

## New Leaders in the Making

*As each generation brings us a new group of leaders, what characteristics should be reflected in those who will soon step into positions of influence?*

*How can we nurture these qualities in today's youth?*

For those of us over 50 years old it can be hard to imagine that some of our grandchildren are now teenagers, and our children are already taking over the reigns of industry and government.

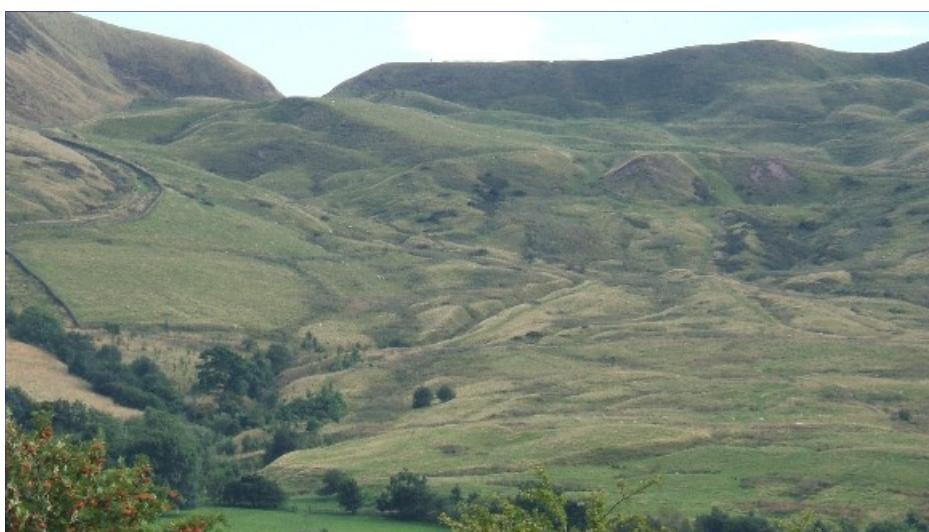
We are often nervous of how the next generation will handle positions and responsibilities. After all, their decisions will affect us all in some way or another. And the rapidly changing priorities of society, with its technical bent, can be hard for some older folk to understand.

Perhaps we are concerned because what we once held dear is no longer

considered 'sacred'. We worry about the disappearance of ideas of national heritage and national identity, the removal of boundaries, and the creeping globalisation of almost everything!

### Purpose and values

It was encouraging for my wife and me to be able to spend nine days this August with a group of young people who have purpose and firm values



Top: Regrouping on the Tor; bottom: The beautiful Derbyshire Dales.

in their lives, at a nine-day Summer Camp for young adults in the beautiful Derbyshire dales.

Along with those from the UK, a number of youth from Europe and America also attended this seventh camp in a series organised by the United Church of God – British Isles.

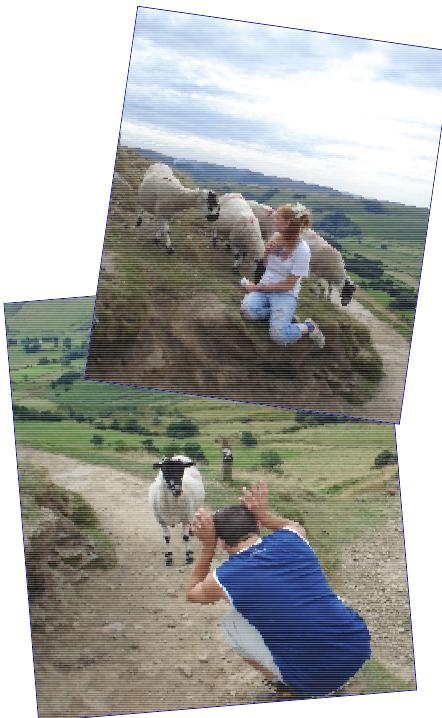
How refreshing to talk to people who are concerned about the influence of the entertainment industry and the lack of adequate parenting. They are well aware of the decline of religious conviction. In their own lives they are trying to apply biblical Christian stan-

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Telephone: 020 8421 2766. Fax: 020 8386 1999. Website: [www.ucg.org.uk](http://www.ucg.org.uk).



