

# Europe at a Crossroads!

*Crucial decisions loom regarding the use of NATO forces or an EU army, the adoption of the new European constitution, and a critical choice of succession for the Vatican leadership. What do these developments signify in the light of biblical prophecy?*

**F**rom its inception, this publication has continually covered the European scene – both with broad brushes and also in some detail. Not due to any innate bias or prejudice against this historic part of the globe, but because events in Europe are central to the fulfilment of biblical prophecy.

Notice how the European scenario has been developing, beginning with the current controversy over defence.

## **NATO or a European Union army?**

Britons were shocked by a recent headline in *The Sunday Times*: ‘Germans want British Army to be run by EU.’ The companion headline in *The Daily Mail* was even more arresting: ‘Germans seek control of our nuclear weapons.’

The first three paragraphs of the *Daily Mail* article are worth quoting: ‘German military chiefs

want Britain to hand control of its nuclear weapons to Europe, it emerged last night. The idea comes in a disturbing document from the German defence ministry, setting out the aspirations for a future Euro army. It talks of Germany’s “visionary goal” for a comprehensive land, sea and air force financed by the European Parliament and built on the proposed EU constitution’ (24 Oct).

These proposals come on the heels of gravely expressed American concern about this fledgling European army. Washington has already reacted to Franco-German defence planning for an independent EU army by requesting crisis talks with its NATO co-members, fearing that the proposal would undermine the military organisation which has dominated the defence of Western Europe almost since the conclusion of World War II.

Although the leading European nations (including Britain) have moved to calm US fears, Washington remains somewhat suspicious of

the motives for a Euro army independent of the NATO command structure. The most recent attempt to allay American concerns came from Peter Struck, the German defence minister. He went as far as to say that the EU planning unit should be attached to NATO.

Previously British Prime Minister Tony Blair stated, ‘I will never put NATO at risk’, with the accompanying declaration of simultaneously remaining loyal to both NATO and the EU army (*The Daily Telegraph*, 18 Oct). It calls to mind the words of Jesus Christ: ‘No man can serve two masters’.

An American official responded by saying that ‘a spearhead defence group of limited membership could deflect Britain’s engagement in NATO and take on a divisive life of its own’ (*International Herald Tribune*, 27 Oct).

## **The new European Constitution**

Normally Buckingham Palace

says very little about politics, remaining generally aloof as a constitutional monarchy. However, even Queen Elizabeth II is apparently concerned over where the contents of the proposed European constitution will leave the British royal family.

According to *The Sunday Times*, '*The Daily Telegraph* has learnt that Buckingham Palace has asked for documents highlighting the constitutional implications of the EU's plans to be sent to her [the Queen's] advisers. Her worries came to light as Tony Blair prepared for an EU summit today in Brussels, where European leaders will begin final negotiations on the text for the new EU treaty' (16 Oct).

Recently the British Labour MP for Birkenhead, Frank Field, after articulating a worst-case scenario for the palace said, 'It is wonderful that at last the palace has got wise to this.' He further indicated that in most respects the [EU] constitution would relegate the Queen to the role of a 'glorified head of a county council' (*The Daily Telegraph*, 16 Oct).

Negotiations and bargaining have now begun in earnest over just where the real power will constitutionally reside in the new Europe. Although current EU membership numbers 15 states, another ten are slated to be added next year. A *Daily Mail* feature article sums up the fight over the final power structure. 'The disputes pit a majority of small member states fearful of losing influence against the big powers – Germany, France, Italy and Britain – who are determined that their population size and political weight are [taken into account] in decision-making' (17 Oct).

The Labour government is very

proactive in resisting any and all attempts to persuade it to submit the new European constitution to a referendum of the British people. Proponents insist that giving up so much sovereignty in crucial areas of national life requires the permission of the country's citizens.

The US president also will make his concerns known about a European superstate. 'George Bush will for the first time raise American worries over the EU's proposed new constitution when he meets Tony Blair during his state visit [to Britain] . . . The president will seek assurances that the constitution will not create a federal superstate' (*The Sunday Times*, 9 Nov).

