



In For the Count

Many of us will recall being patiently taught the alphabet by our parents as they were preparing us for grade school. It is likely that we were even provided with a melody to help us to memorize the all-important alphabet more easily. Similarly, many of us will recall being taught to count to 10 and then 20 and then eventually being able to reach the dizzying heights of 100. I'm sure that a great number of readers of the *United News Canada* learned to count in several languages and are still quite capable of doing so. Being able to count is a very important capacity that we should not take for granted.

Prior to returning to Heaven, Jesus specifically instructed His followers to remain in Jerusalem and to await the Promise of the Father. Promises are important. There are those who make promises but often fail to keep them. There are those who make promises and never intend to keep them. We know of a few rare individuals who, when they make a promise, do everything in their power to keep each

promise they make. For this reason they make very few promises but when they do, they work very hard to ensure that they follow through.

The Holy Bible is replete with very special promises. As early as 1 Kings 8:56 we read the following words: "Blessed be the LORD, that hath given

pleased to follow up on those promises. His Word is sure and He impresses upon His servants how His word is something His followers can depend upon completely.

To have to wait for something we really want or really need is not an easy thing to do. Being able to delay gratification is a mark of maturity. Children typically abhor waiting and prefer for something promised to be delivered almost instantly. Adults can have the same desire. However, sometimes we aren't ready to receive something right away. A preparation process is often needed so that we are able to handle whatever it is we are hoping to receive. As you think back, you may remember the promise of your very first-ever transportation device. Perhaps it was a tricycle, a scooter or maybe a bicycle. You may remember that you had to grow into it. Perhaps your dad had to attach wooden blocks to your tricycle pedals so that you wouldn't have to wait quite so long to ride it!



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In this Issue:

Pentecost and Good Works.....	2
The 4th Step and 2 Birthdays	4
Happy Anniversary.....	6
Leadership Workshop.....	7
National Office Staff.....	7
National Council.....	8
News From Across Canada.....	10
Pentecost.....	12

rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant." The Great God we serve is One who issues promises to His people. Then when conditions are met, He is

Another benefit of waiting is that it heightens appreciation. As we wait for the day when we can finally receive our very first something, we imagine how wonderful it will be when the expectation finally becomes reality. There are the sweet anticipatory thoughts of what it will be like to finally receive the ob-

ject of our affection. Memories may take you back to the fond thoughts you had about some-day having your very own room, your very own bed or your very own bicycle. Or, you might have thought about what it would be like to have your very first pet to care for, look after and be special friends with.

The people of Israel at the time of Christ's first coming anticipated His arrival with increasing ardour. In *The Day Christ Died* (by Jim Bishop) we read: "The Messiah was a sweet national obsession. It was ecstasy beyond happiness, joy beyond comprehension; it was balm to a weary farmer's bones as he lay with his family waiting for sleep; it was the single last hope of the aged, the thing a child looked to a mountain of snowy clouds to

see; it was the hope of Judea in chains; the Messiah was always the promise of tomorrow morning. This solemn surge of singing in the heart of every good Jew was the core of Judea at the time of Jesus. This was the top-most stone in the climb toward eternity."

We know from Acts 2 that the promised Holy Spirit is described as a very special 'gift.' That is, there is nothing we can ever do to earn it. There is nothing we can do to obligate God to give it to us. Even so, there are conditions we must meet such as repentance so that we may receive it. James 1:17 assures us that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of

turning."

Not long ago we observed the Passover, the Night to Be Much Observed and the Feast of Unleavened Bread – giving due emphasis to those annual high holy days. Now we are on a countdown to the Feast of Pentecost when we will observe the next remarkable festival in God's Holy Day calendar. Articles in this issue of *United News Canada* will help you understand the important concept of counting to 50 and related lessons imbedded in the Feast of Pentecost. Moreover, we can fortify the confidence we can have in the amazing promises given to us by our Heavenly Father and His Son as stated in writing in the pages of the Bible, cover to cover.

Anthony Wasilkoff

Pentecost and Good Works

In revealing His plan for mankind, God chose annual Sabbaths – Holy Days focused on harvest seasons in Palestine (Exodus 23:14-17). The Feast of Pentecost or Feast of

Firstfruits pictures the spring harvest.