Above, top to bottom;  
Gate-crashing? The hike of a lifetime.  
Relaxing after lunch on the hike.  
Together into the depths of the lead mine.  
The Htway family from Thailand, now  
living in Sheffield.



Raphael and Leanne meet  
the local inhabitants.

dards to avert a famine of trustworthy leaders.

Let's meet some of those who are preparing to become tomorrow's leaders. What values do they have? What are their deepest concerns in life? How do they see themselves?

### Energetic activity and discussion

The energy of youth is legendary. As 45 minutes drew to a close in the soccer game, the over 40's drew breath and sighed relief. But no, it was not full-time, but half-time! The effects of the full 90 minutes – aching muscles, bruised shins and so on – were felt for the majority of the nine days of camp.

There was an eight-mile hike up hill and down dale. We visited a disused lead mine, boating along a water channel many feet underground. Archers shot for bull, and wall climbers overcame personal fears to reach the top of the simulated cliff face. We learnt juggling tricks, and painted to capture our imagination on paper.

But while activity played a major part in camp, it was often the discussions that brought out the deeper con-

cerns and thoughts of our young adults.

### Learning about ourselves

Friendship and acceptance are two of the most powerful forces at play in teenage and young adult life. Both can be either positive or negative and affect how we see ourselves.

Debbie, 27 years old, and living near London, observes: 'I still have more healing to do and need to work on the way I relate to others.' Being aware of other people's needs and concerns changes our relationships from being self-centred to more considerate and thoughtful. She was perhaps surprised when on the final evening she was handed her certificate – 'Barbara said it was for being there for people. That makes me glad.' Leadership qualities come out in our actions and words.

Jacko (aged 22) from Belgium realised the value of good relationships:

## Group Dynamics

This year's Summer Camp was interesting from the point of view of the dynamics of the group. There were three distinct demographic strata: the teenagers, the twenty-something young adults and the older adult staff. We quickly realised that we older adults lived 'out of phase' with everyone else, in that we headed for bed earlier and mostly got up before the others, so it largely fell to us to encourage (by fair means or foul) the younger people to get ready each morning for the day's activities!

Yet in our group discussion sessions we were pleased to note that the next generation growing up in the Church was willing to share its experiences of the Christian life with everyone else, younger and older. To hear the older teens and those now in their 20s who have committed their lives to God and His way of life describe their experiences and their commitment was for me the highlight of Camp!

David Fenney

'I learned how I should be . . . maybe more serious, more respectful, more of an example. I tried to build relationships and be close to people. I learned that I need [to be around] people for growth.'

We certainly learn a lot about ourselves if we take time to reflect on our words and actions. Elizabeth, 19 years old, from the USA, said: 'I learned that I am quite opinionated. I wonder now if all of my seemingly cut and dry, black and white perspectives are so concrete.'

So how would you feel about having leaders, even though they are young, who are concerned about helping and understanding other people's perspectives?

### **What peers thought . . .**

Here is what these leaders-in-the-making observed about each other:

- Everyone loves friendly, smiling, confident people.
- Young people change in only a few months.
- Others always have an experience to share that you can learn from.
- There are no 'good' people in the world – only God is good!
- Even Christians sin and nobody's perfect. So I can relax.



Lasting friendships are built.

- People want to be open, and we have to willingly shut our own mouth and let others 'unload' – there can be many issues and thoughts weighing a person down.
- Everyone at camp made me feel at home and wanted to help me find the right path.
- There were people who shared, cared and had friendship to offer.

Now maybe there are some aspects of the above that you would debate. But isn't it good to see people who realise the value of others, and the relevance of man's relationship to God, plus a willingness to help each other?

These attitudes remind me of what the apostle Paul said of the young evangelist Timothy: 'For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state' (Philippians 2:20).

Such sentiments were translated into action during the camp.

One very energetic young lad, who could have kept up with the fastest on



Learning to scale life's challenges.

the hike, lingered back with a few ailing adults and a young girl who was not feeling well.

Now I know you may think that he may have had some romantic interest in the young girl! The truth is that even after she was feeling better and caught up with her friends, he continued to assist those at the end of the group.

Then there was the washing up. Not a pretty sight when there are pots and pans, dishes and cutlery waiting to be readied for the next camp meal. A volunteer sign-up sheet was all that was needed.

