

RADIO CHURCH OF GOD

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C. WAYNE COLE, Minister

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Dear Brethren in God's Church:

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, the LIVING, ACTIVE HEAD of the true church of God! Once again we are approaching the annual observance of the Feast of Tabernacles. We in the ministry and the office of God's Work in Australia are beginning to be really excited and thrilled in anticipation of observing this yearly festival.

Before giving details and specific instructions regarding this year's festival, I've some really tremendous and thrilling news to give to you. Be sure you read every word of this letter and I'm confident you will be inspired as I am!

Brethren, in this age of calloused, unemotional indifference and LETHARGY are you praying and striving for continual and close contact with your Creator God? Today we live in an ungrateful world -- are you guilty of what has been considered the most common of all sins, that of INGRATITUDE? If you are not continually thankful to your Creator for every blessing you receive whether material or spiritual -- for the unequaled and undeserved privilege of having a part in the Great Work of God and for the way God has blessed His Work with phenomenal growth in this era, then YOU ARE GUILTY of being UNTHANKFUL. We all have so much for which we need to go to God in sincere heartfelt thanks -- will you remember to always do so!

As I think by now most, if not all, of you realise, God has revealed that we should build a Tabernacle in Australia for the observance of His Festival of Tabernacles! Work is right now going FULL-SPEED AHEAD to have construction sufficiently completed, enabling us to use the Tabernacle for this rapidly approaching Festival. I'm confident that with continued intervention and favour from God we will be ready! However, will you remember to pray for God's direction and guidance in this project?

I want to go back now and give you a little of the history of how this building project all started.

Let me first remind you that GOD MUST PLACE HIS NAME in the location where His Feasts are to be held! It is entirely God's RIGHT and PREROGATIVE to choose where His people will meet and worship Him (Deut. 12:5-7; 16:16)...God does not leave this important decision for man to determine! Brethren, although we have met for the past three years in the Blackheath Community Centre, I did not choose Blackheath as the site for the Festival of Tabernacles and neither did Mr. Gerald D. Waterhouse!! God Almighty REVEALED that it was HIS Will for His people to meet in this BEAUTIFUL and INSPIRING location!

Many of you early members of the Church will recall how God led Mr. Waterhouse to the Australian Institute of Builders in Sydney just prior to the PASSOVER in 1960. For some weeks, before God had made His Will known, Mr. Waterhouse searched diligently for a hall adequate for the Church's needs, without success. EVERY DOOR SEEMED CLOSED! Then, right at the "eleventh hour," God marvellously opened up this fine hall, which can actually be SEEN from our 6th floor office suite in the M.L.C. Building at North Sydney! God kept His name on this hall for all His Festivals during 1960, including the Festival of Tabernacles when 103 people gathered in obedience to God's command.

However, for the Feast of Tabernacles in 1961 God changed locations in a very interesting manner. In mid-1961, it appeared that an Ambassador College might be established in Australia and some considerable searching was done, seeking a suitable property to purchase. During this search, God led Mr. Waterhouse to Blackheath, situated amidst the magnificent beauty and grandeur of the rugged Blue Mountains. Mr. Waterhouse was quickly able to determine that God HAD CHOSEN the Community Centre, in Blackheath, as the site for the Feast of Tabernacles, 1961!! A very friendly and co-operative caterer was found, who was willing to handle the important task of food preparation for God's Festival. Great favour was extended to God's people in healing, with the weather, accommodations, contact with local people, etc.! Yes;

Brethren, the Almighty was CONFIRMING WITH SIGNS that this was indeed the area where HE had placed His name! As Jesus promised, the signs FOLLOWED the believers! (Mark 16:17). That year -- 1961 -- a total of 170 persons assembled to learn more of the great plan and purpose God is working out here below! This was a MOMENTOUS occasion for God's Church in Australia!

The following year -- 1962 -- we returned once again to Blackheath, as it was obvious that this was where God had placed His name. A total of 330 persons convened at the Community Centre in 1962, almost doubling the number who attended the previous year.

