

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

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President and Pastor

(no date given, but from content is
assumed to be approx. June, 1978.)

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Greetings in Jesus' name! Needless to say, I'm most excited that God's Work is once again surging forward with renewed energy and power! As you have heard by now, I've made some fundamental changes and far-reaching decisions to STEP UP the first duty and commission of the Work -- to get this Gospel to the world in greater power than ever before.

We are getting back to the basics and paring down some less essential activities, such as the liberal arts program of Ambassador College, so we can put our resources to work more fully right on the front line of the Gospel Work. All areas of the Work are being streamlined and refocused on the Great Commission!

I'm once again planning to begin another trip abroad in just a few weeks. God has restored my health to such a degree that I am now able to get back to doing the great Work God has placed on my shoulders. I thank all of you for your fervent and effective prayers which have been answered by our Great God! I know you will now share my joy in the renewal of the Work and support me by your daily prayers!

Now for some important information about the Feast of Tabernacles this year. Even though it is still springtime, it's time to begin planning NOW for what has become the largest "convention" of any kind on the face of the whole earth!

We're looking forward to the very finest Festival in our history; expecting around 75,000 in attendance this year, with many thousands of new brethren, and thousands of co-workers and interested visitors! I am asking several of our leading evangelists and ministers to visit as many as three or four sites apiece, so the whole Church will hear from our most inspiring speakers.

All of you know, via coverage in the Worldwide News, that our Mount Pocono festival site received irreparable damage during the recent severe winter, and as a result, we have been forced to locate an alternate site for the Feast. After exhaustive search, and weeks of hard effort, we have been blessed by finding an absolutely ideal replacement for Mount Pocono; SARATOGA SPRINGS, New York!

We feel the brethren will love this up-state New York area; the magnificently wooded part of New York's lake country. There are unlimited outdoor recreational facilities; fishing, swimming, boating, water skiing, hiking and others, as well as very interesting cultural, historical and family attractions. Accommodations in this area are widely varied, so they suit any financial tastes. In some ways, the area is not unlike the Poconos, for it is in the hardwoods forest, with blazing fall colors, with mountain-top vistas, the beauty of serene lakes, and many fine restaurants. All this, and it is only around three to four hours by car (AMTRAK also available) from New York City, and four or five hours away from Boston or Montreal!

Out on the Pacific Coast, we have been forced to lose Squaw Valley for this year, and perhaps two or more years in the future. (You probably heard in the news of the disastrous accident aboard one of the big trams taking skiers up the slopes. These big cable cars are the identical ones that have conveyed hundreds and hundreds of Church brethren and their children to the soaring heights overlooking Blythe Arena. And the car involved in the accident was making its last trip of the season when the accident occurred! That means the next trip that car would have made, had we been attending the Feast there this year, would have been during the Feast of Tabernacles, loaded with our own people!)

As a result, we have settled on FRESNO, California. A recent article in the Worldwide News has described, in copy and pictures, the many attractions of this centrally-located city in California's rich San Joaquin Valley. Brethren assigned to this Feast site will be surprised at the many beautiful attractions of the area. It's only a matter of an hour's drive to see the giant sequoias; some of the world's oldest living things; the gigantic trees of the Sierras. General Sherman, the largest, must have been a little sapling only a few years after Noah's flood! Its trunk is about 36 feet through, and the first limb is about six feet

through! There is enough board feet of lumber in the General Sherman tree to construct 40 five-room homes! The beautiful Yosemite National Park is only about an hour and forty-five minutes away. Much nearer, of course, are several lakes with their resorts and outdoor facilities.

We are including with this letter your Festival Application. Please begin thinking about your Festival plans immediately, and return the appropriate forms as soon as possible! This will help greatly in allowing our work load (it is immense) to be spread out over the summer months, rather than the last-minute logjam of thousands of late applications.