### **Reality of being Christian**

This was a camp organised by a Church that believes in God's supremacy and authority. In the organised discussions we covered a number of biblical subjects.

As camp director David Fenney reported: 'Topics for general discussion in forums, or in "break-out" sessions, were chosen by the young people, and included tithing, the path to repentance and baptism for second and third generation Christians, and why God disapproves of sex before marriage. Several



If you are aged 13-22, we publish a quarterly magazine designed especially for you. Some recent articles in *Vertical Thought* include:

- The Power of Habits
- Do You Choose Happiness?
- Talked to God Lately?
- The Humour of Jesus Christ
- Eating Choices - Does God Care?
- How Do You Think?

Why not request a free sample copy, and if you like it we'll send it quarterly, also without cost to you. Or you can view it online at [www.verticalthought.org](http://www.verticalthought.org).

DVDs on the subject of creation versus evolution were also viewed and discussed.'

Bible studies and forums were often interactive – input from the personal experiences of the campers was welcomed. Their understanding of Scripture was very important. Here is what some of the young adults learnt about being a Christian:

'I got a renewed sense of vision for God's kingdom as well as the importance of prayer. We all have slightly different Christian walks, each is legitimate and the most important thing is that we keep a common vision' (Kirsten).

'I should take into account everyone else's feelings and opinions whether I agree or not' (Jo).

'Always put God first' (Sharry).

'It is impossible to be perfect without God's help.'

'[Life] is sometimes hard but God will help and He always looks after you.'

'[I learnt] how to tithe and I gained a new view of baptism.'

## Deepest concerns in life

Whether we like it or not, we are doing for our children what our parents did for us. We are passing along the results of our actions, some good, some bad.

The campers were asked the question: *What are your deepest concerns in life?*

'From the age of 10 or 11 I have felt inadequate and depressed. I have overcome much of this insecurity, but life has been hard and painful, and I have to just trust that God will help me to heal.'

'What are God's thoughts? What role do I play in His great plan? How long

will it be until man is released [from this society]? Am I a good Christian?'

'Staying close to my family.'

'Will I be able to have enough zeal for God's way of life throughout my



Top: Camp director David Fenney with hikers;  
bottom: Another view of the Dales.

All pictures by Raphael Bernal and David Fenney.

life? Will I find somebody just right for me to marry?'

'That I'll never be happy.'

'Complacency, self-consciousness and doubt concern me. And choosing a path in life for further education. I need to organise my time to cater more for studying my Bible and praying.'

'How will I react to others' actions? Am I doing the right thing too?'

'Not to let my priorities waver to those of the world.'

'Not achieving what I have set myself to achieve.'

## The conclusion of the matter

We received many additional comments about other aspects of camp. What came through strongly to me (as I hope it did to you through the quotes above) is these young people's awareness of God and His purpose for life.

Others have gone before them. Consider some of the young people God chose to become leaders: Joseph, David, Josiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, Esther, Mary, Timothy, and many more. We know God is able to work through people of any age when they listen to Him.

King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 12:1: 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when you say, I have no pleasure in them.' And how should young people remember God? 'Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole [duty of] man. For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil' (Verses 13-14).

At the final service at camp on the Sabbath, I was able to look out over the audience. There were campers in late teens and early twenties who were being led by the Spirit of God and they were Christ's (Romans 8:9).

These youngsters are learning life's lessons under the tutelage of Jesus, the Captain of our salvation. And when He returns to rule the earth, they will be part of that governing family (John 6:39, Revelation 2:26, 5:10).

They are indeed, new leaders in the making.

Peter Hawkins

# Why Believing Prayer Acknowledges God's Existence!

*Do you know why you should pray to Almighty God?  
Do you realise the importance of prayer to your Christian life?*

**A**ccording to recent statistics, ever fewer people in nominally Christian countries such as Britain and those of northern Europe pray to God. In a society where evolution is paraded as if it were fact, people feel self-sufficient and too busy with their own affairs to consider the spiritual dimension to life. It is not surprising that an increasing number of people see no need to pray.

In this article we will examine three reasons *why* we should pray.

