

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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PRESIDENT and PASTOR

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Dear Brethren in God's Church:

AT LAST! And this time IT'S OFFICIAL!

The ground breaking ceremony for construction of the superb HOUSE FOR GOD at His present earthly Headquarters, here on the Pasadena campus, is set definitely for Friday, January 14th next, 1972! That will be the second day of the annual Ministers' Conference!

We have had to be patient. We had been hoping to build this magnificent edifice ever since 1963. But always some other building had become so imperatively necessary that it had to be given priority. Now God has rewarded our patience!

Last January 21, I wrote our members that we hoped to break ground for the auditorium by July. But there were a number of "IF's" -- and then the nation's dollar crisis delayed things.

There is another reason why we could not proceed until now. We did not have the financing for it. The general contractors must be paid progress payments weekly or monthly, so they will be PAID IN FULL upon completion, and before they turn it over to us for our use. Many of you have been faithful in sending in the special monthly offerings for the BUILDING FUND, although many have been slacking off the past few months. We have been setting aside these special offerings, as they have accumulated, and now have this money on hand. And within the past week our mortgage bankers have finally succeeded in obtaining long-term insurance company loans for the balance.

This auditorium will be positively breath-taking in beauty. Possibly it will be THE FINEST -- though far from largest -- building in California. Some architects and engineers have even said possibly the finest in America, but that I doubt. It will not remotely compare with the TEMPLE which God allowed King Solomon to build at Jerusalem. This, of course, is NOT a Temple, but will be known by the public as the 1300-seat auditorium of Ambassador College -- though to us in God's Church it will be GOD'S HOUSE. God's TEMPLE can only be built in Jerusalem, and probably not until after Christ's return in Power and Glory.

This auditorium will serve the dual purposes of providing the auditorium for college functions -- the weekly forums and assemblies and other special events -- and also the meeting place where God's Headquarters Church will meet with Him on the Sabbaths. Actually, it will not be large enough to accommodate even all of the local members, who now number around 3,000. We are having to hold two services every Sabbath, and often the overflow must listen in via loudspeaker at the Student Center.

But this auditorium will be a superbly fine edifice -- by far the finest building on the campus. Since we in God's Church look forward to it as GOD'S HOUSE, to honor HIM, we simply could not have cheapened it to reduce the cost and to have been able to build it sooner.

Our God has simply LAVISHED every spiritual blessing upon us, His own people -- and many, many material blessings also. I'm sure that we will now want to make EXTRA sacrifice that HE may be honored by this beautiful edifice where He will meet with us -- for our fellowship is with our heavenly Father and with His Son Jesus Christ! (I John 1:3.)

I have prayed through these years about this auditorium. But I have NOT begged and pleaded with God to let me build it. Instead, I have asked Him to reveal HIS WILL in the matter: IF He wants it built I have asked Him to make it possible and supply the money. And if He did not, I have always said, "Thy will be done" -- I have always been perfectly willing to give it up. Now that He has supplied the funds, I feel it has God's blessing!

The contract has been let, and we are now bound. To pay off the balance of this financing, we have to meet payments of

\$200,000 per month for the next few years. Brethren, after my last January letter, your SPECIAL BUILDING FUND offerings did equal that. Now, a year later, God has added a few thousand additional members, so we ought to be able to do much MORE than that.

But, if, in so doing, you took tithes and other REGULAR offerings and earmarked them for this BUILDING FUND, the regular Work would suffer, and the whole Work could be destroyed. So be sure that offerings sent for the building fund are SPECIAL, over and above those for THE WORK.

Now here's MORE GOOD NEWS!

We are hopeful that we may soon begin a program of building our own local church buildings -- anywhere from one to a dozen at a time. We have already been doing quite a bit of research and fact-finding toward this project.

We are even giving much thought to whether it might be possible to start additional IMPERIAL SCHOOLS at some of these local church centers. Now of course we can't use some form of magic and produce all this, at all churches at once. But I will say that here at Headquarters our hearts do go out to you Brethren all over the world, having your children in the public schools, and the evils they are there exposed to. And also the poor conditions some of you have to put up with in hired halls.

WE ARE VERY MINDFUL OF ALL THESE THINGS. But we know you realize it cannot all be done at once. We are moving as fast as God makes possible.

Many such things can be done ONLY if we have larger increases in income for the Work. For 35 years, the income for the Work increased by approximately 30% every year over the year before. The past three years the increase has been only around 10% -- and the rising cost of things eats up most of that. It's true, we have a comparatively modest amount of NECESSARY cash reserve -- the Work is in excellent financial condition. But if we dipped into those reserves the Work would STOP. Mr. Portune explained it like he has a big barrel, and as if we use water for money. At the bottom of the barrel are several small holes, and other holes up along the sides. Each of those holes represents a department or phase of the Work. One would represent the radio station bills, another the TV stations, another the salaries of the many hundreds employed in the Work, another the paper bills for The PLAIN TRUTH and other magazines. The water in the barrel represents our cash reserves. If he does not have as much coming in as is draining out all those holes, to keep the barrel filled to the top, then as the reserve supply lowers, there would be nothing pouring out the holes near the top. Those phases of the Work would STOP. And as the water would drain down near the bottom, more and more phases of the Work would have to STOP. The colleges would close -- we could train no more people for their part in the Work. We would go off the air, The PLAIN TRUTH would stop, your local ministers would have to go get jobs else- where. I think this illustrates the point.

During those years when we were getting in a 30% increase each year, we did not have as much in reserves -- but then the Work was much smaller -- YET, WE COULD LAUNCH OUT ON MORE NEW THINGS TO BUILD THE WORK. We just can't do that, now, UNLESS or UNTIL the regular day-to-day and week-to-week INCOME increases back to 20% or 30%.

IF you are able to increase the amount you send in for the Work by that much, you can see how much it would mean to God's Work. Of course we here understand most of you can't.

I would estimate that this beautiful auditorium would take about two years to complete. It seems God has put His endorsement on it, and I am GRATEFUL, beyond words to express!

Your STATEMENT OF INTENTION is enclosed. Remember, it does not bind you. IF, for some reason, you are not able to meet it every month, or even if forced to discontinue, you are free to do so. It is not a pledge or an oath or any such thing -- just a statement of INTENTION, as you now estimate you will be able. But if you can INCREASE what you have put in this fund in the past, please do so. Remember, all tithes and offerings are income tax deductible.

God has answered our prayers in this and shown us His will. How much will we now do for HIM?

With much love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong