

## Dominion of Canada

In Canada, July 1 is celebrated as Canada Day. As many will remember, there was a time when July 1 was not known as Canada Day. It was first known as Dominion Day. The significance of this term should be reviewed and not forgotten.

It was the habit of Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley to begin each morning with prayer and Scripture reading. When the Fathers of Confederation gathered in Charlottetown to draft the terms of the British North America Act, there were many proposals for what to call this new nation. That fateful morning, while reading Psalm 72:8, Tilley became convicted that Canada should be a nation under God. When he appeared at the Conference session, he felt inspired to propose the term "Dominion of Canada." His fellow Fathers agreed and accepted this remarkable name.

Today the following words are enshrined near the Confederation Chamber in Province House: "In the hearts of the

delegates who assembled in this room on September 1, 1864, was born the Dominion of Canada. Providence being their guide, they builded better than they knew."



Image by Jorge Compasio Creative Commons.org

The term 'Dominion' was formalized in 1867. The letter that established the name to Queen Victoria was signed by John A. Macdonald and explained that Dominion was "a tribute to the principles they earnestly desired to uphold."

This Dominion statement was incorporated in Latin into the Canadian coat of arms as "A Mari Usque Ad Mare" (from sea to sea) directly from Psalm 72:8: "He shall have dominion from sea to sea."

Also enshrined in the Canadian Coat of Arms is the expression "Desiderantes Meliorem Patriam." It is the motto of the

Order of Canada and was added in 1994. It means, "They desire a better country." These words probably seem familiar to you because something very similar appears in Hebrews 11:14-16 which states, "For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland . . . But now they desire a better, that is a heavenly country."

It should also be noted that the Canadian Charter of Rights emphatically states, "... Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law." In an increasingly secular society, it is especially important to be reminded of this important albeit nearly forgotten reality.

The Great God left references in our official documents pointing to the Christian heritage of this country. Many of the founding fathers were very familiar with the Holy Bible and had a very high regard for Christian principles and values.

At the annual Feast of Tabernacles, we will be picturing a time when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess the Great God. We look forward to the time when Christ becomes King of Kings and exercises dominion over Canada from sea to shining sea and over all of the earth!

*Anthony Wasilkoff*

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# Relationships

Recently a friend of mine posted on his Facebook page a photo showing his whole family at his father's 91st birthday. I loved the picture when I saw it. Ten days after the 91st birthday, my friend emailed me to say his father had died and we would not be able to meet as planned.

My friend, Mark, and his parents are Japanese. He has honoured his parents. Their relationship was special, since Mark was adopted. So the relationship was not based on blood, but on love.

"Happiness is: something to do, someone to love, and something to hope for." So said Immanuel Kent. 'Someone to love' points to a relationship.

Now I want to ask you a fundamental question: What was there before there were relationships?

God's plan is totally about relationships. God has created the principles that ensure healthy loving relationships and he clearly reveals them to us.

## 1. Before there were relationships

The first four words of Gene-

sis answer what came before relationships. Genesis 1:1: "in the beginning, God..." The Hebrew word used for God is Elohim (plural as in Genesis 1:26 Let us make man in our image.).

Before there were relationships, there was one relationship: Elohim! This is before Creation which doesn't come until the fifth word "created." So before Creation: "In the beginning, Elohim." Elohim refers to the two persons in the Godhead, God the Father, and God the Son as we know them. So before there were relationships, there was one relationship. . . Elohim. Just the two persons in the Godhead.

## 2. The first relationship

Malachi 3:6 says "For I am the Lord, I change not." That relationship is permanent/unchanging. In John 10:30 we find "I and my Father are one." It's a relationship of unity.

The terms Father and Son indicate it's a family relationship...the God family. We also know that relationship is based on love. I John 4:8, "for God is love" (Greek *agape* or God-love).

## 3. The basis of relationships is LOVE

The first relationship then was based on love, for God is love. We will see shortly that God designed all valid relationships and all are based on love. Relationships are the only medium of expression of love. Love can only be expressed or experienced in a relationship.

The sole way for God to expand His love, was to create new relationships. So God designed



photo by Tyler Nix on Unsplash

His plan to have a family. In that family would be many relationships. That way love could be multiplied. In Genesis 1:26 God summarizes his plan "Let us

### UNITED NEWS CANADA

Managing Editor: *Anthony Wasilkoff*

Editorial Reviewers: *Jean Duperrault, Kevin Ford, Denise Masse, David Palmer, Patrick Read, Linda Wasilkoff and Dale van Zant*

Layout: *Paul Wasilkoff*

National Council: *Peter Corrigan, Larry DeLong, Kevin Ford, Stanley Kitt, Jim Lucas, Rainer Salomaa, Lloyd Teetaert, Anthony Wasilkoff and Paul Wasilkoff*

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Etobicoke, ON  
M9A 4X1  
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make man in our image.” That plan for family, is God’s way to create many new relationships

The purpose of family is to have many loving relationships. The only way to express love and to increase love and experience love is in a relationship. After God decided to create His family, He then presented the next step.

#### **4. God developed the principles of loving relationships**

Christ simplifies the relationship principles for us in Matthew 22:36-40. He offers two great relationship principles on which the Ten Commandments hang.

The first principle is found in verse 37, “You shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” The second principle is in verse 39, “Thou shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

So we have two basic relationships that summarize the Ten Commandments.

