



Spring Festival 2015: The Proper Approach

This year the Passover Service will be held shortly after sunset on Thursday evening, April 2. This very special annual service is a commemoration of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. Thus, it is the most sacred occasion of the year. On the following evening, we will celebrate the Night To Be Much Observed—probably the most festive occasion of the entire year. This launches the observance of seven days of Unleavened Bread, which conclude on Friday, April 10. The first eleven days of April will be very meaningful and memorable.

The spring festival season is highly experiential and replete with promise, teaching and life lessons. We are reminded of how the Great God rescued ancient Israel from the oppressive and ruinous slavery of Egypt. 1 Corinthians 10:11 exhorts, “Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

We review the life and times of Jesus Christ and how his parents kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We review what led up to Jesus observing the final Passover of His short life on this earth and how His disciples made the “upper room” ready.

It is clear that the “end of the world” is upon us and how urgently we require the second coming of Jesus Christ because only His intervention as King of Kings can rescue humanity from the global distress it finds itself in today.

Will you be ‘keeping’ the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread this year or will you be ‘observing’ them?



Victoria German/Hemera/Thinkstock

In times past, some have said that “keeping” the festivals is legalistic whereas “observing” them is not. In 2015 should we be keeping the festivals or should we be observing them – or both?

“And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye **shall keep** it a feast by an ordinance forever (Exodus 12:14 emphasis added). Then in the New Testament the very same terminology is used: “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 5:8, emphasis added). Clearly then, the Holy Scriptures enjoin Christians to ‘keep’ the feasts of the Lord in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The terminology is consistent!

At the same time another expression appears that we should be aware of. “And ye **shall observe** the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore you **shall observe** this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever (Exodus 12:17, emphasis added). In Exodus 12:24 we read, “And **you shall observe** this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever.”

Thus, for believers in Old and New Testament times, the weekly Sabbath and the annual Holy Days were to be both “observed” as well as “kept”. In other words, we adhere to God’s instructions regarding his Holy Days, not only because we have to, but also because we want to. Maybe for some of us it began as our having to do so, but quickly it became something we did because we wanted to!

During the reign of King Hezekiah, the nation of Israel rediscovered the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. Their rediscovery led to an exuberant celebration that we would do well to emulate as applicable to us. “And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord” (2 Chronicles 30:21). This issue of *United News Canada* has multiple articles that were written to help us celebrate this year’s spring festival season in a similar way.

In this Issue:

In Favour With God and Man.....	2
Temptations.....	3
Search and Examine.....	4
What Price Glory?.....	6
National Council Update.....	8
News From Across Canada.....	9
The Storm.....	14
Camp Wildrose.....	16

Anthony Wasilkoff

In Favour With God and Man

Luke records that Jesus and His family traveled to Jerusalem each year for the Feast of the Passover. Jesus was strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him as was prophesied (Isaiah 11:2). Jesus stayed behind to talk with the teachers of Israel, to listen and to ask questions to the point that they were astonished (Luke 2:46-47). It is likely that the teachers at the Temple were delighted with the demeanor, ability, intelligence and attitude of this young boy. Jesus told His parents that He needed to be about His Father's business, but the family did not understand His words.

Jesus returned to Nazareth with His parents and continued to increase in wisdom and stature as He grew into manhood. All that time, He was "in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:5-52). We, too, are to be in favour with God and man.

When Jesus was a boy, the Passover lamb was sacrificed and prayers were made for the forgiveness of sin. Death passed over those protected by the blood of the lamb. The people ate unleavened bread to emphasize the need to remain "unleavened" or pure before God. Israel was to be a "holy people and holy nation" and the unleavened bread was symbolic of removing leaven or sin and making sure their homes and lives did not

have sin present (Exodus 19:6; Deuteronomy 7:6). They were to do this to be in favour with God. It is only the presence of God that makes anything holy, so God had offered His presence to the nation of Israel. Israel failed right from the beginning – even before they left Egypt.

After the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the New Covenant was enacted. Anyone who repents and believes is eligible to become part of God's holy people and holy nation (1 Peter 1:5, 14-16, 19; 2:9). Peter explained that Jesus Christ left us an example of how to live – that is, how to be in favour with God and man (verse 21). The Passover is meant to be a reminder of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which makes possible the removal of sin. Our part in that recognition is to believe in Him and resist sin all year long.

For the followers of Jesus Christ today, being in favour with God requires recognition of sin and a heartfelt repentance followed by baptism which cleanses a person from all sin (1 Peter 1:2). That allows God's spirit in a person (2 Corinthians 6:16). We are to live the new life which is free of sin (Romans 6:2, 15). We remain in the grace or favour of God by the choices we make in life as we allow God as the Master Potter to fashion and mold us.

Converted people keep the Feast of the Passover every year. In our case, Christ is the Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7). We remove the leaven from our lives by remaining cleansed from sin. That means we do not sin again intentionally. If we slip and repent, Christ is there to forgive.



iStock/Thinkstock

However the cost of our salvation is so high we ought to be diligent not to slip. We are to "offer up spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:5).

Eating unleavened bread is commanded of us and is symbolic of our determination to fulfill our part of the Covenant. Jesus Christ was without sin and that is our goal and objective. It is attained through the mercy and love of His sacrifice and our love of God's law, which is only possible if we also love God who is the lawgiver (1 John 3:1-10) and are empowered by Him.

