

A NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF GOD - CANADA



# United News Canada

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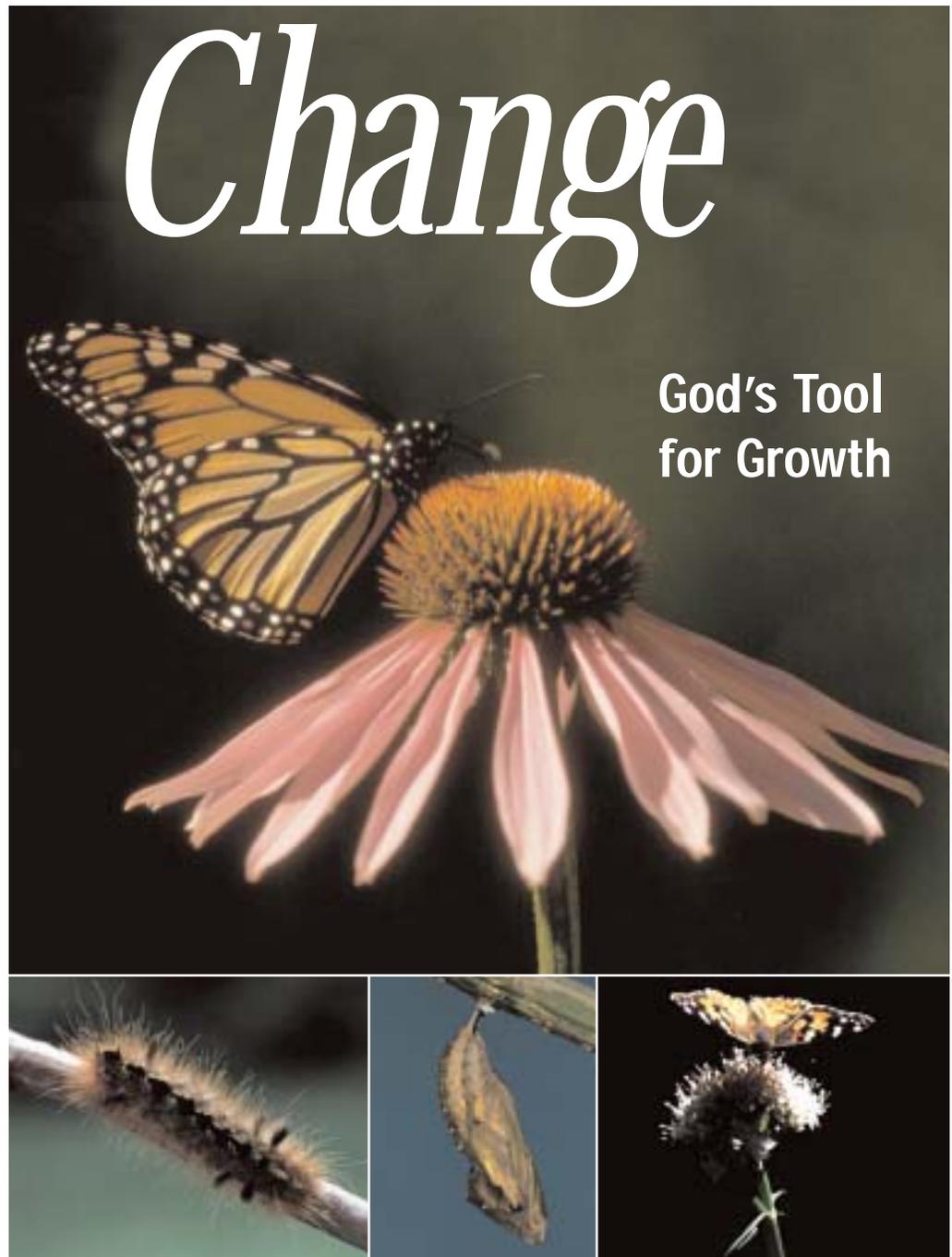
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God's Tool  
for Growth

WHY DO WE RESIST CHANGE? • CHANGE CAN BRING GROWTH  
SEE PAGE 3

# CHANGING THE STATUS QUO

BY RUTH KERR • ASSISTANT EDITOR

IT WAS 70 YEARS IN THE MAKING, enlisting the aid of hundreds of volunteers, and was overseen by a single-minded man who made the project his life's work. It was a bold, massive undertaking, and without the efforts of that dedicated army of volunteers, today we might not have the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*.

The first edition of the *OED* was published in 12 heavy volumes cataloguing nearly half a million words. The English-speaking world had never seen anything like it before, and, in the words of author Simon Winchester, the *OED* "remains in all senses a truly monumental work – and...is still regarded as a paragon, the most definitive of all guides to the language that, for good or ill, has become the lingua franca of the civilized modern world" (Simon Winchester, *The Professor and the Madman*, 1999, p. 25).

The *OED* was the first *comprehensive* English-language dictionary, although it was not the first dictionary per se. Samuel Johnson produced his famous lexicon in the 18th century, and there was an English-language dictionary as early as the 13th century. However, the *OED* was the first dictionary to catalogue the entire English language, wholly and objectively. It was to forever change our language and how we use it.

The project was spearheaded by Sir James Murray, a Scotsman who devoted most of his adult years to the *OED*. He and his volunteer "army" poured through countless books, organizing and defining words. They were not dissuaded by the enormity of the task, and they plodded through

with an almost superhuman tenacity.

As Christians we, too, have an all-consuming life's work in preaching the gospel and preparing for the kingdom. Like Sir James Murray, it is possible we could spend most of our lives working on this "project," doggedly forging ahead even when we are beset with trials, setbacks and discouragement.

Our job is a big one, and sometimes the vastness of it is overwhelming. But just as each volunteer, working on one word at a time, helped compile the *OED* so each Christian adds to the spiritual temple. If one word – or one stone – is missing, the entire project is incomplete.

Ultimately, our goal is to help bring about change that will benefit humanity. But in order to do that, we ourselves must change; the painful process of changing our carnal nature to one filled with the Holy Spirit.

This issue of *UNC* examines change from many angles. Robert Berendt gives us an encouraging look at the change of conversion (*page 3*). Graemme Marshall, newly-imported from Australia, examines the changes that arise from a ministerial transfer (*page 5*). Ernie McBratney discusses the physical changes associated with growing older (*page 11*).

Change is not easy, yet we continue to do it so we can help bring about the biggest change on earth – the establishment of God's government. Sir James Murray dedicated his life to a dictionary and changed the course of the English language; by dedicating our lives to God's plan, we can change the course of history. -UNC

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# WHY DO WE RESIST CHANGE?

BY ROBERT BERENDT • EDMONTON



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“CHARACTER  
SPEAKS TO THE QUALITIES  
THAT MAKE A PERSON WHAT  
HE OR SHE IS.”

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**SOME PEOPLE SAY THERE ARE TWO THINGS** that are sure in life – death and taxes. (This phrase was coined by someone who hates paying tax, one would think.) I have always felt the one thing that is certain in life is change. Death and taxes are manifestations of change. Each of us need only to dig out some old photos to know how much we have changed. New hair styles, and an added “spare tire,” perhaps a moustache (if you are a man), a wrinkle here and there (and here and there), a gray hair (and then many) are some of the changes that are obvious. Add to that life’s experiences, education, changing jobs, moving to a different dwelling place, marriage and children, and there is a clear acknowledgement that change is ongoing, ever-present and inevitable in our lives.

