



## The Makings of a Best Feast Ever

What if you knew that this coming Feast of Tabernacles would be the last Feast you would be observing in this lifetime? Would that knowledge make any difference in how you plan to keep it? Would it make any difference in how you actually keep it day by day? I'm sure that knowing of that possible reality would have a significant bearing on every one of us.

When I was a pastor in my twenties, I used to regularly visit a gentleman in his eighties who lived in a lovely retirement home. Because the setting there allowed for it, I saw him fairly often and also did so unannounced. While I observed other residents taking naps, staring blankly at a television set or looking mindlessly out the window, the church member was never one of them.

Nearly always I would find him in his own room, seated at his desk and diligently studying his Bible Correspondence Course. When I knocked at the open door to his room, he

would look up, smile and say as he chuckled, "I'm cramming for my finals." Eventually his finals came but not until a few years later.

Whatever our age, but especially as we get older, we never know when 'cramming for our finals' will become a reality. Whether we are keeping our last Feast of Tabernacles this year or not, we should approach it with resolve to make it a Feast to remember and possible even our best Feast ever.

There are four sites in Canada this year: Roseneath (Prince Edward Island), Midland (Ontario), Cochrane (Alberta) and Victoria (British Columbia). Two of these sites are new locations, whereas two are on-going locations where we keep returning because they have so much to offer. Even so, many brethren are transferring to sites outside of Canada as opportunity permits them to travel. Some are staying home and keeping the Feast locally because circumstances no longer permit them to travel to even the closest local site. Additionally, there will be some satellite sites in Canada this year such as Blainville (Quebec) and Spencerville (Ontario).

The term "best Feast ever" has become an oft-used expression in the Church of God. What

makes a Feast observance the best, or one of the best ever? It usually depends on what we put into it. We get out of something as much as we put into it. Most of us have found that the more we serve at the Feast, the more benefit we receive, the more return we derive and the more God blesses us.

One year I recall a person saying prior to the Feast that he was going to take a year off during the Feast. The individual was going to attend the Feast. However, he did not plan to volunteer to serve in any of the many areas that require member participation for festival success. My sense was that this person did not attain the kind of Feast experience he had hoped for.

In this regard, the implications of Proverbs 11:24-25 are strikingly profound, "There is also one who scatters yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself."

This copy of *United News Canada* contains articles that will help you observe a meaningful and memorable Feast of Tabernacles. Be sure to carefully read each one of them.

Also be sure to read the 2017

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*Feast Planning Brochure* with the beautiful seashore on the cover. The message from the President states: “But a notable feature of the Feast is that it is a time for the entire Church to convene. It’s not just for those who have the means to go. It’s for everyone, and that includes people on limited incomes, the elderly and mothers with small children. Everyone is to save their second tithe so that they can go to the

Feast, regardless of economic standing.”

Please be sure to read the entire message from the President. Also, be sure to read or review all of the articles in the brochure. In fact, you might wish to bring the brochure to the Feast with you and to use it as a reference manual. Additional related articles on the topic may be found at: [http://](http://www.ucg.ca/bible-study-tools/)

[www.ucg.ca/bible-study-tools/](http://www.ucg.ca/bible-study-tools/).

The 2017 Feast of Tabernacles is only a few weeks away. There is still sufficient time remaining to make changes or adjustments as needed to improve our Feast focus. May your Feast this year be filled with good fruit and so be one of the best Feasts ever for you and your loved ones.

*Anthony Wasilkoff*

## You Go—I am Coming

When God was calling me into His truth 50-some years ago, the strongest driving force that I felt came through an understanding of the magnificence of the life of Jesus Christ here on earth. I considered myself a Christian, and I firmly believed that being a Christian meant being a follower of Jesus Christ. I did not realize that I had been giving lip service, but not following in His footsteps. I did not understand the full importance of the Bible guiding my feet.

I was not the first to lack in a belief towards Jesus Christ. There are many scriptures that

show that almost all those present with Jesus failed in their comprehension until after His resurrection. That got their attention. One story that is motivational and inspiring is recorded in John 7. Many clues in this chapter helped me better understand some of my shortcomings. First of all, like the brothers of Jesus (verse 5), I realized that I did not believe Him. In my case it had to do with relying on the explanations of men I thought were constantly striving to live by the Bible. I actually listened to ministers tell me that “this is what the Bible says, but . . .” I cannot accept any “buts” today.

The Bible is the only recorded word of God - and is not to be tampered with.

