000 for this endowment fund. After reaching the goal, additional contributions have been received and investments have performed extremely well over the past several years. Assets have grown to \$1,118,000. Over \$70,000 is earned annually. Ten percent of the earnings is added to the principal each year and the balance is used to support Atlanta Bible College programs as follows:

| | |
|--|----------|
| Basic grants to students | \$41,000 |
| Capital expenditures (library and equipment) | \$3,000 |
| Holy Land grants | \$5,000 |
| Presidential Scholarships for new students | \$5,000 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Staff training | \$2,000 |
| Recruitment | \$4,000 |
| Grants for summer Conference | \$2,000 |
| Added to principal | \$7,000 |
| Audit and operating expenses | <u>\$1,800</u> |
| | \$70,800 |

The foundation is administered by President, Pastor Billie Kennedy; Vice President, Pastor Gary Turner; Secretary, Pastor Dale Swartz; Treasurer, Don Overmyer; and Directors, Lynn Berry, Dr. Donna Deane, Jim Hamilton, Joe James, Clarence Jones, Dr. William Lawrence, Paul Overholser, Robert Petry, and Terri Tschaenn.

— Trustees of the Foundation

Today's Good News Television Ministry

The Today's Good News Television Ministry continues under the direction of Pastor Steve Taylor in Lafayette, Indiana. While not a department of the Church of God General Conference, the ministry of Today's Good News serves the people and churches of the Conference.

During 1996, fifteen broadcast programs were produced. Approximately one program per month is being produced in 1997. The primary outlet for these programs has been weekly cablecasts in the Lafayette area. A series of programs were cablecast in Peoria, Illinois. All broadcast programs are produced so that they can be customized for local use with commercial spots by the local sponsoring church or organization, and local phone numbers and addresses.

A series of non-broadcast programs entitled *Bible Conversations* featuring the teaching ministry of Anthony Buzzard was produced in 1996. Study guides are being developed for this series. The Eden Valley, Minnesota Church of God utilized some of this series in their midweek program.

A major breakthrough came for this ministry during 1996 with the anonymous donation of three u-matic 3/4" video tape decks and nearly 100 u-matic tapes. The equipment and tapes have a value of approximately \$2,000 - \$2,500. With this addition to the ministry we are able to produce and loan broadcast tapes for local cable use. We would encourage your church to consider utilizing this ministry.

The primary means for financial support of this ministry is personal and church gifts, and revenue from the Lifeline telephone long distance program. Special thanks to the following for their gifts to the Today's Good News Ministry: Hedrick, Indiana Church of God; Oregon, Illinois Church of God Missionary Department; Glad Tidings, Ontario Church of God Missionary Department; and Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference.

— Steve Taylor, Director

Christian Conciliation Board

The Conciliation Board is a service of the Church of God General Conference for the enrichment of our church family. The New Testament church and its leadership had problems, and it is from their experiences that we can learn how to reconcile, forgive, and restore each other. The members of the Conciliation Board are available individually and/or collectively to help churches and pastors. The members are glad to provide assistance over the telephone, or when necessary one or more members can travel to a church to provide on-site assistance. During the past year the Conciliation Board has visited three churches and has provided telephone consultation to these and other churches.

The Conciliation Board also provides some educational services related to its mission. A member of the board taught two classes at the 1997 Christian Workers' Seminar on "Guilt and Forgiveness" and "Maintaining and Restoring Relationships."

We encourage churches and pastors to contact the board before a problem or conflict gets out of hand and beyond conciliation.

The services of the Christian Conciliation Board may be secured by contacting a board member directly or through the President of the General Conference.

— Joe E. James, Chairman;
Michele Millard, Michael Hoffman

Ministerial Recognition Board

Ministers Licensed:

Greg Shaw received his three-year provisional license facilitating one year internship and two-years mentoring program for a full-time church staff position, doing music and youth work in the Phoenix Arizona church; **Seth Ross** received his three-year provisional license facilitating one year internship and two years mentoring program to begin pastoring the North Hills Church of God in Ohio doing his internship under Craig Waggoner; **Tim Spickler** received his three-year provisional license facilitating one year internship and two-year mentoring program, and began pastoring the Family Bible Fellowship in Rockford, Illinois; **Paul Moore** received his permanent license again after making application to renew his license which had lapsed due to inactive ministry. Paul is currently pastoring the Gatesville, Texas Church of God.

Interviews 1996 - 1997 year

April, 1996: **Chris Seiders** was interviewed at Christian Workers' Seminar by the Ministerial Recognition Board; May, 1996: **Dan Kennedy** had his third interview following his internship and first year of his mentoring program; **Mike Cisler** did his second interview subsequent to completing his internship; **Mark Tschaenn** did his second interview subsequent to completing his internship; **Seth Ross** did his first interview prior to his internship; Aug., 1996: **Tim Spickler** did his interview just prior to his internship.

There were other interviews planned and completed in an effort to maintain closer contact with ministers after they go into the field. The criteria for these "ongoing interviews"

is to stay current with the minister's satisfaction and effectiveness in ministry. The "ongoing interview" gives us a chance to encourage ministers. These interviews are made randomly by the M.R. Board and have no bearing on the ministerial licensing process.

Continuing Education

The ministers of the Church of God continue to complete their continuing education units. Many have reported very scholarly ambitious units in various studies that have definitely raised the quality of the Church of God ministerium.

Research is being done to find a way to make information collected on continuing education forms available to the organization in a practical way, to afford committees planning conferences and seminars the information necessary to utilize the acquired skills and education of these pastors. Utilizing their continuing education could perhaps be one of the best ways of encouraging them to continue to develop themselves, plus edifying the whole body by use of these acquired skills and education.

There is also effort being made to produce an exit interview questionnaire to give us contact as ministers leave the ministry for whatever reason.

There were a couple of ministers whose license status changed as a result of not having completed the required number of continuing education units. These are being followed up and encouraged as necessary so that everyone will come under compliance. No one has been removed from active ministry as a result of pending C.E.U. compliance.

Mentor Program

Providing mentors for our new ministers is an on going job of the Ministerial Recognition Board. A mentor is a minister who is assigned to build a meaningful relationship with a new minister to guarantee support and encouragement in ministry. We are very grateful for the many ministers in the Conference who recognize the great value of a good mentor for these new pastors. There is good cooperation in finding and producing meaningful mentor relationships. These mentors give written reports to the Ministerial Recognition Board on an annual basis.

Personal File

A form soliciting background information was produced and given to all the ministers of the Church of God to be filled out and returned to the M.R. Board in order to upgrade the active file that is maintained on each minister. Nearly all of the ministerium has complied in turning in that form.

The Church of God owes a debt of gratitude to pastors who have been faithful to their congregations and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God — individuals who have pastored with the dedication and commitment characteristic of true disciples of Christ. These serve to the Glory of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Praise God for the faithful ministers of the Church of God, and pray for them that their hearts and minds would be strengthened as they continue to feed the flock of God.

— Ray Hali, Chairman

RECOMMENDATION FOR DELEGATE ACTION

Institutional Long-Range Planning

The Board of Directors recommends the establishment of eight one-year task forces: Evangelism, Finance, Atlanta Bible College, Technology, Communication and Marketing, Publications, Youth, Purpose Statement. The purpose of each task force is to review the long-range planning data

and determine priorities and directions related to the particular area. Task forces will be made up of volunteers and Board-appointed individuals. Members of each task force will have the responsibility of developing implementation strategies in these areas and making recommendations to the Board of Directors by April 1, 1998.

Explanation: The Board has completed their review of the long-range study information. These eight areas have been deemed as priorities in the future directions for the College and Conference. The task forces will be made up of pastors, Board members, and church members.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Charles G. Bottolfs

Charles was born on November 8, 1937 in Hammond, Louisiana. He is a lifelong member of the Happy Woods Church of God. He has been married to his wife, Sylvia, for 37 years and they have three children, all members of the Happy Woods Church.

He has a lifetime of experience in church leadership. He is currently serving in his 32nd year as an elder and member of the Happy Woods Church Executive Board, where he is chairman. He has also served on the board of the Louisiana State Conference. He is a dedicated worker within the church, serving in many ways including: teacher of an adult Sunday School class, member of the stewardship committee and worship committee, and liturgist (worship leader). He is a true servant of God who is equally willing to preach a sermon in the pastor's absence as to sweep the floor following a church social.

In addition to his work in the church he has an outstanding record of civic leadership within the community:

- Board of Directors of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce (3 years)
- Past Chairman of the River Parishes Chamber of Commerce
- La Place Rotary Board of Directors
- Member of Southeastern Louisiana University I. T. Advisory Committee (6 years)

- Member and Co-Chairperson of River Parishes Education Initiatives
- Member of Louisiana Chemical Assn. Public Relations Committee and LA Chemical Association

In 1994 he retired from his position as Manager of Community Relations for the E. I. du Pont Corporation, La Place, LA. He is currently self-employed and operates a consulting service.

Charles is a man of integrity, has an excellent knowledge of God's word, and possesses a tremendous commitment to the growth of the church. He has the kind of servant leadership skills that will be a tremendous asset to the Church of God General Conference Board of Directors.

Charles believes that the General Conference and Atlanta Bible College exist to serve the churches of the General Conference by providing services and pastors/leaders for the future growth of all of our churches and Conference. The essence of this philosophy is "Doing together what we cannot do alone."

He believes that the General Conference serves as a focal point for all inquiries not directed to a specific church and provides general direction to churches in matters of church growth, pastoral care, church management (i.e. guidelines for church treasurers, secretaries, etc.), evangelism, pastoral relations, benefits and other items of common interest in churches.

He believes that Atlanta Bible College should be providing future leaders, pastors. Also it should provide a Christian education in a variety of fields when and if possible, so our young men and women would desire to attend the institution when they complete high school rather than choosing a non-sectarian institution.

The Conference exists to serve the churches and members throughout the world. It should provide a focal point for questions and the collective efforts of the churches. It provides a vehicle where those outside our body may look for one voice relating to our doctrines and overall directions.

Currently the College exists to train leaders and pastors for the Church of God General Conference. These people should provide leadership in the various churches and in the General Conference administration as well.

What he would like to accomplish if elected: provide a sense of clarity about the mission of the General Conference and Atlanta Bible College among our members and their churches. Second, he would like to provide a viable method of achieving the goals established by the Board of Directors and attain them.

— Happy Woods Church of God

David W. Cheatwood

David is a 1971 graduate of Oregon Bible College. He has had experience

as a grocery manager and trouble-shooter, warehouse supervisor, and department manager for Warehouse Shoes. He has pastored the following churches: Lombard, Illinois; Bedford, Ohio; Eden Valley, Minnesota; and

Blessed Hope Bible Church in Rockford, Illinois for the past 12 years.

He has been married to his wife Wanda for 36 years. They have four sons, Dennis, Mark, Jon, and Tony, and eleven grandchildren. He has held

office in the Northeast Conference Ministers Association, Minnesota Ministers Association, and Illinois Ministerial Association. He has worked on the Northeast, Minnesota, and Illinois Conference boards. He worked 10 years with the Berean Youth Congress. He directed the Northeast and Minnesota camps for a period of 15 years. He served on the License and Ordination Board for the General Con-

ference for three years. He wrote a column for a newspaper for six years.

He believes the College/Conference is in business to support and encourage pastors and churches as well as to train pastors and Christian workers. He also believes we must produce worthwhile materials that support and teach our unique doctrines.

As a member of the Board he would like to promote unity within the body

of believers in cooperation between churches, pastors, and conferences. He believes communication and compassion are the keys to this action. His hope is to encourage togetherness of purpose and direction. He would like us to move forward under Christ's leadership and do together what He has for us to complete before He returns.

—Ministerial Association

Roger Crocker

Roger Crocker was born in Spartanburg, SC in 1949. He is a member of the Bethel Church of God in Pelzer, SC and has been a member since 1963.

He graduated from Draughons Business College with studies involving business administration and accounting. Roger has retired from the life insurance industry after 24 years. He served as secretary/treasurer, vice president and then president of the National Association of Life Underwriters. He also served on the Board of Directors for the same organization.

His civic activities include serving as a youth baseball coach, a scout master with Blue Ridge Council, BSA, and an Eagle Scout.

Roger has been married to Patricia for 27 years, and is the father of Matthew who is 21 years of age. Roger's parents were V.M. and Leila Crocker, both long-time members of the Bethel Church of God.

Roger was involved as a Sunday School teacher for nine years, and a S.S. Superintendent for five years. He has served as trustee and as deacon for a total of 20 years; in that time he also served a term as board chairman. He is involved on a weekly basis with the Pastoral Prayer Team and has been doing that for six years. Roger is consistently involved with the outreach programs of the local church and supports them with time, talent and resources. He has worked at the southeast camps and is currently a member of the Southeast Conference Board.

Roger feels the work of the College and Conference is crucial to our bonding together to reach the world with the message of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God. He sees the role of the General Conference as giving the leadership and vision necessary to encourage the local churches with their work of ministering the love of God. He sees their role as providing opportunities and planning for reaching the

lost in ways that we could not do alone or individually.

Roger sees the work of the Bible College as training men and women for ministry and equipping them to share our unique and important message with the world. He believes the doctrines of the Church of God, those things commonly believed among us, are crucial and should be taught, defended and maintained with integrity.

Roger would like to see more students being trained for ministry of all kinds, through efforts to raise the attendance at the Bible College and through opportunities in the local churches for those who cannot attend the College. He sees the need for the General Conference to support small and/or isolated churches and members to keep them alive and active with their particular gifts and callings. All churches, no matter how big or small, isolated or not, can be of great service to the work of the Lord.

—SE Conference

Scott Deane

Scott Deane is 32 years old. He is a native of Springfield, OH. He was baptized at the North Hills Church of God. He is a 1987 graduate of Oregon Bible College. He has served as pastor of the Pleasant Hill Church of God since 1987. He served for two years as treasurer of the Ministerial Association. He is a 1996 graduate of United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio with a Master of Arts in Theological Studies.

Scott believes the College and Conference serve a vital part in our continuation as a movement and as a voice of truth in the world. The college exists primarily as an institution to train pastors and leaders for our churches. There is no other institution like it in the world. The purpose of the conference is to serve as a "helping" organization that coordinates our common efforts as a fellowship of churches.

Though we have much in common as individual believers and churches, we are not all the same. We have different and varying talents, strengths,

weaknesses, emphases, insights, interests, and agendas. It is Scott's belief that the Board should reflect the same diversity and yet work together toward a common purpose. He would bring to the Board his experience as a Bible College student, his experience as a pastor who over the last ten years had to apply Bible College education and training to "real" life, his experience with other institutions of higher learning, and his eager desire to communicate the truth of Scripture to the modern world in which we live.

—Ministerial Association

Paul D. Duncan

Paul has been a member of the Church of Resurrection Hope, Lenoir, North Carolina since it became a part of the General Conference in 1961. He serves as pianist, organist, Sunday school teacher, and elder. He serves as president of the Southeast Conference.

He and his wife Mary have a daughter, Elizabeth Anne. Paul is the son of deceased pastor Z.B. Duncan.

He has an AB degree in mathematics from Lenoir-Rhine College and a MAT in mathematics from Duke University. He has been a teacher of mathematics at Hibriten High School since 1969 and department chairperson since 1984. He also is an adjunct instructor for Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina.

Fred W. Gerullis

Brother Fred Gerullis is a servant to our Lord, his family, and his community. Fred and his wife Wanda have been members of the Morse Mill Church of God since shortly after they married over thirty years ago. Over this time they have raised their four children and they are now watching their five grandchildren grow up in the church.

Fred is an engineer by trade, and throughout his career he has overseen numerous multi-million-dollar projects, on time and on budget. Fred took his expertise and management ability and founded a successful design and consulting firm. Fred also serves his community where he is a member of the

In addition to other responsibilities at the Lenoir church, he fills the pulpit in the absence of the pastor as well as at several local Advent Christian churches. He has been the guest speaker for the Virginia youth camp and the revival at Hope Second Advent Church in Monroe, North Carolina. It is Paul's desire to serve God in any capacity to which He may direct.

He believes that the College/Conference exists for the purpose of supporting and building up the congregations of the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith throughout the nation and world. The College/Conference should provide instruction and guidance for laymen and pastors of the churches and provide a basis for sound doctrine on which existing churches can grow and new churches

school board, and president of the local Sewer District Board. Fred has received formal training in engineering, computer science, education, accounting and bookkeeping.

Fred's work for the Lord is equally impressive. Over the years he has served as deacon and youth leader of the Morse Mill Church. Fred currently serves as worship team leader, Bible study leader, trustee, and Sunday School teacher.