Changes can be good and desirable. We embrace these kinds of changes and eagerly look forward to them. We do what we can to prepare for these good changes. Yet, even with good changes, it is apparent effort is needed. Often a hidden anchor is cast out, developments come that “put on the brakes” or that seem to challenge us to see just how determined we are to accept the change. Our established patterns (which grow stronger as the years pass by) are resistant to change and we are forced to “grit our teeth and tough it out.” The degree of difficulty varies with our perception of the benefits and the degree to which we have learned to accept and embrace good changes.

Some changes are not good and even harmful. Some are fatal. Accidents that mar and cripple, disease that is terminal or leaves a person weakened or chronically ill, and divorce and family breakdowns fall into this category. All of these can be agonizing and the impact can last a lifetime. For some people, death is preferable to change. Drastic measures are often taken to avoid or reject these changes.

It seems every day changes challenge us at every turn of life. When we develop the proper tools to live our lives well we have developed a good and wholesome character.

Character speaks to the qualities that make a person what he or she is. Good character is built on the development of right values and the ability to make the right choices in life. Humans grope around in the dark looking and never finding the reasons for life and its lessons. The same tragic mistakes seem to be made over and over. Mankind is always learning and yet not able to come to the knowledge of the truth. We sense that some great hand from somewhere has designed us this way, so we are forced to learn and develop or suffer for rejecting that knowledge. People who work in countries that have poverty, corruption, war, disease and human suffering know that humans need a minister as much as medicine.

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# WHY DO WE RESIST CHANGE?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

**“THERE IS NO GREATER CHANGE THAT AFFECTS A PERSON THAN THE CHANGE OF TRUE CONVERSION.”**

Humans need to know how to live and how to make the choices that lead to a good life. Someone once wrote you can give a man a fish and he will eat for today, but if you teach him how to fish, he will feed himself for a lifetime. One needs to know where and how to fish to be successful. In Hosea 4:6 we read, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” Ignorance of God’s laws and His way of life is the one biggest problem mankind faces. Humans need to be taught right from wrong in God’s terms. We all have the capacity to change, but the old patterns will try to persist. We need to recognize the fact that change will be met with resistance and be prepared to meet the challenges of that inner resistance.

There is no greater change that affects a person than the change of true conversion. Most people resist the changes demanded by our Creator and Lifegiver because those changes are so profound and so strongly contrary to the habits and patterns in life, which we have learned. Conversion changes the innermost core of our being and demands all we have – including our life. In Matthew 22:37 we read Jesus commanded us to love God with all our heart, soul and mind. In Matthew 10:39 we are told we are even expected to lose our lives for His sake. There is nothing to hold back. This kind of change is not for the fainthearted, and yet it is the most vital and important change we can encounter in life. It is truly amazing to observe the myriad of excuses and devices humans have developed to resist God and His commanded changes. These changes are the only answer to the most vital question that death poses: “After death, then what?” Eternity stretches on forever and it is this short span of life that God has given to help us see the need for this most drastic, most needful and most beneficial change.

In John 6:44 we read that God chooses who He will call. He does tell us He wants everyone to be saved in His overall plan. The call is to repentance of sin and the acceptance of Jesus Christ and His precious blood as a sacrifice for our sins. Then we are told to “go and sin no more.” That is the rub – go and sin no more.

Break the old sinful habits of thinking and patterns of life and change everything about us to conform to the image of Christ who is the express image of the Father (Romans 8:29 and Hebrews 1:3).

In Matthew 22:14 we are told many are called, but few are chosen. It is not that God only wants a few, for truly He wants all men to be saved (I Timothy 2:4). He leaves the choice making – the acceptance of the changes He demands – in our hands. Therefore, few are chosen because few grasp the greatness of the offer from God and few have the courage and determination to accept the inevitable changes. Of course, God assists in the needed changes through His Holy Spirit and the scriptures which give us truth. His calling is strong and He adds some needed ingredient to our thoughts.

In Hebrews 8:10 God explains His laws are to be written on our hearts. Those laws define sin and guide us in how we should live so as to please Him. We know the task will not be easy and one of the greatest of God’s servants expresses his battle. Paul wrote in Romans 7:14-25 that true conversion demands change and can be agonizing in that we seem to fail so often. It is clear no human is perfect, but God knows that and what He seeks is the person who is willing to try and change to become more perfect (Matthew 5:48). The goal is to finally become like Him and like Jesus Christ.

The path is not easy or for the faint of heart, but this change is the most beneficial of all. As we humans grasp the purpose for which we exist, we will embrace the trials and pain this change demands and move even closer to being conformed to the image of Christ and of the Father. His values will become our values and His thoughts our thoughts. We are to become One with the Father as Christ is One with the Father (John 17:21).

After much turmoil and a difficult life, the author of the book of Ecclesiastes writes in chapter 12:13 that the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments.

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# CHANGE CAN BRING GROWTH

BY GRAEMME MARSHALL • OTTAWA



**“AS A RESULT  
OF CHRISTIANS  
LEAVING  
JERUSALEM,  
THE GOSPEL WAS  
PREACHED  
THROUGHOUT  
THE ANCIENT  
WORLD.”**

**HOW AMBIVALENT WE HUMANS ARE ABOUT change!** We love being settled and permanent and having a set way of doing things. Yet we also get bored quickly and like variety. For example, we get tired of the same clothes; are prone to change our minds; often change the subject and even change our tune when it suits. And most of us would be bored with gourmet food every day. God designed His sons and daughters for a life of change. Some of it we enjoy, some we regret. But change is inevitable and can lead to personal growth.

## **Change happens every day**

The first day at school can be a tearful experience. Becoming a teen involves a flood of biological changes, and attending high school for the first time can be very disorienting. The first day at a new job can be disconcerting and moving to a new suburb confusing. When children leave home, parents are faced with the “empty-nest syndrome.” When singles marry they enter a new phase of life; when they have children yet another begins. After the death of a mate, the survivor faces an enormous adjustment.

## **When Church life changes**

The Christians in Jerusalem were settled in the years following Pentecost 31 AD. Then a fierce persecution forced many to leave their homes and livelihood. Only centuries later can we clearly see the positive outcome of this dispersion. As a result of Christians leaving Jerusalem, the gospel was preached throughout the ancient world (Acts 8). But for the Jerusalem Christians, the upheaval must have been very upsetting.

When Lynn and I were first sent to Auckland from Sydney Office in 1967 to establish the New Zealand Church, we began with one small Bible Study. That number soon doubled to become a Church. Within two years, more congregations were established as well as an office with 12 staff. We had to trust God to provide each step along the way as the Church grew. That experience was similarly repeated in May, 1995, when we found ourselves

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# CHANGE CAN BRING GROWTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

**“ALL MUST WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF THE STRENGTHS AVAILABLE....”**

unemployed, without a fellowship and having to trust God’s deliverance all over again. We’ve come a long way since that Sabbath of May 27, 1995, which was the occasion of the first United Church of God Bible Study in Australia.

