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A Sense of Adventure

By Anthony Wasilkoff

Do you remember how much of an adventure it was for you to keep your very first Feast of Tabernacles? Perhaps it was here in Canada or perhaps it was in your country of origin. Wherever it was and whenever it was, most of us will recall how exciting it was.

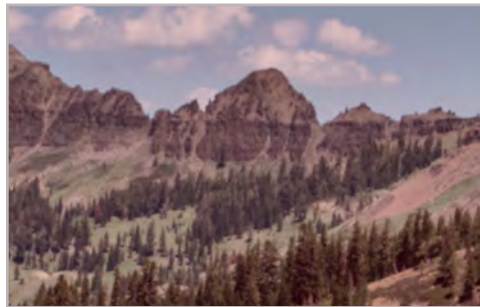
For some of us, our first Feast was in Big Sandy, Texas, back in 1961 or so. For people living in Eastern Canada driving down to east Texas to camp for a week in the famous Piney Woods was no small accomplishment.

Back then camping in Big Sandy was organized by church areas with most people sharing their meals as brethren visited with one another and sampled whatever they might be offered as a fellow member passed by. The cooking fires were highly aromatic and highly inviting.

For some of us our first Feast site might have been Jekyll Island which was added in 1963. That year nearly 17,000 people kept the Feast of Tabernacles at several locations with remarkable camaraderie and joy.

Mt. Pocono was another exciting site that was eventually established and drew brethren from both eastern Canada and eastern USA.

Out west, Squaw Valley was established as a Feast site in 1965 having been a winter Olympics venue that was ideally suited for the then Radio Church of God as an exotic Feast site. I attended my first Feast there in 1966 with many, many others and keeping the Feast there was an adventure in so many different ways.



Squaw Valley, CA
Photo by Earl Wilcox on Unsplash

Eventually, God opened a door for a full-fledged Feast site to be established in Penticton, British Columbia, which drew brethren from both the United States and Canada to the beautiful Okanagan Valley to assemble in a massive tent.

Over 33,000 people assembled to keep the Feast In 1966. There were two services every day and sometimes on special occasions there were even three services (with an evening, morning and afternoon service on holy days). The hunger for singing hymns and listening to messages was enormous for ev-

eryone. There was the blessing of little children ceremony which was ever so special to observe and also various ordinations conducted for all to see.

The end of the Feast came ever so quickly and we sang *God Be With You Till We Meet Again*. The tears just wouldn't stop flowing as we awaited the conclusion of services and the closing prayer.

What adventure awaits you at this year's Feast of Tabernacles wherever you may be keeping it? What if you knew you were keeping your last Feast in this life time? What difference would that make in how you were going to be keeping it? How would you spend your time differently? How would you spend your funds differently? How would you reach out to others differently? Wherever this year's Feast of Tabernacles takes you, reach out to others and make it a Feast of caring and sharing. 🌍

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Nations in the Kingdom

By Robert Berendt

Not long ago, the majority of the world could not read or write. Superstition was widespread at times. Education was extremely limited. It is incredible how in the last century, knowledge has exploded. It is not that humans now have higher intelligence. It is because for the first time all the efforts of many fine and highly educated minds are being pooled. We are literally seeing prophecy fulfilled before our eyes (Daniel 12:4).

The pyramids of Egypt and other edifices reflect the remarkable level of ability that existed in that day. Knowledge was gained and then lost over time. One of the first acts of a conquering nation was to burn and destroy much of the knowledge of those they conquered and to enslave the people. Perhaps a major reason is the difficulty of preserving knowledge in a written language. Even kings could not read or write in many cases. In time, people eventually clustered into groups and became nations. Alfred the Great of Britain was considered great for his literary achievements rather than victories in battle. A growing and

impressive amount of knowledge has opened our eyes to many new possibilities within the power of man to achieve.

One question that has rattled around in my head has to do with nations, cultures and different peoples. Vast numbers of people form nations. Putting the current mad rush toward multi-cultured nations aside, it is easy to recognize attributes and unique abilities among various nations. Experts can quickly point out the nature or culture of a people. It seems that there are some inborn qualities or trends that mark peoples beyond skin color. The languages we speak seem to have a large part in making us somewhat different from one another - we think alike or differently because our languages are not alike.

Where do nations come from? God made some remarkable statements about them. Genesis 10 tells of nations that were formed. Verse 32 says that nations were divided. God intended that to happen. In Genesis 17:4, 16 God promised Abraham and Sarah that they would be the father and mother of many nations. God

singled out others to whom He also stated there would be nations coming from them. God also stated that all the nations of the earth were to be blessed in the seed of Abraham's and that indicates that nations from other origins would exist. Genesis 48:12 goes further to indicate that the descendants of Ephraim would become a company of nations. The British Commonwealth is one group that fits that description. Genesis 25:16 speaks of the children of Ishmael who were to form 12 nations. Why is it that the children of those designated to become a nation cannot all form nations on their own? Why did the 12 sons of Jacob become nations and then Ephraim continue to give rise to more nations. This did not happen to all the children of these 12. Each of them did not give rise to a new nation. The 12 tribes or nations of Israel are distinct one from another and have remained so for thousands of years. Of course, the only way a nation of homogeneous people can exist is if succeeding generations retained the identifying traits.

