

Preaching the Gospel More Effectively

This article, condensed from a letter by Church president Clyde Kilough to members around the world, lets our readers in on some of the Church's current leadership developments and plans for the future.

The United Church of God recently observed the Feast of Pentecost – an annual Holy Day. What miraculous events took place that day nearly 2,000 years ago. And what a tremendous testimony to God's promises and His power that we can continue the work that He gave to His Church some two millennia ago! What does the Day of Pentecost mean for our preaching and publishing today?

Looking back on that dramatic day in A.D. 31, have you ever tried to put yourself in the shoes of those who were gathered there during the events described in Acts chapter two? It's hard, when carefully reading Acts, not to stop and imagine being among those 120 trained disciples or the thousands more people who were quickly called and converted in the next few years – the earliest members of that fledgling Church.

But have you ever tried to imagine what they would say to us if they could see us and advise us today? Could they identify with the challenges we face?

The challenges of the early Church

These brothers and sisters had struggled through the few weeks preceding Pentecost. Humbled and unsure of themselves due to the unexpected turn of events that led to Christ's death and resurrection, they had grappled with their uncertainties of the future and were having to exercise faith in ways they never had before. Nothing had worked the way they thought it would. Thankfully the resurrected Christ had appeared to them many times over the fol-

lowing 40 days to steady and encourage them, instructing them about their future .

God had not cast them off. Formerly secret disciples had stepped into the open; those who might have been tempted to slip into secrecy, shamed by denying Christ, were inspired to step out once more. They were soon formed into His Church and began to carry out the duties He gave them, paving the way for His great work – the same work that we have been called to carry forward today!

I believe we can have a pretty good idea of what the early Church members would say to us today, and I think we can discover that by describing some of our current challenges. But with the Feast of Pentecost recently reminding us of how the Church was started, I want to offer a perspective of examining the challenges we face today in light of lessons from the book of Acts.

One thing we know that we share with the early Church is the first challenge.

Preaching the gospel powerfully

'You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you,' Christ told them before His ascension, 'and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea

and Samaria, and to the end of the earth' (Acts 1:8).

Christ focused them on the power available only through the working of God's Spirit. The resulting witnessing you see, beginning with Peter's Pentecost sermon, could never have been done through the efforts and abilities of human beings! And by the time John recorded God's words to Philadelphia – 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens' (Revelation 3:7) – the Church had seen firsthand remarkable, repeated evidence of God's power to open doors (windows of opportunity) for preaching the gospel.

Reading through Acts we see a trail of miraculous events that witnessed solely to the power of the Holy Spirit – God's power alone – that opened doors.

The early Church was well aware of this and continually directed the credit to Him. 'When they [Paul and Barnabas] had come and gathered the church together, they reported *all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles*' (Acts 14:27, emphasis added throughout).

Likewise today, we must never stray from a clear understanding that it is God who not only makes the ways and means possible for preaching the gospel, but even more importantly, opens the hearts and minds of people to understand and act upon the truth!

The gospel not of men

Sometimes I hear sentiments that seem borrowed directly from the religious world around us – if we will only preach this way, write that way, try this or try that, play this type of music, have this sort of presence in the community, then we'll get more people to come into the Church! It's wonderful that God's people are so desirous of seeing the gospel go out, but we must always

see the working of God in the light of Scriptures like John 6:37, 44-45, 65; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; Romans 2:4; Acts 2:47; and many others, all pointing to the power of God, not men or men's ideas, to open the way of the gospel.

Paul asked of the Colossians what he would undoubtedly ask of us today: '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, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak*' (Colossians 4:2-4; see also Ephesians 6:19-20). Since he was in a Roman prison at the time, I'm sure Paul would have appreci-

The Internet has made it possible to take the gospel to the entire world in ways we could never before imagine.

ated the doors to the jail being opened, but his concern was not centred there – he wanted an open door for the gospel!

When we look at the marvelous expansion of the gospel in the last 75 years, God has taken us through the doors of new technologies, especially radio and television. Now, the greatest breakthrough in communication technology – the Internet – has made it possible to take the gospel to the entire world in ways we could never before have imagined.