### **Impending change at the papacy**

Recently several British newspapers have almost 'deified' Pope John Paul II in their praise of his reign. *The Financial Times* is a case in point. It stated: 'For his leadership and authority in these challenging times, how fitting it would be if Karol Wojtyla, the humble Polish priest, came to be remembered as John Paul the great' (16 Oct).

Many observers feel that his reign as Pope will be a hard act to follow. But it is his creation of so many cardinals (mostly right-wingers) that will tend to ensure that the Pontiff's conservative policies will probably survive his death. Nonetheless, there is a widening gap between belief and actual practice among the Roman Catholic membership, especially in Europe and the United States. Pressures for liberalisation of the official policies have been relentless. It may prove doubly hard for the Pope's successor to prevent demands for reform from

many Roman Catholics.

Some observers think it may be easier for a pope from Africa or Latin America to resist the cries for change on such issues as birth control, celibacy, divorce and annulment, etc. The faithful in the developing world are thought to be generally less liberal in outlook and perhaps more easily influenced by their religious leaders.

There is a clarion call among some cardinals to 'look to the third world for a pope – not tired old Europe' (*The Times*, 22 Oct).

Bible prophecy indicates that the final person to occupy the papal throne will play a major part in the revitalized new Europe to come – currently unimagined and undreamed of by the vast majority of mankind. (For further understanding of this vital point, please request our free brochure *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*.)

### **The foundation of the new Europe**

Public misconceptions about Europe are many. But perhaps none is so potentially damaging as the idea that 'reason, not emotion will be the foundation of a new Europe' (*The Financial Times*, 11 Oct). This concept flies in the face of contemporary history on the European continent, especially in 20th century.

The writer adds: 'Europeans should be grateful that the EU will not for decades be able to mount an appeal to its peoples based on gut emotion. We all know to what horrors such appeals have historically led.' In the vernacular, don't bet on the timing!

The Bible shows that in the future the European populace and much of the rest of the world will be swayed by raw emotion induced

(Continued on page 4)

# Getting it Right *God's Way*

*Relating to God in a successful manner opens the door to solid achievement in many areas of life.*

**W**hat a satisfying feeling we experience when we get it right! It is particularly rewarding when we have spent much time and effort before we pass an exam, hit the ball right on the button, or are promoted at work because of our hard-won accomplishments.

## **Rewarding human relations**

It is, however, in the area of relationships that we can experience the most long-lasting, fulfilling success. Knowing how to relate to our fellow human beings in the right way is one important source of contentment, security, and peace in our lives.

Relating to other people in a successful manner opens the door to achievement in many other ways.

Most of us would like to be popular with our friends, respected by all who know us, and have stable, trusting, loving family relationships. But the starting point and way to achieve this true success may not be where most would naturally look for it.

Jesus Christ said in John 10:10, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' We can certainly have an abundant life, but we should look to our Creator for the way to achieve it.

## **The God of the Bible**

The vast majority of mankind doesn't accept the God revealed in the Bible. Another large category of people are those who may *nominally* accept God, but do not believe that they have to attain success by obtaining it His way. Lastly there is a small group who do accept the God of the Bible and who do try to get it right the biblical way.

If a man would become wise, the starting point is respect and honour toward his Creator. Notice

*Our Creator recognises that success requires a team effort, and promises that both He and His Son will help.*

Proverbs 1:7: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.'

As the saying goes, you need to know where you've come from before you can know where you're going. Do you know the God of the Bible? Many false ideas and concepts are propagated about Him.

Our free booklet entitled *Who Is God?* will lead you through the Bible where the Creator reveals Himself to man. He says that He knows the end from the beginning. That's a startling claim worth looking into.

Our Creator gives men and women the choice to either accept or reject His authority. Giving us

free moral agency sets the stage for achieving God's purpose in our lives. In our choices we either build or destroy character.

Achieving success God's way is not an easy route to take. In fact it's a difficult narrow path we have to follow. But if we seriously want true success, then we will have to individually search for what God instructs us to do to achieve it. Look into God's word for yourself. A good place to begin is to find out if you can trust the Bible. Please request our free brochure entitled *Is The Bible True?*

## **Achieving success**

A person may go to a great deal of trouble and expense to achieve success with many years studying or practising.

