

# The Journal

## News of the Churches of God

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JOHN 8:32

July 31, 2005

## God answers a mother's prayers via a mercy flight

By Ellis W. Stewart

PLANO, Texas—"It couldn't have worked out more wonderfully if I had tried any other way," said Jean McConnell, describing her ailing son's trip from Long Beach, Calif., to Dallas, Texas.

Four years ago Mrs. McConnell decided her grown son Victor Hawkins, whose health had deteriorated over the years, needed to live near her in Texas so she and other family members and friends could visit and check on him frequently.

She began looking and praying for a way to move Victor, now 53, back to Dallas, where he is originally from.

Mr. Hawkins grew up in the Worldwide Church of God in the Dallas area, having been baptized in 1979. He has had a lifelong problem with poor vision, preventing him from driving a car, and other health-related problems.



Victor Hawkins

### Worked for IRS

While attending college at North Texas State in Denton in the 1970s, the federal government recruited him to work for the Internal Revenue Service in the Los Angeles, Calif., area, with assistance from a government program to hire blind and other disabled people.

He attended WCG Sabbath services in Pasadena from the late 1970s through the middle of the '90s.

In the late 1980s Mr. Hawkins had

been diagnosed with diabetes.

In 2000 he moved south to Long Beach to share an apartment with a friend for a while.

About that time he found himself in the middle of a job dispute with his boss, the IRS, and wound up losing his job. However, later the government compensated him for his firing, which involved his taking time off for the Feast.

During his mother's yearly visit in 2000, she and Mr. Hawkins' sister Theresa McConnell, who lives in Monterey, Calif., moved him into an "assisted-living" residence, a long-term-care facility for the elderly or disabled who can get around on their own but who may need help with daily routines such as taking medicine.

Mr. Hawkins also has a sister who lives in the Dallas area, Audrey Andrews. "Her daughter, Ashley, is Victor's pride and joy," said Mrs. McConnell.

In 2003 Mr. Hawkins' diabetic condition had worsened, and surgeons amputated his left leg below the knee.

In 2003 Mr. Hawkins also suffered heart and kidney problems.

Also in 2003 he moved from the assisted-living facility into a nursing home in Long Beach.

### Call Mercy Med-Flight

Mrs. McConnell and members of the United Church of God in Dallas, where she attends, and other friends prayed for Victor and for a way to move him back to Dallas.

"A friend asked if I would call Angel Flight and see if they might be able to help," she said.

See **MEDICAL PERSONNEL**, page 22



**BACK HOME AGAIN**—Victor Hawkins is recuperating from various ailments. Visiting him at his new residence in Richardson, Texas, is his mother, Jean McConnell, sister, Audrey Andrews, and niece, Ashley Andrews. Mr. Hawkins, a Church of God member since the late 1970s, was living in Long Beach, Calif., and could not afford to move to the Dallas area to be near his relatives. His mother, Mrs. McConnell, arranged with Mercy Med-Flight, an air-ambulance charity, to transport him from Southern California to Texas. [Photo by David Andrews]

## Church of God commentators weigh in on London bombings and terrorism in general

Americans won't soon forget Sept. 11, 2001. Neither are the Brits likely to draw a blank when someone mentions July 7, 2005. That was the day terrorists bombed three London subway trains and a double-decker bus, killing more than 50 people and injuring 700 in London's bloodiest day since World War II.

Church of God commentators were active in the aftermath of the London bombings, with news, analysis and opinions.

For example, the United Church of God's John Ross Schroeder, who lives in England and writes for *The Good News* magazine and other UCG publications, noted that his "no-nonsense approach to biblical prophecy has given [him] a useful perspective."

On the [www.gnmagazine.org](http://www.gnmagazine.org) Web site Mr. Schroeder wrote that the "horrific visions" of the Old Testament prophets are close to becoming "historical reality."

Modern "secular prophets," he said, are speaking in apocalyptic terms about current events, including attacks on civilization by terrorists.

To understand more about the events of our time, Mr. Schroeder advises, download the UCG's free booklet *Are We Living in the Time of the End?* ([www.gnmagazine.org](http://www.gnmagazine.org)).

### Simply to destroy

Another resident of Britain, John Jewell of the *What Next* broadcast on radio and the Internet, compared the bombings—attributed to British citi-

zens of the Islam religion—to the bombings of the Irish Republican Army on English targets, including its citizens.

Some tend to romanticize the doings of the IRA, but Mr. Jewell says they're just as bad as the Islamic jihadists attacking indiscriminately.

"Terrorism," said Mr. Jewell, "is one of the fastest-growing diseases in the world today." He noted that many observers refer to the terrorist attacks as an effort by some Muslims to further their religion.

