

# United Church of God *an International Association*

Robert Dick  
Chairman

Clyde Kilough  
President

September 11, 2007

Dear Brethren,

As we begin the Holy Day season this week, I am delighted to announce that the long-awaited, expanded hardback hymnal is going to the printers, with the assurance of a delivery by October 1. This means that you will have your first look at the hymnal during the Feast of Tabernacles, at least for those attending in the United States. The international areas will receive their shipments as soon after the Feast as possible. We regret that the hymnals cannot arrive at all sites prior to the Feast, but it just wasn't possible at this late date.

We are printing 20,000 copies for use in congregations for Sabbath services, and another 10,000 for each member household to be able to have a copy at home. The two versions will be distinguished by different colored covers—blue for the congregational hymnal and green for the personal hymnal.

Here is how the distribution will work. All of the congregational hymnals will be shipped directly from the printer to the pastors of each church area shortly after the Feast, and should be on hand within two weeks after returning home. (Since the congregational hymnals cannot arrive in time, we won't be using the new hymnal at the Feast.) Spiral-bound songleader and accompanist versions will be supplied to each congregation, along with CD accompaniment as soon as possible. The most efficient way to distribute the member hymnals, however, will be to ship them to the U.S. Feast sites where most can pick them up during the Feast. At these sites you will have an announcement as to when, where and how the hymnals will be distributed. We will be working with the international offices to coordinate the best methods for distributing the hymnals to their respective areas after the Feast.

As you can imagine, it costs a considerable amount to print this number of quality, full-size, hardback songbooks. We have budgeted for the congregational hymnals, but will be relying on donations for the personal copies. We want every member household that desires one to be able to have a copy at home, so rather than charge a set amount for each book, we felt it would be more appropriate just to ask for a freewill donation when you pick up your hymnal. Even if you cannot afford a donation, please take a hymnal—I'm sure others' generosity will balance the expenses. Please note that we ordered enough personal copies for each household, not each person. Distribution will be solely on the honor system, and we are asking that you take no more than one per household.

For those U.S. members who will be keeping the Feast at international sites, you will have an opportunity to receive your personal copy after the Feast. Each pastor will take an order on the second Sabbath after the Feast and send it to the home office. We will have the hymnals here and ready to ship out immediately upon receiving the orders. For those making a donation, a check should be sent directly to the home office, with the notation "hymnal" on the check.

To compile this hymnal required an immense amount of volunteer work by many people, and we applaud with gratitude everyone who had a hand in bringing the final product to completion. We especially appreciate the hymnal committee, which shouldered the bulk of the work. Chaired by Steve Myers, the committee consisted of Dan Anderson, Jim Brandenburg, Janel Johnson, Ann Tannert, Teddi Treybig and software specialist Randy Schmidt. They invested literally thousands of hours reviewing and evaluating some 400 suggested additions to the hymnal and more than 200 original compositions from members. They communicated with contributors, conferred often with each other, and edited multiple versions of the hymnal. Toward the end of the process the Doctrine Committee of the Council of Elders reviewed each song as well. Music is technically complex, and musical styles vary greatly, as do our individual musical tastes, so completing a work of this magnitude was a huge endeavor. Again, we give our deepest thanks to those involved for their service to the Church.

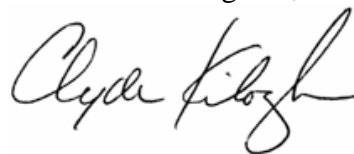
On behalf of everyone here at the home office, I hope that you have a wonderful Feast season, focusing evermore on the return of Jesus Christ and the hope that lies before us. Please be praying for the safety of all of God's people around the world, and for the inspiration on all activities, especially on the messages that we will hear. The ministry is already at work planning their messages, and God's inspiration is needed weeks in advance, not just during the delivery of the sermons, sermonettes and Bible studies.

Please pray as well for inspiration, zeal, vision and commitment to be stirred up within us as the Body of Christ. Our adversary is indeed at work, and the festivals of God are times that Satan especially despises. He knows the plan of God strengthens and bolsters our spiritual defenses against his devices, so let's be especially close to God, and likewise close to one another. We do need one another and the bond as God's spiritual family, as a recent conversation with a member vividly impressed on my mind. She related that one time some years ago at the Feast, when she was a widow with children, her family was somehow overlooked and never included with others at meals or activities. She wasn't bitter or accusative, and they survived, but she poignantly explained how the fellowship part of the Feast experience was empty and lonely that year, and how a little attention would have meant so much to them. Let's make sure that no one "falls through the cracks" and that we are alert to the needs of others, giving of ourselves to help everyone enjoy the foretaste of how life will be under the direction of Jesus Christ.

These festivals and Holy Days always stand as stark reminders of the way the world is today and the way it needs to be, and will be, in the future. May God's blessing be upon all of us as we strive to preach the gospel of His coming Kingdom, and to be increasingly prepared as never before for our individual role in His great plan!

Take care, travel safely, and I hope this announcement of the arrival of the new hymnal adds a bit of extra excitement and enjoyment to this wonderful festival season.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clyde Kilough". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Clyde" being more prominent and the last name "Kilough" following in a similar style.

Clyde Kilough