



Feast Memories

Many congregations host a post-feast social shortly after the Feast of Tabernacles. Toronto is among those congregations. The local social committee organized such an event for October 24 this year. Shortly after the conclusion of church services, the congregation filed into the fellowship hall and filled most of the 84 place settings that had been specially prepared and decorated.

The theme was clearly ‘Feast Memories’ and had been billed thus for several weeks. In fact, all of the delicious dishes represented the Feast locales that had been most recently attended. The same was true for the abundant, varied and scrumptious desserts.

On each plate was a place card listing five table topic questions for all to consider during the meal. Toward the end of the meal, Michael Yap adeptly developed each question and asked the diners to raise their hands and answer the question.

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Comments were received from young and old alike and reflected varied Feast experiences from near and far. One person advocated the profound benefit of attending an all-inclusive Feast site where a person would be with fellow Feast goers for every meal, every church service and every function throughout the entirety of the Feast start to finish. Another person described the perils of driving a car with a



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manual transmission (a recently learned skill) in major cities in the nation of Italy. The youngest person to comment was only 11, but was motivated to give a convincing description of keeping the Feast in Panama City Beach. Grab-bag prizes were awarded to those who courageously commented, thus allowing them to take home a random Feast memento.

My Feast experience began early on Sunday morning. I was surprised to see how many fellow Feast goers had decided to fly to their Feast site on Sunday morning just as my wife and I had. We were up at 4:00 a.m. and out the

door to arrive at the airport two hours before our scheduled departure. We wondered what we were thinking when we booked such a flight. However, we were pleased to see many brethren at the airport who had similarly exercised comparable judgment. What a joy it was to recognize familiar faces at kiosks, check-in lines, security lines and transit lines. We wished each other Godspeed and anticipated seeing one another soon after the Feast.

Each annual “Feast Memories” social enables attendees to vicariously visit multiple Feast sites even those who stayed at home. My wife and I attended only one site this year, Branson, Missouri. However, one site was quite adequate since it meant we would spend quality time with family at both ends of the age spectrum. Even so, we felt like we had gone to multiple Feast sites in one year by listening to the passionate descriptions from brethren who had travelled.

Reading this issue of UNC will likely bring back pleasant Feast memories for you of this year’s Feast and of Feasts from times past, memories to be nurtured and cherished. Also, reading this issue may give you ideas as to where you might want to attend the Feast of Tabernacles next year!

Anthony Wasilkoff

Living In A Troubled World

Is Canadian society getting meaner? Year by year, it seems people are getting less civil to one another. Is there any wonder why? Angry music and ultraviolent movies have made being kind and courteous uncool behaviour. Hip-hop stars and movie directors are the usual suspects, almost too obvious to mention.

There are hundreds of other less obvious influences that contribute to a society in which we find both less respect of others—and more ruthless promotion of self-interests.

Just watch the highlight reel from an NHL game. Half of the recap will be devoted to the goals scored and the other half to every one of the bruising fights that broke out on the ice. For some reason, society relishes seeing talented, disciplined young men reduced to punching one another just as much as seeing them perform astonishing athletic feats.

Athletes were once revered as role models for our young people. There is no allegiance or loyalty anymore. Many athletes change teams more often than some

people change their socks. Why? Money!

And so today the sports world is plagued with the abuse of illegal substances, cheating, gambling, and lying. Some well-known individuals, who should be the role models, are at the top of the list. It's a sad commentary when a TV analyst says, "Everybody cheats; it's just part of the game."

This is a world full of road rage, gang wars, disrespect for the elderly, and a lack of respect for law and order. The justice system is broken, and our government is out of step with reality. Sadly, we seem to be living in an era when the angry man or woman is rewarded. The lowly and the meek, it seems, aren't cut out for the job.

Several centuries ago a prophet wrote these words: "Truth is missing. Those who turn away from evil make themselves victims. The LORD sees it, and he's angry because there's no justice" (Isaiah 59:15, God's Word). Those words are as applicable today as when the prophet first penned them.

If the apostle Paul were alive

today, he might very well have written the same words he wrote to the evangelist Timothy almost 2,000 years ago: "You must understand this: In the last days there will be violent periods of time. People will be selfish and love money. They will brag, be arrogant, and use abusive language. They will curse their parents, show no gratitude, have no respect for what is holy, and lack normal affection for their families. They will refuse to make peace with anyone. They will be slanderous, lack self-control, be brutal, and have no love for what is good. They will be traitors. They will be reckless and conceited. They will love pleasure rather than God. They will appear to have a godly life, but they will not let its power change them. Stay away from such people" (2 Timothy 3:1-5, God's Word).

As society seems to spiral out of control, we would do well to recognize this is the world in which we live. We must be even more zealous in our desire to see a change—a change that can only be brought about because of the great sacrifice of God's only begotten Son (John 3:16).

David Palmer

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Canmore, AB

Following the injunction of “Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,” 180 attendees in beautiful Canmore, Alberta, were blessed with gorgeous weather for the Feast of Tabernacles this year. There was a fresh dusting of snow on the Sabbath, pristine alpine air and a warmth of fellowship as we cocooned in the beautiful Canadian Rocky Mountains to hear inspiring messages and wonderful music. A spirit of cooperation, service and a family atmosphere prevailed. Approximately 40 per cent of the attendees were from the United States.