UNITED NEWS CANADA

Managing Editor: *Anthony Wasilkoff*

Editorial Reviewers: *Michael Caputo, Kevin Ford, Denise Masse, David Palmer, Joseph Sheperd, Linda Wasilkoff and Dale van Zant*

Layout: *Paul Wasilkoff*

National Council: *Larry DeLong, Bill Dimovski, John Erickson, Michael Erickson, Dennis Horlick, Patrick Read, Rainer Salomaa, Lloyd Teetaert and Anthony Wasilkoff*

United News Canada is automatically sent to all members of United Church of God-Canada, and is free to all who request it.

Your subscription is provided by the voluntary contributions of members and co-workers of United Church of God-Canada.

Donations to help share our free publications are gratefully accepted and are tax-deductible where applicable by law.

© 2014 United Church of God—Canada
PO Box 144, Station D
Etobicoke, ON
M9A 4X1
www.ucg.ca

Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited.

Canada Post Publications Agreement # 1487159.



Loving (being in favour with) our fellow man is part of what Jesus Christ asks of us. John noted that if we see a brother in need and simply pass by, God is not dwelling in us (1 John 3:13-18). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus expressed the will of God in clear terms. We need to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves as we strive to love even our enemies. Matthew 5, 6 and 7 are good chapters to read as we prepare for Passover. Examining ourselves and the direction our life has taken is part of the Passover preparation exercise.

Passover is the season to focus on the all-important steps of salvation

we have taken through Jesus Christ. We need to rehearse what our behaviour will be throughout the year by putting special emphasis on our actions during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Our human minds need annual reminders of what we are to be and do. God has provided the way for this reminder by giving us the annual Passover and Holy Days. Let us rejoice as we renew our thought patterns by drawing near to the Father and Son so that we remain pleasing to them for the whole year.

We are called to be ambassadors for the family and Kingdom of

God. We can only be ambassadors if we fully understand and support the beliefs of that Kingdom. The Passover season is designed to assist us in renewing and refreshing our understanding of our calling. It is meant to reinforce the fact that we must love God with all our hearts and our neighbour as ourselves.

We live the Passover message every day, but we refresh our understanding and Covenant during the Passover season. May your Passover season be rich with spiritual food this year!

Robert Berendt

Temptations

It has been said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result each time. It appears that Satan has used the same sorts of temptations from Eve to Jesus Christ and down to us. They are listed in 1 John 2:16 as “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.”

In Eve’s case, Satan got her focused on the forbidden fruit in Genesis 3:6: “so when she saw that the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh), that it was pleasant to the eyes, (lust of the eyes) and a tree desirable to make one wise (the pride of life), she took of its fruit and ate.” She failed miserably.

However, the temptation of Christ in Matthew 4 went very

differently. After Christ had fasted for forty days and nights, Satan said in verse 3, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread” (the lust of the flesh). Christ answered, “It is written ‘man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

Then in verse 8, Satan showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and all their glory (the lust of the eye) and said in verse 9 “all these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.” But, Christ answered in verse 10, “It is written ‘you shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.’”

Satan began each temptation with “If you are the Son of God.” This was the “pride of life” part of the temptation. Instead of saying

“I’ll show you,” Christ ended the discussion by saying “away with you Satan.”



Vladislav Gurfinkai; iStock; Thinkstock

Today, each of us needs to watch our reaction to every person and situation in our lives to make sure we do not succumb to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life. If we succeed as Christ did we will be with Him in the Kingdom of God.

C.K. Vanderraad

Search and Examine

Have you ever searched for something you knew you had, but just could not discover where it was hiding?

Several years ago, I put together a chronology of the events of Jesus' last Passover and remembered several books were still in boxes in my garage. I searched in multiple boxes for them without success. I found other books I had forgotten about. Finally, I examined a stack of boxes and looked in one near the top that I was fairly sure did not contain the books. Yet, when I opened the box, there was a book that I had been searching for. I then remembered that I had loaned the other one to my son, Robert, when he was attending Ambassador Bible Centre. Sometimes you have to make an extra effort in a search.

At this time of year, we are instructed by God to search out leavening and leavened food and either consume or remove them from our dwellings before the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Let's go back to the original instructions given to the tribes of Israel concerning the preparation for observing the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

"Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses..." (Exodus 12:15). The sense of the phrase is, "you shall have removed leaven" by the first day. *Young's Literal Translation* renders this part of the verse as: "...in the first day ye cause leaven to cease out of your houses." Israel caused it to cease by having removed it previously. Obviously they could not wait until the first Day of Unleavened Bread had begun to start removing the leaven. The instruc-

tions continue in this chapter: "For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses" (v.19) and "You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread" (v. 20).

God repeats the instructions several times in these chapters. When the Lord repeats instructions, we need to take note! In the next chapter, we see the instructions repeated again (Exodus 13:3, 6-7). There were two activities specified and commanded: to remove all leavening and leavened bread and to prepare unleavened bread to be eaten during the seven days.

While still in Egypt, the people of God were instructed to prepare and eat unleavened bread with the roasted Passover lamb during the night of Abib 14 (Exodus 12:8). Obviously they would not make any more leavened bread after this evening. The process of completing the removal of leaven would occur on Abib 14.

These seven days commence with sunset that ends Abib 14 and conclude with sunset that ends Abib 21 as instructed in Exodus 12:18: "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening." God also instructed future celebrations to include holy convocations on the first and seventh days of unleavened bread (Exodus 12:16).

With that first observance, God orchestrated the "convocation" and gathering of the tribes of Israel. He organized them into ranks and they exited Egypt to a location just beyond the usual border of Egypt (Exodus 12:37; 13:18).

The Israelites were in their homes celebrating the Passover during the whole night of Abib 14 (Exodus 12:6-11) and could not leave their homes until morning or daybreak (Exodus 12:10, 22). They departed from Egypt at the going down of the sun (Deuteronomy 16:6) during the evening that began Abib 15, the day after the Passover (Numbers 33:3). Their mass exodus from Egypt was to be remembered and commemorated. "It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations" (Exodus 12:42 KJV). God directed Israel and us to begin this special festival with a special commemoration of God's deliverance of ancient Israel from Egypt and our deliverance from sin and the deception of the god of this world.

