

Holy places or holy faces

By John Halford

Our church headquarters finally moved from the location that had been home base for nearly 60 years. It is rather sad in some ways, although most of the people I know who work at HQ were ready to move. Those acres of California that used to be Ambassador College will always have a special significance—particularly to those of us who went to college there.

Some people felt it was terribly wrong to sell what they considered a “holy place.” Although the church

Tabernacle in the wilderness and later the Temple in Jerusalem. In both cases, when they were dedicated, fire came down from heaven. It was a sign that God was “moving in” (Leviticus 14:19-20; 1 Kings 8:10-11).

But after Jesus’ death and resurrection, everything changed. It was time for a new holy place. So on the day of Pentecost, the fire bypassed the temple, and landed instead in the upper room of an ordinary house. But it did not stop there. The house was not to be the new holy place. The fire divided, and individual tongues of flame rested on the



The Hall of Administration, 300 W. Green St. in Pasadena, CA, the location of Worldwide Church of God offices from 1969 to April 21, 2006.

campus may have a traditional and a nostalgic significance, it was not a “holy” place. Neither is the new church office building, or any building we may occupy temporarily.

We can dedicate such buildings to God, and ask him to use them for holy purposes. But that is not the same as making them holy. Only God can do that, and he’s made it quite plain what he considers “holy.”

What is God’s sign that a place is holy? In the Old Testament, God consecrated (or made holy) the

heads of the first church members gathered there.

The meaning of this miracle was quite clear to those who understood. No longer was a building to be the holy place—people were. “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” wrote the apostle Paul to the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 3:16-17).

Buildings come and go, and eventually crumble. But God dwells in and with the people he has called to eternal life.

Celebrations

Seaside, OR: Prayers and planning are well under way for our celebration of Christ. This year will be our final celebration in Seaside, and it will be special. We are preparing “A Christ-centered, family-oriented weekend.” This year’s celebration will begin on Friday evening, Oct. 20, and will conclude after the morning worship service on Sunday, Oct. 23.

A professional ventriloquist will lead Children’s Church. His team will present the gospel of Jesus Christ in an exciting and clear style for children. Our own children’s ministry team is preparing additional Christ-centered activities for our children.

Teens are invited to “YouthSpace.com.” Many of you know that MySpace.com is an interactive Internet website where many young people hang out and connect with one another. “YouthSpace.com” will be an interactive time for teens attending Seaside. SEP Washington staff will prepare an afternoon of activities. For more information see www.wcg.org/events/seaside2006.htm

Summer festival in Italy: Aug. 20-27, Lago Maggiore, Italy. Guests include John Adams, Donat Picard, and Ross Jutsum. For more information, see www.wcg.org/events or contact Joseph Caristi, 94 Belcher Rd., Blairstown, NJ, 07825, (908) 362-7650.

Majorca Island, Spain: With the Mediterranean at your feet, Sun Club Eldorado offers us an unbeatable range of services. Sermons will be in English, Sept. 30 to Oct. 8. For information, write to Pedro Rufian; Real, 26; 28610 Villamanta, (Madrid); Spain. Or see www.wcg.org/events

Estoril, Portugal: Sept. 16-23. Estoril is in one of Europe’s most beautiful coastlines—the Portuguese Riviera, near Lisbon. Services will be in English and Portuguese. For more information, check www.idm.pt or send e-mail to festival2006@idm.pt