



United News Canada

NEWS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF GOD - CANADA

Vol. 26, No. 1

<https://unc.ucg.ca>

Spring 2021

Together Again!

By Anthony Wasilkoff

Last year most, if not all, of us kept the Passover at home. For some of us, it was the continuation of what we have had to do for quite some time. For others of us, this experience was astonishingly unique. It is very different keeping the Passover at home by oneself or with one's spouse, as opposed to keeping the Passover with a group of fellow believers at a central location.

Thankfully, most of us were able to observe Passover 2020 with the aid of a Passover DVD or an online equivalent or by tuning into a live service via the internet. This is far different than simply having a written outline to work from and then having to read all of the Scriptures aloud to oneself. Even in times of isolation, we have still been greatly blessed.

Even so, we yearn for the time when it is once again safe for us to physically meet with one another in one locale. We may have to transition into it by still wearing masks, social distancing and without sharing food after services. Someone said that with all these restrictions, they have taken all the fun out of Christian assemblies!

1 Corinthians 12:17 states "Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the

worse." The term "come together" is a technical term meaning the convening of a congregation and is used three times in this passage of Scripture! In verse 18 we read, "For first of all, when you come together as church . . ." Here there is no doubt that to "come together" means to assemble for purposes of communal worship. In verse 20 we read, "Therefore when you come together in one place..." The subsequent words and verses clearly show that the subject matter is Passover observance and how to go about it properly as a cohesive and considerate body of believers.

I so yearn for the time when we can resume in-person attendance for the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. No doubt you do too. I have so many fond memories of combined services on high Holy Days with singing, messages, special music, fellowship and pot-luck meals. Hopefully those wonderful times will return sooner rather than later.

Hebrews 10:24 admonishes us to "consider one another in order to stir up love and good works." "To consider" means "to study, to watch, to take a keen interest in." Experience tells us that love and good works do not just occur spontaneously. These attributes require stirring, that is, encouragement and reinforcement. This happens when believers spend time with

one another. Verse 25 states, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together . . ." The Greek word "assembling" is *episunagogen* which means synagogy! Clearly this refers to meeting together on the Sabbath Day for worship services - which we must all be yearning to resume one day soon.

We know the expression "absence makes the heart grow fonder." We also know the expression "out of sight, out of mind." Hopefully none of us is becoming so accustomed to worshipping from home that we will fail to see the urgent need to worship together again in person just as soon as circumstances permit and it is safe to do so. Being able to stay home and watch services online is hugely beneficial when one considers the alternatives. However, only in-person worship and in-person fellowship enable the believer to optimally "exhort one another and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." We Christians need to come together much more than we may have realized. 🌐

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National Council Meets Via Zoom

By Edwin van Pelt

On the evening of Monday, December 14, the National Council met for its quarterly meeting by means of the ZOOM videoconferencing platform.

All National Council members were present. Additional attendees were Treasurer Bill Dimovski, Secretary Linda Wasilkoff and Secretary-in-training Edwin van Pelt. After the opening prayer and some introductory comments by Council Chairman, Lloyd Teetaert, the minutes from the September meeting were reviewed and adopted unanimously. Jim Lucas then read the Council Code of Ethics.

The two new Council members, Sheldon Sitter and Cindy Ridi, gave short ice-breaker speeches giving some of their background and church history.

Anthony Wasilkoff and Edwin van Pelt presented the National Office Update. Mr. Wasilkoff gave a summary of the latest Subscriber Development Letter responses. The letters were mailed to over 3,200 *Beyond Today* (BT)

magazine subscribers who were added to our database between January 2013 and November 2013.

Mr. Wasilkoff then gave a brief update on the recent Church and Charity Law Seminar. This year was unusual in that it was a webinar. In previous years close to 1,000 participants met in person. He commented that we must be sure to follow through on due diligence and to follow protocols as needed, especially those relating to COVID-19.

Mr. van Pelt presented a brief update on our *Beyond Today* subscriber list. He mentioned that about 80 per cent of the subscribers live in Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia. About 85 per cent of the subscribers reside in urban areas with the balance living in rural areas as defined by Canada Post. Currently there are 1,440 subscribers to the *Pour L'Avenir* with nearly 90 per cent residing in Quebec. The urban and rural breakdown is about 77 per cent and 23 per cent respectively.