## **Remember your first UCG Feast of Tabernacles**

Back in 1995, newly re-gathered UCG members began asking me about the coming Feast. So I investigated the Noosa, Queensland area as a possible Feast site. When I approached the community centre staff, the man in charge was amazed at what had happened to us as a Church. The hall was available for the time we needed it, and from that initial contact we have enjoyed a remarkable relationship with the Community Hall for seven Feasts. For us today, the Feast of Tabernacles annually reinforces that by our calling we saints are temporary sojourners often subject to change as we await a Heavenly Kingdom.

## **Aquila and Priscilla were positive about change**

Aquila was born on the southern coast of the Black Sea (Pontus), but by Acts 18 he and his wife Priscilla were leatherworkers (tentmakers) in Rome. We assume they were happy and content with a settled business life. Then one day in 49 AD, Claudius the Roman Caesar issued a decree expelling all Jews from Rome. Overnight community, friends, job and school all changed. It must have been a sudden forced learning experience to relocate and adjust to new geography, foods, people, language and customs. Despite relocation we find them active with the Apostle Paul. Acts 18 shows them in Corinth, Syria, and then Ephesus. Later they may have returned to Rome as Paul refers to them in Romans 16:3.

## **Sojourning is much the life of a church pastor and his family**

Some members are happy for their pastors to move. Others want them to stay forever. And they themselves are often caught in between. Church

administrative history has had a policy of pastor relocation when needed. The reasons are varied:

- *Learning Styles:* We humans are unique individuals and learn in different ways. Some learn “hands on” with interactive participation and practical examples. Others learn by logic, reasoning, factual evidence, visual aids, abstract or philosophical reasoning. A pastor can usually only relate his teaching to how he himself learns. This satisfies those who identify well with his preferred methods while other styles are needed to help others.
- *Personal Change of Environment:* Church pastors are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They live the life of their congregations. They can never truly get away. For the ministry a change of scenery by vacation or transfer can be revitalizing.
- *Skills and Talents:* All of us are unique and a pastor’s strengths can initially be seen as valuable and refreshing in a new pastorate. As time goes by, familiarity can dim appreciation for those gifts. All must work together to make the best use of the strengths available so a congregation keeps challenged and striving for greater levels of spiritual change.

## **How to help your Pastor**

Regularly welcome him and his wife and don’t wait for them to approach you each Sabbath. Take personal initiative and go to them. Or call the pastor or his wife and ask how they are doing. Make an effort to personally show you are friendly.

Discover and appreciate their God-given strengths and talents. Strive to see how they can help your spiritual life. After all, God has placed them there for your spiritual benefit (Ephesians 4:11-14). Make their presence in your Church life a positive growth experience for yourself.

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# NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS IN EDMONTON

BY RAINER SALOMAA • CHAIRMAN

Photos by Ken Kerr, Jr.



**THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CANADA** concluded their meetings in Edmonton on March 10, 2002. On the morning of the 10th, the Council held their annual National Conference meeting. We met at the Cedar Park Inn (Best Western).

The meetings began on Thursday evening with the adoption of the minutes, followed by a National Office update. Ed van Pelt distributed various charts and graphs showing breakdowns of members, donors and subscribers from 1996 to the present. He also gave a provincial breakdown: As of now, Canada has 384 members, 368 donors and 11,649 subscribers. Canada leads the international areas in the amount of subscribers.

Besides the *Good News* magazine, the National Office mails out 675 copies of *United News Canada*, 615 *United News*, 391 *World News & Prophecy* and 461 *Bible Study Courses*.

Ed van Pelt also showed charts of Holy Day and Sabbath attendances since 1996.

Rainer Salomaa gave a short update on the recent Council of Elders meetings in Cincinnati. The most significant event of the Cincinnati meetings was the choice of Mr. Roy Holladay as the third president of UCG since our inception in 1995.

The rest of the evening was spent in brainstorming.

Friday morning was devoted to committee meetings. Reports were given that afternoon.

David Palmer gave a Media report outlining recommendations that he and his committee are making to the National Office. The committee would like to make more effective use of the internet by tying in local ads to our website for audio answers on questions of interest. He also discussed an internet search engine that would use key words to bring people to our website.

Anthony Wasilkoff gave a brief report on the festival coordinators and RCMA conference in Tampa, Florida.

John Howard was reappointed to serve another term on the Amendment Committee.

During the reports, a motion was put forward regarding Council composition, but the motion needs to work its way through due process and will not be balloted upon until next March.

One thing that the National Council approved was the full-time hiring of David Palmer, who will continue to work in the Vancouver and Vancouver Island areas. His job at the radio station, where he has worked for close to 40 years, has come to an end.

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**“AS OF NOW,  
CANADA HAS  
384 MEMBERS,  
368 DONORS  
AND 11,649  
SUBSCRIBERS.”**

*Above Left:* The National Conference on Sunday, March 10.

*Below:* Robert Berendt and Rainer Salomaa.



# NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS IN EDMONTON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

**“THE NATIONAL COUNCIL WISHES TO THANK ALL OF THOSE WHOSE NAMES CAME FORWARD...”**

So as not to impact the budget, George Carter will be going on partial salary since his responsibilities in Ottawa and Montreal have come to an end. He will continue to help in the Toronto area as well as in the National Office. We expressed our appreciation for the help that he has provided at a time when there was no one else to help pastor the Montreal and Ottawa congregations.

The Strategic Plan, Operations Plan and Budget were approved. The proposed Amendments to our Bylaws were also passed.

Dr. Rick Dubler was returned to Council for another three-year term, as was Larry DeLong. Graemme Marshall took over a

vacancy by acclamation.

The National Council wishes to thank all of those whose names came forward from across the country: Beverly Hébert (Montreal), Lee Kerrighan (Lethbridge), Jim Petersen (Calgary), Richard Moulton (Ottawa), William Kortegaard (Okanagan), Larry Ellington (Prince George), Mariana Simons (Winnipeg), Joseph Moulton (Ottawa), Mel Rahel (Toronto) and Garry Poffenroth (Calgary).

The meeting adjourned after short addresses by the Chairman and Operations Manager.

The next National Conference meeting will be held in Ottawa on March 9, 2003. -UNC

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## OPEN HOUSE SABBATH SERVICE IN EDMONTON

PHOTOS BY KEN KERR, JR.

**EDMONTON BRETHREN ARE FAMOUS FOR** two things: friendliness and good cooking.

Their warmth and hospitality was enjoyed by those who attended an Open House Sabbath Service on March 9, during the National Council meetings. There was a record 99 in attendance, including 10 new faces.

Split sermons were given by David Palmer (who spoke on Temple Prophecy) and Anthony Wasilkoff (who spoke on Man's Destiny). Special music was performed by Fern Berendt.

After services, members and guests were treated to a fantastic buffet lunch prepared by the Edmonton brethren. -UNC

*Right:* Services were held in an auditorium at King's University College.

