



An Awesome Time of Renewal

A famous brand of corn flakes once used the slogan, “Try them again for the first time.” As a child I remember having various hot cereals for breakfast in the winter time and cereals out of a box during the summer. Among the summer cereals was the one that urged consumers to “Try them again for the first time.”

Each year the time span between the conclusion of the Feast of Tabernacles and the beginning of the spring festivals seems to be interminably long even though it is only about six months. The winter season feels long—but with no Biblical festivals to observe, it would seem even longer. And yet, somehow time passes and the next thing we know, the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread are just around the corner!

For us in the northern hemisphere, the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread are accompanied by the wonderful spring season. Spring brings with it a

reawakening of life where miraculously the dead landscape comes back to verdant life with the return of song birds and the appearance of green grass, wild flowers and beautiful buds and blossoms. No wonder God’s sacred calendar has the new year beginning in the spring instead of in the dead of winter.



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Each year I marvel at the many awesome harbingers of spring. The sighting of the very first robin is quite exciting. The song of the first meadowlark is similarly thrilling. Robins are noted for singing last thing each evening and first thing in the morning with their remarkable enthusiasm. Cardinals are not to be outdone with their melodious song. All of these I welcome each year as if they were a brand new experience. And yet I have experienced them many times as have most of you.

The same applies to the annual return of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We welcome them, prepare for them and observe them as if we

were “trying them again for the first time.” I believe our Heavenly Father and his Son designed the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread to have that impact on us especially because of the long absence of Biblical Holy Days since the conclusion of the fall festivals.

By design, the Passover Service is for baptized members only. Thus it is observed only by adults who have officially become members of the body of Christ through the rite of baptism. Similarly, by design the Feast of Unleavened Bread is for the whole family, that is, for all adults as well as all children. Both occasions require a lot of preparation and are highly experiential. Some of the experiences occur communally while others occur at home. We look forward to both each and every year with an anticipation of newness.

As this year’s Passover Service and Feast of Unleavened Bread approach, prepare to observe them with the high enthusiasm of keeping them again for the first time. Be tuned in to your sense of awe and amazement as you experience the marvel of the spring season and the wonders of observing the spring festivals with all their rich meaning and lasting significance.

Anthony Wasilkoff

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Special Passovers

The concept of Passover was conceived by the Almighty before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:19, 20). God knew that He was placing mankind on the earth on which He had given some power and control to Satan and the demons. God also knew that humans were created with less capacity, strength and ability than demons, so humans would need some assistance. Out of love for the world, God planned assistance in various ways and one way would be to send the Logos or Word who was to become the Passover Lamb. More than that, the Word was with God and was God and everything was made through, by and for the Word (John 1:1-5, 14). The Word was to become that which Israel knew as God until the time of the coming of the Christ who was destined to pay the penalty for the sins of mankind by His sacrifice, then to be resurrected and sit in a high position as the Son of God for eternity.

Mankind was given the opportunity to be sanctified and justified through the sacrifice God offers. God is seeking godly offspring who would become the children of God and who would be like Jesus Christ (1 John 3:1-5). Humans are to learn to hate sin and

love God and His laws. The Passover was to teach that the penalty of sin is death and that through the grace of God the penalty can be lifted.

In the history recorded in Scripture, not many Passovers are clearly referenced. But there are a few very special ones that teach major lessons about God. It is important that we realize that God the Father did not directly speak with humans or appear to them, but the Word filled that role. It was the Word that walked and talked with Adam and Eve in the garden and it was the Word who spoke face to face with Moses. Knowing that, we can understand that when Moses wrote about the Sabbaths of God and the Passover, he knew they were Feasts declared to be holy convocations that were to be kept exactly as God commanded.

When we look at the Passovers written about in the Bible, we must consider it was the Word who became Christ that gave the clear instructions. Christ was the Rock Israel followed (1 Corinthians 10:4). We can understand it was Christ who led Israel out of Egypt and who chose Abraham with whom He made a covenant. Sadly later Israel failed miserably to do their part, and that led to

the cancellation of the Old Covenant which was replaced by the New Covenant through the blood of Christ.