Anthony Wasilkoff gave an

update on the December Council of Elders meetings. Some attended in person at the Home Office and others attended the meetings electronically. President Victor Kubik remarked that that the 2020 Feast of Tabernacles will always be remembered as the Coronavirus Feast. A summary was provided of the current and upcoming ad campaigns that the Home Office is conducting. Two-minute commercials are being tested on the Newsmax channel. This test is scheduled to last six months. Newsmax has a similar demographic to what we are looking for.

A Media Team update was presented by the coordinator, Paul Wasilkoff. Other team members are Anthony Wasilkoff and Dennis O'Neill. Dennis Horlick and others also contribute to the team. The coordinator of the team presented response information for the past 52 weeks of the *Beyond Today* TV program. On a per capita basis, the Atlantic Provinces generate the highest percentage of responses. The highest number of responses over the past year came from Winnipeg.

United News - Canada

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Paul Wasilkoff then briefly went through a recent project that was completed in conjunction with the Home Office staff as it related to our local websites. In the meantime we stopped purchasing Google ads due to the need to disclose personal information. We are now using Microsoft Bing. A summary was given about our ucg.ca website usage for the past 12 months. It shows that we have an international reach. He then gave more detailed information about our ucg.ca website traffic.

Michael Erickson, Chairman of the Compliancy Task Force, gave a brief update. The Task Force is responsible for annually reviewing all the United Church of God – Canada’s policies, which it did last year. A full report from the Task Force is scheduled for the June Council meeting.

The Chairman of the Compensation Committee, Lloyd Teetaert, presented a policy and a resolution. The first was the Moving Expense Reimbursement policy. The policy was adapted

from a Home Office policy. Some more clarification is needed in terminology; the policy was remanded to the Compliancy Task Force for review and updating. It will then be presented to the Council at the next meeting in March 2021.

The resolution was the Annual Inflation Adjustment to Employee Salaries/Wages. Much discussion took place about the details and technicalities. A motion to approve the resolution was put forward and it was approved unanimously.

After a five-minute break the Director of Operations, Anthony Wasilkoff, presented the 2021-2022 Operations Plan followed by some discussion. The Plan was approved unanimously as presented.

The 2021-2022 Budget was presented by Treasurer Bill Dimovski. After considerable discussion it was moved to adopt a modified budget; it also was approved unanimously. The approved Operations Plan and

Budget will be sent to the National Conference for ratification in March.

The next item on the agenda was to realign the Council committees. The new chair of the compensation committee is Cindy Ridi, who, along with Mr. Sitter, will be part of the Governance, Ethics and Pastoral Committee. The Strategic Planning/Finance Committee remains unchanged.

The Director of Operations, Anthony Wasilkoff, gave an update on the upcoming National Council meetings in June with a potential ministerial conference that would immediately follow. Due to COVID-19, there is still uncertainty about holding these meetings in person. We will plan to meet face-to-face but will also make alternate arrangements. The meetings are scheduled for June 3-4 followed by the Ministerial Conference.

The meeting lasted three hours concluding at 10:30 p.m. E.T. after a closing prayer. 🙏

Ministerial Zoom Meeting

By United News Canada

Rainer Salomaa, the Ministerial Services Team Coordinator, called a meeting on February 1 for all pastors and ministerial employees. The meeting was held by Zoom. Two items on the agenda were: to discuss the health of the congregations and planning for the next Ministerial Conference. The meeting began with an update from the National Office. Anthony Wasilkoff reported that the financial situation continues to be positive. The lease on the

National Office has been renewed.

Currently the bi-annual Ministerial Conference is scheduled for June 5 and 6. The belief is that COVID-19 restrictions will necessitate an online meeting to be held on Sunday, June 6. Rainer Salomaa gathered suggested topics to cover and a list of potential presenters.

There was a discussion of how Passover will be conducted

across the country under current restrictions. For most areas, it is too soon to know, but it is likely that most areas will have to keep the Passover at home. Restrictions vary in different parts of the country. For those who regularly receive the sermon DVDs, the Passover-at-Home service will be included on the latest DVD.

Each individual gave personal and congregational updates. An overall feeling is frustration over

not being able to adequately serve the brethren and worry for the spiritual health of the church with only a few congregations still able to hold in-person services. Ministers are working to stay in touch with congregants through phone and email. Zoom fellowship has also been a good tool. A trend is to become less connected with the local congregation.

