

A NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF GOD - CANADA



# United News Canada

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 2 • MARCH - APRIL 2003

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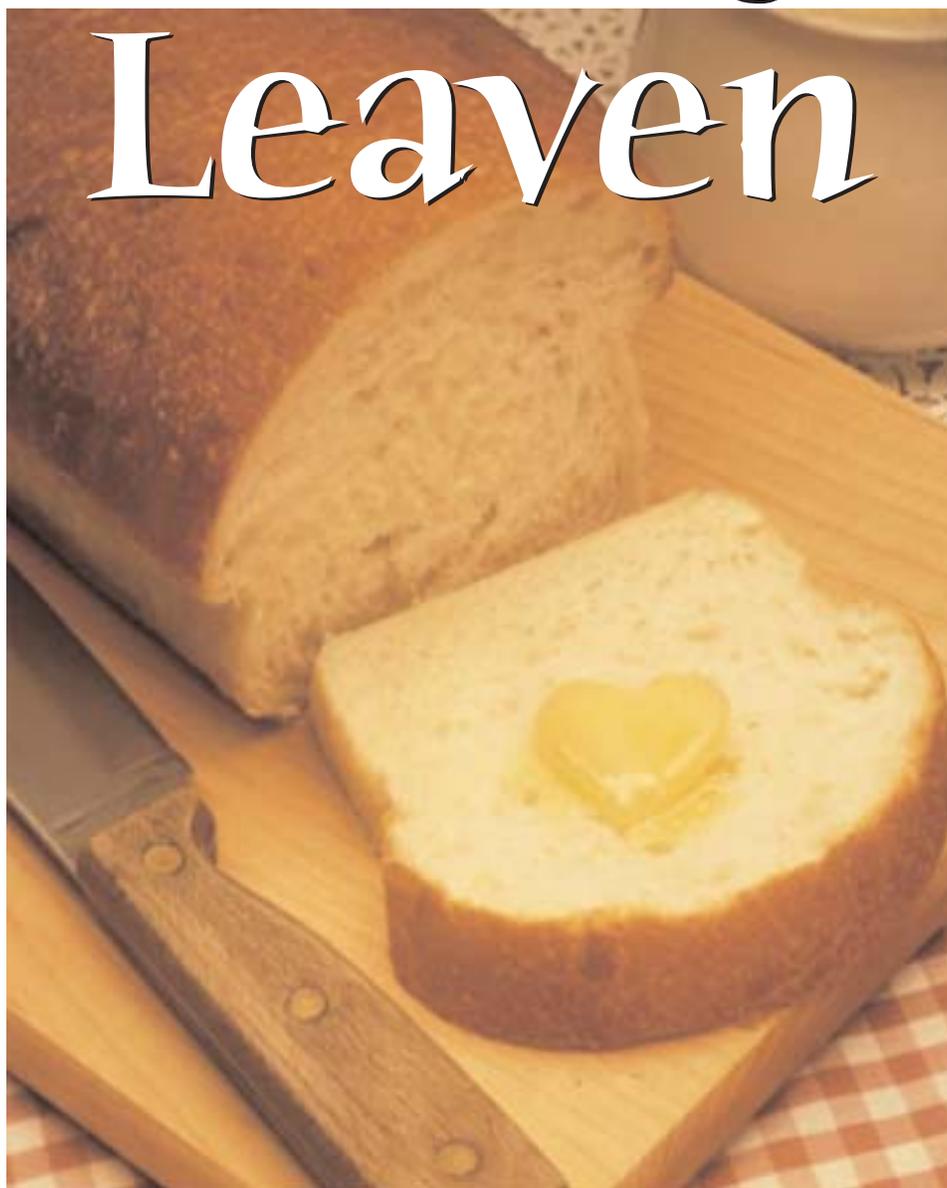
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# Removing Leaven



*The Bread of Affliction*

*Beware Leaven • The Leaven of the Third Person Defense  
What Does Unleavened Bread Teach Us?*

# Wilfrid's Cat Bite

BY RAINER SALOMAA • EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

A cat bit Wilfrid Erickson. At the age of 85, handling animals is not an unusual thing for Wilfrid. He used to run his own trap line for many years in the Summit Lake area, about 50 kilometers north of Prince George. Never before, though, has he come close to losing his hand and possibly his arm over an animal bite – and a domestic cat at that!

Wilfrid found an abandoned cat, and had been feeding it for almost two weeks. Slowly the cautious cat was being won over by Wilfrid's kindness. It was getting friendlier.

As the weather grew colder, Wilfrid set up a heat lamp for the animal on the porch. For that, the cat decided Wilfrid was allowed to pet it. Wilfrid removed his gloves in order to pet the cat. He was holding the gloves in his other hand when he accidentally dropped them behind the cat. The cat jumped and bit him hard in the bare hand.

Initially, Wilfrid told no one about the cat bite. The next evening when he noticed how swollen and sore his hand had become, and after his son convinced him to see a doctor, he went to the walk-in clinic. There he received a tetanus shot as well as a prescription for antibiotics. This didn't help. A few days later the swelling really blew up and his hand felt like it was on fire. He told his son, Michael, who took him to see their family doctor.

The doctor was concerned, although he did remark that "the only thing bigger than Wilfrid's



hand was his heart." He said Wilfrid needed to see a surgeon immediately, as the infection was beginning to work up his arm though his lymph system. After hearing the potential consequences of this surgery Wilfrid, who was in a lot of pain, told the doctor to do whatever he had to, but he wanted to be able to play his accordion again. The doctor decided to send Wilfrid to the hospital instead, for IV therapy. He was to come in each day to get a massive dose of antibiotics through this IV therapy and if that did not begin to work within two days, he was to go into surgery where amputation was a definite possibility.

