



# The Servants of the Word

Christmas 2004

## International Year of the Lord's Day

Celebrating the Lord's Day has always been a priority in Servants of the Word households around the world. During the Sword of the Spirit's "International Year of the Lord's Day," we are especially redoubling our efforts to honor this day each week.



The brothers from Lansing, Michigan, celebrate some of the main features of the ceremony together—blessing the bread and eating a well-prepared meal—and enjoy fellowship around the fire after the meal. Setting aside the cares and concerns of the week allows us to focus our attention on the Lord and give him the special honor and attention we owe him.

## A Passion for Life and God's Service

*Andy Pettman: Brother and Petrochemical Consultant*

Andy Pettman is not your ordinary brother in The Servants of the Word. He is a petrochemical consultant who travels the globe four or five days a month to such places as Turkey, Syria, Kuwait, and Bahrain (to name only a few of the 20-25 countries he visits each year) and works in central London 30 hours a week. He also stewards one of the busiest and largest households in The Servants of the Word, serves on the leadership team for Antioch, a member community of The Sword of the Spirit in London, and for several years has organized and led two youth ministries for his local Anglican parish and for Antioch. On top of this, he still finds time to witness the gospel one-to-one with co-workers, clients, and travelers, give PowerPoint presentations on Old and New Testament topics, and speak at community gatherings. Andy sees his ability for multi-tasking as a gift and blessing from the Lord.

If Andy is not doing any of the above, you might find him studying Spanish, preparing a gourmet meal for a birthday or other special event, or hiking the trails with the brothers on holiday.

Andy grew up in Guilford, some 30 miles southwest of London. As a young adult Andy had a keen interest in pursuing the Christian faith. At the age of 16 he joined a group of evangelical students, called the Christian Union. The group met regularly to pray and read Scripture together. At the end of high school he joined the Evangelical Anglican Church and decided to do a "gap year" as a teacher in Honduras. That was a significant year of growing in faith

and vision for serving God and his people worldwide.

Upon his return in the fall of '82, Andy took up residence at Imperial College at the University of London and got involved in a Christian group on campus. Later that fall he was "door-knocked" by some members of University Christian Outreach. Andy was attracted to their zeal for evangelism, prayer, and Scripture as well as to their shared life with Christians from diverse nationalities, cultures, and Christian traditions.

Andy began his training in The Servants of the Word in 1990 and made his life-long commitment in August 1994. During the past ten years Andy has made a significant contribution to The Servants of the Word in London and to the work of developing a youth outreach within Antioch

community as well as more broadly in churches in southwest London. He has helped many teens grow in faith and maturity and make the transition to university life as active Christians. Through Andy's years of faithful service, many young adults are now actively engaged in service, outreach, and Christian community. ▲

— Don Schwager



**Andy has made significant contributions to The Servants of the Word and to youth in parts of southwest London.**

# Q&A

## *What does it mean to live the "common life"?*

We share our daily life by praying together—communally and individually—and studying Scripture as well. We also gather together to chant the Psalms three times each day. Special times of retreat are part of our annual schedule.

We share the morning and evening meals together and make time for other common activities, recreation, and fellowship in order to strengthen our experience of community as brothers.

## *What does the term "simplicity of possessions" mean to The Servants of the Word?*

Our desire is to have our hearts undivided in devotion to the Lord and to make all our resources available for his work. Our approach to material possessions is guided by our common decisions to meet the needs of each individual while making the most resources available for specific mission and outreach work. The guiding principle is good stewardship of the grace and resources that God gives us.



# Christmas Greetings!

Beloved family and friends,

At the close of this year of our Lord 2004, we in The Servants of the

Word pause to look both backward and forward. We look back in gratitude to God for a year filled with his presence and his blessing: in our moments of deep joy as well as in those of sorrow, in our successes and in our failures, he has at all times been Emmanuel, God-with-us.

We also look forward in hope to the coming year, with great expectation for what God will do in us and through us, as we aim to live a life more deeply consecrated to him, as we seek to love him and to make him loved.

This Advent season of preparation for Christmas is the perfect time for all of

***God has come to us in a way that has utterly and forever changed human life and history.***

God's people to once again gaze both backward and forward, so as to live the present moment in the fullness of God's grace. Advent is a time to look back, remembering that God has come to us in a way that has utterly and forever changed human life and history, and to prepare ourselves to celebrate the Incarnation with joy and thanksgiving. It is also the quintessential season for looking forward in hope to Christ's triumphant return, when "he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead," when sin and death will be destroyed, every tear will be wiped away, and everything that is wrong will be finally and forever made right.

May this season be filled with thanksgiving and with hope for you and for all of your loved

ones, and may the Lord Emmanuel come to you and dwell richly in your hearts and in your homes. We love you, and we thank God for the blessing that you are for us! You remain ever in our thoughts and in our prayers. ▲

In Christ our Incarnate Lord,

John Keating

A handwritten signature of John Keating in black ink.

