



United News **Canada**

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Top left: UCG President Kilough surveys the media centre and television set while it was under construction.

At right above is a *Beyond Today* Television program in production with presenter Gary Petty and guests Richard Thompson and Todd Carey. Now in **Toronto, 10:30 am Sunday on Christian Channel, Rogers Digital Cable.**

For more information on Christian Channel see page 2.
For *Beyond Today TV* background information see page 7.

Canadian Elders Attend Cincinnati Conference of Elders — Ohio May 6-8

Six Canadian elders attended the GCE meetings at the Eastgate Holiday Inn. This year, Anthony Wasilkoff, David Palmer, Rick, Dan and Bob Berendt, as well as Rainer Salomaa represented Canada among the 214 elders and 158 wives who attended from around the world. On Sabbath, Anthony Wasilkoff gave a split sermon on *Seven Attributes of a Real Servant* to an audience listening throughout North America via telephone hook-up and web cybercast. Jim Franks gave the other split sermon, entitled *Who Will You Follow and How Will You Lead?* In the balloting for Council member replacements, Bill Eddington from Australia replaced Anthony Wasilkoff as an International Representative. Anthony chose not to stand on the ballot this time because of time demands. Fellow council members described him as one of the most even tempered and positive individuals – one who has been a great asset to the Council. His approach has been, “What can I do for the church?” Drs. Rick and Dan Berendt conducted a workshop entitled, *Cancer—Healthy Perspectives for an Effective Ministry*. This was Rick Berendt’s first time to attend a GCE meeting. When asked his impressions, he replied, “I have come to the right place.” Indeed, the spirit of God was evident with peace and harmony, brotherly love and mutual respect. There were encouraging messages of exhortation on the theme of *Service and Leadership – Today, Tomorrow and Beyond*. Truly, iron sharpened iron. The organization seemed flawless and the camaraderie among the ministry and their wives was exhilarating. The six of us who attended can echo the statement that we went to the right place!



From left: Jon Pinelli & Paul Wasilkoff (Cincinnati) and Neil Hart (Utah).
Photo—Ray Salomaa

Rainer Salomaa – Canadian Council Chairman

BEYOND TODAY TV — NOW IN CANADA! Starting with ‘Changing Your Life Is Possible.’

From May 21st, *Beyond Today TV* will be airing in Ontario on Sundays at 10:30 am on *Christian Channel*. This channel is carried by Rogers Digital Cable in the Greater Toronto Area and Ottawa to approximately 750,000 homes. It will be on Star Choice digital at the end of May to another 850,000 customers. Cogeco Cable (Hamilton-Burlington) will commence in June to approximately 100,000 customers. Also in June MTS-Manitoba Telephone will add 60,000 homes in Winnipeg, while SaskTel will be adding another 50,000 subscribers in Regina and Saskatoon. In July Telus will add subscribers in B.C. and Alberta. The total number of subscribers across Canada is approximately 1,500,000 and increasing. Check your Digital Cable provider for channel times. Each program will be replayed on VISION TV at 2:00 am early Monday mornings. With the time zone difference this will be Sunday evening in B.C. at 11 p.m. Digital Cable subscribers in B.C would need to check their cable company to ascertain exact details for the program. The 1-800 call number is the same for both Canada and the U.S. as the call centre operates from Canada.

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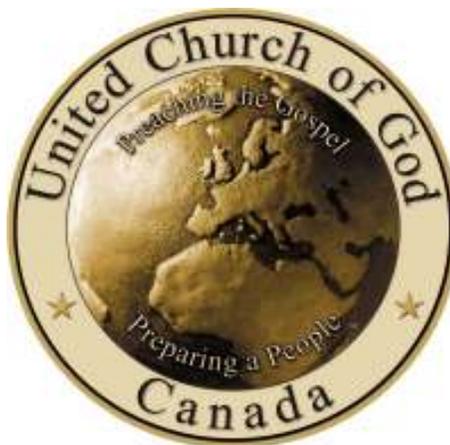
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GOD'S SPIRIT BEHIND A 'MUSTARD SEED' WORK.

"Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the Word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, **Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit**, says Jehovah of Hosts" (Zechariah 4:6 Modern KJV).

Ten years after our humble beginnings, how could a work so small be sustained year by year to accomplish what the United Church of God - Canada does today? We began as a mustard seed.

**'from a small seed...
to a large tree'**



Our early beginning days in Toronto help illustrate how small we started compared with what we are privileged to be in 2006. We hope you will find encouragement in this summary.

When the United Church of God – Canada began in the summer of 1995, the office was a computer, set up on a dining room table. A few short months later, the 'office' moved to a 12-storey building in the west Toronto suburb of Etobicoke. We occupied about 500 square foot on the 7th floor. *As the saying goes, the office was so small you had to step outside to change your mind!*

We soon began to receive booklets and magazines from the Home Office to be mailed to our fledgling list of about 250 members and 50 subscribers. At one point, we set up a 6-foot table in order to prepare a mailing. The problem was there was no place to set up the table, other than through a doorway connecting one of the two small offices. So if you were in one office you were stuck there, unless you crawled underneath the table to the other room.

After the Feast of Tabernacles in 1996 we moved to larger office space on the 6th floor, occupying about 2,500 square feet. The building afforded us underground parking which was a real benefit when loading or unloading mail and supplies. When *The Good News* magazines arrived, however, it was a different story. It was difficult for the delivery truck to maneuver

into the unloading dock at the rear of the building. Sometimes it was impossible. That meant unloading a hundred or more boxes of magazines by hand. On occasion, the truck was too large to go in the driveway and we had to unload the boxes on the street! After a few years, this became a real concern.

During the five years we were on the 6th floor, our incoming and outgoing mail grew significantly and our membership was increasing. When it came time to renew the lease, rents were on the rise in Toronto. Our building was no exception and we faced a rent increase of almost 25%. After several months of searching for new office space, a contract was made with Fishburn Properties northwest of Toronto.

After the 2001 Feast of Tabernacles, we moved to our current location in Halton Hills with rent about 1/3 of what it would have been at Islington Avenue. (It's interesting to note that the space we were renting on Islington remained unoccupied for about 2 ½ years after we left).

During the 4 ½ years we've been at our current location, the work has continued to grow. Here are some areas of growth over the past 10 full years.

* In 1995, we sent out a few hundred pieces of mail. The mail we have sent out since would fill about nine 50-foot rail boxcars.

* At the end of 1995 there were about 300 subscribers to *The Good News* magazine, including church members. At the end of March, 2006 that number had grown to 6,538. In addition, there are 88 subscribers to *Bonnes Nouvelles*.

* In our beginning period we received about 250 pieces of mail per month. Now it is just over 1,500 pieces per month on average.

* In 2003, we received 1,533 emails requesting subscriptions and literature; in 2004 it more than doubled to 3,268; and in 2005 the number grew to 5,116. In the first three months of 2006, we received 1,693 emails—a request every 48 minutes.

* In 1996 our mail income averaged \$28,465 per month. In 2006 the average is \$45,999.

* The United Church of God – Canada's

average Sabbath attendance in 1996 was 354. There were 10 congregations (including Buffalo, NY). In 2006 there are 24 congregations with an average weekly attendance average of 537. The first day of Unleavened Bread was 707.



photo.com

* In 1996 there were 2 Feast of Tabernacles sites. In 2005 there were 5. The growth of the United Church of God in Canada shows no signs of slowing down. **What can we pray for?**

We can pray for sustainable employment for tithe-payers, donors, co-workers and blessings that allow them to contribute.

We can pray for more committed tithe-payers and co-workers to join with us.

We can pray for doors to open for the Gospel -- like *Beyond Today TV*, radio and other advertising opportunities.

We can pray for more Festival tithe of the Tithe contributions during the year to pay for Festival expenses.

The United Church of God – Canada started out as a **mustard seed**. Over the years that seed has now taken root and become as a large tree. The tree continues to grow. We pray it will result in fruit for God's harvest.

Edwin van Pelt – Office Manager

EUROPEAN ADVENTURE AFTER 2005 FEAST

Rebecca and Walter Martin journeyed from Owen Sound, Ontario on an adventure through Europe. Here is how they described their travels.

A trip to Europe for the Feast was beyond my wildest dreams. The Feast in Schluchsee, Germany was amazing. Being with brethren from different languages and cultures striving for the same goal is very exhilarating. I viewed the cultural differences and language barriers as an adventure. It was quite a cultural difference to hear the same hymn being sung in three different languages—all at the same time.

After the Feast our party of three men and I explored everything between Norway and Sweden, all the way to Morocco. Living in a van and eating grocery store food for the majority of the next three weeks, was part of the excitement. Seeing the diverse topography and cultures of each country was an enriching experience. Viewing the breathtaking mountains of Switzerland and the **spectacular fiords of Norway**, contrasted with the vast beauty of the Sahara, showed me the magnificence of God's creation. Apart from the diversity of the topography, I also noticed that everybody, everywhere, no

matter what culture, have the evident desire to economically survive. They also appear to have the desperate need for love, fulfillment and to belong. The latter is a need that only God can fulfill. People who don't know Him are searching, always searching.....

We drove into Paris one evening and began looking for a hotel, when we stumbled upon a "bad accident." It blocked the road and filled the air with toxic fumes. Later that evening we saw the news for the first time in English. We learned about riots in Paris. What we had seen wasn't a really "bad accident" after all, it was the result of a riot! The next day we visited the tourist area of Paris, the **Eiffel Tower**, and saw the original Mona Lisa painting at the Louvre, and had a great time.

Completely exhausted from a month of journeying, and hungry for mom's cooking, we departed for home. We brought back many lessons of life, and great impressions of the zeal of the European brethren.

Rebecca Martin

Our Air Canada flight to Germany on October 16th, with my sister Rebecca, and my friend Allan, landed in Frankfurt where we picked up our rental

car and drove to the feast site in Schluchsee. During the feast we had the opportunity to go Go-carting, explore Freiburg (a large old German city), and drive through Switzerland one afternoon. There were about 25 of us youth and we spent a lot of very enjoyable time together. After a spiritually uplifting feast, we headed north to Denmark.