A warning came that there are some who are trying to pull people away from UCG. Former members have been calling and promoting alternate doctrines. On the other

hand, several congregations have had visit requests and even baptism requests from new people since restrictions came into place. There are new people attending – even when services are online. Another warning was for those who are speaking to be very careful of what is being said so that “hate laws” are not violated. With more services being posted and/or webcast, speakers must be very cautious what they say.

Another big concern is for the youth who need the social interaction of their peers. They are more at risk for isolation depression. The trend

now is to distrust authority which leads to a mistrust of the ministry. Wayne Ward will be moving to the Okanagan by April. We have also had a request to begin a Friday night Bible Study in Niagara Falls.

The French speaking brethren are able to tune into a French service each week. For those in the Eastern provinces, COVID-19 restrictions have been a blessing. Prior to this they had to rely upon DVDs each week. Now they can have a live online service and fellowship afterward – something they rarely had before. 🌐

The New Testament Passover

By United News Canada

One of the earliest study papers that UCGIA published was about the New Testament Passover. It is a lengthy paper that systematically looks at how the death of Jesus Christ was symbolically represented in Scriptures by the slaying of the Pascal lambs on the 14th of Abib. We understand that Christ introduced a new ceremony with symbols of unleavened bread and wine (representing His body and blood) during His last Passover.

Our doctrine and practice is founded on the example and instructions of Jesus and His apostles, which are recorded in the New Testament. One area of possible confusion can be that the term Passover as used in the New Testament can refer to the actual Passover service while at other times it refers to the whole spring Feast period. Our study paper goes into great detail comparing the two.

Further confusion can arise from the command in the Old Testament to eat a lamb or kid on the evening of Passover (Exodus 12). In the New Testament account of Christ's last Passover, there is a reference to “eating the Passover” – but no mention of a lamb or kid (Luke 22:11). This leads to controversy over what was done that evening. However, 1 Corinthians 5:7 tells us that Christ is our Passover. This is the predominant intent in the New Testament. Whenever the New Testament Church observed Passover it was to commemorate the death of Christ.

When we understand that Christ is our Passover, and that both the symbols of sacrificed lambs in the Old Testament and the bread and wine in the New Testament remind us of his death, it is easy to understand why more details about Passover observance are not present in the New Testament. It would seem that the apostles regarded the New Testament

observance of the Passover simply as the perpetuation of the Old Testament Passover with the modifications Christ personally instituted. This is something that Christ was certainly qualified to do as “the Mediator of the New Covenant” (Hebrews 12:24).

Thus, the New Testament church continued to observe the Passover after Christ's death, but with the expanded meaning that Christ is our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7).

If we truly believe that Christ is our Passover, we should then follow His instructions for this observance (Luke 22:14-20). We focus on His death through the symbols. And we follow His example of washing one another's feet (John 13:15).

If you would like to study this subject more thoroughly, you can find the Study Papers at: <https://www.ucg.org/study-papers>. 🌐

Cleaning Out The House

By Linda Wasilkoff

When I was young, I remember helping my Mom with cleaning in preparation for the Days of Unleavened Bread. It was a huge job, but one that was satisfying as we systematically went through the house removing leaven. The experience came in handy one year when I was a teenager. Mom was sick in bed – something that was quite rare for her, and it was up to me to do the spring cleaning. It was a job that was a little overwhelming but made me thankful for the times that I had helped in the years prior to that one!

This year's spring cleaning somehow seems different. That's partly because shortly after the Feast of Tabernacles my sisters and I had the task of going through our parents' home to clean it out. That house had belonged to my grandparents. After grandma died, my parents moved in to help my grandpa. Thus, there was an accumulation from two generations. Once again, I faced an overwhelming job of helping to clean my Mom's home – this time on a much bigger and more permanent scale.

Thankfully, through the years, my Mom had put names on items that were to go to specific people after her death. But, there were so many more items without those little stickers! That meant a lot of sorting to determine who should get what. I am so very thankful that my sisters and I were able to work together so well. The only fights were when each insisted one of the others should have a

certain special object.

During the two weeks I was there, we also had a memorial service for our Mom. So, in addition to feeling overwhelmed, we could also have been maudlin. Instead, we came up with ways to go through the process so that we could have some fun. We often remarked how much our Mom would have loved being there to join in when we were laughing – something she loved doing through the years.

This was a process we knew we would have to face. But a person never wants to go through it nor is ever ready for it. However, it was instructive and provided some valuable lessons, some of which I will attempt to share.