*Far Right (L-R):* Max Berendt, Carolyn Berendt, Savannah Jongerius & Sydnee Jongerius after services.



# ATTENDANCE SUMMARY FOR THE SPRING HOLY DAYS

COMPILED BY ED VAN PELT • TORONTO

	Passover	1st Day of Unleavened Bread	Last Day of Unleavened Bread
Calgary, AB	70	99	85
Clareville, NF *	8	With St. John's	6
Edmonton, AB	46	60	57
Kelowna, BC	With Penticton	With Penticton	42
Lethbridge, AB	15	18	16
Montreal, QC	10	20	32
Nanaimo, BC	14	34	25
North Battleford, SK **	20	With Saskatoon	With Saskatoon
Ottawa, ON	14	27	With Montreal
Penticton, BC	33	37	With Kelowna
Prince George, BC	15	23	22
Regina, SK **	9	8	12
Saskatoon, SK	23	37	33
St. John's, NF	14	24	14
Sussex, NB **	11	16	16
Toronto, ON	91	136	144
Vancouver, BC	26	26	28
Victoria, BC	7	10	9
Winnipeg, MB	25	27	23
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>564</b>

\* - Video group \*\* - Bible Study

Although Church membership is over 400 for the first time, inclement weather across the country was one of the factors that reduced attendance at the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread compared to last year. The Passover figures do not include all those who took it at home. There were a number of members who met on their own for the Passover due to weather conditions and some of them are included in the total. Several others will be partaking of the second Passover in April.

## CALLING ALL GRADS!

If you are graduating this spring, we want to hear about it! *United News Canada* will be running a special feature honouring graduates in the July/August issue.

Please send your photo and a brief summary of your graduation and future plans. You can email your submission to [ruth@banff.net](mailto:ruth@banff.net) or mail: Ruth Kerr, #244, 502 - 3 Avenue, Canmore, AB T1W 2G2. -UNC



## ENGAGEMENT

Mr. and Mrs. Errol McIntosh of Lethbridge, Alberta, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pinelli of Cincinnati, Ohio, are pleased to announce the engagement of their children, Debbie and Jon. A late summer wedding is planned. -UNC



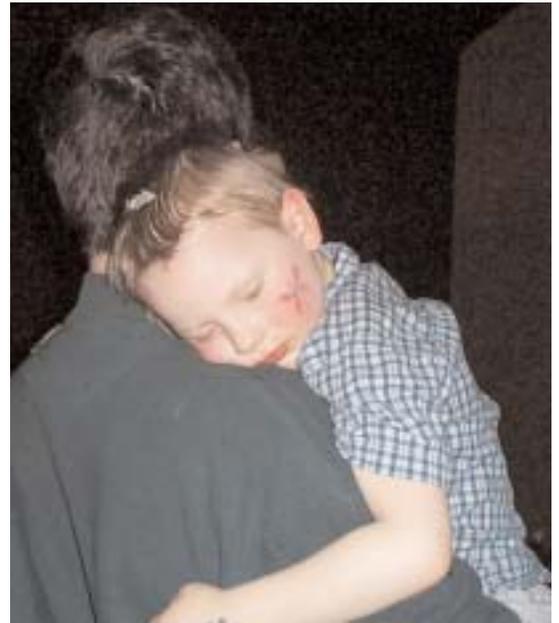
# CALGARY'S NIGHT TO BE MUCH OBSERVED

PHOTOS BY RUTH & KEN KERR, JR.



Approximately 99 members and guests of the Calgary congregation marked the Night to be Much Observed at the Chestermere Landing Steak & Wine Bar, situated on the shores of Chestermere Lake about 15 minutes east of Calgary. The buffet meal included prime rib, lamb, roasted vegetables, salads and specially-made unleavened bread.

*Clockwise, starting below:* Brennen Poffenroth asleep on dad's shoulder; Jim Petersen at the dessert table; children enjoyed many activities including face-painting; Dale Trenerry, Cathay and George Wade; Fred Connery in the buffet line.



# THE EXPERIENCE OF AGING

BY ERNIE MCBRATNEY • VANCOUVER



**I'VE NEVER EXPERIENCED OLD AGE BEFORE** and trying to cope is a constant challenge. It is difficult even when I know God is helping me find the answers I need. Next year I will enter my 80th year.

Some people make up funny poems and stories about aging. For the benefit of the young people who will grow old in the Church, I thought some of my experiences might enlighten their perspective.

A God that you can't see or hear does things in a way that the human mind calls "coincidence" or "a thought that came to mind." Sometimes fun, sometimes serious, but nevertheless God giving an answer in response to your inquiry. He does this with the Holy

Spirit – who answers the question in your mind.

This morning I found myself in the den forgetting why I went there! Has that ever happened to you? When my memory came back I realized I needed a book to find out about forgetting things. Among the many books, it was *Did You Know* by Reader's Digest that caught my eye. It gave me the answer in the articles "The Art of Forgetting" and "Etched in the Mind." It explained why people sometimes forget recent events, but remember the distant past.

Most of the things we are least likely to forget are predictable enough. They include: pleasant experiences; matters that interest us; and things we have a special reason for remembering. But we also remember particularly well the things we go over in our minds just before going to sleep – a trick worth remembering.

As it says in Proverbs 2:5, "Then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find knowledge of God."

Today I have no fear because I know my Comforter is guiding me to do what God wants me to do. He gave me the answer to my problem and the talent to write about it for the benefit of all my brethren by listening to my inner voice.

This is only one experience of growing older and there are many more to come. I know God will answer my prayers until I've learned all the lessons he has for me. May God be with you also. -UNC

**"TODAY I HAVE  
NO FEAR BECAUSE  
I KNOW MY  
COMFORTER IS  
GUIDING ME TO  
DO WHAT GOD  
WANTS ME TO DO."**

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## WHY RESIST CHANGE?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Humans will have to learn through much pain and suffering the best way to live and, yes, the only way to live is God's way. Every other way is too painful. Our problem is we find it hard to change. God knows that and yet demands it of us, because the efforts we put forth build the kind of character He is looking for.

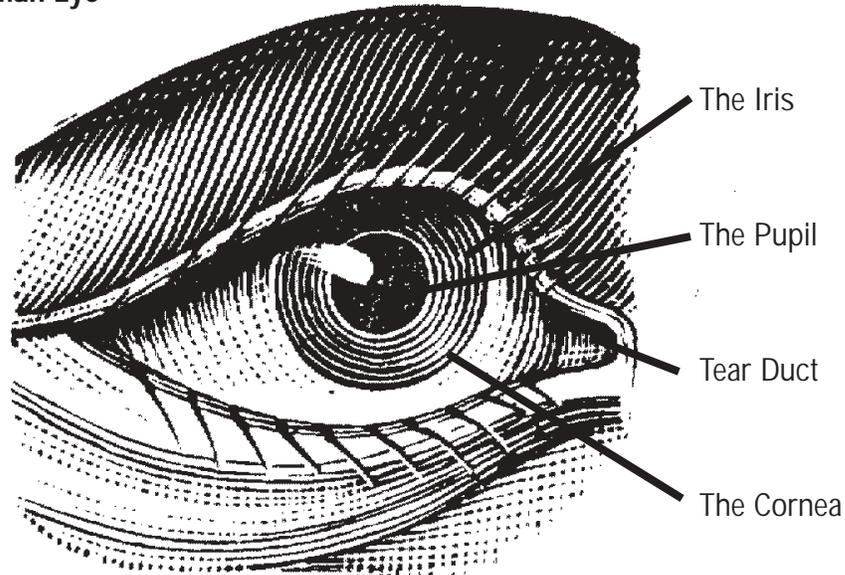
The choice seems so very obvious; the benefits (long term) so wonderful. We start by taking the first step – making small changes as we develop the strength and faith in Christ to make the greater ones until we come to the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13).

