

## CHURCHWATCH NEWSLETTER #4 – January 4, 2004

Welcome to the ChurchWatch newsletter [#4]. This week we're looking at the new Database Rescue Utility included only in Version 3.

This last week we had a call from a customer explaining that a calendar report that worked just last week now crashed the software. Quite often this type of “**used-to-work-but-now-doesn't**” problem is related to minor damage to your data indexes. Data damage usually comes from a computer crash or a power outage. And usually a simple reindex (SETUP->MAINTENANCE->REINDEX) will solve the problem. This damage is not serious and almost always does not affect your entered data, only the indexes (sort orders). But what if your data tables are damaged significantly enough that ChurchWatch cannot even be launched to repair the data? Well, in the past, customers have emailed their tables to customer support for a quick repair. This is awkward, inconvenient and can often leave your database “down” for at least a day. In some cases we have to walk customers through the use of Winzip to email tables. No good for either side. This is where the new Database Rescue Utility comes in. Now you can quickly and easily do your own repairs. This utility alone is worth upgrading to V3. By the way, the customer that called in ran the Database Rescue Utility and the calendar report is working well again – no intervention on our part was required.

The Database Rescue Utility (DBRU) is a program separate from ChurchWatch, so even if you can't launch ChurchWatch, you can still run this utility to make necessary repairs. The program is run from START->PROGRAMS->CHURCHWATCH3->DATABASE RESCUE UTILITY. When the DBRU is run you will see a form like the one below. You have several straightforward options which you must check or uncheck and then just click the RESCUE button. The DBRU will take over from there and make all necessary repairs.

The screenshot shows the 'ChurchWatch Database Rescue Utility' window. The title bar includes a red plus sign and the word 'Rescue'. The main title is 'ChurchWatch Database Rescue Utility' with a red plus icon to its right. Below the title, it states 'Version 1.0 Copyright (c) 2003 By White Mountain Software'. The interface is split into two columns: 'Actions:' and 'Folders:'. The 'Actions:' column contains five checkboxes: 'Rebuild Index Files' (checked), 'Fix corrupted memo fields' (unchecked), 'Reindex all tables' (checked), 'Compact all tables' (checked), and 'Delete Unused Files' (checked). The 'Folders:' column contains three checkboxes: 'Do Home Folder' (checked), 'Do Sub-Church Folders' (checked), and 'Do Archived Giving Folders' (checked). Below these are two progress bars labeled 'Overall Progress:' and 'Current Operation:'. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Rescue' and 'Exit'.

The operations in the DBRU are similar to the MAINTENANCE page of the SETUP form in ChurchWatch. However, the DBRU is much more powerful and has its own database file

containing the descriptions of the design of each of the ChurchWatch tables. As such, it can make very sophisticated repairs, even rebuilding indexes that no longer exist.

Lets look at the options. "Rebuild Index Files" will usually fix most problems so you can leave this checked – it won't hurt anything. It will delete and rebuild the index (.CDX) files for all your data tables. If you're curious, the CDX files contains the sort order information for each data table (they DO NOT contain any data). Next, the "Fix Corrupted Memo Files" item can normally be left unchecked. Memo files (.FPT) contain free form text like the notes in the Membership Manager. Memo files rarely, if ever, become corrupted. Next, the "Reindex All Tables" item is recommended and should be left checked. This item also fixes problems quite often. The "Compact All Tables" item will delete all items you have marked for deletion. Some explanation is required. Whenever you delete a record in ChurchWatch it is not actually deleted. It is only marked for deletion and hidden away. Records marked for deletion do not show up in any reports, queries or statistics. Compacting your data tables will physically delete these records and save some disc space (in some cases significant disc space). The last item, "Delete Unused Files" also needs some explanation. Over time, most notably if you were a version 1 or version 2 ChurchWatch customer or a beta tester, some stray files can appear in your ChurchWatch folder. These are of no concern but they do waste disc space. Check the "Delete Unused Files" to clean up your ChurchWatch folder and save some disc space.

Now lets look at the folder options. ChurchWatch is organized as a root folder (your main data is here), archived giving folders (in ARCHIVE folder and one sub-folder for each year that has been archived), sub-church folders (secondary databases) and sub-church archived giving data (ARCHIVE again). This folder "tree" can get quite complex and large but the DBRU handles it all nicely. The folder options allow you to tell the DBRU which folders you want to repair. Note that if you want to repair sub-church archived giving folders you will need to check off BOTH the sub-church folder and the archived giving folders items. Since data in the archived giving folders is rarely used there is usually not a need to check this item although it will not hurt – you will have to decide. TIP: Unchecking sub-church and archived giving folders can save considerable time during the database rescue operation.

Lastly, click the REPAIR button to repair your data and then sit back and watch the progress. TIP: any time you see something that you think is strange or incorrect try the DBRU before calling customer support – it may get you up and running a lot faster. ANOTHER TIP: The DBRU cannot run when ChurchWatch is in use, either on the same machine or anywhere on your network. Make sure all users close down ChurchWatch before using the DBRU.

**Next week – The new Mass Edit Wizard – changing A LOT of data in one quick operation.**