However, the rapid growth being granted to the Church of God made it very evident that, because of large numbers attending the Festival, it would soon become impossible to use the limited facilities available at the Community Centre. With an anticipated attendance record of over 500 for the 1963 Feast, it was already realised that we would not find it easy using only the Community Centre. Therefore, a search was made in the Blackheath area for another hall which could be used in addition to the Community Centre, perhaps as a dining room.

The search led us to the vacant theatre at Blackheath. However, certain undesirable aspects did not make this a feasible proposition at that time. From there, the search led to Katoomba, and two theatres offered for sale -- for a song! Or, if desired the theatres could have been hired. However, it was obvious that this was NOT the answer to our problem!

By the time the Festival came around in the spring of 1963 we had been given an INCREASE of 245 over 1962, making a total 575 persons present! Despite the increased problems associated with seating and feeding this larger number, God INSPIRED the organization of the Feast, so that through more careful planning, and more efficient use of the available space, we were able to conduct the entire Festival with a minimum of discomfort to the Brethren -- still using the Blackheath Community Centre ONLY.

However, it was now very clear that URGENT action would have to be taken to find more extensive facilities than those available at the Community Centre! If the rate of increase established over the past few years continued, it was evident that we could expect possibly 950 to 1000 persons for the Festival in 1964 -- THIS YEAR!!

Therefore, following the Feast last year, another search was undertaken for an alternative site to the Blackheath Community Centre. Once again, we gave consideration to the Blackheath Theatre, from both purchasing and hiring points of view. Still, it did not look feasible due to size and cost of alteration.

From there, an exhaustive survey was undertaken, seeking out every hall which might be considered a possibility. Tours were conducted to every area of New South Wales which offered prospects of hope! We searched as far south as Albury, on the Victorian border! We went west to the very "edge of civilization," without success! We looked at Police Citizens Boys Clubs, Town Halls, Theatres, Community Centres, Show Pavilions, an abandoned RAAF Base, Lodges and Holiday Camps offering tent or marquee space! However, NOTHING WHATSOEVER OPENED UP!! The situation was beginning to look critical!

We once again returned to the vacant Blackheath Theatre. Perhaps God intended us to convert this empty shell into a suitable meeting hall after all! We went so far as to have a Consulting Engineer inspect the theatre and give us a professional opinion on the soundness of the basic structure, the advisability of enlarging, etc. This alerted us to be cautious and revealed that such a project would be costly. However, at this time we were told that the owner had given an option on the theatre to the RSL Club! This "door" had been effectively CLOSED by Christ! Weeks were passing, and nothing more effective was being accomplished other than the systematic elimination of all our prospects! So far, GOD HAD NOT REVEALED that He had REMOVED His Name from Blackheath! This is a point I want you to understand Brethren! As God had already placed His Name upon this area, until He showed conclusively that His Name HAD BEEN REMOVED, BLACKHEATH REMAINED THE SITE for the observance of the Festival of Tabernacles!!

Nevertheless, HOW could this be accomplished? Obviously, the Community Centre Hall alone could not possibly cope with our expected attendance for 1964. Yet, EVERY OTHER DOOR SEEMED FIRMLY CLOSED! We decided to throw all the agents in the Blackheath-Katoomba area into the search. We had nothing definite in mind, but wanted to see what a thorough search would turn up.

About this time we began to seriously consider building our own property! I

myself had been opposed to this at first! I felt CONFIDENT that God would open up a hall with adequate facilities, in an area where sufficient accommodation for 1000 people was also available. Yet, God simply did not open such a hall, and as weeks turned into months, the need to find a definite site became acute!

The idea of building our own Tabernacle was beginning to fix itself more firmly in our minds. The more we prayed over and considered the entire matter, the more it appeared we had no alternative other than to build. We had a member of God's Church in Sydney, who is an architect, prepare a sketch of a proposed Tabernacle building. I took this sketch with me to the ministerial conference in January this year to discuss the entire problem of a Festival location and to seek counsel and advice from Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong and other of God's ministers.

