

*Due to questions raised, we provide the following background and update to our unity initiative:*

## **BACKGROUND & UPDATE ON THE CALL TO UNITY & REVIVAL**

### The Background to the Call to Unity & Revival

For over a year, the elders and regional evangelists here in Los Angeles have been approached by different brothers, both in and outside the U.S., to initiate some effort to rebuilding brotherhood unity. The events of the last few years have left some churches disoriented, directionless, and in several cases, leaderless. Many other churches have expressed a keen desire to work more closely together to build up our fellowship of churches around the world. Two weeks ago at the Portland Jubilee, Al Baird, Kevin Mains, and Bruce Williams were approached by John Louis, missionary evangelist for the Singapore Christian Church to see what could be done to initiate a call to brotherhood unity in time for consideration at the Seattle Leadership Conference.

The next morning Al, Kevin, and Bruce met together with John Louis and Mike Fontenot, evangelist/elder for the Hampton Road Church of Christ in Virginia and began to formulate a statement of unified beliefs. Later Douglas Arthur, evangelist for the Baltimore Church, was invited to give his suggestions. Still later, the group invited Kip McKean and Steve Johnson into the discussion. We asked if Kip would be willing to work cooperatively with a group of churches for a unity effort. He stated that he would, and we then discussed other churches that might be interested in making such an initiative and committed to making some calls. Everyone left that meeting on Saturday trusting in Kip's stated desire to cooperate in this unity initiative.

On Tuesday, August 23rd, Al and Bruce were on the phone with Scott Green and Ron Brumley, from the Seattle Church, discussing the multi-church initiative and their possible interest. While expressing support for such an initiative, Scott and Ron shared concern about Portland's participation and asked Al and Bruce if they were aware of the article "The Portland Story" distributed in Portland on Sunday, August 21st, at the end of their conference. They said "no", since they had returned to LA for their own services.

Al and Bruce were stunned and extremely disappointed to read this article the week following Saturday's discussion. We, here in LA, did not believe that "The Portland Story" reflected the spirit in which the Lord desired to initiate unity. Rather than a spirit that included threats, intimidation and arrogance, we believed that our brotherhood challenges needed to be tackled by a collective plan, not one that focused on a single congregation or person as the primary source for answers. It was then that several recommended that the LA church initiate a call for other congregations to join and then together, those congregations could develop a plan together for cooperation and revival. That was what gave birth to the LA unity call. We regret that we had such a narrow window of opportunity to put out the call and apologize for the time pressure that it placed anyone under.

### Update

It has been encouraging to see how many churches truly desire the initiation of a cooperative effort. This process has also helped us become aware of how much the Holy Spirit is needed to produce peace and unity.

We are very thankful for all those churches that have positively responded to the call to unity, and those very interested, but would like further discussion. We also continue to appreciate and love those who respectfully disagree with this effort. We are also thankful for those churches that desire a cooperative initiative, but want it to be a multi-congregational effort. That really was our desire and effort from the beginning. Therefore, rather than an LA sponsored initiative, we look forward to participating in discussions with other church leaders in Seattle to develop together a collective initiative. Please continue to pray for a true brotherhood unity and revival.