

Church warms to receiver

By JACKIE KNOWLES

Staff Writer

The receiver overseeing the financial transactions of the Worldwide Church of God was portrayed almost like an invited guest at a meeting of Ambassador College employees Tuesday.

Although the receivership over the religious empire of Herbert W. Armstrong remains unchanged pending a court hearing today, Armstrong's chief aide, Stanley R. Rader, told the meeting he is satisfied that the church's rights are now protected.

One of the defendants in a lawsuit charging abuse of church funds, Rader has led a fight against putting a court-appointed trustee in charge of monitoring church finances until an investigation of the civil charges is completed by the state attorney general.

Muting previous charges that the state is interfering with religious freedom, he said he has seen to it the receiver is protecting the church's interests in the records as much as those of the

state.

However, he said church volunteers would be monitoring the actions of those working for the trustee, retired Judge Steven Weisman.

"If they have 12 people, we'll have 40," he said after the meeting in Ambassador Auditorium.

Rader said he had fired four non-productive people to save about \$200,000 to pay Weisman.

The entity ultimately responsible for the \$150-an-hour trustee will be decided by the outcome of the lawsuit, Weisman explained later in his office in the church administration building.

Weisman also said there had never been any question that Armstrong has continued to be the leader of the church. "I never had the right to interfere in church business," he said, but quick changes and retraction in leadership had caused some confusion.

When it first appeared that there was a split between Rader and the church, Weisman said he had asked several secretaries whether their loyalty was to

Rader or the church.

"When one answered, 'Rader,' I fired her because I wanted people loyal to the church here," Weisman told the Star-News. The court order appointing Weisman receiver gave him the right to hire and fire in order to safeguard church assets.

Virginia Keniston, Rader's secretary, later was reinstated. Rader credited her with protecting the church's records from the receiver.

Rader also told the employees that the receivership had flushed out the dissidents that had been plotting to take over Armstrong's position.

Although Rader told the employees the church is not controlled by the state, Weisman explained later that the state attorney general does have the authority to monitor charitable funds because donors have no recourse if the money is misused.