After the doctor's visit, and subsequent trip to the emergency ward, Wilfrid, who is a deacon in the Prince George congregation, stopped at my home and asked for anointing. He was anointed and he started feeling better right away. The next day while

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# The Leaven of the Third Person Defense

BY GRAEMME MARSHALL • OTTAWA

**A**t Unleavened Bread we focus a lot on what the apostle Paul had to say about spiritual leaven. “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:8).

Facing the truth about ourselves can be touchy. But learning the lesson of King David can work much for us. It is the leaven of failing to see when it is *you* are the cause of your problem, not others. The lesson unfolds by contrasting two names powerfully linked with David. One is Goliath; the other is Bathsheba.

They could hardly be more different. Goliath, a three-metre mean bully, and Bathsheba, a beautiful, soft woman. As different as these two are in character, appearance and spirit, there’s a similarity in their relation to David. Both bring him into testing, to a “look-in-the-mirror” encounter about his heart.

Both enter David’s life at opposite ends. The giant when David was young, unknown and untested; and the woman when he is old, married and hardened through life’s trials. With Goliath David is a man of prayer, more impressed with God than with a giant. With Bathsheba, he is spiritually vulnerable with idle time on his hands. “It was spring when kings go to battle, but David remained at Jerusalem” (2 Samuel 11:1).

With Bathsheba we aren’t prepared for this sort of story. What began as a lustful whim develops into a sordid sex-murder crime. He “abuses” his power (2 Samuel 11:3-6, 12). The verses emphasize *sent* his servants, *sent* for Bathsheba, then *took* her. Then enters Joab with the murder of Uriah. Here we find that Bathsheba’s allure along with Joab’s sly mind totally



“Facing the truth about ourselves can be touchy.”

blinds David’s perception of things. Especially about himself.

Now to a question: how does God get you to see that *you* are often your own problem? It’s fair to ask at Unleavened Bread, “Are you seeing within yourself what *God* wants you to see?”

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# The Leaven of the Third Person Defense

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“David listened to an inspired preacher who spoke in the *third person* and got worked up about someone else’s flaw.”

Now enters the prophet Nathan sent by God (2 Samuel 12:1). He has a story to narrate which, interestingly, doesn’t indicate that David is actually the subject. Had he been reflective and sensitive enough to his spiritual condition, perhaps David might have seen the trap before he fell into it. As a prophet, Nathan was required to confront sin, even in the King. This took courage, skill & tact to make David aware of his wrong actions. Perhaps they sat at morning coffee while Nathan began to report an injustice. As the story unfolds David is unaware he is listening to a sermon. (Can we soberly reflect: How many sermons have I sat through and made no connection with myself?) But back to the unfolding trap set by God.

David is emotionally drawn into the story of the poor man and his pet lamb and the callous behavior of the rich landowner. His anger greatly aroused, as King and a judge he pronounces a death sentence and fourfold restitution. He claims the man had no pity (verse 7). Yet where was the pity shown Uriah? This judgment out of his own mouth would haunt him and his family for a long time (verses 10-14). He ended up losing four sons!

David listened to an inspired preacher who spoke in the *third person* and got worked up about someone else’s flaw. He seethed with indignation out of pity for the poor man and a pet lamb. Pitying and judging are religious sentiments than can be indulged in endlessly, making us feel superior to everyone else. David, pitying and judging, became more righteous by the minute and was absorbed in a huge blur of moral sentimentality. David had become so insensitive to his own sin that he didn’t connect he was the villain in Nathan’s story.

Then the sudden moral moment of

personal truth: YOU are the one! This is what preachers are ordained to do, to somehow by God’s Spirit and help get around the THIRD PERSON defense and compel a FIRST PERSON recognition. Might this have influenced Paul a millennia later in saying: “You therefore who teach another, do you not teach yourself?” And by paraphrase, “You who say don’t steal; commit adultery; abhor idols; boast in the law” are you guilty yourself? (Romans 2:21-23).

But then we have the forever-exemplary converted response of David, “I have sinned” (verse 13). He now realizes his position before God as one caught in sin. Perhaps he writes Psalm 51 after this. There is an enormous amount of self-deception in sin. The Christian walk is to recognize it within yourself. The qualities we condemn in others can often also be our own character flaws. It is so easy to criticize but tough to take it in return. Nathan’s story entraps David. He doesn’t admit his problem until told, “YOU are the one.” At this point he doesn’t try and justify himself, deny or deflect attention from his problem. He accepts the rebuke from this other human being, the prophet speaking for God.

An important lesson in this is that when being told something about yourself you have to accept the authority of the one telling you, or you will miss the message. In the history of the Kings of Israel and Judah there is much refusal of correction from God’s prophets. Acceptance and change was rare. As potential rulers for the Kingdom, how well do we accept “rebuke?” By resisting we may be missing a lot of what God might be trying to show. The message from God for David was delivered through the “preaching” message of a prophet.

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# The Bread of Affliction

BY ANTHONY WASILKOFF • OPERATIONS MANAGER



Some of the foods many of us enjoy today were those we had to acquire a taste for. Do you remember the first time you tasted something you now find quite palatable that was rather unpleasant to you at first sampling?

