



The Continuation of God’s Plan

While preparing to write the cover article for this issue of *United News Canada*, I took the time to review lesson 35 of the *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*. It was first published in 1964 and was titled “The Church in God’s Master Plan.” The cover has an imposing black and white photo of Mount Sinai captioned at the bottom with the statement “Plain of the Law’ – Where Israel Heard the Voice of God!”

Just above the photograph is a hand-written date indicating when I began to study this particular lesson – December 10, 1966. At this time I was an 18-year-old freshman at Ambassador College in Pasadena, California. Even so, I felt compelled to continue these excellent lessons I had embarked upon three years previously. As a condition for subscribing to the course, all students were required to promise they would study the course for half an hour each day. They were also to write out (by hand) each of the Scriptures cited in the lesson in answer to each of the questions listed.

My personal experience was that half an hour was simply not

enough. I found that at the half hour mark I was only getting warmed up and typically continued for another 30 minutes. In so doing, I finished the lesson in two weeks instead of a month. No matter, I would study something else while waiting two weeks for the next lesson to arrive. I suspect many other Correspondence Course students were doing something very similar back in those days.

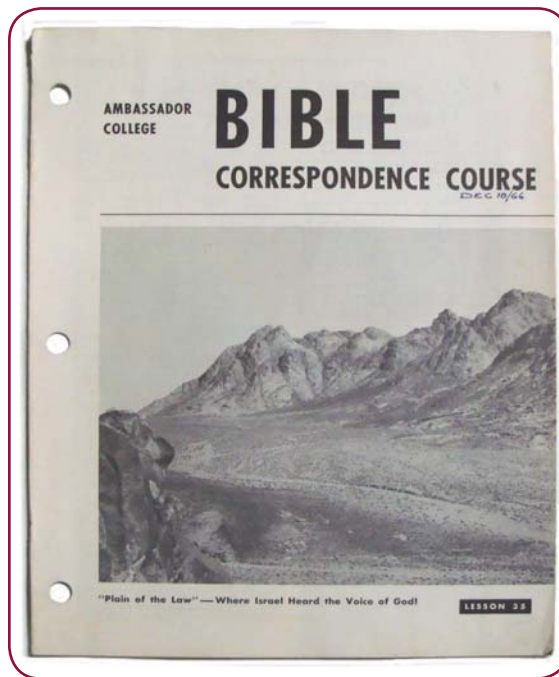
This issue of *United News Canada* is similarly intended to help us prepare for and observe the highly-important Feast of Pentecost. The Feast of Pentecost is strategically situated to help us bridge the gap between the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread and the four autumn festivals. God’s plan of salvation is wonderfully laid out and so are the holy days that enable us to rehearse that astounding plan.

One of the remarkable aspects of Pentecost is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit that enables all Christians who receive it to internalize God’s law of love. Two chapters in the book of Hebrews (8 and 10) explain how the Great God under the New Covenant will put His laws in the minds of his servants and write them in their hearts. He would then be their God and they would be his people.

We might wonder why it does not say God would write righteousness, or perhaps love, in the hearts of His servants.

Why does it say law? To some that may even sound “legalistic.” The answer is simple. It is God’s royal law (James 2:8) that defines genuine righteousness and godly love as many Scriptures clearly attest. There are many aspects of learning to be experienced by observing the Feast of Pentecost year by year. May all the articles in this issue of *United News Canada* be a special benefit to you.

Anthony Wasilkoff



Anthony Wasilkoff

In this Issue:

Practicing What We Preach.....	2
Lessons From Childhood.....	3
Latest National Council Meeting.....	4
2015 Leadership Weekend.....	5
News From Across Canada.....	7
Lethbridge Local Strategic Plan.....	8
Good Works Project.....	9
Pentecost and God’s Plan.....	12

Among the interesting sub-topics covered in Lesson 35 are the following: Christ the Wave Sheaf; Pentecost in the New Testament; Counting Fifty Days; What It Means to Be the Firstfruits in God’s Plan; Holy Spirit Prepares God’s Firstfruits; God’s Law in Your Heart; God’s Law Given on Pentecost; and True Church Founded on Pentecost. All of these and a few more were crammed into the 16 pages.

Practicing What We Preach

A subscriber to the *Good News* magazine sent a letter to the United Church of God Home Office acknowledging that the Church preaches the doctrine of keeping the feasts of God, but asked, “While you teach them, do you actually keep them?”