In recent years much more has been learned about the DNA and

United News - Canada

Managing Editor: Anthony Wasilkoff

Editorial Reviewers: Kevin Ford, Jean Jantzen, David Palmer, Denise Ward, Linda Wasilkoff and Dale van Zant

Layout: Paul Wasilkoff

National Council: Jeff Anderson, Larry DeLong, Michael Erickson, Jim Lucas, Dennis O'Neill, Cindy Ridi, Sheldon Sitter, Lloyd Teetaert and Anthony

Wasilkoff

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UCG - Canada
P.O. Box 144, Station D
Etobicoke, ON M9A 4X1
www.ucg.ca



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gene code. The only way an identity of a nation can exist is if the traits were given and then maintained. When God promises a nation would arise - it seems He determines that a trait will begin and then be passed on. That implies God's direct involvement and indeed it must be so. God has often been directly involved in the direction humans are to take. A few examples would be in creating Adam and Eve, the birth of Isaac, Esau and Jacob's life and children, choosing Mary to give birth to Jesus Christ and many more instances. God was directly involved in the selection of the ova and sperm. He continued to ensure that a nation did indeed arise from those to whom He made promises. What could be the purpose and reason for this? Why would God be so directly involved? It is clear that God allowed many things to happen - not all of them good - but He worked with humans and with the situations that He had allowed to occur.

God designed nations and He intended them to be different. He is the author of variety and His designs are always quite wonderful. Different nations are gifted in various ways that make them unique. Some are very musical; some are romantic. Looking around the world, we see traits that mark nations in unique ways. There are also similarities, but the differences make them unique. It is almost as if there was an unseen built-in factor that is the same within each unique nation. That is not to say that within a single nation there are no differences. It is obvious that crossovers occur and some traits may be stronger than others. It was God who designed the different races and the different traits that give

rise to cultures. War has had its part in blending the races and cultures. The differences are also one of the main reasons nations have not been able to live together in peace. Nations fight against other nations.

When we focus our gaze on the statements God makes about the far distant future, we note that He continually keeps His focus on multiple nations. In Revelation 7:9 we see pictured vast multitudes of all nations that have been accepted by God. Revelation 21:9-21 describes a wonderful scene of God dwelling with mankind. These are those whose names are written in the Book of Life (verse 27). Obviously God wants the saved to retain some of their special and unique traits. Once we learn and comprehend that fact, we will be more inclined to respect and cherish the differences rather than make them the cause for discrimination. God does not discriminate. Peter found that lesson hard to learn - but he did learn it. In Acts 10:35 Peter acknowledged that God accepts anyone of any nation who is willing to fear and obey Him. In Acts 17:26-27 we read that God made all nations of one blood and determined the boundaries of where they were to live.

Revelation 22:2 describes a scene of great beauty and peace. Directly from the throne of God a river of water of life will flow for the healing of the nations. His servants shall reign forever and ever. That implies much more than a physical and temporary existence. We have now entered the spiritual realm with God. His future is described with the distinction of the nations before Him. The only way that nations could come from a

designated few is if God intended it to be that way and was directing the whole operation. We humans have little to do with that. God created the races and character traits within those races. Rather than fight against this concept, we ought to embrace it and with the embracing of that concept we need to learn to celebrate and preserve the differences as gifts from God. Cherish your national identity and respect all others - that is from God. Our behaviour is dictated by the way we see ourselves. Comparing ourselves among ourselves is not wise (2 Corinthians 10:12). Accepting the differences God has designed and trying to uphold them for ourselves and for others is a recognition that God has wanted different nations and the differences will carry on into the Millennium or thousand years that follows the return of Christ (Revelation 20:3). Satan has deceived the nations God created and let them into conflict with one another and with God.

It ought to become clear that what we see in this physical world will change when all who inhabit the Kingdom of God will be spirit beings. All will have the nature of the Father and Son, and will share in their glory (2 Peter 1:4). As spirit beings, we will also be different, but there will be no contentions, disagreements, attempts to determine who is the greatest. Those questions will never occur in God's family. Be thankful for your parents and background and work toward developing the nature of God. He will have a family of children who will be like the Father and Son, but unique in their own way. We are all part of His design of creation. His will shall be done on earth. 🌍

A Very Hard Lesson

By *Linda Wasilkoff*

For young men returning from the Second World War, things were looking up. They had survived some very horrifying times. Many returned home to sweethearts. My Dad was one of those and he and my Mom wasted no time getting married after his return.

They looked forward to some good times, but immediately were challenged. His sister who was about 13 at the time started hanging out with them. She brought with her some new found beliefs – she had started keeping the Sabbath, keeping the Biblical food laws and sending money to a radio preacher. Dad saw a need to help her understand where she was misled. So, he and his new bride began an intense study of the Bible to prove where Rosie was wrong. That didn't work so well.

Time went on and when their second child was born, something was obviously wrong. Eventually Louise was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. This brought a new crisis in their lives. One day a neighbour assured them that God heals. That renewed their study to see if the claim was biblical.

Eventually, my parents were visited by two young men (Raymond McNair and Kenneth Swisher) on a baptizing tour. The two young men thought they were counselling my parents. My parents were determining if the young men believed and taught what my parents had discovered in the Bible over the course of

about six years. Apparently both parties were satisfied and in August of 1954 Mom and Dad were baptized. That fall they were off to keep their first Feast of Tabernacles and to take my sister to be anointed.

One of my siblings and myself chose to stay behind with grandparents whom we rarely got to see. So, I missed my first Feast experience! The next summer we moved back to the farm so that my great-grandfather could move in with us. He was up in years and could no longer live by himself. There Dad was approached by a relative asking to borrow some money. My parents had been saving their second tithe to attend the Feast once again, Those funds are what Dad loaned. That turned out to be a very painful and hard lesson. The lesson learned was that though second tithe belongs to the person who saves it, it is to be used for a specific purpose and not to be lent to someone for a business venture.

It was eight years before we were able to attend the Feast. I recall hoping each year that there would be sufficient funds to make the drive to Big Sandy, Texas – about 14 hours away from our home. Each year, hope was dashed as we had insufficient funds and a car that would not make the trip. So we had to keep the Feast by ourselves at home.