It invariably involves a team effort with family, employer and friends helping. Millions of people were astounded at the level of perfection Olga Korbet achieved in gymnastics at such a young age when she won the Olympic gold medal. Her story revealed how committed she had been from a very early age.

Many of us never achieve that particular kind of success. But as opportunities present themselves, as much as our capabilities allow, we can succeed. Let's not be frightened by our lack of success so far because God offers to help us. Our Creator recognises that success

needs a team effort and promises both He and His Son will help. He also promises assistance in the form of spiritual power to follow the difficult path of character building.

### **The role of the Ten Commandments**

Let's be frank with ourselves. Do we really want success on God's terms? How many people who confess Christ try to do as He says? Not many! Few believe the Ten Commandments are in force today.

Yet God gave them to ensure our success, and Christ magnified and kept them perfectly. He plainly told us to observe them, but how many believe Him? Why not request and study our free booklet simply titled *The Ten Commandments*?

If we are frank with ourselves, we will accept that very few people are looking for success on God's terms. Yet the Ten Commandments are the fundamental principles that would ensure our success. The first four tell us how to show respect to our Maker and the last six show how to relate to other people. They can't be faulted. They work!

What about those who acknowledge the authority of the Creator in their lives and seek to do as He asks? God says it will be a small group. Notice Christ's words in Matthew 7:14: 'Because narrow is the gate, and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few that find it.'

There have always been some who have chosen to follow this difficult and narrow path. The biblical patriarch Abraham was called the father of the faithful because he did so. He understood the reality of God and the need for faith coupled with obedience to achieve success.

Down through the ages there have been others who have walked in Abraham's steps, showing the same kind of faith in their Creator and the desire for the reward that God offers.

### **Your true success**

You have a choice to start living that way now, to apply God's law to yourself. If you show God respect and honour, He will be your guide, forgive past sins and mistakes, and make up for any sacrifices you may have to make in this life. He will guarantee success (Philippians 1:6).

True success is to become a person whose character reflects that of God as Jesus Christ's did. In that event, God promises eternal life and a place in His Kingdom. You will become like God, transformed into eternal spirit life at the resurrection.

Notice 1 John 3:2: 'Beloved, now we are the children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'

We can start now, seeking to improve our character and make a success of our lives in God's way. As this and other passages clearly show, we will then be resurrected and join Christ when He returns to this earth as its Ruler. Then we will 'roll up our sleeves' to help Him restore this earth to its original state of perfection. As its people learn to respect and honour their Creator, they will all achieve true success.

Ask yourself the questions: Am I serious about wanting to be a success? Do I want it on God's terms? This could be a turning point for you. If you want to understand the true state of affairs in your life and you desire to change, why not request the free booklets mentioned in this article?

*The Ten Commandments*

*Is the Bible True?*

*Who Is God?*

Why not start checking out these biblical facts for yourself?

*Will McLoughlin*

*Assistant Pastor, United Church of God: Bricket Wood congregation*

## **Europe at a Crossroads**

*(Continued from page 2)*

by powerfully deceptive displays. Indeed the book of Revelation tells us that the whole world (misled by emotion) will worship a future charismatic European political leader termed 'the beast', along with his religious counterpart, 'the false prophet'.

That is, all except those relative few who have allowed the Bible to alert and enlighten them to the true significance of future events. God's Word terms these called-out ones 'the firstfruits'.

Since you are reading this magazine, you have a unique opportunity to really comprehend God's truth and avoid being misled by the deceptions of the devil which cloud the minds of most human beings today.

### **Summing up**

Europe certainly appears to be at a crossroads in at least three major areas: defence, the new EU constitution, and the papacy. Watching the news on a day-by-day basis can sometimes prove confusing because of occasional contradictory statements in the world's media.

Realistically, it is virtually impossible to correctly comprehend and assess world events without obtaining a much-needed biblical background.