Presiding Elder



# Servant Systems Charts Growth

Many of our readers have heard of our “brotherhood business” called Servant Systems. Incorporated in 1990 by our entrepreneur *extraordinaire* Ted Kennedy, it has become one of the financial mainstays of our brotherhood. All the profits of Servant Systems go directly to the Servants of the Word, to be used primarily for support of our mission work throughout the world.

Servant Systems is a computer company providing soft ware for the franchising industry. Current

clients include Two Men and a Truck (a local moving franchise business), Molly Maid (home cleaning), and Domino’s Pizza (you’ve probably heard of it). How we carved out this particular niche in the marketplace is a testimony to the value of relationships and the

mercy of God more than our extraordinary computer skills. We originally started as a company providing accounting systems to businesses. That venture went more or less nowhere, but through it Ted met some of the people who helped us break into the franchising industry. And the rest is, as they say, history.

Currently at the helm is Don DeSmith, who took over from Ted a few years ago. Don is *el Presidente*, which means—as those of you who have run a small business know—“the

guy who does a lot of the work.” Bruce Franson helps Don manage the business and writes a line or two of software code in his spare time as well. Larry Hunt is our resident geek (a term which Larry takes as a compliment), and spends his days in front of several computer monitors turning abstract ideas into concrete solutions. We also employ two good men who are not members of The Servants of the Word. Mike Morrissey works part time for Servant Systems and part time running a

transition house for men who’ve been through a rough patch in life and are trying to get back on their feet. Dave Flanagan recently graduated from the University of Michigan and has been a great addition to the team.

As we continue to work for our existing customers, we are also looking for new business. Recently we hired a small public relations firm to help us produce a new brochure and news releases—check them out at [www.servantsystems.com](http://www.servantsystems.com). In addition, we are attending trade shows to make our company and the services we provide better known in the franchising industry.

Please pray for the continued success of Servant Systems. ▲

—Bruce Franson



Larry Hunt, Don DeSmith, Bruce Franson



## Brothers in the News

### Servant Systems President Appointed to International Franchise Association Committee



Don DeSmith

ANN ARBOR, Mich., September 20, 2004. Donald A. DeSmith, President of Ann Arbor-based Servant Systems Inc., was recently appointed to a 2-year term on the Information Technology Committee of the International Franchise Association (IFA), based in Washington, D.C. The mission of the Information Technology Committee is to research technology trends, and provide guidance for the adoption and use of technology to continuously improve franchising. Servant Systems is also a member of the IFA’s Supplier Forum and has been serving the IT needs of the franchising industry since 1992. The IFA, founded in 1960, is a membership organization of franchisors, franchisees and suppliers.



## Pillars of Our Ideal

“freedom from other things for the sake of the Lord and his service”

“ ‘Serving Christ is perfect freedom’—a paradoxical phrase from Anglican morning prayer summarizes what I have experienced in The Servants of the Word. Our life constantly calls me to let go of distractions and investments in lesser things and gain the freedom of life lived in Christ and in serving his purposes.”

*Doug Smith  
Belfast, Northern Ireland*

“full subordination of life”

“I am thankful to our Lord Jesus for allowing me to subordinate my life to him, to our covenant, and to my brothers in The Servants of the Word. I haven’t found a better way to imitate Christ, who was fully subordinated to the Father; to fight against our enemy, the evil one, who is the most unsubordinated creature of all; and to build fruitfully the kingdom of God.”

*Fernando Ayala  
Monterrey, Mexico*



## Our Household Christmas Retreat Locations

**London and Belfast households:** *All Hallows Convent, Ditchingham, Norfolk, England*

**Monterrey household:** *Nuestra Señora del Curutarán, Jacona, Michoacán, México*

**Manila household:** *Jesuit’s Mirador Villa, Baguio City, Luzon, Philippines*

**Lansing and Detroit households:** *Abbey of the Genesee, Piffard, New York, U.S.A.*

**Chelsea household:** *Mount Savior Monastery, Pine City, New York, U.S.A.*

**Ann Arbor household:** *The Brotherhood Center, Chelsea, Michigan, U.S.A.*

*Please keep us in your prayers.*

### WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP.

The Servants of the Word gets its support through the financial earnings of the brothers as well as by donations from our benefactors. Many of our brothers work for sacrificial wages or for no pay at all. Please consider if you can become a financial sponsor of The Servants of the Word. Your prayers and support are appreciated in our work with young people and our community development work.

**THE SERVANTS OF THE WORD**  
P.O. Box 7087, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107  
U.S.A.  
Tel: (734) 475-3550  
[www.servantsoftheword.org](http://www.servantsoftheword.org)

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