The third principle is the Family of God relationship. For the establishment of the Church God outlined an additional area of relationship.

The night before His crucifixion, Christ instructed the disciples in the New Testament Passover. Christ said, “A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another: Not

just love, but as Christ continues—as I have loved you that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have love one to another” (John 13:34-35).

#### **5. Relationship principles/ commandments designed before Creation**

God offered the principles (the Ten Commandments) to ensure beautiful relationships. They were in force from Creation, as guides to proper relationships. We know this because the first humans, Adam and Eve, sinned and “Sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). Therefore the Commandments were in force from the Garden of Eden.

Also, “He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sinned from the beginning” (1 John 3:8). Satan didn’t love God with all his heart, and soul and mind. He wanted to replace God. The commandments (rules to relationships) were in effect from before the creation of the angels.

#### **6. Love is reciprocal**

1 John 4:19 tells us, “We love Him because he first loved us.” Matthew 5:44, “Love your enemies.” Why? In time love can turn them; it’s reciprocal.

#### **7. The marriage relationship principle**

In Ephesians 5:21-31 we find that the husband is given the

responsibility of leadership and making the final decision in the context of “submit yourselves one to another.” God gives much instruction on the marriage relationship.

#### **8. The family unit relationship**

One commandment specifies the relationship within the family unit, God’s building block for society. Exodus 20:12 tells us “Honour your father and your mother.” The family relationship is based on that principle. This is reiterated in Ephesians 6:1-2.

#### **9. Man given dominion over the creatures**

Man was to have dominion (rule responsibly) over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth (Genesis 1:28).

#### **10. The angelic realm**

Revelation 5:8-14 shows myriads of angels singing and worshipping God.

Ephesians 4:13-16 “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” Ultimately, the perfect man is able to function lovingly in perfect relationships as God intended with the help of the Holy Spirit.



## The First Beatitude

There is something special about attending a major-league sporting event. Hard work, team work, dedication and pursuit of excellence are intricately woven into professional sports. Also very present is the marketing of ego. And it works—would you ever watch two teams play in the Mediocre Bowl?

Sports is not the only aspect of culture where performance, ego and commerce collide. However, it is an arena where the idea of competence and self-confidence are magnified and lauded. Precious few endorsement dollars would be given to a successful, humble athlete. Media attention, and therefore money, is extended to the brash, haughty and more arrogant individuals.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus spoke of blessings as a result of specific attitudes. The collection, known as the Beatitudes, start with a blessing. The word Jesus used for “blessed” is the Greek word *makarios* which has rich and deep connotations. To get an idea of the meaning see 2 Chronicles 9:5-8. In this passage the context of joy, happiness and contentment is established with the blessing delivered by the Queen of Sheba. It is easy to miss the full scope of “bless” when we use the word so casually (we hear it often after someone sneezes!)

The first Beatitude (Matthew 5:3) is “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” The word poor implies abject poverty. The impli-

cation is a condition more than just lacking resources; the fuller meaning is being broke and also in debt. A person who is poor in spirit recognizes their total lack of inherent righteousness before God the Father. Isaiah 64:6 gives a good summary of this plight.

This realization is a catalyst through which we can begin to change. God pricks our hearts so that we see, know and feel our spiritual poverty. Thankfully, God reaches down to us and grants us a way out of this deficit.

God’s plan has room for so many people. This is clear also in the first Beatitude in the use of the word “theirs”. Romans 8:17 reminds us that we are joint heirs. God’s inheritance doesn’t decrease in value and our share isn’t any less when shared. What an awesome opportunity to be involved in an expanding inheritance that increases in value with each new convert!



photo by Kyle Johnson on Unsplash

This first Beatitude also reinforces God’s view on the promises He makes. “Theirs is.” Jesus could have said, “Theirs will be,” but He used the present tense. Similar language is used when the Lord appeared to Abram in Genesis 17:5 where God changed his name to Abraham. God also told him “I have made you a father of many nations.” God’s promise hadn’t been fulfilled, but He spoke as though it were accomplished because He had the authority, power and will to fulfill the promise. It was as good as delivered.

Why did the Apostle Matthew record the phrase “Kingdom of Heaven” when Luke used the phrase “Kingdom of God”? Some have concluded there must be a doctrinal reason for the difference. However, the variation has more to do with cultural sensitivities than doctrine. Matthew’s audience was primarily Jewish; he understood the reverence the Jews placed on God’s name. He therefore used a word that would deliver the intended meaning without causing offense to his audience. Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven refer to the same idea.

King David expressed a similar sentiment and companion to the first Beatitude when he wrote, “The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.” Putting this vital Beatitude into practice won’t win us any sports endorsements. However, by living a godly life, being appropriately poor in spirit, will hold us in good stead.

*Paul Wasilkoff*

## National Council June Meeting

The National Council met at the National Office on June 20 and 21 for its annual face-to-face meeting. During the first morning, the March Minutes were adopted. This was followed by a Council of Elders update, the Canadian National Office report, financial update, Media Team report and the Ministerial Services report.

Council discussed the pros and cons of having the *Beyond Today* program on television in Canada and how to better measure the effectiveness of the program.

