

United Church of God *an International Association*

Clyde Kilough
Chairman

Roy Holladay
President

Letter From the Chairman June 4, 2004

Greetings Fellow Elders and Wives,

From all accounts I have heard, the 2004 Feast of Pentecost was once again an inspiring and profitable Holy Day for God's people around the world. Although we would expect nothing less than inspiration on the day picturing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we certainly don't take it for granted and we thank God for it.

A big "thanks!" also goes to all of you for making this year's Annual Meeting of the General Conference of Elders one of the best yet. You made it that way first by sincerely seeking God's guidance, then by sacrificing to participate and working hard to contribute. The exit survey results showed, most interestingly, that "fellowship opportunities" rated as the number one answer for both "primary reasons for attending" and "areas of most benefit." Numerous other reasons rated highly in those categories as well, but this shows how highly we value the camaraderie we build with each other at this event.

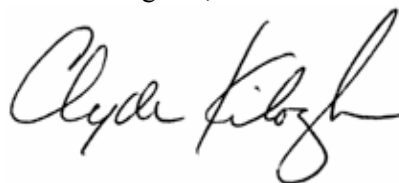
Speaking of the exit surveys, every single comment was recorded and sent to the GCE Planning Task Force, which is already working on next year's conference. Again, we thank all the members of that task force for a thorough, well-organized and well-done job. A couple of weeks ago they met via teleconference to assess the conference and start plans for 2005. Your feedback on the exit surveys was most helpful, and as we walked through the comments point by point, we noted a number of suggestions that will make next year's even better. The overwhelming majority of the comments were positive (95 percent of you plan to return next year), and most of the negatives offered constructive input. The satisfaction level was not quite as high among the women as the men, primarily due to wanting more seminars structured specifically for women. Along that vein, another consistent request was for fewer, but longer, seminars and workshops.

"The 21st-Century Church—Rising to the Challenge" was a well-received theme, one that we can build on in our congregations. The task force is already considering several thought-provoking theme ideas for next year, with the intent to decide that by the August meeting of the Council of Elders. If you have any suggestions for conference themes, please feel free to submit them to Dave Register, the task force chairman.

An important note for next year: some of you need to make long-range plans for attending the conference, so you should be aware of a departure from our recent tradition of holding the conference the first weekend in May. In 2005 the Days of Unleavened Bread end on the Sabbath of April 30, making it impossible to hold the GCE meeting on May 1-2. Therefore, we will be meeting on Sunday and Monday, May 15-16.

Well, even though it is a month behind us, I'm still enthused about the GCE and wanted to write a bit about it and put our minds on next year's. I don't know about you, but life seems to be getting more fast-paced than ever, and we are now heading into one of the busiest times of the year. That's not complaining, though—the faster time flies the sooner we reach our destination. And, in less than 15 weeks, we will be starting the next Holy Day season, which points us to that glorious future! Thank you for your tireless and faithful service to God's Church—it is truly a wonderful calling He has given us.

Warmest regards,



Clyde Kilough