The year we finally got a better car and were able to attend the Feast, we were all so very excited.

To save funds, we camped with two adults and five kids in one tent! Mom canned food during the summer – soup and chilli – for our meals to save money. Our big treat was a package of beef hotdogs and a jug of apple cider! Still this ranks as one of my best Feasts ever!

The past couple of years have brought back memories of those early days of keeping the Feast at home. As COVID restrictions hit hard in Ontario, meeting in any convention centre was banned one year and last year restricted to those who were vaccinated. It made me re-evaluate what is important.

Through the years we seemed to have put more emphasis on travel for the Feast. Perhaps we have put too much emphasis on experiencing new things or seeing new places and on having a good time. The past couple of years have shown how much we should be thankful for the messages we hear and for brethren to spend time with. When we were unable to meet for the Feast, we found ways to get together with other brethren and that made a difference.

So, as I gear up for this year's Feast, what am I determined to do?

I am determined to listen more attentively to all the sermonettes, split sermons and sermons.

I am determined to enjoy being with brethren, make new ac-

acquaintances and get to know others better.

I am determined to serve others in some way.

I am determined to gripe and grumble less and appreciate more.

I am determined to concentrate on the spiritual rather than on the physical.

Sometimes when we go without, we appreciate the little things

more. It certainly worked in those early days when we were at last able to attend the Feast. This year I plan to appreciate more fully the Feast of Tabernacles and its rich meaning for us. 🍁

June National Council Meeting

By Edwin van Pelt

The National Council met on June 16 and 17, 2022, using a unique format that had not been used until this year. The original plan was to have all the Council members meet at the National Office for the typical June face-to-face meetings. It was determined in late April that it might not be practical for the entire Council to meet in one location given the uncertainty of travel restrictions still in effect as well as flight delays, flight cancellations and other complications. A decision was made to have the Eastern Canadian Council members meet at the National Office and the Western Canadian Council members meet in the Edmonton area. The two-hour time difference between the two venues presented a few minor challenges. East and West were connected via Zoom with one individual connecting from home.

The meetings began just before 10:30 a.m. Eastern Time (E.T.), 8:30 a.m. Mountain Time. All National Council members were in attendance with one exception due to an unexpected illness. Several guests were also in attendance at both locations.

After the opening prayer the Chairman Lloyd Teetaert re-

viewed the minutes of the March 7, 2022 Council meeting. The minutes were then approved.

Anthony Wasilkoff gave a General Conference of Elders (GCE) update. It was the first in-person meeting in a few years. Enthusiasm was very high. There were many benefits of eating together and talking with other GCE members before, between and after sessions. Five couples were honoured for 50 years of service to the Church; Anthony and Linda Wasilkoff were among them.

Council of Elders (COE) member Paul Wasilkoff followed with an update. He gave a general overview of the process to appoint the new President of the United Church of God, *an International Association* (UCGIA). There were a number of nominees, which ultimately came down to four. The interviews were extensive. Mr. Wasilkoff noted that the entire process was done with a spirit of unity and consensus.

Dennis O'Neill then gave the Media Team update. The Team meets every two weeks. The main thrust of the Team is the UCG-C website. Taking key articles and parsing them to a few hundred words is one of the processes the

Team is going through. On the website, a reader can then go more in-depth. Mr. O'Neill shared a number of ideas and concepts the Team is working on to improve the experience for visitors to our website.

Anthony Wasilkoff then gave a National Office Update. We have 18,540 subscribers to *Beyond Today* magazine; about 85% reside in urban areas and about 15% in rural areas. *Pour L'Avenir* subscribers currently stand at 1,404 across Canada. The latest Subscriber Development Letter is generating good responses. Renewal letters are being sent to *Pour L'Avenir* subscribers for the first time. Plans are well underway to have a Feast site in Québec once again, though it will be a French language site. Newfoundland will have a Feast site as well with the exact location to be determined.

A Ministerial Services Team update was given by Anthony Wasilkoff. He commended all those who serve in the local congregations. The Monthly Church Reports are very helpful. They are read carefully. Comments are often more important than the numbers. An office staff member compiles the information and then it is summarized. It was sobering to see how many elders and wives have died recently.

Treasurer Bill Dimovski gave a financial update. We are trending well for the first few months of the new fiscal year. Donations are up 4.3% over budget. It is difficult to plan for the future because trends can change quickly. Savings accounts generate very low interest. As our membership ages, the impending retirement of our members is an area of concern. Nevertheless, trends are positive. Our Auditor will visit the office for a few days beginning July 4. There are planned ministerial visits to the Maritimes and to Newfoundland this summer for the first time in several years.

Michael Erickson followed with the Compliance Task Force update. All our policies are being reviewed by the Task Force to ensure they are consistent and in compliance with federal and provincial laws that are applicable. Nine updated policies were presented. Many of the updates were simply technical while others were more in-depth. All nine policies were subsequently approved.

Next was a discussion of committees and their roles to be sure

they are in compliance with their appointed mandates as directed by the National Council. Linda Wasilkoff was asked to compile the definitions and roles of each committee from historical Council records and then present them to the National Council at a future meeting.

Following a lunch break, the meetings resumed. The first item was some unfinished business from the last meeting. Next, the agenda for the upcoming National Conference Annual General Meeting in September was approved. The Council then went into an Executive Session.

Following the close of the Executive Session, the regular Council meeting resumed to present one item, which was to establish a Succession Planning Committee (SPC) for the replacement of the Director of Operations prior to his planned retirement.

The day's meetings concluded at about 5:30 p.m. E.T. and began again at 10:00 a.m. E.T. on Friday.