Jewish tradition connects the Feast of Pentecost with the giving of the Ten Com-

mandments at Mt. Sinai. The physical nation of Israel at that time was committed to keeping God's Laws but they failed. In lamenting their failure in Deuteronomy 5:29, our

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God said, “Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all my commandments that it might be well with them and with their children forever.”

We know from Scripture that what was missing was a power to transform their physical nature to a divine nature. What was missing was the power to transform their lives to a “new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17), one Christ prophesied would be given to His people (John 15:26-27; 16:12-14) when He was yet present on this Earth.

This power came in a dramatic way on the Day of Pentecost in A.D. 31. Those who were His were gathered together in one accord (Acts 2:1-4). Such was the power and transformation that took place that they were viewed as turning “the world upside down” (Acts 17:6).

Upon repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands by one of His servants, that power becomes a part of true Christians (Acts 2:37-38) and begins the transformation. One enters a symbolic watery grave and rises in newness of life (Romans 6:1-6; Acts 22:16; Titus 3:5) as a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Once purchased with our Saviour’s precious blood (Acts 20:28), firstfruits are expected to be undefiled with the world and to follow the lamb wher-

ever He goes, blameless and without fault” (Revelation 14:4-5).

Most of us reading this article know these things. Yet, our Creator saw fit many centuries ago to have us annually rehearse these feasts, as we need reminding, refreshing and encouraging. Even the Apostle Paul reminded a young minister to “stir up the gift of God which is in you” referring to His spirit, “a spirit of power and of love and a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1: 6-7).

Many times I have let my mind meditate on the expectations of firstfruits to “be (or become) Holy as He is Holy” (1 Peter 1:15), “to go on to perfection” (Hebrews 6:1-3). This power “of love and a sound mind” is what makes it possible to do what the Israelites could not do.

Love defines our Creator (1 John 4:7-9). It must ultimately define us. “No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us” (1 John 4:12).

Why must love ultimately define us? This may seem simplistic when one considers the entirety of what we are to be or become. If God is Love and God is a family then all those in the family must be defined as Love. Asking oneself, how does my life compare to the scriptures on “agape” love (1 Corinthians 13; John 3:16) is

a worthy question as a part of self-examination.

A sound mind is a blessing of God’s Holy Spirit. The power that dwells in us allows us to keep His words and become like Him. Although there are many scriptures one could rightly look to as a standard, my favorite is 2 Corinthians 10:4-6, which is the standard of “bringing every thought into the captivity of Christ.” Now that is a standard!

Let us all “consider how to provoke one another unto love and good works” (Hebrews 10:23-25) “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together even more as we see the Day approaching.” We do this not by setting our mind on “high things” (Romans 12:15-17) or thinking too “highly of ourselves” (Romans 12:3) “but soberly,” while thinking on Godly things.

Let’s meditate on “whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

As the apostle Paul encouraged young Timothy, let us all “stir up the spirit” and strive to truly “provoke one another onto love and good works.”

The Fourth Step and Two Birthdays

The Feast of Pentecost is the fourth step that members of the Church of God recognize in their walk toward the millennial Kingdom of God—the “Sabbath Rest” promised to believers. That rest is typified by the Feast of Tabernacles, the seventh step in God’s great plan of salvation; but two more giant steps must be taken in quick succession before that millennial Kingdom is reached.

Under the mighty hand of Jesus Christ, planet Earth will become a paradise, a promised land of peace and plenty! There will be a Sabbath rest from Satan and his horde of unseen demons who are presently pushing the world toward a painful terminus. But God will not allow that to happen (Matthew 24:22).

Beyond the seventh step, in which the last human beings will be born, there will come the great resurrection and harvest of all mankind. That is pictured in the Eighth Day. Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Corinthians 2:9).

Can you believe it? These first four steps are of the springtime, and a small harvest of mankind, men and women of all the ages, brought in as a firstfruits readied to help our Lord bring in the far greater fall harvest. Pentecost used to be called the Feast of Weeks because of the seven-week count before the actual day, but is also called the Feast

of Firstfruits, and how marvelous that is! The count actually connects those who are called as firstfruits of mankind to Him who went before as the First of the firstfruits, pictured by the wave sheaf offering. It was made in the morning following the weekly Sabbath within the days of Unleavened Bread. Jesus Christ died as forecast in Exodus 12, and rose from the dead precisely on time three days and three nights later at the end of the Sabbath. The Wave-sheaf was offered the following morning, even as our Lord presented Himself in Heaven as our High Priest offering Himself as the accomplished sacrifice for all mankind.

