

The Journal

News of the Churches of God

Issue No. 116 (Vol. X, No. 11)

John 8:32

November-December 2006

Triumph founder speaks his mind on churches' doctrines

By Mac Overton

Of the many ministries and fellowships that came out of the Worldwide Church of God, what may be one of the smallest is also among the most prolific in the production of literature.

It is also not afraid to reexamine established Sabbatarian Church of God doctrines and cogitate outside the box.

That ministry is Triumph Prophetic Ministries (Church of God), founded by William "Bill" Dankenbring as a full-time effort in 1995.



William Dankenbring

(Mr. Dankenbring was dis-fellowshipped by then-WCG pastor general Joseph Tkach Sr. in 1987 because, Mr. Dankenbring said, "the church was at that time becoming very hard-fisted and negative to anything not under their direct authority, so my name and reputation began to be slandered, reviled and questioned in many quarters.")

An example of how Mr. Dankenbring, who nowadays lives in Omak, Wash., is not afraid to re-examine cherished beliefs is the lead article in the September-October issue of TPM's flagship publication, *Prophecy Flash!*

Jesus was an angel

The article is "Who Is the Archangel Michael?" in which Mr. Dankenbring presents what he sees as scriptural evidence that Michael is Jesus.

"I show the amazing relationships and statements in the Old and New Testaments that, first of all, Christ, or the Logos, was a created being who was always under the authority of the Father, as He Himself said, 'The Father is greater than I.'" Mr. Dankenbring told *THE JOURNAL* in an interview conducted by E-mail.

When the end comes, Jesus-Michael "will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father and Himself be subject to or under the authority of the Father."

Mr. Dankenbring cited 1 Corinthians 15:23-28 and John 14:28.

Beginning of creation

Jesus Himself "called the Father the only true God," Mr. Dankenbring continued, "and in Revelation 3:14 He tells John that He was the beginning of the creation of God."

About the archangel Mr. Dankenbring explains: "It is Michael who fights against the devil and his angels" (Revelation 12:7-9) "and who prevails over Satan. Who but Christ has qualified to conquer and replace Satan?"

Mr. Dankenbring said he also noticed that Michael is a "prince" of God, citing Daniel 10:21, and "Michael is the one who stands watch over the sons of your people, Israel."

"More and more," he continued, "it sounded like another of the many names of Christ Himself, who is also called in the Scriptures Prince of Peace, wonderful, Messiah, Savior, Redeemer, etc. It is Christ who is going to fight for and redeem His people. The angels of heaven will follow Him on white horses."

See **WILLIAM DANKENBRING**, page 17



THE FEAST IN KENYA—Four Feast of Tabernacles observers from the United States and Canada meet with new friends in Kenya for the 2006 observance. **Standing, from left:** James Mutulu, Nairobi, Kenya; Bill Goff, Tuckerton, N.J.; Peter Okouji, Tarime, Tanzania; Josh Goff, Tuckerton; Seth Odiuwor, Oyugis, Kenya; Evan Manning, Saskatoon, Sask., Canada; Nicholas Ochieng, Ndihiwa, Kenya. **Sitting:** Francis Wanga, Tarime; Joshua Thorne, Oaks, Okla.; Samuel Okinyi, Tarime. See the next issue of *THE JOURNAL* for Mr. Manning's report on the observance in Kenya. See several other Feast reports in this issue beginning on this page. See more pictures from the Feast on page 18. [Photo courtesy Evan Manning]

There's still time for your Feast report

THE JOURNAL continues to invite readers to send in reports of their 2006 Feast of Tabernacles observances.

Members of Churches of God and other Sabbatarian fellowships met at several hundred Feast sites in 2006, with most observances beginning the evening of Oct. 6.

You still have time to get your report into next month's issue of *THE JOURNAL*. Mail your information to Festival Reports, *THE JOURNAL*, P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A. Or E-mail it to info@thejournal.org. Or you can fax it to (903) 636-9097.

Photographs as prints or E-mail attachments are also welcomed. Please mention the dates of your observance and the name of the church fellowship or affiliation, if any, or other sponsors of the site.