The technical crew projected the hymns and also showed the quoted scriptures on the screen using the building’s built-in data projector. The staging was marvelous and the sound and lighting were excellent. Coffee and tea were available before and after services. The ambiance of the meeting facility was warm and cozy.

On the Sabbath, there was a ven-

ue change for the one day to St. Michael’s Anglican Church. It was filled to capacity. The Cornerstone Theatre was not available that day because of a wedding. The Canmore/Banff area is the second most popular spot in Canada, behind Niagara Falls, for weddings. The wedding season runs from early spring until November.

The following elders spoke: Bob Dick, Joe Dobson, Darris McNeely, Matthew Fenchel, Bruce Bird, Barry Dubkowski, Barry Korthuis, Steve Wood and Rainer Salomaa. Three other speakers were Ryan McNeely, Mike Pischke and Mike Whyte. Good comments were received about the messages. The sermons were uploaded to the festival sermon site. The Webcast on the Sabbath came through fine and Victor Kubik’s message was much appreciated.

Garrett Fenchel coordinated the special music. This was a first time for him and he did a very good job

putting together the musical selections as well as accompanying on the piano.

Activities included an excursion to world famous Moraine Lake, a teen study with the bonus of a helicopter ride for the teens who attended, a seniors’ reception, Festival Youth Instruction and a ministerial dinner.

Events ran smoothly and there was plenty of time to explore parts of this World Heritage Site. Night after night, the full moon shone brilliantly and the stars twinkled brightly.

Numerous comments were made saying “We plan to return here.” One wrote saying, “...this one was absolutely wonderful....there was really something special about this one.” Others said they would make Canmore a recurring Feast site. Truly, God was kind to us.

Rainer Salomaa

Gros Morne, NL

Forty-two brethren from the United States and Canada attended the Feast of Tabernacles in beautiful Gros Morne National Park in Newfoundland.

As everyone traveled north to the festival site they were treated to beautiful scenery with the Table Lands of the Long Range Mountains to the east and the expanse of the Gulf of St Lawrence to the west.

Services were held in one of the convention rooms of the Shallow Bay Motel. The room featured a wall of windows opening up onto a deck that is literally on the edge of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The lapping of the waves, the coming and going of the tide and the peaceful serenity of the National Park offered a perfect millennial setting for the Feast.

Four elders, Dennis Horlick

(pastor of Ottawa, Kitchener, the Maritimes and Newfoundland), Ralph Redline (from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), Monte Knudson (from Phoenix, Arizona) and the festival coordinator Larry DeLong (from Lethbridge, Alberta) shared the speaking assignments along with Dale van Zant (from Toronto) and Gary Ridi (from Kitchener). Victor Kubik’s sermon was also much appreciated.

The messages were all spiritually uplifting. As the Feast progressed it became obvious that the themes of the messages were for us to be about our Father's business in personal responsibility; to remain on-task in our individual and collective relationship with Him and our Saviour as we seek and prepare for His Kingdom; to recognize how special each and every firstfruit child is to God and His Kingdom.

Music is a major part of the culture of Newfoundland and that was reflected during the Feast. Special music was very much appreciated with duets, vocal solos and the choir. The ladies of the choir performed one piece and the combined choir sang four pieces.

We were also very blessed to have

David Hannaway in Gros Morne to play the piano for hymns, special music and the choir.

Activities included a festival dinner that everyone attended, a boat trip on Western Brook Pond, a trip to a marine research centre to view all of the marine life in the area waters, a Fine Dining experience sponsored by the local community as well as a musical concert featuring traditional Newfoundland music, which was also sponsored by the local community. We had a hymn sing on Friday evening and finished off the Feast with a two-hour variety night that included 18 "acts" on Sunday afternoon.

Once again, the Feast in Gros Morne proved to be the "Best

Feast Ever" as brethren toured, ate and fellowshiped together. The hotel staff asked questions about the Feast and our beliefs as they too experienced "Feast fever." They contributed to the success of the Feast by serving their hearts out to make our time there as memorable as possible.

One elder commented by saying "the overwhelming and consistent 'warmth' that was experienced by my family and I and the desire to work together, with all being engaged made this a most remarkable Feast of Tabernacles. (I) don't mean to overuse this word but it was the most family-oriented and focused Feast we have ever had."

Larry DeLong

Midland, ON

"It will be a Feast that we will remember for a long time" was one of the many comments made by the brethren that attended in Midland, Ontario. Another remarked that it was a wonderful family Feast.

Opening night services were enjoyed by 97 brethren as they heard a message from Patrick Read reminding everyone that "It Is Not About Us"—but rather about learning and growing and helping the many individuals that will come to know and love the God who has always loved them.

Although the weather was comfortable at the start of the Feast

it did turn cooler. That, however, had no influence on the many activities that were all held indoors and were all well attended.