During a private conference with Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, the entire situation revealing our problem was condensed and explained. The architectural sketch was discussed and Mr. Armstrong, speaking as God's servant, approved in principle the project. He advised on matters of building dimensions, size of property, locations, etc. This was an EXCITING development, Brethren! God was revealing HIS WILL!! He was showing that the TIME HAD ARRIVED for HIS PEOPLE in Australia to BUILD A TABER- NACLE where they could assemble to WORSHIP HIM on HIS HOLY DAYS! Though I had originally had some reluctance to the idea of building, I returned from Pasadena fired with enthusiasm and a strong desire to find the block upon which God had placed His Name for this very important project! The "DOOR" had now been thrown WIDE OPEN!

Once again we embarked on a search, this time in real earnest -- not for a building suitable for our needs but for a site suitable upon which to build! We were now FULLY PERSUADED that it DEFINITELY was GOD'S WILL to build the Tabernacle!

Our enquiries through the various real estate agents began to bear fruit! A number of properties, all in the Blackheath-Katoomba area, looked like opening up to us! They ranged from 12 acres to 40 acres in size, and a few of them seemed very prospective. The first property we looked at was a 40-acre block, formerly the site of Osborne Ladies College in Blackheath. From this property it is possible to obtain truly glorious views of a great panorama of the rugged and awe-inspiring beauty of the lovely Kanimbla Valley. The old college building which at one time was very large and well constructed, had been destroyed by fire some months previously. On the grounds which were once well maintained are many beautiful trees, including cedars, elms and oaks. It was immediately evident that here was a property that supplied our every need!

Arrangements were made to contact the owner, a lady who lived somewhere in the Sydney suburb of Kirribilli. Mr. Trevor M. Higgins was assigned the task of tracking her down which he managed to do in a matter of days. Due to a set of circumstances not necessary to mention here, it appeared she was not particularly interested in selling the property. However, God gave us favour in her eyes to the extent that she later confided to Mr. Higgins that, if she did sell the property, she would like to see the Church of God purchase it! When the time came to try and fix a reasonable price, we found she was thinking in terms of a sum which seemed unrealistic to us. In view of this we decided to look further into one or two of the other properties which still appeared prospective.

One of these alternate sites was a piece of property in Nellie's Glen, located near Katoomba. This was also in a beautiful setting. The property itself consisted of 40 acres, and looked out over the Megalong Valley. We could have purchased this ground for the very reasonable sum of £1500. However, because of its rather remote locality, though actually near Katoomba, we would have had to pay, on top of the purchase price, another £17,000 to £22,000 (this was a conservative estimate) for road works and bringing in sewerage, water and electrical services! This would have involved an expenditure of from £20,500 to £25,500 BEFORE TURNING THE FIRST SHOVELFUL OF SOIL for the Tabernacle foundations! Though the purchase price for the 40-acre block at Osborne Ladies' College was much higher, we would not be confronted with any of the "extras" associated with the Nellie's Glen property, such as sewerage, water, electricity and a road. Also, we would be able to salvage a good deal of material from the still-remaining brick shell of the old college building.

There was another drawback to the Nellie's Glen property. It had a sheer drop of 1000 feet on the point of the property overlooking the Megalong Valley. This would have had to be fenced as it would have otherwise constituted an intolerable danger to the many children present during God's Festivals. It became very obvious that this was NOT the property upon which God had placed His Name!

We had already taken up the matter of a suitable building site with the Blue Mountains City Council which was highly desirous of our purchasing property in the council area. They offered many helpful suggestions, demonstrating once again GOD'S

GREAT POWER in MOVING the minds of men to give favour to His chosen servants! At Council suggestion, other properties were viewed. In most instances however, we were confronted with the same problem as at Nellie's Glen! Related costs were prohibitive, making the project totally unfeasible.

Once again the Council was approached, this time with reference to the possibility of leasing to us a 25-acre site on the now disused Blackheath aerodrome. To this they readily agreed, and a very attractive site was selected. The annual rental was fixed at £500, considered a reasonable figure, for a long term lease. There did not appear -- at that stage -- to be any serious objection to our leasing this block. The council was willing to extend sewerage facilities, the water line, etc., to the property. However, it was here that we once again were confronted with our major obstacle! When an accurate appraisal was made and an estimate was supplied by the council regarding our share of the costs for these most necessary facilities, we found we would be presented with an account for £7000 for the SEWERAGE ALONE! This DID NOT INCLUDE the necessary road-works, water and electrical costs. The result would have been that we would virtually be PAYING FOR THE LAND, and yet STILL NOT OWNING IT! This proposition was also ruled out of the question. It was evident that God Almighty had NOT opened this door!