As a child, I remember having a great love of processed cheese. I especially enjoyed Velveeta and thought of it as the “real thing,” especially when spread thickly over slices of white bread. I recall the occasion when I was invited to sample a piece of genuine cheddar sliced off of one of those old fashioned giant “wheels.” The genuine cheddar was not something that I found at all appealing. The creamy processed cheese was still where it was at for me for quite some time to come. However, today I much prefer natural cheddar to the processed kind. It was a taste and appreciation that I had to acquire over a period of time.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is upon us. Are we looking forward to not having our usual rolls, buns, sandwiches and toast for an entire week? Are we anticipating a whole week of matzos, rye crisp and flat bread instead?

Deuteronomy 16:1-3 says, “Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the Lord your God....You shall eat no leavened bread with it, seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, that is, the bread of affliction....” Why are matzos called “the bread of affliction”? Why is this term used? One commentary describes flat bread as “a sour, unpleasant, unwholesome, kind of bread.” Could this description possibly be appropriate and accurate?

In Genesis 18 we read about three spirit beings visiting Abraham. He persuaded them to stay with him at his home for a while. In the Middle East, the virtue of hospitality was, and is, highly regarded and actively practiced. Consequently, Abraham served them a delectable meal of butter and milk, succulent veal and fresh bread. Abraham stood by his special guests under a shady tree while they enjoyed their hastily prepared meal. First you’ll notice that the meal was not served according to kosher guidelines in that dairy products and meat were served and consumed together. Furthermore, the fresh bread that had been prepared was clearly unleavened. Yet Abraham decided to produce and serve unleavened bread to highly regarded guests. Thus unleavened bread would hardly have been deemed to be sour, unpleasant and unwholesome. Unleavened bread can actually be quite tasty when properly prepared and when one has acquired a taste for it.

Why then is the description “bread of affliction” applied to unleavened bread? The scripture is quite clear. There are two principal reasons. Firstly, to serve as an enduring reminder of the oppressive servitude the children of Israel spent in Egypt. Secondly, to serve as an enduring reminder of the haste with which the children of Israel exited Egypt thus not allowing their bread dough to rise through natural fermentation. Please read Deuteronomy 16:3 in this regard.

“...Abraham decided to produce and serve unleavened bread to highly regarded guests.”

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# The Bread of Affliction

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“[U]nleavened loaves were symbolical of the new life...”

Exodus 20 lists the wonderful Ten Commandments, the core of the law the apostle Paul described as “holy and just and good” (Romans 7:12). As God introduces the Decalogue to the reader, He boldly proclaims, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Exodus 20:2). There are some who erroneously teach that the law of God, especially the Ten Commandments, are a burden and hence a form of bondage. Can you imagine the Great God miraculously delivering the nation of Israel out from under the crushing bondage of Egypt only to promptly place them under the crushing bondage of His law? Fighting this grievous error in his day and age, the apostle James in his epistle twice boldly identifies and describes God’s law as being the “law of liberty.”

According to the *Keil & Delitzsch Commentary*, “unleavened loaves were symbolical of the new life, as cleansed from the leaven of a sinful nature. But if the eating of matzos was to shadow forth the new life into which Israel was transferred, any one who ate leavened bread at the feast would renounce this new life and was therefore to be cut off from Israel.” During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, unleavened bread continues to represent a new life in which the believer has been cleansed from sin as represented by leaven. Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Passover, the Christian is transferred into a new life and this is rehearsed through the eating of matzo during the spring festival season.

The church today constitutes the “Israel of God” (Galatians 6:16) and has been delivered by God from a debilitating sinful life in spiritual Egypt into a way of

life that is in harmony with Him and His law of love. That is not to say that we no longer have any afflictions. David was inspired to write, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all” (Psalms 34:19). This statement is corroborated by Paul and Barnabas who, under inspiration, taught early New Testament believers, “We must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). Afflictions that result from serving the Creator are relatively light when you consider the future reward and the current benefits.

However, compared to the afflictions that are the result of breaking God’s law, keeping God’s law is most worthwhile and rewarding. To the Corinthians the Apostle Paul wrote, “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (II Corinthians 4:16-17). Afflictions that result from serving the Creator are relatively light when you consider the future reward and the current benefits.

I don’t especially look forward to consuming flat bread for an entire week during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. After all, it is the bread of affliction. However, I continue to see its purpose, place and value. Once I get into it, I begin to really enjoy it and appreciate it. During the spring Feast, each of us has a special opportunity to be “renewed day by day.” There is nothing quite like it! However, once the week has come and gone and the necessary lessons have been reviewed and learned, I go back to eating regular bread and I do so not too begrudgingly and without very much persuasion. -UNC

# What Does Unleavened Bread Teach Us?

BY GLEN WHITE • CALGARY

*“What does a piece of unleavened bread teach us ?” Sooner or later our children, in some way or another, will ask this question and God admonishes us to have an answer for them. Here are some.*

All New Testament instruction harmonizes perfectly with the Old Testament, because the God of the Old Testament put these instructions and symbols in place Himself, when He brought Israel out of Egypt. “Now all these things happen unto them for examples: and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Corinthians 10:11). Then 1,400 years later, He came as the Messiah, expounded and lived these prophetic edicts to their fullest (Isaiah 42:21, Matthew 5:27-28, 43-45).

Why was unleavened bread commanded and not another substance ? Let’s go back to the clearly outlined institution of using Unleavened Bread with the Passover commandment.

The congregation of Israel was given explicit instructions concerning the use of calendar dates (Exodus 12:2) and the execution of the sacrificial lamb (verse 6). Then in verse 8, the added instruction to eat this Passover sacrifice with unleavened Bread and bitter herbs.

Later in this scriptural passage the instruction is to eat unleavened bread for the duration of the seven-day festival, known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is used exclusively during the 15th to the 21st day. This command is serious enough that God’s warning in verse 19 legislates excommunication to anyone using leavened bread during this period (verse 18). To further impact the gravity of this, a further warning in verse 20 is given.