Moses carefully recorded the events of the Passover in Egypt and the establishment of the Old Covenant with the people of Israel. Strangers who wanted to dwell in Israel were to become like the Israelites. The acceptance of the covenant was sealed by the physical circumcision. All the males of Israel who came out of Egypt had to be circumcised and this event had to take place before Israel departed. It is recorded in the book of Joshua (5:5). What was stressed was that anyone who was not circumcised was forbidden by God to take part in the Passover. The sentence of death was carried out on every household that did not have the splash of blood on the doorposts. The Word (Christ) made that very clear to Moses (Exodus 12:41-51). It is clear that nobody who was disobedient to the terms given was excused.

Israel broke the Old Covenant with God almost as soon as they left Egypt. They complained, disobeyed God and even made a golden calf to worship. The result of their actions was the sentence of death. The first special

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Passover was to save the lives of the Israelites as first fruits of God, but they did not abide under the protection of God. God had to take special steps to ensure that this rebellious people feared Moses and later Joshua, or they would certainly have returned to the evil ways they had left behind them (Joshua 4:14).

as many as 1.5 million men and boys would need circumcision. That task was carried out at the mountain of foreskins (Joshua 5:3-8).

The second time the Word (now Christ) was directly involved with the Passover was the night He was to be arrested. Je-

Paul had much to say to support this in his letter to the Corinthians. Paul said he had received instructions from Jesus personally and Paul noted that anyone who took those symbols unworthily was eating judgment unto himself. Because some did take the Passover unworthily, some were sick and some died (1 Corinthians 11:23-30).

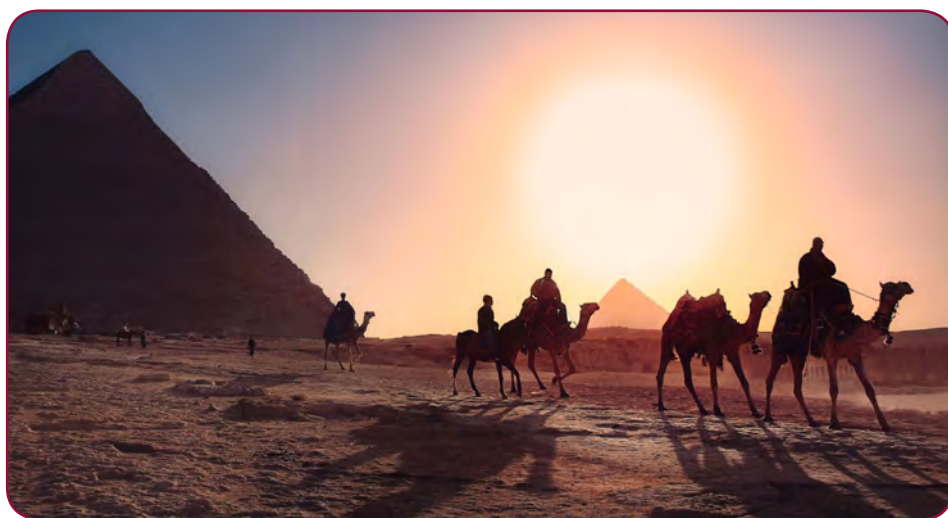


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Forty years after leaving Egypt, when all the males over the age of 20 had died, Joshua was led by the Word to cross the Jordan River and prepare to enter the Promised Land at Gilgal. Before they were allowed to continue, they were required to keep the Passover. Obviously it had not been kept after leaving Egypt because the Israelites did not act as circumcised and God treated them as uncircumcised (Jeremiah 9:25-26). The true problem was that circumcision was to be of the heart, not merely the flesh. Their hearts never turned to God. In His mercy, God gave them another chance and all the males who had grown up in the wilderness had to be circumcised. That was a huge task as perhaps

Jesus instituted the symbols of the New Covenant that night. The new symbols of agreement between God and man were the body and blood of Christ symbolized by the bread and wine. Once again it was Christ personally and directly who gave these symbols (Matthew 26:21-30). The better covenant was with the understanding that the heart was circumcised and it applied to male and female. Only those who had been cleansed by the blood of Christ were allowed to take the Passover. Mark also records this event (Mark 14:20-24). In both accounts Jesus pointed out He would be betrayed and thus one of those present was not clean, not circumcised in the heart and not worthy of taking the Passover.