The Compliancy Task Force had suggested some edits to two policies. Policy 7.0 will now have a new name: Policy and Procedure for Possible Suspension or Removal of Elder. The Council approved some major edits (including the name) to this policy which provides the steps to be taken in Canada prior to sending a concern about an elder to the Council of Elders.

Another policy (8.6.1 Sexual Misconduct and Youth Protection Guidelines) had been adopted directly from the UCGIA policy. Edits were made to reflect more Canadian language and layout.

Two new Human Resource policies were approved: "Alcohol Abuse, Drugs and Smoking" and "Cannabis

Use or Consumption." While these are not critical for the church to have right now, eventually this could become an issue. Committees held their meetings during Thursday afternoon.

On Friday, the Finance Committee recommended a plan whereby the church would match what an employee would contribute to an RRSP. This is subject to further discussion and investigation prior to approval in September.

The Governance Committee looked at strategies to ensure that all elders and employees are aware of and

dian UCG website ([www.ucg.ca](http://www.ucg.ca)) could be improved. It was noted that prior to changing our website, we need to know the objective of the website. Council members were asked to send ideas for improvement to Paul Wasilkoff.

Each year the Council must approve the agenda for the Annual General Meeting of the National Conference. This was the first item of business on Friday afternoon.

The next item of business referred to Policy 10.9 Guidelines for Nominating and Electing the Chairman. A temporary chairman had to be selected to chair



photo by Maureen DeLong

following existing policies. They discussed creating a new form for evaluating the Director of Operations. The Governance Committee was asked to work on a procedure for eventually replacing officers of the church.

Peter Corrigan gave a presentation on how the Cana-

the September meeting of the National Council since the meeting will be immediately following the National Conference meeting and the current chairman's term ends at the end of that National Conference meeting. Larry DeLong was chosen to be the temporary Chairman for the September meeting.



Rainer Salomaa informed the Council that the Council of Elders is working on creating a Safety and Security Manual noting that this subject would be good to discuss with the leaders in the local congregations. Another discussion revolved around our Attendance Policy and the difficulty of unruly children at church.

Stan Kitt presented some ideas for Strategic Planning with a discussion following. There was no decision to proceed with this.

One of the last items of business was to appoint a new person to become the Treasurer of UCG-Canada replacing Edwin van Pelt who has faithfully served in

the capacity since 1996. The date of this transition is yet to be determined. Upon recommendation of the Finance Committee, the Council determined that all UCG-Canada employees should be given a raise since they have not received one for nearly ten years.

UNC

## Ministerial Conference

A total of 55 elders, spouses and two trainees, attended this year's Ministerial Conference held in Mississauga on June 22-23. Laymembers of the National Council were also invited to attend.

The weekend started with a barbeque on Friday evening at the home of the Wasilkoffs. The relaxed venue provided a good setting especially for those who were new to the group to meet others and get better acquainted.

In some cases, individuals got reacquainted with people they had known decades before!

The Toronto congregation helped to host a dinner after church on Sabbath. Then the attendees hurried off to a hotel meeting room where they heard instruction from Gary Antion on Biblical marriages. Aaron Dean shared a cross-section of the lessons he learned from working for Mr. Armstrong.

learned from his time of serving on the Council of Elders.

The group stopped for a quick buffet lunch at the local Mandarin restaurant. While it is mainly a Chinese buffet, it also features options to please everyone. The group had a room reserved allowing further time for fellowship and discussion over lunch.

Once back at the hotel, Anthony Wasilkoff kicked off the afternoon session with a presentation about increasing listening skills. This was followed by Gary Antion giving tips on improving sermon presentations. The last hour of the day was reserved for questions and answers.

We were sorry that some were unable to attend this conference due to illness or family emergencies, but hope they will be able to attend the next conference in two years' time.

UNC



photo by Rainer Salomaa

Rainer Salomaa started Sunday morning off with an important review of the Ministerial Code of Ethics. This was followed by a Power Point presentation from John Elliott on training and mentoring new leaders. Aaron Dean gave further insights he

**“Old Age” from page 16**

forced into a childlike existence by a body that no longer functions. Christopher Reeve in his book *Still Me* says “When two people have to roll you back and forth in order to put on your underpants at age forty-five, it’s a difficult lesson in patience and acceptance.” This must bring about that important ingredient, humility and a meekness of spirit, that vulnerability that might have been missing from our character since early childhood. And humility comes before honour (Proverbs 18:12).

Think about it. When all is well with our world we can be pretty cocky, pretty self-assured, bossy, but get ill, or disabled or old, and see how quickly our attitude and demeanour change. I remember having an acute case of vertigo and couldn’t raise my head off the floor. I was entirely dependent on my husband. I was talking softly, humbly, meek, and thankful. Any cockiness or self-assuredness gone. Temporarily I fulfilled most of the characteristics in the beatitudes. We are slow to learn which is why the period of old age is so necessary. By the time we die, hopefully we have put on humility and gentleness.

One ninety-year-old woman told me her daughter included her own grocery tab in her bill and she had to pay for it. They hold the threat of a nursing home over her head. She says, “I

never say anything. I never get mad about anything with them.” Like Christ when he was being crucified—He opened not His mouth and He suffered in silence. Older people learn not to complain otherwise family and friends would stay away. The elderly feel invisible, vulnerable, dependent and must learn patience, meekness and thankfulness for what everyone does for them.