We drove 16,000 kms (thankfully our rental was unlimited) and visited 16 countries. These were from the glaciers and fjords of Norway to **the Sahara of Morocco**. We stayed at a beautiful ocean-side village in Portugal for a day; hiked to the top of the rock of Gibraltar; took a ferry to Africa and spent an afternoon in a Arab market in Marrakesh.

Of all the countries we visited, I personally liked Portugal the best. Maybe it was because spending a night in a warm dry hotel room was such a nice change from sleeping with all our bags in a small car in cold, damp, northern Europe! Morocco was the most different of places and I am glad we traveled as far through the country as we did. Sweden was the country that was the most like Canada.



Our adventure ended a month later on a Lufthansa flight back to Toronto. I was sad to leave beautiful and exciting Europe, but happy to finally be able to rest up after an awesome adventure that saw us sleeping in the car most nights, not eating very much to save money, and in the last week driving through four nights.

Walter Martin



Using the Holy Spirit - Smug Security or Creative Risk?

The Holy Spirit makes possible the development of righteous character. But comfortable complacency can mean a smug security instead of extending oneself. The parable of the 'talents' helps explain the difference.

Overview of Matthew 25

In the first verses of the parable about the Kingdom, Jesus teaches that we should be in a state of expectancy for His return. The second parable that follows shows what we should be doing while awaiting that return. Christ gave the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2) to make possible spiritual growth. He takes care to provide all the necessary tools. He committed to His Church authority, gave His Truth, laws and future promises, plus the invisible Divine power to accomplish spiritual growth.

The talents are expressed in monetary terms, but refer to spiritual values. For our purpose let's accept a talent as a thousand dollars. Christ's rich gifts are, however, purchased in His blood – something beyond monetary value. Christ came as our Saviour. Firstfruit Christians are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit and are to be busy exercising that spirit to grow and transform.

The parable explains the Kingdom of God. *"It's also like a man going off on an extended trip. He called his servants together and delegated responsibilities. To one he gave five thousand dollars, to another two thousand, to a third one thousand, depending on their abilities. Then he left"* (Matthew 25:14-15 Eugene Peterson - The Message paraphrase used throughout).

By the uniqueness of birth each of us has different abilities, mental processes, and physical and spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit influences and provides an unseen power for the spiritual use of our natural abilities. This spiritual investment is to be put to good use according to our individual ability from birth and from later training in life. God doesn't place a heavier burden on our shoulders than we can bear. He gives us a task, and we are to get on with it. As Christians, we all have different opportunities and capacities, dispositions and personalities. Our situations are not identical. This shows that Christ knows us individually – knows our temperaments, our strengths, abilities, family obligations, personal skills and mental skill. No other human knows precisely what another's responsibility is. But each is ultimately responsible to Christ at the judgment.

Two servants did well.

"Right off, the first servant went to work and doubled his master's investment. The second did the same" (Matthew 25:14-27).

These two servants doubled their spiritual capital and Christ is happy with what each accomplished. They went and traded – immediately got busy. They applied themselves to their task. They lost no time. There was work to be done in transforming their hearts, attitudes, thinking and choices in life. Having made right spiritual investment choices they continued in that direction. They sought the Kingdom first, sublimated personal desires, and dedicated everything in their life to honour God's calling, a Way of Life. They took risks in their personal lives (time & money) to be involved in Church services, fellowship, efforts to spread the Gospel, and Church activities. They grow in Bible study and prayer. This was their main focus. It had a personal cost. It involved a risk. They were prepared to pay it. They developed themselves spiritually. From novices at baptism, through the Holy Spirit, they went on to develop who they were.

The one with the five talents was expected to achieve more. He had more, so was expected to accomplish more. Because of greater ability, he was expected to go the extra mile in extending himself more. It was not sufficient for him to cruise along in smug comfort and security. The servant with only two talents was not expected to produce beyond what he could. If he did the best he could with what he had, this was not only sufficient, it still produced the same percentage - double.

How does the term Creative Risk apply here? James helps explain it by saying: "For if anyone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like a man studying his natural face in a mirror. For he studied himself and went his way, and immediately he forgot what he was like" (1:23-24 Modern KJV). Creative risk is to open up oneself to challenges. It sees the self and determines to change what is personally needed. Few of us are comfortable at stepping into unfamiliar territory. Yet to grow, we sometimes have to be prepared to risk our fears. And God's Spirit will not let us down. It may be uncomfortable, it may mean embarrassment, feeling awkward, even foolish. Over the history of God's Church few of us have ever desired to confront our fears by being involved in Speaking or Family Clubs. It represents a creative risk to step up to a lectern and face an audience. But the risk of doing so paid off. Some years ago one of the ladies who volunteered to do phoning for the Waiting Room Program was afterward terrified at what she had let herself in for. She was concerned over how she would cope with a refusal, rejection, a No. She prayed about it. Her first call responded by saying, "Oh, that would be lovely. Thank you." Her calls thereafter weren't without some anxiety, but the ice was broken and she moved on to a higher level of personal development. It risks pain to do what is right. It risks pain to confront unsavoury things within your self. But from it you grow, you produce, you increase your talent.

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The third wouldn't risk himself.

"But the man with the single thousand dug a hole and carefully buried his master's money. After a long absence, the master of those three servants came back and settled up with them. The one given five thousand dollars showed him how he had doubled his investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.' "The servant with the two thousand showed how he also had doubled his master's investment. His master commended him: 'Good work! You did your job well. From now on be my partner.'

"The servant given one thousand said, 'Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.'

The third servant is severely rebuked. Why? Because he earned no money for his employer? No, the parable doesn't say this. It is even possible he might have been commended even if he had lost some, providing that he had sincerely *tried*. He did not misspend nor embezzle nor squander the money. He simply hid it. *A hidden talent is no good to anybody*. Is a spiritual talent only for one's own personal benefit and need? That he hid the money implies he was aware it was not his. Similarly, the Holy Spirit belongs to God, and He can take it away. When we receive the Holy Spirit we are stewards of its work in our lives.

Here in this parable, we have two servants who are busy developing their talents and being successful in spiritual development. The third servant remains spiritually comfortable in the smug security of having received the Truth and God's Spirit, but doesn't have the motivation for any further effort. The zeal of the others did not rub off to inspire him to any action. The heart of the parable is that we must strive to produce fruits of the Holy Spirit. The two servants who were successful risked their spiritual capital to produce. They stepped out in faith and trusted God for the result. The third servant could have done the same, but didn't. Instead, he was satisfied with what he had received; he had the Truth, had access to the Holy Spirit, had a fellowship – what more was needed?

"The master was furious.' That's a terrible way to live! It's criminal to live cautiously like that! If you knew I was after the best, why did you do less than the least? The least you could have done would have been to invest the sum with the bankers, where at least I would have gotten a little interest."

The third servant reveals a fearful, negative attitude in living as a true Christian. He recognizes that God is his master, but he has the frame of mind that God is demanding and unfair. He buried the money for safe keeping so that it couldn't be lost. This way he wouldn't be accountable for squandering it. He was safety minded and showed concern for his own protection. He didn't want to risk stepping out into an unknown where he might appear foolish, or make mistakes. Fear is at the heart of much of our human psyche, as expressed in Genesis 3 with Adam and Eve. *"Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"* Here is the fear of being seen for what we are. Fear of exposure, feelings of shame, rejection and humiliation. Yet often the fear of having to face the same fears again is enough to change the direction in our lives. We say today 'never again' - which means we do not want to face the same experiences, attitudes, penalties or tensions. So we change.

The heart of the parable is that we must strive to produce fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The smallness of his one talent, did not excuse him from failing to make use of it. We will not be called to account for what we couldn't do, but for what we have received. The third servant is comfortable with having maintained what he was given – the Truth, God's Church, fellowship, baptism and the Holy Spirit. He did not lose what he had received. He states that what God had given he still had to give back. He confesses though to *burying his talent*, of *hiding* it. He expects praise for having kept it in a safe place and that he didn't hazard losing it.

But doesn't an attitude of mind emerge here? He fearfully viewed God's way as too harsh. Having received God's love and forgiveness, he had assumed life would be easier without effort on his part. His fears reveal a false notion about God - that if he attempted to develop more, he would also have to answer to being more responsible. Christ's judgment illustrates that it is not sufficient to just give back what was given, but to make good use of it and improve. When Christ says He would have been happy with just bank interest, it indicates He would have been satisfied if the servant had just tried, even if accomplishing only a little. Instead, this servant elected for safety and smug comfort. The others risked of themselves to make personal change and to grow.

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PENTECOST 2006

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Creative Risk.

“Take the thousand and give it to the one who risked the most. And get rid of this "play-it-safe" who won't go out on a limb.”

In effect what Christ is saying, is that what one will not do, someone else will end up doing it. If we fail to be accountable for the Holy Spirit in our lives, then it will be given to someone else.

Spiritual progress comes from the ‘risk’ of losing your ‘self,’ diminishing the negatives in your human nature, confronting your self justification, facing denial and examining motive in your spiritual life. Growth in Holy Spirit fruit means moving on to a deeper understanding and love for God’s law (Psalm 119:97-104). It means walking in a deeper relationship with God through meaningful prayer and fasting. It means exploring an ever increasing humility and self assessment (Psalm 131:1; Philippians 2:3). It involves an increasing dedication to be accountable and forgiven for past mistakes, attitudes and motives.

Christ sets the high level which we are to attain. And that involves the daunting task of facing up to ourselves; of hearing what others say about us; of seeing ourselves as others see us; of recognising our pride, our blind spots, our irritations, our areas of temptation, our fears, inadequacies, loneliness, and our human inability to communicate much beyond our human limitations.