Fred also serves as second vice president of the Missouri State Conference. He has always been quick to accept assignments and has filled in for other board members on a moment's notice. A classic example of Fred's dedication and resolve became

can be formed. He believes the College/Conference should assist the churches of the Conference to spread the glorious gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His coming Kingdom.

As a member of the Board of Directors, he would like to help the Church of God General Conference provide a firm foundation of truth and sound doctrine in the Lord upon which its members can rely as a basis for the spreading of the gospel. It is his desire to accomplish the will of God in all activities of the College/Conference so that the College/Conference will remain strong and will be able to provide the future leadership for the churches that will be needed to carry the gospel to the world.

— Southeast Conference

manifest with the recent improvements and redevelopment of the Missouri State Conference's lay speaker program.

Fred's vision and philosophy of the General Conference is centered around the need for unity of the congregations. Fred believes that "in order to grow in numbers and in faith, we must do more hugging than pulling." Brother Gerullis will bring experience in program management and small business administration, and innovation in problem solving and development of both people and programs.

Brother Fred Gerullis is qualified, willing and able to fulfill the position of director of the General Conference, and is worthy of your support.

— Missouri Conference

Robert Huddlestun

Timberland Bible Church places in nomination the name of Bob Huddlestun for the Church of God General Conference Board of Directors. Bob has recently retired from an engineering and managerial position with a company that designs and builds tooling for the automotive industry. Bob married Diane LeMasurier, daughter of Orpha Ferrell, in 1951. He believed and was baptized in 1956 and became a member of the Morning Star Church of God in South Bend, IN. He has attended classes at Oregon Bible College, Indiana University South Bend, and the University of Wisconsin.

Over the years Bob has been actively involved in the ministry and leadership of his local church, initiating the merger of the Morning Star congregation and Hope Chapel into the Timberland Church. He has served in many positions but has concentrated on teaching, teacher training, and serving as an elder. He's served as president of the Michigan and Indiana State Conferences. He also has served on the National Sunday School Board and the General Conference Board of Directors in the late sixties, and has written for the adult Sunday School quarterly.

Bob is a progressive thinker, not averse to change, but he has had a growing concern for the direction of

the Conference/College. Have we lost our focus, our purpose? We have a unique message that much of the world has not heard. We have opportunity and responsibility to proclaim that message. Are we being like Israel when they wanted a king, when they wanted to be "like other nations"? Are we trying to be like other churches? Have we lost our savor? Are we content to be different, to be separate, to be a peculiar people? Is there a way to reestablish our purpose for existing, the focus on proclamation of the truth about God, Jesus, man, the kingdom, salvation, etc.? Bob is convinced that with God's leading, we can reestablish our focus, and get on with the work God has called us to do.

— Timberland Bible Church

CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM FOR SUMMER CONFERENCE

Nursery

A free nursery will be provided for children three years of age and younger Tuesday through Thursday from 8:30-11:45 a.m.; 1:30-3:30 p.m.; and 7:00-8:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Please check the box on the registration form to schedule this free service.

Four Years Through Kindergarten

Classes will be held Tuesday through Thursday 8:30-11:45 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Four Years Through Fifth Grade

A Junior Church Program will be offered during the evening services.

First Grade Through Eighth Grade — Music Camp

From 8:30-11:45 a.m. and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday, all children, first through eighth grade attending General Conference will have the opportunity to participate with the Pine Grove Bible Church Junior Choir in a daily music camp. They will be rehearsing the new musical "Amerikids — In God We Trust." They will be performing on Thursday evening, August 7 for the entire Conference. Participants will be sent a book and cassette in advance and will need to learn the music before coming to camp, so they can concentrate on solos, choreography, speaking parts, and costuming during rehearsals.

The musical is about the influence of Christians in the formation of our nation and its government, the faith that made our country great. It uses characters such as "Yacky" Doodle, Robert E. Lee, Abraham Lincoln, and Benjamin Franklin to teach us to have faith in the things which were dear to the Founders of this nation — the Bible, the power of prayer, God's protection, and God's salvation.

The music camp will be directed by Connie Scott, minister of music at Pine Grove Bible Church. This will be the only daytime program for this age group.

Ninth Grade Through Twelfth Grade

Tuesday to Thursday classes will be held on spiritual warfare, discipleship, and topics of current interest to teens.

Trips will be planned to places such as: Mall of America, Zoo, Sculpture Garden, and Minnesota State Conference Campgrounds.

A complete schedule will be available at registration.



PROPOSED BUDGET: July 1, 1998 – June 30, 1999
Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference

ANTICIPATED EXPENSES:

STAFF:

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Salaries and Wages | \$282,000 |
| Social Security | \$11,000 |
| Employee Benefits | \$36,000 |

SERVICES:

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Assist to Churches | \$28,500 |
| Ministerial Assoc. | \$6,000 |
| Youth Ministry | \$5,000 |

SALES EXPENSES:

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Printing & Binding | \$65,000 |
| Postage | \$20,000 |
| Purchases – Bookstore | \$11,000 |
| Purchases – Cook Material | \$9,000 |
| Royalties | \$800 |

ABC:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Basic Grants | \$34,000 |
| Clayton Rebates | \$2,000 |
| Advertising-Recruitment | \$3,000 |
| Special Speakers | \$300 |
| Library Periodicals | \$3,600 |
| Library Books | \$3,000 |
| Period., Books, Dues | \$2,000 |
| Staff Education | \$2,000 |
| Program Development | \$1,000 |

ADMINISTRATION:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Travel | \$31,000 |
| Motor Vehicle Exp. | \$4,000 |
| Office Supplies & Expense | \$8,200 |
| Professional Services | \$3,000 |
| Telephone | \$12,500 |
| Insurance – non-plant | \$1,300 |
| Supplies and Expense | \$10,000 |
| Repairs/Maintenance – non-plant | \$3,500 |

PLANT EXPENSES:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Utilities | \$25,500 |
| Property Insurance | \$6,500 |
| Repairs & Maint | \$6,000 |
| Furniture and Equipment | \$3,000 |
| Supplies & Expense | \$2,500 |

MISCELLANEOUS:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Other | \$2,000 |
| Contingency | \$20,000 |
| Vehicle Replacement | \$3,000 |

TOTAL \$667,200

ANTICIPATED INCOME:

SALES:

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| S.S. Material | \$50,000 |
| Books, Tracts | \$9,000 |
| Subscriptions | \$7,000 |

ABC:

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Tuition | \$75,000 |
| Housing | \$28,000 |
| Laundry | \$1,400 |
| Rentals – Plant | \$3,000 |
| Late Fees/Rent | \$1,000 |
| Fees | \$1,000 |

MISCELLANEOUS:

| | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| ABCDF Interest | \$55,000 |
| Interest | \$1,000 |
| Other | \$1,000 |
| Transfers In | \$12,000 |
| Bequest Distribution | \$4,900 |

TOTAL EARNED INCOME \$249,300

TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

July 1, 1998 – June 30, 1999

Contributions needed for 97-98

\$417,900

\$383,300

Explanation of Budget

The proposed budget for July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999 will fund the following programs and activities of the College/Conference in accordance with our mission.

Anticipated Expenses

1. Salaries and Wages – compensation is provided for 22 employees (5 quarterly editors, 4 part-time coordinators, 4 student workers, 1 ten-month instructor, 1 five-month instructor, and 7 full-time workers).
2. Social Security – amount matched by the employer.
3. Employee Benefits – health insurance, workmen's compensation, conference premium for Ministers Voluntary Retirement Association, and registration fee for summer General Conference.
4. Assistance to Churches – funds provided for seven churches on a declining scale of payments each year.
5. Ministerial Association – support for programs and other expenses of the Church of God Ministerial Association.
6. Youth Ministry – funding to help subsidize the cost of the annual R.Y.O.T.
7. Printing and Binding – includes all materials printed by the College/Conference and the binding of permanent materials for the library.
8. Postage – shipping charges for the *Progress Journal*, *The Restitution Herald*, *A Journal from the Radical Reformation*, tracts, books, and all correspondence.
9. Purchases – Bookstore – textbooks and other materials which are purchased for resale.
10. Bookstore – Cook material – Creative Teaching Aid Packets and other Cook material that is resold as a part of our Sunday School Curriculum.
11. Royalties – fees paid for copyrighted material used in our publications.
12. Basic Grants – assistance to ABC students in the amount of up to \$75 per quarter hour to subsidize their tuition at ABC.
13. Clayton Rebates – during the first four quarters of education, ABC students who attend Clayton College and State University are eligible for a rebate to offset the out-of-state tuition until they can establish residency.
14. Advertising – Recruitment – includes travel, telephone calls, printing, and postage primarily to promote Atlanta Bible College.
15. Special Speakers – honorarium paid to graduation speaker and other guests on campus.
16. Library Periodicals – religious and theological journals and other magazines for the library collection.
17. Library Books – newly published books are acquired to keep the library collection up to date.
18. Periodicals, Books, Dues – a small allowance is provided to professional staff to purchase resource material for classes and to participate in professional organizations.
19. Staff Education – professional staff members are encouraged to attend at least one seminar each year to remain current in their field of study.
20. Program Development – the purchase of resources to enhance teaching programs at Atlanta Bible College and for the Lending Library.
21. Travel – includes travel for Board members, advisory committees, special boards and committees, Gospel Teams, Summer Ministries, and staff.
22. Motor Vehicle Expense – license plates, insurance, and maintenance for three College/Conference vehicles.
23. Office Supplies – paper, printer cartridges, stationery, envelopes, etc.
24. Professional Services – the constitution requires an annual audit.
25. Telephone – basic and long distance service, including the cost of all "800" number calls which are provided toll-free to the caller.
26. Insurance – non-plant – liability insurance for employees and directors.
27. Supplies and Expense – printing supplies, piano tuning, towel and paper products, and other operational expenses.
28. Repairs/Maintenance – non-plant – maintenance agreements and repairs for office and library equipment.
29. Plant Expenses – includes all expenses for buildings and property.
30. Contingency – this budget is being prepared 15 months before the fiscal year begins. This item provides a cushion for adjustments when the fiscal year begins on July 1, 1998.
31. Vehicle Replacement – money is set aside in a restricted account to be available when a vehicle needs to be replaced.
2. Books, Tracts – sale of textbooks as well as other materials to the membership and the public.
3. Subscriptions – subscriptions for *The Restitution Herald* are \$12 per year, \$21 for two years, \$30 for three years; *A Journal from the Radical Reformation* is \$24 per year.
4. Tuition – income is based upon projected enrollment of the equivalent of ten full-time students at ABC (students are also enrolled for additional hours at Clayton College).
5. Housing – rent received from ten apartments on the College campus.
6. Laundry – income from laundry facilities in apartment building.
7. Rentals – income received from New Friends Bible Church for use of College/Conference facilities.
8. Late Fees/Rent and Fees – interest income and registration fees from students.
9. ABCDF – transfer of interest income from the Atlanta Bible College Development Foundation.
10. Interest – money earned on checking account through the year.
11. Transfers In – funding for church planting is supplemented by restricted trust funds.
12. Bequest Distribution – the College/Conference is the recipient of annuity payments on a contract of a deceased member.
13. Contributions Needed – to accomplish the goals of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference for the 1998-99 fiscal year, contributions of \$417,900 will be needed from churches, conferences, and individual families. This is approximately \$35,000 per month.

In 1996, churches, conferences, and groups gave over \$178,000 to the Goal for Giving. We are thankful for this faithful giving and encourage each member church to designate a portion of its income to assist with the work of the College/Conference.

To close the gap between contributions needed and the amount provided by churches, conferences, and groups, we rely upon faithful giving of individuals and families. Approximately \$231,000 is needed in contributions from individuals and families. In 1996, giving families contributed an average of \$264 during the year. There is a need for additional support from other member families to help underwrite the work of the College and Conference.

Anticipated Income

1. Sunday School Materials – includes all sales connected with the Sunday School curriculum.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

June, 1997

Pre-Conference Mini Seminars

A new feature is being added to the 1997 General Conference. On Monday, August 4, two mini seminars will be offered from 9:00-12:00 noon and 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Mini Seminar Number One — Anthony Buzzard

Some in the Abrahamic Faith express concern when they learn that people in other churches criticize our beliefs. Anthony will explain that there is a historical reason for this. Understanding how and why the Church of God's understanding of God and Jesus is different deepens our appreciation of the Bible's Jewish view, which was corrupted by Greek, pagan ideas from the second century onwards. Many modern scholars agree with us that the doctrine of the Trinity is not part of the Biblical revelation. We can help ourselves and the cause of Jesus by being informed about both the Bible and history on this crucial matter of defining who God and Jesus are. This course will stimulate you to further study.

Mini Seminar Number Two — Jodi Werhanowicz

Fill Me 'Til I Overflow!

Each of us wants more — more peace, more joy, more power, more love, more of God in our lives. Jesus says, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). This practical workshop will examine what hinders and what helps our experience of the abundant life. Prepare to overflow!

Please pick one of these two seminars and indicate your preference on the registration form. There is no extra charge for the seminar. Lunch will be available at your own expense in the campus cafeteria.

Pre-Conference Activities

The Pine Grove Bible Church in Minneapolis is inviting early arrivers to worship with them Sunday for Sunday School at 9:00 and worship at 9:50. They are also sponsoring other activities in the afternoon and evening. Please check the appropriate box on the form to indicate your plans to participate in the Pine Grove special activities.

Calendar of Events

| | |
|------------------|--|
| June 15-21 | Midwest Family Camp, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |
| July 13-19 | Youth Congress, Taylor University, Upland, IN |
| August 4-8 | 77th Annual Summer Conference, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN |
| October 10, 11 | Southeast Men's Retreat |
| November 7, 8 | Midwest Men's Retreat, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |
| March 6-8 | College Invitational |
| March 29-April 3 | Christian Workers' Seminar, Holiday Inn, Pigeon Forge, TN |

- 1 **Pray for Pastor Don and Joyce Ward and the newly relocated Raymore, MO church, now named Country-side Bible Church.**
- 2 Pray for believers in the Philippine islands.
- 3 **Praise God for the beauty of His creation.**
- 4 Pray for Pastor Dan and Charlotte Fyfe and their work at Hendersonville, NC.
- 5 **Pray for the Atlanta Bible College students as they complete their studies and make decisions for the future.**
- 6 Pray for the graduates of Atlanta Bible College — Mark Cain, John Nelson, and Tim Spickler.
- 7 **Pray for boldness to share your faith.**
- 8 Pray that God might speak to you through the services of your church today.
- 9 **Pray for the ministry of your local church.**
- 10 Praise God for those who regularly remember our Conference and College with their prayers and contributions.
- 11 **Praise God for your pastor and his family and their dedication to ministry.**
- 12 Pray for Pastor James and Linda Hill and the work at Royal, AR.
- 13 **Praise God for your family and circle of friends.**
- 14 Pray for Pastor Billie and Irene Kennedy and the work at Blood River, LA.
- 15 **Praise God for your father.**
- 16 Praise God for Jim and Martha Mattison and their work with the brethren in Malawi.
- 17 **Pray for Pastor Sydney and Deirdre Kirkpatrick and the work at Pine Grove, MN.**
- 18 Pray for final preparations for the summer General Conference.
- 19 **Praise God for a recent answer to prayer.**
- 20 Pray for believers in Peru.
- 21 **Pray for Pastor Gordon and Barbara Landry and the work at Flagg Center, IL.**
- 22 Pray for churches and pastors who are making changes this year.
- 23 **Praise God for the editors of our Sunday School curriculum and our printed publications.**
- 24 Pray for the Grant family, members of the Valley View Bible Church who are serving in the Middle East.
- 25 **Pray for God's direction in future mission efforts.**
- 26 Pray for God's direction in the preparation for RYOT (Youth Congress).
- 27 **Praise God for your church family.**
- 28 Pray for the Summer Ministries teams as they work in churches this summer.
- 29 **Pray for the Board of Directors as they lead the College/Conference.**
- 30 Praise God for the dedication of the College/Conference staff.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