Also, I am beginning to understand the effects of sin as we age and it can be hard to imagine that the elderly suffering is a result of sin. Sin engulfs the world like a scourge; still it tears at one’s heart to see old people suffering.

One 94-year-old woman has macular degeneration, which means she is legally blind. Once she was a wife and mother and health nurse traveling all over Vancouver Island. Losing her eyesight happened when she was 80-years-old and it happened quickly. One day she could only see slightly from the sides of her eyes. I am daily amazed at her ability to cope and laugh at herself in spite of this major change in her life. I have learned patience from her and that you can still give joy to others. I dance a dance every time I go to her apartment. She laughs and sings to the music. She takes joy in the smallest pleasures we are too busy to appreciate in our overly busy lives. I have developed a sense of how tough it is to be old and how

brave older folks really are. My understanding of “strength” deepens as I come to realize their unique strength.

God says we must humble ourselves as a little child if we are to enter the Kingdom. Obviously many of us haven’t learned in the other stages of life what is required of us. Pride cannot exist with humility. But pride’s roots go deep. If nothing else, old age is a powerful antidote for pride, arrogance, smugness and impatience. Paul instructs us in Colossians 3:12 “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

We should take hope in Solomon’s words, “Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit” (Ecclesiastes 7:8). So what I have seen through my friendships with the elderly is a compulsory classroom of rooting out pride and replacing it with humbleness. How much better a voluntary humbleness of spirit given to us by God almighty—how sweet it is. Take heart because God promises “Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you” (Isaiah 46:4). We are always in God’s awesome Hands!

## Congregation Spotlight: Victoria, BC

We had a wonderful NTBMO here in Victoria. We invited the small congregation we have here to our home, where we prepared a meal. It was a truly bonding night recalling how each of us was called and remarking on how God calls from every nation.

Let me explain, as I said we have a small congregation whose members come from many nations and God has assembled us here in Victoria. You could say we have a united group from



photo by Wendy Corrigan

across the world who come from Canada, Kenya, Jamaica, England, Scotland, and when our Pastor John Elliott is with us, from the USA.

Here is what two of our members remember about their calling.

Back in 1968, while working in British Columbia, Dave Bartlett's mother mentioned to him that he should start seeking God and come to know Him. At that time he says, "I was happy with my life, and told my mother there was no God. I was not in any way religious or unhappy with my life. Things were go-

ing well until I suddenly lost my job."

At around the same time, Dave happened to hear Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong speaking on the radio about religion. From that moment, he thought he must check out this religion thing. The urge to do so was compelling and right out of the blue. A short time later in 1969, Dave was first counselled by Gary Antion in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and was baptized in January 1975. The rest is over 50 years of history in the church.

Richard Shiundu and his wife, Maureen, were raised in Protestant Christian families in Kenya. When they met in 2008, Richard attended the Anglican Church and Maureen attended a local Pentecostal church. Richard would briefly join her before they joined the Church of God in 2012.

Richard's calling came in 2008 when doing a private study on astronomy and was humbled at the expanse and marvel of the universe. There were so many unanswered questions that even science itself admitted they had no answers for. He turned to the Bible for answers, only to find that God's word barely focused on astronomy. God's focus was on people, the apex of his creation with occasional mention of the heavens (space). Suddenly his attention shifted from astronomy to the salvation of mankind, but one thing disturbed him, and he found no answer to in all the mainstream Christian

doctrines that he studied.

The question was, "How is Christ the only way to the Father when there are billions who've never heard about him including his grandparents' generation?" Four years later after abandoning the beliefs he was brought up in, he had clearly seen Christmas was a fraud and Easter was as well, that Sunday was not the day of worship and so on.

Richard also learned that the reason the Trinity doesn't make sense is because it is not biblical. His parents were a little disappointed, but they always let him make his decisions so they didn't try to dissuade him from leaving the family's church. He still had one challenge though, finding the church that followed these "weird" beliefs.

He scoured the Internet and went through more than 50 different churches looking at what they believed and why they always seemed to get one biblical concept right and another totally wrong—and by totally wrong he means the beliefs were not biblical but followed tradition. Then he stumbled on the Churches of God. It was refreshing. They checked all the boxes and showed him what he didn't yet know like the purpose of the Holy Days, but which Church of God to go to was another question, for some reason up to this point he had not come across UCG yet.

This amazes him now because UCG is usually the easiest Church of God site to find.



When he finally did find it, there was a relief. It felt as if this was his final rest. Why? UCG had the knowledge like the other Churches of God, but in addition, they had the humility. They didn't claim to be the only ones who knew the truth, they didn't claim that the two witnesses would come from their church, and most importantly, they didn't bad mouth any other church. That is what he was looking for. He doesn't say UCG is perfect, but he could see a sincere and humble pursuit of God's perfection in this church.

By 2012, the Shiundus had been married for a year. Maureen was sure Richard had joined a cult and was reluctant to join him. One thing that bothered her was that he didn't seem to

honour the Holy Spirit, and even had the audacity to claim the Holy Spirit wasn't a person but a power. Richard asked her to join him on one of the Sabbaths, if for no other reason, to just know what he was up to on Saturday's. She would later tell him she thought we would be sacrificing animals! There was no doubt that God's hand was involved in calling Maureen because the day she came to church is the day a sermon was given about the Holy Spirit. Richard did not request for the sermon to be given. It just happened. Maureen was even more impressed by the love shown to her by the brethren.