We turned our attention once again to the first property we had considered, The Osborne Ladies College. Of all the properties available which could prove satisfactory, this was the ONLY ONE which was still open to us, at what was, by comparison, a reasonable figure!

At this stage it was necessary to make further contact with the owner of the "college property" and establish her willingness to sell as well as the exact price. When Mr. Higgins called on her (after making several unfruitful trips to her home) he found her in the company of two agents representing a large Real Estate and Land Development Company! Believing we had lost interest in purchasing the property, she was about to sign an agreement giving this company a short option on the property, during which time they were to carry out a survey to establish the value to them as a site for sub-division. If the company so decided they could exercise the option at the end of the period by purchasing the property. This was a serious development! Immediately, on the spot, Mr. Higgins persuaded the owner to step aside and he convinced her to delay signing the agreement for twenty-four hours during which time we would make our decision whether or not we would buy her property. This gave me time to make a telephone call (which I had actually planned some days previously) to Mr. Ted Armstrong in Pasadena, California, to discuss the matter.

On Friday morning, April 17, Mr. Ted Armstrong and I spoke for some considerable time. We discussed the various properties which we had investigated with all the pertinent and relevant points of the entire experience explained. Mr. Armstrong explained that it appeared obvious that God had made the decision for us by closing all other doors and opening this one WIDE OPEN for us. Permission was granted for us to go ahead and sign the purchase contract.

Immediately, that very day, we drove to Blackheath to personally pick up copies of the contract from the agent handling the sale. These contracts were then placed in the hands of our respective solicitors. However, at the last moment, a further hindrance was placed in the way of our completing the sale. You will recall that earlier, I explained that the old college building had been destroyed by fire. Well, the insurance company was holding back payment of the amount for which the building had been insured because of certain suspicious circumstances. The solicitor representing the owner in her insurance claim had advised her not to sign the contract of sale until she had received the insurance settlement.

This constituted a serious threat to the entire programme! Time was slipping away fast! Our solicitor informed us that if the insurance company got "wind" of the pending sale of the property, it was conceivable they would withhold payment for an indefinite period in the hope that the owner would go through with the sale and then the company could easily avoid any settlement. Brethren, WE SIMPLY COULD NOT AFFORD TO WAIT if we were to start construction and be ready for this coming Festival! Yet, we, OF OURSELVES, were POWERLESS TO DO ANYTHING! We had already done as much as we were able to do. The only thing we could do was put the matter in God's hands and wait for His intervention!

Let it suffice to say here that God did intervene. I will not go into all the details in this letter, but rather make a long story short by simply saying that though there were some delays and anxious moments, we were informed a few days later by our solicitor that the Insurance Company had settled and that the Contracts of Sale had been exchanged. We were now free to begin making actual contracts with firms that would be supplying and erecting building materials. Excavation and general preparation for construction began virtually immediately.

Brethren, this is now where you come into the picture! As I said before, God has given us a tremendous privilege, a GREAT blessing! He is affording us the wonderful opportunity to participate in the building of His Tabernacle in Australia! This is an opportunity which others, called later in this Work, WILL NOT HAVE! Just as we, today, cannot participate in the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, or the Temple at Jerusalem, so too, those who come into the knowledge of God's Truth in the years to come will not have the marvelous blessing available to you now in helping to build this Tabernacle! A building project of this size costs money... many thousands of pounds of money!

This is a CHALLENGE to all in the Work of God in this part of the world! We have gone right ahead in the building of this Tabernacle with arrangements made at our bank to borrow money as needed to complete the project. However, the funds required for this building cannot come from the regular tithes and offerings sent in for use in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Special property and building offerings and extra second tithe must be used to finance this Tabernacle project.