In the next chapter of the book of Exodus, intertwined with the observance of the Night to be Much Observed (when Israel started out of Egypt) again the edict to use only Unleavened bread during these seven days is made (Exodus 13). This command becomes very personalized as we explain this to our children. “And you shall show your son in that day, saying, this was done because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt [sin].”

“Why was unleavened bread commanded and not another substance?”

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# What Does Unleavened Bread Teach Us?

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“This passage plainly declares Christ as the Bread of life, and offers a special personal relationship...”

Now turn to Leviticus 23:5 where we find the pointed instruction, “...seven days you must eat unleavened bread.” Each time we eat unleavened bread it should trigger a growing appreciation of what it symbolizes.

The New Testament places added emphasis on these basic principles. The Apostle John emphasized that the Bread from heaven is Jesus Christ. And he who eats this Bread shall live forever. In other words, those accepting this bread or relationship also become partakers of Eternal Life (John 6:32-35, 40, 44, 45, 47).

To dispel any spurious interpretation, Christ plainly said, “I AM the bread of life” (verse 48). He again emphasizes this in verses 53 and 54. Now, a most meaningful statement in verse 57, “...he who eats [imbibes] of Me, shall live by [or because of ] me.”

This passage emphatically declares Christ as the Bread of life, and offers a special personal relationship when one continually uses the Unleavened Bread. The worshipper ingests the Bread (teachings) and they gradually change one’s values and character to emulate those of the Master.

Within this concept of communion with Christ, it also extends to the Body of Christ which is the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23, Ephesians 5:23). A statement is also made by the Apostle John (1 John 1:3, 7) that fellowship is first with the Father and the Son, then with the brethren. All parts are inclusive, like the many parts of the human body working together (1Corinthians 12). So to establish a relationship with Christ, the Head, is to create bonds with the rest of the body as well.

In 1 Corinthians 11:23-30, several additional points are recorded. Quoting

the words of Jesus Christ at the last Passover before He was crucified, He established the New Testament symbols of the bread and wine for His worshippers to use. “[T]ake eat this is My Body, which is broken for you” (Matthew 28:19,20). In this passage, equal emphasis is placed with the wine (forgiveness). So both bread and wine continue to be of primary importance, not practices someone can change, or arbitrarily decide to keep or not keep.

Verse 27 declares these symbols must be implemented in a most worthy manner, in an attitude that esteems Jesus Christ in absolute reverence. This is demonstrated in the manner one responds to His instructions.

Paul then brings an additional point into focus (verse 30). Because some had let this holy relationship become mundane, some who had become ill, died as a result when they could have been healed from their ailments. “[This] was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses” (Matthew 8:17). We belong to God, heart, mind, and soul (physical body).

Christ went through 18 hours of intense agony leading up to the Crucifixion. Part of this agony was the brutal and scathing beating He endured. Christ was perfect in mind and health. His body was an unblemished sacrifice as demanded by the Biblical parameters for the sacrificial Lamb. So He offered His perfect health, so we could be healed. Isaiah 53:2-11 prophesied what the Messiah was to endure. Peter later summarized this part of the prophecy with his statement, “...by His stripes you were healed” (1 Peter 2:24). So physical healing is also symbolized in the taking of Unleavened Bread at Passover.

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# Beware Leaven

BY DAVID PALMER • VANCOUVER

**D**uring His ministry Jesus often used the expression “beware” (be careful, cautious). He told His followers to beware of men for they will deliver you up to the councils, and scourge you in their synagogues, and to beware of false prophets who deceive. But there was another warning He issued, something He told His disciples to beware of, and the first time He warned them, they didn't get it.

“Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread” (Mark 8:14-16, KJV used throughout). The disciples at this point did not perceive what Jesus was really getting at. Bread itself was not the point. Leavening was! Then Jesus said unto them, “How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees” (Matthew 16:11-12).

Our world has been permeated (corrupted) with the leaven of the devil. And when Jesus referred to the sin of leaven, He was referring to sins of the heart. “A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaks lies, and he that sows discord among brethren” (Proverbs 6:17-19). “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man....But those things which proceed out of the



mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man” (Matthew 15:11, 18). “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man...” (Matthew 15:19-20).

Leaven has corrupted the true teachings of Christ. Indeed even churches can be leavened with tradition, tradition that is actually hidden deception. The apostle Paul had to address just such a concern in the church at Galatia. Some members felt converts had to be circumcised. This was in fact tradition and Paul tries to explain that it is circumcision of the heart, not the flesh, that is important. This argument over tradition, like leaven, permeated the whole church causing division. “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love....A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (Galatians 5: 6, 9). A little corruption can spoil the whole congregation.

“Leaven has corrupted the true teachings of Christ.”

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# Beware Leaven

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“As we approach the spring Holy Day season... we are admonished to beware leaven....”

Paul also dealt with a leavening problem within the congregation of the church at Corinth. An individual was committing incest, and in responding Paul compared the problem to leavening the entire church. “And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you....Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” (I Corinthians 5:2,6)

Paul reminded the church at Corinth, and indeed all of us, when he wrote and rebuked them for allowing incest to take place within the congregation, that we are to keep the Feast, to put leavening out of our homes, and for seven days we are to eat unleavened bread. But Paul meant more than just eating physical bread. “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that

ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:7-8).

As we approach the spring Holy Day season, the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, we are admonished to beware leaven, the puffed up, self righteous hypocrisy of the Pharisees, the false doctrinal concepts of the Sadducees, and the leaven of Herod, this world’s demonic political and religious system.