When humans are conducting the Passover, they do not have the insight Jesus had about who was clean or unclean. But Jesus did know. Just as the angel of death would not pass over any house that was not protected by blood, so too Jesus would not offer salvation to one He knows is not clean. Paul said if a person did not keep the law, he had once again become uncircumcised. If a person is baptized and yet turns back to his old ways, he is as one who is not baptized (Romans 2:25-29). He carries the sentence of eternal death until he is saved.

John records the comments of Jesus during that special Passover. Jesus clearly stated that not all the disciples were clean, knowing that Judas was not. Since Jesus Christ is the same yesterday (as the Word) today and forever, He could not make an exception for one unclean person any more than the angel of death could pass over a house that did not have blood on it. The Word of God is true and strong. In order to stay true, the angel of death cannot pass one who is not protected.

Spring Holy Days

God created man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27) from the dust of the ground with the great purpose of making him part of His Kingdom as spirit beings. Man was in harmony with God until Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sin entered into the world. All have sinned (Romans 5:12). As we know, the penalty of sin is death and every human would be doomed to die without God's intervention.

How can man be saved from this sure death? This is what we know as God's plan of salvation. Jesus Christ started His ministry with the message "repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand" opening the door to His kingdom and thus offering it to more people than ever before.

Further instruction was given by Peter to repent, be baptized and receive God's Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). These steps are related to spring festivals (Passover, Days of Unleavened bread and Pentecost) which show the conversion process of man from physical to spiritual beings. These three festivals describe God's plan of salvation. They show that any human, with God's calling and help, can become converted and then become spirit beings in God's Kingdom.

Passover

John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God is

not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). In this plan, Jesus paid the death penalty for all mankind with His own blood. He died as the sacrifice to reconcile man to God.

Days of Unleavened Bread

God's payment for the death penalty does not happen automatically. Every human should avail themselves of it by repentance, baptism and receiving God's Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

The Days of Unleavened Bread describe our part in God's plan of salvation. Here we are instructed to remove leavening from our homes and to eat unleavened bread for seven days (Exodus 12:15). During that time, leaven represents sin and therefore we are instructed to remove sin out of our life. This is done through repentance and baptism for the remission of our sins. The instruction to not eat leavened bread represents overcoming sins. Then the instruction to eat unleavened bread during the seven days shows that we must grow in God's grace and knowledge. In other words it means replacing our sinful life with God's way of sinless life.

Pentecost

Jesus Christ died to pay for the death penalty that results from man's sins. But His help did not stop there; it continues with the Feast known as Pentecost.

We need His Spirit in order

to understand spiritual things (1 Corinthians 2:11). In addition, God also knows that we are helpless against our enemies (Satan, our carnal nature and the world) because we are missing one of the main ingredients that will help us follow and obey God – His Holy Spirit.

We believe that all who truly repent of their sins are willing to obey God, and who, by faith, accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour can have their sins forgiven by an act of divine grace. Such individuals are justified, pardoned from the penalty of sin and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, which literally abides within them and supplies the divine love that alone can fulfill the law and produce righteousness. They are baptized into the body of Christ, which is the true Church of God. We believe in a true change in life and attitude. Only those who have the indwelling presence of and are being led by the Holy Spirit are Christ's (Romans 8:9). Pentecost also describes the first harvest for those whom God called to be part of the first resurrection.

The spring festivals (Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost) portray God's plan of salvation. They show that Jesus paid the penalty for mankind. They also show the need for forgiveness of sins, the receiving of the Holy Spirit and the need to continue overcoming and living God's way of life.

