

notes from the **UMA** *items ideas inquiries*

May 1966

In a recent letter from our President, Ralph Rhea, it was mentioned that we were planning to reinstitute the "Voice of the UMA." We are all agreed that this is a very good idea, as is made evident by the immediate response that you have given to our request for material. Since the suspension of the regular use of that name "Voice of UMA," a new publication is on your desk called "The Voice of Unity," and a fine and informative publication it is. To avoid confusion, we have chosen what can be a temporary title, and later on we can alter it if we wish. That which follows, and that which will fill these pages in the future, are Items, Ideas, and Inquiries of our members on subjects that are of concern or interest to us as members of the UMA.

In these first issues of our "Notes from the UMA," we will, as we have indicated in recent correspondence, be considering our forthcoming plans for compliance with the now famous Bulletin #4. There has been such a wonderful and thought-provoking response to the suggested bylaws that we want to share in these pages your comments, your questions, and (where available) your answers. There has been much in the way of independent mailings from sincerely interested individuals and groups regarding our proposed plans. It has been felt that this medium of notes from the UMA would be an easier, more orderly, and far less expensive means of sharing our ideas.

Marjorie Staudenmaier, Roseville, California - "There has to be a divine solution that does not eliminate the vote of the part-time ministers who have not yet incorporated. More definite wording concerning the payment for the establishment of the new building, land, etc., and all upkeep."

Blaine C. Mays, Phoenix, Arizona - "I have every confidence in AUC being the exact vehicle through which our ministerial services to Unity-minded folk can be upheld and expanded. First, because I have faith that Unity School officials and their attorneys, as well as the UMA Executive Board, would not approve and recommend such a corporation unless it were right for everyone in every way, and second, because I feel AUC provides the avenues through which our ministries can be enriched and made more serviceable. I am sure that as we continue to grow in number and in consciousness, the Bylaws of AUC will be changed or altered many times. But thank God we have something to begin with right now! Our church is in the process of preparing every document required to become an active, supporting member of AUC. We have been assured of no financial responsibility. Frankly, I want to accept a spiritual, moral, and financial responsibility for AUC because I want

to think of AUC as my organization, my legal vehicle through which I can be associated with a prosperous, effective, dynamic, progressive group of Unity ministers."

Grace Comley, Knoxville, Tennessee - "My questions are these: #1 - What is to become of small centers like mine? #2 - What is to become of ministers like me?"

Editor's Note: In recent communications from Ralph Rhea and Eric Butterworth, it has been made abundantly clear that no one is going to be left out, and that no work, however small, is going to be excluded from the projected organizational plans.

Herbert & Beulah Ornbaun, El Paso, Texas - "Article V, Section 5.03, Elections. - First and most important, lay members to the AUC Board are completely unacceptable. An eight (8) additional Trustees selected and elected by the duly elected Board of Trustees are unwarranted and unnecessary. If we need more Board members, let them be subject to an open election of the Conference body, or appointed from the Regional Conferences when they are in session.

"We as individual members have little way of knowing the qualifications of our Association officers; therefore, completion of the Unity study course and ordination are our only certainty of qualification. If our elected 21 member Board needs to appoint an Advisory Board to help with decisions, that would be permissible, but they would have no vote. If we need attorneys, financiers, or accountants in an advisory capacity, they should be hired, but 'all members of the Board of Trustees to be duly elected by and from member ministers.' Let us strive to keep Unity, UNITY."

Editor's Note: In the recent second set of bylaw recommendations that were sent out from the bylaws committee by Eric Butterworth, this matter of laymen was dealt with...if it is the majority feeling, leave the laymen out!! There were a number of letters that dealt with this matter, the above being chosen as representative.

Herbert & Beulah Ornbaun continued - "Article V, Section 10, Compensation. All trustees of the Association must serve without compensation, except for the Executive Director, who is a Trustee by right of his position. If a member of the Board should be needed for other Association duties, he should resign from the Board and accept the paid position under the guidance and control of the Executive Director, who is a voting member of the Board and directly responsible to the individual member church.