Our "Meet and Greet" mixer started the activities off with 61 family members getting re-acquainted with each other.

On Tuesday evening, we held our first ever Ladies Seminar, which was presented by Mrs. Pam Kuver. There 36 ladies listened to a heartfelt address encouraging them to stay close to God and be women of faith.

The following evening provided brethren with an opportunity to enjoy a family square dance that

proved to be a highlight of the Feast. Both young and old enjoyed a hearty workout and many laughs.

Other activities included a games night, family day, Bible study, variety show and a hymn sing. The seniors enjoyed some special time with each other as they listened to a message provided by Mr. Ken Skorseth who reminded them that getting older does not diminish their ability to provide an example to others.

Our high attendance was 125. First and last Holy Days saw 105 and 104 in attendance, with the average attendance being 102.

Our messages were encouraging and enlightening, providing the brethren with the desire to continually move forward drawing on the power of God's word to make it to the Kingdom where we will have the opportunity to share our knowledge with others.

On the Last Great Day, we heard a heartfelt message from Mr. Tom Kuver titled "God's Power Over Death." He explained that there

will be billions of individuals who have never known God's way of life and will need to be taught. Those who accept God's way of life will enjoy the benefits that come from it.

After a well-attended lunch between services, the closing sermon was given by Mr. Ken Skorseth titled "Endure To The End." It was a message of hope reminding us that God's promise to provide us

with His Kingdom will happen.

Services concluded with "When Christ Shall Come." With many warm words and hugs, the family of God that had come together in Midland, Ontario, began to head home with a renewed desire for God's Kingdom and the hope of seeing each other again in the future, perhaps at next year's Feast.

Patrick Read

Kelowna, BC

More than 150 brethren from across Canada, the United States and even from Australia celebrated the Feast in the beautiful Okanagan Valley city of Kelowna, British Columbia.

Some said, "It's hard to know which harvest is growing faster in this fertile and beautiful valley: tourists or fruit." The moniker "Canada's Napa Valley" is often used and is somewhat apt. The beauty of the area added to the vision of God's soon coming Kingdom on this earth – a truly grand harvest all of us were blessed to be spiritually refocused on.

Planned activities centered on that beauty and, among other things, included golfing, a hike to "Paul's Tomb" on Knox Mountain overlooking beautiful Okanagan Lake and a wine tour of several (of the over 200) wineries located in the world-renowned Okanagan Valley.

The majority of the brethren stayed at the Sandman Hotel

where services were held. The "Meet and Greet" dessert social held early in the Feast provided members the opportunity to get to know each other. Everyone enjoyed daily fellowship in a designated hospitality area and having access to the meeting rooms 24 hours a day, which provided opportunity for spontaneous activities in addition to the planned activities.

Doug Lesh, a deacon from the Grande Prairie congregation, set a very positive, family-oriented tone for the Feast with the opening night message on "Rejoicing in Brotherly Love." The following day Mr. Lesh was ordained as an elder by Michael Erickson. The other elders attending the Feast site, Ed Dowd and John Petrisor, participated in the laying on of hands. Many commented that it was very positive to witness an ordination during the Feast.

On Youth Day, we were blessed with many youth participating

in the service. Giving his first sermonette, Matthew Erickson, a young adult from the Prince George congregation, spoke on "Growing to Your Potential" and included aspects for both in and outside the church. Ed Dowd gave the sermon on "Will You Receive Your Family Inheritance" and later he conducted a teen and young adult Bible Study on the "Power of Choice."

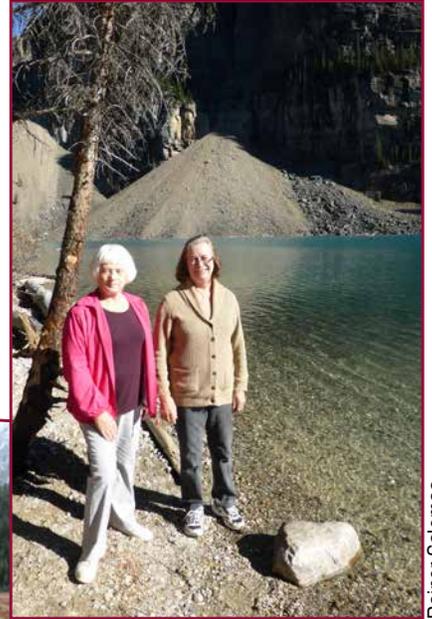
Many served in capacities from songleading to speaking for the first time ever at the Feast, which added to the overall positive Feast experience. I wish to thank all who served in whatever capacity. On more than one occasion the phrase "best Feast ever" was heard. From beginning to end the fellowship, special music, and activities flowed seamlessly together with the physical beauty of the valley and spiritually uplifting messages of God's soon coming Kingdom, that great fall harvest.

