

United Church of God *an International Association*

Clyde Kilough
Chairman

Roy Holladay
President

Letter from the President May 16, 2003

Dear Brethren,

The last two weeks have been very hectic for the home office staff—helping to coordinate the annual meeting of the General Conference of Elders and hosting the Council of Elders meetings afterwards. Without their hard work and involvement, these meetings would not run smoothly and efficiently. The eighth annual GCE meetings proved to be very educational for the approximately 400 ministers and wives who met in Cincinnati. The fellowship and camaraderie that is developed and sustained during the three days of the conference is invaluable! Many of our elders serve in far-flung areas of the world, and these meetings provide them one of the few opportunities to get together with fellow elders, to discuss issues related to pastoring, their ministry and to catch up on news of families.

One of the highlights of this year's conference was the tribute and honor paid to 28 ministers and minister's wives who have died since United started. We were all reminded of our mortality and the fact that we are an aging ministry, but were encouraged to hear the tributes paid to each individual for his or her service to God's people and to his or her own family. The elders and wives who were honored had numerous comments read about them that were written by brethren, family and fellow ministers. We were all struck by their years of dedication, sacrifice and service. They all are missed.

When United Church of God, *an International Association*, began in 1995, we received an unusually high offering on the Day of Pentecost that year. Many members had been saving their tithes and offerings and gave them at that time. For the first time, the offering on the First Day of Unleavened Bread this year surpassed that large total! Thank you brethren for your continual support of the work of God. We all have a vital part in continuing to reach the world with the good news of the Kingdom of God.

The new design for United's Web site has now been in place for a couple of months. Since the new design came on-line, the average number of visits per day has grown from approximately 4,000 to 5,200—a 30 percent increase. Perhaps more importantly, the average amount of time a visitor is spending on our site has grown from 6 minutes to 8.5—a 42 percent increase. This is an extremely cost-effective way for people to read our literature or to begin their own subscription to the *Good News* magazine.

We also hope to have our Web-based E-learning program on-line before the summer is over. Dan Deininger, an elder in Montana, has developed the E-learning program and is willing to share the use of it with the Church. The first project will be to put the *Bible Study Course* on-line. With the help of many volunteers, all the *Bible Study Course* modules and quizzes have been completed for a year. This is a project that illustrates the teamwork that we have been striving to develop in United—the cooperation between the home office and local members in finding ways to more effectively preach the gospel. Several of the publications (*World News and Prophecy* and *Virtual Christian Magazine*) that we now have were conceived and started as projects in local church areas. Our thanks go to all those volunteers

who have given countless hours of their time to further the work of the Church. Working together to further the preaching of the gospel is an example we have from the New Testament Church (2 Corinthians 1:24; Philippians 4:3; Colossians 4:11; 3 John 8). We may not have great riches, but Peter articulated the principle in Acts 3:6 to give of what we do have (time, work, talents, etc.). You are doing that, and it is greatly appreciated.

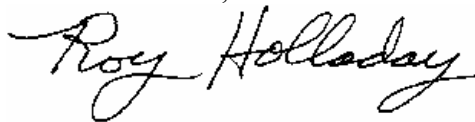
Another exciting development deals with the fledgling Portuguese work. We have approximately 35 individuals who speak Portuguese scattered around the world. The Spanish arm of the work has been trying to minister to them since the Spanish language is similar to Portuguese. Recently, Jorge de Campos and his wife, Kathy, traveled from South Africa to Cincinnati to attend the GCE meetings. Mr. de Campos stopped off on the way in Portugal to visit his 85-year-old mother, and while there he and Kathy visited with five adults and two children who have a Church of God background. The full report of his trip is in the May *United News*. While in Cincinnati, Mr. de Campos taped a sermon in Portuguese to send to scattered individuals. He is committed to recording one sermon a month for distribution. He also put together a newsletter in Portuguese to circulate to interested individuals. Michelle de Campos, his daughter and our Web master, also worked with Mr. de Campos to lay out a Web page in Portuguese that is now displayed on our Web site at www.ucg.org/litlibrary/portuguese. One piece of literature is available so far! Your prayers for the success of these efforts are needed. As Colossians 4:2-3 states: "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ."

A companion scripture in this regard is 2 Thessalonians 3:1, which states: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, just as it is with you." As we come close to the end of another fiscal year, we are again faced with that good-bad scenario of having more opportunities for moving forward with the work of God than we have resources to take advantage of those opportunities. As this scripture states, please pray that God would provide us with greater means to do His will, as our ways please Him and as He sees fit. At the same time, this scripture also reminds us to be grateful, and to remember how the Word of God has produced much fruit in the lives of God's children, and the powerful witness that this is. This brings God glory. God is honored when our lives produce righteousness (John 15:8). A zealous, active Christian is one of the most powerful tools for proclaiming the good news. Let us continue to be that example of "the Way" in action.

Norma and I are traveling to Minneapolis, Minnesota, this weekend for the annual family weekend activity hosted by that congregation. We are very much looking forward to meeting with the brethren and ministry there. As the summer progresses, we hope to visit other congregations and some of the summer camps.

Until next time, please keep us here in your prayers, as we pray for you.

In Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Holladay". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roy Holladay