The task of having the Holy Spirit is too important to neglect. The parable of the talents helps us examine whether we live in smug security, or whether we exercise a creative risk in developing our spiritual talents. And it is guaranteed that the unseen power of God will help us.

Graemme Marshall - Ottawa

MARCH NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING—TORONTO OFFICE NEWS

The Council is required to meet four times a year. In the past, this has been done through three face-to-face meetings and one teleconference. For several years, the Council has been seeking ways to reduce costs to allow more funds to go into other areas of the Work. One way to do that was to reduce the number of face-to-face meetings to two per year. The Council determined to try holding the spring meeting by teleconference. This meeting was held on March 5.

The first item on the agenda for that meeting was to fill an upcoming vacancy on the Amendment Committee. Michael Erickson of Prince George was reappointed. The Amendment committee later selected Mike Erickson to continue as Chairman.

The Council has appreciated the efforts of Pastor Glen White, who has returned to pastor in the United States. He finished his second council term on March 31. (His current responsibilities now are the Kalispell, Missoula, and Whitehall, Montana Church areas. In visiting scattered members in Central and northern Montana, the area is about half the State of Montana. He remains attached to the Focused Education committee with two elders in the areas; in Kalispell, Roc Corbett, and in Whitehall, Dan Deininger).

Any time there is a change in the council composition there also has to be a change in the composition of the committees. After discussion, it was determined that the Governance/Ethics/Pastoral committee will remain the same. Anthony Wasilkoff was appointed to the Strategic/Finance committee. The next face-to-face council meeting will take place in Calgary from the 13th to the 15th of June.

Linda Wasilkoff—Secretary



BEYOND TODAY TV has three Beyond Today Anchors — Gary Petty, Darris McNeely and Steve Myers. Each pastors several UCG congregations as well as other responsibilities. Throughout the year some 30 other men as expert guests assist them with the programs. With such a variety of people participating in the television program, UCG’s focus is upon God’s message, rather than on any one messenger. Behind the scenes at top left is director Peter Eddington. Below at left is technical director, Clay Thornton.

BEYOND TODAY television offers a unique perspective on the challenging issues facing mankind today.

View at: <http://www.beyondtoday.tv>

'BE HOLY FOR I AM HOLY'

Most Bible students are familiar with the Exodus account of Moses and the burning bush. "Then He (God) said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). What made the ground on which Moses stood holy? And why is holiness so confusing to those claiming to be Christian when God's word clearly states that we are to be holy? "For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy" (Leviticus 11:45). "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy (Leviticus 19:2).

While God commanded that His chosen nation of Israel be a holy nation, we also find that those called and chosen in New Testament times, including our day, are also to be holy: "...but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy" (1Peter 1:15-16).

Despite Biblical admonition for holiness, the vast majority of those who claim Christianity as their faith have little or no concept of what it means. A survey conducted earlier this year by the *Barna Research Group* found the idea of holiness baffling to most church-attending Americans; that most adults remain confused, if not daunted by the concept.

"When pressed to describe what it means to be holy, adults gave a wide range of answers. The most common reply was "I don't know," offered by one out of every five adults (21%). Other responses fell into categories such as "being Christ-like" (19%), making faith your top priority in life (18%), living a pure or sinless lifestyle (12%), and having a good attitude about people and life (10%). Other response categories included focusing completely on God (9%), being guided by the Holy Spirit (9%), being born again (8%), reflecting the character of God (7%), exhibiting a moral lifestyle (5%), and accepting and practicing biblical truth (5%)." (www.barna.org)

Notice that the answer most often given when asked to describe holiness was "I don't know," and notice that only 5%, less than 1 in 20 church-going adults, believe in accepting and practicing Biblical truth. Does that mean 95% do not believe in taking the Bible literally? And not one answer referred to keeping the Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath, which God says we are to keep holy (Exodus 20:8).

These new findings caused the survey's director, George Barna, to suggest that churches need to take this body of information seriously.

"Realize that the results portray a body of Christians who attend church and read the Bible, but do not understand the concept or significance of holiness, do not personally desire to be holy, and therefore do little, if anything, to pursue it. The challenge to the nation's

Christian ministries is to foster a genuine hunger for holiness among the masses who claim they love God but who are ignorant about biblical teachings regarding holiness. To align their hearts with the notion of being holy, we must move them away from a 'cheap grace' theology and replace people's self-absorption with focus on God and His ways. To help them pursue holiness, we must help them comprehend and accept biblical theology regarding God, Satan, the purposes of life on earth, the nature of spiritual transformation and maturity, and the necessity of bearing spiritual fruit"
(www.barna.org).

So just what does God desire when He commands that we 'Be holy for He is holy.' Lets look closely at the original meaning of the word holy. The Hebrew is *Kodesh* meaning 'Separated or Set Apart.' Bullinger's Companion bible comments that *Kodesh* can also imply 'consecrated' 'dedicated' 'hallowed' 'holiness' 'saint' or 'sanctuary.' Some modern English dictionaries will include, devout, faithful, god-fearing, righteous, and virtuous. The New Testament Greek for holy is *Hagios*, and Strongs Exhaustive Concordance translates *Hagios* into the English words sacred, blameless, and consecrated. We find the word Holy used in the scriptures 567 times!

To be holy simply means to be set apart for a special purpose by God, because holy means that God is present. It is His presence that makes it holy. We also recognize it means our dedication to God's way of life, seeking after righteousness, giving our heart and soul, our very being to God and Jesus Christ, following the 'way' that God has laid out for us. Holy means allowing God to guide and direct our paths through His Holy Spirit.

The apostle Peter referred to those in God's church as a *holy priesthood* (1Peter 2:5). Peter also tells us that the people of God, called to the knowledge and understanding He reveals are very special to Him. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a *holy nation*, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1Peter 2:9).

It may seem a little odd to ask the question: Do you want to be a holy person? But the truth is that holiness has its reward: "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6).

The ultimate goal, the reward we all desire is to be in God's Kingdom, and being holy is part of the bargain!

"He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy" (1Peter 1:15-16).

David Palmer—Vancouver

POSITIVES FOR OLDER PEOPLE.....

APPRECIATING OLD AGE.

If we live out our natural lives - one thing is sure: we all get old. It's a 100% certainty with no exceptions other than for those who die prematurely. Bible heroes weren't any more exempt from the traumas of aging than we are today.

Isaac at 137 had eye problems. 'Now when Isaac was old and his eyes had become clouded so that he was not able to see. ...he said, See now, I am old, and my death may take place at any time' (Genesis 27:1-2 Bible in Better English). With his infirmities Isaac thought about imminent death, yet in fact he lived on for another 43 years (Genesis 27:1-2; 35:27-29).

Jacob had a portent of his death at 147, was nearly blind, but held on until he saw his son Joseph and his grandchildren (Genesis 47:28/33; 48:1-2/10/21; 49:33).

Much later King David at only 70 years of age is termed 'very old' and had acute hypothermia (1 Kings 1:1).

His 80 year-old friend Barzillai said, "I don't have long to live; why should I go with Your Majesty to Jerusalem? I am already eighty years old, and nothing gives me pleasure any more. I can't taste what I eat and drink, and I can't hear the voices of singers. I would only be a burden to Your Majesty (2 Samuel 19:34-35).

Aging comes with its traumas - and they certainly aren't to be dismissed as of little consequence. They are a trial of life. But one that is part of God's plan.

What does God intend we learn by the aging process?

We try to counter aging effects by light hearted banter. Popular anecdotes about seniors illustrate this. 'When I bend down to tie up my shoes, I look around to see what else can be done while I'm down there.' Or, 'These days my back goes out more than I do.' Or, 'When I go down to the shops I often wonder whether I'm coming or going.' It is important to keep a positive, humorous outlook on aging because God designed the process. And it's not the act of a vengeful God.

Positives to appreciate.

Aging brings maturity and mellowing, born from the crucible of experience. There is digestion of life's experiences, an assimilation of loss and grief in life. We experience a loss of youthful vigour, appearance, health, career position, and income through retirement. And there can be the death of a spouse, family members or loved ones. There is the realisation of Job: 'naked I came, naked I return' (1:21). Paul explained, 'For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it' (1 Timothy 6:7).

The aged have absorbed the 'blows' and 'wounds' of life. Some heal, some scar. The mature re-assess their life experience. They often see they're not going to reach their 'dream'. But they also no longer feel they must protect some inflexible position. John the Baptist at a youngish 30 maturely concluded, 'He must become greater, I must become less' (John 3:30).

The elderly know what works. They can make decisions with an economy of action. They can cut through much behavioural baggage by seasoned judgment developed from experience. Maturity means being less pre-occupied with financial concerns and advancement. Maturity means composure, a lessening of the extremes of emotional highs and lows. There is less exuberance, and less depression. The mature years bring a greater sense of being in control of life. There may be a feeling of wanting to *feel young*, but not to *be young* again. They have too much self control, ease of interpersonal relations and self-confidence to trade for a youthful age again.

Men in maturity.

Older men become much more comfortable with themselves and their mates. Aging causes many men to accept their present place on the career ladder; it becomes 'far enough'. They are at peace with themselves. A 60-year-old can comment: 'I'm too old for politicking or infighting anymore, I just want peace and quiet.' The shift of interest is toward developing skills and spending more time with friends and family. Mature men show more affection for their mates and value the part their wives have played towards the family. Romantic love can finally blossom and mature for many older people. This is the beauty of committed love from a lifelong devotion. A lengthy partnership of love in facing good and bad times, means a husband and wife are real friends. Committed love over long years yields the highest return on this faithful investment. It becomes a marriage of advanced maturity. Looking back on child rearing, men attribute much of the teaching and nurturing to their wives, indicating they themselves were too busy making a living. With less financial obligations they desire more companionship from their marriage relationships.



(Photos throughout courtesy of photo.com).

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POSITIVES FOR OLDER PEOPLE.....

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Women in maturity.