After the opening prayer, the first item was to assign four Na-

tional Council members to the newly formed SPC. A Chair will be chosen from the four.

Up next were Committee reports. Michael Erickson, Chair of the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee, noted that as a nation we could be heading into a recession due to inflation and rising interest rates.

Governance, Pastoral and Ethics Chair Jim Lucas mentioned that there is nothing new to report since everything was covered during Thursday's meeting. The Compensation Committee also had nothing new to report.

The next item of business was to appoint a Temporary Council Chair for the September meeting. A resolution to appoint Larry DeLong for the position was adopted.

The Council then went into an informal meeting. After the informal meeting, the regular Council meeting ended just before 1:00 p.m. E.T. with closing comments from Council Chair Lloyd Teetaert. It was noted that meeting in two locations seemed to work well. 🍁

Safety Tips

By United News Canada Contributor

Most people are familiar with the simple things they can do to make their community safer. They might pay attention to speed limits around their neighbourhood and lock their doors at night. Despite our combined best efforts, crimes will still occur in your communi-

ty. Don't hesitate to report crime in your neighbourhood, and make it a safer place to live.

Carjacking

Carjacking incidents in Canada have more than doubled since 2019. They often have threatening or actual elements of violence,

where the suspect approaches the victim and steals their vehicle. A theft also occurs when a vehicle is taken when it is left unattended. Aspects of these offences can vary, but in both cases, criminals are looking for the opportunity to take the most valuable vehicle they can find, as quickly and easily as possible, to then sell it for profit.

Vehicle owners are encouraged to consider the following safety tips to help prevent these offences.

Carjacking prevention tips:

- Trust your instincts and be aware of your surroundings.
- If you suspect you are being followed, on the road or into your driveway, call 9-1-1.
- If you are approached by thieves, remain calm and comply. Don't fight back. Call 9-1-1 as soon as possible.

- When at a gas station, lock your car door while pumping gas.

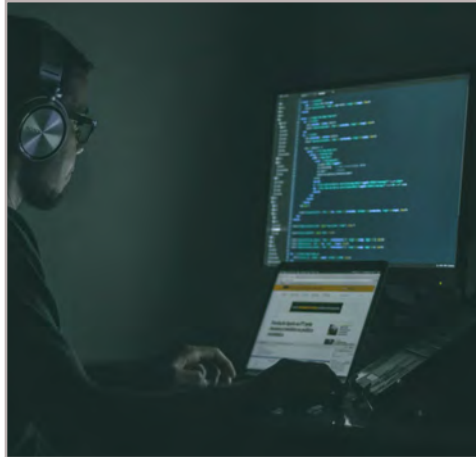
Vehicle theft prevention tips:

- Call police immediately to report suspicious people or activity.
- If possible, park your vehicle in a locked garage. Most vehicles are stolen from a driveway.
- Use a steering wheel lock. It will also act as a visible deterrent.
- Install a lock on the data port. This simple device can be purchased online and blocks access to the computer port where the thieves can gain access to re-program the vehicle's keys.
- Consider purchasing a quality video surveillance system.
- Inspect your vehicle regularly and call police if you notice any suspicious potential tracking devices.

Fraud Prevention

Whether it is Internet or mail fraud, deceptive telemarketing or identity theft, fraud is a serious problem.

Thousands of Canadians lose millions of dollars every year through fraud. Protect your money and keep yourself from becoming a victim of fraud by learning how to identify a scam.



There are ways to protect yourself from online fraud.

Photo by Jefferson Santos on Unsplash

There are always new and inventive scams criminals come up with to try to steal your money and identification. Educate yourself so you know what to do if you suspect a scam.

Look out for these signs of fraudulent activity online:

- Suspicious emails requesting personal information.
- Emails requesting the transfer of funds or banking information.
- Online deals that seem too good to be true.

Look out for these signs that someone may be attempting to

steal your identity:

- People prying through household garbage cans or recycling bins.
- Suspicious people lingering around ATM vestibules.
- Somebody other than an employer or government agency requesting your SIN.

Check out the Competition Bureau's [Little Black Book of Scams](https://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/03074.html) (<https://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/03074.html>)

Domestic Abuse

Look out for these signs of domestic violence involving someone you know:

- Someone who has stopped communicating with you because of a controlling partner.
- Unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches.
- Depression caused by someone's relationship.

Look out for these signs that you may be at risk of domestic violence:

- Your partner has isolated you from friends, family, and/or personal property, like a cellphone.
- Your partner has threatened you or your family, or is jealous/obsessive over you.
- You or your partner grew up in a violent environment, or have a history of domestic violence. 🇨🇦

News From Across Canada

Camp Wildrose

Camp Wildrose had a wonderful comeback summer session! Thank you for the prayers for good weather - it was warm and sunny all five days of camp!



Enjoying an evening by the fire.

Photo provided by Susan Davis

Camp Wildrose is located on a country property near a large lake in the area of Darwell, Alberta. Joining us this year were 26 campers, ages 5 to 15, and 24 volunteers including four teen counsellors who worked wonderfully with the youth and participated in many activities. Attendees travelled from all over Alberta, from as far west as British Columbia and as far east as Ontario.



Archery requires careful aim.

Photo provided by Susan Davis

Our theme this year was “Appreciating our differences - showing love and service to one another.” Christian living lessons focused on building our spiritual bonds, showing Godly love and learning to work together harmoniously while appreciating our God-given differences that make us special and important in God’s plan. Our first morning session taught a lesson in perseverance and trusting in our Creator to supply everything we need. The second session took a look into our spiritual suitcase to see if we packed everything we needed for an enriching camp experience full of Godly character traits.



1 parachute + campers = fun!