Are these feasts of the Lord still relevant today? And if so, why do we keep them? Are they just “religious trappings,” or are we instructed to observe them for a specific reason? There is a scripture in the Old Testament book of Leviticus that admonished the nation of Israel to observe the feasts of God. “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, concerning the Feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts” (Leviticus 23:2). The entire chapter then gives instructions from God as to the observation of these special feasts, and when we look closely at the festivals outlined, we learn a number of lessons.

One of those lessons is particularly important in answering the question as to why we continue to observe them today. While many of Canada’s mainstream churches simply neglect or ignore these festivals, the United Church of God continues to observe all of the

Feast days, including the Feast of Pentecost. But why?

Three specific words are used each time God reminds us that the feasts, His feasts, are to be observed. So let’s take a close look at God’s instructions. “These are the Feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which you shall proclaim in their seasons” (Leviticus 23:4). The word “holy” in this verse refers to “a sacred place” or “thing.” The Hebrew is *quodesh*, from the prime root meaning “to observe as ceremonially or morally clean.”



Dana Moss Photography

Convocation refers to “a calling out, as in a public meeting.” In other words, a holy convocation is a God-commanded sacred assembly of God’s people. But the word convocation means much more than that. It also means “a rehearsal.” The Hebrew is *miqra* and is taken from the prime root of the word *qara*.

Why is that important? Because in a word it means the feast days involve “rehearsal.” Each week on the Sabbath, and each year as we observe God’s annual feast days we are rehearsing the plan of Salvation.

These feasts of the Lord, including the Feast of Pentecost, are a blueprint of God’s plan for His entire creation, and as we continue to rehearse God’s way, God’s plan, we are in effect, “practicing what we preach.” We are rehearsing for the Kingdom of God!

It’s interesting to note that the first scripture that uses the phrase holy convocation is found in Exodus 12:16. It refers to the keeping of the seven-day Feast, the Days of Unleavened Bread. The last use of the phrase holy convocation is found in Numbers 29:12, referring to the Feast of Tabernacles.

Jesus made it clear that He came to do the will of His Father (John 5:30; 12:49-50).

When we understand that Christ is the central character of God’s plan, we recognize that the Messiah observed and kept all of God’s commands, including the feast days. The apostles also observed them, even after Christ’s death and resurrection. The apostle Paul wrote

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.

© 2015 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.



that the Old Testament scriptures were given for our learning (Romans 15:4). The word “learning” refers to both knowledge and function, the concept of not just acquiring information, but acting on it as well.

So whether we are looking at Old Testament scripture, or bringing Jesus into the picture, we still have the commandment to keep the feasts. And each is a portion of the overall rehearsal program that God laid out, so that we might be bet-

ter equipped as kings and priests in His kingdom.

God tells us to keep these holy convocations, these rehearsals of His plan of salvation in their season. We are to observe, to rehearse, to practice and to continue to do so year in and year out. Each holy day is designated by God for us to step back from our busy world for a brief period of time, and once again rehearse His marvelous plan of salvation.

One day all this rehearsal will

be over. Jesus Christ will be here and it will be time to implement all those things we learned at rehearsal. That’s why a holy convocation, a commanded assembly of God’s people, is to be proclaimed, observed and rehearsed. We have the command to “preach the gospel,” and to preach the gospel requires that we practice what we preach which includes rehearsing many elements that the Pentecost pictures.

David Palmer

Lessons From Childhood

Recently an event from my childhood was brought back to mind. We lived on a farm located about one kilometer from the main highway. Our house was located at the end of an unpaved road and had one other house between us and the highway.

There are many chores to do on a farm. One was to walk down our country lane to the mailbox. It was usually a treat to have that assignment as it might mean a break from weeding the garden or other unpleasant tasks!

One day I was asked to check the mail. I remember a beautiful summer day. All was going well until I got close to our neighbour’s house. Then, I heard yelling and screaming – some of it unintelligible. It was so spooky to be jolted out of the serenity of being surrounded by sounds of nature to hearing yelling. I was so scared I almost returned home without getting our mail!

We knew the people who lived in that house. I could even recognize the voice I was hearing. Then I was able to make out one sentence as I passed by the house: “Thank you for Acts 2:38.”

When I arrived home, I asked my Mom what was happening. She explained that the individual believed

in “speaking in tongues” and that was what I had been hearing. She went on to explain what the Bible actually teaches about the subject.

Recently, I read through the book of Acts once again. It again struck me how a careful reading of Acts, chapter 2, shows that it was Christ’s disciples who spoke in tongues – not everyone – and that they were not speaking gibberish. The miracle had a purpose – to be able to communicate with many from many other parts of the world in their own languages.