Sixto Yap

What Would It Take?

At the beginning of each year, there's much discussion about resolutions. Many are made but it seems few are kept for long. Those who keep the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread have a very different approach as we carefully examine ourselves in preparation for these important occasions. Instead of making promises to ourselves that we are not apt to keep, we carefully look at our behaviour over the past year to see how well we have lived up to what we know. Then, after repenting, we make important adjustments to our lives so that we can do better the following year.

This year as I have been giving thought to the process, I have also been reflecting on those who I will miss seeing at these commanded assemblies. Some have health problems that prevent them from attending church, but others have decided they no longer wish to attend with us. Now I ask myself "What would it take to get me to leave this Church?" Here are some of the underlying reasons I have thought of.

1. Hurt Feelings that get out of control

It is so easy to have our feelings hurt. Some people lack tact and diplomacy. Others just seem to be mean. Still others think that to be truthful, they must sometimes say things that are better left unsaid.

Sooner or later each of us will experience occasions when other people's words or actions can cause us injury. I remember one man who had been very ill for

quite some time. When he was able to return to church nobody welcomed him back or asked where he had been. He was so hurt, he almost stopped attending!

If we allow hurt feelings to fester, it can become debilitating. It can mean that we misinterpret other things the person says or does. In short, it can start a destructive fire that is detrimental to our spiritual well-being. Many have decided they will no longer attend a church that allows "that" person (or family) to attend.

2. Itching ears

It seems that every few years certain "new truths" arise. With access to the Internet, this has become an even greater problem. It is so easy to find a "new doctrine" that seems so exciting on a non-UCG website. Some seem credible on the surface, while others are such that one wonders how anyone could possibly believe them. But, someone with "itching ears" is looking for something new. After all, that is more exciting (and easier) than looking at Christian living principles and actually applying them. Whether it is trying to predict when Christ will return or getting intrigued by various conspiracy theories, it is a distraction from solid Christian living principles. The late Herbert W. Armstrong's admonition from years ago to stick to the trunk of the tree is still very applicable.

3. Cares of the world

There are many pressures and

worries in life. For those who are working, time pressures take their toll so that our priorities may become upside-down. Those who are retired find that everyday tasks take longer than they used to. They can also become very busy with doctor's appointments. These can all distract us from daily awareness of giving priority to living God's way.

4. Prayer and Bible Study slippage

This often is an end result of all the above difficulties. If we are hurt or depressed, it is hard to concentrate. If we get itching ears, we get wrapped up in the twigs and forget the basics. If we get too involved with the cares of the world, we find we don't have time to pray and study the Bible each day. Having at least one-half hour each day for prayer and Bible study takes effort and careful scheduling but is a guideline worth following. You might want to check out the Daily Bible Reading Schedule at: <https://www.ucg.ca/resources/daily-bible-reading-schedule>. There are also Bible Study tools that list many subjects for your study. They can be found at: <https://www.ucg.ca/bible-study-tools>.

This year as I prepare for Passover, I am asking myself, "What might keep me from observing the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread next year with my church family?" With God's help, I am determined to keep on keeping on!

Clean and Unclean

Would we knowingly feed our family contaminated or unclean food? Most brethren would not eat unclean meat knowingly. Some people believe that eating unclean animals is not a sin, but only breaking health laws—no big deal! That view seems too simplistic. The words “clean” and “unclean” occur 382 times in scripture, so it should get our attention. Many in the world eat unclean foods and live to be in their nineties. So a long life was not all God had in mind. From that we can grasp that what we put into our body (this temple) is extremely important to God. Eating what was forbidden landed Adam and Eve outside the garden and led to their death. This set of instructions about food in Leviticus is more than just a health issue, it’s about our attitude and approach to God.

We are what we eat; what we put into our bodies becomes part of our flesh. And we know our body does not belong to us but belongs to God (1 Corinthians 3:17).