Try it – ask God for His guidance and help as you sincerely try to change to be more like Christ – you might like it after all! -UNC

# JESUS' INCREDIBLE MIRACLE OF HEALING BLINDNESS

BY LYNNE BROSCAK • EDMONTON

Fig. 1 - Parts of the Human Eye



**“THE EYE IS A  
WONDERFULLY  
MADE...ORGAN.”**

**“...NOW AS JESUS PASSED BY, HE SAW A man who was blind from birth (John 9:1). When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is translated, *Sent*). So he went and washed, and came back seeing” (John 9: 6,7).**

The miracle of sight! Do we truly realize what a fantastic miracle took place?

The eye is a wonderfully made, complex, sophisticated and unique organ. Thousands of times a day our eyes move and focus on images near and far, identifying images for interpretation. The eye transmits thousands of bits of information at any one time to the brain to interpret and decode. Let's grasp how all this works.

These are the basic parts of the eye: the *pupil*, which is the opening of the eye; the *retina* is a screen at the back of the eye; the *cornea* is a layer of clear tissue that covers the iris; and the pupil with an overlaying film of tears. The iris, the colour part of the eye, exercises the muscles

required to change the size of the pupil admitting more or less light into the eye. The lens, near the middle of the eye changes shape in order to focus light rays on the retina. If the object is close up, the lens thickens and when the object is farther away, the lens thins itself. The retina has about 135,000,000 light sensitive cells. They are of two distinct kinds – rods and cones. Rods are sensitive to dark and light, black and white only. The cones, however, react to colour in bright light. They stop working in dim light while rods work well in dim light. That's why we can see even at night.

Even though there are many complex parts to the eye, the actual mechanism of sight is a well-designed simple process. The light is projected through the cornea, the pupil and then the lens. The lens muscles focus the light rays on the back of the retina. There the rods and cones turn the light into electrical impulses that are carried by the optic nerve to the brain. The brain interprets these messages into what we perceive as sight.

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# JESUS' INCREDIBLE MIRACLE OF HEALING BLINDNESS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

In order for us to interpret the messages into recognizable images, the brain draws on images and information that has already been categorized. If the eye sees a tree, the brain interprets the image and searches the memory to compare the image being viewed to what is presently stored and then determines the image is a tree. This all takes less than a millionth of a second.

As soon as a child is born, the baby is bombarded with sensory stimuli that informs him about his environment and he immediately starts to categorize this stimuli (some believe it starts sooner than that). A baby's eye, at one day old, is able to follow a doctor's pen light. Baby's sight starts developing immediately. As he sees new things, images are imprinted in the memory and the brain gets busy categorizing these pieces of information. It has been found that even at this early age, baby actually develops some preferences as to what he stores. In a relatively short time he will recognize shapes, colours, faces, light and dark.

As the child grows, he will learn to recognize depth perception, balance, movement and much more. And of course, the other senses add to this storehouse of memory. For example, the child will learn by touch what a ball is. He

discovers it is round, soft or hard, by sight, the colour categorized, as well as large or small, and, of course, whether it tastes good. He filters and stores all this in his memory and continues to add information to this data for the rest of his life.

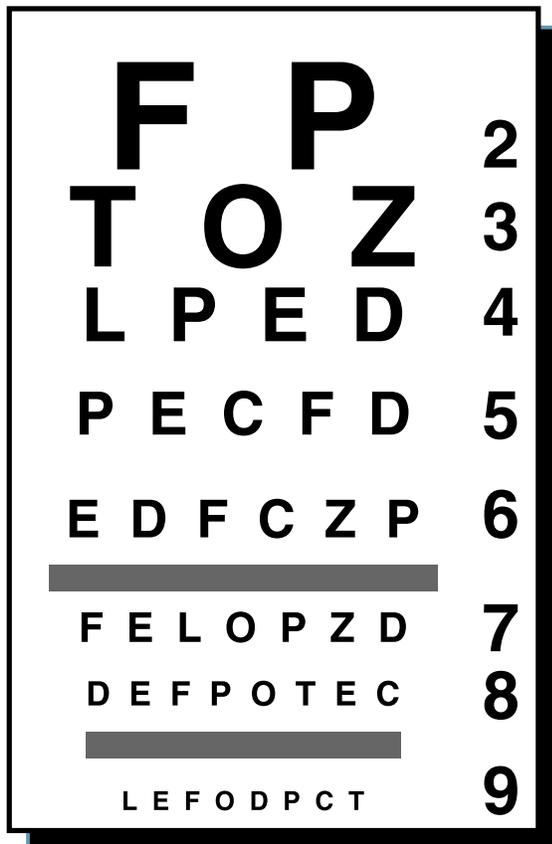
We read in a number of places in the Bible that Jesus healed many blind people. In Matthew 9:27-31 and Matthew 20:29-34, Jesus healed a number of needy persons. In Matthew 21:14 we read, "Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He healed them."

In John 9:1, the man Jesus healed was blind from birth. This means he had no images stored in his memory except for those formed through touch, or hearing. The cornea, the lens, the retina, the rods, the cones – none of these parts of the eye had any opportunity to

function. Yet we read that he received his sight and went his way. How did he know which way to go? How did he maintain his balance? He would have been used to walking as a blind person.

Did he have to close his eyes so he could remember how to walk? How did he process all the colours and sights that would have been so new to him?

**"HOW DID HE  
KNOW WHICH WAY  
TO GO? ...  
HE WOULD HAVE  
BEEN USED TO  
WALKING AS  
A BLIND PERSON."**



continued on page 14

# JESUS' INCREDIBLE MIRACLE OF HEALING BLINDNESS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

**“WHEN A PERSON  
REGAINS THEIR  
SIGHT THROUGH  
SURGERY...  
USUALLY THEY  
MUST COPE WITH  
SUDDEN LEARNING  
PROBLEMS....”**

Further, in John 9, Jesus healed another and restored his sight. The Pharisees examined the man and did not believe that he had been blind (vs18). They did not want to credit God or Jesus with the miracle of sight, but at the same time it must have been very difficult for them to accept the fact that physically, the man could actually see when he had been blind from birth.

The men healed in Matthew 9:27-31 went about the country telling people of the wonderful miracle. In Matthew 20:29-34, when the two blind men were healed, they followed Jesus as did the healed blind man in Mark 10:46-52. All of these men were able to function normally immediately upon receiving their sight. This, too, was an awesome miracle!