God put these steps in place before Adam was made, but not until the Son of God put off His great power and glory to become a man – the Second Adam – could we begin to understand the truly incredible potential of mankind. And not until after the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ would the Holy Spirit be given to open our minds to the marvellous truth of God’s great plan of salvation. Every man, woman, and child who ever lived or will yet live shares this divine potential. The vast majority will become part of the tremendous harvest of the Eighth Day.

Step one in that wonderful plan was the Passover, given as Israel was led out of captivity, but foreshadowing the ultimate Passover when the Lamb of God was sacrificed to take mankind

out of a world of sin and captivity to Satan who is the unseen slave-master at work since the Garden of Eden. Step two is Unleavened Bread during which mankind must learn that man does not live by bread alone. Step three is the Wave-sheaf, acknowledging the stupendous sacrifice willingly made for our sake, without which nothing else could follow. And then step four, the first small harvest pictured by Pentecost, the Feast of Firstfruits. These are empowered by the Holy Spirit, grow to maturity and are plucked up at the Lord’s return. Steps five (Feast of Trumpets) and six (Day of Atonement) must soon follow.

Two Awesome Births

After the Lord God took Israel out of Egypt, He brought them to Mount Sinai. There He came down in fire upon the mountain whilst the earth shook and the people trembled in fear. He spoke powerfully to them, and gave His Ten Commandments which they agreed to obey. He made a covenant with them, taking them to be His people, and figuratively, His betrothed. Then the nation of Israel was born. Rabbinic scholars maintain that this was at Shavuot (Pentecost). Israel failed to keep God’s Law or remain His people, but their history was written as instruction for all humanity.

Years later, the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy

Spirit to His disciples on the anniversary of that phenomenal day in which He had given the Ten Commandments. The coming of the Spirit was manifested by the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and tongues of fire and the apostles began to speak in languages which they had never known (Acts 2). The event brought crowds of people to the apostles, men of many nations gathered in Jerusalem for the Feast, and God miraculously enabled each one to hear in his own language what the apostles were inspired to teach on that momentous day. Peter in particular was inspired to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of the Risen Christ, and 3,000 people accepted the wonderful truth and were baptized. That was the birth of the New Testament Church.

Both of these distantly associated births occurred on the Day of Pentecost, in perfect accordance with God's foreordained plan – revealed first to Moses and Israel and then to us.

Feast of Weeks/Firstfruits

God told the Israelites that when they came into the Promised Land, they were to wave the first sheaf of the first harvest before the Lord so that they might be accepted. It was to be done on the day following the regular Sabbath which occurred during the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:9–11). Having done that, they could start the fifty-day count

to Pentecost from that day of the wave sheaf.

They counted seven Sabbaths and the next day (always a Sunday) would be Pentecost as it is called in Greek. To the



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Israelites it was the Feast of Weeks (Deuteronomy 16:9-12), the firstfruits of wheat harvest (Exodus 23:16, 34:22) or the Day of Firstfruits (Numbers 28:26).

What is important here is the firstfruits; this provides the connection between Jesus Christ, who is the First of the firstfruits typified by the wave sheaf, and the Church as the firstfruits of mankind, typified by another wave offering. On the day after the seventh Sabbath, the fiftieth day, they were

to bring two loaves of bread, made with fine flour and baked with leaven. These two loaves of bread were to be used as a “wave offering” for the people (Leviticus 23:16-17).

It has been suggested that the two loaves waved on the day of Pentecost were prophetic and represented both Jew and Gentile made one in the Church: For He is our peace, who hath made both (Jew and Gentile) one, and have broken down the middle wall of partition between us ... to make in Himself one new man, so making peace (Ephesians 2:14-15).

Alternatively, they may represent the called-out ones of the age before Christ, and those who have been called since. That would not be restricted to the Old and New Testament churches, as such, since God clearly called men into the truth from the time of righteous Abel, through Noah and the Flood, and on to Abraham, who is called the “father of the faithful.” There may be other explanations, but of this we can be certain; that the Church, the ecclesia, is the entire body of individuals who were called out and endured in their lifetimes, from the beginning until the day that Jesus Christ's Kingdom comes.

The Kingdom of our Lord will come, and the refreshed Earth will then be ruled in righteousness.