Chapter 7 is divided into several parts. Verses 1-9 record the disbelief of the brothers as to “who” Jesus was. Verses 10-24 tell of Jesus bringing the Word of God and living by it. Verses 25-31 reveal the ongoing search for the Messiah. Verses 32-36 tell of the puzzled queries of the Pharisees. Verses 37-39 yield the promise of the Holy Spirit which was to come. Verses 40-44 ask the question “Who is He?” Verses 43-52 express the rejection of Jesus by the reli-

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gious authorities. I did not want to remain among those who rejected Jesus. I wanted to be like Him.

One point of great interest to me was that this whole chapter records events that took place during the Feast of Tabernacles. This was confusing because I thought it was the “Jew’s feast”. How amazed I was to learn that it is God’s Feast as recorded in Leviticus 23:33-34. Jesus did go and keep this Feast as He kept every Feast day that God had given to His people. He went though His life was in danger and though He had to walk, ride a donkey or perhaps ride in small boat over a distance of over 160 kilometers. He traveled past hostile villages and through dangerous territory to attend the Feast of Tabernacles.

I had never even heard of this Feast. I could not reconcile how to be like Jesus Christ while not doing the things He did so I have kept the Feast ever since 1965. What a blessing to understand the significance of these great days as well as the grandeur of all of God’s Holy Days.

John 7:16-19 addresses what I was learning. Jesus said He was living by the doctrine of God the Father - not His personal doctrine. He says “if anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.” Jesus went on to state that He was sent and that the religious leaders did not know God and thus

could not recognize Him. What a duplication of the past is evident when we see the image, deeds, footsteps and direction of Jesus Christ changed, manipulated, cancelled or mocked. In a way, humans have continually sought to kill Christ rather than follow Him. A true Christian will follow His example.



In John 6:37-38, Jesus spoke boldly in the temple telling of the promise of the Holy Spirit to those who believe in Him. Those who thirst for truth and oneness with Jesus Christ and God the Father will be given this great gift.

I learned much about the precious gifts of God through the keeping of His Holy Days. The Feast of Tabernacles is the one time when a person can spend eight or more days in fellowship with those of like minds. That is “like” one another, and more importantly “like” with Jesus Christ. It is the oneness that binds us all together. Believing

is not enough - actions that reflect that belief must follow.

These days were set aside by God to look forward to the time where the Kingdom of God will be established on Earth and Jesus Christ will be the great King and Priest. Justice, godliness, lawfulness and peace will be poured out upon the earth. God’s law will go forth to all the nations and there will be no more wars. That glorious time is taught by keeping these days. That future moment is being experienced and reconfirmed by those who determine to attend.

James 2:19-20 states that demons believe and tremble. We humans ought to see that belief is not enough and trembling is not enough - as James wrote “faith without works is dead.” Our works involve following the example of Jesus Christ who taught and lived in the flesh according to the doctrine of the Almighty Father. I want to be like Jesus Christ and the Father. It is through Jesus Christ that we can grasp the true direction. If we are to be like Him - we need to accept and capture His values and way of life. We need to clothe ourselves with the spiritual garments God has designed.

I truly hope that you too have a burning desire to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and be like Him. As He said to His followers: “You go! I am coming!” We will meet Him there.

## Kings and Priests

What will we be doing in God's Kingdom and how long will it take for us to attain the knowledge and skills and perfection we will need to perform these tasks?

Here are some things mentioned in the scriptures related to the topic:

1 – Our change will come in a twinkling of an eye.

When Jesus returns, our change to immortal beings will be as fast as or faster than the blink of an eye.

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’” (1 Corinthians 15:50-54 NKJV throughout).

Though we, as members of the Church of God, had a change upon receiving the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands at baptism, a much greater change is coming.

2 – We will meet Jesus and always be with him.

We will meet Jesus in the clouds and set foot on the Mount of Ol-

ives as eternal spirit beings.

“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1Thessalonians 4:15-17).

“And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east . . . Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You” (Zechariah 14:4).

At this point in time we will be converted spirit beings beginning our reign with Christ and initiating living with Christ in person into eternity.

3 - We will be kings and will rule with Christ on earth.

“...and has made us kings...to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen (Revelation 1:6). “And have made us kings...to our God; And we shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:10).

We will be doing work like reforming laws that reflect the will of God, stopping production of weapons of war and stopping pollution. At this time, we can only support such changes. Then we will actu-

ally put laws into effect that will be enforced and respected.

4 – We will be priests and will rule with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation says, “and has made us...priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever” (1:6). And have made us...priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth” (5:10). “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” (20:6).

We have been given only a small measure of the Spirit of God now but then we will be given much more and will be able to lead people in the way of God, convince them of the importance of God's commandments and of the validity of the Holy Scriptures. People will have the choice to respond positively, be converted and be baptised. The family of God will grow in leaps and bounds and in joy.

5 - Those who overcome in this life will attain eternal life.

“To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (Revelation 3:21).

