

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



2821 Route 22, Patterson, NY 12563-2237 Phone: (845) 306-1100

November 5, 2001

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

It is commendable to see the warm bond of love that exists between the congregations and the traveling overseers that serve you. One way that you have demonstrated your love is the generous financial support that you have given to the health-care and transportation provisions for traveling overseers and their wives. It was in 1983 that arrangements were first made to provide coverage for their health care. Then in 1988 the lease car arrangement went into effect. These arrangements have been working well, and we have received many expressions of appreciation from traveling overseers. On behalf of the United States branch office as well as all the traveling overseers, we express our warm gratitude for your generous and loving support of these provisions.

Last year, in our March 22, 2000, letter to all congregations in the United States, adjustments were made in how the traveling overseers' automobile and health-care expenses would be cared for. Instead of each congregation contributing to a separate fund a specific amount based on the number of publishers, these costs now come out of the general funds, which are supported by donations to the worldwide work. Of course, as you can appreciate, the cost of health care and transportation continues to be a major expense, amounting to millions of dollars each year. Thus, while a specific contribution is not being suggested, it is now important for each publisher to be mindful that the funds contributed to the worldwide work are also being used to care for this major expenditure. It would be good to give thought to setting aside something on a regular basis to share in covering these necessary expenses.—1 Corinthians 16:1, 2.

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul, a first-century traveling overseer and member of the governing body, highly commended them. Despite their poverty, on at least three earlier occasions, the brothers had sent Paul the things he needed. (2 Corinthians 8:1, 2; 11:9; Philippians 4:10, 15, 16) But a span of time passed wherein they gave nothing materially. Why? "You lacked opportunity," wrote Paul. (Philippians 4:10) Perhaps difficult times, changed circumstances, or their not knowing where Paul was prevented them from doing what their hearts desired. But now they had 'revived their thinking on his behalf,' and he was grateful.

We too are confident that you will continue to give thought to supporting our traveling overseers as they keep working hard to serve Kingdom interests. It is our prayer that, in turn, "God will fully supply all your need to the extent of his riches in glory by means of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19) We send our best wishes and warm Christian love.

Your brothers,

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P.S. to body of elders:

It would be appropriate to keep this matter before the congregation from time to time during the year so that adequate contributions will be made to support the transportation and medical expenses of our traveling overseers. For example, following the visit of the circuit overseer to the congregation when a resolution is being considered regarding his weekly expenses, it may be well to remind the brothers of this expense that is now being covered by their donations to the worldwide work. If funds are on hand, you may wish to present a resolution to send an additional amount to the worldwide work that month. We thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.