July, 1997

- 1 **Pray that God might move the Church of God forward in new areas of ministry.**
- 2 Pray that God might lead many into full-time Christian service.
- 3 **Pray for Pastor Tom and Sheila Schmitt and the work at Ripley, IL.**
- 4 Praise God for the freedoms you enjoy.
- 5 **Praise God for His daily provision for all your needs.**
- 6 Pray for the new church being started in Canada, Freedom in Christ Ministries, by Pastor Stephen Bolhous and Pastor Michael Cisler.
- 7 **Praise God for the assurance that He hears and answers prayers.**
- 8 Pray for the brethren in India.
- 9 **Praise God for efforts being made to plant new churches.**
- 10 Pray for Pastor Russell and Joyce Magaw and the work at Eden Valley, MN.
- 11 **Pray for the soon return of Jesus.**
- 12 Pray for your pastor as he prepares to share God's message tomorrow.
- 13 **Pray for safety for those traveling to RYOT (Youth Congress) today.**
- 14 Praise God for His great love shown to us by the sacrifice of His Son.
- 15 **Pray for the staff of RYOT and the influence they are having on the Congress participants.**
- 16 Pray for the Badillo family and the work in Mexico.
- 17 **Pray for Pastor Michael Mattison and the work at Baton Rouge, LA.**
- 18 Pray for the safety for those traveling home from Youth Congress.
- 19 **Pray for the Bible schools being conducted by the Summer Ministries teams.**
- 20 Pray for Pastor Emory Macy and his work in Weiser, ID.
- 21 **Pray for someone you know who needs to accept Christ as Savior.**
- 22 Pray for Pastor Hollis and Hilda Partlowe and the work at Dixon, IL.
- 23 **Pray for the new church being started in Michigan, New Beginnings.**
- 24 Pray that God will lead many of our young people into ministry at home and abroad.
- 25 **Pray for new students to enroll at Atlanta Bible College this fall.**
- 26 Praise God for the leadership of your church family.
- 27 **Pray for Pastor John and Alice Railton and the work at Timberland, IN.**
- 28 Praise God for the abundant life you have in Christ.
- 29 **Praise God for your parents and their guidance in your life.**
- 30 Pray for Pastor James and Rebecca Ritch and the work at Lenoir, NC.
- 31 **Pray for the new church being started in Minneapolis, Family of God Fellowship.**

PASTORS NEEDED

Hedrick, Indiana

Hedrick, Indiana Church of God—A friendly rural church of approximately 25 regular attendees, wishing to spread God's love in their community, is searching for a dedicated God-loving minister to help them. With present finances, the position would be part-time, but job opportunities are available in the surrounding area. If the Lord is leading you to consider a less hectic atmosphere, pray about it and contact the Hedrick Church of God. Please call Howard Kidd, chairman of the Pastor Search Committee (765-762-6398) or Myra Hamilton (765-762-6395), treasurer and committee member. They may also be contacted by E-mail: mihamilt@wvec.k12.in.us

Blanchard, Michigan

Blanchard, Michigan Church of God—is looking for a pastor. Please contact Charles Baldwin, 517-561-5126, Lyle Walkington, 517-561-2800, Roger Wood, 517-561-2580, or Terry Kunst, 517-561-2515.

Farmington, Missouri

The new Church of the Open Bible is seeking church leaders, teachers, members, and a PASTOR.

If you want more information, or are available to help, call Loyd and Donna Cooper (573) 756-4715, Jason Cooper (573) 546-7884, or Harold and Diane Thomas (573) 783-2938.

Fredericktown, Missouri

The Fredericktown Church of God is seeking a pastor. For further information call Florene Thal, (573) 783-3437, or Marvin H. Cooper, (573) 783-3291, or write Florene Thal, RR 2, Box 139, Fredericktown, MO 63645.

Cool Spring, Virginia

Cool Spring Church is looking for a pastor. Contact Robert Coverstone at 13172 Fort Valley Road, Fort Valley, VA 22652, Ph (540) 933-6271 after 8:00 p.m.

Herndon, Virginia

Fair Oaks Community Church would like to secure the services of a pastor. Please contact Carolyn Kohn for more information: 7711 Ivymount Terrace, Potomac, MD 20854.

PASTORS AVAILABLE

Pastor Christopher Seiders and his fiancée Jennifer Knapp will be available to assume the pastorate of a church starting September 1, 1997. The couple has been working with Pastor David and Anne Riley during their internship. They will be married in June. Any church interested please contact Chris at 5823 Trammell Road, Morrow, GA 30260, or phone at (404) 362-0429; E-mail at pastorfurry@juno.com

Retired Pastor Leon Driskill is available to be guest teacher and speaker among brethren. 1115 Scott Street, Eldorado, IL 62930, Ph 618-273-2425.

Pastor Jon Cheatwood is available for an associate pastorate Ph 314-916-5160.

BAPTISMS

ARKANSAS

Forest Hills—Jason Chamber, Jessica Efird, Cassie Hill, Britney and Nicole Motley, and Matthew Neighbors (3/30/97) by Pastor James Hill.

ILLINOIS

Blessed Hope Bible Church (Rockford)—Colleen Cave and Michael Cave (4/27/97) by Pastor David Cheatwood.

Macomb—Monte Allison (3/30/97) by Pastor Michael Brown.

MINNESOTA

Eden Valley—Lee and Troy Fuchs (6/21/96); Gerry Ehmke (4/13/97) by Pastor Russ Magaw.

Hector—Gaylene Kirkpatrick (5/4/97) by Pastor Vivian E. Kirkpatrick.

MISSOURI

Countryside Bible—Shawna Irene Elkins and Theresa Gail Thibault (1/26/97); Heather Ann Wood (2/27/97); Rebecca Sue Thibault, Ashley Brook Simpson, Jennifer Renee Elkins, and Jamie Rae Elkins (2/16/97) by Pastor Don Ward.

OHIO

Bedford—Beau Onderdonk (5/11/97) by Pastor Rex Cain.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Bethel—Randy and Jennifer Monroe (3/16/97) by Pastor Alan Cain and Tony Sloan; Brian Clark (4/6/97) by Pastor Alan Cain.

Guthrie Grove—Cathy Cunningham (10/5/96); Matthew and Melissa Durham (11/24/96); and Harry Parker (3/9/97) by Pastor Wally Winner.

WASHINGTON

Wenatchee—Ariel Hill (4/20/97) by Pastor Kirby Davis.

MARRIAGES

GEORGIA

New Friends—Susan Savage and Gregory Landry (8/27/95) by Pastor Daniel Kennedy and Pastor Gordon Landry.

MINNESOTA

Eden Valley—Helen Haag and Elmo

Gaspar (1/27/96) by Michelle Gaspar, Virgil Braun, and Pastor Russ Magaw.

Hector—Vivian P. Kirkpatrick and Gaylene Schoon (12/14/96) by Pastor Vivian E. Kirkpatrick.

DEATHS

ILLINOIS

Flagg Center—David Foster, 44, member, church secretary, great-grandson of S. J. Lindsay (2/19/96) by Pastors Delbert Rankin and Gordon Landry. Muriel Randall Haas, 77, Board member (2/12/97); and Francis Reints, 86 (2/25/97) by Pastor Gordon Landry.

Freeport—Shirley A. Urish, 70, former member of the Board of Directors (5/1/97) by Jesse Pestle.

MINNESOTA

Eden Valley—Earl Voss, 75, member (1/17/97) by Bob See.

Hector—Leonard "Bill" Ryan, longtime member (4/18/97) by Pastor Vivian E. Kirkpatrick.

Litchfield—Vernon Roepke, 71, member (3/4/97) by Pastor Russ Magaw.

MISSOURI

Raymore—Jewel Zagorach (2/9/97) by Pastor Don Ward.

NEBRASKA

Chappell—Carol Wilson Smith, 90 (3/23/97) by Ray Nelson and Pastor Russ Magaw.

OHIO

Columbia Station—Kathryn Laufert, 92 (3/5/97) by Tim Trammell and Pastor David Swartz.

COMPLETED SYSTEMATIC BIBLE STUDY COURSE:

James Hamann of the Timberland Church, Indiana, and Emily Chandler, Norman Chandler, Beth Durham, Mack Durham, Sharon Durham, Eugene Grant, Earl Martin, Harry Parker, Dean Smith, Pat Smith, Annette Stanley, Jill Stanley, Robert Stanley, Betty Stevenson, Bill White, Joyce Williams, and Lindsey Young of the Guthrie Grove Church, South Carolina, have completed the Systematic Bible Study Course.

DIRECTORY CHANGES:

Glad Tidings Church of God, Fonthill, Ontario

Sec: Barbara McArthur, 4112 Boysenberry Ct, Vineland, Ontario, Canada L0R 2C0

East Peoria Community Church, Illinois
Pastor and Mrs Darrell Cardwell, 24000 Veteran's Road, Lot 121, Morton, IL 61550, Ph 309-694-1862

Indiana Conference
James Hamilton, Ph 765-762-6395

Attica (Tri-County), Indiana
Pastor: Earl Poland, 102 Oak St, W Lebanon 47991, Ph 317-893-8257
Sec: Delores Merrill, 804 S Brady St, Attica 47918, Ph 317-762-3116
SS Supt: Ray Merrill, 804 S Brady St, Attica 47918, Ph 317-762-3116
Co-Yth Dir: Lynette Bales
Co-Yth Dir: Judy Shamp, 913 Ravine Pk Blvd, Attica 47918-1942

Hedrick Church, Indiana
James Hamilton, Ph 765-762-6395
Myra Hamilton, Ph 765-762-6395

Hammond (Happy Woods), Louisiana
Pastor Jeff Fletcher, E-mail: jfletch@i-55.com

Blanchard, Michigan Church
Sec: Kathy Walkington, 1359 Costabella Rd, Blanchard 49310, Ph 517-561-2416
Yth Dir: Terry and Terrie Rogers, 1060 Jefferson Rd, Blanchard 49310, Ph 517-561-2527
Bd Chair: Roger Wood, 10049 W Blanchard, Blanchard 49310, Ph 517-561-2580

Raymore Bible Church, Missouri has relocated and changed their name to: Countryside Bible Church, 21705 South State Route J, Peculiar, MO 64078

Bible Faith Church of God, Washington
Pastor Arlen Rankin, E-mail: afrankin@snovalley.com
Sec/Treas: Sherry Wiltsey, 34250 166th Way SE, Auburn 98092, Ph 206-931-3875

Church of God Ministers
Pastor Steve Fewell, 1215 Cheyenne Ave, Springfield, OH 45503-6316

REGISTRATION FORM
 1997 Annual General Conference
 Northwestern College — August 4-8

1. _____
 Mr Mrs Miss First Middle Last Name

 Street

 City State Zip

 Phone

 Age if under 18 Church Name

2. Workshop Preferences
 Tuesday 9:30 _____ Thursday 9:15 _____
 Wednesday 9:15 _____

3. Fees—number per room _____

 Name(s) of person(s) sharing room

4. Babysitting Service FREE

 Name(s) and age(s) of children

5. Pastor discount, if applicable _____

6. Fees (line 3 minus line 5) _____

7. Extra housing need _____

8. TOTAL FEES DUE _____

9. Amount Enclosed _____

10. BALANCE DUE _____

11. Monday Mini-Seminar
 Buzzard Werhanowicz

12. Pine Grove Sunday Activities

13. I wish to help with special music.

HOW TO REGISTER (use one form per person)

1. Enter the name and address information. Please include age if under 18.
2. Indicate your workshop preferences by number from the chart found on page B of the JOURNAL.
3. Conference Fees: (all-inclusive)

Housing is in air-conditioned rooms with three single beds per room. Please indicate the number of occupants per room as well as the persons sharing your room. If the names of those sharing the room are not included, we cannot guarantee the desired room arrangements.

Meals will begin with the Monday evening meal and end with the Thursday evening meal.

| | Early-Bird* | Regular |
|--|-------------|---------|
| 3 to a room, per person | 195 | 215 |
| 2 to a room, per person | 195 | 215 |
| 1 to a room, per person | 230 | 250 |
| Ages 6-10, 2 or 3 to a room | 170 | 190 |
| Ages 6 and under, 2 or 3 to a room | 50 | 60 |
| Full-time commuter (with all meals) | 110 | 125 |
| Full-time commuter (3 lunches/4 dinners) | 95 | 105 |
| Full-time commuter (no meals) | 50 | 60 |
| One-day commuter (lunch and dinner) | 35 | 40 |
| One-day commuter (no meals) | 20 | 25 |

*Postmarked by July 3

4. Free babysitting service. Service will be provided for children two years and under Monday from 7:00-8:30; Tuesday-Thursday from 8:30-12:00; 1:15-3:30 and 7:00-8:30. Please list children's name(s) and age(s).
5. Active and retired pastors and their families (children under 21) calculate 10% of the amount on line 3. Enter this amount on line 5.
6. Fees due (line 3 minus line 5).
7. Rooms are available at the rate of \$48.00 per room per night for early arrivals on Saturday and Sunday, August 2 and 3. Please indicate which night(s) and the amount due. (No discounts).
8. Fees due (add lines 6 and 7).
9. Please indicate the amount sent with registration. A nonrefundable deposit of \$25 per person is required.
10. Balance due if any.
11. If you plan to attend the mini-seminar check one of the boxes.
12. If you plan to attend activities at Pine Grove Church on Sunday, please check box.
13. Please check box if you wish to help with special music. Connie Scott, music coordinator, will contact you.

Send your check with completed registration form to:
 Church of God General Conference, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260
 Any special meal or housing requests need to accompany your application.

Atlanta Bible College
 Church of God General Conference
 P.O. Box 100,000
 Morrow, GA 30260

Address Correction Requested

| |
|---|
| U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT 21 Morrow, Georgia Nonprofit Organization |
|---|

Maranatha



Atlanta Bible College

Progress Journal

Vol. 39, NO. 5

July-August, 1997

Ministry Experiences

An integral part of the preparation for ministry at Atlanta Bible College is practical application of material learned in the classroom. In addition to involvement at local Churches of God. Students participate in other ministry experiences during the school year.

Summer Ministries

In 1996, the Summer Ministries Program's fourth year, the team helped with six Bible schools and two camps: New Friends, GA; Macomb, IL; Pennellwood, MI; Brush Creek, OH; Columbia Station, OH; Cool Spring, VA; and camps in Minnesota and Washington. Several ABC students were involved, including Shawn Emmett, Melissa Lee, John Nelson, Chris Seiders, and Tracy Swartz.

This summer the teams will be kept busy with 11 activities: Vacation Bible Schools at New Friends, GA; Family Bible Fellowship in Rockford, IL; Blanchard, MI; Farmington, OH; Brush Creek, OH; Columbia Station, OH; Cool Spring, VA; Fort Valley, VA; and Hope Second Advent Church in Monroe, NC. Members of the Summer Ministries Team will also help with camps in Minnesota and Washington. Again several ABC students and soon-to-be ABC students are planning to participate: Tim Gould, Eryka Lundquist, Merry Peterson, Rebecca Swartz, Tracy Swartz, and Michelle Turner.

One main goal of the Summer Ministries Program is to provide "extra hands" to help churches in ministry — Vacation Bible Schools, camps, calling, or other projects. The program also exists to give young people ministry opportunities during the summer. One worker summed up her experience in this way: "I believe that this was a positive experience for me and I would encourage others who enjoy traveling and like working with children to do this."

—Sarah Buzzard, Summer Ministries Coordinator



Food Pantry

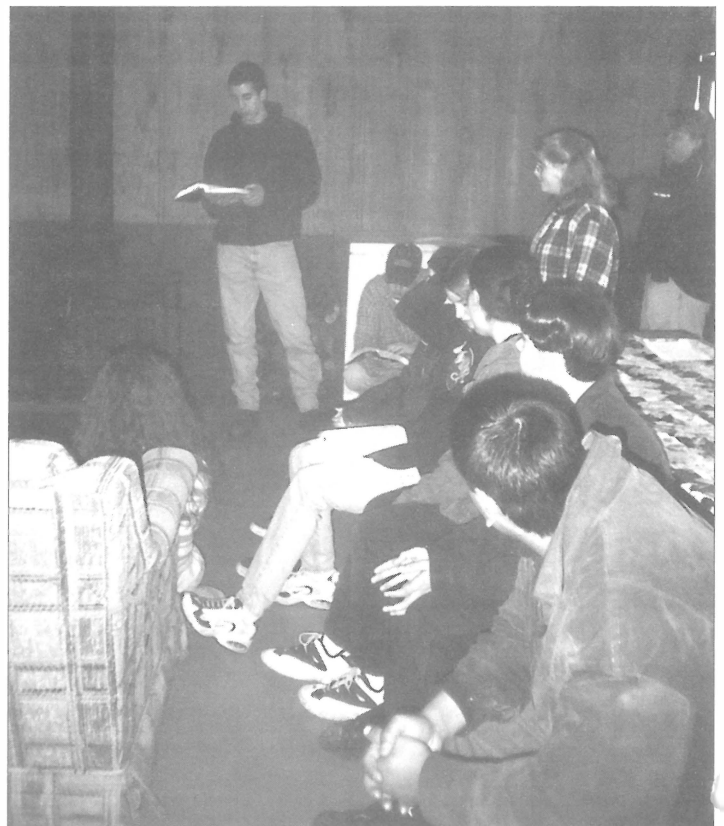
Through the ministry of New Friends Bible Church, students are involved in collecting food and helping to distribute food to needy families in the area of Atlanta Bible College and New Friends.