Cards are important

When a prayer request goes out to the church and includes a mailing address, cards begin pouring in. My dad received multiple cards when he was ill. Mom received many sympathy cards after he died. Then more cards arrived when Mom became ill. And they must have kept them all plus many other cards they received through the years marking various special occasions.

There were hundreds of cards! That they kept them all shows how much they appreciated them. When I would call Mom during the months prior to her death, she would often tell me about the cards she had received that day. She appreciated them all – those from near and far and those from

church congregations. Most of all, she appreciated those from people she knew that included a personal meaningful note.

But – my sisters and I had to go through all of those cards and dispose of them. It was hard to see and read them all. Since some had photos or other items in the envelope, we needed to check each one. It took a lot of time! I returned home with the determination to send cards to others as well as appreciate every card I receive, but I intend to regularly sort through the cards and dispose of most so that my children will not one day have to face such a huge undertaking.

Photos are important

Years ago Mom began sorting through photos and making albums for each of her children. Of course, such a task never gets completed. Just as we came across cards tucked away everywhere, we also found photos everywhere. Many of them were very old – dating back to my great-grandparents. They were very special to us – especially when we knew who they were. Thankfully, we had spent an evening several months prior to my Mom's death going through a chest of old photos belonging to our grandparents asking for names and how they were related to us. We were so glad that we took that time.

But – many photos we found had no names on them. Anyone who knew who the individuals were also were gone. I learned the importance of putting names (and

dates) on photos. Otherwise, in years to come, those photos will be of no significance to anyone. A family tree is also helpful to put such photos in proper perspective. Though I had tried to ask my Mom all the questions I could think of over the last few months her life, there are still many things I wish I knew.

Old Books

I like old books, but had no idea how many old books there were in my parent's house. When we pulled one row of books out from a shelf, most often there were additional rows behind! And there were shelves we didn't even know existed. Among our surprises were our grandfather's veterinary books – either from when he graduated from veterinary school in the early 1900s or that he used when he was in practice. I'd have loved to keep them, but they would not fit in my suitcase. As I clean my house this spring, I have determined that I must consider getting rid of some books.

Knickknacks

It is easy to collect knickknacks – some are from travels, many are mementos from the Feast, others are gifts from friends and family. My dad collected many coffee mugs and many baseball caps. My mom collected coffee spoons and anything with a chicken motif. It made it easy to know what to buy them – and all of the family joined in.

But – what do you do with the collections after the ones who collected are gone? How many of a certain item does a person need? Thankfully, there were enough grandkids to take many of these items as a keepsake of their grandparents, but there were many left over. Now I am trying to determine how much of my stuff I really need to keep.

There were many treasured items taken from that house – most were not valuable except to the person who took them for the memories associated with them. There were many items that were donated or disposed of because they were no

longer of use to anyone in the family.

The Lesson

So what did that hectic two-week period of cleaning teach me that I can use to prepare for the upcoming Passover season?

I learned that it isn't the things we accumulate that are important. For instance, family and friends didn't talk about the beautiful chicken decorations my Mom had. The thing most commented on was her character. Over and over individuals talked about how kind, caring and loving she was. They talked about how she made everyone who came to the house feel welcome. They talked about her faith that lasted strong for over six decades.

So as I am cleaning for Unleavened Bread this year, I may get rid of a few more things. But mainly as I clean out the leavening, I will be trying to also clean my character so that at the end of my days I will have left a positive legacy for those who knew me. 🌍

Reflections On COVID-19 and 2020

By Dale Craniford

Would you agree the year 2020 was challenging? Acting Vancouver area Pastor David Palmer, his wife Ghyslaine, and I have stayed in touch with brethren by phone and e-mail while in-person church services have been cancelled. COVID-19 also saw business closures, social confinement, requirements for mask wearing and uncertainty.

We were in this together.

What challenged us? How did we cope? What did we learn? I asked some Southern British Columbia brethren these questions.

Ralph Cortes said challenges were "isolation and loneliness due to COVID." How did he cope? By reading the Bible and reflecting on God's promise of hope and deliverance from pestilences and disasters. Ralph also prayed regularly and kept a daily journal of his thoughts. He said, "God...

will not leave or forsake those who cry out for His help."

Richard Shiundu, a deacon in Victoria quipped, "2020 was a year that the young folks are making sure that the old people aren't sneaking out of the house!" More seriously, Richard referenced the book of Habakkuk. "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear? Even cry out to You, 'Violence!', and You will not save?" (Habakkuk 1:2). In

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2020, violent protests in America shocked us. "The passage in Habakkuk reminds us God hasn't lost control." Also, the world was shut down abruptly "that they may know I am the LORD" (Ezekiel 33:29).