God directed events to occupy the Israelites during the night of Abib 14 and daylight of Abib 14. They did not have time to use starter dough to make new leavened bread. "And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, 'We shall all be dead.' So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders" (Exodus 12:33-34). God influenced the Egyptians to urge them to leave because of the catastrophes they had faced with the plagues. By the time they commenced their trek out of Egypt, the only bread they could make was unleavened bread.

To prepare for Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, we are to examine our physical and spiritual



Evan Sharboneau, Hemeira, Thinkstock

condition. Part of that includes making a search for physical leaven and leavened bread. We are to also search out the sins and faults they symbolize. Paul instructed the church, “Therefore purge out the old 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 5:7-8).

But there is the other side of the search. We are to search for the evidence that we are “in the faith.” We are to examine our “spiritual diets” and the condition of our “spiritual bodies.” We are to search for the stockpile we have assembled of unleavened bread of sincerity and truth and other godly qualities as well. It is not just a negative focus. There is a positive objective as well. Paul also instructs the church, “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?” (2 Corinthians 13:5). With the examinations we make we must focus on ourselves. It is not our place

to critically examine and judge and condemn others (Matthew 7:4-5). We must repent of our own sins. We cannot repent for someone else.

When we think of “examination” we think of a test or exam at the end of a semester or school year. We are tested on what we learned. The time before Passover is a time to review the lessons of the past year. For those who have been coasting and merely putting in time, the exam will be a wake up call.

Some have gotten so caught up in spring house cleaning that they have little time for spiritual de-leavening. God asks us to simply search for and remove leaven and leavened bread. We want to have the right balance and emphasis so that we do what God asks us to do. In spite of our best efforts, we will at times miss something. Leavened food will remain hidden until it is revealed sometimes in a surprising or unexpected way. Then we must act to remove it. This reminds me of some sandwiches my daughter made for me about a month before Passover. During Unleavened Bread, I was looking for something in my trunk and there I found one of the sandwiches hiding among some extra winter clothing! Out it went.

We see in the above Scriptures guidance and teaching to apply both the letter and the spiritual application of these instructions:

1. We should not be careless about searching out leavening and leavened bread, but be methodical and organized and give attention to details.

2. In the same way, we are to search out and remove that which is spiritually puffed up, that is prideful, sinful

and unlawful.

3. We must put into action the instructions to look for the flaws and leaven in our own lives before we go about examining others.

4. We are to assemble the ingredients that are without sin and ingest the nutritious spiritual food and qualities to promote spiritual growth.

5. We are to remember the miracle God orchestrated to call us out of slavery to sin and the control of the god of this world. Make participating in the Night to be Much Observed a celebration that is meaningful and encouraging.

6. As God calls us to depart from Egypt and leave the old life of enslavement to sin, we should have a sense of urgency. We should not be hesitant or procrastinate in following the instructions of the LORD. When God shows us that we need to get away from the old lifestyle, we need to be urgent and make haste to do what God instructs us to do.

7. We are to assemble with a congregation of called-out individuals to celebrate our calling, to worship God, to receive and digest spiritual food and to encourage each other.

If we love God and desire to serve Him and be prepared for His kingdom, we will have a heart to consume the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Get out those unleavened bread recipes and prepare those tasty morsels. Also, assemble the Scriptures and instructions that provide the ingredients to prepare for and provide a wonderful feast of spiritual food. Let us partake of them and be strengthened and sustained to continue on our spiritual journey to enter the Kingdom of God.

Really? What Price Glory?

We are familiar with the story of the treachery of Judas Iscariot. He had been selected to be one of the 12 apostles and was entrusted with the money box holding all their funds. Yet Jesus knew that he was a devil, “diabolos” meaning “false accuser” in the Greek (John 6:64 and 70). Jesus was well aware the prophecy found in Psalm 41:9, “Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.”

The trigger for Judas Iscariot’s ultimate treachery came at Bethany in the house of Simon the Leper. There Mary anointed Jesus with very expensive oil worth more than 300 denarii, or the equivalent of a whole year’s wages for the average working man (Mark 14:3-5). Some disciples were indignant, protesting such waste, but Jesus praised her action knowing that it was in preparation for His death and burial (verses 6–9). The disciples still did not believe that He was to endure terrible torment and the crucifixion, although He had plainly told them (Matthew 16:21; 26:1, 2). They did comprehend that the jealous priests wanted to get rid of Him (John 11:57). Judas considered this an opportunity for personal profit and went to the chief priests to ask what they would give him to deliver Jesus into their hands.

They offered him 30 pieces of silver, in deliberate contempt for Jesus, this untutored carpenter who put them to shame with His inspired teaching of Scripture and miraculous works. Judas had been intimately connected with those wonderful things, yet from that mo-

ment on he sought a chance to put Jesus in their foul hands (Matthew 26:14–16).

Thirty pieces (shekels) of silver was the price of a gored slave (Exodus 21:32) and had been reflected in Zechariah’s experience when he had asked about his wages as a shepherd. The pompous priests of his day had insulted him with 30 shekels of silver. “A goodly price” Zechariah said sarcastically, and the Lord told him to cast it to the potter in the Temple (Zechariah 11:12, 13). It then became remarkably prophetic of what was to happen with Judas.



curio/curio; iStock; Thinkstock

Judas gathered with the other apostles for what was to be Jesus Christ’s last supper, but he left before our Lord instituted the New Testament Passover. He hurried to the high priests, and then led a mob to take Him when He was in the garden. Meanwhile, Jesus knew what Judas had to do, and had sent him on his way to do it! Satan himself had entered into Judas before, and now came again to urge him on to the ultimate act of betrayal (Luke 22:3, John 13:27).