Feeding the Homeless

Students have prepared food and taken it to downtown Atlanta to share with homeless people. The students believe that this action is in accord with the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:35-40: "for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat . . . Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you . . . I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

Gospel Teams

Students have the opportunity to travel to local churches and state/district conferences to assist with weekend youth rallies and retreats. Students participate in teaching classes, providing special music, and participating in social and recreational times.



College Invitational

Each year Atlanta Bible College invites prospective students to visit the campus for a weekend. In March, students and sponsors from around the country came to participate in classes, a picnic, a concert, and several hands-on ministry experiences. We are grateful to pastors, youth leaders, parents, and others who encouraged participation in this event.



A servant evangelism project in McDonough, Georgia.



Singing in the Chapel.



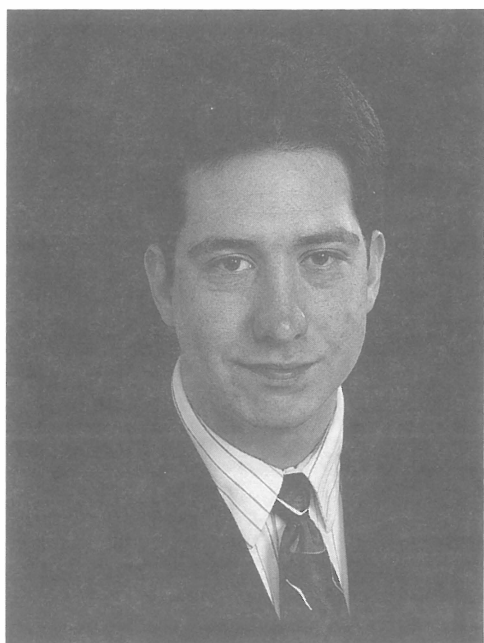
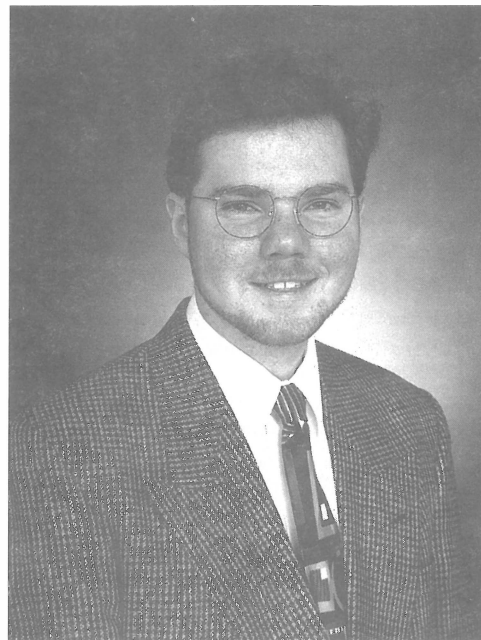
A picnic supper.

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1997 Graduates of ABC

Mark Cain

I attended Atlanta Bible College from 1989 to 1993. However, lacking several credits, I did not graduate at that time. I moved to Cleveland and attended a technical school for radio and began work at a local Christian radio station. I soon married my high school sweetheart, Karen Crowcroft. After two years in radio, I returned to school full-time to obtain a Bachelor's in Computer Science. I am currently half-way through this endeavor, and in the process have successfully completed the remaining credits for graduation at ABC. It is an honor to be a part of the graduating class of 1997.



John Nelson

I came to Atlanta Bible College to learn more of who Jesus is and what God wants out of our lives. I came with the intention of only being here for a year, but decided to continue for the four-year degree. The skills of ministry and the knowledge of the Bible that I learned have already proven valuable to me. I thank God for the faculty members who are rich in knowledge and have experience in ministry. With the help of God, these individuals were the ones who gave me the skills to teach God's Word to the lost. At the end of my internship, I hope to continue my education at a seminary to study Christian counseling and later practice as a marriage and family counselor. Being a student at Atlanta Bible College has been great!

Tim Spickler

I am married with two children. I was raised in Mount Morris, Illinois. I graduated from Mount Morris High School in 1990. I attended Highland Community College in Freeport, Illinois and then transferred to Atlanta Bible College with my wife Shelly and daughter Ashley. While at ABC, we had another child, Lindsey. After I completed the required classes at ABC my family and I returned to Rockford, Illinois. I am now a pastor at Family Bible Fellowship and work part-time as a meat cutter. I am interested in church planting. I am pastoring in a recently planted church and was active in the planting of Cornerstone Bible Church in McDonough, Georgia. I am excited about the ministry at Family Bible Fellowship and know that God is working in that body.



COLLEGE CONFERENCE NEWS

Annual Maranatha Issue

This issue of the *PROGRESS JOURNAL* is dedicated to the students and staff of Atlanta Bible College. The word "Maranatha" is an Aramaic word that means "come, oh Lord!" The second coming of Jesus Christ for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth is the motivation and driving force behind Atlanta Bible College. It is this hope that inspires students to hear God's call to service and to prepare for a lifetime of lay or professional ministry. We are grateful for the students who have heard the call and who are equipping themselves to be effective in proclaiming Good News. We are thankful for the staff who serve unselfishly in the preparation of leaders and workers.

ABC Graduation

The 54th graduation program was held in the chapel of Atlanta Bible College on June 6. Bachelor of Theology degrees were awarded to Mark Cain, John Nelson, and Tim Spickler. Jeff Osborn and Michelle Turner received Church Leadership diplomas for completing a two-year program of 90 credit hours. Jeff Osborn, Kirk Ross, and Michelle Turner also received certificates for the completion of the one-year Freshman Foundation program. Anthony Buzzard presented the graduation message. Other faculty participated in the program. Sarah and Claire Buzzard presented special music.

Additional Summer Conference Information

An Invitation from Pine Grove Bible Church to Participate in Pre-Conference Activities

We are planning a special day for any people coming to General Conference early. On Sunday, August 3, Sunday School will begin at 9:00 a.m. and morning worship at 9:50 a.m. Following services there will be a light lunch with activities taking place on the church grounds throughout the afternoon. Activities will include a time and place for fellowship, various recreational activities (horseshoes, volleyball, basketball, and the use of the walking trails and

bike paths which run immediately behind the church property). Around 4:30 p.m. there will be a dinner served. The dinner will be buffet type where people can come and go at their leisure. Throughout this time period, people will be available for pick-up service from the airport, and shuttles to the college for those who want to check in, get settled and then come back to the church for the evening. There will be a special praise service in the evening at 6:30 p.m.

The Minnesota State Conference is making its campground available the week before and after Conference. Please contact Bill Gaspar to let him know which days you will be using the campground. His number is: (612) 474-9535.

On the registration form please indicate your plans to be at Pine Grove on Sunday.

If you wish to stay in a recreational vehicle during Conference, please contact Bill Gaspar for information on camping sites.

— *Pine Grove Bible Church*

Financial Update

Atlanta Bible College and the Church of God General Conference depend on contributions from churches, conferences, and individuals to provide two-thirds of the operating budget. During the past fiscal year, which ended June 30, over \$330,000 in contributions were received. We completed the year with a small surplus. We are deeply thankful for the many churches, conferences, and individuals who participated in our support during the past twelve months.

Contributions needed for the new fiscal year that began July 1, 1997 are \$390,400. Contributions of \$32,500 are needed each month to carry out the programs and services authorized by delegates at last summer's Conference.

Web Sites

Several Church of God groups have created web pages.

ABC/Conference: www.abc-coggc.org
Church of the Open Bible, California: members.aol.com/tolkienjbs

Countryside Bible Church, Missouri: www.concentric.net/~g2b2w/cbchurch.html

Crossroads Youth Ministry: www.cyminc.org

Freedom in Christ Ministries: www.iaw.on.ca/Gladtidings/ficm/index.html

Guthrie Grove Church, South Carolina: www.its-all-here.com/guthriegrove

Hector Church, Minnesota: www.hectorcog.com

Restoration Fellowship:

www.mindspring.com/~anthonybuzzard
RYOT: www.cyminc.org/ryot.html

Please send addresses to the editor of the *PROGRESS JOURNAL* for other web sites that may be of interest to our membership.

An Invitation to You

Cornerstone Bible Church has been in existence for about two and a half years. We recently acquired a ten acre site in one of the fastest growing areas in the country. This summer we will be constructing a building on our new property. We need and would appreciate anyone who could come and help us during this building project. We intend to build much of it with volunteer labor to save money and many of you out there have great skills in this area. We'll let you know more details, but if you have a willing heart, we would love to have you come and raise the roof! Please call me at (770) 603-1886 or e-mail/write me at: DRileyCBC@aol.com, 2107 Tiffany Lane, Jonesboro, Georgia 30236.

— *Pastor David Riley*

Delbert A. Jones

Memorial Scholarship Fund

A scholarship fund has been established by the Church of the Open Bible, Pomona, California, in memory of Delbert A. Jones. Since Delbert's life of service to the Lord touched so many lives, we want to make it possible for you to join us in this remembrance of his ministry. Contributions may be sent directly to Atlanta Bible College, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, Georgia Morrow, GA 30260, or Laureen Steiner, Treasurer, Church of the Open Bible, 400 South Montezuma Way, West Covina, California 91791.

BAPTISMS

ILLINOIS

Rockford (Blessed Hope) — Erica Scott and Tom Cave (5/11/97), by Pastor David Cheatwood.

MINNESOTA

Pine Grove — Cheryl Arness and B. J. Bormes (5/4/97), by Pastor Sydney Kirkpatrick.

OHIO

Lawrenceville — Neil and Greg Shambaugh (5/18/97), by Pastor Mark Tschaenn.

North Hills — Anastasia Phillips (5/4/97); Allison Carpenter (5/11/97) by Pastor Seth Ross.

DEATHS

ILLINOIS

E. Peoria — Julia Patterson, 91, long-time member (5/10/97), by Pastor Leon Driskill.

IOWA

Gladbrook — Marjorie C. Oaks (6/7/97) by Pastor Francis Burnett.

MISSOURI

Springfield — Irene K. Poe, long-time member (5/19/97) by Ted Armes.

OHIO

Lawrenceville — Hope Errett, 84, long-time member, by Pastors E. Richard Smith and Mark Tschaenn.

Correction from last JOURNAL:

ILLINOIS

Flagg Center — Muriel Randall Hass, 77, Board member (2/12/97), by Pastor Gordon Landry.

DIRECTORY CHANGES

Church of God Ministers

Pastor Mark Good,
171 South Broadview
Greenbrier, AR 72058

PASTORS NEEDED

Eldorado, Illinois

The Restitution Church of God, Eldorado, Illinois is looking for a pastor. For more information, please contact Jack Wiggins at 618-273-3676 or Carlis Medley at 812-838-6437. Until a pastor is found, if a pastor is traveling in the Eldorado vicinity and would be willing to speak on Sunday, please call one of the numbers above to make arrangements.

Hedrick, Indiana

Hedrick, Indiana Church of God — A friendly rural church of approximately 25 regular attendees, wishing to spread God's love in their community, is searching for a dedicated God-loving minister to help them. With present finances, the position would be part-time, but job opportunities are available in the surrounding area. If the Lord is leading you to consider a less hectic atmosphere, pray about it and contact the Hedrick Church of God. Please call Howard Kidd, chairman of the Pastor Search Committee (765-762-6398) or Myra Hamilton (765-762-6395), treasurer and committee member. They may also be contacted by E-mail: mihamilt@wvec.k12.in.us

Farmington, Missouri

The new Church of the Open Bible is seeking church leaders, teachers, members, and a PASTOR.

If you want more information, or are available to help, call Loyd and Donna Cooper (573) 756-4715, Jason Cooper (573) 546-7884, or Harold and Diane Thomas (573) 783-2938.

Fredericktown, Missouri

The Fredericktown Church of God is seeking a pastor. For further information call Florene Thal, (573) 783-3437, or Marvin H. Cooper, (573) 783-3291, or write Florene Thal, RR 2, Box 139, Fredericktown, MO 63645.

Herndon, Virginia

Fair Oaks Community Church would like to secure the services of a pastor. Please contact Carolyn Kohn for more information: 7711 Ivymount Terrace, Potomac, MD 20854.

PASTORS AVAILABLE

Retired Pastor Leon Driskill is available to be guest teacher and speaker among brethren. 1115 Scott Street, Eldorado, IL 62930, Ph 618-273-2425.

Pastor Jon Cheatwood is available for an associate pastorate. Ph 314-916-5160.

COMPLETED SYSTEMATIC BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Leon Howard Driskill has completed the Systematic Bible Study Course.



Pastor Alan and Susan Cain leading a chapel service for students and staff in May.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

August, 1997

REPORT OF BAPTISMS:

2,000 by the Year 2000

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|----------------|
| | | Jan. 1, 2000 |
| April 1, 1996 - March 31, 1997* | 138 | Total 1,163 |
| April 1, 1995 - March 31, 1996 | 164 | |
| April 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995 | 162 | |
| April 1, 1993 - March 31, 1994 | 142 | |
| April 1, 1992 - March 31, 1993 | 164 | |
| April 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992 | 170 | |
| June 1, 1990 - March 31, 1991 | 168 | |
| January 1 - May 31, 1990 | 55 | |

* More complete figures are being collected from non-reporting churches.

Calendar of Events

| | |
|------------------|--|
| July 13-19 | Youth Congress, Taylor University, Upland, IN |
| August 4-8 | 77th Annual Summer Conference, Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN |
| October 10, 11 | Southeast Men's Retreat |
| November 7, 8 | Midwest Men's Retreat, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |
| March 6-8 | College Invitational |
| March 29-April 3 | Christian Workers' Seminar, Holiday Inn, Pigeon Forge, TN |
| May 2-5 | Ministers/Spouses Retreat, Clock Tower Resort and Conference Center, Rockford, IL |
| July 3-7 | 78th Annual Summer Conference, Renaissance Atlanta Hotel — Concourse, Atlanta, GA (same location as 1994 Conference) |

- 1 Praise God for the beauty of His creation.
- 2 **Pray for spiritual renewal for yourself and your church.**
- 3 Praise God for the faithful ministry of the ABC/General Conference staff.
- 4 **Pray for God's Spirit to be present in the activities of the General Conference this week.**
- 5 Pray for a spirit of unity at the Summer Conference.
- 6 **Pray for Connie Scott and her ministry at Pine Grove, Minnesota and as she leads the Music Camp at Conference this week.**
- 7 Praise God for His faithfulness in your life.
- 8 **Pray for those traveling home from Conference today.**
- 9 Pray for the brethren and leaders in Peru.
- 10 **Pray for your pastor and his family today.**
- 11 Pray for your church family as you join together in worship today.
- 12 **Pray for students who are making plans to attend Atlanta Bible College this fall.**
- 13 Pray for the Focus on the Kingdom radio ministry which is being aired on four stations.
- 14 **Pray for the Cornerstone Bible Church of God, McDonough, Georgia as they construct a church building.**
- 15 Praise God for the faith of the brethren in the Philippines.
- 16 **Praise God for the challenges He sends your way.**
- 17 Pray for the Grant family, members of Valley View Church, who are serving in missions ministry.
- 18 **Pray for a personal hunger to know God.**
- 19 Pray for individuals who feel led to God to pursue mission careers.
- 20 **Pray for the Board of Directors who lead the ministries of the Conference.**
- 21 Praise God for His love and faithfulness.
- 22 **Pray for the leadership of your local church.**
- 23 Pray for the brethren in India.
- 24 **Praise God for the editors of Conference publications.**
- 25 Pray for Pastor Dale and Cheryl Swartz and the work at Brush Creek, Ohio.
- 26 **Praise God for Pastor Cecil Smead's many years of service for the Lord.**
- 27 Praise God for your heritage of faith.
- 28 **Pray that God might speak through you to someone who is hurting.**
- 29 Pray for someone you know who needs to make Christ Lord.
- 30 **Pray for an opportunity to share your faith this week.**
- 31 Pray for Pastor Steve and Pat Zimbelman and their work at Blessed Hope, Rockford, Illinois.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

September, 1997

- 1 **Pray for the youth of your local church and the General Conference.**
- 2 Pray for Pastor John and Gayle Guthrie and their work at East Oregon, Illinois.
- 3 **Pray that God might be praised through your worship today.**
- 4 Praise God for Tracy Savage and her ministry to Russia.
- 5 **Pray for Pastor Chris and Jennifer Seiders as they begin their ministry at the Blanchard, MI Church of God.**
- 6 Praise God for Roberto and Lupe Badillo's ministry in Mexico.
- 7 **Pray for healing for someone you know who is in need.**
- 8 Pray for Pastor David and Karen Swartz and their work at Golden Rule and Columbia, Ohio.
- 9 **Praise God for the gift of His Son.**
- 10 Praise God for His daily mercies.
- 11 **Pray for the outreach of Beder Ucanay in Lima, Peru.**
- 12 Praise God for the beauty of each season.
- 13 **Pray for David Krogh and Kent Ross in their leadership roles at ABC.**
- 14 Pray for spiritual renewal and growth for ABC students and staff.
- 15 **Praise God for the prayer partners and financial supporters of the Conference and College.**
- 16 Pray for your church family and any guests who worship with you today.
- 17 **Pray for Sergey and Lucya as they continue in Bible study in Russia.**
- 18 Pray for your own personal desire to love God more.
- 19 **Pray for Seth Ross in his ministry at North Hills, Ohio.**
- 20 Pray for your family and your friends.
- 21 **Pray for Pastor Mary and Ray Vadnais and their work in Champion, MI.**
- 22 Pray for ABC students and staff as they gather in a spiritual retreat today through Tuesday.
- 23 **Pray for Steve and Pam Grant in the Middle East.**
- 24 Pray for ABC as classes begin today.
- 25 **Pray for those who are seeking God's will for their lives.**
- 26 Praise God for His Word which provides guidance for your life.
- 27 **Pray that you might be an example to an unbeliever.**
- 28 Praise God for new believers in your church family.
- 29 **Pray for the faith to stand firm when temptation comes.**
- 30 Pray for the soon return of Christ and that you might remain faithful.