## A key purpose for prayer

By praying we acknowledge the existence of a Power greater than ourselves. We didn't create ourselves, nor did evolution bring life into being. Every man, woman and child owes their

existence to a Supreme Being who created the whole universe and everything in it. This is made plain in the first two chapters of the Bible, in the book of Genesis.

Mankind was made last in the physical creation. 'So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female He created them' (Genesis 1:27). God created man and woman for a great spiritual purpose, including the procreation of other human beings. But it all began with the first man Adam and his wife Eve (1 Corinthians 15:45). (As an aside, evolutionists have no compelling answer to the question: 'Who evolved first, man or woman?')

Prayer is a real manifestation of the humble acknowledgement that we owe

our existence to a great and all-powerful Creator. 'The LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk on it' (Isaiah 42:5).

Today many deny that we were especially created for a great purpose. The apostle Paul describes those 'who suppress [or "hold back"] the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in [to] them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse' (Romans 1:18-20).

There can be no creation without a

## The Evidence of the Creation

**W**hen we look at the vast expanse of the universe with the numerous galaxies innumerable light years from planet Earth, we see the evidence of a great Creator with unlimited power. When we view the intricacies of animal and plant life all around us, the flora and the fauna, how could anyone ascribe all of this to blind evolution?

In this connection, it is intriguing and interesting to note the July issue of *Science* magazine as quoted in *The Times* newspaper (1 July). 'To mark its 125th anniversary of the magazine, *Science*'s editors compiled 125 "big questions" that show the extent to which humanity still struggles to understand our universe . . . Many of the greatest scientific mysteries, from the nature of the cosmos to the secrets of the human genetic code, still baffle us.'

Did you think that science now understands everything, that there is little more to be discovered? Far

from it. 'Pride of place goes to what the universe is made of. Current thinking is that visible matter, so far detected, makes up just 5 per cent of the Universe's mass, with the remainder composed of mysterious "dark energy".'

Continue: 'Other prominent [problems] include the biological basis of consciousness . . . Many of the questions involve genetics: how so few human genes account for such intricate biology . . . Perhaps most intriguing of all is how life on earth began, and whether we are alone in the Universe. *There are plenty of theories, but no firm answers*' (*The Times*, 1 July, emphasis added).

The Bible, however, gives us clear answers on how life began and what is expected of us in acknowledging God and Christ, who possess life within Themselves (see Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 57:15; John 5:26).

Creator. That is one reason that every time we kneel in private prayer or pray publicly we acknowledge the presence of a Supreme Being.

## Recognising our need for help and guidance

But is the sole purpose of prayer merely to acknowledge the Creator of mankind? Does God actually hear our prayers and answer them? These questions are addressed by the second reason that we should pray. By praying we recognise our desperate need for help and guidance in conducting our lives. None of us is self-sufficient spiritually.

The Hebrew prophet Jeremiah freely acknowledged this need when he told God, ‘I know, O LORD, that a man’s life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps’ (Jeremiah 10:23, New International Version).

Jesus Christ encouraged His followers to bring their burdens to Him. ‘Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light’ (Matthew 11:28-30). *What wonderful words!*

One important purpose of prayer is to recognise our inadequacies and ask

### Recommended Reading:

Many of these concepts may be very new to you. That is why the United Church of God publishes a wide range of free booklets to fill in the vital details. Those titles most helpful in supplementing this article are:

*Life’s Ultimate Question: Does God Exist?*

*Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?*

*You Can Have Living Faith.*

Please request all three today, or read them online at [www.ucg.org/booklets](http://www.ucg.org/booklets).

God the Father for guidance in our everyday lives.

### God’s willingness to assist us

That brings us to the third point. By praying we recognise God’s willingness to help and guide. Another Hebrew prophet, Isaiah, was fully aware of this attribute. ‘I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD . . . according to His mercies, according to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.

So He became their Saviour . . . In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old’ (Isaiah 63:7-9, excerpts, emphasis added). Likewise God will look after His people today!

On His last visit to Jerusalem, just prior to His crucifixion, Jesus Christ showed His fervent desire for the salvation of the inhabitants of the Holy City. In pleading with them He said: ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones them who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks, but you were not willing’ (Matthew 23:37).