After Jesus was subjected to an illegal trial, Judas awoke to the cold

reality of what he had done and then unwittingly fulfilled Zechariah’s prophecy. He went to the priests and elders and told them that he had betrayed an innocent man. He threw their 30 pieces of silver down in the Temple before going away to hang himself (Matthew 27:3–5). The hypocritical priests, having used Temple money to bribe Judas into betraying his Master, now considered the money unfit to go back into the treasury. So they used it to buy the Potter’s field in which Judas had hung himself and died. His body subsequently swelled up and burst, spilling his bowels on the ground. The disgusted people of Jerusalem, knowing some of these things, thereafter called it “The Field of Blood” and it became a burial ground for strangers (Matthew 27:3-8, Acts 1:18,19).

All this fulfilled “that which was spoken by the prophet” (Matthew 27:9, 10). But it was Zechariah, not Jeremiah as most translations today have it. Pious men go to great lengths to explain the apparent contradiction, but the simple fact is that Matthew probably gave no name here. The name of Jeremiah is not found in early manuscripts like the Syriac, the Persic, two of the Itala, and some other Latin copies. It is most likely that the original simply read, “dia tou prophetes” – “by the prophet.” And it may be observed that Matthew often excludes the names of specific prophets, as for instance in 1:22, 2:5, 15; 13:35; 21: 4 (*Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, Mathew. 27:9). What is important is that the prophecy was fulfilled. The

erroneous attribution to Jeremiah has caused unnecessary attempts to justify it, but we need not bend Scripture to do so.

The Lord Jesus Christ has returned to glory and resumed His place as God beside His Father in Heaven. He gave up everything, both as God and as man, to make it possible for us to enter eternity. It is unlikely that we, as mere men, will ever fully grasp the breathtaking majesty of God's work. Hopefully, we may someday in the collective body of the Church made perfect. Meanwhile, let us hang on to the vision even if it is "through a glass, darkly" as Paul put it (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Thirty pieces of silver was the insolent sum paid for the life of the greatest servant of all. Jesus Christ's true worth is beyond measure, but He gave His life a ransom for us all! Truly His life was fully worth that of every man, woman and child who ever lived, or will ever yet be born into the world, since He it was who made Adam and Eve in the first place, and breathed into them the life which passed on to us all (Colossians 1:16, Genesis 2:7). But now He has made everlasting life possible for each one of us, something which no man could ever earn for himself. Only by the grace of God, extended to us by faith in the fact of the ineffable sacrifice of Jesus Christ, may anyone ever pass on into the glorious eternity of God.

What a tremendous sigh of triumph and relief the Lord's final word must have been as He took

His last breath on the cross. Just one word in the Greek, it has been obscured in translation. Our English Bibles give us the phrase, "It is finished" and it can indeed include all that was prophesied of the suffering Messiah from the beginning in the Garden of Eden, but when we look at the actual Greek word something more marvellous comes into view.

That Greek word is found only in the Gospel of John, just the one wonderful word, "tetelestai." A more important word was never spoken as it was uttered by our Saviour with His dying breath. The Lamb of God had hung in agony on that torture stake from 9:00 a.m. when He was first nailed to the wood at the time of the Morning Sacrifice until 3:00 p.m. when He died as they began to slay the paschal lambs at the time of the Afternoon Sacrifice on that crucial Passover day. It was the turning point of mankind's history. For six extremely long hours the Lord of Life suffered agony, and He had power to stop it at any moment! But He had to give Himself thoroughly, wilfully, and completely right up to the end to become the Saviour of mankind and our extraordinarily well-qualified High Priest. Having ensured that every prophecy was completely fulfilled (Psalm 69:21), He said, "tetas-tai" and bowed His head and gave up His spirit (John 19: 28-30).

That single Greek word, tetelestai, translated as "It is finished" in our English Bibles, is a perfect passive form of the verb teleō (Strong's 5055/5056), which connotes finish, or completion, and is

used elsewhere in the New Testament. It is applicable to all that Jesus fulfilled regarding prophecy and the Law, and as our Saviour. In order to save us, He had to pay the penalty for the sin of each and every one of us. He literally became sin for us, taking that tremendous burden with Him to the cross.

The debt was paid for every person in mankind's history. Tetelestai was an accounting term familiar in Greek and Roman times. Papyri receipts for taxes have been recovered with the word telelestai written across them, meaning "paid in full." This word on Jesus' lips was significant. When He said, "It is finished" He meant His redemptive work was completed. He had been made sin for people (2 Corinthians 5:21) and had suffered the penalty of God's justice, which sin deserved. Our great Father God sacrificed His Son for this purpose. Who can imagine His great pain or His enormous gratitude for all that Jesus did (Isaiah 53:10-11, Colossians 2:13-15).

Jesus Christ not only paid the debt of sin which no man can ever settle for himself, but also made possible our admission into the glory of eternal life in our Father's realm. The richest of men, by any standard, would find it impossible to buy a ticket. A very perceptive anonymous writer wrote:

"He came to pay a debt He did not owe,

Because we owed a debt we could not pay."

Last Council Meeting of 2014

On Monday, December 15, the National Council conducted its fourth and final meeting of the calendar year. The meeting was held using WebEx technology with eight of the nine members online. As is the norm, the first item of business was to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting (September 14).