While younger women are often vulnerable and dependent on their husbands, mature women are no longer weighed down by the responsibilities of family life. When children are grown up and leave home older women have renewed energy to re-assess and modify their life. Many women look anew at the positives of their husbands and at their own personal appearance. They are more settled in what they like and dislike. They no longer feel the need to fit in with every fashion, knowing now what best suits them personally. Many develop careers for the first time, or pick up from where they left off when childbearing intervened. Grandparenting experiences bring pleasure without parental strains. Grandchildren are said to keep grandmothers young!

Physical positives.

The benefits of regular exercise.

People in their 70's and 80's can still build muscle by 'pumping iron'. Loss of strength is often the reason why elderly give up independent lives. The human body was not made for a spectator role - it needs physical activity. With prolonged idleness muscles become atrophied, joints stiffen, bones become brittle, digestion is impaired and physical co-ordination declines. One study on aging showed how a class of 70-year-old men, after a year's exercise program, ended up with bodily reactions of men 30 years younger! And the *Seniors Athletic Games* are testimony to people who late in life still actively pursue athletic and sporting competition. Exercise oxygenates the blood and helps release mood-elevating endorphins. Working on your health also signals to your mind an important psychological ingredient – that you have not yet given up on life and still express HOPE.



Pets.

Because animals are age-blind and don't answer back, they are ideal company. They aren't a substitute for people but can lighten loneliness. Sometimes when older people marry again out of a need for companionship, and if it proves to have been a wrong choice, then maybe a dog, cat, or parakeet might have been a better alternative.



Generosity of spirit.

Aging yields a greater self mastery over emotions and attitudes, and fosters an ability to forgive others. It allows more sharing of thoughts by letters, sayings, and jokes – all things that help uplift other people. Old age should be a time that turns out better than you expected. A stage of life that you can truly say, Yes, in many respects it is the best so far.

Inner peace from acceptance. You are now more comfortable with how life has worked out for you. Perhaps a greater calm about the things you didn't achieve. Yet, doesn't old age seem contradictory? That just when you've finally gained the competence to properly handle marriage, family and people relationships, you now don't have the health or energy to do so! We could be moved to ask God what's the point of it all? He might answer that your life is a preparatory stage for entering the Kingdom of God.

It's why the Apostle Paul could disclose, *"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body"* (Philippians 1:21/23).

Old age is the hope of a grand new beginning. And for the elderly the Kingdom lies just around the corner.

Graemme Marshall—Ottawa

GOLDEN AGE REFLECTIONS....

**Interview with member Mr. Arthur Gogolin,
Prescott, Ontario Nursing Home.**

When and where were you born?

I was born in 1922; I'm now 83 years of age. I was a home birth at our farm near Pembroke, Ontario, with a local midwife assisting.

What was childhood fun for you when you were young?

For me on an isolated farm back in the '30's there wasn't much fun – it was mostly all work. We would slide down hills on pieces of cardboard in winter. We would also play catch with a baseball. I didn't ride a bike until around age 30 – just for fun. If I went anywhere I walked. We walked three miles a day to go to school after crossing the Madawaska River in a rowboat. After school we had cows to get in for milking. Then there was firewood and to carry in water from the outside well. The toilet was also outside.

To get groceries to last the winter, we had to cut pulp poles and telephone poles and drag them by sleigh to the train station. The local store-keeper then arranged a credit at his store for the log payment and this supplied our winter food. Our supplies were in bags of sugar, flour, oatmeal, tea and prunes. Our school lunch was bread, pork fat and brown sugar.

How did you get your first paying job, and how much were you paid back then?

My first job was at a neighbor's farm at age 22 or 23. I did ploughing and cutting logs with horse teams. I was paid \$10 plus board and clothes and lived on the farm. We would start work at 5:30am with 24 cows to milk by hand. Breakfast would be 9 am and we'd eat supper around 6 pm but have more chores to do until 9. Then it would be off to bed.

Back in those days our family kept us at home until 21 years of age, and 18 for the girls. We went to school at age 8. I only went for five years to a one room, one teacher school with 80 students. In winter the ink wells would freeze up overnight and we would warm them on the stove in the morning. When too hot they would fly off all over the



place hitting the windows. The teacher would have a 'strap' for discipline and from time to time one of the kids would steal it and hide it up in the ceiling. One day they were repairing the ceiling

and found many straps hidden in the dust up there.

You didn't learn to read or write. In what way has this been a handicap to you?

I could always sign my name. I would copy labels off the jars or cans, like a picture of peanut butter, to make up a shopping list. I can't read documents, the Bible or literature. When I have owned properties I have always had someone I trusted read the legal documents before I would sign anything. I would have to trust people in this way.

I haven't seen it as a handicap, I have just got used to it. I have a good memory and can copy things well. I would ask people I trusted to check financial records for me, to double check. I haven't been able to have a motor vehicle license because I cannot read signs or maps. I can drive farm machinery alright. I suppose not being able to read or write helped keep me out of the military.

You now reside in Wellington House nursing home in Prescott. How do you make use of your time?

I have always had an interest in crafts, copying and drawing. I make models out of wooden pegs and popsicle sticks and do needlework making decorative doilies. I give these away to people. I share a room with a gentleman who had a stroke some years back and who is in a wheel chair now and can't speak.

What was your entertainment at home on the farm when there was no power or TV?

I can watch TV but can't read any advertisements – maybe that is a blessing. We had no radio until hydro came to our area in 1953. There wasn't much to do after doing all the chores.

When did you marry?

It was late in life, when I was 70. I have been married for 13 years now. When I grew up in an isolated rural area there was not a lot of social life.

What fond memories do you have as you look back over your 83 years?

Probably because I can't read or write I like stories with a joke in them. I remember as school kids how we had to pass by this old grumpy neighbor who accused us one day of breaking his window with snowballs. Later another day as we passed by we saw his dog 'Buster' jumping through the window. So we knocked on his door and showed him what his own dog was doing to the window!

Not long ago I had a lady asked me where I went to Church. I said, 'In Kemptville,' meaning UCG. Not knowing much about Kemptville she said, 'There can't be too many people in Kemptville.' I replied, "Well how many people did Noah have?"

On another occasion I asked a lady: 'If you saw 20 sheep, a dog and one shepherd, how many feet would you have?' She figured

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WALKING THE STREETS FOR THE GOSPEL'S SAKE—OTTAWA

Distributing GOOD NEWS magazines and brochures to households.

Mrs. Isabelle Nicol regularly walks around her suburban streets for exercise. While she does this she delivers UCG advertising brochures and *Good News* magazines to people's homes. So far this year she has delivered some 1,400. This is how she expressed some of the challenges involved.

"Last Sabbath someone expressed some safety concerns about my delivering the brochures. They wondered if it was safe to do this on my own. I explained that I'm not the least bit worried about doing it.

Postmen (women) have been delivering mail for a long time and the worst that ever seems to happen is to have some dog come chasing after them. Nowadays, however, dogs are not allowed to roam about freely. Or at least,



they are not supposed to. When it comes to delivery people, the most fun dogs seem to get out of their day is to bark hysterically as they tear the literature from your fingers while you're trying to

push it through the mail slot in the door. Good thing mail slots don't allow fingers to go through too. One wonders what condition the mail is in when the owners return home. More enterprising dogs sense exactly when the letter delivery is due and sneakily hide behind the door waiting for their opportune moment. Just as you're about to drop the mail in the mailbox, a ravaging head suddenly appears in the door window, and with mouth foaming and eyes popping, amidst a volley of shrieking barks, scares the living daylight out of you.



After this bit of amusement, the dog no doubt composes himself and lurks in wait for his next victim.

This type of psychotic episode on the part of dogs is somewhat frightening for unsuspecting people, but no doubt, most entertaining for any dog left on its own all day.

All told I have delivered 1,400 pieces of mail - 400 *Good News* magazines, and 1000 brochures. And so far there has been one confirmed subscriber request."

Isabelle Nicol – Ottawa

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20 or more. But I said, you would only have two – your own!

How did you first come to know the Truth?

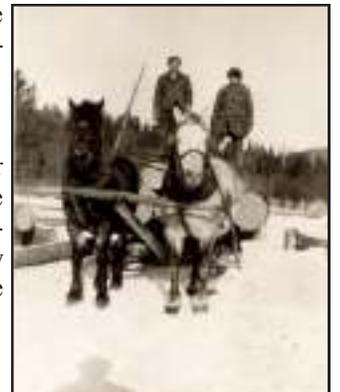
When I worked and lived on the farm the farmers had a radio. One night they heard The World Tomorrow broadcast with Mr. Herbert Armstrong. This would have been in the 1950's. He talked about the seventh day Sabbath. They went to an Evangelical minister to ask him if this was right or not. The minister said we must have had a hard time studying out all the scriptures about the Sabbath day. We all started to keep the Sabbath and the farmers wrote and asked for a visit from ministers of the Church. After that we began attending in Ottawa and became baptized. After a time they dropped out and I moved down to Spencerville where I worked on the Moulton farm. During one period when I was ill the church began to change its beliefs and much of that passed me by - except I could tell from the audio tape sermons that something was quite different. I then continued with the Moultons and United.

What does it mean for you to being at church where you can't read scriptures or take notes?

I rely on my memory and can listen to the audio tapes. I can tell from what a minister says whether he is on the right track or not. How I have known the Truth is by following the fruits of long time members of the church who I know are dedicated to God. Their examples set the way for me to follow. And there is answered prayer for me as well. When I have a need I pray and ask God for clarity and an answer. And it has always come. But my confidence is to follow the example of long time members just as Paul said, 'To follow him, as he followed Christ.'

UNC

Old family photos illustrate hauling logs by horses to the mill.



ETERNITY – imagining the possibilities.