Next month's issue will probably conclude Feast reports for 2006.

Then there were two: The United Church of God divides in San Salvador, El Salvador

By Dixon Cartwright

BIG SANDY, Texas—The United Church of God an International Association (UCG), based in Milford, Ohio, lost about half the members of a congregation in Central America in October and November, according to reports from elders and other members who are no longer a part of the congregation.

The affected congregation—which is now two congregations—met in San Salvador, capital of El Salvador.

Leon Walker of Big Sandy, director of the UCG's Spanish department and regional director of the church's activities in Spanish-speaking regions of the world, announced during a visit to the congregation the removal of 30-year pastor Herberth Cisneros at

Sabbath services Oct. 28.

The church members in attendance greeted Mr. Walker's announcement with apparent consternation as several dozen of the brethren jumped to their feet to ask questions.

According to reports, Mr. Walker seemed unable to restore order or to continue the service and therefore walked out of the room.

Unsubstantiated rumors

Events leading to the church split included Mr. Cisneros' wife, Conchita, contacting Mr. Walker with concerns about a possible inappropriate relationship between her husband and a woman in another UCG congregation.

According to *THE JOURNAL*'s sources,

Mr. Walker had looked into the rumors and found no substantiation for them.

In the meantime, however, the rumors had spread, and some members had decided to stop attending church because of them.

Mr. Cisneros denounced these actions in statements to the congregation. Mr. Walker was reportedly unhappy that the pastor had referred to some of the rumormongers by name and had accused them of involvement in his alleged defamation.

As a result, Mr. Walker is said to have insisted that Mr. Cisneros apologize to the congregation.

Mr. Cisneros' apology during a church service did not satisfy Mr. Walker.

See **PRINCIPALS**, page 19

Journal readers report on their 2006 feasting and fellowship

Following are Feast of Tabernacles reports readers have sent to *THE JOURNAL*. This is the second installment of reports covering the 2006 festival. They are in alphabetical order by Feast-site location. Look for more Feast reports in one or two more issues of *THE JOURNAL*.

The walls of our mind

NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, S.C.—This year our family attended the Feast of Tabernacles in North Myrtle Beach, S.C., where two Churches of God met in the same building with only a partition separating services.

Our intention was to spend time at services from both Church of God congregations: the Church of God Big Sandy and the Christian Biblical Church of God.

The sentiment among many of the brethren was "Tear the wall down"—keeping in mind that several activities were planned in which brethren from each side of the wall participated.

In fact, there were close to 100 people who attended Dixie Stampede together and another 40 people who attended a women's luncheon.

As we had conversations with brethren about "tearing down the wall," we came to the conclusion that the only walls that existed here at this Feast site were in fact the walls that existed in our minds.

We likened services to the concept of having two seminars. The brethren would fellowship in the hallways, and then, when it was time for the seminars to begin, they simply decided which seminar—or service—they would like to attend.

It didn't matter which side of the wall we were on; we saw the same people with the same Spirit of God.

Our conversations with brethren included encouragement to personally visit with the brethren on the other side of the wall and to show ourselves friendly because, in all honesty, if any walls, whether literal or not, are to come down, the process must start with us.

With that said, our family had a fabulous, inspiring Feast of Tabernacles. *Tom and Rhonda Fannin, Hillsboro, Ohio.*

Level of excellence

OCHO RIOS, Jamaica—With high attendances of 340 on the

See **READERS REPORT**, page 18

Churches of God in New England mark 40th

By John Warren

KITTERY, Maine—Church of God members from a variety of fellowships congregated in this city in the southern part of Maine the Sabbath of Nov. 18 to mark the 40th anniversary of Church of God groups with origins in the Radio/Worldwide Church of God in a six-state area.

The celebration began with church services sponsored by the United Church of God congregation commonly referred to as the Portsmouth church, even though Portsmouth is across the state line in New Hampshire.

The UCG congregation is pastored by Paul Suckling of Shrewsbury, Mass. Mr. Suckling also pastors a congregation in Worcester, Mass., and serves as a regional pastor for the UCG.