To overcome we must remove all our false beliefs, false assumptions, and futile habits, remove the proverbial plank from our eye, and replace it with the truth from God and the ways of God, then we will be able to help others do the same.

6 - We will be rewarded according to our works.

“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last” (Revelation 22:12–13).

“For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom” (Matthew 16:27–28).

Our works are our good example. How well do we apply the knowledge, truth and way of God in our lives as examples for others to do the same.

A little final insight:

“But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that

those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance” (Hebrews 9:11–15).

“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits” (Hebrews 6:1–3).

Our skills, knowledge and wisdom acquired during our lifetime as Christians, and how we put them into action are factors that will have a direct bearing on our duties and responsibilities during the Millennium.

*Jacques Gauvin*

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### “Covering” from page 16

Here in the book of Hebrews we have both a reference to Christ our Passover as the sacrificial Lamb, and Atonement, the covering for our sins. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation (atonement in the original King

James)” (Romans 5:8,11).

On Atonement almost all ceremony, work and instruction was delegated to the priesthood. Those ancient Israelites simply had to present themselves before God, but there was one instruction they were commanded to follow, which still applies to the church of God today. “You shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all ...” (Leviticus 16:29). To afflict our souls (both physically and spiritually) simply means to humble ourselves through fasting, abstaining from both food and water.

But why fasting? Why on this particular holy day? When we think of sin, we think in personal terms, my sins, my faults. But on this one day a year God commands that we assemble together as God’s people and the atonement, (covering) for sin, the sacrifice of Christ, includes the whole congregation.

Why is this significant? So that we come to understand that God forgives not only our personal sins, but the sins of every member of His family, and if God can forgive all of His people, how can we hold a grudge, harbour

hate or have ill-feelings toward other individuals who have been called out of this world and into God's marvellous light.

Atonement covers the transgressions of the whole house of God!

But why fast? Fasting is an outward acknowledgment that we need to take in more of the spiritual food of Christ, the Bread of Life, rather than depend on physical sustenance.

Atonement is also a day of self-examination, a day for reconciliation in the form of forgiveness. Fasting is acknowledgment that we understand the need to forgive others, as God has forgiven us (Matthew 6:12, 14). We are to cut out strife and debate, end

animosity between brethren and come to understand, appreciate and love one another with "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by [the] Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Ro-



provided by Linda Wasilkoff

mans 5;5). And how do we get more of God's Holy Spirit? By getting closer to God. How do

we get closer to God? Through Bible study, prayer and fasting.

Consider it this way. We require food and water to sustain life. We need spiritual food and water to gain eternal life, and fasting makes us dependent on God spiritually rather than depending on physical food for survival. As Jesus said, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (eternal life) (Mark 8:36).

The principle of atonement is that Christ is our covering, our atonement. He is our Saviour who reconciles us to God the Father, and Jesus taught that we by the same principle are to work at being reconciled to each other.

*David Palmer*

## Service Pin Award

To promote unity, the National Office has a staff luncheon several times each year. Sometimes it is a working lunch. At other times, it is a time to share what is happening in the office or in personal lives.

In late May of this year, an office luncheon was planned. Members of the office staff prepared a luncheon of lasagna, salad and garlic bread, which everyone enjoyed. But, this time was for a special reason. It was actually a surprise party of sorts. But what was the occasion?

On behalf of the Home Office,

Anthony Wasilkoff presented a 20-year pin to Edwin van Pelt in recognition of his 20-years of employment by the United Church of God – Canada. He also received a special card from

the UCGIA President with a surprise content inside.

Ed was instrumental in setting up the Canadian office back in the summer of 1996. Since then he has faithfully worked in the office fulfilling a wide-range of duties. One of his major responsibilities is that of Treasurer for UCG – Canada, an office he has held since March 1996.

Congratulations go to Mr. van Pelt on receiving this 20-year pin. We are grateful for his faithful service.



provided by Paul Wasilkoff

## June Council Meetings

The annual face-to-face meeting of the National Council was held on June 8-9 at the National Office. The meeting began with approving the minutes of the previous meeting. Rainer Salomaa and Anthony Wasilkoff gave an update on recent Council of Elders meetings. Those who were present for the General Conference of Elders in May gave their perspective of the highlights of that meeting. General consensus was that the round-table discussions were most profitable.

Office staff worked together to give an office and financial update. Of note was that the National Office is in the process of getting new signage over the office door. Included in the financial discussion is retirement of the baby boomers and what affect that might have on the income of the church. The source of our donations is: 70 percent from members; 20 percent from donors and 10 percent from coworkers. It was suggested it would be a good idea to give sermons about the importance of giving tithes and offerings and the scriptural basis for doing so.