Anthony Wasilkoff gave an update from the National Office. He reported that the latest subscriber development letter had a response rate of 11 percent. As a result of that letter, donations were received from six first-time donors. He related the results of five Open Houses held in three provinces. He also reported that the National Office is working on a method to receive online donations.

The Council was given a summary of a law seminar held in November in Mississauga. Areas of special concern to the church were pointed out. One of the most pressing needs is to create a policy so that the church is in compliance with the new Canada Anti-Spam legislation. Bill Dimovski noted that the presenters of the seminar stressed that it is important to have suitable policies in place and to be sure that those policies are adhered to.

Edwin van Pelt reported that our finances are sound with the income and expenditures closely on track with what was budgeted for the year.

Rainer Salomaa gave an update on what the Council of Elders is doing. He related some of the rea-

sons for deciding to change the name of *The Good News* magazine to *Beyond Today* magazine. He showed the Council a tri-fold created by the UCGIA Treasurer on



Mitchell Moss

“Planned Giving” and suggested that Canada might wish to create something similar. Ambassador Bible College has filed a petition to make it easier for students from outside the United States to attend Ambassador Bible College. A decision on this is still pending.

The Director of Operations presented the draft of the 2015-2016 Operations Plan. After some questions and making some minor changes, the Council approved the plan. It will be presented to the National Conference for ratification in March.

The Treasurer presented the 2015-2016 Budget explaining the rationale for various line items. After discussion, the Council gave its approval to present this Budget to the National Conference for ratification in March.

Committee chairs gave a short report of what their committees are

working on. The Finance Committee is looking at insurance and reimbursements. The Compensation Committee has been working with the National Office to review salary ranges. The Governance Committee has worked on an assessment form for the evaluation of the Director of Operations. The Compliance Task Force will be working on an Anti-Spam policy and a resolution to present to the National Conference on how to receive and process absentee ballots.

Anthony Wasilkoff presented a policy for Online Donations that states that automatic withdrawals for tithes and offerings will not be an option. Questions were fielded on how the online donation system would work and the cost. E-cheques will not be used because that would require us to store personal information until we had a “batch” to submit. This would increase our responsibility and liability for protecting that information. After discussion and some changes, the policy was approved with the understanding that a further related policy would be needed.

The final item of business was to approve the March and June meeting dates. The March meeting will be on Monday evening, March 16. The June meeting will be a face-to-face meeting and will take place on June 11 and 12 at the National Office. On Saturday evening, June 13 and Sunday, June 14, there will be a Ministerial Conference. Ministerial Services Team and Media Team meetings will be held on June 10.

Linda Wasilkoff

News From Across Canada

North Battleford Fondue

On the mild winter evening of December 6th, Boyd and Donna Yahn hosted the annual fondue social in North Battleford. Fifty-three brethren from Saskatoon, Edmonton and North Battleford congregations attended. There was a choice of beef, Northern Pike, chicken, mushrooms and onions to fondue. There was also a table



Robert Jonsson

laden with veggies, dips, crackers, spring rolls to choose from. This feast was followed by an array of dessert items ranging from chocolates to fruit.

The highlight of the evening was the fellowship. It was a wonderful opportunity to renew old friendships as well as get to know others better.

Adeline Sanoy

Edmonton Anniversary

Each year in January, the Edmonton congregation comes together for a dinner and evening of entertainment to commemorate their first church service. Originally, Anthony Wasilkoff and his wife, Linda, served the Edmonton congregation out of Calgary. This year was the 19th anniversary of that occasion.



Permission by Robert Berendt

Our deacon and deaconess, Joe and Lynne Broschak, cut the cake with elders, Rick and Dan Berendt, and their wives, Heather and Fern, standing by. Edmonton is one of the four churches pastored by Robert Berendt and his wife, Valerie. Several members from Saskatoon, North Battleford and Calgary attended the celebration. There were just over 100 people in attendance. The pot-luck dinner was marvelous – as home cooking always is – and the dessert table was loaded. The hour of entertainment that followed featured a number of children as well as adults being involved.

It is a joy to see the church that started with 14 people now having over 100 potential attendees. Edmonton is very happy to serve outlying brethren like the Klassen family who live in Enterprise, Northwest Territories, by live cyberscast each Sabbath. Although a number of members cannot attend due to distance, they all feel part of the Edmonton congregation.

Robert Berendt

Country in the City

What do you get when you are in the middle of the big city of Toronto and you see cowboy boots, hats, bandanas, ropes, saddles and bales

of hay? You get a little country in the city. On January 24, the Toronto congregation hosted the “Country in the City” social.

While the food, fellowship and decorations were fantastic, the center-piece of the evening was the square dance hosted by a professional square dance caller. Some seemed a little reticent at first, but soon everyone had a smile on their face as they do-si-do’d and promenaded their way to a fun-filled evening. While toes may have gotten stepped on and right got confused with left, all who wanted to participate could do so with this all-inclusive style of dance.



Amy van Zant

Young and old alike were both exhilarated and exhausted by the end of the evening. There were many comments about how much fun everyone had and that it may perhaps become an annual event. Yee Haw!

Jim & Almeda Lucas

Regina Bowling

It was a dark and rainy evening on January 24, 2015, when the Regina congregation had their annual evening of bowling. Our pastor, Rainer Salomaa, and his wife, Claudia, made the trip from Calgary for the Sabbath and the event.



Helen Teetaert

After church and a sermon on “Friendships,” a group of brethren went to a nearby restaurant and had an enjoyable time fellowshiping.

Due to weather and sickness, we only had eight bowlers and one guest to spur us on. Fun was had by all. Even though the scores were not high, our spirits were.

