

Archiver's notes:

This document has suffered from many years of neglect. It might have been stored in a clay vessel in a middle eastern cave for all we know. We do not represent this text as scripture, Holy writ, or even anything we even agree with, merely interesting history about the formation of the United Church of God.

The original document had been photocopied, it is also a second or third generation fax. We have edited out the visual artifacts resulting from so many generations of copying.

While we have not emended the text, we have (on page 3) inserted the first 1 or 2 characters (which were missing on the original) where we could make the reading of the document easier. Unfortunately we were not able to find a suitable "j" for "join" and left it as it was "oin".

We have removed fax telephone numbers and personal names of the recipient and contact to protect their identity.

If you have other similar documents from the MALNET network, please contact Gavin Rumney at <http://www.ambassadorwatch.co.nz>. Links to his email address can be found there. It does not matter if they are "important" or not, we are trying to build a complete collection of the documents from that time.

We remained indebted to the brave soul that contributed this to our collection.

Subj: The PLAIN TRUTH about REORG.  
Date: 95-03-17 18:30:25 EST  
From: RITESPIRIT  
To: Mal116

To the Church of God,

The leading ministers of the Church of God (COG) wish to post this announcement about the coming separation from the WCG that is now inevitable. This message is meant to be distributed to those who love God and who have decided to follow his truth wherever it leads, whatever the consequences.

There is no need to document the failings of the WCG. Differing agendas require different actions. We can leave it at that. An Acts 15 type of conference has been proposed and rejected. A request has been made to the WCG leadership that we find a way to implement a peaceful separation, based upon irreconcilable differences. The only peaceful way to separate, that the WCG leadership will recognize, is for longtime faithful ministers to resign their positions and to sit in the congregations as lay members not causing "division" by teaching the truth. Obviously, this is not acceptable.

This message is meant to dispel rumors and to tell you plainly and openly as much information as possible - under the current circumstances. As it is safe and wise to do so, additional information will be posted. There will obviously be questions and we will try to respond to those questions as soon as possible. Please be patient while we give careful consideration to your questions and then respond. Many of us, ministers and lay members, are working inordinate hours. We will do the best we can with the resources that are available to us. We realize that you are starving for both information and leadership and we will seek to provide both as quickly as possible. Please PRAY that the Spirit of Christ will guide us and allow God's people to be UNITED! Events are transpiring at a rapid pace.

It is very important that each us strive to have a RIGHT SPIRIT and ATTITUDE so that Christ can unify us through his holy spirit. God's people will be united not by might, not by power, but by his spirit. It is very important, that we each strive to be agreeable, because the obstacles to our unification are great and the physical resources (at least at first) will be limited. We must learn to agree to agree and work together to serve God in a spirit of cooperation.

The reorganization will involve local congregations having a much more

important role. In fact, they will have autonomy. There will be no large headquarters complex that can serve as a breeding ground for political power struggles and other carnal behavior. The local churches will each incorporate separately, collect tithes and offerings locally, and have their own Board of Directors. The members of the Church of God will be more involved in its governmental structure.

There will be a central association that functions as a service provider for the local congregations located around the earth. The central association, will be very small and will only have those employees that are absolutely necessary. The central association will receive a portion of the funds collected by the local autonomous congregations, which will be given as the local congregations see fit. The central association will provide the following kinds of services:

- \* Preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. We do believe there is much work yet to do.
- \* Recreating a body of literature
- \* Helping with legal matters, particularly in the international area
- \* Publishing a magazine, church newsletter, and materials which help local congregations
- \* Possibly help provide services which are more inexpensively purchased collectively, e.g., general liability insurance
- \* Providing "how to" advice to local congregations who request it
- \* Establishing Feast sites

If the central association does not provide a high level of services, the funding to it can be cut off by the local congregations. And it will be. There will be checks and balances implemented so that the power and wealth of the COG will not ever again be used against the members. The Board of Directors of the association will be comprised of longtime faithful leading ministers who are loyal to the truth and who genuinely love both the members and the ministers.

The most likely name for the central association will be the United Church of God (UCOG). The UCOG has been separately incorporated in Alabama and the Birmingham area members will hold their first Sabbath service, this Sabbath, 3-18-95. It is the first local congregation to independently organize and begin operations. Mr. Ray Wooten will be pastoring the congregation. Other local congregations will follow over the next several months.

UCOG can receive donations from members and then remit them back to the local

congregations, once they are separately organized. However, UCOG would prefer that non-Birmingham area members hold their tithes and offerings until such time as a local congregation is set up. At that time the tithes and offerings can be used to fund the local autonomous congregation. If you do send a donation to UCOG, clearly mark the church area you wish the funds held for. Donations are tax deductible. UCOG has graciously offered to help local churches with fund management, until they are formally legally organized, but it would be better to wait. To dispel a rumor, UCOG is NOT a retirement fund for ministers who have been terminated from the WCG. UCOG's address is:

United Church of God  
P.O. Box 361334  
Birmingham, AL 35236-1334

Again, accounting, legal, and organization packages will be available in about 2-14 days. Contact information about where to request them will be posted at that time. Please give the Birmingham brethren a break and wait until the correct contact information is posted before requesting a package. Ministers will need to involve people in their congregations with the variety of skills necessary to organize and begin operations.

It is VITALLY IMPORTANT that the newly organized local congregations DO NOT PROSELYTIZE the membership of the WCG. We seek to be different from those who have previously separated from the WCG. We seek to stay on the high road. It is not desirable or necessary to proselytize. DO NOT DO IT. We will simply get those of a similar spirit and attitude as us, who wish to worship with us **JOIN US AS THEY ARE READY.** This is a crisis of conscious for each of us. Some are ready to take action before others. Christ is our savior and he will keep working with each of us until he comes again Phil. 1:6.

More information will be made available as it is wise and appropriate to do so. Again, we will entertain questions and will endeavor to provide answers as soon as possible. We may not be able to answer your questions right away for security reasons.

What can you do now?

Pray that Christ will guide and bless us and unite our minds with his so that we can be united and do a work.

Look into finding a place to meet locally.

Start looking at what it would cost to fund your local church congregation. There will be some general guidelines provided, but that is

what they will be, general. Each church area will obviously be different.

4. Make loyal members aware of the coming separation and get them involved. Many hands make light work. It would be prudent to hold tithes and offerings to seed the local church startup.

5. Update your local church mailing list, as it is all right to send a one-time announcement that does not proselytize - at the appropriate time, of course.

What not to look for:

A coordinated last sermon on the same Sabbath. Many ministers will not have a pulpit to preach it from. And it is not necessary. When a new local congregation begins to meet, the word will spread. Word of mouth, along with polite announcement will suffice. Members of the right spirit and attitude will come and worship with us when they are ready.

You can give hard copies of this message to THOSE YOU PERSONALLY KNOW TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE TRUTH. It would be of particular help to get this message into the hands of God's true ministers. As one of the Founding Fathers of the United States once said, "The event is in the hand of God. Amen."