The Holy Scriptures show that God is very willing to hear the prayers of those in need. But the Bible also shows us that ‘God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth’ (John 4:24). This is where many fall short of what the Creator expects of them. The vast majority of Christians are Christians in name only. They may carry a Christian label, but when it comes to actions many are unwilling to obey God in practice (Acts 5:32).

In seeking to have our prayers answered, we need to live by every word of God (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4). Rather than reassuring ourselves that human traditions will suffice in place of worshipping the Creator in spirit and truth, we need to study the Word of God dili-

gently to see what He requires of us (2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11).

Prayer will become a spiritually rewarding exercise. We may stumble a bit at first, but if we persist in seeking to obey God, blessings will certainly come our way (Acts 5:29; John 10:10).

*Gerhard Marx*

## Prayer for Divine Healing

The United Church of God both believes in and teaches divine healing. One of God’s names is *Yahweh-Rapha*, or the God who heals (see Exodus 15:26). King David confirmed that our Creator is well able to heal us of our diseases (Psalm 103:3).

In the New Testament, Matthew explains that Jesus took our infirmities and sicknesses upon Himself (see Matthew 8:16-17). This passage indicates that these words were written in connection with His final sufferings (Isaiah 53:4). By His stripes we are healed (1 Peter 2:24).

The gospel accounts are replete with examples of Christ healing every kind of illness and disease. The apostles followed their Saviour’s example and called upon Christ’s name as God’s instruments in healing the sick (Mark 16:18).

Today we have the New Testament instruction in James 5:14-15 to call the elders of the Church for special prayer when we are ill. They anoint the sick person with olive oil according to the biblical example (Mark 6:13).

In case a person is unable to see an elder, the ill individual may request a cloth that is personally anointed by one of God’s ministers following the biblical example in Acts 19:11-12.

Of course, the Church does not discourage anyone from seeking medical advice from a physician for procedures and medication to address any affliction, while at the same time looking to God for the true healing that only He can give.

*United Church of God ministry – British Isles*

# Natural Disasters to Disappear in a Future Utopian Age

*Katrina has brought enormous suffering to the Gulf states of the USA.  
Yet God promises a new age in which these events will be but a dim memory.*

In 2004 we witnessed a succession of killer disasters which took the lives of many, many thousands and caused worrisome concern to the insurance industry. Now Katrina, one of the most destructive of all hurricanes on record, has recently hit the coast of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama with untold suffering and a potential loss of life in the thousands. A number of Britons are missing in New Orleans.

Do we have the spiritual insight to grasp the signs of our time? In His last major prophecy before His crucifixion, Jesus said one of the signs of His return to this earth would be natural disasters such as earthquakes in various places (Matthew 24:7). In the same sentence, He also mentioned diseases, which often follow in their wake.

British columnist William Rees-Mogg summarised our present plight nearly 2000 years distant from the time of Christ. *'Mankind has built a fragile home for itself, with the growth of the world's population, the exploitation of natural resources, the spread of diseases from overcrowding and modern transport, the dependence on modern technologies, some of which are very vulnerable to upheaval, and the tall buildings which are open to terrorism. That fragility is the real danger of the mod-*

*ern world'* (*The Times*, 27 December, 2004, emphasis added).

Strong indications are that we are headed for the ultimate expression of what the apostle Paul observed in Romans 8:22, 'For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birthpangs until now.'

Our free brochure *Are We Living in the Time of the End?* helps to explain these tragic events in the context of our modern age. Nevertheless, a new utopian age is going to be born on this earth when these horrific natural disasters will be buried deep in the past. We live now in a time of uneasy and even chaotic transition, yet in firm expectancy of a new world of peace and prosperity.

God is now preparing specially trained leaders to help rule the earth with Jesus Christ when He returns. As Paul put it: 'For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God' (Romans 8:19).

To understand more fully, request our free booklets *What Is Your Destiny?* and *The Gospel of the Kingdom*.

## Why suffering?

When major natural tragedies occur, like Hurricane Katrina in the southern part of the United States, the same ques-

tions are always asked: Where was God? How could He allow death and devastation on a scale such as this? Why doesn't God intervene?