Report on Theological Conference

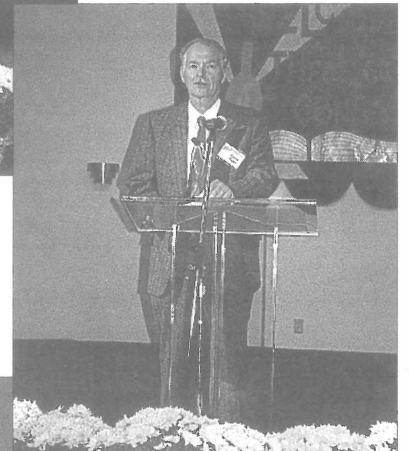
Atlanta Bible College and A JOURNAL FROM THE RADICAL REFORMATION sponsored the sixth theological conference on the campus of Atlanta Bible College April 25-27.

Guest speakers were: Dr. David Keyes, a Unitarian universalist pastor from California. He has worked with George Huntston Williams who is the author of a classic text on the radical reformation. Dr. Calvin Pater, professor of church history at Knox College in Canada spoke on his special interest in the radical reformation. Allon Maxwell from Australia is a biblical Unitarian.

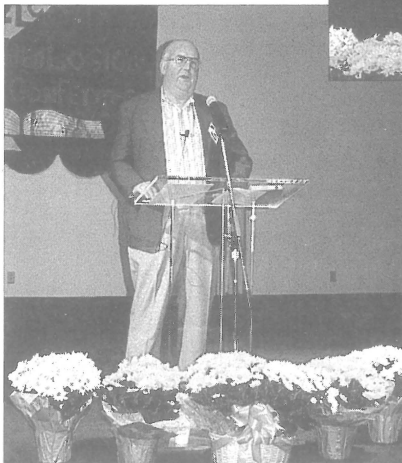
More than seventy-five individuals attended one or more of the sessions.



Dr. David Keyes



Dr. Calvin Pater



Allon Maxwell

CLAYTON COLLEGE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Clayton College and State University is an integral part of the Atlanta Bible College experience. Many of the students as well as staff benefit from courses taken at CCSU. ABC students who take courses at CCSU have full access to all CCSU's computer labs, library resources, and athletic facilities. This fall CCSU will be implementing ITP, Information Technology Projects. ITP is a great leap forward in the rapidly evolving technology era. CCSU is the third state college in the nation offering lap top computers to each student. ABC

is subsidizing the cost of the lap tops for all ABC students that attend classes at CCSU. CCSU's arts department offers a wide variety of concerts and has opportunities for students to take part in musical ensembles. CCSU also has many ways for students to get involved in the college atmosphere. There are numerous clubs and activities such as campus crusade, student government association, and honors programs. CCSU is definitely an asset to Atlanta Bible College students.

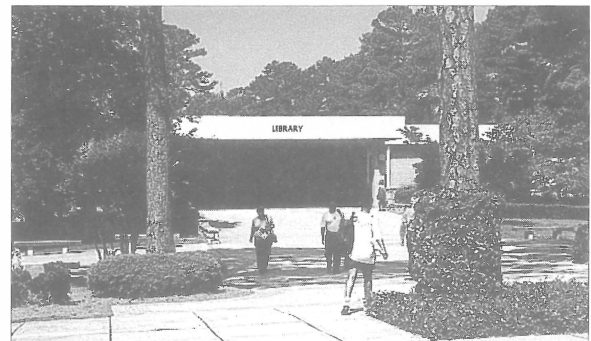
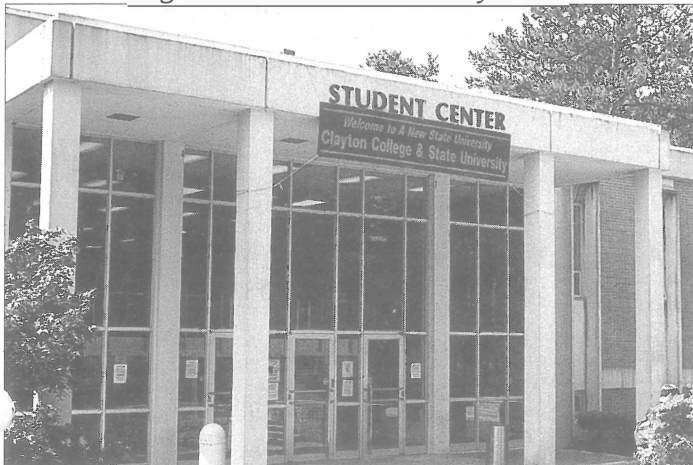
— Zachary Ross

Several small lakes on the Clayton campus add to its beauty.



The name of Clayton State College was recently changed to Clayton College and State University by the Board of Regents to reflect its university status.

ABC student, Zachary Ross, who has been elected Student Government President for Clayton College and State University for 1997-98.



Clayton's library has over 85,000 volumes.

NEW FRIENDS BIBLE CHURCH

New Friends Bible Church is an exciting church with exciting people where exciting things happen. Are you excited yet? I hope so! Atlanta Bible College students find that the nature of New Friends Bible Church is unique because of the wide variety of experiences that are available. Along with New Friends' regular activities, the Bible College has several activities and conferences throughout the year which add to their spiritual experience. Everyone who attends New Friends soon finds out that we discourage them in being spectators and encourage them to find their niche and get involved in ministry. There are several ministries that are already functioning and some people have come up with new ministries, and we encourage them to do that. Many times students are stretched beyond personal comfort zones in ministry and worship for the sake of the gospel, and I believe this is when significant growth takes place. Muscles never grow and become mature unless they are exercised, stretched, and then built back up. Muscles that are seldom or

never exercised will not only not grow, they will turn into fat. Exercise is to our muscles like ministry is to our spiritual walk with Christ. New Friends Bible Church strives to give everyone an opportunity to become a minister and burn some spiritual fat.

One thing we must always remember:

Ministry is kinda like swimming, to enjoy it and be fulfilled in it a person must jump in and get wet. Many people sit on the edge of the pool wondering why they're not having any fun. If they would just get in the water to swim and play and even try out different dives, they would soon be full of joy, life, and God's blessings. NFBC strives to provide that swimming pool experience. Students who choose to get fully "wet" leave with a renewed vision of ministry, worship, fellowship, and personal relationship with Jesus.

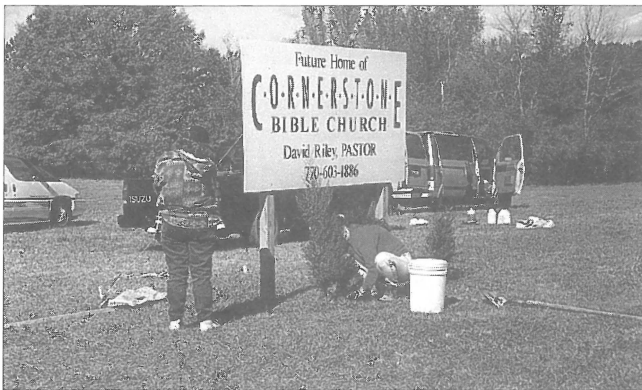
— Dan Kennedy



AROUND THE CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY . . .

Cornerstone Bible Church, located about 20 minutes from Atlanta Bible College, is a great place to get involved in Ministry! Not quite three years old, Cornerstone is a growing congregation located in one of the fastest growing communities in the United States. Cornerstone's primary purpose is to bring the message of the gospel to this growing

community, and this offers a tremendous opportunity for ABC students. Whether it's by ministering to children, youth, assisting in worship, preparing for Sunday services, getting involved in community calling, being a part of a small group, servant evangelism, or many other areas — Cornerstone Bible Church is a place where students can grow



and give in the body of Christ. Cornerstone's vision of "Bringing Christ to Families and Families to Christ" is what we're all about, and Atlanta Bible College students get a chance to "practice" what they learn. It is a pleasure for me to take an active role in the lives of ABC students and assist them to find ways to get involved and exercise their spiritual giftedness. This summer and fall, Cornerstone is also beginning to construct a new worship facility on 10 beautiful acres in McDonough, Georgia. Since the Cornerstone family will do much of the construction work, this will provide many more opportunities to get involved in assisting in this area. Cornerstone Bible Church provides a place for students to practice ministry as they learn the principles at Atlanta Bible College.

— David Riley

Make plans to attend ATLANTA



Call: 800-347-4261

OR WRITE:

Kent Ross

P.O. Box 100,000

Morrow, GA 30260

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Atlanta Bible College
Church of God General Conference
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Report of Summer Conference

The 77th annual General Conference was preceded on August 3 by a day of worship, fellowship, and feasting sponsored by the Pine Grove Bible Church in Minneapolis, MN. Monday, prior to afternoon registration, many early arrivers participated in mini-seminars taught by Anthony Buzzard and Jodi Werhanowicz. The Conference officially began on Monday afternoon, August 4. One hundred and eighty-eight were registered for the Conference and approximately eighty others from Minnesota churches attended evening sessions. The theme was "Fan the Flame." Daily sub-themes were as follows: Rekindling the Flame, Preparing the Lamps, Guarding the Flame, and Spreading the Flame. Morning and evening sermons focused on these sub-themes.

The program on Tuesday emphasized missions and was led by the Lord's Harvest International Mission Board. On Thursday evening — in addition to a sermon — children attending the Conference, including many children from the Pine Grove Bible Church, presented a musical program directed by Connie Scott.

Robert Huddlestun from the Timberland Church in South Bend, Indiana and Pastor Scott Deane of the Pleasant Hill, Ohio Church of God were elected to four-year terms on the Board of Directors to replace Dr. Donna Deane and Don Overmyer. Pastor David Cheatwood of the Blessed Hope Bible Church of God in Rockford, Illinois was elected for two years to complete the unexpired term of Clarence Jones who resigned in the spring. All three retiring Board members were presented plaques of appreciation for their years of service on the Board.

Carol Ring was reelected to a four-year term on the Christian Education Advisory Committee, and Dr. Donna Deane was elected to a four-year term on the Higher Education Advisory Committee.

The Board of Directors reappointed Pastor Vivian Kirkpatrick to a three-year term on the Lord's Harvest International Mission Board; Joe

James was reappointed to a six-year term on the Christian Conciliation Board. Charles Bottolfs was appointed to a three-year term on the Atlanta Bible College Development Foundation Board. Additional appointments will be made at the October board meeting.

The Atlanta Bible College Development Foundation Board reelected Pastor Billie Kennedy as President and elected Charles Bottolfs as Vice-President. The Secretary and Treasurer of the Board of Directors automatically serve in the same capacities for the Foundation Board.

The recommendation calling for eight task forces to be appointed to continue work on the Institutional Long-Range Planning Study was adopted by the delegates. Delegates were asked to consider volunteering and/or recommending others to serve on one of the task forces. The Board has appointed forty-eight individuals to serve on the task forces during the coming year. A meeting of these individuals has been scheduled for October 18 and 19 in Atlanta.

A budget for the 1998-99 fiscal year was adopted by the delegates. It calls for contributions of \$417,900.

The Christian Education Advisory Committee reported on a new adult elective which will be published later this year. The title is "Being Totally True When You're in the Pew." The study is part of a Christian lifestyle series. Other books in the series are being considered for future publication.

Pastor James Graham reported on the summer Youth Congress (RYOT). Two hundred and fifty-two were in attendance. Eight young people made decisions to accept Christ and others rededicated their lives to the Lord. Daily themes were: the development of the biblical worldview; the development of a dynamic prayer life; the development of a Christ-honoring philosophy; and living for Christ without compromise.

Joe James and Mardy Lawrence served with the President as the Program Committee for the Conference.

Chairman's Message at 1997 General Conference

by Dr. William D. Lawrence

During a Saturday morning men's church breakfast an outside speaker from Victorious Christian Living counseling organization challenged us to read through the book of Philippians every day for a month. I did and profited greatly. A lot of the basic thinking for this chairman's address came from that "Philippian Experience." Verse 1:5 speaks of partnership and 1:6 of Him carrying the good work on to completion. Did God begin a good work in the COG conference? Does He want dedicated partners in this work?

Recently I believe we have been drifting toward allowing our differences to divide us. That may be necessary if we think we can work better apart than together. Generally there are several camps. I'd like to outline some of these as I see them.

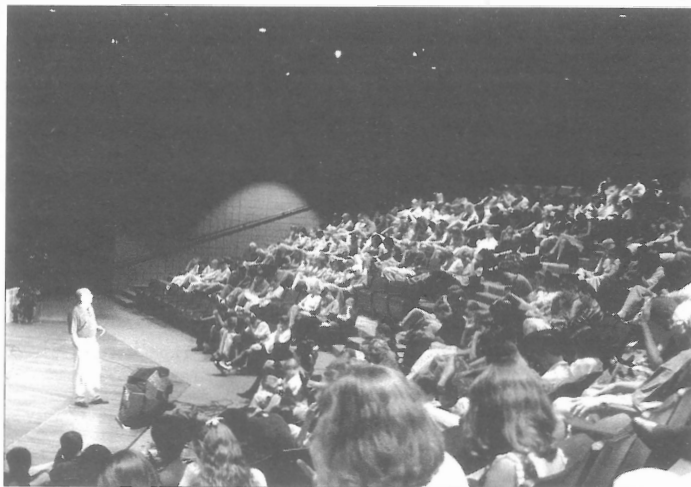
1. Traditional music versus a new approach. I've heard some say that the new songs are repeated over and over as they are sung. I find it interesting that the first hymn in our hymnal repeats the words "How Great Thou Art" 16 times. Actually I'm glad of that for I don't believe we can ever repeat that praise phrase too often. Hymn number nine repeats "Alleluia" 16 times and number 18 "Bless the Lord" 20 times.
2. Those who believe that we should primarily teach COG distinctive doctrines versus those who believe, while holding firmly to our distinctives, we should teach with an additional emphasis on love, acceptance, asking for and giving forgiveness, etc.
3. The Holy Spirit is also now a dividing line. Some desire or even demand that there be no real physical activity such as raising hands in praise, clapping of hands, etc. Some want the physical moving that they feel and that they find the Bible speaks of to be OK in church.
4. Divorce. Lots of dividing lines there.
5. We've lived for many years with "before" or "after" tribulation rapture. Or one or two returns of Christ. To some, one or the other opinion is essential.
6. Some believe Satan is not a being of some sort but just the Adam-inherited sin within all of us. Others feel there is a Satan described in the literal interpretation of the Bible. These believers feel Satan exists as a being in charge of the world now and exerting influence on non-Christians.
7. Some believe that Jesus preexisted His birth while the majority among us don't believe this.