In Mark 8:22-26, a blind man was brought to Christ in Bethsaida. The blind man wanted Christ to touch him so he would be able to see. After Christ had put saliva on the man's eyes and touched them, He asked the man if he could see anything. "I see men like trees walking. Then the Lord put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. He was restored and saw clearly" (Mark 8:24,25). Did Jesus partially restore the man's sight to impress upon him and others who may have been watching, how extraordinary this healing was?

When a person regains their sight through surgery, or other methods, usually they must cope with sudden learning problems from the deluge

of new and incomprehensible images that now flood the brain. Optically, the person is like a new born babe. The person must learn a new language of lines, colour, and dimensions and be able to discern differences between objects. For example, would the person know if the spoon and table were separate items or one object when he first sees them? Presumably the person would have to pick up the spoon, close his eyes and feel it to recognize what it was and then visually focus on it to enable the brain to recognize through sight as well as touch. It takes considerable time and effort to re-educate the brain in this way.

The miracle of Jesus healing the blind is so much broader than just restoring sight. It is actually a multi-faceted miracle of awesome scope. All the parts of the eye had to function immediately, the brain had to be able to recognize what was being transmitted to it through the eyes, and all systems had to be in the "go" mode. For those blind people Christ healed, who had had vision and then lost it, the brain may have remembered images from the past. Also, what ever the physical reason was for the blindness, that too, was miraculously corrected.

Jesus Christ performed many, many miracles of healing during His short time on earth and the restoration of sight was one of the most awesome. So, when we read the scriptures in Matthew, Mark, Luke or John about Christ healing a blind person, let's think about what an incredible miracle it truly was! -UNC

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# WHO, ME? IT'S NOT MY FAULT

BY JOE SHEPERD • VICTORIA

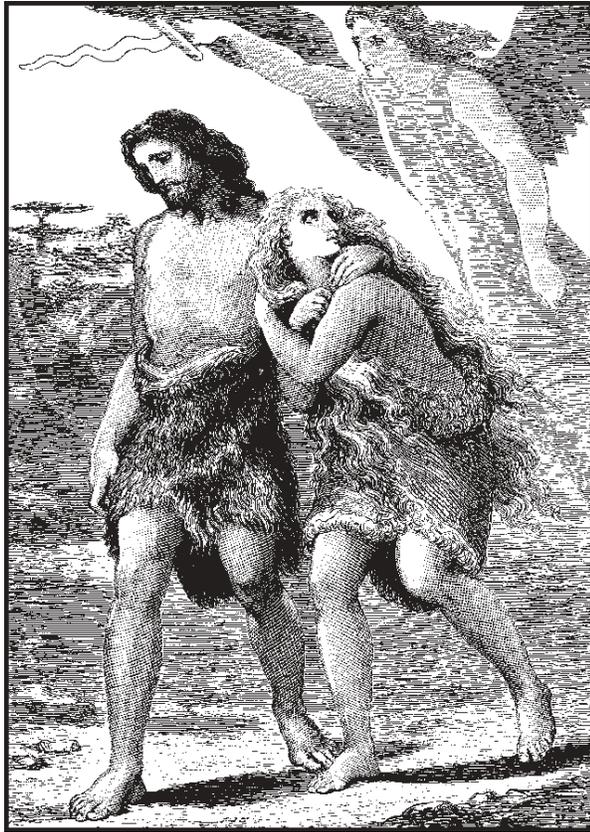
**THE VERY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF** human misconduct, when held to account, resulted in denial of truth and reality. When God said to Adam, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” God knew Adam had eaten. How did Adam handle this?

He shifted the blame – it wasn't his fault, it was the woman's. What's more, it was the woman that *God* had given him; *she* gave him the fruit! Adam was inferring that both the woman and God were responsible for what happened.

To us in God's Church, we find Adam's attempt to shift the blame both obvious and shallow. Yet, a heartfelt acceptance of being wrong, or being at fault, is one of the most difficult admissions we humans are called upon to make. We wrestle with this all of our lives.

For a child of God, our response to instruction or correction is a life and death issue! God's word is replete with powerful reminders of this principle. We see two ways people respond to instruction and correction: acceptance with conviction of guilt; or downplaying and ignoring as “not applicable to me” and, even worse, sometimes resenting it.

The question we all need to ask is: “Is the reaction that Adam had, my reaction, at least



some of the time?” Let's consider these powerful admonitions and honestly evaluate ourselves: Proverbs 15:12 says. “A scorner loves not one that reproves him; neither will he go to the wise.” These people love “smooth and soft” words that leave them feeling good about themselves. They will “edit out” the parts they need most, and may even resent the one giving the reproof.

Notice the contrast in these two reactions to correction: Proverbs 12:1 says, “He that loves instruction loves knowledge, but he that hates reproof is brutish.” It is either genuine acceptance of correction with motivation to change, or resenting and rejecting the reproof, which God says is “brutish” (In the KJV, the word actually means “stupid.”)

The reaction to instruction, which may also contain correction, shows either our foolishness – a spiritual immaturity, or it shows godly wisdom. With godly wisdom, we not only accept the instruction, we truly appreciate and love what God is giving us via a human instrument. This powerful play within us is so important in our Christian walk, that it truly is a life and death issue.

**“[ADAM] SHIFTED  
THE BLAME –  
IT WASN'T HIS  
FAULT, IT WAS  
THE WOMAN'S.”**

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# WHO, ME? IT'S NOT MY FAULT

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## “HOW MUCH OF ADAM’S REACTION TO GOD IS YET IN US?”

Let’s notice Proverbs 15:10, “Correction is grievous to him that forsakes the way; and he that hates reproof shall die.” One who does not overcome the powerful forces of self-defense and self-justification is forsaking “the way,” the only way that repentance, spiritual growth and overcoming are possible. The end of that road is to fail in the greatest calling, goal and quest that life can offer any human being.

A wonderful contrast to resistance to instruction or correction is found in Proverbs 25:12: “As an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.” An obedient ear differs totally from Adam’s (and mankind’s) reaction. Here is wise reproof, or instruction, being given and falling upon willing, teachable and obedient ears. The results are likened to a person adorned with golden jewellery and clothing. Why? These hearers listen, judge themselves

honestly and are moved from the heart to make changes. Godly wisdom, character and spiritual growth will be gained. This is worth far, far more than anything that the world’s treasures can buy.

How much of Adam’s reaction to God is yet in us? How much of a role does it still play in our lives? Our loving Father has this ongoing, loving instruction to all of us. Notice Hebrews 12:10-11 (NIV), “Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best, but God disciplines us for our good; that we may share in His Holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

The truly big question for each of us is, “Am I in God’s training program, or have I customized the program to terms which are more acceptable to me?” -UNC

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## CHANGE CAN BRING GROWTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Go to bat for your Pastor, link hands with him, uphold him against unwarranted criticisms and “guard him” as the workers did for each other in building the Temple wall with Nehemiah. We too have a work to do and need to ‘guard each other’ from unwarranted attacks that would weaken our resolve or distract us from our task (Nehemiah 4:13-23).