We have spent the last year studying and consulting about the opportunities available through this means, and we now know we have hardly scratched the surface of its potential. We have begun to invest in manpower and technical developments that have the potential to greatly expand our reach with the gospel, for much less cost than traditional media. And yet our traditional means will not be put aside. The challenge is to rightly balance all of the media vehicles in a co-ordinated manner.

But all of our human plans are nothing without God's divine help, so what can I say other than . . . please pray! Yes, much of the world is uncaring and rebellious toward God, but many others are hurting, searching and hungry for the solutions to life's biggest problems. They need what we have!

When you pray, also ask God to protect us in our efforts. Paul wrote, '*For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries*' (1 Corinthians 16:9). The moment we see potential for the gospel to go out more effectively is the moment we should expect the great adversary, Satan the devil, to intensify efforts to stop it or negate its impact!

Urgently needed leadership development

By the Day of Pentecost, Jesus had carefully worked with a core

group of disciples who would provide strong, capable leadership after His departure. They soon scattered among the tribes of Israel and also later to the gentile world, not only preaching the gospel but taking care of the congregations and preparing others to lead and pastor. A vital lesson leaps from the pages of the book of Acts. A strong and growing Church requires well-prepared, godly leadership. The same lesson also leaps from the pages of modern Church history.

Herbert Armstrong (1892-1986) preached for years with little growth in the Church until he prepared and sent out ministers to serve those whom God was calling. The lesson is clear from Acts until today: God is the one who calls people, but they need shepherds to help them learn, mature and grow into a cohesive body.

'How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? *And how shall they*

hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?' (Romans 10:14-15). These are core strategic questions Paul asked, and they are just as relevant today!

He later wrote to Timothy, 'The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also' (2 Timothy 2:2). In other words, identify those God is calling to the ministry and train them well so they can most effectively serve God's people.

We do not expect the Word of God to go out and return empty (Isaiah 55:11). With our expectation that God will continue adding to the Church, we must prepare now for the manpower needs; and in fact, we have begun doing so. When you consider the even greater shortages in the international areas like the British Isles, for instance, the need for training is even more pressing.

The challenges of effectively caring for God's people are more complex than those of only a decade or two ago. We seek to ensure our ministers are trained and grounded in all areas of pastoral care, ranging from doctrine, to counseling, to preaching, to congregational development.

We have been working for several years now on many levels of leadership development programmes. Those that target pastoral education are based on the 'immersion model' of intense training. Jesus used that principle for training the 12; Paul used it for training such men as Timothy, Titus, Silas and John Mark. Our proposed model will provide up to two years of accelerated preparation at a central location, at the feet of experienced, veteran pastors, through both classroom and field training.

Pray for additional human resources

Christ commanded us to be praying and thinking about this. "He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore

pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest' (Matthew 9:37-38). This includes not only pastoral labourers and even writers and researchers for our publications, but everyone labouring to supply what each can do for the edification of the Body (Ephesians 4:16).

God is calling some now to prepare for leadership in His Kingdom, and we prepare by learning and doing the right things now. Christians have not been called to just maintain a certain spiritual level, but to serve and shoulder the responsibilities He gives to every one, young and old alike.

Striving for unity and peace

Hebrews 12:14 tells us to 'pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.' In fact that is a strong command, backed up with fearful consequences. By the time Paul wrote this, the early Church had seen firsthand how a lack of peace and unity loomed as a threat over God's people. We should not be surprised to see this happen in our time.

Yet unity was one of the most remarkable traits the early Church enjoyed.

- 'These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication' (Acts 1:14).
- 'Continuing daily with one accord in

the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved' (2:46-47).

- 'The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul' (4:32).
- 'They were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch' (5:12).
- And perhaps the most striking example lies in Acts 15:25, in the letter sent to the Church following a time 'when there had been much dispute' (verse 7) over a major doctrinal change: 'It seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord.'

Unfortunately, such peaceful unity has seldom settled over the Church for a long period of time. Even in the same chapter in Acts, just a few verses later, we read the sad account of Paul and Barnabas having a personal contention over John Mark that 'became so sharp that they parted from one another' (verse 39). They later reconciled, of course, but this division had to be very difficult not only for them, but for everyone else who was aware of it. No doubt the gossip grapevine was working overtime in the Church on this issue, and there is no telling how many ver-

Nurturing the Next Generation

The recorded portion of Peter's Pentecost sermon ends with the statement, 'For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call' (Acts 2:39).