Lloyd Teetaert

Women’s Weekend

The Toronto congregation hosted 36 ladies from southwestern Ontario on February 7-8, 2015, for its inaugural Women’s Enrichment Weekend. The theme was “Walking by Faith” based on 2 Corinthians 5:7, “For we walk by faith not by sight.”

The weekend began with Sabbath services in Toronto where Garry Lucas gave a great sermon titled “Who’s the Boss?” Following snacks and fellowship, the ladies commuted to the nearby UCG-Canada National Office for the evening activities. As the Sabbath came to a close, we had an intimate and delicious catered dinner, during which we were able to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

Following dinner, over tea and dessert, we listened to four heart-

felt speeches on walking by faith. The first was by Lillie Robinson titled “With a Song in My Heart” on how God’s Word through song has strengthened and sustained her. She was followed by Josephine Damania’s presentation “My Calling.” She described her calling from the Catholic Church and her family’s fear for her salvation. Next was Pat Ellis with a speech entitled “Sink or Swim.” She shared the trials she had moving from Jamaica to Canada as a young wife and mother with no choice but to sink or swim with God. Lastly, Linda Wasilkoff give a presentation titled “Stand, Step, Stumble, Stride” by means of PowerPoint that outlined the stages of faith through our lives and highlighted with her own personal experiences of faith.



Marilyn Anderson

That night many ladies went home, but some stayed at the Days Inn just around the corner. The hotel was very comfortable with a continental breakfast that was attended almost exclusively by women from our event. The ladies returned to the National Office for a delicious brunch, or second breakfast to some, prepared by some of the local women. Over the same tables as the night before, we played a “getting to know you” game that brought much laughter as we learned new details from each other’s life. The event was brought to a close with an early afternoon of more fellowship and

assisting the Work by stuffing envelopes.

This was a great and much needed weekend in which we were able to gather together to fellowship, serve and learn. We were able to learn about walking by faith, but more specifically we were able to learn about each other: our strengths, weaknesses, trials and strategies of staying close to God. Despite the snowstorm warning for the area that weekend, all made it safely to the event and back home with very thoughtful small gift bags for the journey. A special thank you to Trish Romeo, Donna Checca and Linda Wasilkoff (and many others) for their hard work in preparing for this event. We look forward to future Ontario Women’s Enrichment Weekends and the relationships with each other and God that they strengthen.

Meagan Garant

Bahamian Feast 2014

If it were not for people transferring in to their site, some areas of the world would not be able to have the Feast as we know it. This past year, 12 Canadians were able to help the local brethren in Freeport, the second largest city in the Bahamas.

Two hundred and forty brethren were able to enjoy the hospitality of the Bahamian brethren who hosted the Feast at the beautiful Grand Lucayan Resort located in Freeport. Now, when you come from a cooler climate, enjoying temperature of 31 C (88 F) during the day and going down to 26 C (78 F) at night is very welcome.

The evening after the first day, the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism hosted a welcome reception. They provided buses that took us to Freeport Bahamas Adventure location on the beach. There they provided music and sampling of their local food such as Crostini Chicken, roast beef wraps and local vegetables along with drinks like Bahama Mama and Yellow Bird. As we left, we could partake in shopping of their local wares.

During Services on Friday, there was a separate service for the teens on the beach. That evening we were provided with an interactive Bible study.

Saturday evening was the authentic Bahamian Game night. There we had the opportunity to learn and play their very popular and serious game in the Bahamas—dominoes. A group stood around the piano and sang songs, while others played other card and board games.

On Sunday afternoon, Ray Wright (elder from Dallas, Texas) gave a prophecy seminar showing that, as the world faces an uncertain future, God's people can have peace amidst the chaos. We can make sense of it all through the eyes of God's Word.

A boat cruise was scheduled for Tuesday with snorkeling, fellowship and enjoying the scenery. Due



Provided by Lloyd Teetaert

to rough water, the cruise was cancelled, but buses were provided to go to the other side of the island to do snorkeling and games on the beach. On the trip back to the resort, the buses made a stop at a traditional gift shop.

Most afternoons and evenings were spent fellowshiping around the pools or on the beach and then going for meals at one of the many all-inclusive restaurants at the resort. The famous Churchill's restaurant was only open without a surcharge on Monday. There was a buffet lunch provided for the church members in a restaurant just outside the meeting hall each day. This was a very great opportunity to eat and fellowship with brethren. The food and service were excellent. On Wednesday, all 12 Canadians were able to get together for the noon meal. That evening the resort put on a fish fry by the outdoor pool, which was topped off with dessert and very lively entertainment.

Talking about food, we had very excellent spiritual food ranging from sermons on the promise of God's glory in us, a view of what man tried to create in a perfect city versus what God has in mind, being ready for the return of Christ, the law going forth and, finally, God starting a family. Mark Mackey, a local, gave a sermonette with video clips on "Why it is better in The Bahamas" and ended with "Why it is better in Christ."

The Bahamas was a great place to spend God's Feast of Tabernacles with the local brethren. Not having to wear a jacket was lovely. Overlooking the ocean provided opportunity to think of how God's knowledge will cover the earth like

the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14). To view God's creation with the sun coming up over a large body of water was truly inspiring. We are like a pebble of sand on the beach, yet we are called to do a great work. We thanked God for the opportunity to take time away from our daily work and activities to come and worship Him for eight days

Lloyd Teetaert

Duhan Anniversary

On December 13, 2014, the North Battleford, Saskatchewan, brethren presented Fred and Theresa Duhan with a cake, card and a small gift for their 40th anniversary. They were married on November 23, 1974, and have made their home in North Battleford.



Adeline Sanoy

Fred is retired from his job with Saskatchewan Highways, while Theresa is still employed as receptionist at the local radio station, CJNB and Q98. They have two children: Michael and Trista. Both children live and work in Saskatoon where they are church members.