Edwin van Pelt gave a presentation showing statistics regarding the Beyond Today television program. This past year responses have dropped about one-third from the previous year. However, almost 30 percent of those responding each week are new people. It was asked if we should try a different station or time. This is a possibility, but can be quite costly even if there is a time slot available.

As of June, the *Readers Digest* ad

generated 124 responses with 96 percent of those being from new people. The Media Team is doing research and working to find new means to reach people.

A portion of the morning was reserved for brainstorming. Included in the discussion was: media challenges, trends, the Ministerial Newsletter, current challenges facing the church, lack of commitment, not registering for the Feast, the need for succession planning for replacing the Secretary and the lack of individuals willing to have their name on ballot selection to the National Council.

Our bylaws require that the Council formally approve the composition of committees. Council members were given the opportunity to change the committee on which they served. The committees are listed at: <http://www.ugc.ca/about/national-council>.

The committees met during the afternoon on Thursday.

On Friday, the Council began by welcoming Donald Ward and John Elliott as guests. This was followed by the committee reports.

The Strategic Planning/Finance Committee had tested a program for online balloting. The program still needs fine-tuning before it is put into use by the National Council and National Conference. They also discussed phone, Internet and cell-phone reimbursement and gave their recommendations to be sure all are reimbursed equitably. The committee has worked on forecasting future income

based upon several factors that are expected to come into play in the future. Finally, the committee suggested that the Council approve taking funds out of reserves to be used by the Media Team to implement an advertising campaign targeting various demographics. Dates for future Council meetings were submitted and approved.

The Governance/Ethics/Pastoral Committee has been asked to review all policies on a yearly basis. They reported their strategy this coming year.

The Compensation Committee asked if the Council wished to change or update their mandate. It was determined to leave the mandate as-is.

Michael Erickson presented concerns to be aware of regarding Canada's Anti-Spam legislation. The legislation concerns "commercial electronic messages." Part of the problem is a lack of definition of the terms used in the legislation. It is not clear if some of our emails might fall into that category since they may sometimes advertise an event (socials, feasts, etc.). Much of the definition will be determined in court so the Church needs to do what it can to protect itself from potential lawsuits. The agenda for the annual meeting of the National Conference in September was approved.

During Friday afternoon, the Council conducted the annual evaluation of the Director of Operations.

## Canadian Ministerial Conference

UCG-Canada from its inception has recognized the need to train individuals to become leaders in the church. While this is crucial, it is also important to have ongoing instruction for those who are already involved in leadership in their roles as elders and wives. Thus, a Canada-wide ministerial conference is held every second year.

This year, the conference was held at the National Office in Toronto over the weekend of June 9-11. A total of 51 were in attendance. Only one elder was unable to be there due to attending to a critically ill member. Herb Teitgen who serves the Winnipeg congregation out of the U.S. was invited to attend the conference. Also present were John and Merrie Elliott who serve the southern British Columbia congregations from the U.S.

We were blessed to have Dr. Donald Ward and Mr. Gary Antion as guest speakers. The conference officially began on Saturday evening with the ordination of two elders: Jim Lucas and Ellsworth Stanley. This was followed by two presentations. Mr. Antion spoke on confidentiality, while Dr. Ward spoke on expository preaching.

Rainer Salomaa got Sunday morning off to a good start with a presentation entitled, “Wise

and Timely Transitions.” This was followed by two presentations about health by Drs. Daniel and Richard Berendt.

In the afternoon, Gary Antion’s presentation was “If I Had To Do It Over Again.” This was followed by “The Future of the Church” by Donald Ward. The last hour of the afternoon session was reserved for questions.

Much of the advantage of such a conference comes during the fellowship over meals. This began on Friday evening with a barbecue, which allowed individuals from various areas to get better acquainted. This was especially important because there were a number of people for whom this was their first conference.



provided by Anthony Wasilkoff

One of the new attendees was Tonya Speir. Since this was her first time to attend a Ministerial Conference, she was asked to give her impressions of the conference. Here is what she wrote:

“I feel honoured that I was asked to give my impression of the 2017 Canadian Ministerial Conference as a first-time at-

tendee. It was such a wonderful experience, especially the bonding time spent with pastors, elders and their wives. The national office staff was very welcoming and had done a lot of work to ensure this conference went as smoothly as it did.

“One theme that stood out to me across all speakers and discussions was “striving to, and maintaining, a teachable heart to ensure we are able to serve our brothers and sisters to the best of our abilities.” All speakers had valuable information and counsel to remind everyone of key items and to sharpen everyone’s skills and mindset.