Our earthly “temples” are sacred—they make up the chaste, pure bride of Christ. He tells us to be holy as God is holy. How we approach God is of great consequence. He is particular about who (and in what frame of mind) comes near to Him. When Moses came near the burning bush he was commanded to remove his shoes as he was on holy ground. God is also particular about what sacrifices are acceptable to Him (they are to be without spot or blemish). Anything less would be an abomination. We are to be a

living sacrifice and that fact behooves us to be holy and clean and blameless before God (Romans 12:1-3).

It is of weighty significance how we approach God because it shows in our attitude. It must not be a casual, careless, half-hearted approach—like attending church, God’s holy sanctuary, in torn jeans, an old sweatshirt and dirty hair. That would show God that we do not love Him with all our heart, soul and might. It would show God we do not acknowledge or comprehend who He is: His majesty, His splendor, His righteousness, His dignity, His holiness. We should fear Almighty God always! Read what happened to Moses who forgot his fear of God on one occasion. (Numbers 20:1-14)

God expected the priests to be sanctified and clothed in a precise way before they could approach Him or sacrifice to Him. It is important to remember that Nadab and Abihu, who offered profane fire before the Lord, were killed instantly. God gave precise and meticulous instruction for His tabernacle. He determines the terms on which mankind may approach Him. Worship cannot be haphazard. We must approach our Heavenly Father in carefulness, thoughtfulness, holiness and one day He will transform us into the bride of Jesus Christ.

We can then understand one purpose God gave for avoiding unclean meats is all about holiness and obedience and attitude. God wants us to be holy. Since we

belong to Him and He purchased us with Christ’s blood, He does not want us to contaminate ourselves through any kind of physical or spiritual defilement (1 Corinthians 6:15-20). In God’s sight refraining from eating unclean animals separated His called-out ones from the unclean nations around them and showed them they were different.

Notice Paul’s summing up of this principle: “But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:22-23). So it is important to remember that God alone determines the terms by which we may approach Him in worship.

After we are told not to eat anything unclean, God says bluntly in Leviticus 11:43, 44, “You shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing...neither shall you make yourselves unclean with them, that you should be defiled.... sanctify yourselves, you shall be holy....” We become “abominable”, unclean and defiled before God if we eat anything unclean.

God tells us plainly what He thinks about eating unclean meats in Isaiah 65:2-5(NKJV): “I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, according to their own thoughts; a people who provoke Me to anger continually to My face; who sacrifice in gardens, and burn incense

on altars of brick; who sit among the graves, and spend the night in the tombs; who eat swine's flesh, and the broth of abominable things is in their vessels; who say, 'Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am holier than you!' These are smoke in My nostrils, a

fire that burns all the day."

Obedying the food laws separates us out, sanctifies, tests and identifies us by our obedience and reveals our true attitude toward God and as an added benefit offers us better health. So approach

our heavenly Father always with a humble mind, with fear and trembling, presenting to Him a pure and chaste body fit to become the future bride of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Jean Jantzen-Duperreault

"Days" from page 12

others as better than ourselves; to help others; to carry one another's burden and to forgive one another. This is one reason unbaptized individuals are not allowed to partake of Passover as they are not "washed" or baptized yet.

2. Sin No More

This was the instruction given by Jesus to the woman caught in adultery (John 8:6-11) and to the man He healed in the pool of Bethesda (John 5:14).

God gives us the same instruction after baptism. God, through the laying on of hands, provided us with His Holy Spirit to help us overcome and live His way (John 16:13-14).

3. Good Growth

2 Peter 3:18 tells us to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is another reason God gives us His Holy Spirit—for us to live His way of life.

We grow in the grace and knowledge of God by prayer, Bible study, meditation and fast-

ing. Attending Sabbath services is another opportunity for us to grow in God's grace and knowledge as we listen to the messages and fellowship with one another—not neglecting the assembly as God commanded in Hebrews 10:25.

4. Adopt God's Way

We need to replace sin with God's way of doing things (Romans 8:1-6 and Ephesians 4:18-31).