We are to put away “the leaven of malice and wickedness” and substitute “the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth”, the bread of eternal life, Jesus Christ of Nazareth! -UNC

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## Wilfrid’s Cat Bite

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receiving his IV therapy at the hospital, his doctor came to see his progress. The doctor was amazed at how quickly the infection and swelling were beginning to subside. Over the next few days, his progress was much faster than anyone had expected.

Why do I write about Wilfrid and a cat bite? It is to help demonstrate that God is our Healer. The Passover season reminds us that Christ’s sacrifice makes it possible for us to be healed. Isaiah prophesied about this when he wrote, “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded

for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:4-5). Peter refers to Christ’s sacrifice, the forgiveness of our sins and divine healing in 1 Peter 2:21-25, saying, “...by whose stripes you were healed...”

What a blessing to be able to call on our God for divine healing! -UNC

*Editor’s Note: As of press time, Wilfrid is on the mend and is again playing his accordion. although his hand is still in a little pain. (By the way, the doctor said that the two worst bites for infection are cat and human bites.)*

# Edmonton Celebrates Seven Years

BY LYNNE BROSCAK • EDMONTON

It's hard to believe but UCG Edmonton has been meeting now for seven years. We have had the blessing of being in the same place since our first Sabbath services on January 13, 1996.

January 18, 2003 was set aside to celebrate our anniversary. We had a sermonette, "Who Are We and Where We Are Going," by our first resident elder, Mr. Garry Poffenroth. Garry and Ann Poffenroth now live in Calgary, so it was wonderful to have them back for the day and to hear from Mr. Poffenroth again.

Dr. Rick Berendt gave his traditional summary of our humble beginnings. The first time we met as the United Church of God, Edmonton, we had 14 people in attendance – half of which were children. It was the meeting of the three "B's" – Balroop, Berendt & Broschak. It was important to all of us to have a "Church home" and our home has been blessed with growing numbers.

Mr. Robert Berendt gave the sermon, entitled, "Preservation of What is Good." The 96 people attending services received precious spiritual food. We had visitors from Saskatchewan, Calgary, Red Deer, as well as from Edmonton. It was marvellous.



To celebrate, people dressed up in costumes and we had a pot luck lunch featuring some ethnic dishes. A variety show was planned for after lunch. The food was scrumptious and in abundance. I don't think anyone could have left hungry!

Later, we had the variety show and at the last minute, David Gargas was commandeered to be the emcee. He did a splendid job, especially on such short notice. There were many different kinds of talents displayed, from singing, to highland dancing, musical instruments (saxophone, flute, piano, guitar), to skits performed by little one and two year-olds.

Many people worked very hard to help make our Seventh Anniversary a memorable day. -UNC

"To celebrate, people dressed up in costumes...."

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## Anniversary

*Ken and Grace Bryant*

Ken and Grace Bryant marked their 50th anniversary on February 21. The Toronto-UCG congregation honoured them with a special anniversary reception on Sabbath February 22nd immediately after the services. In spite of the inclement weather, brethren stayed to honour the Bryants for their special achievement. Thereafter, everyone made it safely home. -UNC



# Second Annual Young Adults Seminar

BY LARRY DELONG • LETHBRIDGE



Young adults from Lethbridge, Regina, Saskatoon and Winnipeg met for a three-day seminar in Regina in December.

—Photo courtesy  
Jolene Drewniak

The second annual young adults seminar was held on December 25-28 in Regina, Saskatchewan. Fourteen single and married young adults from the southern part of the prairies had a chance to get together in Regina for a weekend of learning and fellowship.

Participants from the Lethbridge, Regina, Saskatoon and Winnipeg congregations participated in two days of seminars. On the Sabbath they met with the local brethren for services.

Lloyd and Helen Teetaert hosted the event and invited all the participants to a large dinner and several lunch meals.

The seminar was conducted by Larry DeLong. Glen White was unable to attend but sent a taped message specifically tailored for the event.

The theme of the seminar was, “Coming out of the world while letting your light shine.” Thursday was spent in lively interactive discussions on, “Just what is

the world” – and how do we come out of it? On Friday the topic was, “What is a light and how do we let it shine in today’s world?” The interactive discussions were interesting and inspiring, with many personal examples shared.

On Friday afternoon Maureen De Long guided everyone through a test on discovering your spiritual gifts. To close the Friday’s events off we watched the movie, *Pay It Forward*. When the movie was over and a few tears shed, we discussed what we had learned in the seminar and how it applied to the theme of the movie and the importance of letting your light shine.

Not all was seminar and study, however. In a world where God’s young adults live far apart, fellowship with each other is very much appreciated. Meals, volleyball, bowling, conversation, and just spending time together goes a long way in building the strength needed to continue living a godly life. The activities of the weekend did just that.

The Sabbath song leading, opening and closing prayer, announcements, special music and the sermonette were all handled by the young adults. The messages continued to show why we must understand what the “world” really is and why especially as we look for Christ’s return it is so necessary to let our lights shine.

The weather was great for Saskatchewan in December but on Sunday morning as we all gathered at Smitty’s for breakfast and to say goodbye, the snow was falling. Even though there was a threat of bad roads the atmosphere was like the Feast of Tabernacles, no one wanting to leave!

Thanks to all the young adults who participated in making the event a success. -UNC

# Calgary's Winter Party

PHOTOS BY RUTH KERR • CALGARY



The Calgary Congregation held a Winter Party on February 9, 2003, in Millarville, Alberta (about 30 minutes southwest of Calgary.) Inside the hall, which was decorated with paper snowflakes suspended from the ceiling, a chili cook-off and dessert baking contest was held. Outdoor activities included sledding, broomball, hockey and, of course, snowball fights.