Organizing and sponsoring the reunion were

See **NEW ENGLAND**, page 6



Reg Platt

UCM moving to Indiana

ROANOKE, Ind.—United Christian Ministries, founded by Ray and Peggy Wooten in Birmingham, Ala., in 1996, is on its way to Roanoke, a suburb of Fort Wayne.

Mr. Wooten told *THE JOURNAL* that, although he hates leaving friends in Alabama, he is excited about the move. "Peggy and I have served in the Birmingham area for 18 years [as a pastor and regional pastor in the Worldwide Church of God, as a pastor of an independent congregation and as founder of UCM], and we have many dear friends in Alabama," he said.

"But we look forward to continuing our ministry in an area of the country that is closer to our children."

The Wootens have already found a home in Roanoke and have begun the move, which is scheduled to be complete by the end of December.

Although UCM will continue to maintain an office in Birmingham, the "main facets" of the ministry will originate from Indiana beginning in January, Mr. Wooten said. "We are definitely not retiring."

Mr. Wooten plans to conduct a weekly church service by telephone from his studio and hold a monthly congregational meeting.

The new address of UCM in Indiana is P.O. Box 608, Roanoke, Ind. 46783, U.S.A. Mr. Wooten says he is happy to announce that UCM's toll-free number, (888) 985-9066, will not change.

Doesn't God still move in mysterious ways?

Dr. Griffiths is a member of the Austin Church of God and an avid student of history and psychology.

By Richard F. Griffiths

AUSTIN, Texas—Three men dressed in rags climbed ever higher through the mountain snow and mist of South Georgia Island.

It was the last leg of a truly epic survival journey out of the heart of the Antarctica after their ship had sunk.

Awaiting them now on the opposite side of the mountains of this desolate island was a whaling station and civilization. If they made it, there was still a chance to save their fellow explorers left hundreds of miles behind them.

Frostbitten, staggering from fatigue and lack of adequate food, the three, Frank Worsley, Tom Crean and Ernest Shackleton, pushed on, barely conscious and close to death.

Love, grit, courage, comradeship—call it what you will—were all that was keeping them going.

Are we alone?

They had a strange feeling, almost subconscious at first, that they were not alone. Out of the snowy mist each one sensed and thought he saw a glimpse of a fourth figure walking with them, if just for a millisecond.

Two years earlier these three men and 25 others had been on board the ship *Endurance* as it sailed from England on Aug. 1, 1914. Their goal was noble: to be the first to cross the south pole.

This outing, the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, was to be the third time Ernest Shackleton would venture bravely into the Antarctica.

Those who knew Shackleton and served with him acknowledged the force of his imprint on the times.

The man was brilliant, driven, ambitious, physically imposing and, most of all, a leader of men.

1,000 miles of ice

As the *Endurance* sailed from England, its crew did not know the ice off Antarctica's coast was to be unusually thick that year.

So thick was the ice and so huge the ice pack—it stretched 1,000 miles—

that the *Endurance* would become trapped on Jan. 19, 1915, almost within reach of landing on Antarctica's coast, in spite of the crew's skillful maneuvering.

The frozen water never relented, eventually crushing the ship and then drifting. It took the helpless crew, now forced to subsist on the ice, ever northward away from land.

The crew perched on the ice for five months, totally exposed to the elements, until the weather warmed and the ice pack finally broke up, displaying a wind-tossed, angry ocean.

The intrepid band in three small rowboats then set out in a desperate attempt to reach land.

The works of the Lord

As the men rowed "standing up at the stern of the leading boat," recounted one crew member, Shackleton stood against "a south-east wind blowing at his back."

Among his possessions that day was Psalm 23 printed on a page from a Bible presented to him by Queen Alexander, consort of King Edward VII, with a flyleaf inscribed inside. The words were prescient: "May the Lord help you to do your deeds and guide you through all dangers by land and sea," and "May you see the works of the Lord and all his wonders in the deep."

The crew made land just barely days later on Elephant Island, a glacier tract

and make it to the whaling station on the other side of the island.