A single lady member felt social isolation as the biggest challenge for her. "All of a sudden, my world became very small." How did she cope? "Looking back, we are built for community, and so living and working alone at home was difficult. I made a concerted effort to use technology to stay in contact with people." What lessons did she learn? "That the state and sin of worry affects your physical well-being. When the Bible commands us to 'cast all our cares on Him' (1 Peter 5:7) and 'be anxious about nothing' (Philippians 4:6), He means it for our good."

A mother of two teenage boys reflected, "It is challenging. My

boys have anxiety, so we limited talk about COVID in the house." She also re-examined her comfort zone, as it had been challenged, and sought to seek God's Kingdom more. Her advice for coping: Stay POSITIVE! Don't panic. She said, "An antidote is gratitude - God will provide" (Philippians 4:6). Some lessons she learned were that God's plan doesn't change (Isaiah 46:10). She also said, "I have found a renewed faith and wonder in the Almighty God."

Alex and Marlina Escasinas agreed that not seeing each other for services during the lockdown was the biggest challenge. Alex said, "God is looking at how we handle the crisis (Jeremiah 17:10). If we can't handle this, what will we do when things get worse?" Marlina added, "Sabbath keeping is more important than ever." The lessons they have come away with are: "Be thankful for what we have, do the best we can and have peace with God."

Gerry Folstad, a senior living alone, mentioned the loneliness from COVID-19 restrictions, but said "it is important to keep others safe from danger. I have what I need and I thank God."

Another senior, Dave Bartlett of Victoria said "seeing man doing the opposite of what God says to do (Romans 8:7) was challenging." He said that focusing on Christ and not on our fears is a way to cope. He learned to hang in there and totally avoid politics. Also, religious talk must be strictly guarded.

Brethren, we are in this together! As we fight the good fight (1 Timothy 6:12) in these "perilous times" (2 Timothy 3:1), let's remember that "he who endures to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13).

COVID-19 and the year 2020 taught us much. What will the year 2021 teach us? 🌍

Tools You Can Use

By United News Canada

No doubt many of our readers use the search tools on the www.ucg.org website to search for articles written on a particular subject.

Did you know that there are also Bible Study "tools" on the UCG-Canada website? They are found at: <http://www.ucg.ca/bible-study-tools/>.

As you prepare for the upcoming Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, you may

like to check out the Bible Study tools under Unleavened Bread at: <http://www.ucg.ca/bible-study-tools/unleavened-bread>.

You will find a whole range of articles relating to preparing both physically and spiritually for the upcoming Holy Day season.

Perhaps there was an article that you read a few years ago that made an impact and you would like to review it again but just do not remember which issue

of the *United News Canada* it was in. Or, maybe you are a new reader who would like to see an article that has been printed in a previous issue.

This resource is an ever-expanding one for you to utilize. Why not check it out?

Another resource that may be helpful is the many unleavened recipes posted at: <https://www.ucg.org/members/recipes/unleavened-recipes>. 🌍

News From Across Canada

Combined Zoom Service

On the final Sabbath in January members from across Eastern Canada joined together for a combined church service. In all we had just over 100 direct connections with a number of other connections too.

The sermonette was given by Mr. Carlos Aviles, from the Kitchener congregation, and the sermon was given by Mr. Anthony Wasilkoff, from the Toronto congregation. The opening and closing prayers were given by members from Ottawa and Barrie.

After the service concluded, members were able to fellowship both as a group and in smaller sub-groups. It was a great way for us to have a special Sabbath service while under lock-down conditions.

We are appreciative for the way we are able to benefit new technologies.

Paul Wasilkoff

Deacon Ordained

On the Sabbath of February 13 in Regina, Lloyd Teetaert and Rainer Salomaa ordained Ray McBride to the office of deacon. He and his wife, Marion, are long-time members who serve faithfully in the local congregation.

As a teenager in the early 60s, Ray was introduced to the Church through the World Tomorrow broadcast and the Bible Correspondence Course. He



Ray & Marion McBride
photo by Rainer Salomaa

attended his first Feast in Penticton in 1969. Marion attended her first Feast in 1964 in Big Sandy, Texas, with her family.