Michael Erickson

Canmore, AB



Warren Poffenroth



Rainer Salomaa

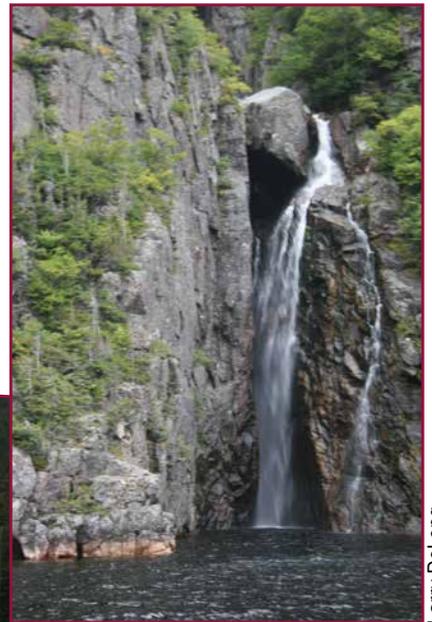


Rainer Salomaa

Gros Morne, NL



Larry DeLong



Larry DeLong

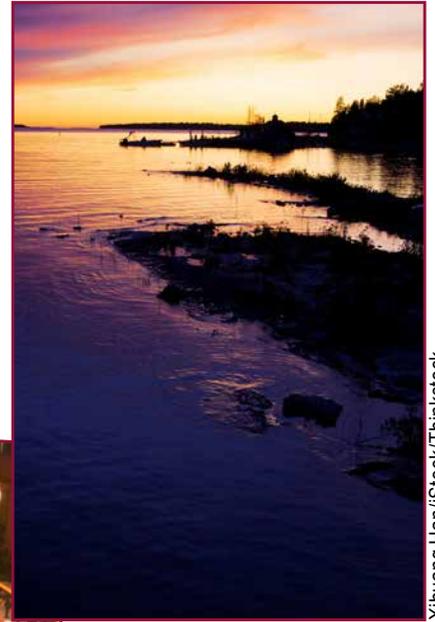


Larry DeLong

Midland, ON



Edwin van Pelt



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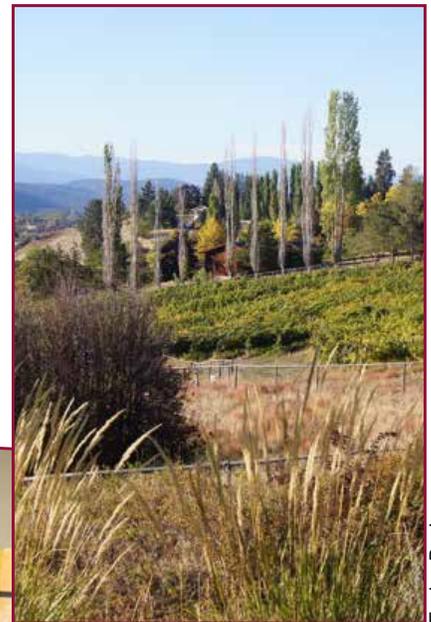


Edwin van Pelt

Kelowna, BC



Evelyn Davis



Evelyn Davis



Michael Erickson

2015 Audit Summary

The Bylaws of United Church of God-Canada require that the annual audit of the church's finances be published and made available to all congregations of UCG-Canada. If you would like to see the complete printed version of the report please contact your local pastor.

UNC

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD - CANADA							
Statement of Operations and Fund Balance							
For the year Ended March 31st, 2015							
	Operating Fund	Festival Fund	Assistance Fund	Building Fund	Other Funds	2015	2014
Revenue							
Tithes and offerings	\$1,470,123	\$ 19,505	\$ 11,803	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,501,431	\$1,420,817
Interest and other income	7,214	-	-	471	-	7,685	8,119
	<u>1,477,337</u>	<u>19,505</u>	<u>11,803</u>	<u>471</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,509,116</u>	<u>1,428,936</u>
Expenditure							
Salaries and benefits	685,284	-	-	-	-	685,284	666,733
Travel	75,470	-	-	-	-	75,470	85,906
Festival costs	-	24,200	-	-	-	24,200	18,738
National conferences	12,261	-	-	-	-	12,261	11,735
Office and general	120,390	-	-	-	-	120,390	99,177
Insurance	16,542	-	-	-	-	16,542	16,252
Telephone	9,687	-	-	-	-	9,687	9,981
Advertising	157,129	-	-	-	-	157,129	171,064
Professional fees	8,696	-	-	-	-	8,696	6,486
Hall rentals	120,950	-	-	-	-	120,950	121,569
Church supplies	7,658	-	-	-	-	7,658	3,005
Tape duplication	1,436	-	-	-	-	1,436	1,606
Rent	43,242	-	-	-	-	43,242	42,673
Equipment rental	5,261	-	100	-	-	5,261	8,540
Assistance	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,397
Bank and interest charges	8,051	-	-	-	-	8,051	10,336
Amortization - (Notes 2(b) and 3)	8,777	-	-	-	-	8,777	10,813
	<u>1,280,834</u>	<u>24,200</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,305,134</u>	<u>1,286,011</u>
Revenue over Expenditure for the Year	196,504	(4,695)	11,703	471	-	203,983	142,925
Fund balance at beginning of year	951,495	48,044	70,999	36,818	1,898	1,109,254	966,329
Fund Balance at End of Year	<u>\$1,147,999</u>	<u>\$ 43,349</u>	<u>\$ 82,702</u>	<u>\$ 37,289</u>	<u>\$ 1,898</u>	<u>\$1,313,237</u>	<u>\$1,109,254</u>