For starters we offer the following free brochures: *You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*, *The Book of Revelation Unveiled*, and *Are We Living in the End Time?* You need to request and carefully read these three brochures in order to fully understand the significance of today's world news.

# The Only Way Is Up!

*Climbing a mountain reveals a lot about one's spiritual well-being.*

'I'm not doing this anymore!' I muttered to myself, loudly enough that the friend I was with could hear me. Not knowing exactly how to respond to my outburst she wisely chose to say nothing at all and kept plodding away.

Starting in Chamonix, at the base of Mont Blanc in France, we were eight days into our hiking trip. Our long-planned 180 kilometres route was due eventually to take us into Zermatt, at the base of the mighty Matterhorn in Switzerland. Everything was on our backs; 20kg (45 pounds) worth of tent, sleeping bag, cooking equipment, food, clothing and a supply of fabulous Swiss chocolate.

Previous days had taken us through lush valleys and quaint Swiss villages. We had crossed rivers, scaled the sides of glaciers and reached breathtaking mountain peaks.

## **Mountaineering not easy**

In all seriousness today's hike was not hard, but for some reason I was battling. Everything felt heavy and after three hours going uphill I'd had enough. I wanted to go no further.

However, I didn't have too many options. Either continue the ascent, or go back down the route we had just climbed. After a few more stops (quite a few in fact), we finally reached the top and our destination for the night – a cabin perched above a glacier.

As the evening progressed, my friend Sue and I talked about the day's events and I listened carefully to her thoughts, observations and words of wisdom. 'You need to

slow down, find a pace that's good for you, and not worry about the people ahead. Take time to stop and breathe.' I went to bed prepared to make tomorrow a better day and put her advice into practice.

As the next days unfolded I managed to find a much better pace for myself, a pace that allowed me to enjoy the uphill climbs (as much as one can!) and reach the peaks without panting as if I was going to die. Hiking along the paths I found myself thinking about the spiritual analogies one could make between climbing to the top of a mountain and our journey to the Kingdom of God.

## **The spiritual analogies**

For any hiking trip to be successful, one needs a goal and a detailed map and guidebook to follow. We, as Christians, have been given the most thorough of guidebooks written by the most accomplished Author in the form of the Bible. Our map has been outlined to us by God's Holy Day



plan. The markers along the route are the weekly Sabbaths – a reassurance and reminder that we are on the right path.

The path that we follow, however, will not always be an easy one. Along our hiking trip we faced many obstacles – boulders to climb, rivers to cross, glaciers to scale, hailstorms to slow us down and even cows to block our path! At times our path was just wide enough for us to pass through. Our Christian life can also have many obstacles, but we are exhorted to count them as blessings (James 1:2). God says that our path will be narrow (Matthew 7:14), but we can take confidence in the fact that he also says he will never leave us (Hebrews 13:5) and will direct our paths (Proverbs 3:6).

## **Avoiding side routes**

Our trip was full of highlights and we had many opportunities to enjoy the extras along the way – friends to visit, parties to enjoy, fine food and wine and stunning scenery. There were many side routes where we could have ventured off the main path, and occasions when we could have abandoned the trip completely. (Sometimes this seemed like a great idea!)

Similarly our path to the Kingdom of God is full of highlights and opportunities. However, the devil provides numerous 'interesting' alternative paths to prevent us from reaching the top. He will do his best to ensure the route we take is the downhill one by placing many temptations in our way.

Just as a hiker's body needs a suitable daily diet to cope with the

physical demands, spiritual hikers need to ensure their daily diet includes prayer and Bible study (Ephesians 6:18; 2 Timothy 2:15, etc).

There are many striving for the mountain peak that is the Kingdom of God. It is easy at times to become discouraged by those you perceive to be up ahead of you.

### **A spiritual race**

But it is not a race between them and us. It is a journey between you and God. As my friend reminded me to find a pace that was good for me and not worry about those up ahead, we also need to be patient with ourselves spiritually and pace ourselves for the journey.

The apostle Paul exhorts us to run the race with patience (Hebrews 12:1). We need to remember there are many lessons to be patiently learnt along the way.