After both were baptized and Marion and Ray had moved to Regina, chemistry happened and by August of 1970 they were a married couple.

Rainer Salomaa

Hodgins-Haight Obituary

Bernice Marilyn Hodgins-Haight died on November 24, 2020, in her 84th year. She graduated from St. Joseph School of Nursing in 1958 and, for many years worked as an RN in Southern Ontario.

Marilyn and her first husband had five children. She became a single mother in 1975 and began raising milking goats and sheep. She raised her children on the farm where she taught them that “If the animals haven’t eaten, then neither do you!”

By the age of 12, Marilyn had read the Bible from cover to cover. Eventually she found the Church and by 1974 was

attending Passover services. She attended many church activities through the years and made sure her car was crammed full with her own children plus as many other “kids” as she could fit so that all could participate in the activities. That often meant praying for the money for gas to get there – and God always provided!

Later in life, when she was 79, Marilyn married Arthur “Art” Haight, whom she had dated briefly when they were teenagers. These were some of her happiest years. Together they attended the Hamilton, Ontario, congregation.

In addition to five children, Marilyn leaves behind 15 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Her first great-great granddaughter was born 12 days after her death.

Due to COVID-19, a private funeral service was held on November 27 with Art in attendance. Two days later Art died peacefully at home in his 86th year.

Art loved cars. He especially enjoyed touring in his 56 Chevy,



Marilyn & Art
photo by Sue Hodgins

which he and Marilyn used on many of their trips to various Feast sites (including Newfoundland, Alaska and Cincinnati). They also relished spending the winter in Florida. Art delighted in going for long car rides after which they would go to a restaurant – not for the food but to meet people. He also enjoyed his bicycle. At age 80, Art was still riding his 10-speed bicycle all around town.

Both Art and Marilyn liked growing things. They grew flowers, vegetables and fruit – even planting trees for the next generation. On their farm, they also raised Heritage Chickens, Chinese Runner Ducks, turkeys, cats and a dog.

Though they only had five years together, Art and Marilyn made the most of them. They added significantly to the Hamilton congregation and will be greatly missed.

Sue Hodgins

Mayo Obituary

George Mayo was born on April 12, 1937, in Newfoundland. He died after a brief battle with a brain tumour on January 14, 2021, at the age of 83.

George leaves behind his loving wife, Elizabeth (Betty), of 58 years; three sons Rodney (Elaine), Lloyd (Cathy) and Wade; one daughter Lorna (Randy Turpin); grandchildren Justin Mayo, Michelle Mayo (Williams), Dylan Mayo, Andrew Mayo, Brandon Mayo, Joshua Turpin and Jenny Turpin; and great-grandchildren Taylor-Rae, Anna-Marie, Nelson and Christopher.

George and Betty were pillars in the St. John's, Newfoundland, congregation. He will be dearly missed by all those who had the privilege of meeting and knowing him.



George Mayo
photo by Patrick Read

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, a memorial service was conducted on the Sabbath of January 23 via Zoom when over 60 individuals from across the Maritimes and Ontario paid their respects to Betty and the family.

During the service, tributes were read from Gary Antion (their first minister in the United Church of God-Canada), Anthony Wasilkoff, Dennis Horlick, and Ed van Pelt. David Squibb (deacon in St. John's) and Ellsworth Stanley (elder in the St. John's congregation) both provided tributes that spoke very highly of Mr. Mayo.

George spent his working years as a welder. He was a man of many talents and built their home in Burin, Newfoundland.

The Mayos first came in contact with the Church after hearing Mr. Armstrong on the radio. George and Betty attended their first Feast of Tabernacles in Halifax in 1990, were baptized

in 1991, and, as they say, “never looked back.”

Of all the tributes that were read during the memorial, there was a common thread that ran through each one. They all mentioned that George was a very dedicated man who loved God, his wife, his children and his church family. They also mentioned that he had a wonderful sense of humour and a laugh that was contagious. Those who knew him best mentioned that he loved to play the guitar and sing.

George was a good soldier of Jesus Christ who never left his post and fought the good fight of faith until the end. Newfoundlanders have a small, yet wonderful saying that will remind us of George Mayo and goes like this “Stay where yer to, till I comes where yer at.”

We look forward to being reunited at the return of Jesus Christ when the last enemy—death—has been removed and there will be no more tears.