But their real purpose, he said, is to simply to destroy.

"How does it [suicide bombings and other destruction] further any religious belief that they may have? It See **CHURCH OF GOD WRITERS**, page 4

## COGs helping with disaster relief in wake of Hurricane Katrina

Hurricane-relief efforts have started up in various Church of God ministries and congregations. Two *THE JOURNAL* was aware of at press time were projects undertaken by the Ohio-based United Church of God an International Association and an East Texas congregation with ties to sister congregations in several states, the Church of God Big Sandy.

Hurricane Katrina, with 160-mile-an-hour winds, slammed the Gulf Coast early on the morning of Aug. 29, inflicting an almost direct hit on New Orleans, La.

Suffering devastation as well were Biloxi, Miss., and other population centers along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

The disaster may prove to be the nation's biggest naturally caused calamity since 1900, when a hurricane hit Galveston, Texas, killing, according to some reports, 8,000 to 10,000 people.

The United Church of God has announced its Katrina Disaster Relief Project to help members of the UCG who were affected by the hurricane.

In a press release the church said it is encouraging its members to

take up fund-raising projects, "some or all of the proceeds of which they can dedicate to this disaster-relief project."

The church also requests members as much as they are able to contribute cash to the cause, because of the "damage and dislocation caused by this hurricane."

The greatest concerns, said the press release, are food, clothing, emergency shelter and transportation.

Monetary contributions sent to the UCG, at P.O. Box 541027, Cincinnati, Ohio 45254, U.S.A., should include a note to the effect: "This contribution is for use by the Good Works Program in funding the Katrina Disaster Relief Project."

### Two relief fronts

Dave Havir, pastor of the Church of God Big Sandy, says his congregation plans to attack the situation on two fronts:

- Financial.
- Nonperishable food items, air mattresses, cots, sheets, pillows, pillowcases, blankets, towels, washcloths and fans.

Unlike the UCG's effort, the See **COG CONGREGATIONS**, page 5

## LCG announces transfers, death of another elder

CHARLOTTE, N.C.—The Living Church of God announced in late July the transfer of Doug Winnail from serving as a regional director in Britain to church headquarters in Charlotte to head up the church-administration department.

Charles Bryce, the outgoing church-administration head, is in the process of moving to the Tyler, Texas, area to serve as regional director after the death of John Ogwyn on June 14. Mr. Ogwyn, who lived in the East Texas city of Kilgore, served as pastor of the Gladewater congregation (which meets about 15 miles from Gladewater, in Hawkins).

In late-breaking news, the man who served the Gladewater brethren as pastor after Mr. Ogwyn's death, David Burson of Forney, Texas, himself died unexpectedly Aug. 19. Mr. Ogwyn and Mr. Burson reportedly both died of massive infections. Mr. Burson was serving seven congregations in Texas and Louisiana.

Of the recent transfers, LCG presiding evangelist Roderick Meredith said the moves "will work for good for the entire church. We must move forward as a team to finish the work to which the living Christ has called us."

- 3 The state of the faith prompts a rambling moan from Brian Knowles
- 5 Peter Kamen says one little word sums up personal evangelism
- 6 Ken Westby and friends present the fourth One God Seminars series
- 24 Present and former WCG members meet for reunion in East Texas

## Announce your site for Feast 2005

For the ninth year *THE JOURNAL* is publishing a monthly listing of sites and dates of Feast of Tabernacles observances.

Members of Church of God and other Sabbatarian Christian fellowships will meet at several hundred Feast sites this year. Now is the time to send in your Feast contact, location and date information.

When submitting information, writers should state the dates (on the Gregorian calendar) on which their observance (including the Last Great Day) will fall in 2005. Otherwise *THE JOURNAL* will assume each observance will begin the evening of Monday, Oct. 17, and run through Tuesday, Oct. 25.

Send to [info@thejournal.org](mailto:info@thejournal.org) or P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A.

For more information see the second installment of this year's full listing on page 23 of this issue.

## UCG announces several employee transfers

MILFORD, Ohio—Jim Franks of Houston, Texas, is the new director of ministerial services (church administration) for the United Church of God an International Association.

Mr. Franks, a member of the UCG's 12-man council of elders, replaces Richard Pinelli of the Cincinnati area, who served in the post for close to 10 years.

Mr. Pinelli will now "mentor ministerial assistants," announced President Clyde Kilough. The assistants will come in to church headquarters one at a time to train under Mr. Pinelli's tutelage.

Mr. Kilough announced other transfers. Lyle Welty, pastor in Cleveland, Ohio, will move to pastor Cincinnati East.