### Change isn’t Comfortable

I’m now challenged by learning French and daily coming to see the extent of the task it is. Although Lynn and I have served in four different countries and lived in 28 homes, calling Canada home and driving on the right side of the road doesn’t all happen overnight. Yet we know by experience the ultimate

outcome of each dislocating move has been a rewarding experience. Although relocating from one country to another has inevitable upheavals and often losses, we know God will provide as He has always done.

Confronting change and being positive about it brings further personal growth. We are guaranteed through Divine knowledge that everything God allows, through all stages of our lives, will work out in the end (Romans 8:28).

There are always new horizons, new possibilities, and new breakthroughs that God has in store for us all! By embracing changes positively you’ll richly discover some of them! -UNC

# HAVE YOU TOLD YOUR MOTHER LATELY THAT YOU LOVE HER?

BY JEAN JANTZEN • VANCOUVER ISLAND

## TRIBUTE TO MOTHERS

"Of all the rights of women, the greatest is to be a mother." – Lin Yutang

"The heart of a mother is a deep abyss at the bottom of which you will always find forgiveness." – Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850)

"My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her." – George Washington (1732-1799)

"By and large, mothers and housewives are the only workers who do not have regular time off. They are the great vacationless class." – Anne Morrow Lindbergh (1907- )

"The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom." – Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887)

"Youth fades; love droops, the leaves of friendship fall; A mother's secret hope outlives them all." – Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894)

"I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life." – Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

"The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother." – Author Unknown

*"Eighty-year-old Sen. Robert Byrd was less than a year old when his mother died. He spoke of her when addressing the Senate this week. 'In the one photograph which I have of her, gazing back at me is a blue-eyed, fair-complexioned, pretty young woman with a serious, yet sweet expression and a large bow in her hair. How I wish that I had known her even for one day.'"* – Candy Crowley

**MOTHERHOOD: LIFE'S MOST IMPORTANT** job – for better or for worse – is life's original influence.

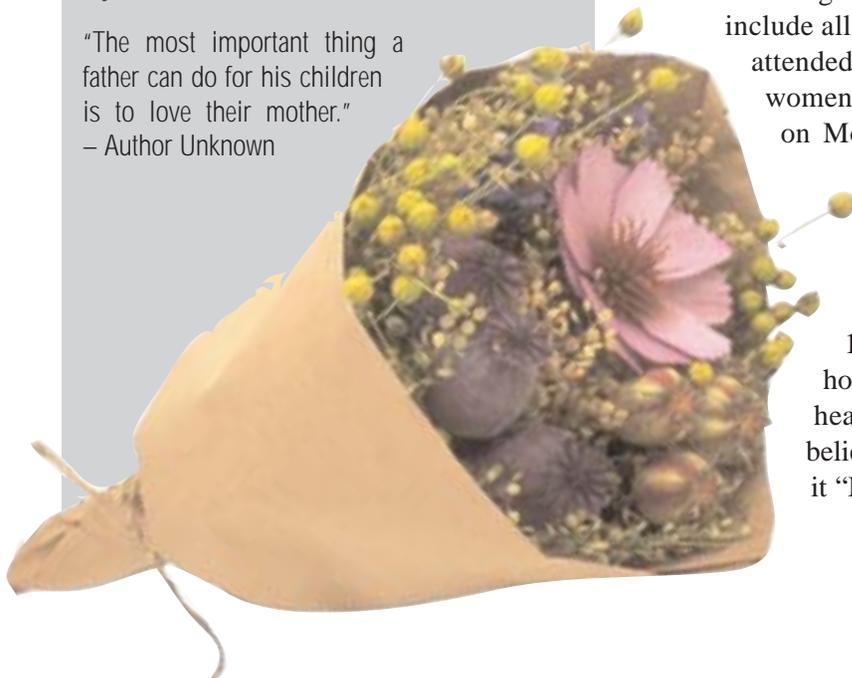
**MOTHER** – In all languages and cultures the word "mother" is representative of a female figure as nurturer – one who provides security, warmth, love and protection to those around her.

On May 12, 2002, mothers will have been remembered and honored all over the world. They will have been showered with flowers, served breakfast in bed, received phone calls and cards, or maybe taken out to dinner. Many use it as a day to express their love and consideration, for without her they would not be here.

Contrary to popular belief, Mother's Day was not conceived and fine-tuned in the boardroom of Hallmark. Mothers have been acknowledged in various ways, going back to the Greeks and Romans.

In England in the 1600's this holiday was expanded to include all mothers and was called Mothering Sunday. People attended their parish, laden with offerings. Young men and women who were apprentices or servants returned home on Mothering Sunday, bringing to their mothers small gifts like trinkets or a "mothering cake." Sometimes furrnety was served – wheat grains boiled in sweet milk, sugared and spiced.

In the United States, Mother's Day started nearly 150 years ago, when Anna Jarvis, an Appalachian homemaker, organized a day to raise awareness of poor health conditions in her community, a cause she believed would be best advocated by mothers. She called it "Mother's Work Day."



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# HAVE YOU TOLD YOUR MOTHER LATELY THAT YOU LOVE HER?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

**“IN 1914 ...  
WOODROW WILSON  
SIGNED A BILL  
RECOGNIZING  
MOTHER’S DAY  
AS A NATIONAL  
HOLIDAY.”**

Fifteen years later, Julia Ward Howe, a Boston poet, pacifist, suffragist, and author of the lyrics to the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” organized a day encouraging mothers to rally for peace, since she believed they bore the loss of human life more harshly than anyone else.

In 1905 when Anna Jarvis died, her daughter, also named Anna, began a campaign to memorialize the life work of her mother. Legend has it that young Anna remembered a Sunday school lesson that her mother gave in which she said, “I hope and pray that someone, sometime, will found a memorial mother’s day. There are many days for men, but none for mothers.”

Anna began to lobby prominent businessmen like John Wannamaker, and politicians including Presidents Taft and Roosevelt to support her campaign to create a special day to honor mothers. At one of the first services organized to celebrate Anna’s mother in 1908, at her church in West Virginia, Anna handed out her mother’s favorite flower, the white carnation. Five years later, the House of Representatives adopted a resolution calling for officials of the federal government to wear white carnations on Mother’s Day. In 1914 Anna’s hard work paid off when Woodrow Wilson signed a bill recognizing Mother’s Day as a national holiday.

At first, people observed Mother’s Day by

attending church, writing letters to their mothers, and eventually, by sending cards, presents, and flowers. With the increasing gift-giving activity associated with Mother’s Day, Anna Jarvis became enraged. She believed that the day’s sentiment was being sacrificed at the expense of greed and profit. In 1923 she filed a lawsuit to stop a Mother’s Day festival, and was even arrested for disturbing the peace at a convention selling carnations for a war mother’s group. Before her death in 1948, Jarvis is said to have confessed that she regretted ever starting the mother’s day tradition.

Despite Jarvis’s misgivings, Mother’s Day has flourished in the United States. In fact, the second Sunday of May has become the most popular day of the year to dine out, and telephone lines record their highest traffic, as sons and daughters everywhere take advantage of this day to honor and to express appreciation of their mothers.