During 2012 and beginning 2013, Richard read about the throne of Britain and God's purpose for English speaking

people and their heritage. They developed the urge to be part of the physical promises to Joseph's children which led them to apply and become permanent residents of Canada.

In 2016 Richard, Maureen and their son, Timothy, moved from Nairobi, Kenya, to Winnipeg and then to Victoria. Their daughter, Talia, was born in 2017 in Canada.

They say, "When we look back it is truly a miracle, there's no chance we could have figured this out for ourselves, and we will forever be thankful for the opportunity of God's greatest blessing, His calling into His church."

*Peter Corrigan*

## News From Across Canada

### Toronto Farewell Social

Shortly after Sabbath services on May 25, 2019, the Toronto congregation held a social to bid farewell to the location at the Community of Christ building, which had been "home" for

nearly twenty years.

The commemoration took us down memory lane and highlighted the many events and activities that were held at this location. This was presented as a slide-show created by Amy van Zant, with many of the photos contributed by Gary Haynes.

The function began with a tribute to Lillie Robinson, who was one of the first deaconesses ordained after UCG-Canada began. She served in many roles and was our beloved choir director before moving to the

Windsor congregation. One of our pre-teens, Charles Lepage, who attended at this location since before his birth and was also blessed at this location, gave a tribute to Mrs. Robinson. He spoke of the fond memories of her dedication, labour of love and many contributions to him personally, his family and the greater family of God.

The slide-show of Mrs. Robinson's diligent service at this location was then presented which brought to mind fond memories of yesteryear and reminded us of her talents and her skill in the detailed, beauti-



photo by Amy van Zant

ful and creative ways she would decorate the cafeteria for the Holy Days and special events. We were delighted to see past photos of her directing the choir along with a video of her, as she sang an iconic Spring Feast vocal solo, "He Could Have Called Ten Thousand Angels."

The slide-show also captured memories of ordinations, blessings of children, weddings, baptisms, socials and funerals. There was a section of the slide-show called "Hebrews 11 cont'd" with photos and the names of our fellow brethren who are now awaiting the resurrection.

Three representatives of the Community of Christ congregation were our special guests for the social. At the end of the slide-show, Mr. Wasilkoff introduced them to the congregation. Two spoke to us on behalf of the Community of Christ. They thanked us for being good tenants and spoke very kindly about our good manner and conduct over the years.

*Deznah Ellis*

## Rafting Weekend

A group of 25 brethren from seven families in the Edmonton and Red Deer congregations enjoyed a camping and rafting weekend in the mountains of Alberta and British Columbia over the July long weekend. Many of the families have been camping and rafting together for over ten

years, but this year there were three families who joined the group for the first time!

Campers arrived at the Robson Shadows Group Campground in Mount Robson Provincial Park between Friday and Saturday evenings. Despite rainy weather on Saturday morning, everyone pitched in for a breakfast of pancakes, eggs, bacon and sausage. After breakfast, the rain stopped and all gathered for Sabbath services in the outdoors. Following services, many went for a short drive to see Rearguard Falls. For the remainder of the day, there was plenty of time for the adults to relax and enjoy fellowship around the campfire and the children to play together in the wooded and open areas around the campsite.



photo by Mt Robson Whitewater Rafting Co.

*Kim Eckert*

er. Sunday evening started with impromptu games of volleyball, frisbee and soccer followed by conversation and rousing campfire games.

On Monday morning, everyone broke camp early and most headed to Jasper National Park for an ambitious four-hour rafting trip down the Athabasca River from just past Athabasca Falls to near Jasper townsite. All enjoyed the exciting rapids near the beginning of the trip. However, the rafts were pulled out of the water halfway through the trip when the weather became cold, wet, and windy, turning the rafting expedition into a character-building experience. The weekend still ended on an upbeat note with all of the rafters gathering for pizza and warm drinks before heading home.

Plans are already underway for next year's rafting weekend. Overall, the weekend was a positive experience with many opportunities to enjoy each other's company, appreciate God's Creation and learn to work together!

## Québec City Inaugural Service

We had a very joyful first service in Québec City at the Hôtel Universel chemin Sainte-Foy on July 6. We could feel electricity in the air. Under the direction of Carl Tremblay, we sang hymns of gratitude with heartfelt confidence in our Father's lead and generosity.

Guy Routhier gave a sermonette on the blessing of keeping the Sabbath and encouraged the 18 attendees to pass from the mundane preoccupations to the “sublime” ones.



photo by Chantal Leclerc

The warm wishes expressed by the Wasilkoffs, the National Office staff, our pastor (Michael Caputo) and Harold and Sharon Descoteaux (Montreal elder) contributed to the solemnity of the occasion.

The main message built on Mr. Caputo's sermon given at Pentecost in which the Jewish historian Josephus was quoted about the glory of the Second Temple. Bruno Leclerc explained that the new and everlasting temple will be built on the perfect temple that represented Jesus made man. He emphasized the importance of the words He pronounced: “Destroy this temple and I will rebuild it in three days” and on the fact that He said to Peter: “I will build My church.”