“Some of the areas that stood out to me were the following:

- Remember to try and see things through the eyes of our brothers and sisters when we are interacting because everyone is going through different experiences.
- Our focus should be to show love to our brethren, to listen, keep confidences, and understand what they are going through before responding.
- When needed, be humble enough and wise enough to sometimes steer members to someone else who has been trained in specific areas of knowledge and experience.
- Continue learning and sharpening preaching skills to ensure pastors and elders



are continually growing in abilities to help get God's complete message across as effectively as possible.

- Don't forget that everyone's health and well-being are vitally important and we

should all take the time and effort to stay as healthy as possible.

"For me, the experience was very encouraging, motivating, informative and pleasant. There seemed to be a strong

unity of spirit among all those who attended. The main thread that stood out to me was 'Iron sharpening iron—be teachable so that you can better teach and serve others.'"

UNC

## Laymember Selection Process

In January of 1996, a group met in Calgary to form what was to become the United Church of God – Canada. One of the first items on the agenda was to determine how to set up the governing board for the church. There it was determined to tap into the talents available in the local congregations to find qualified individuals to serve on the National Council.

Once that decision was made, a process had to be formulated to determine who would qualify to be selected to the board. It was quickly determined that only baptized members should be selected. The next question was: "How do we determine who are members?" Canadian Privacy Legislation considers religious affiliation to be as confidential as a person's medical history. Thus, we cannot call someone a member unless we have that person's express permission. So a special membership form has been created to conform to legislation and be able to answer the question "who is a member of UCG-Canada?"

Of course, there is no requirement for a person to fill out the membership form. There are a

number of baptized individuals who choose not to do so. They are all welcome to participate in the local congregation, but for legal reasons, the church cannot call them members of the church. Thus, they are not eligible to take part in the nomination process or to be a laymember nominee.

This August, UCG-Canada has once again gone through the laymember nomination process. Since each National Council term is for three years and there are two seats reserved for laymembers, this process is carried out two years out of every three.

It is interesting to note that since the inception of UCG-Canada, 14 laymembers have served on the National Council, and several have served two terms. We deeply appreciate those who have been willing to commit the time to serve on the board through the years. We have had professionals (doctor, chiropractor, accountant, teacher, etc.), businessmen, retired individuals and even one lady! Each one added something positive to the functioning of the board.

Equally important are those individuals who allow their name to be included on the ballot after carefully weighing whether they would be able to fulfill the duties. By being selected to be on the ballot, these individuals have shown that they have the respect of members in their local congregation, which is a great recommendation.

Each year that there is a ballot to fill a laymember position on the National Council, the National Conference has between six and 12 names from which to choose. All of these individuals have something that would positively add to the functioning of the board. For those of you who have been on that ballot but not selected, our collective thanks goes out to you. Please do not be discouraged or feel rejected. Allowing your name to be on the ballot helps with the overall process and is greatly appreciated. It gives those who are making the decision the ability to carefully weigh the needs of that year and choose who seems to be the best choice for that year.

UNC

# Beyond Today Television Update

We recently completed our 11th year of airing Beyond Today on television. During that time we have recorded over 53,000 responses averaging over 90 per week.

More than 23,000 new people have been added to our database as a direct result of the program. About one in four people in our database responded to the program on television or online.

The table below is a summary of the responses from the be-

ginning of our 12th year on the air.

Future program titles include:

- How to Avoid End-Time Deception
- Hard Questions: Why Does God Kill People?
- Suicide: Is There Hope? (2)
- Shocking Teachings of Jesus: You Are Gods

- Confronting Anxiety
- Kingdoms at War: The Mystery of the Fourth Beast (2)
- What is Hell?

Many pastors report new people attending Sabbath services had their first contact with the church through the television program. Our continual prayers for the program do make a difference.

*Edwin van Pelt*

Date	Program	Study Aid *	Responses
May 28-June 3	Hard Questions: Why Does God Allow Evil?	AS	67
June 4-10	Shocking Teachings of Jesus: False Christs	ET	53
June 11-17	Kingdoms at War: The Man Who Would Be God	RV	56
June 18-24	The Mystery of the Mind	EV	50
June 25-July 1	The Hidden Agenda	BT	45
July 2-8	When Nations Rise and Fall	UP	49
July 9-15	Seduced by Conventional Wisdom?	UB	63
July 16-22	The Power of the Living Word	BT	59
July 23-29	Are You Led by God's Spirit?	731	123
July 30-August 5	Preparing for Chris's Return	521	108
August 6-12	Angels: God's Messengers and Spiritual Army	AN	107

\*The study aid code is shown in the table. Their full names are as follows:

521 – Christ's Reign on Earth: What It Will Be Like

731 – The Power of the Holy Spirit

AN – God's Messengers and Spiritual Army

AS – Why Does God Allow Suffering?

BT – Is the Bible True?

ET – Are We Living in the Time of the End?

EV – Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?