*Clockwise from Above:* The World Championship broomball game. Team 2 suffered a humiliating 6-2 loss.

Alexis Willis and Brielle Davie enjoy the sunshine.

Chili Cook-Off contender Merv Snyder refuses to reveal his secret ingredient.

Faster, Daddy! Ashley Von Hollen and her father, David, enjoy sledding.



# Announcements

NEWS OF THE CANADIAN BRETHREN

## Obituary

*Jean Micallef (1936-2003)*

Jean Micallef, a member of the Toronto congregation, passed away on January 28, 2003, at the age of 67, after a long period in hospital from complications resulting from diabetes. She is survived by her husband, Joe, also a member of the Toronto Church, and by two sisters, Mary and Teresa.

Jean Catherine Gauchi was born in Toronto in 1936 of Maltese parentage, and on leaving school, pursued a career as a dental technician. In 1964, she had a chance meeting in a restaurant with a professional musician, Joseph Micallef, who was also of Maltese origin and was visiting Toronto for a musical engagement. Because of Joe's travelling commitments, however, it was not until 1967 that they were able to marry and settle in Toronto. In 1983, they were called into God's Church and began fellowshiping with the Worldwide Church of God. Later, they became members of the United Church of God.

Jean suffered from diabetes from an early



age, and this became an increasingly serious problem as she grew older. In the autumn of 2002, she became hospitalized, and after a long struggle to combat her failing health, she finally succumbed this January.

She was a shy, gentle lady who was much loved in the church, and although her loss is felt by all, it is of course her husband, Joe, who has suffered the most at her passing. He wishes to express his heartfelt thanks to all the brethren for their prayers during Jean's long illness, and for the comfort they have given to them both. -UNC



## Graduation

*Tania Marshall*

Tania Marshall graduated from the University of Calgary in November, 2002 with a Master of Science degree.

Her thesis was on "Trauma in Elite Athletes." Some of the athletes interviewed had participated in the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. -UNC

# “I Was Sick and You Visited Me”

BY JOE DUMOND • TORONTO

That Monday (January 27) was blisteringly cold at -31°C. My truck was difficult to start and never seemed to warm up all the way to work. Then the backhoe I used at work would not start. After about an hour of trying I gave in to the cold and shut down for the day. The crew was pleased to hear this.

I wanted to discuss some thoughts with our pastor, Mr. Wasilkoff, so I went to see him. During our conversation he asked if I could find the time to go and visit a lady from our Church who was not doing so well and was staying in the local hospital. Her name is Jean Micalleff, and on most Sabbaths I would say “Hello” and make small talk with her and her husband. They were an interesting couple. Jean was recovering from her illness but had lately taken a turn for the worse. She had been hospitalized since October and was in intensive care. The situation was very hard on Joe, her husband.

When I was asked, I thought, Sure – no problem. But then remembered I hate hospitals. They’re full of sick people and are depressing. I never leave one feeling “up.” My wife works at the old folks’ home here in town and she is often depressed when the residents get sick or die.

As I left Mr. Wasilkoff’s office I began to come up with reasons not to go. I had to light the fireplace to warm the house, bring in logs, get a haircut, plan tomorrow’s work, do my books, check the stock market and then discover the cure for cancer! I was really too busy to go and visit someone that was ill in a hospital.

No one ever asked me to go visit someone before, so why did my pastor do so today? I have prayed for Jean

before and for some others when I heard prayer announcements. But even here I have been too busy praying for my family, my kids, my problems, my this and my that. How can I pray for everyone else, except to say, “God, help everyone else that is sick. The list is too long, there are so many.”

So I decided I had to go. God was watching; how could I not go? I arrived at the hospital and made my way to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). You have to call the nurses’ station on a phone to see if they will let you in. I hoped they wouldn’t, but as soon as I said I went to the same Church as Jean did, I was told to come on in.

I was not expecting to see what I saw. There were at least 10 separate rooms with lots of monitors in each room. There were cords running everywhere and it seemed like there were two nurses to a room. Very Intensive. Each person that I passed was near death’s door. I did not want to stare because I had to be careful where I walked so as not to knock over the monitors that were in the hallways as well as the rooms.

As Jean came into view I was not sure this was her. I still pictured her in her Church attire, shaking my hand. In hospitals you quickly lose all dignity and the busy lives we lead outside disappear and just surviving the next few moments becomes uppermost important. Jean was on a ventilator that was attached through her throat. And she was breathing heavily with her chest and stomach rising and falling with each breath. Another cord was attached to her nose and arms.

“No one ever asked me to go visit someone before...”

—continued on page 16

# “I Was Sick and You Visited Me

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

“On that day, Jean cared not about any war or the crashing stock market...”

The nurse was wiping Jean’s face as I walked in, and was glad to know I was from the Church. It seemed to bring a smile to the nurse, but I don’t know why. Jean could not talk and did not open her eyes but she could hear me, the nurse said. So I started to talk to Jean told her who I was and that we had not heard she was back in ICU. I told her a little news and how cold it was and that we had been praying for her. The Church has.

But as I talked I found myself being self-conscious as Jean did not answer back to help make the conversation go smoother. And the nurses were listening as they went about caring for Jean. I felt awkward. I can’t imagine how Jean felt. As I talked

the lights began to flash and the numbers on the monitors were constantly going up and down. I was concerned for my sister and knew that the only thing I could do at this time was to pray. Really pray from my heart and not the sleepy prayer I so often offer up.