We humbly thank our God for allowing us to share in His plan of growth in this new challenge. We thank all of the church leaders and servants for holding the hands of Jesus, our amazing Carpenter, while we

saw Him put a new stone in the construction of His Father's House.

A couple with two children and a single individual attended for their first time. They showed their appreciation for the Scriptures used and stayed a good while to fellowship with the brethren. Everyone shared in the meal that the hotel allowed to be brought in to this new hall.

*Chantal & Bruno Leclerc*

## Southern Ontario Campout

Brethren from across Southern Ontario gathered at Point Farms Provincial Park over the July 13 weekend. Our group campsite was conveniently located near fresh water, restroom facilities and next to a trail leading to Lake Huron.

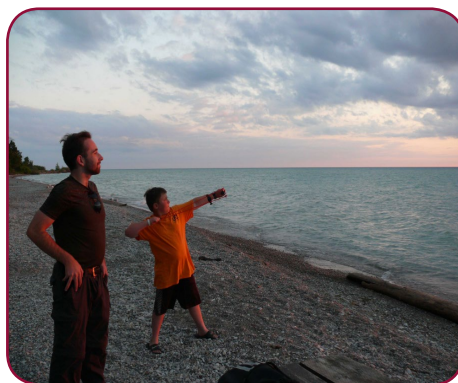


photo by Heidi St. Thomas

On Sabbath morning we awoke to comfortably warm temperatures. We leisurely ate our breakfast meal and enjoyed fellowshiping with the brethren.

We had an interactive Bible Study where we discussed our

Passover Fundamental Belief. We then shared stories of our Passover experiences.

As the day progressed some enjoyed relaxing on the beach while others preferred the quiet and shade of our campsite.

Special thanks goes to Ezra Martin, who coordinated the event this year.

*Paul Wasilkoff*

## Okanagan Picnic

Brethren from the Peachland, British Columbia congregation enjoyed their annual picnic on Sunday, July 7. The beachfront venue was Bear Creek Provincial Park located on Okanagan Lake across from Kelowna. Attendees came from as far away as Kamloops. The event was accompanied by a variety of scrumptious foods including barbecued chicken and hamburgers.



photo by John Elliott

The weather was “partly.” Partly warm, partly cool, partly cloudy, partly sunny, and partly rainy. The consensus was that it was perfect weather for a July picnic! The enjoyable afternoon was filled with hearty fellowship





and lots of laughter, which continued until after 6:00 p.m.

*John Elliott*

### Burke Graduation

Teagan Burke graduated from Grade 12 on April 13 in Red Deer, Alberta. She attends the Edmonton congregation with her parents, Brian and Trish Burke where she has been active in the Sabbath school program.

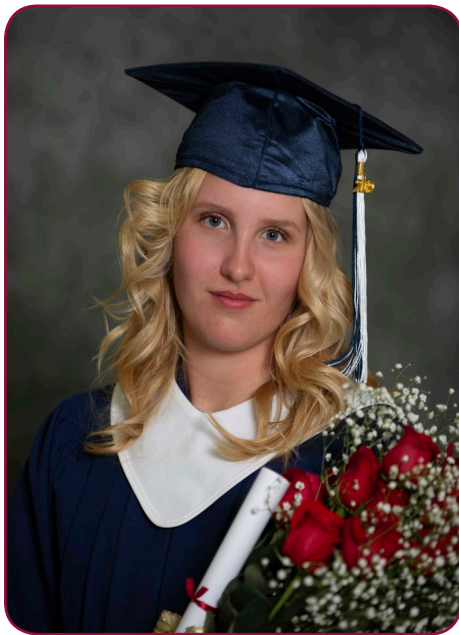


photo by Claudia Obando

Teagan enjoys travelling and hiking. She loves reading, photography, baking and working on her dirt bike. Teagan is now working in Calgary where she will be attending church when she is in town.

Teagan is a tall blonde and the family likes to tease her that she will one day marry the Sasquatch of her dreams.

*Trish Burke*

### Davis Graduation

Ashley Davis attends the Edmonton congregation with her parents, Owen and Susan Davis. She graduated from Onoway Junior/Senior High School in Onoway, Alberta, on June 28, 2019.

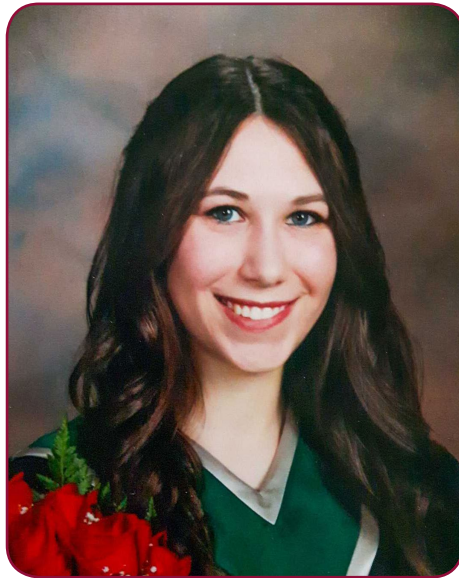


photo by Smart Photography

Ashley was named Valedictorian of her graduating class. She has been accepted into the Engineering Faculty at the University of Alberta in Edmonton for the fall semester. Her plans are to earn her Bachelor Degree in Engineering and possibly specialize in nanotechnology, physical engineering or mechatronics.

Congratulations Ashley!