Happy Anniversary

This year, Canada celebrates the sesquicentennial anniversary of Canadian Confederation. In other words we are celebrating the country's 150th anniversary. The Queen along with Prince Charles and his wife, the Duchess of Cornwall, will arrive to attend the celebration on July 1 in Ottawa. Additionally many communities across the country will also have organized events to mark the occasion.

Anniversaries are important. They can mark both happy and sad milestones in each of our lives. We recognize wedding anniversaries, the date of our baptism or perhaps the date of the death of a significant person in our life. Of course, parents will remember the anniversary of their children's birth.

Even congregations celebrate the date of their official beginning. Over the past couple of years several UCG-Canada congregations have reached and celebrated the twenty-year mark since their group began. Lots of memories were created during those 20 years even though, in hindsight, those years went by very quickly.

Several years ago, my siblings and I planned a surprise celebration for my parent's 50th wedding anniversary. Many relatives and friends were invited. A local instrumental group played under

a shade tree outside the small community hall we rented. It was a celebration of a very important event for the family and started what became an annual tradition to honour two people who have touched so many lives so positively.

Recently my husband and I traveled to southern Missouri for the celebration of another wedding anniversary for my parents. This year marked 71 years of married



life for them – a milestone that most of us will never reach! This year was relatively quiet celebration with somewhere around two dozen close family members there for the meal. Last year, however, was a much bigger celebration as about 70 family, friends, neighbours and church members gathered for the celebration! It was a wonderful occasion as relatives who had not seen each other for decades had a chance to become reacquainted.

Soon another very important

anniversary will be observed. That is the anniversary of the establishment of the church and the giving of the Holy Spirit. No matter how extravagant a wedding or wedding anniversary may have been, it is totally overshadowed by the events that occurred on the Feast of Pentecost.

When the latest Star Wars movie came out just a few months ago, we took two grandsons to see it. It included the to-be-ex-

pected fighting scenes with lots of lights and sound. The boys loved it. I, however, found the sights jumbled and sounds too loud. But, as we can read in the book of Acts, the sights and sounds associated with the giving of the Holy Spirit on that first Pentecost after the Resurrection must have been so much more impressive than the Star Wars movie! Hollywood with all its technology can't begin

to compete with that event.

This year once again on the Feast of Pentecost, we will celebrate the important anniversary of the founding of the church and the giving of the Holy Spirit. While we will not experience the spectacular sights and sounds described in Acts 2, we will feel a surge of excitement as we are reminded of a vital milestone in God's plan of salvation. Happy Anniversary to you all!

Linda Wasilkoff

Leadership Workshop Weekend

Shortly after UCG-Canada began, Gary Antion and the Canadian pastors put together a leadership development program that was implemented in the congregations that existed at that time. Through the years, various other methods have been used to help train local leaders and potential pastors.

Over the past several years we have held annual leadership workshops — mainly in the Toronto area, but also in Calgary.

On the weekend of April 1 and 2 the annual leadership weekend was held in Toronto. Gary and Barbara Antion drove up from Cincinnati for the occasion. There were 140 people at services on the Sabbath. Most stayed for a potluck after services and 66 attended the Saturday

evening seminar presented by Mr. Antion.

On Sunday 42 people attended the morning and afternoon sessions, which were presented by Gary Antion and Anthony Wasilkoff and held at the National Office. Attendees came from the Montreal, Ottawa, Kitchener, Hamilton and Toronto congregations and ranged in age from mid-twenties to late fifties. The advantage of holding this weekend at the National Office is that there is no hall cost and we can self-cater.

The workshops have brought forth good results with many becoming better leaders in the local congregation and some being ordained as deacon or deaconess. Others are now elders and some

have become pastors. The benefit of the workshops is more than just the teaching. It gives the opportunity to interact with the current leaders and see how they answer and ask questions. Of course, there have been some who have not worked out as leaders and some are no longer members of United.

We very much appreciate the Antions being willing to make the eight-hour drive to assist in this program. Next year's Leadership Weekend is already being planned!

Please continue to pray for God to provide more people who can begin to be trained for increased service in the local areas and for those who are in training now!

UNC

National Office Staff

Since it is sometimes difficult to know to whom to refer questions to, a listing of employees and their primary duties has been compiled for your convenience. Of the office staff only two are full-time office workers: Edwin van Pelt and Dale van Zant. The rest are either part-time employees or have pastoral duties in ad-



Paul Wasilkoff

dition to working in the office.

Donna Checca: mailing, duplicating booklets, MP3 and DVD editing and duplicating.