On that day, Jean cared not about any war with Iraq or the crashing stock market or any other cares that we so often concern ourselves with. Her concern was her next breath.

I have been slack in caring for our brethren and was more concerned about myself and my life. Aren’t we all like this? May God’s Kingdom soon come. -UNC

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## The Leaven of the Third Person

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

How can we ensure we will receive any message God has in mind for us?

To the extent you are listening and applying correction to yourself will determine how much of David’s attitude you have. In the Passover context Paul wrote: “For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world” (1 Corinthians 11:31-32). The self-corrective

approach of David will bring you a good attitude. David’s counsel on this is found in Psalms 19:12-13, 26:2 and 139:23-24.

Genuine heartfelt prayer on these Scriptures about yourself will keep you from being self righteous, self justifying or having a “puffed up” leavened spirit. It will work.

Don’t let another Unleavened Bread pass you by without trying it! -UNC

# Do You Hope to be Baptized One Day?

BY GARETH SIMONS • WINNIPEG

## **If you have grown up in the Church, developing a relationship with God is up to you.**

**I**f you hope to be baptized one day, just what do you have to do? How do you get there? Does God simply decide out of the blue when He feels like helping you along the process of conversion? Or is there something that you can personally do to move towards baptism?

While it is true that God calls people, (John 6:44) there are concrete steps that you can take now that will help you move towards baptism in your future. If you have grown up in the Church, God has already allowed you to start seeing and understanding the truth (Acts 2:38-39). You are therefore being called now, in this age – a rare opportunity! It is up to you to accept your calling when you are mature enough to grasp it. But how do you accept it? How do you progress along the process of conversion?

Baptism is a way of committing yourself to a relationship with God. There is no turning back once baptized! Now if this is the case, surely it is vital that by the time you are baptized you have a rock-solid relationship with God through thick and thin. Can God entrust you with His Holy Spirit if you might neglect your relationship with Him, potentially reaping eternal death? God wants all of us to come to repentance and to ultimately be in His family; however, He simply can't take the chance of giving us His Holy Spirit if we don't have a dependable and meaningful relationship with Him.

This step of developing a relationship with God is up to you. God does things with a reason, and one of the most important gauges He will use to see how

you are coming along in the process of conversion is whether you have a strong and committed relationship with Him. The best part is that you can do something about this! The Bible tells us to "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). If you seek God, and try to develop a good relationship with Him, God in turn will strengthen His relationship with you. It's guaranteed!

If you diligently seek God, do you believe that he will reward your efforts? "...he who comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). So believe God, seek Him diligently and see what happens. He will reward you! You are fully able to initiate this process and beyond a doubt, you will see real changes occur in your life as the process of conversion kicks in. If you draw close to God, He can work with you, and be assured that in all His wonderful ways that are often truly beyond our comprehension, He will!

Once you have started developing a committed relationship with God through regular and sincere prayer and study, you should consider contacting your minister for specific guidance and assistance towards baptism. Sometimes it may seem scary to talk to a minister about these things, but you don't have to worry. They are not going to ask you for a 3,000-word essay on your past sins! Ministers are God's servants and God uses them to reach out to you with specific help and guidance. They are experienced and compassionate, and will help gently guide you towards baptism.

So try putting Jesus Christ's advice to the test, "So, I tell you, continue asking, and it will be given to you. Keep on searching and you will find. Be knocking, and the door

"Sometimes it may seem scary to talk to a minister about these things, but you don't have to worry."

—continued on page 19

# Attendance Figures

COMPILED BY ED VAN PELT • NATIONAL OFFICE

## Good News Circulation

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>%</b>
	<b>04-01</b>	<b>01-31</b>	<b>Change</b>
Members	398	412	3.5
Donors	339	420	23.9
Subscribers	4956	4242	-14.4
Waiting rooms	7052	7710	9.3
Total	12745	12784	0.3

	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001- 2002</b>
							<b>% change</b>
January	336	390	371	438	495	491	-0.8
February	406	413	438	476	474	503	6.1
March	398	414	423	482	499	485	-2.8
April	407	411	439	504	504	507	0.6
May	392	435	440	466	482	512	6.2
June	421	403	440	475	459	496	8.1
July	375	379	403	441	442	517	17
August	367	404	498	448	438	470	7.3
September	400	412	434	478	452	531	17.5
October	385	348	466	452	478	526	10.0
November	413	429	461	490	483	536	11
December	410	404	445	429	481	533	10.8
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>392.5</b>	<b>403.5</b>	<b>438.1</b>	<b>464.9</b>	<b>473.9</b>	<b>508.97</b>	<b>7.4</b>

## HIGHEST WEEKLY ATTENDANCE COMPARISON

<b>1997</b>			<b>1998</b>			<b>1999</b>		
<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
16	Apr 19, 1997	456	46	Nov 14, 1998	464	44	Oct 30, 1999	509
12	Mar 22, 1997	451	49	Dec 5, 1998	457	46	Nov 13, 1999	500
49	Dec 6, 1997	445	50	Dec 12, 1998	455	34	Aug 21, 1999	486
6	Feb 8, 1997	440	44	Oct 31, 1998	454	43	Oct 23, 1999	483
45	Nov 8, 1997	433	32	Aug 8, 1998	452	49	Dec 4, 1999	474

<b>2000</b>			<b>2001</b>			<b>2002</b>		
<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
12	Mar 18, 2000	522	14	Apr 7, 2001	555	50	Dec 14, 2002	561
17	Apr 22, 2000	514	10	Mar 10, 2001	537	47	Nov 23, 2002	553
16	Apr 15, 2000	514	3	Jan 20, 2001	529	49	Dec 7, 2002	552
46	Nov 11, 2000	511	2	Jan 13, 2001	518	30	Jul 27, 2002	548
9	Sun, Feb 1, 2000	511	43	Oct 27, 2001	515	25	Jun 22, 2002	543