Before reading this mind-expanding article, please bear the following in mind. One of the loving characteristics of God as our Father is that he reserves to Himself some things as ‘surprises’ for His children. Scripture teaches that ‘*The secret things belong unto God*’ (Deuteronomy 29:29). He will reveal all in His time. Before then, it can be part of the anticipation of this expected ‘gift,’ to think about, imagine, and contemplate what those surprises might be? This is true of our becoming Spirit Beings; the details of the World Tomorrow, and of God’s Kingdom. Within what God has so far revealed, and what he has not chosen to, this article, while not dogma, projects our minds forward into eternity and attempts to envision some of the wonders and glories which God has prepared for those who love Him. Eternity in an endless universe in the family of God with whom all things are possible, presents us with limitless possibilities. With this explanatory purpose in mind, we can appreciate what the article suggests of this not yet revealed potential. We hope you will find it a useful tool for prayer and meditation -- in anticipation of your ‘surprise gifts’ from your heavenly Father. UNC

ETERNAL LIFE – What might it mean for you and me?

Eternity is something that humans everywhere seem to long for. Most religions, in fact, offer a promise of eternity. All strive to satisfy this longing that dwells inside the human psyche. Where did this deep longing come from? The answer is given to us by the Word of God in: “He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He (God) has put eternity in their hearts...”(Ecclesiastes 3:11 NKJV throughout).

God is the One who has put the awareness of and the craving for eternity in the human heart. He wants humans to long for it, because eternity is their destiny. Most of all, He wants Christians to long for it, for that’s what they were called to: “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness— a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time...” (Titus 1:1-2).

Eternity, therefore, is a promise from the one who cannot lie: The Great God. Consequently, the promise is absolutely sure. Lest there be any doubt, Jesus Christ confirmed His Father’s promise: “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:28).

The Apostle Paul asserts with certainty that our hope is indeed eternal: God, “...who will render to each one according to his deeds: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality” (Romans 2:6-7).

Paul also adds that the life awaiting us will be thrilling beyond our comprehension: “But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him’”(1 Corinthians 2:9).

In the Book of Psalms, David gives us a vague but very inspiring glimpse into that future: “I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:8-11).

This is figurative language, of course. Christians will not spend their eternity sitting at the right hand of God. Being at the right hand of God simply implies Divine rulership, Divine authority, and Divine power. But what are the pleasures the scriptures hint at? What will give us fullness of joy forever and ever? Does the Bible give us any hint? Yes, the Bible gives us several hints into our eternal future, which this article will explore in detail. To accomplish this, the article will be divided into ten chronological phases, beginning with the return of Christ and on into eternity. Let’s, therefore, begin with phase one.

Phase one: Our Transformation

We don’t know if we’ll be dead or alive, when Christ will appear at His second coming. Whatever might be our state, there will be a moment when we will be transformed from mortal to immortal. For a while we will not know if it’s a dream or reality. But the moment will come when we will realize that we have passed from death into eternal life. That will be one of the most overwhelming and joyful moments of our life. Everything is in doubt until that moment, but at that moment the ultimate hope and dream of our existence will finally be fulfilled. That is the moment when the war against Satan and our own nature will be declared won. That is the moment when the finish line will be crossed and eternal life will be assured.

That is also the moment when our implacable enemy, death, will be declared defeated, and it will never again have power over us. As Paul emphasized “When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘death has been swallowed up in victory’” (1 Corinthians 15:54). This is the stunning reality that the Apostle Peter is referring to in 1 Peter 4:13: “But rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.” In other words, because you have suffered with Christ, when He will appear, you will experience your reward: ecstasy.

The transformation or resurrection phase will be characterized by another aspect as well: the realization that there has been a transformation not only into eternity but also into power and glory. Weight will become weightlessness; weakness is suddenly

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replaced by power. The eyes can see clearly and far into the distance without the need of glasses; the ears can hear clearly without the need of hearing aids; the aches and pains that accompanied us for years are no longer.

Soon after this amazing realization, we will be puzzled by the fact that the dazzling light emanating from others around us is the same glorious light that emanates from us as well. We will then realize that Christ's promise in Matthew 13:43, to make us shine as the sun, has also been kept, and that we are fully in the Divine realm.

Phase Two: The First Resurrection, and the Dramatic Events that Will Follow.

After coming to terms with our transformation, we will be overwhelmed by the moment when we will see Christ for the first time, not as a human being, but as the glorious, powerful God that He is. From that point on, it will be very hard to take our eyes off our glorious older brother. Will He communicate with our minds at that point and tell us personally *"Welcome! Congratulations, you made it, I can't wait to spend time with you"*?

One thing is certain; we will look at Him, and we will be filled with wonder. Jesus said in His prayer to the Father, before His death, that He was impatiently looking forward for us to see His glory (John 17:24). That moment will come, and it will be majestic.

We will then fly with Him to Jerusalem where His feet, and our feet, will finally rest on the Mount of Olives. Then the nations will surround us and a horrific battle will ensue. Millions of soldiers will gather to attack Christ and us, His saints, only to have their eyes melt in their sockets (Zechariah 14.12). It will be a battle humans will never forget. We witness the awesome power of God, slowly becoming aware that much of that power is available to us as well.

Phase Three: Our First Assignment.

Christ promised us that some Christians will be rulers over a few cities, some over several. Will the assignment be given immediately after Christ's return, after the crowning? Will we be assigned big cities? Will they be small cities? Will they be a combination of both? The world has hundreds of thousands of big and small cities. There will be plenty for all.

Soon after, we will fly to the locations assigned to us and, rest assured, none of us will find joyful, thriving places. The cities of the world will be in a horrific mess. Buildings will be rubble, water will be polluted, food will be scarce, and disease will be rampant. In early September 2005 we saw the mess in New Orleans. We have seen the desperation in the eyes of the elderly and the children. We have seen their longing for help. They knew that eventually soldiers would come to give them help. But after the Great Tribulation, the throngs of the nations will not have such a luxury. Their desperation over time would have turned to listlessness and hopelessness. We will be their only hope, and this will

be our opportunity to use our newly given powers to serve and to heal.

Upon our arrival, most probably with a company of angels, the people will be bewildered by these spirit beings that will appear out of nowhere. At first, their reaction will be fear and astonishment. Some will run and hide; some will be frozen with fright. Soon after, they will be reassured by our warm smiles, our soothing words and kind and loving actions.

Then will come our first opportunity to use our powers for good. Who will be the first person we will heal? An old man covered with painful boils, nearing starvation? A sickly, starving woman protecting a baby? A paralytic? A blind person? A deaf and dumb person? A dying baby? Who will be the very first one we will touch and totally heal? Even the then unconverted disciples were involved with miraculous healings through God's spirit (Matthew 10).

There will be a blissful, unforgettable moment, when we will touch and totally heal our "first" patient, and the sight of complete recovery will fill us with unspeakable joy. And then another, and then another, then hundreds will crowd around us, and then thousands seeking relief from countless diseases, like they did with Jesus while He walked on earth.

The lame will walk, and the blind will see, and the deaf will hear; the sickly will regain their health, be it physical or mental, and the dying will be filled with life and vigor. Terror will be replaced with peace of mind; depression with joy; anxiety with assurance; confusion and hopelessness with hope and meaning.

The rivers, lakes and ponds will be filled with fresh clean water teeming with life. The weather will be neither too hot nor too cold, neither too wet nor too dry. We will watch over the people assigned to us with love and concern, and they will experience true, loving, godly rulership for the first time ever. We will share with them the knowledge of the true God, and physical and spiritual principles that will bring lasting solutions to chronic human problems.

Phase Four: Meeting Christ and God our Father.

We do not know when, but there will be a time appointed when we will meet Christ personally. Will there be a long lineup? For certain there will be hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of Old and New Testament saints longing to meet Him. Will we meet Him in alphabetical order? Will we meet Him in chronological order? Is there need for either? Christ can be anywhere at any time. If He so wishes, Christ can meet with all of us separately at the same time and spend much time with all of us at the same time as well, if He so chooses.

The moment we will be able to say *"thank you"* to our great Savior face to face will be a time of incomparable joy. How will we feel? Will we be overwhelmed by the experience?

When we appear before Christ, we will be speechless and we will have a hard time saying anything at all for a while. At that moment, we will experience powerful emotions of great joy,

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mixed with awe and the deepest love and gratitude. We will fall on our knees; we will worship Him, and we will possibly say, "Thank You" countless times, while crying with joy.

He will then ask us to rise and will tell us how happy He is that we made it, and that He had known us since time began and was supporting and promoting us, all this time. He will tell us He can't wait to spend time with us, and that He will answer any question that we may have in due time. If any archangel will be present, He will introduce us to them and other mighty angels that He surrounds Himself with.

Then the most sweet and most longed for words that anyone could ever hope to hear: "Our Father would now like to see you." Those words will leave us overwhelmed and astonished. We will then fly into Heaven, and as we approach from the distance we will see millions of angels looking our way. We will see a Great Light shining in their midst. We will land on the sea of glass, and we will be overwhelmed by the spectacle: a glorious throne emanating light so powerful that no human eye could ever dare to look at, and a stunning rainbow framing it all. We will also see smaller thrones set on both sides with beings looking at us with joyful smiles. But our eyes will be transfixed by the centre of it all. The One who loves us with love we cannot now comprehend, there looking at us, showering us with warmth; our eternal Father, the source of everything, right there in front of us.

Will Jesus announce our arrival by name? Will the Father ask us to approach? What will we do? We will for certain fall on our knees on the glass floor. What will we say? Will we be speechless for quite some time? What will the Great God say to us? What will be His first words toward us? We are his babies; newly born, in a manner of speaking.

Will He say "Come to me my beloved child?" Will He stand up and meet us? Will he hold us to His spiritual self? We are his children that He invested so much time and anguish over. His love for us is beyond anything we can ever presently feel.