RV – The Book of Revelation Unveiled

UB – How to Understand the Bible

UP – You Can Understand Bible Prophecy

## News From Across Canada

### Canada Elder in Scotland

UCG-United Kingdom holds weekly Sabbath Services in the ancient city of Stirling, Scotland, where King James 1st of Britain originated. He was responsible commissioning the famous 1611 version of the King James Bible we use today. The King was baptized as a baby in the ancient church right across the road from the meeting hall.



provided by Wendy Corrigan

Peter Corrigan from Vancouver Island, who is Scottish, met with this group when God first called him. On a recent visit there, he was asked to speak on three consecutive Sabbaths. Any visiting minister is put to work right away!



provided by Wendy Corrigan

The Stirling congregation is a mixed group of around 20 adults, seniors and young children who have a Sabbath school. Some have been in the Church many years. They are an enthusiastic, lively and loving group of God's people. If you are ever in Scotland, you will enjoy meeting them.

Wendy Corrigan

### Heritage Tour

Since this year is Canada's 150, Shirley Rogers suggested that the North Battleford, Saskatchewan, congregation to take a Heritage Tour. The group met at the World's Largest Tomahawk in Cut Knife Hill on July 9. From there we traveled to Cut Knife Hill, a national historic site located on Pound Mak-



provided by Adeline Sanoy

er Reserve and where Chief Poundmaker is buried. The view from that hill of the surrounding countryside is awesome. It is not surprising that the Cree chose it as a place to hold off the Northwest Mounted Police, militia and the army – an event that later became known as the

Battle of Cut Knife Hill.

From there we were met by two local couples who acted as guides at Pine Island and Shiloh Church. Pine Island is a large island located in the North Saskatchewan River. The Hudson Bay Company, as well as several others, had trading posts on that island. Here furs were traded by the First Nations for various goods including guns and whisky.

Next we went on to Shiloh Baptist Church, which was built by a black community who had moved to Saskatchewan after being freed from slavery. The first winter these people suffered greatly and were helped by the local community, but in the spring some of them moved back to Oklahoma.

After a picnic lunch and a historic update by the local guides who grew up with these people's children we moved on to St. Walburg and the Imhoff Studio. Count Bethold von Imhoff was born in Germany and immigrated to the United States. After a hunting trip to the St. Walburg area,



provided by Adeline Sanoy



he moved to Canada. Imhoff was a gifted artist and painted many churches in Canada and the United States – some at his own expense. He used the best of oils and canvas. Some of his paintings are now located in the Lloydminster museum.

At this point some of the group headed home, while the rest of the group travelled on to Frog Lake, a site of the Northwest Rebellion. From there they carried on to Laurier Lake where they had a meal of stew and bannock at the Roger’s cabin.

*Adeline Sanoy*

### Visit to Shut-Ins

Peter and Wendy Corrigan visited the Vancouver congregation on July 8, 2017. After services, they and some members from the congregation had the opportunity to visit two



provided by Dale Craniford

fine gentlemen, Ernie McBratney and Don Matheson who are residents at a senior care centre in White Rock that is located near the United States/Canadian border. Ernie and Don are

members of the Vancouver congregation, but are now unable to attend because of health and mobility issues.

It was a pleasure to fellowship with these friendly and positive gentlemen. Their light shines! They told us of the various activities at their fine facility, and they shared life’s challenges and achievements. It was a delightful visit. Don and Ernie truly appreciate connecting “live” with their church brethren.

*Dale Craniford*

### Southern Ontario Campout

The annual Toronto-Kitchener camp weekend took place from July 20-23. Like last year, we were at Point Farms Provincial Park. The park is located a few kilometres north of the picturesque town of Goderich on the shores of Lake Huron. This part of the province is known as Ontario’s West Coast.

We had a different group campsite from last year and by all accounts this year’s site was an improvement. Among other



provided by Paul Wasilkoff

things it was bigger and more private.

A total of 30 campers participated in this year’s event. They represented the Toronto, Kitchener, Ottawa (all in Ontario) as well as the St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador congregations.

About a quarter of the campers arrived on Thursday afternoon. The morning began with heavy rain and strong winds but by afternoon the skies cleared and it turned into a very pleasant day. The rest of the campers, with one exception, arrived on Friday and everyone was set up well before the Sabbath began. Some stayed for one night, most stayed two nights and few stayed all three nights.

Everyone stopped by the central campfire at some point on Friday evening. Some elected to retire to their tents sooner than others.

During the evening, the skies became overcast and early Sabbath morning the pitter-patter of raindrops could be heard on the tents and tarps of the campers. It rained throughout the Sabbath but we had a relatively dry period during our Bible Study. The hour and a half Study continued covering the Fundamental Beliefs of the Church. This time Repentance and Faith was covered with extensive input from the campers.