8. There are those who believe we can learn from and cooperate with believing Christians from outside the COG, as Clyde Randall did working with the Billy Graham Crusade. Others believe we should not associate at all with those who believe other than our distinctive doctrines, and some even say that we should not bother to read biblical scholars outside our COG, forgetting that when we read all the versions of the Bible in English that I know of, from King James on, we are reading what was translated by Trinitarians. I guess we'd better scrutinize our own COG hymns, for many, such as Fanny Crosby's songs, were written by Trinitarians. This of course is extremism but exists among some of our members.

Now to Philippians 1:15-18:

It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will. The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Paul says that all that matters is that Christ is preached. Before this, in 1:9, Paul said, "And this is my prayer: that



1997 RYOT at Taylor University

your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight.” 2:1-4:

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

2:14-16:

Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life — in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

No arguing! 2:21, “For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.” That’s sure true for me.

3:13-18:

Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining for what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. For, as I have told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Enemies — as we divide ourselves and don’t accept differences of thoughts, ideas, and interpretations. Let’s hang on to the next quote, 4:4, “Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again: Rejoice!”

Having brought some of the skeletons out of the closet, I believe it is time to be stimulated to get on with the work and not concentrate on negatives. Let’s not refuse to deal with the problems but let’s not let the few negatives override the many positives. 4:2-3 points out two women whose names are written in the book of life, yet they were disagreeing. “I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.” Let’s pop back to 1:27: “Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come to see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel.” Hear the words “strive together”!

I believe it behooves each of us to read Joseph Marsh’s article of 1840. As we look back to our heritage, many of us believe he was right on and that through the years we may have focused so much on our distinctives that we may have forgotten the unity and oneness of Christianity. I believe we are at a turning point in our existence as the COG Abrahamic Faith. I’m encouraged to see new churches with outreach for the lost as they focus on both bringing the lost to Jesus and teaching them our distinctives when they are mature enough to comprehend. I’m encouraged with the caliber of the recent graduates of Atlanta Bible College and many past graduates and their experience in servant evangelism and their excitement in worshipping God and His Son Jesus. They are steeped in the COG doctrines yet not so narrow as to think that is all it’s about. I’m encouraged that God has seen fit to bless us as a Conference with many dedicated souls who give support so that our budget is met. I’m encouraged that there are now only a few who still believe that the move to the Atlanta area was a mistake. I’m encouraged by the dialogue this last spring between the pastors and the Board of Directors. I believe we are at the place where we can live together in harmony and unity even though we differ in many areas as I mentioned earlier. As we all draw closer to Jesus our Lord, the Holy Spirit will unite us in love, acceptance, forgiveness, and the world will see our oneness and know as Jesus prayed “that the world may believe that You have sent me.”

Minutes of the General Conference Business Sessions

Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN

Tuesday, August 5, 1997

The first business session for the 1997 Church of God General Conference was called to order by Chairman William Lawrence. The meeting was preceded by a group prayer session led by Pastor Seth Ross. Chairman Lawrence welcomed all the delegates including a special welcome to the first-time delegates and newly licensed pastors, after which the first-time delegates stood and introduced themselves.

Chairman Lawrence then gave his chairman's message to the delegates in which he focused on a theme of unity. There are a variety of issues on which members in the Church of God are divided: namely music styles in worship, Church of God distinctive doctrines versus the emphasis on relationships and experience, marriage and divorce, the one or two phase coming of Jesus, the personality or non-personality of Satan, just to name a few. Focusing on a variety of texts from Paul's letter to the Philippians, the chairman encouraged the delegates not to dwell on things that are negative and things that divide, but to unite together in the areas in which we agree.

Following his message to the delegates, Chairman Lawrence called on Miss Carrie Krogh, Chairperson of the Credentials Committee. Carrie reported that there were 57 delegates from churches and state conferences, 33 pastors, and 6 Board members for a total of 96 voting delegates. In comparison, there were 99 voting delegates at the opening session of General Conference in 1996.

The chairman asked the secretary if there were any communications to be brought before the delegates. The secretary responded that there were none.

The delegates then were asked to consider the Annual Report of Atlanta Bible College and the Church of God General conference as printed in the May/June PROGRESS JOURNAL on pages C through I. With no questions being asked, Bob See moved and John Huston seconded a motion to accept the Annual Report. The motion carried.

Pastor Jim Graham reported on this year's R.Y.O.T., which is an acronym for Radical Youth Overcoming Today. Jim pointed out that the focus of RYOT is to challenge the youth, educate them and encourage them in their daily lives. Approximately 252 people attended this year's RYOT with eight young people accepting Christ and many others recommitting themselves to the Lord. After an absence of over 20 years, President

David Krogh attended RYOT and received a 90s makeover. Jim encouraged the delegates to send representatives next year and to pray for the youth of today.

Next was the consideration of the Special Reports. The Special Reports are printed on pages J and K of the May/June PROGRESS JOURNAL. There were no questions asked and no motion was necessary.

The Financial Reports were reviewed by Bro. Gary Burnham. We reviewed the ABC/Church of God General Conference Operating Fund income and the ABC/Church of God General Conference Operating Fund expenses. We then turned to and reviewed the ABC/Church of God General Conference Restricted Funds Statement of Income and Expenses. In response to a question, and as a line item in the restricted funds, Anthony Buzzard reported on the radio work being carried on in Atlanta, Georgia and Dallas, Texas. Gary then reviewed the accountability statement from the Morgan Estate.

The next order of business was the nominations for the Board of Directors. Needed this year are two individuals to be elected to four-year terms and one individual for a two-year term to complete the unexpired term of Clarence Jones, who resigned due to the poor health of his wife. The terms of Donna Deane and Don Overmyer expire and they may not be reelected. Donna Deane moved and Joyce Knapp seconded a motion to place in nomination the names of Charles Bottolfs, Pastor David Cheatwood, Roger Crocker, Pastor Scott Deane, Paul Duncan, Fred Gerullis and Robert Huddlestun. The floor was opened up for additional nominations. Since there were no nominations made from the floor, Charles Webster moved and Joe James seconded a motion to close the nominations and the motion carried. Chairman Lawrence asked all the nominees to come forward to be introduced. The nominees are to be in the lobby of Totino Hall at 6:30 this evening to answer any questions the delegates might have. The elections for the Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday afternoon, August 6, 1997.

Nominations were then opened for one position on the Christian Education Advisory Committee. The term of Carol Ring expires and she may be reelected. This is a four-year term. Frances Johnson nominated Carol Ring. Wanda Gerullis then moved and Charles Webster seconded a motion that the

nominations cease and the secretary be instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for Carol Ring. The motion was passed.

Nominations were opened for one position on the Higher Education Advisory Committee. The term of Bill Lawrence expires. This is a four-year term. Seth Ross nominated Donna Deane. Joe James moved and Phyllis Raymond seconded a motion that the nominations cease and that the secretary be instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for Donna Deane. The motion was passed.

David Krogh reviewed the items in the delegate packet. Among them are: the Great Commission Challenge form, an application form for the Church Builder's League, a brochure on Charitable Gift Annuities, a General Conference supplies order form, a paper outlining the process of bringing resolutions, major motions or recommendations to the conference delegates, a copy of the ABC Lending Materials Catalog, a subscription form for *The Restitution Herald*, a subscription form for the *Journal from the Radical Reformation*, and a copy of "Who You Are Makes a Difference" from the book, *Chicken Soup for the Soul*.

David expressed his appreciation to the delegates for their presence here at this Conference and for their work at home as they, indeed, make a difference in their world of influence. He encouraged everyone to place a special blue ribbon, included in the packet, onto themselves and then pass the others to their friends.

Gayle Guthrie, head of the Christian Education Advisory Committee, shared the potential use of "Being Totally True When You're in the Pew." This is a new lesson book that can be an alternative possibility to the Adult Sunday School Quarterly. These lessons would be particularly helpful for those churches that have multiple adult classes.

David mentioned the book table in the lobby of Totino Hall and also commented on his enjoyable week at RYOT. He complimented Jim Graham and his staff for having a quality program.

Anthony Buzzard gave an announcement about an upcoming trip to the Holy Land. This trip leaves on February 11, 1998.

Don Ward thanked David Krogh and the General Conference for the financial help they received which helped his congregation to acquire a new church facility.

Miriam Johnson asked about the silent auction that was taking place in the lobby of Totino Hall. She received a consensus of opinion to extend the deadline for the auction until 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday.

David Riley spoke about the upcoming construction of Cornerstone Bible Church's new building and encouraged labor, prayer, and financial support.

A request was made for Carol Ring and Donna Deane to stand up to be identified, since they were elected to the Advisory Committees today.

Seth Ross closed the meeting with a session of prayer.

Wednesday, August 6, 1997

The Wednesday business session was called to order by Chairman William Lawrence. The business session was preceded by a guided group prayer time led by Pastor Seth Ross.

The secretary read the minutes from Tuesday's business session and called for any corrections. Approval for all the minutes of the Conference will be handled at the end of Thursday's business.

Chairman Lawrence called on President David Krogh for his message to the delegates. David spoke on three topics: 1. Issues regarding the mission and work of the Church of God, 2. A review of the vision of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference, and 3. His thoughts on several important issues which we are facing as an association of churches. The President's message will be printed in its entirety in an upcoming issue of the PROGRESS JOURNAL. The Chairman asked the delegates if they had any questions or comments. Thoughts and feelings of praise and appreciation for the message were expressed by Anita Howell, Don Ward, and Sarah Ross. Marge Overmyer asked for a short break before the elections begin. The Chairman obliged.

The next item of business was the election of the three individuals to the Board of Directors. The Chairman instructed the delegates from the constitution on the rules and process for voting. Upon completion of the election process, the following individuals were elected to the Board of Directors: Robert Huddleston to a four-year term, Scott Deane to a four-year term and David Cheatwood to a two-year term, fulfilling the unexpired term of Clarence Jones.

In other miscellaneous items of business: Dale Bliss thanked the General Conference for their support in the start of North Kent's day care. Mike Gallagher is their associate who is directing the day care. Dale asked for prayer on behalf of Mike and Julie Gallagher as they minister to the parents and children who use the day care facility. Dale also spoke about Crossroads Youth Ministries. One of the goals of Crossroads is to free up youth workers from a lot of organizational details in order to help the youth workers have time to devote to the youth themselves.

Jim Graham invited the delegates to subscribe on the Internet to a new youth information service called UTHMAIL.

Howard Shute talked about the 150th anniversary celebration of the Glad Tidings Church in Fonthill, Ontario, Canada. Howard spoke about the rich heritage of Glad Tidings Church and mentioned they have a book available on the book table in the lobby which outlines the long history of the church. The cost of the book is \$5.00.

The Chairman "put in a plug" for *The Restitution Herald* and encouraged the delegates to read and share the upcoming issue. The sermons made at this conference will be included in the fall issue of the *Herald*.

The location for General Conference in 1998 will be the Renaissance Concourse Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. The dates for the Conference will be July 3-7.

The 1998 RYOT was announced for the week of July 26-31 at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana.

David Krogh presented plaques of appreciation to the retiring Board members. Plaques were given to Donna Deane, Don Overmyer and Clarence Jones. David praised and thanked each one for their hard work and contribution to the Board.

Donna Deane presented the recommendation on the Long-Range Institutional Study. The recommendation calls for the establishment of eight one-year task forces: Evangelism, Finance, Atlanta Bible College, Technology, Communication and Marketing, Publications, Youth, Purpose Statement. The purpose of each task force is to review the long-range planning data and determine priorities and directions related to the particular area. Task forces will be made up of volunteers and Board-appointed individuals. Members of each task force will have the responsibility of developing implementation strategies in these areas and making recommendations to the Board of Directors by April 1, 1998.

Kent Ross then moved and Alan Cain seconded a motion to adopt the recommendation. Fred Gerullis moved and Phyllis Raymond seconded a motion to amend the recommendation to say that a summary of the data received would be sent to the membership by way of the *PROGRESS JOURNAL*. A variety of questions were fielded by Donna, after which there was a call for the question on the amendment to the recommendation. The amendment to the recommendation passed and the question on the motion to adopt the recommendation as amended was called for. The motion was carried.

Kent Ross announced Christian Workers' Seminar for March 29 to April 3, 1998. It will again be held in the Pigeon Forge/Gatlinburg, Tennessee area. This will be the 25th year for Christian Workers' Seminar so plans are being made to make it special. There will be children's classes, the entire ABC student body will be present and babysitting will be available until noon for parents who have small children.

David Krogh presented the proposed budget for the 1998-99 fiscal year. The proposed budget and its explanation are on pages O and P of the May/June *PROGRESS JOURNAL*. No questions were asked about the proposed budget. Action on the budget will take place on Thursday afternoon, August 7, 1997.

The Institutional Long-Range Planning volunteer sheets were handed out. The delegates were asked to fill out the volunteer sheets and return them to the book table by tonight's evening service.

The meeting was adjourned by a group prayer session led by Pastor Seth Ross.

Thursday, August 7, 1997

Chairman Lawrence called the final business session of the 1997 General Conference to order. The secretary read the minutes for Wednesday's meeting. With no corrections being made, they stood approved as read.

The Chairman asked the secretary to read a statement and motion passed by the Board of Directors in regard to Freedom In Christ Ministries. "Pastor Stephen Bolhous and Pastor Michael Cisler have begun a new work in Fonthill, Ontario, Canada called Freedom In Christ Ministries. Back in the spring of 1997, Freedom In Christ Ministries submitted an application for membership into the Church of God General Conference. The Board of Directors considered this application at their April 1997 meeting and again at their meetings preceding and during this conference. The Board also sent Billie Kennedy and Joe James on a study trip to gain more insight and information about Freedom In Christ Ministries. After much discussion, the Board of Directors moved and seconded a motion to turn down Freedom In Christ Ministries' application for membership into the Church of God General Conference, but will review it again at a future meeting. The motion was carried."

David Krogh announced the following appointments made by the Board of Directors: Don Overmyer to the Investment Fund Board, Vivian Kirkpatrick to the Mission Sending Agency, Joe James to the Christian Conciliation Board, and Charles Bottolfs to the ABC Development Foundation. One more appointment to the ABC Development Foundation is yet to be made.

(continued on page 13)

President's Message to Summer Conference Delegates

by President David Krogh

It is a privilege to speak to you members and delegates today on three topics: 1. Issues regarding the mission and work of the Church of God; 2. A review of the vision of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference; 3. My thoughts on several issues which we are facing as an association of churches.

Issues Regarding the Mission and Work of the Church of God

Last spring a number of our churches went on a Fifty-Day Spiritual Adventure based on the theme, "The Church You've Always Longed For, and What You Can Do to Make It Happen." As our local church went through this material, I thought of it not only in terms of my own local church, but this theme also prompted me to think about the Church of God as a whole, and my dreams for us as a people. I wish to share these with you for your consideration.

1. The Church of God I long for is one in which all members of the Church of God are wholeheartedly committed to the Bible as the infallible Word of God.

Our founding fathers believed in the importance of the Bible. They were truth seekers. They called themselves Bereans because they searched the Scriptures daily to see if the things they were being taught were true. Their study led them to the conclusion that many basic Bible truths were being ignored or rejected by Christendom. Their study led them to articulate Bible truths which were not being taught by others. These doctrinal distinctives became the foundation for the Church of God and were eventually compiled into the statement of faith adopted by pastors and representatives of our founding churches and were incorporated into our Constitution and By-laws. These Bible beliefs make sense. I personally endorse, support, and teach these doctrines without reservation or qualification.

In regard to our message making sense, Anthony Buzzard received a letter recently from a truth seeker in Dallas, Texas who had heard his radio program "Focus on the Kingdom." The author's father is a Pentecostal preacher, but he is a very active Southern Baptist.

He writes:

I have spent the last four days studying your book *Our Fathers Who Aren't in Heaven*. (In fact my wife is amused at my taking time off work to "only read.") I began with some skepticism and fear that I could be going down a trail that leads to a "wandering away from the faith." The part of your belief that does not acknowledge the Trinity was what really concerned me. Much like the people in Paul's day, I could be thrown out of the Southern Baptist fellowship with that one! My own curiosity, which arose some months ago when I read that Jesus came "proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom," had prepared me for your radio program on the Gospel of the Kingdom because I could find no reference by Jesus to his preaching about his death and resurrection in his early ministry. Interestingly enough, I flipped to a page in your other book, *Doctrine of the Trinity*, page 69, and happened to see a sentence that said "the fearful believer obstructs the whole point of the Christian venture which is to seek progressive understanding of the truth"! With so many warnings about false teachers, along with observation of others who seem to be led astray, I suppose that it has made me skeptical of anyone who wants to "explain the Bible to me"! The Spirit must have planted this "love of the truth" because I have been struggling for a long time with the questions about the seemingly endless ways to interpret the Bible and the resultant behavior produced by followers of different denominations or ministers of the "Gospel." It's questionable to me how any new believer has a chance these days unless they begin to read the Bible for themselves — without the grid of a denomination's beliefs being handed to them like Cliff Notes used in college courses.