Will He be a distant father? Will it be just a formal event? God is Love. He will neither be cold nor distant. That moment will be the most loving moment we will ever experience. And that is the love we will feel forever; for He is our Father forever; a Father who only wants our best; who wants to share all he has with us. A Father we can access at any time; that we can talk to at any time; that we can consult with at any time. A Father who will most probably be present during the most important moments in our eternity and will celebrate our achievements forever.

What then? Will there be a gigantic celebration, a magnificent celebration that will go on and on? We will never tire. We will not get tired and want to go to sleep. How many angels will we meet? What will we say? What kind of spiritual drinks and food will be served? What kind of music will be played? How big a chorus of angels will sing in our honor? Will there be a song composed and sung for each one of us? Whatever will be sung will be much greater than anything the great composers of world history have ever composed.

But there is more. Let's read some intriguing scriptures in the Book of Revelation. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it" (Revelation 2:17).

We only and the Father and Christ will know that special name, of course. When will it be given to us? What will it be? Will it capture the essence of who we are to Our Father and Christ? It will be "our" secret. And without doubt, we will treasure it for ever.

Further down in Revelation we find other exciting details of what awaits us. "Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name" (Revelation 3:12).

Christ will write on us the name of the Father, the name of the New Jerusalem and a "new" name. Where will these names be written? Having the name of the Father and Christ's new name on us is the ultimate honor. This is one more proof of the great familial bond that will exist among us. When will He do so? Will the Father give us the stone and will Christ then write on us the name when we appear before the Heavenly Throne?

In verse 21 we read another great promise. "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne." Christ has His throne at the right hand of the Father. He is co-ruler with God the Father, though the Father is supreme in authority. Does it mean that anytime we go to the Father and Christ is not on His throne we can sit beside Him? For certain it means that we will share in the rulership of everything God possesses, as we are told by Paul that we are co-inheritors with Christ.

Paul also tells us about a future crown to be given to Christians once transformed into spirit beings: "And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown" (1 Corinthians 9:25). This reality is further amplified in 2 Timothy 4:8: "Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing." Is Paul saying that the crown will be given to us the day of Christ's return, or is it a generic "day," meaning at the general time following Christ's return? Will the crowning take place in Heaven?

Can we visualize the moment when Christ will place that crown on our heads?

Can we imagine the deafening applause on the part of millions of angels at our crowning?

Can our minds even begin to imagine the exhilaration of the

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moment?

Phase Five: Getting to Know our Eternal Brothers and Sisters and the Angels.

Once things are under control, then comes a phase that we all long for; getting to know our eternal brothers and sisters and the angels that have been faithful to God. We will get to know Abel, Noah, Abraham and the patriarchs, David and the great prophets of old. We will spend time with Paul, Peter, John, and the other apostles. I want to be able to spend time with Michael the Archangel, Gabriel the other Archangel, and the millions of angels that populate the universe. And each moment with them will be indescribable joy.

(The final five phases will come next issue).

Michael Caputo - Toronto

FRANCOPHONE NEWS – excerpts of letters from Mr. Joel Meeker - February 16, 2006

“Mr. Hongerlout, his son Jérémie and I have now returned from our trip to Africa. Our trip was crowned with success. For four and a half days, we presented seminars intended for those in local positions of responsibility, on how to better serve our brethren in the francophone areas of Africa. The sessions were very intense. The meetings in Benin, which usually began at 9 a.m. and finished at 5 p.m., with a midday break for lunch, covered several subjects.

On Friday evening, we began with a Bible study on the importance of service. During the Sabbath, the following day, we had the presentation by the participants, followed by a Bible study on spiritual tools, as well as a sermon on our role in God’s plan. From Sunday, we had interactive presentations on the subject of the divine character that our Father wants to develop in us, a presentation on pitfalls that leaders must avoid, gave instructions on the organisation of functions in the Church, and gave each day lessons on the preparation of sermonettes – preparations which concluded with the presentation of a sermonette by each of the eight participants who attended.

On Tuesday morning, we made a boat trip together to the lakeside village of **Ganvié, twelve kilometres from Cotonou**. Not only was the visit interesting, but we were also able to fellowship and get to know each other better. We had the pleasure to welcome Mr. Jean-Marie Mundeli of Rwanda ; Mr. Tia, Paul and Félix, from the Ivory Coast; Mr. Kossi Fiaboé and Mr. Pierre Kloutsé, from Togo; Mr. Michel Ogoudélé and his son Bonaventure Ogoudélé, from Bénin; and Mr. Moïse Mabout from Cameroun. Unfortunately, Mr. Jean-Baptiste Sibobugingo (Rwanda); Mr. Pierre Goueth and Mr. Emmanuel Andang (Cameroun) were not able to come, not having succeeded in getting passports. We missed them very much and hope that if we can repeat a seminar of this kind they will be able to attend. The meetings in Bénin over, Mr. Hongerlout and Jérémie departed, while I continued my tour to visit Mr. Ganda Kaboré in Burkina Faso. One of his daughters had asked for baptism, and we were able to begin preparation for it and spend a very pleasant Sabbath together.”

March 28, 2006.

“I am writing to you from the Home Office where I have just returned from a trip to **Martinique** which was both profitable and enjoyable. It was a pleasure to be there with the faithful little group, especially as there were two “new” people at the meetings and the Bible study. I put *new* in quotation marks as they are new to UCG, but not at all to the Church of God in its full spiritual sense.

We were able to spend two Sabbaths together and do personal visiting during the week, as well as have a Bible study on a Friday evening, during which three people who are not part of the Church attended. The theme of the study was the signs leading to Christ’s return, based essentially on Matthew 24 and Luke 21. The guests seemed very interested, and read for themselves the passages I quoted from the Bible. Whatever happens with these people, by the fact that they were at this study, they have received a “witness” of the good news of the establishment of the Kingdom of God here below.



I leave again in a week on a trip to **French-speaking Europe and Rwanda**. I will be accompanied to Rwanda by Dr. Greg Swartz – a dentist who is also a minister of the United Church of God. He is going voluntarily to provide dental care for our brethren in Rwanda. As it is the country where we have the greatest concentration of members in French-speaking Africa, he will be able to do a lot of good in a short time. This trip to Rwanda will be financed by the United Church’s Good Works program, an assistance program which has already given a great deal of help to the African areas.”

Joel Meeker—Regional Pastor

CANADIAN COMMENTARY AND PERSPECTIVE.....

HOT VIDEOS - LINKED TO EARLY SEX!

“Kid’s *GANGSTA* and *STREETWALKER LOOK* related to raunchy music videos,” shouts the newspaper headline. Another says, “TV SEX DOUBLED IN LAST SEVEN YEARS.”

Displays of cleavage and pelvis on teen girls, and the *gangsta’ strut* among teenage boys is now common within the culture of our young people, but how many parents have bothered to take notice. Where did they learn it? According to experts the kids see it constantly displayed on raunchy music videos, and the ‘soft porn’ of some mainstream advertising, as well as the sexual content on television. The message, whether intended or subliminal, is not only responsible for the *gangsta’* and *streetwalker look*, it also has a direct influence on the sexual behavior of young people.

The *Canadian Pediatric Society*, says what the kids watch on TV and in music videos encourages experimentation of sexual activity at an earlier age than ever before. The society published a report in 2003 showing that more than two-thirds of young people learn about sex from the media, specifically music videos.

McGill university psychologist Rina Guptha says, “*We know that kids are incredibly influenced with respect to fashion and the message of these music videos.*” What they get has more influence than previously understood. A study published in 2005 by the American Academy of Pediatrics in its journal *Pediatrics* suggested that at least two-thirds of *all* TV programs contain sexual content and might actually contribute to “precocious adolescent sex.”

A study conducted by the RAND Corporation uncovered some rather disturbing conclusions. When examining the sexual activity and TV viewing habits of 1,800 adolescents ages 12-17, researchers found that young people who watch the most sexual content suddenly begin to act much older than their years. For example “a 12-year old girl at the highest level of exposure behaved like she was 15,” said lead researcher Rebecca Collins in a report to Reuters news service. “*This,*” she said, “*is the strongest evidence yet that sexual content encourages promiscuity at an early age.*”

Guptha, who works with teens at risk, through the program at McGill University in Montreal, believes the influences kids are getting through the media “*are much more intense, more complex, and more confusing--primarily in music videos.*” In the last 5 years the increase in sexual content on the screen has been staggering, all the way from faux lesbianism to porn-type scenarios. The most famous or infamous depiction, is that of Britney Spears and Madonna performing in a video that features the two singers sharing a kiss.



Singers Britney and Madonna (CNN– American Press).



Singer Elton John and partner David Furnish ‘newly weds’ wave to fans (BBC News).

The pictures to the left may be seen as offensive to our Biblically based Christian values. However, they are published here to help illustrate the stark reality of the world’s powerful musical celebrity influence upon both our children, and ourselves. They are in sharp contrast to godly true marriage covenantal relationships— as pictured by the man and woman being married to the right.



photo.com

Gisele Bazergui, a school guidance counselor at two Montreal high schools, sees teens dressing in a way that mirrors the music videos. Her concern focuses on how out of sync. their behavior is with reality, the ability to assimilate and handle “real-life” situa-

(Continued on page 18)

HOT VIDEOS.....

(Continued from page 17)

tions. Seeing girls, some as young as 12, who are sexually active, needing the morning-after pill and having relationships with different people, has made it clear to Bazergui that, *“They’re not really understanding what they are getting themselves into.”*

So who’s to blame? The kids? The media? Parents? Who? We are! We live in a blasé society, a world where too many adults are concerned only with themselves, a fast-paced world where both dad and mom have working careers, often paying for a large mortgage, two cars, bank loans and credit card debt. As the Apostle Paul warned Timothy, in the latter days we would face trying, troublesome times, that as a society we would become lovers of money, that our children would become disobedient, that we would seek pleasure rather than God’s way of life (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

According to statistics reported in the UCG publication Marriage & Family, *The Missing Dimension*, the typical amount of time a working parent spends with his or her young children is about 30 minutes a day, and much less as the child grows older. For example a typical father will spend less than *three minutes a day alone* with a child who has reached teenage years.