The most easily reached audience on earth for hearing the gospel, the audience with the most potential for being called, is our children. They are pliable, teachable and ready to learn. In these formative years the way of God can be etched upon their hearts (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

They are also vulnerable. We need to pray for them and their parents, develop strong relationships with them, encourage them and, perhaps most importantly, set godly examples for them. They hear about the way of God, but they need to see it in action. Anything less than godly behaviour potentially could make these 'little ones' stumble, but true godly behaviour potentially inspires them to walk courageously in God's way of unity and peace.

sions of the story sprang up contrary to the truth.

The words in the familiar hymn the Church congregations sing based on Psalm 34, 'Seek peace, pursue it, earnestly,' tell us that unity and peace don't automatically settle upon human beings. We must *pursue* peace to prevent division from finding its way into our lives. 'Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' is the way Paul put it in Ephesians 4:3. It takes hard work. It takes submitting to and following the Holy Spirit of God. We have to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

Unity is not always found in having the same opinion about an issue, but being unified in how to handle it. It is doubtful that the 120 disciples gathered in Acts 1:14 were all of the same opinion about every issue. That's not what it says. The unity factor is that they 'continued with one accord in prayer and supplication'. If we are all praying earnestly from the same mindset of asking for the same thing – God's will – then we know He will answer. He can bring us into one accord in other things on which we may have divided opinions.

We can talk all day about desiring unity and peace, but we must understand that these wonderful qualities result only from godly thinking, godly attitude and godly behaviour. Anything less than godliness begins to drive the wedges into our relationships with God and other brethren.

Countering threats to unity and peace

The first threat to unity in the early Church came at an otherwise wonderful time, 'when the number of the disciples was multiplying' (Acts 6:1). Satan began to manipulate a specific situation

into a division. 'There arose a complaint [murmuring, King James Version] against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.' Why were they neglected? Did favouritism or prejudice exist? We can easily come up with possible reasons, because we humans are very good at doing the wrong things.

Notice further that the leadership of the apostles led to a proper solution that benefitted everyone (verses 2-6). As a result, what happened? *'Then the Word of God spread, and the number of*

'Let there be no doubt of the power that is behind the Church and work of God!'

the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem' (verse 7). God blesses us when we solve our problems His way.

This potentially explosive situation in the Church was headed off, but others would come along on a regular basis to periodically threaten the peace and unity of the Body of Christ. In all of the New Testament books that follow Acts, we find the apostles strongly appealing to the brethren to understand the nature of disunity and to fight to overcome it.

In some of those books we can read about the specific issues certain groups faced: sometimes it was doctrinal, other times it was behavioural. Today, it's the same song, just a different verse. The test on the Church has always been whether God's people have the vision to see themselves honestly and correctly and then rise above the natural carnal reactions that cause disunity. It is truly a test of our personal and collective spiritual condition.

Again, real substance has to do with fruit of the Holy Spirit being nurtured and borne in our lives.

The miracle of God's calling

The United Church of God has now observed the annual festivals of Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost. We now look forward to the observance of the autumn festivals of the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and finally the Last Great Day, rehearsing their meaning which reveals even more about God's plan and purpose for humankind.

We cannot help but be continually humbled and awed to consider the miracle of God's calling, Jesus Christ giving His life for us, His goodness in leading us to repentance and His sharing with the Church the great gift of His Holy Spirit.

We identify with those in the earliest days of the Church, and we appreciate our spiritual roots. What would they say to us today? First and foremost, it would have to be, 'Let there be no doubt of the power that is behind the Church and work of God! We have seen it firsthand. Draw on the lessons that have been preserved in God's Word, in the accounts of our lives in the book of Acts. Go forward in the hope of faith, but with the reality of the challenges we face. God's Spirit is available to do everything that is required.'

*Clyde Kilough, President
United Church of God*

Recommended Reading

This article by the Church president tells of our plans to expand the preaching of the gospel with God's help. If you are not familiar with some of the biblical concepts mentioned, the following free booklets may help: *God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind, The Church Jesus Built, This Is the United Church of God and The Gospel of the Kingdom.* Please request them by title.

An Open Door to the British Isles?

Why is the encouraging message of the true gospel often coupled with a warning about changing our ways? Does God want many more people in the British Isles to be aware of both the dangerous path we are following and also what He promises us if we listen?