Photo provided by Susan Davis

Campers especially enjoyed a number of water sports this year. They went tubing and canoeing, and had splashy fun on a giant slip n’ slide. The other favourite activities were archery, making lanterns during craft time, volleyball, group tag games, teamwork challenges, outdoor education, technology class and soccer. The youngest campers had fun doing a treasure hunt, building boats and bubble wands and playing parachute games. Everyone enjoyed fireside time every night with special treats and activi-

ties. Adults and children worked in groups to create human machines in the Machine Charades game. One evening was dedicated to a dance party where everyone joined in the hilarious fun of musical chairs, various line dances, the hokey pokey and the limbo.

The Sabbath day was a special time of extra fellowship and rest. Pastor Erickson gave a morning message reminding us to look to the Creation to learn about God, and how in His creation of us, He had a definite purpose. The church services were run by many of our older youth and they did a fabulous job! The skills the teens learned in Technology class helped them assist in the set up and cybercast. Thank you to all who served and made our worship special.

On our final day, we participated in laughter-filled picnic games! Pie and watermelon eating contests and races with volunteers and youth competing against each other! It was a day of great unity before our goodbyes.

We are already making plans and looking forward to Camp Wildrose, 2023! We hope you can join us!

Susan Davis

Alberta Anniversary

Where does the time go? In so many ways, it seems that just recently I was welcomed into the congregation here in Grande Prairie. I began attending the

congregation within a month of their official beginning within the United Church of God – Canada. It is now 18 years later, and most of the warm smiles and welcoming hearts are still here. A few have moved from north-western Alberta's climate to other church areas and at least one attendee now sleeps awaiting Christ's return. The founding members have persevered, and the congregation has served as a Sabbath resting spot for travellers passing through north-western Alberta or for those on company business in our area.



Enjoying fellowship and sunshine.
Photo by Rainer Salomaa

Our celebration on June 11 was a joyous one. Our founding pastor, Rainer Salomaa, who lives in Calgary, travelled back to Grande Prairie to celebrate with us this year. After Mr. Salomaa's sermon on Spiritual Vision, we travelled to Beaverlodge and enjoyed a wonderful potluck at the home of Ardele Lesh. There were some dark clouds hovering over Beaverlodge as we headed to Ardele's. They brought a light rain shower complete with a bit of hail, but the cloud soon passed, and we were able to enjoy the sun, food and fellowship in the backyard again in no time.

It was so good to be able to

share a meal and extended fellowship together again! Even though Alberta's public health restrictions were less rigid than most of Canada's these last two years, our opportunities for fellowship were constrained by concerns about inadvertently spreading something cast a psychological shadow on our interactions – just as it has for everyone. As we look back on the lessons learned over the last 18 years and look forward to Christ's return, we are grateful for the reinvigoration the opportunity provided. Our vision has been sharpened and we have been refreshed for the remainder of the journey ahead - together.

Brenda Thompson

Two Cakes

When I arrived in Canada with my family in January 1976, Mr. Anthony Wasilkoff was pastor of the Kitchener congregation. He graciously welcomed us there when we arrived for our first Sabbath service in Canada.

'Gracious' very well describes Tony and Linda Wasilkoff who recently celebrated fifty years of service in the church of God. They are two gentle, affable and busy people. Tony is as comfortable behind a broom sweeping up after services as he is behind the lectern giving a sermon. Linda was until recently the smiling, conscientious secretary of UCG Canada, and is still often consulted on matters of history, committee functions, protocol and church policies.

On the occasion of their fif-

tieth anniversary of service, Mr. Wasilkoff was put to work giving the sermon that Sabbath in Hamilton. He very appropriately chose to remind us that, although our lives are measured in years, they are lived day-by-day, one day at a time. Linda helped as always with the refreshments when not socializing and reminiscing with the congregation.

We elected to have an indoor picnic after services on July 9, with everyone contributing to a smorgasbord of goodies on the long side-table. Prominent among the goodies were two cakes: one for Tony, one for Linda. That was because the baker was unable to provide one big slab cake as we had planned. So Mr. and Mrs. ceremoniously cut their own named cake, and we all enjoyed a slice irrespective – one cake was the same as the other.

Many thanks to Anthony and Linda for their years of service, and for contributing to yet another happy Sabbath day in Hamilton.

George Carter

Women's Enrichment Weekend

The Women's Enrichment Weekend held in Hinton, Alberta, was a wonderful weekend full of laughter, fellowship, bonding and iron sharpening iron. A group of 22 enthusiastic female beavers, lions, otters and golden retrievers (personality types taken from Gary Smalley's assessment) joined each other from May 27 to May 29 to learn more about themselves and their fellow sisters in Christ.

The theme of the weekend was well named as “Growing as God’s Spiritual Daughters.”

We started the weekend with a fabulous homemade dessert reception, provided by Lee Kitt and Irene Seniuk, followed by the Welcome given by Evelyn Davis. The ladies presented Tonya Erickson with a lovely bouquet of coral roses as a thank you for the weekend.



Participants were connected in-person and online.
Photo by Evelyn Davis

We were very blessed to have the following speakers:

LeeAnn Luker presented the Hebrew Biblical view of a woman, including being a helper of mankind. Mrs. Luker’s discussion was very informative, thought provoking and motivating.

Tracey Jongerius, a registered psychologist, discussed how to identify and address unhealthy thinking styles and how to help bring all thoughts into captivity, to work towards having the mind of Christ. The cognitive behavioral strategies laid out were extremely beneficial and relevant to everyday issues.

On Sabbath, Michael Erickson gave a sermon on different



Attendees posing for a group shot.
Photo by Evelyn Davis

strengths of women in the Bible which are recorded as examples to all of us. It was very thought provoking and encouraging.