I must tell you that after reading the entire book (*Our Fathers*) and looking up all of the Scripture references I do not have any questions to pose to you. I feel exactly like those people in the crowd in Acts 2:37. The verses of Acts 1:6 and 3:21 are now key (at least to me), and it may not be an exaggeration to state that how one "interprets" these determines if one is

able to appropriate what you are teaching. I am so thankful that God led me to your radio program and your book.

The whole Bible makes much more “sense” now and I can appreciate Paul’s statement that “the Gospel is something to be learned” (p. 159, Col. 1:7).

The Abrahamic faith is able to open eyes.

— Curt

There is much in this letter that encourages. It is always refreshing to find a fellow truth seeker — someone who affirms what we believe.

But I must ask, “do we believe that we must seek progressive understanding of truth?” That is what Anthony says and I agree with him. We must not rest upon the study and research of our forefathers. My dream is that we would have the boldness of our forefathers to grow in our understanding of God’s Word and that we will continue to seek for truth. We must not be so arrogant as to say that we know all of God’s truth and that there is nothing more to learn. And yet some of our people say that. It is dangerous to close our minds.

It is my observation that we have several different views in the Church of God today in regard to our distinctives. Some are strongly committed to teach and preach these distinctive truths; some believe that these truths are essential for salvation, and that any variance jeopardizes one’s salvation; on the other hand some think that Church of God distinctives are part of a larger body of Bible truth and they are tolerant of some variation in belief without the risk of losing salvation.

And then there are different views on how these truths should be taught and how quickly new attenders should be taught our distinctives. There are those who use a confrontational approach in teaching Bible truth. They don’t mince words about what they believe. In fact one of our churches put ads in the newspaper saying that they were a non-trinitarian church. Some believe they need to point out our doctrinal distinctives the first time someone comes to their church. On the other hand there are those who use a non-confrontational approach in teaching Bible truth. They use the approach of presenting Bible truth in a positive, gentle, and gradual way. They use the approach of building a personal relationship with people. They establish their credibility as Bible teachers; show themselves to be loving and caring persons; and earn the right to speak.

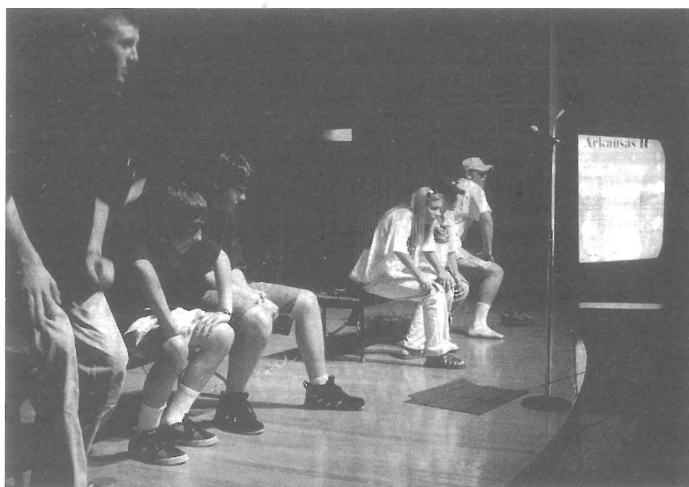
We also have differences on how much persons need to know before they are baptized.

I believe it is in our best interests to work together, despite the differences among us. It is my contention that the greatest differences among most of us are small compared

to our differences with other churches and groups. It is not our heritage to insist on 100% agreement on all issues in the Church of God, especially on issues that are not addressed in our statement of faith. And I for one do not want to see us change this tradition. I believe we should put forth a major effort to be tolerant of each other, and agree to disagree on some issues. We must certainly continue to seek unity, which means that some of us may have to swallow our pride and admit that we are wrong. Unfortunately, ego sometimes gets in the way. No one likes to admit he is wrong. But if differences cannot be worked out, I believe we should continue to love each other and work toward common ends.

In looking at our history, it is clear that the founding fathers of the Church of God had differences of theology, and they intentionally kept our statement of faith fairly short so that we could focus upon the things that we agree upon so we could work together while giving our pastors, members, and churches freedom to differ on other issues. I believe we can have unity without having uniformity. When we differ we should do so with kindness and love and without the use of threats. Yes, we have heard threats made that if the Board does something, or if they fail to do something, individuals will withhold money, or withdraw from the Conference. Those threats, if carried out, will destroy the Conference.

Our Conference was organized for the purpose of doing together the things that we could not do alone. I continue to believe that there are advantages in working together. Synergism takes effect when we work together, so that our effectiveness is not just the sum of each of our churches added together, but there is an added advantage as we pool our resources and encourage each other. I do not believe that our churches should have a blind loyalty to the Conference or to other churches in our Conference, and go along



Missouri and Arkansas Bible quiz teams competing at 1997 RYOT

with everything that happens just for the sake of going along. However, I believe that we share common interests and the Lord's work is strengthened by our unity and cooperation. Each church in our Conference is entitled to delegate representation at the summer Conference where decisions are made by majority vote. The work of the Church of God is strengthened when there is support and participation in the projects approved by the delegates.

And one of the greatest reasons for working together leads me to the second point regarding the church I've always longed for, and that is:

2. I long for a membership wholeheartedly committed to making disciples.

Jesus said in Matthew 28:19, 20 that we are to make disciples by going, baptizing and teaching people to obey everything He has commanded. When Jesus looked at the multitudes, He saw them as sheep scattered abroad, who needed a shepherd. It is imperative that we see the fields that are ready for the harvest and put forth effort to reach those who are lost. This may mean giving up cherished ways of doing ministry, but we must clearly understand our mission of making disciples, and put forth a concerted effort to fulfill the mission. With Paul we must become all things to all men so that by all possible means we might save some (1 Cor. 9:22).

3. My dream is to see a balance in the Church of God between knowing truth and doing truth.

James makes it clear that we must not just hear the word but we must do the word. We must avoid the temptation to be caught up in knowing and forget the doing. Some of our members have prided themselves on knowing our distinctive doctrines, but they do not live spirit-filled lives, nor do they share the message of truth and salvation with others. James says we deceive ourselves if we only listen to the word and fail to do it!

4. I long for an association of churches and members that has genuine love and care for each other.

Jesus said that the world would know that we are His disciples by our love for each other. This love and care should be exhibited in the local church as well as throughout our Conference. One of the ways this love and care is currently demonstrated is by the members of the Church Builder's League who give \$25 twice a year to help other churches in our Conference start or expand church buildings. We have also seen it demonstrated by the Summer Ministries team that has served a number of our churches. It is seen in the construction volunteers who have traveled

to various parts of the country to help build new church buildings. This demonstration of love and care is beneficial to both the giver and the receiver.

Sometimes, though, this love and care has not been evident in our churches or in the Conference. Some have demonstrated a negative, bitter, or critical spirit toward others in the body. We must constantly work to build this love and care in the body.

5. My dream is for the Church of God to have a spirit of optimism as we trust a God who has unlimited resources and as we look forward to the return of Jesus and the establishment of the Kingdom on the earth.

That does not mean that our work will be easy, but we can have a basic attitude of optimism knowing that God is in control and that He will bless our efforts when we are obedient to Him. This is not the time to be pessimistic and discouraged.

Our Vision

In creating the Church of God that we have always longed for, I believe that the College/Conference must continue to focus upon the vision that we have articulated over the past several years:

1. Our commitment as a College/Conference is to serve our churches. The Conference was organized for the benefit of its member churches. The responsibility of the Board is to make sure that resources are used wisely. Churches, members, and pastors are free to pursue ministry as they see fit and the Conference encourages and provides support wherever possible. Our Institutional Study was initiated three years ago to help us better understand the needs of our churches and how the College/Conference can better help meet these needs.

2. The members of the Conference recognize the importance of starting new churches for several reasons: it is one way to fulfill the Great Commission. I believe the Conference should continue to give financial help and encourage individuals or groups who have a desire to reach out into new areas. We can put them in touch with other Church of God planters who have learned from experience things to do and things not to do. Obviously each church planting situation is unique and what may work in one place may not necessarily work in another place. Not all church planting efforts will become self-supporting, self-sustaining churches. There are many factors that affect the work of churches. And just because some have failed is no reason to quit planting.

3. From the very beginning of our organization it has been a priority of our members to train leaders for churches. Atlanta Bible College will continue to:

- a. Teach doctrines that are commonly believed among us.
- b. Be evenhanded in presenting doctrines that are not commonly believed among us and permit students to draw their own conclusions.
- c. Teach students how to do ministry — in a variety of settings both for existing churches as well as new churches.

We have put in place an instructional staff with a variety of educational backgrounds, spiritual gifts, and emphases. We have a staff that is balanced. They are not carbon copies of each other. They complement each other and provide a well-rounded program for our students.

As an educational institution, ABC is committed to helping our students to think and to do. We emphasize high morals, academic excellence, and a spirit-filled life. Students who do not wish to be in this kind of an environment will not be happy at ABC. We have an open admissions policy, but students must earn the right to remain as students.

The future of our college depends upon people hearing God's call to service and their willingness to answer the call and prepare for ministry. We dare not forget to pray the Lord of the harvest to send workers, and we must realize that He may answer our prayer by calling us, or calling our children, or our grandchildren.

4. We must continue to facilitate the teaching of Bible truth to the public at large. This is happening in several ways:

Several families are underwriting a 15-minute daily radio program called Focus on the Kingdom. Anthony Buzzard speaks on Bible truths regarding the Kingdom of God.

Steve Taylor has a commitment to television ministry. We have done everything possible to support and encourage that ministry.

Kent Ross and Anthony Buzzard initiated the publishing of the *Journal from the Radical Reformation* to promote Church of God distinctives into the academic community. We have facilitated this project which has been underwritten by churches and individuals who believe that this is an important ministry.

The Restitution Herald, along with books, articles, and tracts, also helps to teach Bible truth to the public at large.

We welcome feedback in response to the vision and dreams that I have shared and how they can be implemented by our College and Conference and our membership. If there are new ideas or things that we should be doing or ways in which we can do them, I want to assure you that our staff and our Board have a listening ear to receive whatever anybody wants to share.

My Thoughts on Several Issues That We Currently Face:

1. Doctrine and Experience

In the last several years, some in the Church of God have been speaking more about their feelings and experiences in their Christian lives. Several books have been referred to at our Conference and throughout our membership such as Henry Blackaby's book *Experiencing God* and Steve Meek's book *Relational Christianity*. These and other books have addressed the subject of knowing and loving God in a more intimate way and experiencing a deeper Christian faith. For many years, our membership has been known for its emphasis upon intellectual understanding of Bible truth. Since the Bible stresses both knowing and doing, it seems appropriate to emphasize both intellect and experience in Christian faith. Not either/or.

Some are expressing a concern that the pendulum will swing away from doctrine and toward an emphasis only on experience. Obviously whenever balance is sought, there is the risk that the pendulum will swing from one extreme to another. However, we must achieve balance. Extremism on one side is no more correct than extremism on the other side, when God's truth is in the middle.



Alan Cain, Dan Kennedy, and John Nelson leading worship at Minister's Conference

Some who hold extreme views are afraid that moving even slightly to the center will start a process that will be irreversible. They believe that the farther away they can be from error, the better. But when God's truth is in the middle, extremism on one side is just as wrong as extremism on the other. We should seek to follow God's truth and trust Him to control the situation. Obviously proclaiming truth is a never-ending process. There will always be those who will challenge God's word and try to lead people astray with their own philosophies and theologies.

The Church of God must continue to search the Scriptures regarding the proper balance between knowledge and experience.

2. The Holy Spirit

For the past 30 years, the Church of God has been giving more thought and study to the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts. In the past, our theology of the Holy Spirit consisted of teaching that the Spirit is not the third person of the trinity. As this study has been undertaken, differences of understanding have become evident within our membership. So, the question is, how closely must we agree on doctrinal issues that are not specifically addressed in our statement of faith?

Historically, the Church of God has encouraged each member to be a truth seeker and to follow their own conscience. In this regard, Clyde Randall wrote in his book *Historical Waymarks* on pages 108, 109:

One of the characteristics of the Church of God from the beginning has been the freedom of the individual to study and interpret the Scriptures as he came to understand them. This individual access to the Word, with an avowed purpose to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," has led the members to an acceptance and belief of the basic fundamentals of the Gospel of the Kingdom. As expressed by the editor of the *Harbinger and Advocate*, Joseph Marsh, "It is *free investigation* that elicits truth and exposes error." This freedom of investigation rooted out many of the errors inherent in those who came into the Church of God with unbiblical beliefs. . . .

The Church of God has always been slow to exercise discipline on individual or group views, except when those holding such injected them into the body in a divisive way. Division in the body of Christ, the church, is abhorrent to the Lord (Prov. 6:16-19) and one which the church cannot condone if it is to survive.

Is it now possible for us to have an attitude of acceptance and tolerance for different views, especially in the area of the Holy Spirit? As Clyde Randall mentioned, we must guard against divisiveness and a spirit of arrogance as we discuss issues and work together for common ends. And to me, this is the issue: divisiveness. Usually this divisiveness is caused by people trying to force their views on others. We must learn to live with our differences, and accommodate these differences in a way that will result in our working together and reaching more people. There is diversity in our world, and if we are to reach a diverse world, we need different kinds of churches, different styles of worship, and different emphases.

3. Outreach Focus

The historical record of the Church of God indicates that disciplinemaking has not been a priority for our members or churches. Some of our churches have been content to focus exclusively on ministry to existing members, rather than having a balanced ministry of outreach and edification. There are some who feel that an emphasis on evangelism and outreach is only a "numbers game." The charge is made that some are interested in growth at any price. In my opinion, these charges are unfounded. The emphasis upon evangelism is based upon Jesus' instruction to make disciples, and therefore becomes a matter of obedience. It is the will of Jesus that we be productive in bearing fruit. The multiplication of fruit will obviously result in increased numbers, but the numbers are a by-product of our obedience to what Jesus has commanded. The Church of God must seek for balance between inward and outward focus and we must not waver in our obedience to clear commands of Jesus.

4. Service Organization

From its inception seventy-seven years ago, our General Conference has focused on being a servant to our churches and membership. It has never been a headquarters in the normal sense of the word. Decisions regarding the work of the College and the Conference rest in the hands of delegates who represent pastors, churches, and state/district conferences. Total control of the organization is in the hands of these delegates who not only make decisions about the work, but elect a Board of Directors who are instructed to carry out the wishes of the membership. Any delegate may introduce a motion on the floor of the Conference. Churches and conferences may introduce motions. The Ministerial Association may introduce motions. Members, churches, and pastors may communicate with the Board of Directors by telephone, by letter, or in person to express their wishes.

The General Conference does not dictate to local churches how they should conduct their affairs. The only regulations that are imposed upon members of the Conference are those that have been adopted and approved by a majority vote of the delegates.

There are some who believe the Conference should be more assertive in controlling and correcting local churches. There are some who attempt to hold the Conference accountable for things that happen in local churches. The role of and the limits of authority of the Conference must be clarified.

5. Mergers

For a number of years, in the spirit of the ecumenical movement, denominations have been merging. In just the last few weeks the United Church of Christ has decided to join with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Presbyterian Church USA, and the Reformed Church in America.

I would like to make it clear that this is not a direction that the Church of God General Conference is pursuing. Because of our distinctive doctrines, which we are unwilling to compromise, it would be unlikely that anyone would want to merge with us, and we will not compromise our doctrinal position to merge with another group.

During the past year, we have shared information with you about the Big Sandy, TN Church of God. There has been a lot of turmoil in that organization, and at this point there are many unanswered questions about who they are, what they believe, and why they want to work with us. You can be sure that our Board/staff will proceed very cautiously in any efforts to work with this group.

There are other groups that we have some things in common with, such as:

Advent Christians — we have common roots; however they have chosen to become a part of the National Association of Evangelicals and they have become trinitarian. Though we share common beliefs on conditional immortality, most of their members are headed in a direction in which we will not go.

