

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1RN Telephone: 020 8906 2211

SDD:SSJ January 2, 2014

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS

Re: Branch relocation and expansion

Dear Brothers:

Jehovah's earthly organization continues to progress at an ever-increasing rate! We are reminded of Ezekiel's vision of the heavenly organization, in the form of a chariot, keenly observing the way ahead and quickly changing course as required. (Ezekiel chapter 1) It is a challenge for us all to keep in step with this heavenly chariot, and many more changes can be anticipated. You will recall our earlier letter regarding branch expansion and the relocation of our facilities away from Mill Hill.

We are delighted to announce that, after 18 months of negotiation and following approval from the Governing Body, a conditional contract was signed and exchanged on December 31, 2013 for the purchase of an 80-acre site at West Hanningfield, near Chelmsford, Essex. Various conditions have to be met before an unconditional contract is signed and a deposit paid. If those conditions are not met we may have to withdraw our interest. *So, we ask that you make this project a matter of earnest prayer and supplication.* Meanwhile, the brothers continue to work hard to carry out needed surveys, draw up plans, and handle all the other details before we can ever have a new branch on this site. We kindly request that nobody visits the site as it is still occupied by the current owners and industrial tenants.

In the meantime, we continue to expand our facilities in London. Early in 2013, we were able to take up occupation of two more blocks of flats, just five minutes' drive from Bethel, and over 100 Bethelites are now living there. This relieved severe pressure on our accommodation, permitting us to bring in volunteers for other ongoing building projects. It also enabled us to accommodate the two-month course for circuit overseers, which will continue for a full year. In spite of these new flats, we are once again very short of accommodation.

Due to limited working space in Mill Hill, we have sought ways to expand our shipping and laundry facilities at our existing factory at Manor Point, Borehamwood, about ten minutes' drive from Watch Tower House. Hence, this year we bought two more buildings, just yards away from our existing premises: (1) a small office block, and (2) a large warehouse with its own offices. The total floor area is 50,000 square feet, which is roughly half the size of the IBSA House warehouse. The new warehouse is needed to permit storage for additional literature, paper, convention items, sound equipment, along with Bethel home items and supplies. The offices will be brought into use within about three months after some needed adaptation.

As part of looking ahead, we know that more personnel will be needed throughout the planning and construction of the relocated branch. Hence there is a need for much more office space. Our workload has increased considerably in other ways too. For example, the Governing Body has asked us to care for the literature needs of additional branches in Africa. This has given rise to the need for improving our facilities at Borehamwood. The dining room there has been enlarged to accommodate up to 120, with potential to expand the facility to cater for up to 200. Also a kitchen has been built, so that food can be cooked on the premises instead of being sent in insulated containers from our main kitchen at Watch Tower House.

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As you can imagine, this work has required an enormous dedicated effort for all those serving here. With the Bethel family and many temporary volunteers we usually have 800 or more persons here at any one time. Your prayers in support of all we are doing, along with your continuing generous donations, are greatly appreciated. With our warm brotherly affection, we remain,

Your brothers,
*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

PS to the coordinator of the body of elders:

Please arrange for this letter to be read to the congregation at the first available opportunity.