We had a very lengthy table topic discussion around setting spiritual goals, taken from a sermon by the late Mr. Dennis Luker. There was also much discussion around the “Seven Questions to Ask Ourselves” to help set our spiritual goals and the spiritual principles behind each one.

The personality traits activity appeared to have a large impact on the ladies. This was taken from the book “The Two Sides of Love, the Secret to Valuing Differences” by John Trent and Gary Smalley, a Focus on the Family book. One lady commented “the activity that impacted me the most was the personality traits activity based on The Smalley



Preparing to enjoy a meal together.
Photo by Evelyn Davis

Institute Personality Interpretations guide. Academically I know that we’re all made differently. However, as we went through the activity, and as I think back on it now, I am amazed at the range of mental and emotional complexity God incorporated into our creation. This activity enabled a shift towards a healthier, more compassionate state of being for me, one where I can more fully appreciate the complexities and differences He incorporated into our creation. I experienced an internal tranquility, a Psalm 23 peacefulness, as I more fully realized He is working with all of us in a way that is best for each of us.”

The weekend also included a hymn sing, an impromptu PJ party, a fun filled time with a trivia game and a “who am I” game, a couple of excursions (Beaver Boardwalk and Miette Hot Springs), and just getting to know each other better. The fellowship was very bonding, and the feast of physical and spiritual food prepared with love and concern by a dedicated team was very much appreciated.

Lots of excitement about planning for next year’s Women’s Enrichment Weekend was expressed!

Thanks to all who attended and helped make the weekend a success! Most of all, thanks to our Heavenly Father who directed the discussions and fellowship and worked out even the smallest details to bless His daughters as we congregated to grow together spiritually.

Tonya Erickson

Maritimes Visit

Bruno and Chantal Leclerc and Sylvie (Chantal's sister) came for a visit to the Maritimes from August 5 through 15 to visit and serve the brethren.

We were blessed with the opportunity to gather together for two Sabbaths, August 6 and 13. There were a total of 24 in attendance with several others connecting via zoom including East Farnham congregation. Brethren drove a distance of an hour up to 3 1/2 hours for some. Fellowship was extended for an additional hour in the parking lot before brethren headed home.



Attendees posing for a group shot.
Photo by Bruno Leclerc

It had been three years since many brethren had gathered together, because of COVID restrictions. It was the first time one of our members was able to meet with brethren after having followed the Beyond Today program for several years. It was precious to see the brethren interacting with and serving this individual as he is blind. What a beautiful sight to see and it was a wonderful experience to see things from his perspective.

The experience of hearing all the joyous chatter amongst the

brethren was like a Feast gathering – something we don't get to experience too often when we live so far apart. Many brethren commented how much it meant to be able to give one another hugs again and to be able to meet.



Maritimes brethren
enjoying refreshments.
Photo by Bruno Leclerc

The Leclerc's were able to visit several brethren in Sackville (New Brunswick), Nova Scotia and in Prince Edward Island.

My daughter Lydia and I got to join them all to visit Sam and Leona in PEI for two days, which was a special treat.

There were a total of six of us to witness the baptism of Leona on Thursday, August 11. The tide was absolutely perfect the entire time showing us God's presence was with us. Sam was by her side for this special event. We all welcomed Leona to the family. She had tears of joy expressing how much it meant to her to have all of us there with her during this special event. Soon afterwards the tide receded back to low tide. It couldn't have been more perfect timing. The location was a secluded in a bay with perfect weather and warm waters. Afterwards we celebrated at a restaurant of Leona's choice

and spent the rest of the day together. We shared several meals together with them, got to visit Victoria Park, Kings Castle Provincial park and had extended fellowship at our BnB gazebo. Leona's tears of joy expressed how much it meant to be able to fellowship with brethren as both she and Sam have felt very isolated for a long time.

Unfortunately the trip ended one day early due to several brethren, including Bruno, Chantal and Sylvie, getting sick the day after the second Sabbath. We are thankful for their visit and precious memories that we'll hold near and dear to our hearts.

Michelle Vautour

Anthony Wasilkoff Graduation

Anthony graduated from Westmount Secondary School in Hamilton, Ontario, with Honours. He also achieved Westmount's "Primus Tenure" (having achieved high grades in six senior credits in his fourth year



Anthony Wasilkoff
Photo provided by Coreen Wasilkoff

and proficiency in his third year).

Anthony specialized in Computer and Communications Technology with a Specialist High Skills Major. He also completed a Cooperative program in Web-design and computer database programming. He did this while also working part time at Value Village.

He plans to continue Web design and programming for one year and then pursue further education for Computer Programming and/or game design.

Anthony is the son of Paul and Coreen Wasilkoff and attends the Hamilton and Toronto congregations where he assists with audio and Zoom. His hobbies include: camping, gardening and fishing. He is also a music enthusiast and is creating a portfolio of orchestral scores for future use. He is an avid artist and is programming and designing his own video games.

Coreen Wasilkoff

Jayden Wasilkoff Graduation

Jayden, son of Paul and Coreen Wasilkoff, will be attending Westmount Secondary School in Hamilton, Ontario, in the fall after graduating from Franklin Road Elementary.

Jayden received the Science award for his passion in learning and creating all things science. He loves to solve puzzles and problems. He hopes to pursue an education and career in engineering.



Jayden Wasilkoff
Photo provided by Coreen Wasilkoff

Jayden loves to camp, fish and draw. He is also learning to play the drums. He attends the Hamilton and Toronto congregations.

Coreen Wasilkoff

James Connors Obituary

James (Jim) Albert Connors was born on June 23, 1948, in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, to Clarence and Mary Connors. He was the eldest of three boys. Jim married Teresa Ann Bodie (Terry) Connors on May 11, 1968, in Palmer Saskatchewan. The couple later moved to Lloydminster, Alberta, where Jim was employed in the oil industry.