A few potluck meals were

planned before the camp and they were, as in previous years, very tasty. It was enjoyable to break bread together on those occasions. Each family had their own picnic table so it was easy to wander through the camp and sit with one another for a chat, a snack or even a meal.

Another campfire took place on Saturday evening. Some spent a short time sitting near the fire, roasting hot dogs and marshmallows, while others lingered for some time.

Sunday morning began with overcast skies but it didn't take long for the skies to clear and a breeze to pick up so any damp camping equipment could be dried before packing. By mid-afternoon everyone had broken-camp and headed home. Some stayed in the park to enjoy some hiking and swimming before leaving.

Plans are afoot for next year's camp weekend after another successful event this year.

*Edwin van Pelt*

## Hamilton Picnics

The Hamilton congregation hosted two picnics this summer after services.

The first occasion was held on June 10 at a park on the es-carpment edge overlooking the harbour. We were blessed to have a number of guests join us including two guest speak-



provided by Amy van Zant

ers: Lloyd Teetaert and Larry DeLong.

Our second picnic was held on July 9 at a park beside Lake Ontario. Again we were blessed with visitors, this time from Toronto.

For both picnics we were blessed with ideal weather: it was neither too hot or humid with just enough breeze to keep the insects at bay. We enjoyed fellowship and lovely potluck food.

We look forward to similar occasions next year.

*Paul Wasilkoff*

## Ordinations

As an added bonus to an already special weekend, two men were ordained on the Saturday evening at the start of the June Canadian Ministerial Conference. While ordinations are frequently done during services at the local church, it seemed appropriate this time to do it in the presence of all Canadian elders at the conference.

Jim Lucas is the son of Garry Lucas who is a long-time elder from Barrie, Ontario. Jim and his wife, Almeda, have two sons: Evan and Daniel. The family has faithfully attended in the Toronto congregation for many years. Of recent date, they have also been assisting in other congregations in the Southern Ontario area. As of July 1, he became the Assistant Pastor for Ottawa.

Both Jim and Almeda graduated from Ambassador College. Jim is an architectural



provided by United Church of God, AIA

draftsman and has run his own company for years. Now he is working part-time for the church. Almeda works as a litigation specialist in insurance claims.

Along with his speaking, Jim occasionally plays the guitar and sings for special music – something that we hope he will be able to continue to do!

For several years now, the St. John's, Newfoundland, congregation has been without a resident elder. The congregation has only had a pastoral visit once or twice a year. While

David and Florence Squibb, the resident deacon and his wife, have done an excellent job of keeping the congregation organized through the years, we are happy that they will now have a resident elder in the congregation as well.

Ellsworth Stanley and his wife, Dorothy, have lived in lovely St. John's for many years where they have been faithful members of the church. Ellsworth attended both Memorial University and the University



provided by United Church of God, AIA

of Toronto where he earned a Bachelor of Education degree and then a Masters degree in Education and a Masters degree in Education Psychology. After many years of teaching (including a stint in the far north – see July-August 2008 *United News Canada* – he retired a few years ago.

United Church of God-Canada is happy to have two more elders to lighten the load of the other elders in serving the brethren. We appreciate their willingness to serve in this capacity.

## Windsor Graduation

On the Sabbath of July 1, 2017, the small congregation in Windsor, Ontario, had the opportunity to honour one of its graduates.



provided by Patrick Read

Tyler Brdar closed one chapter of his book of life by graduating from public school and will be opening another as he moves on to secondary high school.

The congregation was able to learn more about this young member as they listened to the list of accomplishments that he has made throughout the past school year.

Because of his hard work, Tyler has achieved high grades. He has participated in jazz band for the last two years playing saxophone, and he has chosen to continue with this instrument in high school. This past year, Tyler chose to join a non-fiction book club where he enjoyed monthly discussions and writing reviews.

He will be attending University of Windsor STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) camp for a second year in a row. And as is the case

with many children, Tyler enjoys video games, books, movies, and jokes.

His favorite story in the Bible is David and Goliath because it shows “you can overcome anything with God’s help.”

Tyler’s high achievement academically has granted him acceptance into the “Enriched Academic Program” at Vincent Massey High School, a Fraser Education Institute awarded school.

The congregation presented him with a beautiful cake, cards of congratulations and well wishes. We wish Tyler much success as he furthers his education.

*Patrick Read*

## Golden Anniversary

Charlie and Janice Ellison were married on May 6, 1967 in Aurora, Ontario. They moved to Alberta in 1971. They have three daughters: Jennifer, Katherine and Laura.

The Ellisons were baptized in 1981 in Westlock, Alberta, by



provided by Janice Ellison

Norm Strayer. Currently they are members of the Edmonton congregation and have their home in Dapp, Alberta.