When Jesus Christ started His ministry He told His listeners to 'repent and believe the gospel [of the kingdom of God]' (Mark 1:14-15). The start of a new life personally and nationally comes through responding to that call. It is a repentance, or change, from the way we are used to living, as well as believing the good news of what God has in store for us.

Those familiar with the Bible know the will of God concerning the spreading of His truth. The apostle Paul made it plain to the young evangelist Timothy: 'For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all men [and women, gender inclusive], to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Timothy 2:3-4, emphasis added throughout).

The plan of God, however, as expressed through the annual Holy Days, teaches us that the salvation of men and women will not happen exclusively during this age of man. Only the firstfruits of God, just a 'little flock', are being called now (Luke 12:32; John 6:44, 65).

The gospel to the world

That said, God commands His Church to preach and publish a warning message to the world in preparation for the second coming of Jesus Christ. 'This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end [of the age] will come' (Matthew 24:14).

Jesus Christ further instructed His apostles and those ministers and elders after them down through the ages: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age' (Matthew 28:18-20, emphasis added throughout).

Narrowing our geographical focus to our region of the globe, we have a biblical mandate to take the gospel to the British Isles. But how can so few do so

One lesson we are taught from the miracle of the loaves and fishes is that God is able to multiply the effect of our limited physical resources.

much with so little? What windows of opportunity should we be searching for to spread our Creator's message in our own back garden?

Should we not be making plans and seeking God's guidance in getting the gospel out to specific regions of the United Kingdom (which includes Northern Ireland) and the Republic of Ireland? Perhaps the experience of the first-century Church will aid us in answering these questions.

Christ's miracle to provide

At a time when Jesus had been teaching many thousands (five thousand besides women and children), He gave His disciples what seemed to be an

impossible task. After they pointed out the needs of the hungry crowd Jesus said 'You feed them' (Matthew 14:15-16). Their response implies: We don't have enough money to buy food for all of them even if there were time to go and buy it (Mark 6:37).

One lesson we are taught from this miracle is that God is able to multiply the effect of our limited physical resources. With five loaves and three fish, after giving thanks for what was available, the whole group was fed, and twelve baskets of leftovers were gathered (verses 42-43).

Like the disciples, we may feel, 'What can my miniscule effort in prayer or financial aid accomplish?' God looks at things differently – He praises the 'widow' who does whatever she can (Mark 12:42-44).

Historic open doors

Back in the days of the early Church, Paul travelled a great deal to preach the gospel to his generation in the known civilised world. He is the only apostle whose travels are preserved in the biblical record in a very detailed manner.

On one of his journeys, He told the Corinthian brethren, 'I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries' (1 Corinthians 16:8-9). But Paul was not a man to cave in and let his mission be thwarted even by persistent opposition, whatever its source.

The preaching of the true gospel rarely spreads effectively without hindrance, and sometimes even active opposition from certain quarters. The main adversary to gospel preaching is mentioned in Paul's second canonical letter to the Corinthian brethren. 'Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices. Furthermore, *when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel . . . a door was opened to me by the Lord*' (2 Corinthians 2:11-12).

A door in the biblical context is defined as a window of opportunity to preach the gospel – either in areas never reached before or to reinforce and expand the publishing of God's true message in places where the previous impact has only been superficial.

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23). He both opens and sometimes closes doors of opportunity to preach and publish the true gospel.

Spreading the gospel from prison

Although Paul's first imprisonment curtailed his travels temporarily, it did not stop him from carrying out his Christ-given commission (Acts 26:16-18). In addition to preaching to others while under some type of house arrest, he wrote at least four letters to different Church congregations and one to a private individual.

One of these, the epistle to Laodicea, does not appear in the New Testament canon (see Colossians 4:16). The other four letters were to the Ephesian, Philippian and Colossian congregations, plus a personal epistle to Philemon.

An open door today?

Open doors to preach the gospel were not and are not confined to the

early Church. Jesus Christ's mandate to the Church to preach the gospel extends through history to the time of the end. The living, resurrected Christ stated: 'I know your works. See I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it' (Revelation 3:8).

Then (in context) Christ continued in the following passage: 'Because you have kept My command to persevere, I will also keep you from the hour of trial,



to test those who dwell on the earth' (verse 10).