Jim and Terry started attending UCG services in North Battleford in 2010 and Jim was baptized a few years later. The Connors were a wonderful addition to the congregation as they were both always very positive and very happy to be with their brethren. Though they both had failing health and a great deal of pain they were shining examples because it was never an excuse to stay home on the Sabbath.

Their daughter, Angie, always teased Jim that the only reason he attended services was for the potluck that followed.

For several years it was difficult for Jim and Terry to travel to the Feast. During those years, they took up residence in Peter and Adeline Sanoy's home to host a satellite Feast there with around eight in attendance who otherwise would have been spending the Feast at home alone.



Jim Connors
Photo provided by Sean Connors

Terry passed away on October 22, 2021. Jim and Terry are survived by their son Sean, his wife, Adrean and son, Riley; their daughter Angie and her daughter, Tara.

Jim spent most of June at the family farm where he died suddenly on June 25, 2022. A private family service took place at the Palmer Cemetery on July 3, 2022, where Jim and Terry were laid to rest.

Adeline Sanoy

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Newfoundland Visit

The Newfoundland brethren had not had a visit from a Pastor since before the pandemic. With the lessened restrictions, Anthony and Linda Wasilkoff were able to visit the St. John's congregation on August 27. The congregation meet in a lovely hall that overlooks the bay.

While the attendance was down somewhat due to illness, the group was happy to have light snacks following the service – the first time this has happened in over two years. All the ladies worked in the kitchen to prepare the food while the men worked to set up tables.

While in the Province, the Wasilkoffs were able to visit

several of the brethren who had not had a visit for several years. It was the first time to meet the Penney family. Many have been praying for Doris Penney and it was very inspiring to learn that she has been feeling better. It was also inspiring to see the numerous cards she has received from around the world and how



An array of cards sent to Doris Penny
Photo by June Penny

they have been a source of encouragement to her.

One lady who lives five hours away from St. John's happened to be in the city over the weekend and so had the opportunity to attend church and have a visit. Unfortunately a visit with a lady who lives quite a distance away had to be cancelled due to sickness.

Despite the fact that many are isolated due to distance, the brethren in Newfoundland are faring well and are looking forward to being together for the fall Holy days, especially the Feast of Tabernacles. We appreciate the dedication and service these precious brethren receive from the area elder and deacon.

Linda Wasilkoff

Two Frequent Doctrinal Challenges

By *United News Canada*

The following is an excerpt regarding two of the doctrinal challenges covered during a 2014 Leadership Workshop. It was compiled by Randall Stiver.

Why We Use The Traditional Hebrew Calendar

Duties God delegated to the Jews:

Romans 3:1-2 – “What advantage then has the Jew...to them were committed the oracles of God.”

- The “oracles of God” equals the Word of God

- God's Word clearly uses a specific calendar for the weekly Sabbath and annual Holy Days.

- The main body of the Jews preserved the text of the Old Testament which included specific calendric observations. The history of that preservation is a matter of record as witness of the Jews who preserved the Old Testament.

- The Bible requires observing God's annual holy days, therefore God had an annual calendar which was maintained by the Levitical priesthood—who were eventually part of the Jews along with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

- Those same Jews have preserved the biblically sanctioned calendar along with the Scriptures.

Matthew 23:1-3, “Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.”

- Fundamentally, the Pharisees became the Jewish leadership by the end of the first century and gave direct rise to rabbinic Judaism which continued to preserve

the Old Testament and the Hebrew calendar.

- The Karaite Jewish movement (which produced its own competing calendar) came about in the 700's A.D. as a breakaway group from the mainstream, rabbinic (Pharisee founded) Judaism. [Sources: *Jewish Encyclopedia* 1906 ed.; Karaite-Korner.org]

- The Karaites did not preserve the scriptures, nor therefore can we look to them as the historical Hebrew calendar authority.

Historical authenticity:

- The Jewish/Hebrew calendar has been preserved by the same "Jews" who preserved the text of the Old Testament.

Luke 24:44 – Christ cited the Tanakh: [T-N-K for Torah (the Pentateuch), Nevi'im (Prophets) and Kethuvim, (the Writings)] as the three divisions of the Scriptures as they then existed. Thus He verified Hebrew Bible which is the Old Testament has a solid historical record of preservation by the Jews.

Ecclesiastical authority:

Leviticus 23:1-2, 4, "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel, ... 'The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.... you shall proclaim at their appointed times.'"

- God assigned to the Levitical priesthood the responsibility and authority to maintain the Hebrew calendar and to use it to pro-

claim by calling the commanded assemblies on the weekly Sabbath and the annual Holy Days in their months.

Ephesians 4:11-16, "And He Himself gave some to be apostles for the equipping..., for the edifying...the unity of the faith...no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine,...the whole body, joined and knit together...effective working..., causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

- Jesus Christ gave His ministry (starting with the Apostles) the responsibility and authority to spiritually build up (edify) the Church in the unity of worship that knits God's people together.

Matthew 16:17-16, "Jesus answered...flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven...on this rock I will build My church,... And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (NKJV margin: "...will have been bound...will have been loosed...")

- The duty to build up the Church clearly includes identifying and maintaining the authoritative Hebrew (or Jewish) calendar by which to call the commanded assemblies of the brethren on the weekly Sabbath and the annual Holy Days to worship God in spirit and in truth.

- Therefore, calling the commanded assemblies of God's

people is the duty of the Christ's recognized and duly ordained ministry: the organized true Church of God—of which UCG is a viable part.

- Historically, Christ's ministry in our era, going back to before 1939, has consistently recognized the traditional Hebrew (or Jewish) Calendar as the biblically sanctioned calendar for computing the holy days.