Doug Johnson will move from pastoring at Mansfield and Canton, Ohio, to take Mr. Welty's old post.

Chris Johnson will move from Jacksonville, Fla., to replace Mr. Johnson.

Dave Register is moving from Los Angeles, Calif., to headquarters to work in ministerial services.

Larry Greider will move from Collinsville, Ill., to take Mr. Register's place in California.

See **UCG PRESIDENT ANNOUNCES**, page 5

# Present and former WCG members reunite

By John Warren

**B**IG SANDY, Texas—Judy Biggs, a longtime Church of God member who lives in Big Sandy, played host to a recent get-together for old friends in the Big Sandy area.

On Sunday, July 31, from noon until about 5 p.m. in the building owned by the Church of God Big Sandy, about 150 people with some present or past connection with the Worldwide Church of God enjoyed fellowship, a potluck meal, music and a couple of surprises.

Ron and Linda Avey of Big Sandy coordinated the setup and serving of the food. David Maas of Hawkins provided lively background music on the piano.

After the meal Lee Stolley of Pritchett helped Mrs. Biggs make a few announcements that included news of an anniversary and a birthday.

The daughters of Bernie and Paula Monsalvo of Gladewater had prepared a special 40th-anniversary tribute complete with pictures, cake and punch based on the old *This Is Your Life* radio and television series of the 1940s and 1950s.

In another surprise move, Vi Lehman startled her husband, Jack, with a cake to celebrate his 85th birthday. The Lehmans live in Pritchett.

Mrs. Lehman said she kept Mr. Lehman in the dark about his cake.

"I told him that if he was going to get any cake it would be at Judy's party," she said. "He was surprised."

Mrs. Biggs told how she pulled off the surprises.

"Once we made it a church party,



1



2



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4



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we got Bernie involved, and he worked very hard. He thought he was working on Jack Lehman's surprise birthday.

"Jack thought he was working on the Monsalvos' anniversary."

Julie Wilkins of Hawkins baked two cakes for two surprises, one for Mr. Lehman, the other for the Monsalvos.

The "Friends Reunion" happened in a building in which many church and community events take place these days.

(The building could still be pressed into service, by prearranged agreement, by the Red Cross to house evacuees from the swath cut into the Gulf Coast in late August by Hurricane Katrina.)

Mrs. Biggs was happy that 150 people could attend. Many people from many and varied church groups were present.

"Chuck [Mrs. Biggs' husband] and I want to thank all who attended," she said.

Some people had traveled from out of town and out of state to see old friends. Ed Lain of Yreka, Calif., had come the farthest.

While the fellowship continued, Dr. Maas switched from the piano to the guitar, and Rex Ulmer of Gladewater fingered the accordion while his son Andrew played the harmonica.

David Fisher of Pritchett helped coordinate the stage and sound

and also played some music CDs. The program included old pictures of church members.

"The elderly people really enjoyed the pictures," Mrs. Biggs said. "They had a ball trying to guess who was who."

She concluded: "I had fun. To me it was a labor of love."

**FRIENDS' REUNION**—Attending the reunion organized by Judy Biggs of Big Sandy, Texas, are (1) Dean Koeneke of Big Sandy, (2) Pedro Reinoso and Genette Gordon-Reinoso and their daughter Katherina of the Dallas area, (3) Bernie and Paula Monsalvo of Gladewater, Texas, (4) Mrs. Biggs and (5) Ed Lain of Yreka, Calif. [Photos by Dixon Cartwright]

# Ministry plans pre-Feast Katrina work party

**P**LAINFIELD, Ill.—Common Ground Christian Ministries, a Church of God ministry, is organizing a work party for Sunday and Monday, Oct. 16 and 17, to help people whose homes were devastated by Hurricane Katrina in late August.

"We share the concern of all Christians for those affected by the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Katrina," said Guy Swenson of Plainfield.

The two days of the work party are planned for just before the traditional

dates for the Feast of Tabernacles this year. The location will be within a two-hour drive of the Destin and Fort Walton Beach, Fla., areas.

"The exact community will be determined once telephone and basic utilities are restored," Mr. Swenson said. "People who would like to participate should plan to bring their own food, water and other basic essentials. My family plans on leaving whatever food and water we don't use behind when we leave for the festival."

Once communications have been

established with the areas impacted, Common Ground Ministries will assess opportunities to serve and generate a list of feasible projects.

"Those joining us can bring tools appropriate to their expertise and the need. There will be plenty of work for people of all ages. We expect everything from clearing debris to Sheetrock repair and painting.

For more information write Mr. Swenson at gswenson@ntevangelism.org or phone him at (317) 707-5003.