Fred and Theresa have been faithful members of God's Church for many years.

Adeline Sanoy



Baptism

On Friday evening, January 23, 2015, Jim Connors of Lloydminster, Saskatchewan, was baptized in the home of Boyd and Donna Yahn. Several church members were present and everyone stayed for an enjoyable evening meal and fellowship.



Adeline Sanooy

Jim Connors has attended church with his wife, Terry, for a number of years. Terry was baptized some years ago. Jim has been very helpful to a number of people in the North Battleford congregation by driving them to the Feast in Canmore the last few years. One member commented that Jim has a servant's heart.

He has been involved in several areas of the oil patch in his working life and is originally from Saskatchewan. Terry has been a real trooper in spite of some effects from a minor stroke she had a few years ago and of a knee replacement. The Connors have been married "forever" in Jim's words. Jim and Terry sort of grew up together and have known one another since childhood. They have adult children.

Robert Berendt

Correa Obituary

Bridget Clare Correa, a member of the Toronto congregation, died No-

vember 26, 2014, in a nursing home in Brampton, Ontario, where she had resided for some years.



Provided by Robin Correa

Bridget was born in Kuwait, on November 17, 1920. She met her beloved husband, Patrick, in Karachi (India). Together they lived in the Middle East for many years where Patrick held responsible positions for oil companies. They had three sons: John, Alan and Robin.

In their late years, they moved to Brampton, Ontario, where they resided until their death. There they attended the local Worldwide Church of God congregation and later the United Church of God and were loved and respected by many.

Though Patrick and Bridget were distinguished in their appearance and aristocratic in their demeanour, they were humble and approachable. Most of all, they were firmly committed to the faith.

That faith helped Bridget face up to the death of her beloved husband in July, 2003, and the lonely years that lay ahead of her. She faced these trials with courage and resilience, thanks to God's help along with support from family and church.

Her last and perhaps most challenging years were spent in a nursing home severely limited by ill health.

A close and very supportive church friend, Donna Checca, describes Bridget as follows:

"Bridget loved music. Even with dementia, she would be very quick to pick up on the rhythm of music and clap with perfect timing. She was very hospitable and hated her guest leaving without taking something with them. She kept a stash of chocolates and cheese as treats for her guests. Her careful grooming even when she was confined to a nursing home earned her the title "Queen."

Bridget will be missed by her friends who look forward to reuniting with her in the Kingdom she so much longed for.

Michael Caputo

Hawker Obituary

Members of the Toronto congregation bid "so long" to Millicente James (also known as Sybil Hawker) on December 29, 2014, when



Amy van Zant

her relatively short battle with cancer ended just after the Sabbath on December 20.

Millicente formerly hailed from Guyana but had been in Canada for several decades.

She was born on May 6, 1915, and was eagerly looking forward to reaching 100 years of age. Upon learning that she had cancer this past summer, she opted not to have surgery stating that she had had a good long life and was not afraid to die. Her only request was that she not suffer.

Most affectionately known as Nanny, she is remembered for her faithfulness and quick smile. At age 99 she did her part in serving by keeping in touch with the brethren through phone calls and cards. Very rarely would she miss Sabbath services or the Feast of Tabernacles. She was featured in the January-March 2014 issue of United News Canada.

While in the hospital, she mentioned quite often that she was surrounded by love and could be found praying for others who were sick. When she was no longer strong enough to lift her Bible, she would ask the brethren to read it to her. She particularly loved the Psalms. Her last request to her son was that she not be kept on ice too long as she would get cold. Her sense of humour was with her to the end.

We miss our dear “Nanny” who was mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, great-great-grandmother and dear friend.

Donna Checcha

Henderson Obituary

Roan Henderson died of a heart attack at age 57 on February 6, 2015. A memorial service was con-

ducted following Vancouver Island services in Nanoose, B.C. on February 21.



Suzanne Lee

Roan was born July 5, 1957, to Dennis and Audrey Henderson in the small mining town of Witternoon Gorge, Western Australia. It is now a ghost town, shut down because of the banning of asbestos. Dennis later died of asbestosis because of working in the mine.

The Henderson family moved to Canada via England in 1967. The brothers, Shane and Roan, came with long hair which was frowned upon. But they soon had a fan club and the girls were chasing them. One of those girls was called Cosette Guillou, affectionately known as Coco.

Several decades later, Roan and Coco started talking to each other again through Facebook. They were often separated because of his work in Alberta.

In a phone conversation with his pastor, David Palmer, Roan said he hoped to propose to Coco and talked of a honeymoon in Paris. He truly had found the love of his life. Coco lived in the Vancouver area, and, when Roan would travel from Vancouver Island to visit, they often attended the Vancouver services. Roan's untimely death occurred

before their dreams could come true.

Roan liked the early history of the world and was interested in many different countries. He had lived in Australia, New Zealand and England before moving to Canada. He had also visited France, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Thailand and the United States. However, most of all he loved India.

It was when he was in his early thirties that God called Roan, through reading *The Plain Truth* magazine and the writings of Herbert W. Armstrong. At the time, Roan was living on the West Coast. His brother, Shane, was in Nova Scotia but soon moved back to B.C. where the two shared an apartment.

The brothers began attending Church of God services in the late 1980's and were both baptized in 1991.

Roan leaves behind: his mother, Audrey; brother, Shane; sister, Denise; niece, Cheena; Cheena's two children, Zane and Matilda. He will also be missed by many members of his church family and friends.

Denise and Audrey Henderson

Thurm Obituary

Johannes Thurm was a quiet, determined man who came to Canada from Germany in 1964 and went to work for the Federal Government as a computer engineer in the Department of Inland Waterways

Management, in Hamilton, Ontario. He was baptized on March 31, 1974.