Christadelphians — we also have common roots with this group. We have 95% agreement in doctrine with Christadelphians on the nature of God and Christ, the Kingdom on the earth, sleep of the dead, etc., but most of them worry about the 5% on which we disagree, and therefore most of them will not fellowship with us.

Other groups — there is a growing number of ex-Jehovah's Witnesses, ex-Way International members, and ex-Worldwide Church of God members. Many of them are looking for truth and looking for others who share some common beliefs. We certainly will continue to welcome any and all truth seekers.

Some of these groups use our Sunday School curriculum and other literature. We welcome contact with them and we will continue to promote truth.

Conclusion

Today, we look back at seventy-seven years of history with a sense of gratitude for God's faithfulness in bringing us to this point in our history. The Lord has seen fit to keep us together, working toward common ends for many years. God has in His graciousness provided financial resources to continue our work. Not only has He met our needs through His people, but the financial resources of the College and Conference have grown over the years. Hundreds of students have been trained at the Bible College and untold thousands of lives have been touched by the ministries of our churches.

It is imperative that we continue to look to Jesus as the head of the church, be obedient to all that we have been asked to do, and continue to seek God's direction as we labor in fields that are ready for harvest. Now is the time for renewed zeal as we build upon the foundation of our forefathers and work diligently in anticipation of the soon return of Jesus to this earth. We will always face opposition and obstacles, but we must not let these deter us from doing the work that God has called us to do.



1997 Christian Workers' Seminar

The delegates gave a rising vote of thanks to Bill Burnham for his work on the Investment Fund Board and to Paul Overholser and Gary Turner for their service on the ABC Development Foundation.

The Chairman called for a motion on the proposed 1998-99 budget. Bob See moved and Charles Bottolfs seconded a motion that the proposed budget for the 1998-99 fiscal year be approved. With no discussion taking place, the question was called and the motion carried.

Carrie Krogh gave the credentials report indicating there were 62 church and conference delegates, 36 pastors and 6 Board members for a total of 104 voting delegates. This is the same number of voting delegates as last year.

Under General Business, Joyce Knapp suggested that a possible theme for the 1998 General Conference be "The Flame Aglow" in order to emphasize the positive things happening in our churches. Francis Burnett suggested a sub-theme of "Freedom in Christ" since this conference will be held over the July 4th holiday. A variety of persons made comments about the music at this year's Conference. Joyce Knapp would like to see the early morning prayer services started up again. Wanda Gerullis brought greetings from Clarence and Helen Jones and she asked for prayer for the Missouri Conference as well as the church in St. Charles, Missouri that had closed. Billie Kennedy moved and June Andrew seconded a motion that we express our appreciation to the Minnesota Conference for their fine welcome reception on Monday evening. The delegates responded with a round of applause.

The Chairman then asked the secretary to read the minutes of Thursday's business session. After a few corrections were made, David Riley moved and Jon Welch seconded a motion that all of the minutes for the 1997 General Conference business sessions be approved. The motion was carried.

Russ Magaw then moved and Charles Webster seconded a motion that the 1997 General Conference business session be adjourned. The motion carried. Following the business session, Seth Ross led the delegates in a session of prayer.

Special Note: An appreciated new touch to this year's Conference were the sessions of group prayer before and after each of the business sessions.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dale H. Swartz
Board Secretary

PRAYER AND PRAISE

October, 1997

- 1 **Pray for Pastor Gary and Glenda Turner as they prepare for the first public service of New Life Bible Church, Winnebago, IL.**
- 2 Pray for wisdom as decisions are made for the use of the Morgan bequest.
- 3 **Pray for a personal hunger to know God and Jesus better.**
- 4 Pray for New Life Church in Beloit, Wisconsin pastored by Jason Turner.
- 5 **Praise God for your church family and the strength that you receive through it.**
- 6 Pray for the students and staff of Atlanta Bible College as they enter the third week of classes.
- 7 **Praise God for the promise of a new heaven and a new earth in His coming kingdom.**
- 8 Repent before God for going your own way instead of God's way.
- 9 **Praise God for retired pastor Harry Goekler and his wife Thelma.**
- 10 Pray for Community Bible Fellowship in Culver, Indiana.
- 11 **Pray for Tim and Shelly Spickler in their work at Family Bible Fellowship.**
- 12 Pray for a church planting vision for Church of God members.
- 13 **Praise God for your pastor.**
- 14 Praise God for new contacts who are seeking the truth around the world.
- 15 **Pray for Beder Ucanay as he works in Lima, Peru.**
- 16 Pray for new subscribers to *The Restitution Herald*.
- 17 **Pray for the work that is being done in India to proclaim God's truth.**
- 18 Pray for the Institutional Long-Range Planning Task Forces as they meet in Atlanta today and tomorrow.
- 19 **Pray for your pastor and his leadership.**
- 20 Pray for the Board of Directors as they meet today and tomorrow in Atlanta.
- 21 **Praise God for those who have supported Atlanta Bible College through the Booster Campaign.**
- 22 Ask God to help you love Him and His Son more.
- 23 **Pray for Today's Good News television ministry in Lafayette, IN, led by Steve Taylor.**
- 24 Pray that Church of the Open Bible in Farmington, MO will find a pastor.
- 25 **Pray for those churches observing National Friend Day tomorrow.**
- 26 Pray for New Life Bible Church in Winnebago, IL as they meet today for their first service.
- 27 **Pray for Steve and Pam Grant in their ministry in the Middle East.**
- 28 Pray for Steve and Jill Taylor as they lead New Hope Community Church in Lafayette, Indiana.
- 29 **Praise God that He is our constant source of strength.**
- 30 Praise God for His constant care.
- 31 **Pray for 2,000 baptisms by the year 2000.**

PRAYER AND PRAISE

November, 1997

- 1 Praise God for the contacts that are being made through Atlanta Bible College ministry groups.
- 2 Pray for someone who is in need of physical healing.
- 3 Pray for the Badillo family in Labor Vieja, Mexico.
- 4 Praise God for men and women who are studying at Atlanta Bible College for Christian service.
- 5 Pray for Daniel Smead in his duties as Technical Director of the publishing department of the General Conference.
- 6 Pray for Sunday School teachers in your local church.
- 7 Pray for those attending the Midwest Men's Retreat at Camp Mack this weekend.
- 8 Pray for Gayle Guthrie as she serves as coordinator of the Christian education department.
- 9 Praise God for His holiness and truthfulness.
- 10 Pray for Judy Myers and the work of the Lord's Harvest International Mission Board.
- 11 Pray for a spirit of unity throughout the Church of God.
- 12 Pray for Pastor Gary and Glenda Turner and New Life Bible Church in Winnebago, Illinois.
- 13 Pray for the General Conference/Atlanta Bible College staff.
- 14 Pray for wisdom for the Ministerial Recognition Board (formerly License Board) as they serve.
- 15 Pray for an opportunity to share Christ with someone this week.
- 16 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.
- 17 Pray for Pastor Paul Moore and the work of the Gatesville, Texas Church of God as they construct an addition to their facilities.
- 18 Pray for the boldness you need to share Christ with an unbelieving friend.
- 19 Pray for Jim Graham, Youth Coordinator of the General Conference.
- 20 Pray for the outreach efforts of your local congregation.
- 21 Praise God for His daily blessings of shelter, food, family and friends.
- 22 Pray for the Kokomo, Indiana church as they make plans to relocate their church.
- 23 Pray for an individual you know who does not have hope of eternal life.
- 24 Pray for the financial needs of our College/Conference.
- 25 Pray for those who have recently accepted Christ and are beginning a new walk.
- 26 Pray for the churches within your state or regional conference.
- 27 Thank God for His goodness to you.
- 28 Praise God for many baptisms in our churches this fall.
- 29 Praise God for the leadership of your local congregation.
- 30 Pray for new contacts through the distribution of literature.

REPORT OF BAPTISMS:

2,000 by the Year 2000

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| April 1, 1997 - July 31, 1997* | 36 |
| April 1, 1996 - March 31, 1997* | 141 |
| April 1, 1995 - March 31, 1996 | 164 |
| April 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995 | 162 |
| April 1, 1993 - March 31, 1994 | 142 |
| April 1, 1992 - March 31, 1993 | 164 |
| April 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992 | 170 |
| June 1, 1990 - March 31, 1991 | 168 |
| January 1 - May 31, 1990 | 55 |

Jan. 1,
2000

Total
1,202

* More complete figures are being collected from non-reporting churches.

Calendar of Events

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| September 26, 27 | Church of God Women's Retreat, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |
| October 3-5 | Northeast Conference, at Urbana, OH church |
| October 10, 11 | Southeast Men's Retreat |
| November 7, 8 | Midwest Men's Retreat, Camp Mack, Milford, IN |
| March 6-8 | College Invitational |
| March 29-April 3 | Christian Workers' Seminar, Holiday Inn, Pigeon Forge, TN |
| May 2-5 | Ministers/Spouses Retreat, Clock Tower Resort and Conference Center, Rockford, IL |
| July 3-7 | 78th Annual Summer Conference, Renaissance Atlanta Hotel - Concourse, Atlanta, GA (same location as 1994 Conference) |

College/Conference News

Financial Update

The fiscal year ended on June 30. Though contributions were less than budgeted, expenses were also less than budgeted enabling us to finish the year with a small surplus. Also, during the year, \$12,500 was repaid to cover funds previously borrowed for general operations. We praise God for the faithfulness of members, churches, and conferences that enabled the college/conference to meet all of its financial obligations during the year.

The new fiscal year which began on July 1 will require contributions of \$390,400 or approximately \$32,500 per month.

New Church Starting

Pastor Gary Turner and his wife Glenda are starting a new church in Winnebago, Illinois, a western suburb of Rockford. Winnebago is a rapidly growing community with twenty-three subdivisions under construction or on the drawing boards.

Gary began making contacts for the church beginning the first of July. Nearly 1,000 door-to-door calls have been made. Approximately 35% of the community is unchurched, and nearly 30% of those individuals have expressed an interest in the church.

New Life Bible Church of Winnebago is the recipient of the current Church Builders' Appeal. Church planting and church development aid is being provided by the General Conference.

Focus on the Kingdom Radio Ministry

Several Church of God families are providing financial support for a fifteen-minute radio program broadcast on WGUN in Atlanta, Georgia Monday through Friday at 3:15 p.m. Anthony Buzzard is the speaker. The program is also being broadcast in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. In addition, approximately 5,000 tapes have been duplicated and made available to individuals and groups who have an interest in the kingdom message.

Free literature is offered to those who call in response to the program. Over 150 individuals have responded.

Beginning soon, the Focus on the Kingdom radio broadcast will be available over the Internet. Radio station KSKY in Dallas, Texas will broadcast the program, which will be available to everyone who has an audio card and an Internet connection. Additional information will be available when this broadcast begins.

Transylvania Pilgrimage '97

Kent and Cheryl Ross spent three weeks in August in eastern Europe visiting sights important to Biblical Unitarians as well as Jewish travelers. Dr. David Keyes, who spoke at the Atlanta Bible College Theological Conference in the spring, was the

tour coordinator. George Williams, author of the book *The Radical Reformation*, accompanied the tour partway.

Trust Received

William and Rhoda Hanson were long-time faithful members of the Church of God and supporters of the General Conference. They were charter members of the Pennellwood Church of God in Grand Rapids, Michigan. They also assisted when the Garden Park Church was started in Grand Rapids. Will served as president of the Michigan Conference. He died in May 1975 and Rhoda died in August 1987. Prior to her death, Rhoda created a trust fund of approximately \$400,000 for the benefit of the College and Conference. The agreement stipulated that the funds would be held for ten years after the death of Rhoda and during this time interest earnings would be distributed to the College and Conference. At the end of ten years, the principal would be turned over to the Conference.

According to the terms of the trust, the interest earnings have been used for scholarships, staff training, pastoral aid, the general fund of the Bible College, a revolving loan fund for the General Conference, home missions, foreign missions, and church builders' appeals. Over the life of the trust, over \$300,000 has helped to fund these various programs.

At the end of August of this year, the trustee of this account, Robert Smith of Blanchard, Michigan, turned over the principal to the College/Conference. The Board of Directors has invested these funds, and the interest earnings will continue to assist with programs as requested by the donors.

We are very grateful for this trust which will be a continuing memorial to William and Rhoda Hanson.

Institutional Long-Range Planning Study Task Forces

At the summer Conference delegates authorized the creation of eight task forces to continue the work of the Institutional Long-Range Planning Study during the coming year. Delegates and attenders at the summer Conference were given an opportunity to volunteer to serve on task forces and to recommend others to serve. The Board has reviewed all of the candidates for the task forces and has contacted individuals to serve.

The task forces will meet in Atlanta October 18 and 19, followed by a meeting of the Board of Directors beginning the evening of October 19 and continuing through October 21. Information on the Institutional Study will be reviewed and each task force will have the responsibility of developing possible strategies in its respective area: evangelism, finance, Atlanta Bible College, technology, communication and marketing, publications, youth, and purpose statement. These possible strategies will be submitted to the Board of Directors by March of 1998 and the Board will prepare recommendations for action by the delegates of the 1998 summer Conference.

BAPTISMS

MICHIGAN

Garden Park — Linda Swart (6/15/97), by Pastor Ray Hall.

MINNESOTA

Eden Valley — Jason Nordmann, Breanna Koch, and Frank Koch (6/20/97), by Pastor Russ Magaw.

OHIO

Lawrenceville — Rena Stevens (6/16/97), by Pastor Mark Tschaenn.

Pleasant Hill — Veronica Vance (7/6/97), Joshua Deane (7/6/97), and Betsy Stickley (7/16/97), by Pastor Scott Deane.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Bethel — Marvin Kay (4/20/97) and Wallace Kay (4/20/97), by Pastor E. Richard Smith; Barney Owens (4/27/97) and Freddie Pless (5/4/97), by Pastor Alan Cain.

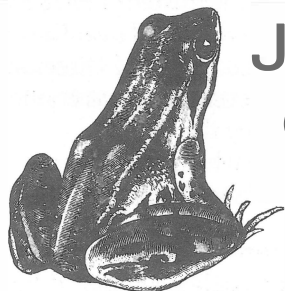
TENNESSEE

Nashville — Judith Marie Stotmeister (6/22/97), by Pastor Roger Mattus.

DEATHS

CALIFORNIA

Forest Hills — Etta Humphreys, 94, long-time member from California (4/10/97), by Pastor James Hill.



Jump into Quizzing

For teen Bible quizzing information call Tom New: (501) 679-3037

For information on study guides, practice questions, newsletter, audio tapes, practice ideas, write to Tom New:

29 Sheila Drive
Greenbrier, AR 72058

Teen Bible quizzing, a fun way to get young people studying the Bible.

MINNESOTA

Eden Valley — Donna Madden, 66, member (7/6/97), and Vivian Savage, 96, member (7/7/97), by Pastor Russ Magaw.

OHIO

Golden Rule — Anna Fowler, 88 (6/19/97), by Pastor Rex Cain.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Bethel — Faye Hammonds (6/20/97), by Pastors Alan Cain and E. Richard Smith.

MARRIAGES

ILLINOIS

Oregon — Todd Myers and Stephanie Nesemeier (6/14/97), by Pastor Michael Hoffman.

DIRECTORY CHANGES

Pastor Harry Goekler, new area code (956) 428-1171

Pastor Dale Ramsey, 9878 Browntown Road, Browntown, VA 22610 Ph (540) 636-4226.

Pastor David Riley, 530 North Oakland Circle, McDonough, GA 30253, Ph (770) 914-7404.

Pastor David Swartz, Columbia Station, OH, new area code, change from (216) to (440).

WEB SITES

The correct address for the Freedom in Christ Ministries web site is: <http://www.iaw.com/~jmurphy/ficm/>

BOOK AVAILABLE

Many of our readers were richly blessed by the book by Sidney Hatch, *Daring to Differ: Adventures in Conditional Immortality*. Now from the pen of this gifted and scholarly servant of God comes an equally good book based on his experiences during World War II.

Sid fell asleep in Christ on October 1, 1995. The book, *In Combat with the Blackhawks: Blessings from Those Days of Battle*, was published by his family after his death. He spent his final days battling leukemia, finishing this book.

The book can be ordered from his wife, Josephine Hatch, 21800 SW Pacific Highway 41, Sherwood, OR 97140-9130. The book sells for \$19, which includes postage and handling.

— Hollis Partlowe

Atlanta Bible College
Church of God General Conference
P.O. Box 100,000
Morrow, GA 30260

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