We don't appear before God just during the Passover season but for all the days of our life and especially every Sabbath and Feast day as God commanded. As Matthew 24:13 tells us, we must endure to the end.

5. Do Our Part

Whoever eats leavened bread during the Feast will be cut off because the wages of sin is death (Romans 8:13).

A stark contrast is given in the book of Ezekiel to both encourage and to warn us. Those who relent from wrong living to righteousness are forgiven and rewarded; those who cease doing

good and turn to sinfulness are punished (Ezekiel 18:21-24).

God loves His creation and wants everyone to be in His Kingdom. But we are created as free moral agents. God gave us an option to choose which way we want to go.

All have sinned and are destined for eternal death if not for God's love for mankind sacrificing His son to pay the penalty for sin. God is calling everyone to repentance and offering forgiveness if we keep our part in God's plan of salvation: by removing sin through repentance and baptism and by observing the Passover, growing in His grace and knowledge, and making God's way our way of life.

The Days of Unleavened Bread describe our human part in God's plan of salvation. It refers to us and our goal to be like unleavened bread before God. It is a calling for us to remove sin from our life, to overcome it and to live God's way of life. It is our calling and God's mandate for us to be free from sin and live His way to be in His Kingdom.



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National Council Update

Starting at 7:30 (EST) on Monday evening, December 16, 2019, the National Council met for a marathon quarterly meeting. The meeting took place via videoconference. All the members of the Council were present along with two others who gave reports.

After the opening prayer, the minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and adopted. Jim Lucas then read the Council Code of Ethics.

Newly appointed Council member Jeff Anderson, from the Prince George congregation, gave a short icebreaker. He stated he was looking forward to serving on the Council.

An update from the National Office was given by Anthony Wasilkoff and Edwin van Pelt. Edwin will be transitioning from the role of Treasurer to becoming the Secretary to the Council. Bill Dimovski will become the Treasurer for The United Church of God – Canada.

Council of Elders (COE) member, Mr. Wasilkoff, gave a short update on the recent COE meetings.

He covered a number of items that were discussed at the open sessions of the meetings.

A Media Team update was then given by Council member Paul Wasilkoff. He showed a graphic summary of the “Beyond Today” television responses for the previous 52 week period. Interestingly Newfoundland and Labrador have the greatest response rate based on population. Ontario has the highest overall number of responses.

Paul then reported on the subject of protecting our trademarks. He and Bill Dimovski had met with a trademark agent to discuss the matter. Further discussion will be required since this is a highly complicated issue.

A brief update by Council member Michael Erickson was given on the activities of the Compliance Task Force. A more detailed report should be available during the June 2020 National Council meeting.

Mr. Dimovski provided an update on the proposed retirement plan for employees of The United

Church of God – Canada. The Council rescinded a previous resolution and approved a new resolution.

Anthony Wasilkoff then presented the highlights of the 2020-2021 Operations Plan. After some discussion the new plan was adopted unanimously and was forwarded to all members of the National Conference in February for their review.

The 2020-2021 Budget was presented by Bill Dimovski who went through the highlights of the entire budget. It, too, was adopted unanimously and was also forwarded to the National Conference for their approval.

March 9 was selected as the date for the next Council videoconference meeting.

The last item of the meeting was to cover some details for the next face-to-face Council meeting which will be held on June 11-12 in Toronto.

Edwin van Pelt

News From Across Canada

Wild Game Social

Each year brethren gather together in December to enjoy fellowship at the Davis farm located west of Edmonton. The Wild Meat Barbeque and Winter Fun Social has become an annual event. On December 17, 85 brethren, family members, and

friends, attended from various parts of Alberta –as far as Grande Prairie, Red Deer, Marwayne, and Calgary. A few more families were expected, but were unable to attend due to illness. They were missed.

The weather was perfect with sunny and above freezing temper-

atures! Families enjoyed skating on the pond rink and tobogganing on the big hill in the pasture. Many took advantage of the lovely day to walk through the fields and enjoy the sunshine and fresh air.