On average our youth watch some 1,500 hours of television a year, and much of it is MTV, or MUCH MUSIC, the 24 hour a day music video channels. A young teen will spend about 900 hours a year in school, influenced by teachers and peers, yet will likely spend less than 100 hours a year involved with a family activity.

Despite political claims to the contrary, our society has abandoned both the young and the old, all for the sake of the almighty dollar. The truth is our nation has forgotten God. Canada has officially become a ‘secular nation’ declared as such in Parliament, and the end result is what we see in all too many of societies, forgotten children and teenagers left to their own devices.

If we were to summarize the plight of our world today, we might consider this paradox:

- We have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints.
- We spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy less.
- We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time.
- We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment.
- We laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too little.

We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life not life to years.

- We conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things, but not better things.
- We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the mind. We've conquered the atom, but not our prejudice.
- We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less.
- We've learned to rush, but not to wait.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throw-away morality, one night stands, and overweight bodies.

It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom. No wonder we need to continue to pray, *“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven”* (Matthew 6:10).

David Palmer-Vancouver

SERVING BY TRANSCRIBING SERMONS

“Have you ever wondered how God’s church serves the deaf, hard-of-hearing and prisoners in jail who are not allowed to receive tapes or CD’s?”

There is a group of women in the Church who volunteer their time to transcribe sermons from the audio form (these days on a CD) into a written form. A CD is sent out from Cincinnati Home office to each of these women, who number 13 at the moment, including me. Sometimes there are 9 – 10 sermons to transcribe and during the Holy Day season there are more. Each transcriber chooses which sermon she would like to transcribe

and lets the others know, and they get to work.

In order to preserve the sermon the way it was given, the sermon is typed word for word. The transcribers work at their own speed, but attempt to complete the task within a two month period. Once it is done it is proof-read by the transcriber who then e-mails it back to the Home Office. It is then posted on the website and sent by mail to those who do not have access to the internet.”

Mariana Simons – Winnipeg

FROM A WOMAN'S PERSPECTIVE.....

Interview with Mrs. Chantal Vautour, Moncton, New Brunswick.

What was it like growing up in a French language area of Canada?

I lived in the Acadian peninsula where music has a big place in everyone's life. It was a warm and friendly environment. It was all French speaking, all the stores and businesses.

Was all your schooling in French, or was there some English too?

Yes, there was English. There were mandatory English classes as English is the other language in New Brunswick. Television from Quebec was in French but all other TV, movies, videos, and radio with modern music was in English. I was part of the New Brunswick Youth Orchestra at 19, on flute and that needed better English skills.

Did you encounter any attitude against English Canada in your growing up years?

Growing up, I saw English as being more privileged with things like English school programs. At one point, Acadians had to politically fight to have the same economic help from the government. Today, the situation is much better. There is a good job advantage if you are already bilingual.

Was there any difficulty for you in embracing God's Truth? And what difficulty does an English language Work of God present for you when your first language is French?

It was really difficult, mainly because of different word constructions to the English Bible. I felt God was testing me; maybe I wasn't called; maybe why I didn't understand. It took a while before I could properly understand. I sometimes pray in French and English.

What career were you pursuing before your marriage and now motherhood?

I was planning on a flautist career and to travel. But there are few professional instructors in Acadia. I have a BA degree in music interpretation. I now teach flute lessons in a conservatory in Dieppe, which is bilingual.

What has it been like to be newly baptized? What challenges have you faced?

2005 was my first Feast of Tabernacles after being baptized only five months. My challenges have been spiritual priorities for prayer and Bible study. Motherhood presents challenges on priorities. For me at the moment it is God, then baby, then everything else.

As a young mother, do you have any advice for others?

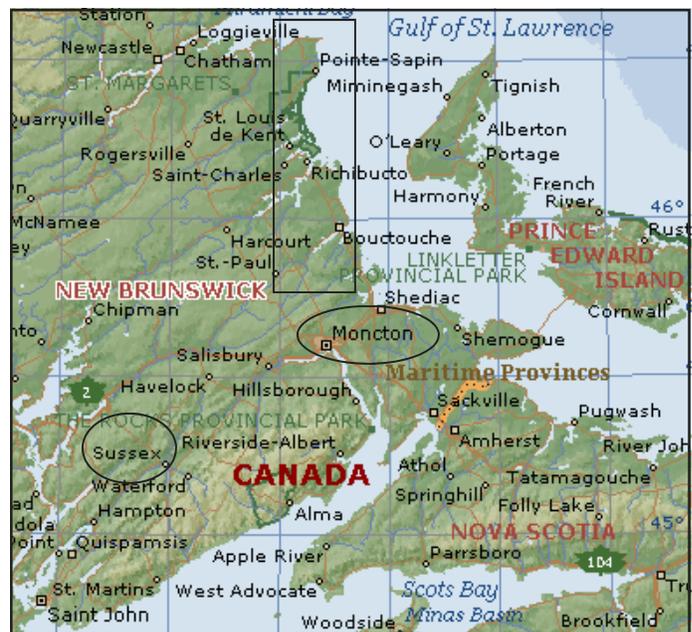
For any francophone members I would say: don't give up on your language skills and learning better English. Subscribe to UCG *Bonnes Nouvelles* and compare it with the English

Good News magazine. For young mothers I would say, take time for God. He is your premier source for well-being and energy. And also take time for yourself.

UNC



Acadia coast (square) is area where Chantal and husband Samuel grew up. They are pictured above with baby daughter. Moncton is where they currently live. Dieppe is a Francophone suburb where *Bonnes Nouvelles* waiting rooms are planned.



'THE BEAST' movie.....from a Biblical perspective

'Jesus didn't exist!

A movie whose purpose is to prove that Jesus Christ never existed, and that demonizes Christian fundamentalists, is scheduled to open on June 6, 2006 – that is, 06-06-06, the "666" biblical mark of the Beast. Directed by Brian Flemming, who is described on the film's website as a "former fundamentalist Christian," "The Beast" promises to spread the theory he claims is "gaining credibility among scholars" – that Jesus was made up out of thin air. According to the film's web site. "The authors of the Gospels, writing 40 to 90 years after the supposed life of Christ, never intended for their works to be read as biographies. There are no credible non-Christian references to Christ during the period in which he is said to have lived." (WorldNetDaily.com).

During production, the film's cast and crew were "legally sworn to secrecy." But, here's how the film's promoters describe its plot: When her father, a biblical scholar, mysteriously disappears, a Christian high-school student named Danielle investigates. She discovers that he had stumbled across a cover-up of Christianity's best-kept secret: that Jesus Christ never existed. Now that she possesses proof of this dangerous fact, Danielle must confront two strong forces: a band of fundamentalist Christians who will stop at nothing to suppress the truth, and her own desire for Jesus Christ to be real.

Like the fictional motion picture, "The Da Vinci Code:" the director claims the movie explores factual territory well-explored by scholars but largely hidden from the view of the public. "The Beast" says the website, *is an epic story of innocence lost, faith in crisis and the astonishing power of the truth to survive. On the trailer, which is viewable on the film's site, ominous music plays while these words flash across the screen: "Centuries ago, a legend was invented... forgery ... fraud ... coercion ... wealth ... greed ... torture ... murder ... war ... gave it the power to dominate the world"* (thebeastmovie.com).

Did you notice those lofty accolades and adjectives thrown around such as, "biblical scholar", "proof", "fact", "truth", "real",

"factual", "epic story", "truth to survive" and the awe-inspiring "scholars," "factual territory well-explored by scholars" – what scholars?

Flemming is touted on the film's website as "internationally acclaimed." States the site: "Flemming's work has been called 'a parallel universe' by the BBC, 'jaggedly imaginative' by the New York Times, and 'immensely satisfying' by USA Today. The Fox News Channel dubbed him 'a young Oliver Stone.' Flemming won the New York Times Claiborne Pell Award for Original Vision for his groundbreaking feature film 'Nothing So Strange,' which was released theatrically in 2003 and is currently distributed on DVD in more than 200 countries" (thebeastmovie.com).

Supporters of the film have participated in a discussion forum on the site. Says one excited poster: "I must say, I highly commend this director for his immense courage on putting something like this out!! The fact that he has the courage to put out a movie about the possibility of Christ never existing after all the controversy surrounding a movie about the LIFE of Christ (well, death really) is just amazing!! Another participant enthused, "I'm so excited! I can't wait until it's released! This is DEFINITELY the age of Aquarius!"

But reaction has also been swift from various corners of the Christian world. One theologian wrote; "Some recent foolishness from the heart of fools, is a malicious attack upon the person of the Lord Jesus Christ in the upcoming movie, appropriately, titled "The Beast". The demonic phony plot is to "prove" that the Lord Jesus never even existed, while at the same time paint Christians as crazed lunatics. So what's new? This has been the lofty goal of Satan and his unholy hounds of hell for the last two thousand years."

Another wrote; It is ludicrous for a little, finite, deluded man to shake his puny fists in the face of Almighty God and scream, "You don't even exist." At the same time, the innumerable stars, the complexity and balance of our enormous universe, and the incredible design of the human body, testify so loudly to the omnipotent hand of a supernatural God that only an intellectually deaf and dumb buffoon could actually

question His existence.

One of the many arguments often used to support the theory that Jesus never existed is the belief that there is no evidence of His existence outside the Bible. Yet such evidence does exist. A well-established, well-documented and well-explored account of Christ was written by a contemporary secular Jewish scholar and historian named Flavius Josephus. Josephus is the recognized authoritative scholar of ancient Jewish history. He was born in 37 A.D. and died 100 A.D., and according to his written documents, was very familiar with the person of Jesus Christ and the apostles, having lived during their time period.