This unique period of time corresponds to the Great Tribulation mentioned in Matthew 24:21-22 when all human life would be threatened with extinction, were it not for God's promised intervention for the sake of His elect. (See Daniel 12:1 and Jeremiah 30:7 for Old Testament examples of this same predicted time of trial.)

It is of utmost importance that those whose eyes God has opened to understand His truth carry the gospel to the nations. And since we are approaching the time described as 'Jacob's trouble', we have an important task to both warn and encourage our peoples. The descendants of Jacob's son Joseph were to bear the name of Israel, as explained in our free publication *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy*.

Taking the gospel to Britain

Jesus Christ plainly said: 'Do you not say, "There are still four months and then comes the harvest? Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest. And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life' (John 4:35-36).

We should enthusiastically take up our responsibility to preach and publish the true gospel to the British Isles, just as the apostle Paul did, 'that I might gain the more' (1 Corinthians 9:19) This can result in more British people in the first and better resurrection. Paul asks how people can believe if they have not heard from a preacher sent by God (Romans 10:14-15).

Just as it was in the Holy Land in the first century, there is much harvesting yet to be done in Britain. But how can

the little flock Jesus spoke of gather in the harvest? (Luke 12:32). The gospel of Matthew provides the answer. Jesus 'said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest [God the Father] to send out labourers to His harvest' (Matthew 9:36-37).

From very small beginnings, the United Church of God has increasingly sought to preach the gospel of the king-

dom in Britain. In the last four years *The Good News* magazine has been sent to more than twenty thousand new people, bringing them the same message of both warning and encouragement taught by Jesus Christ.

We have plans to multiply that figure through use of the print media and the Internet, but we cannot accomplish this goal without greater human and financial resources.

Pray for God's Work in the British Isles

Preaching and publishing the gospel is a spiritual enterprise that requires labourers at all levels of endeavour. The apostle Paul called the brethren who laboured with him 'fellow workers',

'fellow labourers' and even 'fellow prisoners', if they had been detained in prison like himself (Philippians 4:3; Colossians 4:10-11). John mentioned 'fellow-helpers to the truth' (3 John 8, KJV).

The apostle Paul used prayer as a major tool in spreading the gospel message. He exhorted the Colossian brethren: '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, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to *speak*' (verses 2-4).

Paul importuned the Church members of his generation: '*Pray for us, that*

the Word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified just as it is with you' (1 Thessalonians 3:1). In principle, we follow his first-century example by asking you, our readers, to pray that additional doors for preaching the gospel will be opened to us in Britain and that God would provide the resources for the Church to walk through those doors.

Our modern age is no different from the early Church in that we can all have a vital part in spreading the gospel of the kingdom. The rewards are many for those who truly surrender their lives to God (Mark 10:28-30), not forgetting the gift of eternal life. 'Then the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father' (Matthew 13:43).

Peter Hawkins

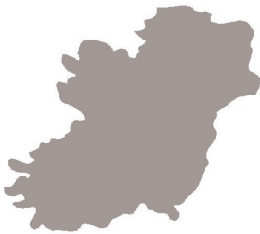
An Open Door to Ireland

The United Church of God began a small congregation in Northern Ireland just a few years ago. We meet in Ballymena, about 30 miles north of Belfast, several times a year, especially on God's annual Holy Days.

United meetings in the Irish Republic began just over two years ago and we meet there nearly every weekly Sabbath day in County Carlow. We hope to begin a Bible study in Dublin in the near future.

The *Good News* mailing list in the Republic of Ireland has grown considerably over the last several years. We hope God is indicating that a greater harvest is just around the corner in both the north and the south.

John Ross Schroeder



United Church of God Meetings in the British Isles

We are always glad to hear from people who would like to attend services on a regular basis or just wish to investigate God's way of life further.

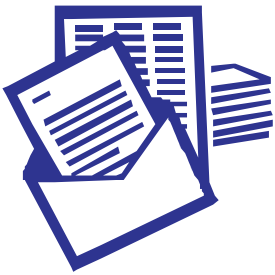
We meet according to God's commandment on the seventh-day Sabbath, which by biblical definition lasts from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. This has been the practice of the Church throughout history. (If you have not read our booklets *The Church Jesus Built* and *Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest*, please request printed copies or download them from www.ucg.org/booklets.)