Another verse I found very comforting as I read through the book of Acts was 9:31. It states that the churches had the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit and they multiplied. This is the miracle I would ask for on this coming Pentecost. However, it will require effort and cooperation on our part.

Linda Wasilkoff



martinaphotography/istock/Thinkstock

March 2015 National Council Meeting

The National Council conducted its first meeting of 2015 on the evening of March 16 using WebEx technology. All nine members were online. After the December 2014 Minutes were adopted, various reports were presented.

The Director of Operations reported that 25 new donors were added to our database as a result of the November 2014 Subscriber Development letter, which had a 13.4 percent response rate. The responses to the latest Subscriber Development letter are beginning to come in and they are looking good.

The Council was informed that the contract for a potential Feast site in Quebec has not yet been signed. The room rates being offered are too high and there is too much liability for the church built into the existing contract.

The church had been receiving a free time slot in addition to what we were paying for on Vision TV for airing the Beyond Today television program. This is no longer available because someone has purchased that time. A different free

slot is being looked for.

Paul Wasilkoff gave a demonstration on how the new online donation process will work. There is a need to do some further testing with it to be sure that it will work for us. The system will use Interac which means anyone using online donations must have set up online banking with a major Canadian bank and have access to an Interac card. They will use the card number and their own password for that card. This will be approved by the bank and then the individual and the church will receive confirmation of the transaction.

Edwin van Pelt reported that as the fiscal year is close to ending we are pretty well on track to meet the budgeted projections. He noted that last year about 70 percent of the income came from members and 30 percent from donors and coworkers.

Rainer Salomaa gave an overview of what the Council of Elders has been working on. He noted that the February meetings were very productive with many items being

completed. Some of these will be reflected in what will be presented to the General Conference of Elders in May. He reported that the work in the U.S. is doing well financially.

Each committee chairman gave a short update on what his committee is working on. All will do more work when they meet face-to-face. The Compliance Task Force asked for a short meeting of the National Conference during the Ministerial Conference in June to seek approval of a resolution on how absentee ballots will be collected and counted. The National Council approved calling that meeting. The Task Force will complete the resolution to submit to and receive approval from the National Council before it is sent to the National Conference.

Paul Wasilkoff has been working on placing a French version of the Bible on the ucg.ca website. He has this partially done and will complete it once other time sensitive matters are taken care of.

Linda Wasilkoff

New Canadian Online Service

Over the years, we have had numerous requests from people to provide a mechanism for online donations. For some time, UCG Canada has been looking for a way to provide a means for online donations. Each potential avenue we looked into seemed to lead to a dead end. However, persistence does pay off!

This past year, a company was found that seemed to have what was needed. Over the past several months, the office and IT staff have been working with a company called Beanstream to set up online donations.

Members, coworkers and donors will now have the ability to donate

online. What will be required is: that the individual have an Interac bank card, which must be connected to a bank account; and that bank account must have internet banking enabled. Most major banks and a few credit unions will be able to be used in this program.

Negotiations and configuration

requirements were more complicated than it might seem. We first had to be satisfied that they would be able to provide the needed security for the information that would be gathered. They had to be satisfied that we are a legitimate charity – or more accurately for them – a legitimate company.

Then came the technical part. Paul Wasilkoff, from the UCGIA IT department, worked to be sure that Beanstream's system would be able to handle what we need. When he was satisfied that it would, he proceeded to look for a suitable "shopping cart." Anyone who has done online shopping is familiar with the fact that as you choose to "buy" an item, that information is stored while you are allowed to browse for any additional items you might like

to purchase. You accumulate all you wish to purchase in the cart until you are ready to check out and pay.

For our online donations, the shopping cart allows individuals to choose which fund they are making the donation to: Tithes and Offerings, Holy Day offerings, Assistance Funds, etc. It also gives the person a chance to review and make any changes prior to payment.

Once you have determined the fund(s) and amount you wish to donate to each fund you are asked for personal contact information. Finally, you will be taken to your own bank's site where you will be asked to enter your internet banking credentials (neither Beanstream nor the church will have access to this). When you have confirmed the

amount and which account it should come from, you will be e-mailed a confirmation message showing that the donation has been made. You will have numerous opportunities to change the amount or cancel the operation.

It was determined by the National Council that there would not be "automatic deductions" since giving tithes and offerings should be a conscious and determined act. It was also decided that using credit cards would not be desirable since each credit card company would deduct a percentage of the amount donated in addition to a transaction fee.

We trust that this new addition to the website will be of benefit to many.