*Susan Davis*

### Spahich Graduation

Kevin and Lexie Spahich of the Edmonton congregation would like to announce the high school graduation of their son,



photo by Smart Photography

Stone Spahich. Stone graduated from PACeS Christian School on June 2, 2019.

The occasion was celebrated with family, classmates and close friends. He is excited to be finished school and is looking forward to his future plans of moving to Edmonton and beginning an apprenticeship program as an electrician this fall.

*Lexie Spahich*

### Brdar Anniversary

At the conclusion of services on the Sabbath of April 6, 2019, the Windsor congregation gave a very special tribute to two members. Joe and Mary Brdar were honored for 50 years of marriage even though their anniversary was actually not until April 19.

The small congregation needed to keep this secret, and therefore it was felt that we should utilize "the element of surprise". Whether that worked or not,

only the Brdars know.

Joe and Mary were presented with a beautiful 50th wedding anniversary picture frame and a gift card to purchase something special for themselves.



photo by Patrick Read

The Brdars were instrumental in starting the Windsor congregation in its meager beginnings as a twice a month Bible Study that started with 8 people in attendance on Wednesday evening, April 10, 2013.

Since that time, the Brdars have opened their home to many potluck meals for Holy Days and have faithfully and diligently provided for the Windsor congregation where they serve as Deacon and Diaconess.

It is always a pleasure to be able to honour God's children who continue to show such a fine example to others and in particular for 50 years of holding to the vows that they made not only to each other, but also to God.

We wish them many more years together!

Patrick Read

## Wallace Anniversary

Howard and Marilyn Wallace of Wilkie, Saskatchewan, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on March 1. The North Battleford congregation honoured them after services with a cake, card and gift.



photo by Marlene Hiebert

Howard and Marilyn live on a farm near Wilkie where they raised three children. They have two grandchildren.

Adeline Sanoy

## Brauer Obituary

Guenter Brauer was born on October 23, 1927, in Lillemin, Germany, to Max and Emma Brauer. He passed away in Cal-



photo by Rainer Salomaa

gary, Alberta, on June 4, 2019.

Mr. Brauer was predeceased by his parents as well as his siblings Walter, Herbert and Ursula (Brauer) Loveless, and his wife, Elfriede (Klein) Brauer. He is survived by his daughter, Karen (Andrew) Lee as well as grandchildren, Stephen and Madeline.

Guenter moved to Canada in 1954 and lived a full life in Calgary, where he loved trips to the mountains, driving his German-made car and tinkering with stereos. He was baptized on Sunday, April 16, 2016, and has been a fixture in the Calgary congregation for many years. He loved to talk with everyone in the local congregation regardless of their age. It was not unusual to see him bring a new toy for a small child, stuffed animals for Children's Day at the Feast or extra food for the after-service snacks. Todd Suave wrote a member profile about Guenter in the April – June 2016 *United News Canada*.

Funeral services were held for him on June 14 at Eden Brook Memorial Gardens and Funeral Home. A fine eulogy was delivered by his son-in-law Andrew Lee, an elder from Cleveland, Ohio.

Rainer Salomaa

## Chase & McBratney

### Obituaries

This February saw the passing of two faithful members of God's



church: Chuck Chase (a deacon), 94, and Ernie McBratney, 95. They were also close friends.

Ernie McBratney was married to his loving wife, Hazel, for over 73 years. They had three children (Lorne, Terry and Lynn), seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.



photo by Dale Craniford

Ernie grew up in Edmonton, Alberta, and later served in the Royal Canadian Navy in World War II. After that, he had a distinguished career as Head Buyer at Woodward's Department store in Vancouver. Further, he industriously compiled *Words to Live By*; a booklet with pearls of wisdom and positive thoughts for everyday living. It is still posted at Evergreen Baptist Care home, Ernie's residence for the past few years and excerpts from the collection are included each week in the local Vancouver Sabbath bulletin.

Harry James (Chuck) Chase was married to his loving wife, Muriel, for over 72 years. They had three children, a son and two daughters. Chuck is survived by his wife, Muriel, a daughter

Marilyn Nielsen) as well as two grandchildren. Chuck grew up on a south Saskatchewan farm. At age 17, he entered the RCAF during the Second World War, serving in radio repairs for aircraft and land equipment. Later, he had a successful career with then BC Tel, as installation supervisor on the DEW Line. Later he worked with television operating systems and microwave towers.



photo by Muriel Chase

It is written in Ecclesiastes 12:3 "The strong men bow themselves." Despite aches and pains and trouble walking, Ernie and Chuck faithfully attended Sabbath services as long as they could. They had our love and respect. They provided us warmth, caring and keen senses of humor.

We rejoice as they await the first and better resurrection. Revelation 21:4 states "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Dale Craniford

## Serve At the Feast

What if Jesus Christ was going to attend the same feast site as you this year? What if He was going to be serving in some capacity and needed assistants? Would we make an extra effort to be more involved in the Feast of Tabernacles this year?

What would happen if the feast site you were planning to attend had no volunteers? A lot of the extras we enjoy are due to volunteers who serve tirelessly during the feast year after year.

Here is a list (although not comprehensive) that a feast coordinator needs for help with: audio-video, special music, choir, family day, festival youth instruction, parking, ushering, security, and events for various age groups.