As we rounded the mountains on day 13, the last day of our trip, I

reflected on the past 12 days. We had faced many challenges and encountered numerous experiences. The sight of the Matterhorn and Zermatt, our final destination, and the feeling of accomplishment will stay etched in my memory for years.

Our ultimate goal, the Kingdom

of God, will be a far more exhilarating and rewarding experience.

We need to keep our goal in focus and look forward to that day when we will, as Isaiah 2:2-3 explains, go up to the mountain of the Lord.

*Louise Kleinbergs*



## ***Feast of Tabernacles 2003 – Grange-over-Sands***

**W**arm autumn sunshine and largely clear skies from the start of the Feast of Tabernacles season (11-18 October) replaced the cold chilly winds and rain that had set in the previous week. Warm friendship was also obvious amongst the brethren from all over Britain and visitors from Canada, South Africa, Sweden and the USA who gathered to keep the feast at the Victoria Hall, Grange in Cumbria. The camaraderie and co-operation was an outstanding hallmark of this annual biblical festival. The outstanding beauty of the Lake District proved to be an additional bonus for feastgoers.

The guest speakers, Roy Holladay (President of United Church of God IA) and Jim Tuck (pastor of several California congregations) gave messages on a future world without war, the restoration of Israel, learning discretion, and perhaps most importantly, seeking eternal life. Several other helpful messages by British pastors and elders brought out facets of working effectively together to accomplish the task

God has given us. (A link to messages given in Grange may be requested from [info@goodnews.org.uk](mailto:info@goodnews.org.uk)).

Those attending the opening service on Friday evening were able to first meet the mayor of Grange at an informal discussion. Throughout the feast, activities were arranged for the youth including ten-pin bowling, laser quest, swimming and eating out together.

After an all-day bus tour for feastgoers, including a boat trip on Lake Windermere, the festival film was shown at an evening service. The film gave us the opportunity to 'meet' more of our brethren around the world, and see the impact of the work of the Church.

Those who are not familiar with these biblical festivals may wish to request our free booklet, *God's Holy Day Plan: the Promise of Hope for All Mankind*.

*Peter Hawkins*  
Festival Coordinator  
United Church of God – British Isles

# Questions & Answers

**Q** ■ I would like you to deal with the book, *Bible Code II: The Countdown* in one of your publications.  
F G, Italy

**A** ■ Claims that there is a secret code discernible by computer calculations embedded in the Bible may be well meaning in their intent but remain very doubtful. While it is certainly true that the Scriptures were inspired in a way that veils their meaning to most of mankind in this present age, the key to understanding them is having the Holy Spirit of God – not through a codebook or even by means of the efforts of an able mathematician.

The apostle Paul wrote: ‘But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God . . . nor can you know them, because they are spiritually discerned’ (1 Corinthians 2:14). The Holy Spirit of God is a gift; it is not restricted to those few who discover the keys to a hidden code. Read the words of a related prophecy found in Isaiah 29:10-14:

‘For the LORD has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes [blocked your understanding] . . . The whole vision has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed, [unable to be understood], which men deliver to one who is literate, saying, “Read this, please.” And he says, “I cannot, for it is sealed . . .” Therefore the LORD said:

“Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honour Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men, therefore, behold, I will again do a marvelous work among this people, a marvelous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hidden.’

Mankind is spiritually blind, not until he discovers a secret code by mathematical formulae, but rather until God supernaturally opens his understanding (John 6:44, 65). God reveals truth to

those who are called of Him, who show themselves willing to obey Him (Acts 5:32).

Jesus told His disciples and future apostles, ‘These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you’ (John 14:25-26, NKJV). John 16:3 adds: ‘However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come . . . He will tell you things to come.’

(Please note that the personal pronoun ‘He’ should be rendered ‘it’ when translating from the Greek language into English.

The Greek word *pneuma*, normally translated spirit, is also rendered ‘wind’ and ‘breath’ in the New Testament. The Greek language personifies objects, as do Spanish, French and Italian. A more detailed explanation may be obtained by requesting our free booklet *Who Is God?*)

We also invite you to request the booklet titled *Transforming Your Life*, which explains what the Bible says about how a person comes to repentance, receives faith, becomes baptised and receives the Holy Spirit of God.