## Notes and quotes

### Katrina evacuees

PORT AUSTIN, Mich.—Norman Edwards announces that the Port Austin Bible Campus (PABC) in Michigan is offering medium-term accommodations to church members displaced by Hurricane Katrina, which attacked the U.S. Gulf Coast Aug. 29.

The accommodations would include "a place to stay and food to eat for a few months to a year or so," Mr. Edwards said.

The PABC would ask members to help out with various tasks of the PABC ministry as they are able.

"While PABC would like to help all people at this time of struggle, we are not able to accept a significant number of people who are unbelievers or would oppose our understanding of Christianity," Mr. Edwards said.

For more information contact Mr. Edwards at PABC, P.O. Box 474, Port Austin, Mich. 48467, or pabc@portAustin.net, or (989) 738-7700.

### CEG public lecture

ARCADIA, Calif.—Norbert Link of the Church of the Eternal God recently presented the church's first public Bible lecture here, speaking to 32 people on the unification of Europe and its implications.

"It was very exciting to be dealing with people directly after having put most of CEG's efforts into other mediums," said an attendee.

More lectures are planned as finances permit. Until then, the CEG is sending out CDs that contain Mr. Link's presentation.

Also available on CD are topics that include life after death, hope, Jesus' return, accountability and military service.

Write info@eternalgod.org or CEG, P.O. Box 270519, San Diego, Calif. 92198, U.S.A.

### Feast in Eureka

LANSING, Mich.—John Bensing announces a Feast of Tabernacles observance at Eureka, Mo., near St. Louis, beginning the evening of Oct. 17.

Everybody is welcome, Mr. Bensing said.

For more information contact Jeff Ledy at (517) 675-6383 or Matt Gaffney at (970) 532-0522. See also www.feast2005.com.

### Barn Party

HELENVILLE, Wis.—Hal Geiger announces the 11th annual Barn Party, planned and designed to "build bridges of friendship."

The party is set for Saturday night, Sept. 24, and will include old-fashioned fun and fellowship. Related events will run Friday night through Sunday.

"Bring along your homemade chili, cornbread or apple cider, enter the pie- and cookie-baking contest, listen to and participate in the local talent and hayride and warm yourself by the fire."

Camp sites are available on

the grounds of the event, as well as motels and private homes. Call Hal and Scarlet Geiger for more information at (262) 593-5637, or write them at halgeiger@hotmail.com.

### Middle adults

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.—Bill Jacobs of Life Resource Ministries announces a presentation series titled "Spiritual Growth and Human development," free for the asking.

Mr. Jacobs said that adults in the 34-60 age-group must learn to be "outward-looking," otherwise "they tend to stagnate, or become self-centered, inward and depressive."

Write bjacobs@liferesource.org or P.O. Box 66540, Albuquerque, N.M. 87193, U.S.A. Or call (505) 890-6806.

### Don't expect

WESTBURY, Australia—Rod McQueen, longtime COG elder who quit the paid ministry to write, announces the launch of dawntoduskpublications.com.

Mr. McQueen's writings fall into three categories: (1) seeing God through His Works, (2) issues of faith and reason and (3) Bible teachings.

"Two articles of particular interest for many JOURNAL readers," he said, "are 'Was Jesus God?' and 'The Age of the Earth.' Don't expect the typical explanations given by most COGers."

### U.K. Feast information

LONDON, England—Peter Cross announces that information on "all the Festival of Tabernacles sites in the U.K." is available at his Web site, <http://churches-of-god.7p.org.uk>.

### Katrina changes Feast plans

HOLLISTER, Calif.—Fred Coulter has announced that, because of the destruction from Hurricane Katrina, his church, the Christian Biblical Church of God, is canceling its Feast site in the Foley, Ala., area and will instead sponsor sites at Waco, Texas, and Dunedin, Fla.

For more information contact Jack or Betty Thomas of Waco at (254) 772-0031. See also [www.cbco.org](http://www.cbco.org). The observances begin the evening of Oct. 17.

### Winter Family Weekend

MILFORD, Ohio—The United Church of God announces its Winter Family Weekend for 2005 in Louisville, Ky., Dec. 23-28.

"We are anticipating a possible record year of attendance with no less than four days full of fun and fellowship," said church president Clyde Kilough.

For information see [www.ucg.org/familyweekend/](http://www.ucg.org/familyweekend/).

### Winter Family Tournament

WEST CHESTER, Ohio—Jim O'Brien announces the annual Winter Family Tournament for Lexington, Ky., beginning Dec. 23. For more information write jobrien@fuse.net or visit [www.cogcincinnati.com](http://www.cogcincinnati.com). See also an announcement on page 19 of this issue of THE JOURNAL.

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