In accordance with the example set at God's headquarters in Pasadena, California we have opened a special PROPERTY FUND in the office here in North Sydney. Your special and generous offerings for this fund are needed NOW! I would like for you to read with me in Exodus 25:1-2 of God's command to Moses and to the children of Israel concerning the building of His Tabernacle in the wilderness: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that GIVETH IT WILLINGLY with his heart ye shall take my offering....And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (vs. 8).

Those people were our very ancestors! Notice how they responded to God's command: "And all the wise men...spake unto Moses, saying, the people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much" (Exodus 36:4-7).

Brethren, CAN YOU IMAGINE THAT...the people actually had to be restrained from contributing anything more for the building of the Tabernacle. I sincerely hope we, today, will "stir up the gift that God has given us" and be filled with JOY that we are being allowed the privilege of building God a Tabernacle here in this area of the world! I know that those of us in God's service here at Sydney are REALLY elated over this project.

So, Brethren, as God's minister, I call upon all of you to stir up your hearts and GIVE, cheerfully and willingly as you are able! Mark your special offerings for the Tabernacle "Property Fund." And remember since this Tabernacle is for the observance of God's Holy Days, it is perfectly right and proper for you to contribute any excess second tithe you have to this fund. If any of you have any extra second tithe or if you can estimate your needs for this coming Feast of Tabernacles and determine that you have a few shillings or several pounds more than you will require then be sure to send it in immediately!

I want to exhort you not to be indifferent nor lethargic towards this great project. Let us not neglect this inspiring commission and fail to do our part in building this Tabernacle for our Creator God in heaven!

Now, I want to come to some details and specific instructions for this coming Festival which is very rapidly approaching.

We will once again be meeting in the inspiring and beautiful Blue Mountains, but not in the Blackheath Community Centre. This year we will be meeting in GOD'S OWN TABERNACLE IN BLACKHEATH! The address of the Church grounds is: Wariga Street, Blackheath. I will include a simple diagram to assist you in locating the property with this letter. The first meeting of the Feast this year will be held at 7:30 P.M. Sunday, September 20th. Meetings will ~~continue~~ continue twice daily throughout the Festival which ends on Monday, September 28th. To properly obey the command to observe this Festival, we are to be present each day and not just on the first and last days which are annual Sabbaths. Also, Brethren, the first service, in the evening of Sunday, September 20th is a part of the Festival. You should all plan to arrive in Blackheath in time to settle in and be present for this service. Some have in past years planned to arrive late and first attend a service on the morning of the first Holy Day. This should happen only in the case of an emergency, otherwise do plan to attend the first important orienting service.

All of you who attended last year will remember the many ways in which God blessed those who obeyed Him in being present for the Feast of Tabernacles! This

year, if each person present does his part, I'm sure we shall have an even greater Feast!

The Feast of Tabernacles pictures, in God's GREAT PLAN, the time soon to begin when this earth will really and truly learn the ways of peace and happiness! Yes, this pictures the coming great harvest during the 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ when God is going to set aright the woeful and chaotic conditions of this earth. To make this Festival accurately picture this coming time of "REST," we must all plan and work together in making this a time of love and harmony.

Remember, the annual Holy Days are commanded by God and in no place throughout the Bible is there the slightest shred of evidence that these days are not to be observed by Christians today. No, to the contrary, Jesus Christ kept these days and set the example for us to do the same! The Apostle Paul observed the annual Sabbaths and taught Gentiles to do so. Yes, the Bible makes it abundantly clear that True Christians today will observe the annual Holy Days and that they will be observed during the World Tomorrow when Jesus Christ establishes the Government of God on this earth!

Let me exhort you to attend this wonderful Festival. Put God first in your lives, TRUSTING Him to provide your physical needs. Don't allow the "cares of this world" and the desire for material things to come between you and your Creator! Remember that God is unchangeable! He is no respecter of persons! You can be sure that God will not bless one person for attending the Feast and not bless another for sincerely and humbly obeying the same commandment! God NEVER commands us to do something which is impossible to do...seek Him and His divine intervention to enable you to attend this coming Feast of Tabernacles.