Also available on request is a list of congregations meeting regularly in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, with times and contact telephone numbers. When visiting for the first time it is advisable to confirm the time, date, and venue by phoning the listed contact, as it is sometimes necessary to make changes. The dress code is smart, and we recommend bringing a Bible and notebook.

Meetings usually last about 1½ hours and begin with a few hymns and an opening prayer, followed by a short message (ten minutes), announcements, a sermon (¾ hour) and then a closing prayer. We enjoy fellowship afterwards, usually with refreshments provided by members of the congregation.

For those too far away to attend, sermons are available on MP3 CDs or DVDs by request to our UK office. For those with broadband Internet connection, live services from the US and a number of recorded sermons may be viewed at www.ucg.org/multimedia. Local UK sermons are available in audio format at www.ucg.org.uk/UCG_BI_Sermon_Archives/.

As interest develops we will be adding more congregations. We look forward to meeting you.



Letters From Our Readers

The Good News and British Supplement

You successfully blend Christian opinions and outlines with stories you glean from the modern British press, to shed light on the failings of British and European society. You also have the wisdom to recall history and how past social failures should act as a warning for now and in the future. Reporting and writing in this manner follows good biblical principles.

N C, Jarrow, Tyneside

Thank you for the latest issue of *The Good News and British Supplement* (May-June, 2008). After reading the Supplement, which is up to your usual high standard, I noticed the letter on the back page about abuse. Please send me a copy of the free reprint 'Dealing With Abuse.' I am sure it will be of help to me and others.

D G, Isle of Wight

I find that your magazine really makes sense of God's Word. I request the free reprint 'Dealing With Abuse' as I have been and still am coping with physical, sexual and mental abuse. As a Christian I need guidance as to how to handle the feelings that it has caused and to forgive the perpetrators.

Reader in middle England

'Talked to God Lately?'

Thank you for writing in *The Good News and British Supplement*, 'Talked to God Lately?' – explaining the meaning of the Lord's Prayer. I was very interested, but noticed the words were different to what I learnt as a child and have always repeated. Is what you wrote a modern version of this prayer? Thank you for reading this letter and I hope you can answer it.

Mrs C L, Plymouth

- *Most lines of Jesus' famous prayer were taken from the New King James Version. The NKJV is the standard version for all of our publications. Those less familiar with the King James classical English of 1611 usually prefer a more modern translation of the original Greek. More information about the various Bible translations can be obtained by requesting our free booklet How to Understand the Bible.*

God's Holy Day Plan

For about two years I believe God has been nudging me to learn about the [annual] festivals and what they mean. So I look forward to receiving your booklet [on *God's Holy Day Plan*]. Also, since reading your magazine about Easter and the Passover, I have been telling my sons and Christians I know about this. You convinced me.

Mrs S B, Nottingham

- *Our companion booklet Holidays or Holy Days: Does It Matter Which Days We Keep? explains the important differences between the true biblical Passover and the pagan-in-origin Easter observance.*

Bible Study Course

Lesson two helps me to understand more about the foundational knowledge of God's Word. Life without this Word is vanity. We need the Holy Spirit and God's grace to help us stand in whatever situation we find ourselves.

S O, London

Spreading the true gospel

Thank you so much for supplying me with your interesting booklets. My husband and I have just moved to the United Kingdom and are so grateful for the opportunity to strengthen our faith in God. Kindly accept this small gift donation. I hope to send more once I find a job. I pray God will build and empower the work that you do. Kindly send me the following booklets . . .

Z B, Swindon

I look forward to reading your magazine each month. Please renew my subscription and accept a small donation enclosed to keep up your good work.

Mrs R S, Wigston, Leicestershire

How our literature is funded

The United Church of God – British Isles is registered as a charity in England and Wales (number 1079192). The publication of this Supplement and other literature is funded by the generosity of members of the Church, co-workers and our readers. Following Jesus Christ's instruction (Matthew 10:8), it is supplied free of charge so that His message can be made available to all. We are grateful to those who assist financially in the work done by *The Good News*. Donations may be sent to: United Church of God, PO Box 705, WATFORD WD19 6FZ, United Kingdom, or donated online at www.ucg.org.uk/donate.html through Paypal or Charity Choice.