"Article VII, Section 7.01, Executive Committee. - NO LAYMEN! We should take our cue from other denominations who have allowed laymen to get control and render Christian churches almost ineffective. This must not be allowed to happen in Unity. Advisory laymen, if you like, but they must have no authority in policy making; and they must have no authority over the individual member church or center."

Warren Meyer, Oak Park, Illinois - "Responsibility is always opportunity. First, we all know that one should be responsible to God's presence of good. We all realize that the more insight one has concerning God's presence the more one is prepared to handle the responsibilities required of him on the highest and most mature levels.

"Unity is a spiritual idea. This dynamic idea came into manifestation to serve. As the co-founders of our movement served in the light of the Unity idea, they repeatedly changed their methods of sharing the Truth. But always they upheld the basic Unity idea, and in turn it upheld them.

"All of us are in the Unity movement because we believe in its basic idea. Also, those who support every local Unity organization or any part of its worldwide function, are doing so because they too are endorsing the Unity movement with their love and faith. Therefore, whatever those of us who are in places of responsibility do, we should keep in mind that we are acting for the whole movement in the light of Truth. No part of our movement should be left out. We should all be included, unless all who are locally involved should decide otherwise. Then, too, we should prayerfully proceed, utilizing legal guidance whenever necessary in order to avoid taking unwise steps wherever the law is concerned.

"One may feel hesitant concerning the involvements of organization. Yet when the involvements are sound in their incorporation of Unity's fundamental essentials and all legal requirements, they can serve the program of the local organizations along with the function of a valuable central office. The benefits can be mutual. Of course, if an involvement is actually unsound, faithful prayer and spiritual exploration should be exercised until the right arrangement is found.

"Responsibility is with us all. Only through prayer-guided thoughts, prayer-guided emotions, and prayer-guided actions can we all expect to be ready to take another progressive step in the opportunity that awaits us. Let us remember that a body without love, faith, joy, wisdom, good judgment, or understanding requires a healing.

"Those who are fired with zeal might pause in order to avoid the elements of force. Those who are resisting change might pause in order to avoid the patterns of failure. Truly, this that we are growing through is neither the beginning nor the end. It is a stage. Actually, the stage is set. The parts we play have behind them a sound Unity script. Ad-libbing could lead to disunity.

"Whatever we do in organizing, let us do our best. Let us do that which serves now and long after we have contributed to the present scene. Everyone of you has a wonderfully important role to play in Unity. You are an important contributor. Everyone of you is capable of sound, mature, Christlike deportment. Let us all let the spiritual idea of Unity shine as a bright star of guidance. Let us all come to Unity with a new sense of service in our minds, hearts, voices, and hands. Responsibility is always opportunity."

Charles R. Fillmore, Unity School of Christianity - "I have been asked many times recently my position in regard to the proposed Association of Unity Churches, and I have replied as follows:

"In Bulletin #4 Unity School has stated that it recognizes the presence of and need for a mature Unity Field ministry. Furthermore, the School has stated that for a number of good reasons, also outlined in Bulletin #4, it can no longer provide the services of a Field Department for the Centers. This is a decision which the School HAS the moral right and legal authority to make, did make, and is pledged to stand by.

"Bulletin #4 also suggests that the Field has reached a state of maturity where it can formulate its own service organization, and should indeed do so also for a number of sound, beneficial reasons. However, Unity School has neither the moral right nor the legal authority to impose an organization structure upon the Field.

"The big question which the Center leaders must ask themselves is this" "Do I value the complete autonomy of my Center more than the service benefits that can be provided by an organization governed by myself and my fellow leaders to which I must pledge my Center's allegiance and for which I must accept my share of responsibility?" This is a decision which a majority of the Center leaders must make for themselves. The School has stated that it will view favorably the corporate entity decided upon by the Field, but can now only wait to see what transpires in June.

"If the majority decides in favor of an organization, then I believe that the proposed articles of incorporation and bylaws of AUC provide a good framework for discussion and consideration."

Editor's Note: This is our first selection of Items, Ideas and Inquiries, and it is important that you should understand that we have not included all the suggestions or criticisms or questions that have been sent in, because since they were sent in many of them have been adequately dealt with through communications that have subsequently been mailed to you. If you have other views, suggestions, constructive criticisms, etc., please do send them into the UMA office as soon as possible.