The first Mother’s Day proclamation was issued by the governor of West Virginia in 1910. Oklahoma celebrated Mother’s Day that year as well. By 1911 every state had its own observances. By then other areas celebrating Mother’s Day included Mexico, Canada, China, Japan, South America and Africa. The Mother’s Day International Association was incorporated on December 12, 1912, with the purpose of furthering meaningful observations of Mother’s Day. -UNC

## PRAYER REQUEST

**PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR THE FAMILY** of Eric and Angela Jantzen of the Nanaimo, British Columbia congregation.

Eric and Angela have taken on private guardianship of seven nieces and nephews, (which makes a total of 11 children) and have had to alter their life accordingly. They have been receiving a monthly maintenance which has suddenly been cut off by the provincial government due to new legislation and no fault

of their own. This is devastating as Eric is disabled and unable



to make up the loss. There is the possibility they may lose their home and vehicle, which would put them in a precarious position. It was this financial assistance that made it possible for Eric and Angela to keep the siblings together. God’s provision is humbly requested.

Thank you for your prayers. -UNC

# UNITED NEWS CANADA WEBSITE STATISTICS

Following are statistics for the United News Canada website ([www.unitednewscanada.org](http://www.unitednewscanada.org)).

## Analysis for the Month of February, 2002

### Server Activity Totals for Period:

Total sessions served:	460
Total hits made on server:	4,266
Total page view hits:	2,145
Total non page view hits:	2,121
Total time spent	
by all sessions (in seconds):	64,492
Total bandwidth (in kilobytes):	67,072.95

### Breakdown of Traffic from North America:

United States	260 sessions
Canada	47 sessions

### Breakdown of Traffic from Europe:

United Kingdom	2 sessions
Germany	1 session
Sweden	1 session
Italy	1 session

## Analysis for the Month of March, 2002

### Server Activity Totals for Period:

Total sessions served :	750
Total hits made on server :	5594
Total page view hits :	2465
Total non page view hits :	3129
Total time spent	
by all sessions (in seconds):	79,609
Total bandwidth (in kilobytes):	99,345.68

### Breakdown of Traffic from North America:

United States	483 sessions
Canada	81 sessions

### Breakdown of Traffic from Europe:

United Kingdom	3 sessions
Italy	1 session

### Breakdown of Traffic from of Asia:

Japan	25 sessions
China	2 sessions
India	1 session

### Breakdown of Traffic from Australia & Oceania:

Australia	2 sessions
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# Words to Live By

COMPILED BY  
ERNIE MCBRATNEY

Until you make peace with who you are, you will never be content with what you have.

Today's preparation determines tomorrow's achievement.

If God is your partner, make big plans.

Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier.

Happiness adds and multiplies as we divide it with others.

None are so empty as those who are full of themselves.

Live so that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip.

You'll never leave where you are until you decide where you'd rather be.

Nothing conceals your laurels as much as resting upon them.

Courtesy, politeness and smiles are all contagious. Be a carrier.

When we seek to discover the best in others, we somehow bring out the best in ourselves.

Think all you speak, but do not speak all that you think.



View *United News Canada* on the web!  
**[www.unitednewscanada.org](http://www.unitednewscanada.org)**

## EUROPE’S COMMON CURRENCY: CHARLEMAGNE’S DREAM

BERLIN - After the Roman Empire’s denarius, the first common currency was actually a penny that was 90 per cent silver and was minted by Charlemagne in 794 AD when the Holy Roman Empire stretched from northern Spain through Eastern Europe.

Once the Empire weakened, politics and profit entered the picture as kings and local lords put less silver or gold into coins than the metals were worth.

The common hope for the euro is that it will once again create a European consciousness, knock the US dollar out as the world’s leading currency and simplify trade and investment.

The odd markers, we hear, are betting that the euro will succeed this time and make good old Charlemagne’s dream come true at last. (STS)

*Editor’s Note: For the curious, at the time of printing it would take 89 cents (US) to buy one Euro. It would take \$1.42 in Canadian funds to buy the same Euro.*

## ANTI-SEMITIC VIOLENCE JOLTS FRANCE

PARIS - A gunman opened fire on a kosher butcher’s shop in southern France – the third anti-Semitic attack over one weekend – drawing vows for increased security at Jewish sites and appeals for religious tolerance.

The owner of the shop was inside, with his front gate partially closed, when an unidentified gunman fired two shots and sped off in a car, officials from the Haute-Garonne region said.

The shooting came amid a rising number of anti-Semitic attacks in France, including recent attacks on a synagogue in Lyon. Prime Minister Lionel Jospin said he was “revolted” by the attack on the synagogue, which was “apparently organized and premeditated.”

In the attack against the synagogue, hooded vandals crashed two cars through its main gate and then rammed one of the vehicles into the temple’s prayer hall and set it on fire.

And *Le Journal du Dimanche*, a Sunday newspaper, reported that a Jewish couple in their 20s suffered injuries from an attack in the town of Villeurbanne, in the Rhone region. The woman, identified as pregnant, was reportedly hospitalized.

The wave of anti-Jewish violence broke out after Israeli-Palestinian fighting escalated in the Middle East and has mounted further since the September 11 terror attacks on the United States.

A book published by a leading French anti-racism group chronicled about 400 recent attacks against Jews and their religious sites around the country. Many are concerned the attacks are fueled by the rising threat of neo-Nazism. (AP)

## A CRISIS OF FAITH

World Youth Day is coming fast, but will its star attraction make it?

The holiest week in Christendom had started in Rome on the bleakest possible note: For the first time in 23 years, Pope John Paul II, 81, did not rise to deliver the Palm Sunday Mass. That worries all Catholics, but especially Father Rosica and his flock, who have been toiling full tilt for two years to put on the Pope’s July

visit to Toronto, accompanied by up to half-a-million Catholic youth from around the world. This is the biggest show on earth, and the star is ailing.

“He’s a very good man. I’ve known him for a long time,” says Father Rosica, who spent a week at the Vatican in meetings with the Pope and his staff. (He meets the Pope every six weeks.) “It’s sad to see him with his health failing.”

So will he make it to Toronto? “We have every reason to believe that he will be here. He wants to come. This is one of the projects that keeps him alive.”

World Youth Day organizers had better pray that he makes it. Just a look around their new store underlines the investment they have made. There are T-shirts, sweatshirts, children’s T-shirts, fleece pullovers, baseball caps, all with the red, yellow and blue Youth Day logo (the red part is a maple leaf). There are pens and watches and posters and banners. There are dozens of books and magazines and videotapes, all dedicated to World Youth Day 2002.

World Youth Day is a huge undertaking. Half a block south on Yonge Street, on the ninth floor of an office building, is WYD headquarters, teeming with staff in tiny cubicles. Phones ring, visitors come in; the joint is jamming. News clippings of stories about the progress of the WYD cross – which has travelled to every province and territory – cover all available wall surface. So far, organizers have signed up 136,000 pilgrims from 145 countries to come to Toronto, including 40,000 from the United States and 23,000 from Canada. Every one of the pilgrims expects the same climax to his visit here: a mass with the Pope at the former Downsview Air Base. (National Post) -UNC