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD - CANADA		
Statement of Cash Flows		
For the year Ended March 31st, 2015		
	2015	2014
Cash Provided By		
(a) Operating activities		
(b) Financing activities	241,318	127,621
(c) Investing activities	(26,116)	(26,116)
Increase in Cash	<u>(596)</u>	<u>(579)</u>
Cash, beginning of year	214,606	100,926
Cash, End of Year	<u>1,102,901</u>	<u>1,001,975</u>
	<u>\$1,317,507</u>	<u>\$1,102,901</u>
(a) Operating Activities		
Excess of revenues over expenses	\$ 203,983	\$ 142,925
Amortization of capital assets	8,777	10,813
Interest paid on capital leases	5,561	7,071
Change in non-cash working capital	22,997	(33,188)
Cash from operations	<u>\$ 241,318</u>	<u>\$ 127,621</u>
(b) Financing Activities		
Capital lease payments	<u>\$ (26,116)</u>	<u>\$ (26,116)</u>
(c) Investing Activities		
Purchase of other assets	<u>\$ (596)</u>	<u>\$ (579)</u>

MARSH GOULDING

CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

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AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of United Church of God - Canada:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of United Church of God - Canada, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31st, 2015, and the statement of operations and fund balance, and changes in cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of United Church of God - Canada as at March 31st, 2015, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.



July 8th, 2015
North York, Ontario

CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS
(Licensed Public Accountants)

Afterwards

In the early morning hours of the 2015 Feast of Trumpets, Bill Vanderraad had a fatal heart attack. His wife, Carolyn, was left with many details to take care of before leaving for the Feast of Tabernacles. She was thankful for the help of friends, neighbours, in-laws, step-children and church members. Below are some of the practical lessons she learned and would like to share.

I recently lost my precious husband to a sudden heart attack. Even in the midst of my grief, I had a hunch there would be lots of paper work to be done, but I had no clue what would be involved.

Thankfully, the next day my brother-in-law called and gave me detailed instructions of all that needed to be done. What follows is a combination of his instructions and my experiences. I hope it will help you if you lose a spouse.

1. The funeral home will give you the death certificate. Mine gave me a dozen in case some wanted an original instead of a copy. They also provided two Service Canada forms. One to stop his Old Age Assistance and one to start my survivor benefit (a lump sum of up to \$2,500) and my monthly widow's benefits.

2. When you take these forms in to Service Canada, you will also need to provide a marriage certificate or license and the deceased's Social Insurance Number.

3. You will need to change the deed to any property to your name only. Check to see what your province requires. In Saskatchewan, the death certificate from the funeral home was not acceptable. I had to order one online. To do so I needed the death registration number from the



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funeral home and information about my spouse's parents.

4. If you have a CAA membership, you may

be able to cancel your spouse's driver's license and re-register the vehicles in your name at one of their offices.

5. Check to see if credit card insurance will pay off the balance on any credit cards.

6. Be aware that some banks will freeze the account when they are notified of a death. So, be sure you have sufficient cash on hand.

7. Check the safe deposit box for insurance policies. The funeral home contacted these and my husband's union for me.

8. Take a death certificate and your spouse's Social Insurance card everywhere. You never know when you will need it and having it with you will save some frustration.

I hope this will be helpful to anyone who loses a loved one and I pray that you will not need the information any time soon.

Carolyn Vanderraad

News From Across Canada

Calgary Open House

On September 26, 2015, the Calgary congregation hosted an Open House featuring *Beyond Today* presenter, Darris McNeely as the guest speaker. His theme “Canada: The Time is Now” contained a three-part focus, blended into one message. The presentation was advertised on the calgary.ucg.ca website with the following:

See What God Is Doing In Today's World

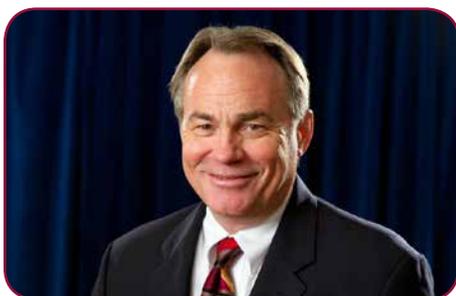
World events are moving toward God's fulfillment of His exciting purpose for humans. God directs these events toward fulfillment of His plan. God's coming reign on Earth will replace the failed governments of mankind.

Understand Why Your Life Matters

Your Bible reveals more about your life than you've been taught. It's unbelievably astounding. Discovering why you were born opens your life to a new dimension of understanding.

Know What You Must Do

Now is the time for you to



Mitchell Moss

consider a new direction for your life. It's time for you to get a new mindset that reflects the coming Kingdom of God. Begin now by living the teachings of God's Kingdom—and experience a foretaste of the world to come!

Invitation letters were sent by the National Office to 436 *Good News* magazine subscribers. This was followed up with a postcard reminder. The Home Office staff in Batavia, Ohio, prepared a banner to advertise the event that ran on two successive *Beyond Today* television programs starting two weeks prior to the event.