The United Church of God has published a 16-page booklet which thoroughly addresses these questions – all of which have challenged theologians, philosophers, historians and scientists down through the generations.

This publication carefully considers the Scriptures that impact these questions and puts them into an understandable framework. It explains free will, the consequences of human decisions, Satan's influence, the good that can emerge from suffering and when it will ultimately cease.



The suffering of the Christian is an essential component of God's purpose. If we suffer with Christ we shall also reign with Him. This booklet also addresses how you can cope with your personal sufferings.

You need to request and read this unique publication. The title is *Why Does God Allow Suffering?* It's free for the asking. We have it readily available in print, or you can download it if you are on the Internet.

*John Ross Schroeder*

## 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: The United Church of God, PO Box 705, WATFORD WD19 6FZ.



# Letters From Our Readers

## Verifying truth and faith

Thank you for sending me your magazines that are a great help in keeping in close contact with God and the Bible. I have been a believer for nearly 50 years, but I needed verification of the truth at a time when everyone was questioning the very existence of our Creator and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Mrs C T, Peterborough

Please renew my subscription to *The Good News*. It has helped me stay strong throughout a year of extreme testing of my faith. I feel strengthened through God's Word.

Ms P A, Barnsley

Your magazine provides a marvelous insight not only into the Bible, but today's everyday life as well. While everything seems to be turned upside down, this magazine helps me understand how God is working with mankind.

A C, Hungary

## The British & European Supplement

Your articles in *The British and European Supplement* are most enlightening and full of interest in God's Word.

G M W, Worcester Park

## Helped by the booklets

Honestly, I enjoy reading your booklets. They help me to understand some views from the Bible that are very hard to interpret. I believe that God will continue to bless you and meet your needs in continuing to serve Him through publishing and sharing the Gospel with the whole world.

Please accept this small cheque as my contribution towards the printing and distribution of your magazine and other publications.

Miss H M, London

The reason for writing this letter is that a friend of mine had one of your booklets with the title *Who Is God?* After reading through it, this booklet opened Christian knowledge to my understanding. So I obtained your address from him and am now requesting titles of your other booklets.

J L, Middlesex

## Bible Study Course

I am very grateful to God and you for making it possible for me to complete the 12-lesson *Bible Study Course*. I am proud to inform you that the course has really changed my life and I continue to pray that the Church of God continues to wax stronger in spreading the gospel of our Lord. I have received the certificate of completion which you sent to me as evidence of satisfactory completion of the course.

J O F, Luxembourg

These studies are very interesting and helpful. Some of the doctrine is questionable in reference to some Scriptures, but I am interested in continuing these studies which are good.

E U, Harrogate

The precise and articulate ways in which this Bible course seems to reveal the teaching and depths of God's Word

## Meeting in Douglas, Isle of Man

The Isle of Man congregation of the United Church of God extends an invitation to readers of the *Supplement* to a Sabbath meeting on Saturday 3rd December 2005 in the Wedgwood Suite at the Castle Mona Hotel, Central Promenade, Douglas. The meeting will start at 1:30 pm. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

is obviously commendable. I can now boast of a better understanding of the Bible than before.

C N, London

## The true Sabbath day

Is Saturday the recommended day of the Lord?

S F F, Hackney

- *It is not only recommended, but actually commanded in the Bible. To understand, please request our free booklet Sunset to Sunset: God's Sabbath Rest.*

I just cannot explain to you how much your booklets and *The Good News* magazine have helped me. As one who has moved from the conventional Church and now worships by myself on the true Sabbath (Saturday), I cling to God's promises that we need no man and He will teach us by Himself. I believe He is using your material to give me the truths I need to know and learn, that I am afraid the church does not teach us.

S C, Carnoustie

- *Jesus Christ Himself built the Church (Matthew 16:18). Our free booklet The Church Jesus Built explains how great apostasy has occurred over the many centuries since. But that does not mean that a remnant, faithful to the truths of Scripture, would not exist today.*

*There is still a little flock, a Church that keeps the commandments of God (Revelation 12:17), in existence today. So as God makes possible, we are commanded to worship with others of like mind on the Sabbath day (Leviticus 23:3; Hebrews 10:25). Please request our free booklet This Is the United Church of God.*

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