Bill Dimovski: accounting and special project analysis.

Paula Horlick: receptionist, data input, event planner, church attendance reports.

Jim Lucas: ministerial trainee, UCG Pastoral map.

Patrick Read: pastor, oversees video editing.

Edwin van Pelt: Corporate

Treasurer, oversees database and mailing, donations, privacy officer.

Dale van Zant: accounts payable, human resources, insurance, payroll, editing.

Anthony Wasilkoff: Pastor, Director of Operations.

Linda Wasilkoff: Corporate Secretary, *United News Canada* coordinator, event planner, marriage registration.

Paul Wasilkoff: Pastor, IT manager, website maintenance, *United News Canada* layout.

UNC

National Council Meeting Update

The National Council met via WebEx on Monday evening, March 13, for its first meeting of the calendar year. All members of the National Council were online plus the Treasurer and Secretary. Bill Dimovski was also invited to be online to provide valuable information. As usual, the first item of business was to review and adopt the minutes from the previous meeting.

Edwin van Pelt reported that the number of people making online donations is increasing and the amount donated by that method is also increasing. Most online donations come from members, but a recent donation came from someone new to us.

The latest Subscriber Development letter was sent to 3,800 people and, as of the meeting, 135 responses had been received. The response to the *Reader's Digest* ad was 103 at the time of the meeting with all but five of those com-

ing from people not already on file.

Anthony Wasilkoff reported that the National Office is in the process of ordering signs to be placed above the office entrance and on the office door itself. He also reported that the Council of Elders has been working on amending the Rules of Association to improve consistency between documents. These amendments are now ready to go to the General Conference of Elders for approval.

Each National Council committee chairman was asked for an update on what the committees are working on. The Strategic Planning/Finance committee is working on a policy or guidelines for cell phones and internet. The Governance committee is busy doing a review of current policies to see what needs to be updated.

Ellsworth Stanley's term

on the Amendment Committee was to end on March 31. After discussion, the council determined to reappoint him to another three-

year term, which he has since accepted. The Secretary announced that the Strategic Plan, Operations Plan and Budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year were approved by the National Conference.

Anthony Wasilkoff requested that the Council discuss a potential donation to help fund the media center in Cincinnati. Because UCGIA is not a CRA recognized charity, this would be difficult. There would potentially be a need to change our mission as it has been approved by the government, change our bylaws as well as pursue getting UCGIA recognized as a charity by the Canadian government. It was decided that further research and input from those with more background on the requirements be sought before proceeding.

The final agenda item was to review and discuss the June meetings that will take place at the National Office. Dr. Donald Ward has been invited and hopes that he and his wife, Wanda, will be able to attend. Following the Council meetings, there will be a Ministerial Conference on the weekend. Gary and Barbara Antion will be present for that conference.

Following the regular meeting, the Council moved into an executive session to discuss personnel matters and how to better serve the brethren.



Paul Wasilkoff

“Pentecost” from page 12

become part of the greater and final harvest of mankind.

Pentecost is designed to teach that there is a first harvest of humans that will be resurrected with spiritual bodies and be like Christ (1 John 3:2). It points to a greater hope for all of mankind. Jesus taught about a resurrection to life, rewards and glory with Him and the Father (John 5:29, Matthew 19:28-30). God gives the opportunity to many to be called – that is invited (Matthew 22:14).



AlexRaths/iStock/Thinkstock

Many who were invited were not willing to come and had excuses (v. 3-4). Some grew angry and murderous at the invitation and Jesus said they were not worthy (v. 8). Finally others were invited, both bad and good and they did come, but some of them treated the invitation carelessly and were cast out (v. 13). The lessons taught by Jesus Christ about the resurrection to life are serious and not to be taken lightly.

God began the process of receiving repentant sinners into

fellowship with the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:1-3). What seemed like a violent, howling wind rose on Pentecost as the followers were gathered together and something that looked like flames of fire rested on each of them (Acts. 2:1-4). The sound attracted the attention of many of the devout Jews who had come from all over the Roman Empire. To the utter astonishment of the gathered crowds, each person could hear the Word of God spoken in their own language.

Meanwhile the Spirit of God was moving the hearts of many of those gathered together. They learned that they needed to repent and be baptized to be forgiven. Then they would receive the Spirit of God and the Father and Son would dwell in them. Three thousand were baptized on that day and more were added to the group every day (Acts. 1:38-47). However, there were more than the 3,000 who heard the words. Some were skeptical, some angry, some mocked and some just did not care. The 3,000 did care.