REGISTRATION:

Enclosed in this letter you will find a registration card. It is extremely important that you CLEARLY fill out this card and return it to us at the earliest possible moment. Fill out this card and return it whether or not you are going to be able to attend the Feast this year. By this means of a pre-registration only are we able to have an accurate determination of the number of people who will be attending the Feast enabling us to make thorough final plans. And, PLEASE DO BE COMPLETE in filling out your card. In past years we have had some cards only partially completed rendering them nearly useless to us.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Again this year we are asking that those who will be attending the Feast make their own arrangements and plans for lodging. We are not going to make bookings through the office of The Radio Church of God and then assign units to those attending. To facilitate your lodging arrangements we are enclosing with this letter a list of motels, hotels, inns, lodges, etc., for your information. You may have to write to more than one of these establishments before finding the place suitable for your needs. Also, some of these places may be booked out by this time so you should write for your bookings immediately if you have not already done so. Also, to assist you in any way possible we have set up a department in the office to handle various Festival arrangements. Mr. Trevor Higgins is in charge of this department and he has assured me that he is most willing to help any of you in any problem you may have relevant to the Feast of Tabernacles. So, if you meet any complications with regard to lodging, travel, etc., please feel free to write to us.

MEALS:

In building the Tabernacle we have included a large and well-equipped kitchen for the preparation of meals. In past years we have had a local caterer supply us with meals but this year we will hire a Chef and kitchen staff to work our own kitchen and meals will be prepared in God's Tabernacle. However, the preparation of meals at the Tabernacle will include only the noon and evening meals. You will be individually responsible for your breakfasts, either at your respective lodging or at a local restaurant. Brethren, we have gone to some considerable expense to equip this kitchen and we need to plan the number of meals we will be serving. For this reason, we are asking, AND THIS IS IMPORTANT, that all who attend the Feast plan to eat the noon and evening meals at the Tabernacle. This is also a part of the Feast. As Brethren together we are picturing the time of the harmonious 1000-year reign. As much as possible we should spend our time together in the meetings, in personal and enjoyable fellowship and also at meal times. This year we are simply going to charge a flat rate for adults and children from 4 years old through 10 years of age. Cost of meals will be: Adults: £8:0:0 per person for the entire Festival. Children (4-10 years): £4:0:0 per child for the entire Festival. There will be no charge for children under 4 years of age. Also, prepared baby food will be available upon request at cost to us.

One other point I want to mention in this letter is in regard to the weekly Sabbath service just prior to the Feast of Tabernacles. Since the Feast begins on Sunday night this year, we need to plan just a little more with respect to travel and still properly observe the weekly Sabbath of September 19th. I want to encourage as many of you as can do so to arrange to be in Sydney for the observance of that weekly Sabbath. We have made no definite plans yet as to the location of services on Sabbath, September 19th and any such plans would be greatly affected by the numbers of you who will be present. I want all of you to include a short note when returning your registration card informing us whether or not you plan to be in Sydney or Blackheath in time to observe the Sabbath of September 19th. If enough of you will be present we may hold services on this Sabbath in the Tabernacle in Blackheath as well as in Sydney as usual. Please be sure to mention your plans in this regard and do HURRY as time is running out. I will send out a short letter giving final details about this as soon as I have your returned information.

Now, finally, Brethren---much "spiritual meat" will be given in many sermons and sermonettes during this Feast of Tabernacles. You need this "meat in due season." So, PLAN TO ATTEND! If for some uncontrollable reason you are not able to attend this year---go to Almighty God in solemn and zealous repentance and prayer and then diligently begin to prepare for next year.

Before closing I want to mention that other activities are planned. Games and vigorous outdoor exercises for the children and for adults, walks through the delightful bush country, a fun-show put on by members of the Church to provide healthy and proper laughter and other activities are planned to make this truly a well-balanced Festival.

We will look forward to seeing you at the coming Feast and I sincerely trust God will continue to guide, bless and inspire all of you as you submit your lives in total surrender to Him!

ring office re. 18th or 20th

With love in Jesus' name,



C. Wayne Cole