Fortunately, the weather warmed just enough to save them from freezing to death, and they completed the climb after many harrowing escapes in 36 hours.

But who was the fourth figure the men sensed and even glimpsed? Did Shackleton and his men encounter someone, some kind of being, in those mountains?

Real or not?

It is clear from the evidence that Shackleton had had a mystical spiritual meeting that profoundly affected him. Roland Huntford, in his masterful biography, describes Shackleton as visibly upset and emotional when he explained the encounter with this "fourth presence" to a writer who helped him with an account of the expedition.

Mr. Huntford believes it was a hallucination induced by extreme deprivation, but how probable is it that all three of the men would experience the same hallucination?

Frank Worsley and Tom Crean also confirmed sensing and seeing a fourth figure.

There is, however, another explanation and one right out of the book that Queen Alexander presented to Shackleton. Perhaps the Logos, the being who, after all, created the mountains, chose to tabernacle again with men as He had done so many times in the past.

In that storm and out of the snowy mist, did God choose to walk with three of His valiant sons and, yes, even to share in the pain and privation of the moment?

If He did, maybe it was not only to encourage His sons but to leave His imprimatur, His stamp of approval, on their example of endurance for us to learn from.

The other side

It is fitting, given the poetry in the Bible and written into the mountains, that Shackleton's spiritual encounter inspired the poet T.S. Eliot to pen this verse in "The Waste Land":

Who is the third who walks always beside you?
When I count, there are only you and I together
But when I look ahead up the white road
There is always another one walking beside you
Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded
I do not know whether a man or a woman
—But who is that on the other side of you?



Rich Griffiths

A biographer believes it was a hallucination, but how probable is it that all three men would experience the same hallucination?

devoid of shelter and habitation. The last humans to set foot on Elephant Island had been whalers in 1830, and it was still so far from civilization that there was little hope of rescue.

Their only chance was to reach South Georgia Island, where there was a whaling station. The problem was that South Georgia was 700 miles away across one of the stormiest oceans in the world.

Shackleton, determined to save his men, took five others and left the rest behind.

Many harrowing escapes

With an improvised passage in one small rowboat, the *James Caird*, he managed to sail those 700 miles—in what is widely considered to be one of the greatest open small-boat journeys ever—in 16 days.

After landing on the coast of South Georgia, Shackleton, Worsley and Crean still had to scale the interior mountains without any climbing gear

Notes and quotes

That's life

BIG SANDY, Texas—*THE JOURNAL* will soon begin a new department in each issue to feature what could be called "life events" of its readers.

It will be similar to the section in *The Worldwide News* in the 1970s that reported births, weddings and deaths.

But, depending on reader interest, it could also feature graduation announcements, retirements, Feast plans, news of new fellowships and congregations and relocations of pastors. Items could include photos as well as text.

To help kick off this new *JOURNAL* feature, submit your "Life Events" items, which can include photos. Write Life Events, *THE JOURNAL*, P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A., or E-mail your information to info@thejournal.org.

Be sure to include a phone number in case of the need for follow-up information.

There will no charge for this service.

1977 AC reunion

TYLER, Texas—Debbie Wood and other members of the AC Class of 1977 are planning their



Members of the Class of 1977

30-year reunion for Dallas, Texas, beginning Friday night, Aug. 3, and running through noon Sunday, Aug. 5.

"The graduating 1977 alumni and their spouses, as well as all who entered in the fall of 1973, spring of 1974 or were ever part of the class somewhere in between are invited to attend," Miss Wood said.

Murdock "Doc" Gibbs will provide entertainment with music from the '70s. An optional barbecue at Skip and Michelle Quant's ranch near Burleson, Texas, is planned for Sunday afternoon.

Members of the reunion committee are Steve Schantz, Terry Willhoite, Miss Wood, Jeff Wahlen, Michelle Bumpers Quant, Charles Melear and Jacque Harvey Melear.

For more information visit www.ACReunion.info or contact Miss Wood at (903) 939-1765 or debbieawood@sbglobal.net.