- SPECIAL NOTE: The issue is that the organized Church must call the annual commanded assemblies in good faith. For instance, the Church in good faith kept Pentecost one day off for 40 years while receiving God's blessing of exponential growth. When the error was brought to the ministry (specifically to HWA) and was verified, then the Church changed to observe the correct day (yet we still used the same traditionally recognized Hebrew Calendar as before).

- When individuals choose their own "Jewish" calendar and then call their own assemblies, they do not have the ecclesiastical authority to do so, and thus their actions cause division rather than unity of the body.

- SPECIAL NOTE: If every individual had the authority to call the official assembly, then there would no assemblies—as in gatherings of brethren! There has to be a duly recognized authority to call God's commanded assemblies or confusion is the result. And God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Why We Do Not Observe New

Moons (Except One)

- God commanded special monthly sacrifices for the new moon (Numbers 28:11-15) and the blowing of trumpets (Numbers 10:10)—which are not in force under the New Covenant church age.

- God never commanded a Holy Day status for the new moon—except for the Feast of

Trumpets or when a new moon may occur on the weekly Sabbath.

- In Leviticus 23 (except for the Feast of Trumpets) new moons are very obviously absent from the list of annual Holy Days or “set Feasts” as Solomon later differentiated them from new moons (2 Chronicles 2:4).

- Therefore, the Church in the New Testament era does not observe

new moons even as quasi holy days.

- SPECIAL NOTE: Why would God then give the new moon particular sacrificial status in the past?

- Answer: the Sabbath provided the Israelites a weekly calendar reminder and the new moons provided a monthly calendar reminder by which they could anticipate the annual Holy Days. 🌍

“Tabernacle” from page 16.

fills everything everywhere with his presence” (Ephesians 1:22-23 NLT). His body, by metaphor, is also the Church, which simply means those called into the Body are the tabernacles of God, in whom dwells the spirit of God.

“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man” (Hebrews 8:1-2). “But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building” (Hebrews 9:11 KJV). The writer is explaining that the building is not the physical structure with four walls and a ceiling. The building, (tabernacle) is Jesus Christ, who said “I will build My church.”

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him

who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house (Greek for house is “OIKOS” meaning temple, tabernacle, tent, or dwelling). For this One (Jesus) has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honour than the house. For every house is built by some man; but he that built all things is God” (Hebrews 3:1-3). “But Christ as a Son over His own house, (tabernacle) whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end” (Hebrews 3:6).



We must be a light that shines through the dark
Photo by David Monje on Unsplash

The Apostle Peter explained it this way: “You also, as living stones, are being built up a spir-

itual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). Recall Peter’s statement related to his death: “Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle” (2 Peter 1:14).

Notice Paul’s explanation in a letter to the Church in Corinth. “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Corinthians 5:1). Do you not know that your body is the temple (tabernacle) of the Holy Spirit which is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

The Feast of Tabernacles is a good time for us to comprehend that we are part of the spiritual tabernacle of God. We must be the light that shines through a dark world by following the example of our true and more perfect tabernacle, God’s beloved Son Jesus Christ. 🌍

A More Perfect Tabernacle

By David Palmer

When we think of the Feast of Tabernacles, we often shorten our conversation to simply “the Feast.” Have you ever considered the other word in God’s command to keep this annual festival – the word “tabernacle”?

We come to the Feast with great enthusiasm to hear inspiring messages, to enjoy good food, to fellowship with old friends and make new ones. God fully expects us to do this. He wants us to enjoy ourselves to the fullest. God ordained that we experience the Feast as a joyous physical occasion. But how often, as we are busy making arrangements to get together with friends to take in the various activities, do we pause and reflect on our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? In Hebrews 9:11 the Apostle Paul wrote, “But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.” What exactly does that mean and how does it relate to the Feast of Tabernacles?

When we attend the annual festival, what is our relationship to “the Tabernacle built without hands?” If we leave the true Tabernacle, Jesus Christ, out of our Feast we will miss one of the most important lessons of the festival. We need to realize that God, through the holy day plan of salvation, is moulding a more perfect you. The Feast of Tabernacles is a very important part of that overall plan!

We observe the Feast in the physical, but what about the spiritual application? Jesus came to magnify the law emphasizing faith, justice and mercy, as explained in Matthew 23:23. He expounded the rich meaning of the commandments, and, in a subtle way, gave a spiritual insight into the Holy Days, of which He is the focus, including the Feast of Tabernacles.

Notice these instructions to ancient Israel: “And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it” (Exodus 25:8-9). Israel made a physical sanctuary after the pattern given, and God dwelt or tabernacled among His people.

The Apostle John tells us in his Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:1, 14).

There are two interesting points related to these Scriptures. The word “became” (“made” in the original KJV) can be translated assembled or built. The word “dwelt” is described as: reside (as God did in the tabernacle of old, a symbol of protection and communion) or tabernacle. So we could read John 1:14 “And the Word was (assembled, built or constructed) of flesh and (tab-

ernacled) among us.”

Even today, He tabernacles among His people. Recall what He promised His disciples, “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him’” (John 14:21-23). The original King James Version uses the term “abode” – a dwelling place, a place of residence, the place where He resides, where He tabernacles.

Jesus Himself made it clear that He is the True Tabernacle. “So the Jews answered and said to Him, ‘What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ But He was speaking of the temple of His body” (John 2:18-19, 21).

Jesus Christ is the True Tabernacle of God, yet the Church that Jesus built is also recognized as the “body of Christ.” “And God has put all things under the authority of Christ, and he gave him this authority for the benefit of the church. And the Church is His body; (Temple-Tabernacle) it is filled by Christ, who

See “**Tabernacle**” on page 15.

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