Ernie von Hollen crafted a sign that was placed by the turn-off to the Bow Waters Canoe Club, which was the venue location. Prior to the message, Heidi Poffenroth, Melanie Davie and Brett Davie sang a Richard Kmodras song, “God of Israel.” A literature table and refreshments were available.

There was a total attendance of 68 including four new attendees. The event was a great way to help remember our commission of preaching the gospel and preparing a people.

Rainer Salomaa

Toronto Post-Feast Social

I believe it is quite beneficial for a Christian throughout his or her life to reflect on their journey. Reflection helps us realize how far we've come and grown, as well as where we can improve. This year I had the opportunity to serve the brethren in the Toronto congrega-

tion during our annual Feast Memories social.

It is great joy to fellowship with one another with wonderful foods inspired by the various Feast sites around the world, adventurous stories and inspiring lessons. During our meal we had a short slideshow of pictures showing activities from various Feast sites brethren had attended. Those able to go to other countries are able to share experiences and adventures, which allowed others to enjoy vicariously. It was to inspire brethren to perhaps look forward to attending a different site next year.

Each year we share stories after the meal. This year, we had a short questionnaire to elicit comments. The first question was “What qualities did you enjoy about your Feast location?” Each Feast site has their own set of perks, quirks and qualities. Sharing gives potential ideas to bring to other Feast sites.

The second question was “Can you tell us about some of the inspirational people you met?” One teen passionate about art met an experienced professional artist at the Mexico Feast site. The teen asked him what the most important aspect of art is. The man answered “light” and further explained that he came to that by asking himself what God created first. The conversation showed the teen how



Amy van Zant



much God can be part of this world and our lives.

Our third question was “What activities and adventures did you participate in or do?” Riding an elephant and feeding a giraffe while holding a carrot in my mouth are now on my Feast to do list for the future. I may have to reconsider the latter!

Another question was “Did you encounter any trials or lessons during the feast?” One person shared a story of sharing a dinner with brethren who were going through trials. As we share our burdens with one another, we find strength in God through our prayers for one another.

The last question was “What are some of your goals for next Feast?” I shared that my goal, as a social hermit, is to meet new people in future Feasts. I look forward to meeting some of you and hearing some of your Feast stories.

Michael Yap

Hamilton Potluck/Dance

Southern Ontario congregations were invited to attend an “Italian Dinner and Dance.” The small Hamilton congregation committed to providing pasta and pasta sauce for all who attended, while others were encouraged to bring anti pasta, salads, drinks and Italian desserts.

Peter and Mary Ann Halcrow and Sue Hodgins assisted by Sue’s husband worked hard planning and preparing the décor. The day before the social, several members set about transforming the hall into an Italian street scene! As to be expected, the tables were decorated



Ezra Martin

with an Italian theme. Each table was covered with a table cloth and had a candle, jar of Parmesan cheese and a centerpiece with real plants. There were awnings to give the appearance of a street café and at one end of the hall was a huge mural of Venice! Another wall featured what appeared to be shuttered windows looking out onto the city.

Michael Caputo was a guest speaker and gave a sermon reminding all of the need to keep the Sabbath holy. Usual attendance in Hamilton is around 30, but that swelled to over 90 as members from surrounding congregations came. Additional people arrived after services. Shortly after sundown, a delicious meal was consumed while Italian music was being played.

After dinner Jim Lucas, provided a wide variety of dance music. There was something for everyone. During the “chicken dance” one creative young lad donned a chicken mask he had constructed himself. Musical chairs for both children and adults provided fun for adventurous participants and those watching. Several individuals went home with prizes.

With such a successful first social, one wonders what this congregation will plan to do next and when!

Linda Wasilkoff

Vancouver Baptisms

The Feast of Trumpets on September 14, 2015, became extra special for the Vancouver congregation. We were blessed with the opportunity to conduct four baptisms.

Gerry and Lillian Falstad have been attending with us for almost two years. Luis Ruiz has been a regular attendee for over a year, and June Yohm began attending with the Vancouver congregation just before Passover in 2014.



Ghyselaine Palmer

Along with the baptisms, we were also blessed to have John Elliott, a member of the UCG Council of Elders, give the sermon. Services were followed with a cold-plate potluck and a celebration cake!

David Palmer

White Birth

Sixto and Jocelyn Yap (Toronto congregation) are pleased to an-



Lorayn White

nounce the birth of another granddaughter.

Elizabeth Lilian White was born on October 20, 2015, weighing in at 5.85 pounds and measured 18.75 inches long. Parents are Reuben and Lorilyn White of the Richmond, Virginia, congregation. Paternal grandparents are James and the late Keiko White.

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Mercer Birth

Isabella Amylee Mercer arrived at 6:48 p.m. on October 22, 2015—her due date! She is the daughter of David and Tracy Mercer of the Hamilton congregation and sister of proud big brother, Ethan.



David Mercer

Isabella weighed nine pounds and one ounce and was measured at 21 inches long.