Why not take the time to carefully read about the site you are planning to attend. Then please sign up to help as you are able. The feast will function that much better and you will be blessed with spiritual benefits. You may also lighten the load for someone else who will otherwise be taking on multiple duties.

UNC



## Camp Wildrose

Despite some rain, which is very typical of our annual camp experience in Alberta, Camp Wildrose had another wonderful summer camp. This year we had 65 people in attendance with 39 youth ranging in age from one to 18. The rain did nothing to dampen spirits or attitudes. In fact, patience and perseverance flourished as everyone adjusted to schedule changes. In the end, all the activities were completed and no one missed out. With the generous support from many brethren we were able to purchase durable, weather proof tents that withstood the rain and wind very well.

This camp was especially memorable for a number of reasons. First of all, it was our 10th summer session since 2010! Saturday evening's event featured a slideshow of the last nine summers.

Secondly, we were pleased to welcome three visitors from far away – Slavica Radonic and her daughter, Mia, from Windsor, Ontario and Alex Schweitzer from Madison, Wisconsin. We hope to encourage more visitors in the future.

Our third memory will always be of four individuals who slipped and fell off the slippery dock and into the murky waters of Goose Lake while on the canoeing activity! They were all good natured about the incident and took the teasing quite well.

Each year, Camp Wildrose fulfills the need to grow in unity and harmony and become a loving family of God. We watch as friendships grow deeper, families expand to include others, individuals are welcomed and cared for. Camp Wildrose is officially a children's camp, but works to attend to the needs of all our



photo by Wayne Ward

people, from the very young to the teenager, and the young family to the retired grandparents. Activities serve the purpose to keep our youth busy, entertained and learning as they participate in Christian living, canoeing, archery, outdoor education, crafts, teamwork challenges, various sports and dance lessons. Whole camp activities work to build our God family as an integrated whole, and include a dance, Sabbath services, an entertainment evening, campfire activities, morning compass checks, picnic games and various group games.

This year the Sabbath featured not only children's Sabbath school, but a teen Bible study and an adult Bible study. Except for the two split sermons, services were orchestrated entirely

by the youth, including prayers, song leading, announcements, special music and hymn accompaniment. We were very proud of our children's confident abilities in serving and their willingness to take on responsibility.

This year's theme of "Growing in God's Garden" was sub-themed with three Fruits of the Spirit – joy, patience, and kindness. All are important characteristics that need to be learned, and the setting of camp a place in which to learn them. Our compass checks (or Peanut Butter and Jam sessions, as we call them) discussed how we are called "special treasures" by God. Therefore, if God sees us as special and looks upon the

inward man to discover a treasure inside, how ought we then to view our fellow man as special and a treasure to be discovered. A second session looked at the story of the potter and the clay in Jeremiah 18 and how we must allow God to work with us—molding and shaping us into useful vessels. Camp allows us many opportunities to be shaped, molded, improved and perfected.

Camp Wildrose welcomes all United Church of God attendees and would love to have you join our unique church family in a camp experience! If you are interested in attending next July (2020), please contact Susan Davis at [campwildrose@gmail.com](mailto:campwildrose@gmail.com).

Susan Davis

## Why Old Age?

Old...It's a dirty word! Why do we grow old anyway? I have been trying to figure it out as it sneaks up upon me. Why is old age included in God's plan and purpose for us? Each phase of our lives passes quickly leading into the next exciting stage or season of our lives...but why old age? Why did God put this timing device into our body causing it to run down? We know sin is the reason for death, but why old age? We could just go to sleep at a certain age and that would be that. In some respects old age seems worse than death.

King David certainly wondered about old age and observed "...verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Psalm 39:5). So where does that leave us when we are old? It seems we end up right where we begin—dependent, vulnerable and like a little child. Only we aren't little, cute or cuddly, we are old and bent and wrinkled. Maybe we haven't quite learned everything we need in order to be in God's Kingdom. Perhaps old age may provide the final touches needed in our character like the icing on a cake.

I realize as I watch my own body age and the care I do for older folks that it is not a fun time. I must admit it has helped me face my own mortality—that I have been given a temporary body to use or abuse—and if I am smart, I'll take good care of it, but more importantly I'll learn what

God wants from me before getting too old.

As we age we discover the body doesn't work so well and we become more and more dependent on others. In the process we become more humble, appreciative and accepting.

life, relationships and for the beauty that surrounds us. We lose our openness, our innocence, our humility, and thus we lose the childlikeness we once exhibited. In fact, God calls us a stiff-necked people or in simpler terms, stubborn, arrogant and aloof.



photo by Rod Long on Unsplash

For many years we do what we want, moving our bodies with great agility and grace, being self sufficient, even taking this wonderfully constructed body for granted. We are independent, sometimes pushing and shoving our way through life like a headstrong ox. We may have been successful monetarily in our chosen endeavours, raising or providing for a family, trusting in our own abilities. Yet, in this process we may have become self absorbed, hard and cynical and abrasive in our attitude toward God and others. As adults many of us lose our sense of wonder, our appreciation for

Childlikeness is such an important character trait that Jesus said to the crowds: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3-4). The exact opposite of pride is humility. Humankind clothes itself with pride throughout life but old age teaches humility.

It doesn't seem so out of line then that old people become physically dependent on others, even for basic needs,

See "Old Age" on page 7