Mr. Thurm, or John as he was affectionately called, was severely diabetic but never allowed that to



Anthony Wasilkoff

stop him although he collapsed on more than one occasion. A doctor

once asked him if he really understood what diabetes was. John replied with an encyclopedic definition which took the doctor by surprise. The doctor thought it was the best definition he had ever heard. On another occasion a nurse was having trouble with a new blood-monitoring device, so John simply took it and showed her how it worked.

A computer and electronics whiz, Johannes also enjoyed tinkering with specialized timepieces like hygroscopic clocks and wristwatches fine tuned to the three atomic clocks in Japan, Britain, and the United States. He could tell you the time to the exact second. Johannes

also enjoyed classical music, board games and his food and drink. He was something of a gourmet in that regard. The Hamilton and Toronto congregations often enjoyed the special cakes he brought to go along with coffee. He also kept us well supplied with a choice German coffee which he liked.

Johannes was born on May 4, 1924, and died in his sleep on February 3, 2015, just a few weeks short of his ninety-first year. He is now laid to rest in Woodlawn beside his beloved wife, Bertha, in sure and confident hope of the resurrection.

George & Helen Carter

The Storm

Friday, September 6, 2014, started out like any other day. However, it ended much differently than it began.

On this particular day, a powerful storm would sweep through and change our lives. Although the weather reports never confirmed that it was a tornado, it is hard to believe that anything else could cause that kind of damage.

Our home is a 100-year-old farmhouse and is filled with many fond memories. It is where our children grew up and where we have lived for the last 30 years.

My husband and grandson left the house shortly after dinner to

go for a walk. It had been a sunny day, but the clouds were beginning to roll in. On their way back home the winds began to pick up.

After arriving home my husband went up to his office to prepare for the upcoming Sabbath as my grandson and I sat downstairs in our living room. Moments later, my



Patrick Reed

husband came hurrying downstairs and told me quietly (so that our grandson could not hear) that there was a tornado warning in effect.

Tornado watches or warnings are a fairly common occurrence in the rural community where we live. But, as my husband proceeded to close the downstairs living room and bedroom windows due to the extremely windy conditions, it became apparent that this was much more than just a “warning.” Many have described the sound of a tornado like that of an approaching locomotive. Now I know exactly what they mean!

I looked out of our living room window and watched the dirt on



Patrick Read

took us two and half hours to clean up.

Eleven seconds of wind ripped two one-hundred-year-old trees right out of the ground by their roots. Shingles and part of the roof were raised and torn right off. We lost beautiful maple trees, a pine tree and a black walnut tree!

the side of the highway begin to swirl. At that moment my husband shouted to my grandson and me to take cover and get into the bathroom where there were no windows. It was too late now to go to the basement. Within a matter of 11 seconds, it was all over and a dead calm surrounded us.

While we were in the bathroom I prayed like I have never prayed before! I was very scared. Yet, I had to remain calm for my grandson's sake.

Retrospect is a powerful thing and as I think back on that day, I realize more than I ever have before that God's promise to protect us and never leave us is a sure one.

I have also had time to realize the spiritual implications of that physical storm. Matthew 7:24-27 began to take on a whole new meaning as it speaks of the carnage that can take place as a result of "the winds" blowing against the house.

Eleven seconds of "wind" put a huge branch from one of our older trees through the living room window shattering glass from one end of the house to the other, which

My husband had placed railway ties as steps going down into a kidney-shaped garden in the front of our home. The railway ties were ripped right out of the ground! Trees that were not completely destroyed had their tops sheared right off – in just a matter of 11 seconds!

The wind and the rain were like nothing I have ever seen or heard in my lifetime. The back half of a barn behind our home was flattened.

It was over and done leaving behind major damage. Surprisingly enough, the power had not gone out even though the top halves of two trees had fallen against the hydro pole. It was nothing short of a miracle that we were spared our lives and our home! I am so thankful to our Heavenly Father for the protection He gave us throughout the storm. We hung on to each other after everything settled and didn't let go for a while.

Our house is not the same anymore. It has lost its character because of the damage and losing those trees. In the same way, when spiritual storms roll through our lives they, too, can leave much carnage behind and can change us forever.

The next morning neighbours from everywhere (some I had never met before) came with chainsaws and huge trucks to help clean up the mess. They brought food, hot coffee and donuts. What a tremendous blessing! Oh how the Great God of the Impossible takes such good care of His children.

To this day, the storm has left us weary, a little fatigued and fragile. We are slowly but surely getting back to normal again. My husband had worked hard on his gardens and landscaping. Seeing them damaged was very hard on him. Although the storm is now behind us, it was indeed a life-changing experience – one I will not forget for a long while.

James 4:14 warns us that our lives are "but a vapor" and in a moment they can be gone. Trees that had been standing strong and solid for over one-hundred years were no match for the winds that day, they were but a "vapor" that in a moment were gone.

Our lives are important to God. He cares deeply for us as His children and wants us to realize and remember that although things will take place in our lives (some that will forever change us); we must allow them to change us for the good.

So the next time the "winds blow," stop and consider that we can take cover or comfort in the promises of God that He will protect all of us as He did my family on Friday, September 6, 2014.

Now this... is Summer Camp!



JULY 19 - 22 • DARWELL, ALBERTA

A children's fun-filled exploration
of a Christ-Centred life.

- Children 5 -15 welcome
- Families welcome
- Volunteers 16 and over welcome
(criminal record check required)
- For more information contact Susan
Davis at susan.renee.davis@gmail.com
- Register at ucgedmonton.org