*Janice Ellison*

### Speir-Erickson Wedding

Tonya Speir and Michael Erickson were married on July 25, 2017, at the Silvertip Golf Resort in Canmore, Alberta, accompanied by their children and Tonya's grandchildren (Matthew, Ashley and Sarah Erickson; Mitch, Ashley, Mia and Uriah Speir) and other close family members

The ceremony was officiated by Rainer Salomaa. Following the ceremony, a champagne toast and private reception was held at the resort.



provided by Orange Girl Photography

Prior to the wedding, the Raleigh, North Carolina, congregation hosted a wedding shower for Tonya on July 9 to express their love and support for the couple.

The Edmonton congregation surprised the newlyweds with a cake-cutting ceremony and

toast after Sabbath Services on August 5. The Prince George congregation hosted a barbecue and women's tea after the Sabbath on August 12 to officially welcome Tonya to Canada.

Both Tonya and Michael were overjoyed by the love and support shown by their families and their brothers and sisters in Christ.

*Michael & Tonya Erickson*

### Morris Obituary

Our dear friend Robin Morris left us early in the morning of June 24, 2017, appropriately entering his rest just before sunrise on that peaceful Sabbath day.



provided by Cheryl-Lynn Lio

Born in Worcestershire, England, in March 1928, he was only six months old when he came to Canada, but he retained a remarkably British attitude. Robin was very happy to have spent most of his adult life in the Hamilton, Ontario, area – 'Hamlin' as he called it with that inherent English tendency to foreshorten longish words.

He met a very pretty nurse named Evelyn at a dance one

day, and he pursued her until she caught him. They were married in October, 1952. They spent more than 64 years together. They bought a small farm with a creek running through it, just across the Grand River from York, about 25 miles south of Hamilton. The family still happily gathers down at the "creek" for picnics and barbecues, campouts and so on. Members of the Hamilton congregation also remember enjoyable times spent there.

Robin and Evelyn have five children: three boys and two girls. As time went on, they also had nine grandchildren, and one great-grandchild at time of writing. Evelyn brought the children to church with her from the time they were young. Robin eventually began attending with them. After the United Church of God was formed, Robin began attending, and he became a cheerful, helpful, song-leading member of the congregation. He had a penchant for telling several stories at once, with an amazing capacity to bring them all to a fitting conclusion! It was a rare talent.

Evelyn's health began to deteriorate in the last few years. She began to struggle with dementia, but resolutely turned to crossword and brain-teaser books to keep her mind active. Robin worried about her and spent much of his time during the last year being with her in hospital, and then in the nursing home in Hamilton where she now resides.

*George Carter*

## A Covering for Sin

Atonement is a day set aside for prayer and fasting. Yet, God's instruction is that we celebrate this special day. "It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath" (Leviticus 23:32).

Just what are we to celebrate? The principle of atonement is the concept of being at-one with God or making amends for wrong doing – what the Bible calls reconciliation. But before there can be reconciliation there has to be forgiveness of sin – a covering for sin. The Jews celebrate' this day as Yom Kippur. The word Kippur simply means: "to cover" or "covering."

The history of the Israelites in the Old Testament shows they went through a very elaborate ceremony marking this special day called Atonement. They were to construct a sanctuary, "that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8). Then came specific instructions for the construction of the tabernacle, including the area known as the most holy, where a figure/type/replica of God's throne was to be placed.

The Israelites were also to construct a special altar, made with exact specifications, to be used for a special purpose. "And Aaron shall make atonement upon its horns once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement; once a year he shall make atonement upon

it throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD" (Exodus 30:10).

Aaron, the High Priest, had very specific instructions for that ceremony. "And he shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat (replica of God's throne) that is on the testimony, (the Ten Commandments on the ark of the covenant) lest he die" (Leviticus 16:13).

Why incense? What did it represent? Was it just some trivial hocus-pocus Aaron went through? Why did God have him sprinkle incense on the fire on the altar? And why sweet-smelling incense?

The answer is in the last book of the Bible, and relevant to our keeping and observing this unique day called Atonement. "Now when He (Jesus Christ) had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (Revelation 5:8). "Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. And he was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand" (Revelation 8:3-4).

Aaron, brother of Moses and Israel's high Priest, was commissioned to conduct the elaborate ceremony of Atonement once each year on behalf of the entire nation of Israel (Leviticus 16:16). The relevance of that ancient ceremony is brought forward to New Testament times including this day and age. Notice the overview presented by the writer of the book of Hebrews. "Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary" (Hebrews 9:1).

But notice the writer now connects the observance from ancient Israel to God's church today. "But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle (His body) not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption . . . For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another--He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:11-12; 24-26).

See "Covering" on page 5