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Quebec Ordinations

Something very joyful happened during the Feast Trumpets in our small congregation of the United Church of God, in Montréal, Québec.

During Sabbath services, two

days before the Feast of Trumpets, our minister, Mr. Michael Caputo, told us that we would have had a very nice surprise during the coming Feast. He was right! During the Feast of Trumpets, he announced, the ordinations of four



Yvon Poulin

individuals and also made it official that a man who had been a deacon in another church of God had been credentialed as a deacon in our assembly.

The members who were ordained are Pat and Marie-Anne Delfino, and Harold and Sharon Descôteaux. The deacon who was credentialed is Ange Marie Dunn. These brothers and sisters in Christ are very much esteemed and loved by our small congregation, and the event is seen by us as a great moment and a great blessing!

During the past ten years, our Montreal church has gone through many trials and our great Father decided to encourage us and bless us with three new deacons and two deaconesses. They will be a big help to Mr. Caputo who can only attend Montreal monthly. They will continue serving our congregation with the same love and zeal that they have shown towards God's people for

many years.

Before concluding, it is worth mentioning that altogether, the five deacons/deaconesses have about two centuries' worth of experience in the faith! Each one of them, has been a true Christian for over forty years.

Yvon Poulin

Alberta Ordination

Although a native of California, Doug Lesh spent much of his childhood growing up on the family farm in Alberta's Peace Country. It was there that he met and married Beth. The couple eventually made the County of Grande Prairie their home. The County



provided by Doug Lesh

is also home for the majority of their children and grandchildren and where Doug has spent the last 22 years working in the freight industry.

Doug was ordained a Deacon in 2007. Then on September 28, 2015, during the Feast of Tabernacles in Kelowna, he was ordained as an elder. Doug and Beth continue to serve the Grande Prairie, Alberta congregation.

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Ontario Ordination

During services in Hamilton, Ontario, on October 17, Paul Wasilkoff was ordained as an elder. Paul along with his wife, Coreen, and their three sons moved from Cincinnati, Ohio, to Ontario in August. Prior to the move, Gary Antion had put forth the recommendation for Paul's



Michelle Moss

ordination. However, the actual

ordination was put on hold until the Wasilkoffs relocated to Canada. Mr. Antion drove to Ontario to conduct the ceremony.

Paul will serve as Assistant Pastor for the Hamilton congregation, as well as IT Manager in the National Office.

UNC

Dress For The Kingdom

The following is adapted from an article, written by John Ross Schroeder, which appeared in the Summer 2011 issue of *United News* from the British Isles (no longer published).

When we attend a Holy Day or Sabbath services, we all appear in the presence of God. Solomon reminds us that God is in heaven and we are on earth (Ecclesiastes 5:1-2). We are all present to worship our Creator and to fellowship with our brethren. However, we fellowship with each other only in and through our fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3). This is because, 'both He who sanctifies and those whom He is sanctifying have all one Father; and for this reason He is not ashamed to speak of them as His brothers' (Hebrews 2:11, Weymouth translation).

Since at Sabbath services we are all in the presence of our Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, it stands to reason

that we should attend services in the very best clothing that we have. Holy Day and Sabbath services are not a time for casual attire. Jesus Christ drew our attention to the fate of a person who attended an important banquet without properly dressing for the occasion (Matthew 22:1-14). The lesson there has very strong spiritual implications.

However, if someone does dress down a bit (particularly a new attendee), this should never constitute an opportunity to judge him or her. In the context of dress, the apostle James strongly cautions against premature judgment and showing partiality to the better-off (see James 2:1-4, 9). Spiritually, such behaviour constitutes a clear violation of the Ten Commandments.

The apostle Peter also emphasized the spiritual in advising about women's dress (1 Peter 3:3-5). The Sunday services I attended some 60 years

ago in a prominent Protestant denomination had obviously turned into a fashion contest of one-upmanship among the ladies. Clearly this attitude is not correct either.

Helping our brethren to dress properly with a non-judgmental attitude is certainly in their best interests. I know of an occasion where the brethren all chipped in and collected enough money to buy a decent suit for one of the brethren in a UK church congregation. Afterwards he gratefully wore it to Sabbath services.

In the future the saints, who will make up Christ's bride at His return, are promised garments that are pure and white. These represent righteousness (Revelation 19:7-8).

For now, as we come into the presence of God each Sabbath, we should dress appropriately to represent that coming Kingdom!

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National Conference and National Council Meetings

The day before the Feast of Trumpets was the date set for this year's annual meeting of the National Conference. Why, you might ask, was that day chosen? The meeting must be held within six months of the fiscal year-end (March 31) and must be done after the yearly audit is completed. This required that the WebEx meeting this year occur on Sunday, September 13. In spite of the inconvenience of timing, all but three members of the National Conference were online for the meeting!

After a prayer led by Robert Berendt, the meeting began with an address by the Director of Operations. He cited Scriptures having to do with planning and related those to the importance of the plans under which UCG operates as an organization.