# What does Unleavened Bread Teach Us?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Observing the Passover each year is a sacred privilege. It is also a time of reflection on what the Christ endured that each of us might be forgiven and become an intrinsic part of His body. The Unleavened Bread we are commanded to use at Passover and the seven days of Unleavened Bread, keeps us mindful of our responsible relationship with the Master and the body of fellow believers He died for, our dedication to the continual study of the Scriptures (Bread), and that Christ has the prerogative to heal our physical bodies

This flat, unpretentious bread that God chose to represent Jesus Christ's body as well as His humility in fulfilling His Father's will, is a spiritual state of mind that is offered to us on a daily basis. "For this cause we faint not: but though our outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Corinthians 4:16).

This is a brief summary of the symbolic meanings that are retained in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. -UNC



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# Words to Live By

COMPILED BY ERNIE MCBRATNEY

When you have nothing left but God on your side, you have enough to start all over again.

Yesterday is history, tomorrow a promise and today a gift from God.

Happiness is the will to ignore what life owes you and think about what you owe life.

It's easy to be an angel if no one ruffles your feathers.

Swift gratitude is the sweetest.

Being kind is more important than being right.

A clean conscience makes a soft pillow.

A rainbow is the ribbon nature puts on after washing her hair.

The most completely lost of all days is that on which you have not laughed.

Things turn out best if you make the best of the way things turn out.

A good neighbour doubles the value of a house.

Don't be concerned about the years in your life, rather the life in your years. -UNC

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## Baptism

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

will open for you. You will receive, if you will always ask. You will find, if you continue looking. And the door will open for you, if you continue knocking (Matthew 7:7-8, Simple English translation).

Remember, there is something very real that you can do to prepare for baptism. It is in your hands to show God that you really want to have a strong, lasting, and dependable relationship with Him. So diligently pray and study, knock, ask, and look for a relationship with God and for an understanding of His truth and He will reach out to you. God will never leave a sincere and healthy request unanswered, especially in the case of a request to draw closer to Him! It's up to you to ask, to seek, and to find!

—Gareth is a baptized young adult  
in the Winnipeg congregation.

# World News Watch *"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matt. 24:42)*

COMPILED BY DAVID PALMER • VANCOUVER

## Jerusalem's Holy Sites Key to Peace: Vatican

CAIRO: (AFP) – Solving the disputes over Jerusalem's holy sites is the key to peace in the Middle East, according to Vatican Foreign Minister Jean-Louis Tauran.

"It's clear that there will not be peace as long as the problem of the holy sites and places of worship in Jerusalem is not resolved," Monsignor Tauran told reporters following a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

"The Vatican believes it is essential to insure that these sites do not belong to any one party but are available to the whole world," he said.

In September of last year (2002) the Arab League called on the Holy See to provide clarification on an agreement signed between Israel and the Vatican to formalize the status of the Roman Catholic church in the Jewish state.

The agreement stipulates that the accord is applicable "where Israeli law is observed," which from an Israeli point of view includes contested Arab east Jerusalem, annexed by Israel and home to what is believed to be the Holy Sepulcher, where many Christians believe the body of Jesus Christ is buried.

The Vatican has once again reiterated its position, that it does not recognize Israel's annexation of east Jerusalem, and the Holy See has underlined that the agreement it signed with Israel does not concern Jerusalem, for which it wants international protection.

## Germany's Economic Woes

BERLIN: (Daily Telegraph) – Chancellor Gerhard Schröder was dealt another blow earlier this year when German unemployment shot up by almost 10 per cent in the biggest monthly increase for five years.

Nearly 400,000 Germans lost their jobs in January, taking the total to 4.6 million, or one in nine of the entire work force.

Gerhard Schröder is hoping reforms will save the economy. The rise for the same period last year was 250,000 and the previous year 280,000.

Wolfgang Clement, the economics and labour minister, has admitted the seriousness of the figures, saying they were a reflection of the country's "grave structural problems."

Opinion polls showed that Germans have spectacularly lost faith in the ability of Mr. Schröder, who suffered a humiliating defeat in regional elections this week.

One observer notes that the situation is similar to circumstances in Germany during the 1930s, just before the country elected Adolf Hitler's "Workers Party," the Nazis, in 1933.

## SUV's Cited in Warning of Weather Extremes

OTTAWA (CP) – Unless we give up our gas-guzzling SUV's and our appetite for disposable products, Canadians will have to get used to the severe weather patterns seen in recent years,

United in Nations experts warned.

The kind of sweltering, choking heat waves that hit central Canada last summer, as well as the droughts on the Prairies, are going to become a lot more common, according to a report entitled North America's Environment.

"There will be more extreme events, in terms of droughts and floods and weather phenomena," predicted one of the authors of the report that examines the state of the environment on an annual basis.

"We have to really look at how to reduce our impact.... People are driving SUV's, four-wheel drives where they don't need to."

North Americans must accept more responsibility for environmental damage and could start by curbing their energy demands – which are linked to climate change, says the report.

Total energy use in North America has grown by 31 per cent since 1972 according to the report, while parts of the Prairies and the Midwestern U.S. faced their worst drought in 133 years, posing a serious threat to the future agricultural economy.

As a result of climate change, "there is greater variability in our weather and we're getting more extreme weather events and the report clearly documents that," said Keith Robinson, deputy director of the UN Environment Program for North America. *(National Post)* -UNC