Patrick Read

Petersen Obituary

Art Petersen died January 17, 2021, just days short of his 80th birthday. Art was a faithful child of God and kept his zealous love for God for fifty years attending the Church. Art had suffered brain damage when he got smothered in a plastic sheet as a baby. He slowly went completely deaf and had trouble communicating. He was a smart man, but unfortunately was unable to express himself completely.

I was talking to Linda Wasilkoff and she said “I have wonderful memories of him handing out the bulletin for us at church. On occasion he would find a typo and bring it to me chuckling! He certainly was smarter than people initially thought.”



Art Petersen
photo by Jim Petersen

Art maintained a steady regimen of Bible study and prayer and was a wonderful example of faithfulness under the most difficult of circumstances. You would never enter his home without finding a Bible open on his desk.

Jim and Darlene (his brother and sister-in-law) took him to services. Since he was unable to hear, one of them always wrote out the sermon for him. After they took him home, Art immediately went through the notes looking up every Scripture in his Bible. He faithfully picked up song books after church, happy any time he could help. Art rarely missed a Sabbath or Feast day.

After church services in Calgary on January 23, there was a memorial for Art with a pictorial tribute called “How great thou Art.” Chelsey, a niece, sang a movingly beautiful “I vow to thee my country.” Many shared personal memories and anecdotes

with us. The Wasilkoff family joined the brethren in Calgary by Zoom. Art’s brother Jim gave an emotional eulogy for him. We were all moved by the beautiful tribute by Warren Poffenroth. It is too bad Art wasn’t there. He would have enjoyed it immensely.

Art is survived by two sisters Pat and Tina, three brothers, Jim, Doug and Bill, and lots of nieces and nephews. He will be sorely missed by many.

Jean Duperrault

Ugulini Obituary

Due to complications from a long-standing illness, Michael Ugulini died suddenly at his home in Thorold, Ontario, on Sunday, January 24, 2021, at the age of 63. He was baptized in 2014 and was a member of the Hamilton congregation. Learning and living God’s way was very important to him. Although his family did not share that with him, they were always very supportive of his focus to serve and obey God. He served wherever and whenever possible in the congregation including leading hymns and giving sermonettes.

Michael was a full-time freelance writer in the Niagara Region. He was a published writer specializing in short and feature-length business articles, newsletter articles, SEO articles and corporate profiles. He also wrote blog posts for small businesses, web page content and brochures. His creative writing works included short screen and play scripts, short stories and poetry. Many of his poems can be found online. His short screenplay “Parched”, which was his third script, won First

Place in the American Gem Short Screenplay Competition in 2006. At the time of his death, Michael had completed more than six scripts. He was inspired to write scripts by the power of words and the power of visual storytelling. He studied screenwriting texts and films that moved him and had meaning to him. He would usually write late at night and whenever he could find time on the weekends.



Michael Ugulini
photo by Cathy Ugulini

Before moving to the Niagara Region, Michael and his wife, Cathy, lived in Toronto where he worked in the food industry for a large grocery store chain. One of the skills he developed in that position was baking. There were many times the Hamilton congregation enjoyed his special breads, rolls, cakes, cookies and other treats after services, on Holy Days and at potluck meals. As well as baking, Michael liked to cook and would tempt us with many of his favourite Italian dishes, some that his mother used to make.

Michael was very active in his community, always keeping abreast of what was going on and what the needs were for those in his community. When his brother Terry began his campaign for the position as Mayor in Thorold, Michael was there helping wherever he could, delivering signs for people to put

on their lawn, or pounding those signs into the ground around the community, helping out at the open house events, assisting with mailings and delivering flyers. Michael was so proud of Terry when he won the election and would often talk about the focus his brother had for the community, one Michael was happy to be a part of.

Economics, literature and music were also of interest to Michael. He began studying the piano and was becoming quite skilled at learning challenging pieces. He was an avid baseball fan. He and a friend travelled to New York just to go to a ball game. Michael would also put on his heavy parka, hat, gloves and anything else that would keep him warm and head out to a Hamilton Tiger-Cats football game with friends, no matter how cold it might be that evening. If you played chess and happened to have a chess board handy, Michael was always ready to sit down for a game. He studied the game to improve his skills and enjoyed playing online with people

from around the world.

In addition to his physical family, whom he loved dearly, he had two other loves of his life. They were Amber and Lexi, the two Norfolk terriers that he and his wife shared their life with. Amber and Lexi are half-sisters, and, as it often is with sisters, they did not always get along especially when the younger one wanted to be the boss.