The desire for a greater comprehension of the Word of God is very commendable.

Further important keys to biblical understanding are summarised in our free brochure, *How to Understand the Bible*.

## Fellowshipping With Others

The United Church of God *British Isles* continues to plan additional meetings for study and fellowship throughout Britain. We already have congregations in or near:

**Bricket Wood, near St Albans**  
(just north of London)

**Tonbridge, Kent**

**Gloucester**

**Preston** in Lancashire

**Birmingham**

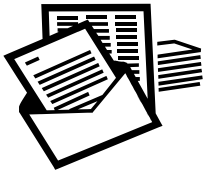
**Edinburgh**

**Ramsey, Isle of Man**

We have a Bible Study group in **Chelmsford**, Essex and are starting others in the Northwest and Southwest of England.

If you are interested in attending any of these groups, or desire fellowship in other areas, please contact us as soon as possible at:

PO Box 705, Watford WD19 6FZ  
E-mail [info@goodnews.org.uk](mailto:info@goodnews.org.uk)  
Telephone: 020 8386 8467



# Letters From Our Readers

## **The Good News**

I was introduced to *The Good News* by a friend. I find it interesting, relevant and motivating. It brings into the light any area of doubt or ambiguity people may have regarding the fulfilment of Bible prophecy in the Old Testament.

J O, West Croydon

I was born into a Moslem family 50 years ago in northern Nigeria. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Redeemer eight years ago. It is no exaggeration to mention that your *Good News* magazine has been very useful at this particular stage of my faith.

G Y, Vienna, Austria

## **Veracity of the Bible**

The *Bible Study Course* seems to have a very intolerant view of the Bible. I can't view the Bible as inerrant as I can see many inaccuracies, inconsistencies and a developing understanding of God. Much of it seems to be the words of men and not of God (e.g., Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, some Psalms, much of Job and some statements of Paul).

G B, East Sussex

- *The apostle Paul tells us, 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God' (2 Timothy 3:16) and Peter adds, 'Prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the*

*Holy Spirit' (2 Peter 1:21). The Bible is a book written by the hand of man, but always inspired by God. Please request our free brochure Is the Bible True?*

I find these Bible Study tests very interesting and indeed very helpful. When reading God's Word, the Bible, they give a greater understanding of God's intentions for all mankind in the future. The Bible is true in all it says and its prophecies tell us what is going to happen in the future.

P C, Wishaw, Scotland

## **Looking in the wrong place**

As I look at the world, I am beginning to lose my faith and my beliefs.

N C, London

- *The Bible encourages us to look to God, His way and His word and not to the world. 'The world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever' (1 John 2:17). Please request and read our free booklet, You Can Have Living Faith.*

## **The United Church of God**

Would you be good enough to let me know what is the United Church of God, what is its statement of faith, and who is Jesus Christ and what does He stand for?

D H, Essex

Is the United Church of God Methodist, Anglican or Pentecostal?

Please send me some materials about the Church and its unique beliefs?

O O, Norway

- *The United Church of God is nondenominational and its beliefs differ considerably from all of the church organisations you mention. The whole story is told by our free booklets, This Is the United Church of God and Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God. Another booklet, Who Is God?, will explain about Jesus Christ.*

## **Making a difference**

I am thankful to God that resources like *The Good News* are available. I got married last year and left a place where the gospel is so realistic and vibrant, and have in the last nine months realised how different the UK is and how essential the written word is.

Dr A O, Orpington

Please accept my small donation for your wonderful work. I thoroughly enjoy every article and booklet that you have sent me.

S C, Port Talbot, South Wales

## **Charge for literature?**

Please send me any booklets, pamphlets or any other material you have available. Please advise me if there is a charge.

L J, Buckley, North Wales

- *No charge! The box just below explains our financial policy.*

## **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 it can be made available to all who wish to receive it. We are grateful to those who assist financially in the work done by *The Good News*. Donations may be sent to: The United Church of God, PO Box 705, WATFORD WD19 6FZ.