After the sun set, groups assembled indoors to play board

and card games and the downstairs family room gave the children plenty of space to play with toys. For entertainment, Tracey Jongerius played her harp and sang old ballads with her daughter, Savannah.



provided by Charlie Ellison

Many in the Edmonton congregation, as well as our Pastor, Mike Erickson, and his son, Matthew, from Prince George are avid hunters and supplied a generous quantity and variety of wild meat this year. We enjoyed sampling barbequed elk, deer, moose, caribou, mountain goat and smoked Canada goose. Everyone pitched in with salads, desserts, beverages and appetizers to round out the meal.

It was a wonderful day, enjoyed by all! Thanks be to the God who makes such opportunities possible and blesses us with ideal conditions in which to enjoy His creation.

Susan Davis

Victoria Bowling

A ten-pin bowling social was organized by Andre Dennis for Sunday, December 29 at the Langford Lanes located in the

Greater Victoria area of Vancouver Island. All Vancouver Island brethren came out for this fun time except for our UVic student, Eliza, who was away visiting her family over the break. Timothy Shiundu, age six, assisted by his father, came in with the highest bowling score! His sister, Talia, two years old, also had the greatest time.



provided by Wendy Corrigan

Afterwards everyone went for a meal at a Chinese restaurant. It was a great get-together. Thanks, Andre!

Wendy Corrigan

Combined Service

The Vancouver brethren meet in Surrey, British Columbia. On the Sabbath of January 11, ten members of the Victoria congregation visited the Surrey congregation. Thankfully, our prayers were answered, as strong winds were forecast which might have cancelled the BC Ferry Services and prevented the combined service.

Our guest speakers from the Victoria congregation delivered fine messages. Richard Shiundu gave a sermonette entitled

“Knowledge and Wisdom” and Peter Corrigan’s sermon was “Spiritual Blindness, Old Testament and in Our Times.” Both encouraged us as we continue our walk of faith towards God’s Kingdom.



provided by Dale Craniford

There was plenty of good food and fellowship afterwards, giving opportunity to renew old friendships and make new ones.

Each year, God willing, Vancouver Island and the greater Vancouver area brethren plan to exchange congregational visits.

Dale Craniford

Snowmaggodon

The weekend of January 18 will go down in history as one of the single most extreme snowstorms ever recorded in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Some areas experienced upwards of 93 centimeters of snow with winds of 160 kilometers an hour on the Bonavista Peninsula. In the St. John’s area we had sustained winds of 100 kilometers an hour for 10 hours straight with 73 centimeters of snow. Before the storm hit we already had well over 100 centimeters of snow

on the ground. The city was essentially shut down. For the first time in 35 years, our mayor declared a state of emergency. Little did we know that it would last for over eight days.

Neighbouring towns also declared states of emergency. The city and area became very quiet with transportation brought to a halt - no buses, cars, ferries or planes were able to move. Only emergency vehicles and clean-up crews were allowed on the streets. Eventually the Armed Forces were called in to assist seniors and disabled citizens get their doors and walkways cleared of snow.



provided by Ellsworth Stanley

There were many stories of people helping out neighbours and other vulnerable people with food and other necessities. One lady was taken to the hospital on skidoo to have her baby delivered. Doctors picked up patients at home and brought them to their appointments. First responders and other emergency workers snow shod, skied and walked many miles to relieve their co-workers who were stranded at work. Some hospital staff worked 40 hour shifts to serve their patients.

We weathered the storm fairly

well, but did lose our power for a few hours over the first few days. When the grocery stores were opened for a day, I went out to shop but had to return home as the stores were crowded with people with long line-ups outside. The following day the stores were opened again and I was able to get what we needed.

The Squibbs, who live in Torbay, got on well too. They were even able to cook a turkey for a birthday dinner. They had lots of wood for the fire which kept them warm and cozy.

This was a very costly storm for the city. It has been estimated to have cost four to five million dollars just to clear the snow. The storm surge damaged many of the breakwaters in the smaller towns, which will be very expensive to repair.

Hopefully we will not have a storm of this magnitude again.