Due to COVID-19, a small private family service was held and memorial will be held at a later date. Michael will be lovingly remembered by his wife Cathy, his step-sons Kevin and Sean, his grandsons Jaxxon and Archer, his father-in-law Leno, his brothers James, Terry, John and Patrick and their families, Lynda and Caroline his sisters-in-law, his brother-in-law Richard, many nieces and nephews and his Hamilton Church family.

Maggi Molland

A Few Words of Thanks

In this issue of *United News Canada* we begin using a new layout.

We'd like express our appreciation to Mr. Dan Dowd who volunteered his time and experience to give us suggestions and guidance to freshen up both the masthead and content pages. His mock-ups proved invaluable.

We'd also like to thank our contributors who submit articles and congregational events which form the backbone of our content. Without their contributions we'd have nothing to print!

In addition, thank you to our editors who help us put our best foot forward. 🌍

“Kindness” from page 12.

world. As Passover approaches we need to consider, not only the kindness of God through the sacrifice of Jesus, but our kindness towards each other.

We see a virtue of God that He wants us to learn, that even toward our enemies we are to be kind. There's no excuse to be vengeful and spiteful toward our enemies. God in His heaven above exercises kindness toward those who shun Him and disregard His benefits. Recall what Jesus admonished “But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in

return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil” (Luke 6:35).

God encourages and exhorts us to practice being kind, to have kindness in our lives. “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of

perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful” (Colossians 3:12-15).

As we prepare for the richly meaningful observance of another Passover, let's ask ourselves, “do we practice the law of kindness?”

The fruit of the Spirit includes kindness, which knows no bounds, no limits. Kindness is not a sign of weakness, rather kindness is one of the keys that unlocks the door to the Kingdom of God. 🌍

The Law of Kindness

By David Palmer

We are living in a divisive world – a world fraught with frustration, anger and hatred. We see divisions of political ideology, frustration and anger over restrictions resulting from the pandemic. Anger and violence are a daily occurrence in many parts of the world, whether it is over support for a political ideology opposite from your neighbour, or debate over whether to wear a mask as mandated by health authorities while dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Apostle Paul in his letter to Timothy warned of a perilous world prior to Christ's return: "You should also know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control; they will be cruel and have no interest in what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. They will act as if they are religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. You must stay away from people like that" (2 Timothy 3: 1-5 NLT).

Jesus also gave us a glimpse of what human nature would be like during what Scriptures refer to as the end time, "then many will be offended, will betray one another,

and will hate one another" (Matthew 24:10).

Missing from the world you and I live in is a simple character quality called "kindness." Kindness is a universal principle the Bible refers to as one of the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. Kindness is more than a principle—it is a law actually – that is magnified throughout Scripture.

In the book of Proverbs is the account of a "virtuous woman." Notice what God says about a wonderful quality and a delightful characteristic of this woman. "She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness" (Proverbs 31:26). Many of us probably never really consider that kindness is in fact a law that God expects us to cultivate in our lives.

The word for "law" here is *torah*. It is the same word that is used for "law" as in "The torah of kindness." And the word for "kindness" is a word that is generally used to mean "mercy." It's translated over 240 times in the Old Testament from *chesed* and it means "mercy." But it also is translated in various places as "kindness," and "loving kindness." *Holman's Bible Dictionary* defines kindness as "the steadfast love that maintains relationships through gracious aid in times of need."

It is used in describing God's faithful love toward those who keep His commandments, and is used to describe God's slowness to wrath and quickness to mercy.

In the list of nine fruits of the Spirit, the word translated "gentleness" in the King James Bible is the Greek word *chrestotes*, and is better interpreted "kindness." "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), goodness, faithfulness, gentleness (kindness,), self-control. Against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23). One fruit that needs to be growing in our lives is the fruit of kindness.

God looks at the humble and contrite heart (Isaiah 66:2). He does not delight in the destruction of the wicked. God can be touched by our words and by our attitude. God can change His mind based on how we change our actions and attitudes. "Who knows if He will turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him" (Joel 2:14).

God has wonderful kindness to share, and it is boundless toward those who love Him. God's mercy and kindness knows no boundary, when He's entreated humbly. God has shown kindness toward us, and He expressed it by giving His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Lord and Saviour, to be the one to take our place as our sacrifice. "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:4,7).

We see how God expresses wonderful kindness toward those whom He has called out of this

See "**Kindness**" on page 11.

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