David Palmer, on behalf of the Media Team, reported that, as a result of airing the Beyond Today television program, over 45,000 responses have been received. Some of those who have responded to the program are now attending Sabbath services. He also announced that a new section has been added to the ucg.ca website where past United News Canada articles have been categorized and posted.

For the Ministerial Services Team report, Anthony Wasilkoff gave an update about Feast of Tabernacles plans for Cana-

da. He referred to recent baptisms across the country and others coming up soon. He also acknowledged that Peter Corrigan had recently been ordained an elder and announced that two additional elders would be ordained shortly.

For the Treasurer's Report, Edwin van Pelt read the cover letter from the auditor and explained that this year's audit once again went smoothly.

During the Chairman's Address, Rainer Salomaa focused on this year marking the 20th anniversary of the start of the United Church of God. He reminisced about the January 1996 meeting when UCG-Canada was officially started. He emphasized the need to maintain unity and work as a team to serve God.

By resolution, the next annual meeting of the National Conference was established as September 18, 2016. Some business was done by mail-in ballot prior to the meeting. Minutes from the previous annual meeting and a special meeting on June 14, 2015, were approved. The March 31, 2015, Financial Statements were approved. A resolution to use Marsh, Golding as the 2016 auditor was also approved. The last item that was balloted upon was to choose three National Council members. The three chosen to serve three-year terms were: Peter Corrigan, Michael Erickson and Anthony Wasilkoff.

After a short break, the members of the National Council began their meeting. Outgoing member, Dennis Horlick, was thanked for his service and new member, Peter Corrigan was welcomed to the board and asked to give a short biography of his life.

The first item of business was to approve two sets of minutes from the June meetings. Once this was completed, Edwin van Pelt reviewed the draft of the T3010 form (tax form for charities). The National Council then approved sending the form to the government.

Larry DeLong presented the 2016-2017 Strategic Plan, which had some changes in wording from the previous year. After he explained the rationale behind the changes, the plan was approved for presentation to the National Conference for approval in March 2016.

Mr. DeLong then presented preliminary research of potential costs should the National Council meet in Western Canada next June. The purpose would be to enable members of the board to visit the surrounding congregations.

The next meeting of the National Council is scheduled for December 14, 2015 and will again be held via WebEx.

Maintain the Momentum

Among the billions of people who have ever lived, there has been a wide range of guesses about what will happen after death. Beliefs vary greatly but few offer hope to everyone. In all of this, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day, which we just celebrated, declare a truth and a hope that is pure and refreshing. They teach us about a loving Creator whom Jesus revealed to mankind as a Father seated upon a throne of mercy—a Father who wants everyone to be saved.

The last four Holy Days (Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day), which God declares as “My feasts” in Leviticus 23, reveal the final elements of the plan of God. They portray salvation through the return of Jesus Christ, a thousand years of peace and oneness for mankind. This will be followed by a time when all who have died without knowing the truth will be resurrected and educated so that they can make an informed choice about how to live their lives.

The Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day have given us eight days of spiritual feasting—days during which we focused on the Almighty God and the only true hope for mankind. We rejoiced in the excitement of knowing that family members and others who have never turned to God nor learned obedience to Him will be given a fair and complete chance for salvation. If we kept the Feast with

willing hearts and were spiritually filled, we have gathered the momentum God intended and the motivation to preach this wonderful truth in a world where the storm clouds are gathering. This bright point of light that was illuminated once again this year gives us something to focus our attention on in the months ahead.

Every time I visit the graves of my parents, I am reminded of the blessing of the knowledge God that has revealed. Every time I hear of war and rumours of war or of millions of refugees with starving children, I recall the great hope that we heard about in sermons and read in our own personal Bible studies. Keeping the momentum that each Feast gives us is something we are admonished to do.

Momentum means the force of motion gained in movement or impetus. It takes energy to keep anything moving and that is the part God does not do for us. God provides the impetus and motivation. We have the responsibility to keep that momentum going in our lives. We must build the character of consistency and patient continuance in well doing. God has made His plan for the future clear to all those who love Him and keep His commandments. He offers eternal life, a spiritual body and an inheritance with Jesus Christ and all the saints in His family. God asked what more He could have done that He has not done (Isaiah 5:4). We have been fed spiritual food at the Feast and

have the Bible constantly at our side. God does not give us a task that is impossible. With Him, all things are possible. He has done His part and now we must do our part.

In daily prayer and study, we stay close to God. Some tips on how to keep your momentum might include: 1) review the your sermon notes soon after the Feast, 2) talk about your Feast experiences and ask other people about theirs and 3) always accentuate the positive as it is very easy to think negatively and that is when little hills become mountains.

We can always find things to criticize and be negative about, but as Christians we need to treasure the wonderful truths God has revealed to us and keep our attention focused in that direction. As we observe the daily troubles of humans on earth, our faith and clarity of thought should be enhanced. In our communication with family members we love, but who are not obedient to God, we can be looking forward to their time of understanding. We need to remember the price Jesus paid for our part in His plan and know that we are ambassadors for that Kingdom and that plan. We need to build the character that will be pleasing to God. It is right and good that we are responsible to continue to preserve the momentum of His Feast days. Let us all do our part this year.

Robert Berendt