The path to eternal life had been set and to this day, it has not changed. In order to be part of the resurrection that happens at the return of

Jesus Christ, each person must know what sin is so they can repent of it. They must believe and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ which cleanses us from sin (1 John 1:7-2:2). Peter writes that God expects us to be holy in all we do (1 Peter 1:13-23). The Father and Son dwell in converted people through the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Pentecost teaches the first harvest and marks the end of the spring holy days. These days look forward to the greater harvest from all of mankind which is revealed in the fall holy days. Pentecost is exciting as it marks the “better resurrection” (Hebrews 11:35). Those who are part of this resurrection will live and reign with Christ for about 1,000 years before the greater harvest takes place (Revelation 5:10).

The invitation is open to all who would hear just as it was to the whole crowd gathered before the disciples on that special Pentecost. Many are called and that is part of the task of God’s people today. Few are chosen and that is partly their choice, but it is the area in which God works (Matthew 22:14). Peter encouraged them to “save themselves from this corrupt generation” (Acts 2:40). The message of Pentecost is the same today. The door is open to become part of the firstfruits.

News From Across Canada

Saskatoon Bowling Social

The Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, congregation held a bowling night on February 18 at Perdue, a 45-minute drive from the city.



provided by Darlene Buck

A potluck was held at the home of Al and Joey Levitt before the bowling. Thirteen bowlers enjoyed an evening of fun and fellowship. Darlene Buck, Joe Kozenko and Laurie Reichert were on the winning team.

Donna Bird

Calgary Ordination

In Calgary, on the first Day of Unleavened Bread, Julie Molnar was ordained a deaconess by Rainer Salomaa. Julie has been serving the brethren faithfully for many years. She is usually one of the first ones to arrive and among the last to leave our church facility each week.

Julie started attending God's church in 1977. She has four children she raised on her own. She also has eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



provided by Rainer Salomaa

For recreation, Julie enjoys writing poetry and crocheting. This spring, she slipped on the ice and broke her wrist, spending twelve hours in ER since four-hundred others had also had falls that day.

Rainer Salomaa

Saskatoon Ordination

On the Sabbath of April 8, 2017, in Saskatoon, Allan Levitt was ordained an elder. Our associate pastor, Mr. Doug Lesh, was here for the occasion along with Mr. Robert Berendt, our former pastor who is now enjoying retirement.

With this ordination, there are now two elders serving the Saskatoon and North Battleford congregations: Bruce Bird and Al Levitt.

Al and his wife, Joey, have been members of God's church for over 50 years. They have lived in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Through all these years, they have been very loyal and dedicated to God's church and

His way of life in the areas they have lived.



provided by Darlene Buck

We ask God to give them health and understanding as they serve in the years ahead.

Darlene Buck

Lethbridge Ordination

On March 11, 2017, the Lethbridge, Alberta, congregation had a joyous occasion. Rainer Salomaa and Larry DeLong ordained Donna Grieves to the office of deaconess.

Donna first came in contact with the truth in the 1970's listening to Garner Ted Armstrong on the radio. She was baptized in 1986. Donna has always had



provided by Rainer Salomaa

a deep love for the truth and a heart willing to serve the brethren. You can always find her behind the scenes quietly helping at church services and when her fellow brethren are in need.

Maureen DeLong

Stoner Obituary

Pamela Anne Stoner died Tuesday, April 25, 2017, after a decline in her health. Pam was born in Chatham, Ontario, on September 4, 1933.



provided by Patrick Read

She was the deeply-cherished wife of the late Keith Gordon Stoner (deceased in September 2014), whom she married on June 2, 1956, and was the beloved mother of Aym Ramsay and Rebecca Pyper. She was also the proud Gran of Jacob and Emma Pyper and Doodles.

In 2005, Pam and Keith were instrumental in starting a Bible study group for the United Church of God in London, Ontario, which eventually became a small church group. She remained faithful to it until her

death. Pam enjoyed spending time with the little group in London and especially enjoyed the many conversations that centered on the Word of God.

Pam longed for the Kingdom of God and would often remark “I can hardly wait.” She would often ask for an anointed cloth and faithfully placed her trust in her Creator to provide healing for her ailments.