Passover feast site

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C.—Carol Ann Honeycutt announces a "Passover feast site" scheduled for April 1-10 at the Golden

Sands Inn in Myrtle Beach.

Call (800) 782-0513 by Feb. 15 for sermon outlines, to make theme and activity suggestions and to volunteer.

Announcement

BIG SANDY, Texas—This issue of *THE JOURNAL* carries the date November-December 2006. The next issue will be dated January-February 2007. Readers' subscription-expiration dates will be adjusted, and subscribers will receive the full number of issues they have paid for.

Above all names

HARTVILLE, Mo.—Dan White announces the availability of a new message in MP3 format titled "Christian America Turns Anti-Christian."

"All through American history it was considered an honor to be a Christian," Mr. White said.

"Today people are mocked for being a Christian. What does it mean to suffer shame for the name that is above all names?"

For the audio recording, visit www.homeschool-helpers.info/messages/antichristian.mp3.

One God Seminar

AUBURN, Wash.—The Association for Christian Development's One God Seminar is coming to the U.S. Northeast June 8-10.

"This is the sixth in a series of seminars investigating the nature of God and of Christ and the first one held in the Northeast," announced Ken Westby, founder of the seminar series, which began in 2002.

Sean Finnegan of Albany, N.Y., is organizing and coordinating the event, which will take place in the building of the church he pastors.

This year will include several new presenters and an "opposition presenter," Mr. Westby said.

Who will be the opposition presenter? Mr. Westby doesn't know yet and seeks volunteers.

Write P.O. Box 4748, Federal Way, Wash. 98063, U.S.A., or acd@godward.org for more information.

Many Bible studies

KENSINGTON, Conn.—F. Paul Haney, founder and pastor of Christ Fellowship Ministries, announces a redesign of his Web site, which now includes many Bible studies readable on screen and quite a few PDFs to download.

Mr. Haney said he expects to put studies and other articles up on the site that will discuss fasting, anointing, divorce and remarriage, primitive Christianity, New Testament corruption, holy days, holidays and much more.

Visit www.CFMinistries.org to see what's new.

"We are grateful for all webmasters who might add a link from their Web sites to ours and indeed solicit that attention," Mr. Haney said.

Readers without computers may write P.O. Box 337, Kensington, Conn. 06037, U.S.A.

The Journal:

Subscribe or renew!

Mail to: **THE JOURNAL, Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A.**
Subscribe to *THE JOURNAL: NEWS OF THE CHURCHES OF GOD* and keep up with your family and friends in all the groups!

Name _____

Address _____

City/state/zip or postal code/country _____

New subscription Renewal Start with back issue dated ____/____/____

(specify any month and year from February 1997 to present). Individual back issues are \$2 each, with 2-issue minimum order. (No minimum if ordered with new sub.)

In U.S.: \$49 for 24 mo. issues \$28 for 12 issues \$15 for 6 issues. Non-

U.S. mailed from Big Sandy: \$51 for 24 mo. issues \$28 for 12 issues \$17 for 6. For distributors in other countries, see box on page 2. Please remit in U.S. funds drawn, if possible, on a U.S. bank.

Use a copy of this coupon or plain paper to order from *THE JOURNAL* or any of our distributors. When writing or E-mailing about subscription problems, please include phone number.

To subscribe, simply send a check or money order along with the subscription coupon on left (or provide the information on a plain sheet of paper). Or now you can pay for your *JOURNAL* subscription or renewal with a credit card. (Just call 1-903-636-9974 or write info@thejournal.org.)

Be sure to check your mailing label for the number of issues remaining in your subscription. If you have only one or two or "zero" issues remaining, we suggest mailing in your renewal now so you don't miss any issues.

Contact *THE JOURNAL* for subscriptions and renewals at Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755, U.S.A., or at the distributors' addresses on page 2. See also *THE JOURNAL*'s Web site, at www.thejournal.org.

Thanks for reading *THE JOURNAL*!

The Journal
News of the Churches of God
P.O. Box 1020, Big Sandy, Texas 75755

Time-sensitive material