Ellsworth Stanley

Teitgen Obituary

Herbert Teitgen died at his home in Moorhead, Minnesota, on February 2. Herb served as pastor for the United Church of God congregations in Bismarck, Fargo and Minot, North Dakota and Winnipeg, Manitoba. He suffered from pulmonary fibrosis for the last few years, but actively and faithfully served his congregations in spite of his health issues.

Herb was baptized in 1964 while attending the Radio Church

of God. He served as an elder since 1984 both in the Worldwide Church of God and United Church of God and has served as a pastor since 1986.

Herb was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1942. He was called into the church in 1962 and was baptized the following year. Soon he began attending Ambassador College in Big Sandy and graduated in 1969. While at college, he met and married Anne Robinson who predeceased him in 2002. He is survived by a son, Robert, a daughter, Carla Erickson, and a twin brother, Fred. Both of his children are members of the United Church of God.



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Through the years, Herb's employment included being a mechanical engineer, land surveyor and church pastor. He has served congregations in Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska and Manitoba since the United Church of God began. He has also been involved in answering letters from *Beyond Today* subscribers for both the U. S. and Canada.

A memorial service was held on Friday, February 28.



Days of Unleavened Bread

In Exodus 12:15-17, God instructed the Israelites to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. We keep this physical aspect of observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread by removing leavening from our homes before the Feast begins, by not eating leavened bread, and by eating unleavened bread for seven days. But what about the spiritual aspects and meaning of this Feast?

The Days of Unleavened Bread describe our human part in God's plan of salvation. This is the instruction given by God to all whom He calls to be in His kingdom. This is the teaching throughout the Bible of how God's people should live.

Let us look at the spiritual aspects of this Feast:

1. Remove Sin

God created mankind with the great purpose of making spirit beings in His kingdom. But that plan will be defeated if sin exists in our life because the penalty of sin is eternal death. That is why Jesus Christ died as our Passover to pay the death penalty for mankind to be saved. God gave us the steps of how to remove sin from our life.

A. Baptism

Acts 2:38 tells us to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins so that we can receive the gift of His Holy Spirit. In baptism we enter into a cov-

enant with God. He forgives our sins and we commit ourselves to obey Him. God confirms this by giving us His Holy Spirit to help us to live God's way of life.

B. Repentance

This covenant with God opens the door for us to repent and ask Him for forgiveness of our sins (1 John 1:8-10). If anyone sins, we have Jesus Christ as our Advocate with the Father. He Himself is the propitiation for our sins as well as for the whole world (1 John 2:1-2).

C. Keeping the Passover

Passover is the other event that cleanses us. This is the time when we should in a repentant attitude as we are instructed to examine ourselves before partaking of this ceremony. In our examination we more clearly see our sins and repent of them, just as we did before our baptism.

During Jesus' last Passover on earth, He changed its symbols into foot washing, eating of bread and drinking of wine.

Jesus Christ instituted it by washing the feet of His disci-

ples. He told Peter who initially refused to be washed, that if he did not allow it, he would have no part with Him (John 13:8-10). He then gave the disciples instructions to wash one another's feet (John 13:15-17).

We need Jesus to wash our sins away or we have no part in Him as we will still be in our sins. Jesus cleansed us of our sins during our baptism, but as the Bible states we sin again. Although God forgives us of sins upon repentance, God wants us to confirm our commitment annually by participating in the Passover ceremony. We need to be washed again as Jesus instructed His disciples and His followers, including us today. When we wash each other's feet, we are fulfilling His mandate and helping one another to be part of Jesus Christ.

The first time Jesus washed away our sins was during our baptism. Why feet only during Passover? After baptism, we sin again. We don't need to be rebaptized but only require foot washing as previous sins were already forgiven. Foot washing symbolizes our sins being washed away before coming before God. In Old Testament times, the Israelites could not come to God unclean. They had to wash themselves.

The foot-washing ceremony symbolizes us being clean. In addition, it symbolizes humility: to treat

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