Pam’s faith, trust and devotion to God and His church will be missed. We are, however, grateful to God that she will no longer have to suffer or struggle as she watched this world decline.

Patrick Read

Wannamaker Obituary

Shortly after a fall in her home, Clara May Wannamaker died on Friday, April 7, 2017 in the Saint John Regional Hospital at age 97. Mrs. Wannamaker was born on March 17, 1920, in Nauwigewauk, New Brunswick, where she lived all her life. Her home, built in 1913 by the father and uncle of her husband, is well known by the local brethren since services were held there many Sabbaths.

The Wannamakers came into God’s church in the 1970’s after hearing the radio program on WWVA from Wheeling, West Virginia. At that time, they were part of the Seventh Day Adventist church. They were both baptized in 1982. At that time, services were held every other week in Saint John, New Brunswick. On the other Sabbath, the family had to drive to either Fredericton or Moncton



provided by Edwin van Pelt

for services. On Holy Days, the congregations would combine in Sussex. In 1996, Mrs. Wannamaker became part of the Sussex congregation of the United Church of God – Canada.

Clara loved gardening and her award-winning gardens showed it. She had a multitude of flowers including heritage rose bushes. When the National Council met in Sussex in 2006, council members and members of the Sussex congregation spent an enjoyable summer day in her yard and gardens. Through the years, many couples had wedding photos taken in her yard. In addition to gardening, she did knitting, crocheting, embroidery and quilting. Each of her five children and 14 grandchildren were glad recipients of one of her hand-crafted quilts.

Her funeral was conducted by Edwin van Pelt on Wednesday, April 12. She was predeceased by her husband (Harold) and daughter (June Steeves). Clara is survived by three daughters, one son-in-law, one son, and one daughter-in-law along with 14 grandchildren (including Virginia Steeves of the Lethbridge congregation), 11 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.



Pentecost

Pentecost is the third of the Holy Days listed in Leviticus 23. There it is called the Feast of Weeks and it is counted as the 50 days following the day after the Sabbath falling during the Days of Unleavened Bread. It is also called the “Feast of Harvest” (Exodus 23:16). Therefore, Pentecost always falls on a Sunday.

The wave sheaf offering was waved before God on the day after the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread the Bible explains that Jesus Christ would not let His followers touch Him until He had ascended and been presented to God the Father, but later that day Jesus came to them and they could touch Him (John 20:17, 20). It appears that the wave sheaf looked forward to Jesus Christ just as the Passover lamb looked forward to Him.

Jesus was resurrected late on Saturday, but waited until the next morning to ascend. God is acutely aware of His days and symbols. When we observe how carefully each prophecy of Scripture was fulfilled and how each Sabbath and Holy Day played a part in the life and death of Christ, it becomes apparent why they are “God’s” days.

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ introduced the new and better way for mankind to be reconciled to God (Hebrews 8:6). God had found fault with the people as they did not develop

the character to love and obey His laws. In the new covenant, His laws are written in the hearts and minds of those who believe and follow Him (Hebrews 8:10).



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There was a “new” covenant because of the failings of the people. The system of sacrifices was intended only to remind people of sin (not absolve them) and did not lead to the godly offspring God was seeking (Malachi 2:15). There was a law that was added 430 years after Abraham and would last until Christ would come (Galatians 3:17, 19).

God wrote the Ten Commandments on stone, but the laws of sacrifices were added. That is what ended with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who

became our sacrifice. Moses added to the law due to the hardness of the hearts of the people (Matthew 19:7-9). Those additions and others were due to the faults of people who did not love and obey God’s laws. The only law that Jesus Christ removed was the law of sin and death or in other words the sacrificial system that was to remind people not to sin (Hebrews 10:1-4).

The blood of animals could never take away sin, but reminded people of sin and the need for a Saviour. God was so careful in every detail that Paul noted that just as the bodies of the animals whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin were burned outside the camp, Christ Himself also suffered outside the gate (Hebrews 13:11-12).

James refers to the saved as a kind of “firstfruits” (James 1:18). This harvest would be the early or spring harvest in Israel with the second and greater harvest coming in the fall.

We can see in the Scriptures that there is a smaller harvest of God’s people that happens at the second coming of Christ and it is called the “first resurrection” (Revelation 20:5-6). The statement “rest of the dead” would then apply to all who had not been redeemed by Christ’s blood, but who would live after the 1,000 years to

See “Pentecost” on page 9