"About this time lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was the achiever of extraordinary deeds and was a teacher of those who accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. When he was indicted by the principal men among us and Pilate condemned him to be crucified, those who had come to love him originally did not cease to do so; for he appeared to them on the third day restored to life, as the prophets of the Deity had foretold these and countless other marvelous things about him. And the tribe of Christians, so named after him, has not disappeared to this day."

(Flavius Josephus, Antiquities XVIII, 63, cited in Josephus, *The Essential Works* by Paul L. Maier, Kregel Publications, 1988, p.265 –emphasis ours).

Such fictional concepts as "The Da Vinci Code," "The God Who Wasn't There" and the latest screen fiction "The Beast" are just further fulfillments of end-time prophecies distorting God's truth. When we consider the number of TV productions, movies, magazine articles as well as internet sites and forums that dispute the very existence of Jesus Christ, we should not be surprised. For God's word warns that in the last days "...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13 KJV).

No wonder we pray earnestly for the coming Kingdom of God!

David Palmer - Vancouver

CHURCH NEWS....



Young people enjoy an afternoon and evening socializing, touring Ottawa, ice skating, and afternoon tea at Ottawa church Sabbath services held in Kemptville.



Toronto and Ottawa Youth Weekend – March 4-5, 2006

Fifteen young people, from the Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal congregations, gathered together at the Richard Moulton home, near Kemptville, for a weekend of visiting, games, and ice skating.

The weekend started out with Sabbath services, and I must say, we have never had that many youth at services; it was a very nice change! Three of our Toronto young ladies presented special music.

We enjoyed gorgeous weekend weather, and excellent food! On Sunday, some of us went skating on the Ottawa Canal, others explored the University of Ottawa Campus, and we finished our day in downtown Ottawa by meeting at the Rideau Center shopping mall to have a last snack before going our separate ways!

The best part of the weekend was being able to spend time with other youth in the Church, since teens and young adults are such a small group in both Ottawa and Montreal!

(photos Walter Martin)

William Moulton



CHURCH NEWS across Canada.....

HARK, HARK, NOAH AND THE ARK!

The Sabbath and evening of March 11th, 2006 was an exciting one for children of the Calgary congregation.

After an enjoyable meal of pizza, salad and refreshments provided by the Calgary Social Committee, the congregation was treated to a production of, "Hark, Hark, Noah and the Ark."

As the audience gathered, strange sights met their eyes. An ark loomed upon the stage, and as if in preparation for their voyage, animals small and large roamed the hall. Lighting crews scurried about, adding their final colorful touches.

The audience became quiet, as *Israelite Diana* began setting the stage with her narration of events. Mr. and Mrs. Noah conversed with one another and with an unbelieving observer. Then, under the watchful eyes of several rather large cows, the animals began a steady progression onto the ark: elephants, horses, squirrels, zebras, rabbits, sheep, polar bears, to name some of those in view. The children/animals burst into a rousing version of "Children of the Lord" also known as the "Arky, Arky" song. Lightning flashed, thunder roared, and the huge ship was on its way with its entire, squawking, noisy menagerie on board.

Time passed, and the ark with its precious cargo came to rest on dry land. Alas! Two lonely, sad-eyed creatures appeared out of nowhere: a rather familiar purple dinosaur joined by its one-horned companion. Their message to the audience: "Don't miss the boat!" More of the lessons we learned from our furry, feath-

ery and leathery friends were these:

- Everyone needs to be on the same boat.*
- Plan ahead – it wasn't raining when Noah began to build.*
- When you are 500 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big!*
- When you are stressed, float awhile.*
- For safety's sake, travel in pairs.*
- Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job.*
- And finally: when you are in a storm with God, there is always a rainbow waiting.*

Many worked with the children, made costumes, set up the stage, and "Noah" Connery built the ark!

Anne Poffenroth - Calgary



A WIDOW'S TRIBUTE TO HER HUSBAND KEN BRYANT, TORONTO.

It was back in 1972 that I first went with Ken to church. I felt it was my duty as a wife to go with him. I wore a hat and makeup. The next Sabbath they preached about make up. I felt awful but we kept going. Later when leadership problems emerged, we were so uncomfortable that we left. We were alone for a while but keeping the faith. Ken listened to Garner Ted Armstrong, and we remained with CGI for the next eighteen years until a split occurred. Then we were on our own again for a little while. Our daughter Judy was going to United, and she asked us to go as well. I feel God's Spirit is in United.

My husband Ken has had a lot of suffering with scleroderma and needed a liver transplant. It

was a struggle. Ken got on the waiting list and we waited for two years. Then they phoned at 1 a.m. to be at Toronto General Hospital as soon as we could. I showered him and got his clothes on and phoned our daughter Judy who came and took us there. As Ken went in for the operation he looked at me a long time as if he wouldn't see me again. When he was taken off life support and came out of it he looked at me a long time and said, "You are beautiful" – meaning that he was glad to be alive to see me! He had a stroke three days after the transplant from the anti-rejection pills and couldn't talk at all. I had to write out the alphabet and he would point to letters to make a word.

He had a wonderful speech therapist in hospital and then another at home for a year. Ken played the harmonica, which he

loved. But now he couldn't play at all so we prayed and asked God to help him play again. It was after that one year that he started trying every day. And God gave the ability back to him again.

After Ken had the transplant and a stroke he was so thin. We asked God to take him, as he had so much pain. His nurse gave me a hug and said that Ken will come through this. She gave us reassurance. Ken started to get stronger. I had him up the next day and took him for a walk. He was so proud and everyone was surprised to see him walking.

On our 50th. wedding anniversary, February 23, 2003, we had a party at which our daughter Judy gave us train tickets to go to British Columbia. We also went to Nova Scotia twice by train. In 52 years of marriage our life was full. It was a hard

struggle for Ken to have 40 years with scleroderma. Now he is at rest.

We had a wonderful life together and we always had a lot of friends in the church. I love being with the church people and 2005 was my first feast without Ken in 42 years. It was hard. I cried a lot and couldn't talk to anyone without crying. I made up my mind to ask for anointing and afterwards a peace came over me. It was wonderful with the brethren beside me. It gave me strength to go on. I still cry; but not as bad.

After all, 52 years is a long time.

Grace Bryant – Milton, Ontario

CHURCH NEWS....

Edmonton 10th Anniversary

It's hard to believe it has been ten years since the UCG Edmonton congregation first met at the King's University College, January 13, 1996. It's a wonderful blessing to still be meeting in the same place; in fact, in the same room. Sabbath services started at 2:00 pm with a sermonette by Richard Berendt, then the sermon by our Pastor, Robert Berendt. Our first anniversary service had an attendance of 14 people, while this service was attended by 107.

We had a Big Band Theme this year and colours for the event were white, red and black. The room was decorated to look like a dinner theatre with white table cloths with a black or a red centre alternating with black and red napkins. Centre pieces were little musical instruments - the saxophone, trumpet and violin. Red, black and white balloons decorated the posts and our talented artists decorated the walls with drawings, paintings and silhouettes of musical instruments and people dancing. The celebration started after services with a marvellous potluck meal of salads, vegetables, meat, cheese and desserts. Evelyn Davis made our anniversary cake, beautifully decorated and tasting as good as it looked.

The main event was the Variety Show. Many of the acts demonstrated the music and dancing of the period of 1935 to 1945. There was tap dancing, swing dancing, singing, skits, and poetry.

One of the poems (dedicated to the Pioneers) was written and read by the most senior of our members, Mrs. Ava Stephenson. And the other poem was read by another of our senior members, Mrs. Peggy Bates. Our youngest performers who sang for us were three beautiful little girls, aged 2 and 4 years old: Natasha Davis, Ashley Davis and Savannah Jongerius.

Another pleasant surprise was the three congratulatory messages. The first was from UCGia President, Clyde Kilough, who at one time was an assistant minister in Edmonton for about two years. The second message was from Anthony Wasilkoff, Director of Operations for Canada, who was the first UCG minister in Edmonton. At the time, he pastored both the Calgary and Edmonton Churches. The third message was from Rainer Salomaa, who was the first minister to speak in Edmonton after a beginning by video or cassette. It was special hearing from these three gentlemen.

The evening ended with a dance to the sounds of the Big Bands. It was a wonderful, happy evening of celebration. We are very thankful to God for all He has provided us and for the new people He is bringing into our Church Family. We look forward to another year in serving God and doing His work.

Lynne Broschak



Three young performers aged 2-4 years; Natasha and Ashley Davis and Savannah Jongerius. Below well dressed in Big Band style is the Rick Berendt family.



Cassie Hillard of Penticton, died on December 29, 2005 at the age of 95.

She was born in Shellbrook, Saskatchewan on June 5, 1910. A memorial service, organized by her family, was held for her on Sunday, January 22, 2006 in Penticton. Cassie was the only child of Severt and Marie Filbey. After she married Ben Berg, they lived in Saskatoon. After Ben died, she moved to Vancouver where she eventually met and married Charlie Hillard and enjoyed 35 years of marriage. Charlie and Cassie moved to the Penticton area in 1968 where they enjoyed their retirement years, and attended Church of God services. She was a great hostess for friends and family and was a very modest and dignified Christian woman.

Rainer Salomaa



CAPTION CONTEST PICTURES

WRITE A CAPTION !



BLACK BEAR:“.....”
.....”



FOXES: “.....”
.....”



CHIMPS:”.....”
.....”



LIONS: “.....”
.....”

CAPTION CONTEST DETAILS: Open to all UCG-Canada Young People aged 12-19 years.
Prizes of \$75, \$50 and \$25 for 1st, 2nd. and 3rd. best judged captions.

Example: CHIMPS: "If humans are an improvement on us, then we are in deep trouble."

Complete as many captions as you choose—and send to: (e-mail) gmar@persona.ca
Or G.Marshall, P.O. Box 578, Chesterville, ON. K0C 1H0.

Provide your **name, age and address**. Entries will be judged by UNC reviewers & Toronto office staff.
Deadline for responses — July 15th. 2006. Judges decision will be published in July-August issue.