Here are some important items to remember:

- 1) HAWAII is very limited in size, and the auditorium is so small that it is quite possible any people who try to "make their own arrangements" will be unable to attend any services! We will have to issue "auditorium passes" this year to insure those who transfer to Hawaii through the Festival Office will have seating!
- 2) PASADENA IS NOT A FESTIVAL SITE this year. Only a skeleton crew of those absolutely required employees will be in Pasadena, and we will, as in past years, make sure they attend at least half of the Feast in either Fresno or Tucson.
- 3) TWO "ASL" FEAST SITES this year for the deaf! American Sign Language will be present at both Seattle, Washington and at Norfolk, Virginia. There will be interpreting of services, captioned movies, and other activities. For additional information, write to Educational Services for the Handicapped in Pasadena.

Here's what you need to do to make this the best Feast ever! First, be sure to plan carefully, and after you have considered all aspects of your Festival plans, send in the forms soon.

Secondly, please do not make your "own arrangements" at ANY site; but cooperate with the Festival Office by letting them know of any problems or inconsistencies you encounter. If we are not using an establishment you think we could, give your Festival Adviser the necessary details!

Remember, there will be many hundreds who cannot attend the Feast without help! If you have any extra Festival Tithe you can send in now to help others -- it will be a tremendous blessing for hundreds of your poorer brethren, particularly many widows with children, who could not otherwise attend. HELP these people by being generous, if you can!

Also, while I'm on the subject, please send in your "tithe of the tithe" as soon as possible! Remember, your Festival Tithe is FOR YOU! We are to spend it on the "booths" or temporary dwelling places during God's Festivals -- and on food and drink and the things that make the Feast so enjoyable! But we must also rent, collectively, many large auditoriums, all over the world! We should not have to take FIRST COMMISSION MONEY out of the Work, to spend on these Festival costs! Many years ago, God inspired us to see that it would be no major inconvenience on God's people if they sent in a "tithe" or ten percent of their Festival Tithe, to defray these large costs! It has been an excellent system, God has blessed it, and His people as a result! Please send in your "tithe of the tithe" as soon as you are able -- the Festival Office is already in the process of paying out checks for down payments, rentals, and the like, as well as the required maintenance and payments for our own Church-owned sites in Big Sandy, Lake of the Ozarks, Wisconsin Dells and Mt. Pocono (though damaged, it still requires maintenance).

The Feast is a great highlight of the year -- and this year, we will have the opportunity of being in FIVE BRAND NEW FESTIVAL SITES! These include SEATTLE, Washington; FRESNO, California; SARATOGA SPRINGS, New York; NORFOLK, Virginia, and SAVANNAH, Georgia!

This means five new areas, including BIG CITIES, will be seeing the examples of the brethren of the Worldwide Church of God for the first time! Brethren, in the past, we have compiled a tremendous record of the finest kind among the people in the areas where we have observed the Feast.

When we bring some six to ten thousand brethren into an area for eight whole days, the impact on the region is unprecedented! Our Festival Office officials have, of course, already met, and spent many hours with city officials, convention bureau managers, and leaders in the motel, hotel and restaurant associations, Presidents of the local Chambers of Commerce, and the like. Our brochure ad sales will feature dozens of resorts, restaurants, recreational centers, etc., and each of these businesses will have already been contacted. Therefore, the whole city is geared to EXPECTANCY just prior to the Feast!

"What kind of people are these?" "What do they believe?" "What is the 'Feast of Tabernacles'?" "How will they treat my establishment?" "What about their children and their teenagers -- will they be rowdy?" "Are they heavy drinkers?" These and dozens of other questions will be running through thousands of minds. YOU BRETHREN will be giving the answers, by your example, for a full eight days! Here, then, is an opportunity to really be a LIGHT to this world by LIVING the very picture of the Millennium, the KINGDOM OF GOD in action on this earth, as a witness to these people! You can, by your own personal example during the Feast, be used of God as a powerful witness that may help lead others into the very truth of God, and a way of ESCAPE from the terrible times ahead!

THINK about that, as a very real responsibility!

Please complete and send in your forms as soon as possible! THANK you again, brethren in Christ, for your loyalty, your concern, your love and your PRAYERS!

With much love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong

P.S. Please note that we are setting June 15 as the new deadline for returning your applications. This supercedes the June 1 date mentioned in the FESTIVAL PREVIEW.