UNC

2015 Leadership Weekend

March 21 and 22, 2015, were the dates for this year's Leadership Weekend in Ontario. As usual, it was well attended by brethren from all over Ontario. Three individuals from Quebec had planned to attend but had to cancel at the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances.

This year we were once again blessed to have Gary and Barbara Antion come back to their Canadian stomping grounds in Toronto to participate in the weekend.

On the Sabbath, Mr. Antion gave a sermon on "Preparing for the Passover." After services, the Toronto congregation hosted a

delicious and plentiful potluck meal for the brethren who stayed to enjoy food, extra fellowship and instruction.

After the meal, all were invited to attend a presentation by Mr. Antion on the importance of "Integrity for Life" in our personal, family, vocational and church life.



Anthony Wasilkoff

Seminars on Sunday were by invitation (due to limited space at the church office) and began at 9:00 a.m. with a DVD by Mr. Randy Stiver. He discussed "Common Doctrinal Challenges" such as which calendar we should use, new moons, sacred names and many other very thought-provoking topics with a quick summary of the church's position on these topics.

At 10:00, Mr. Patrick Read discussed the "Importance of Reaching our Youth" – the future of our church. This was followed by part one of a presentation by Mr. Gary Antion on "Mediation and Peace Making" with an emphasis on mediating for success.



Anthony Wasilkoff

On Sunday, the ladies of the church office ensured that we were all well nourished with coffee and breakfast snacks before the seminars began and a delicious lunch with a choice of homemade soup (chicken or beef), sandwiches and desserts.

After lunch, Mr. Antion continued with part two of the “Mediation and Peace Making” topic with a focus on resolving problems. This led to some open discussion



Anthony Wasilkoff

and comments on several topics during the Discussion and Closing Comments portion of the day.

As is the case every year, the attendees left encouraged, inspired, unified and very grateful for all the hard work done by the presenters and others to make these leadership weekends the success that they always are.

Jim & Almeda Lucas

Prayer Poem 6

The morning light is breaking, Lord,
Another day is here;
Life's problems must again be met,
With heart and vision clear.

Strength for today I ask, dear Lord,
Strength for only today;
Renew my faith, my hope revive,
Illuminate my skies of gray.

For yesterday is past, dear Lord,
Tomorrow I ne'er may see.
Today alone lies in my grasp,
To use or lose for eternity.

Lord, help me to lend a helping hand,
To dry the fallen tears;
To give to all whose life touch mine,
Some comfort or good cheer.

Our Father, help me to sink my poor weak self,
With its longing, hopes and fears,
In service to my fellowman,
Battling through this vale of tears.

Just for today—day by day,
Courage and strength I pray.
Garnering the good, forgiving the wrong,
I'll have lived my last today.

So our Faither, help us to see the light,
And not in dismay.
In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.

Dean Hostetler

News From Across Canada

Vancouver Farewell

April 25, 2015, was a special recognition Sabbath for Wendy Burton. Wendy, her husband Paul and two boys Xylin and Jayden were about to move back to Calgary where they will be closer to family that includes her mother, father and three sisters.

Wendy was recognized for her contribution of special music over the last several years in the Vancouver congregation especially on Holy Days. She then performed one more time for the congregation.



Nicolas Sherry

Wendy was presented with a gift card, as well as a card of well wishes signed by members of the congregation. Fellowship included a special cake in her honour.

David Palmer

Birth Announcement

Gabriel, Michelle and Joshua Vautour of the Ottawa, Ontario, congregation are happy to announce the birth of the newest addition to their family, Lydia Joy, born on March 1, 2015. Adorable little Lydia weighed in at 6 pounds 6 ounces (2.9 kg.), and was 19.3 inches (49 cm.) long. We are

thankful to God for our precious little miracle.



Michelle Vautour

The proud grandparents include Jorge and Kathy de Campos of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Jean-Pierre and Camilla Vautour of New Brunswick. Lydia is the sixth grandchild of Jorge and Kathy de Campos and the tenth grandchild of Jean Pierre and Camilla Vautour.

Michelle Vautour

Obituary

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Mrs. Jeanne-Martel Dunn. She passed away February 4, 2015, at the age of 70 years and seven-months. She had been living in a residency and was admitted to hospital a week prior to her passing. She leaves behind a loving husband, Ange-Marie Dunn, of almost 46 years of marriage, and five children.

Mr. and Mrs. Dunn were married in 1969 and met in the most unique circumstances. Both responded to a newspaper article stating they could find their perfect match with a computer. They both answered questions and entered the answers into a computer to test the theory. After an exhaustive 250 questions, they were

sent each other's names and the rest was history.

They both began attending church together in 1978. Mr. Dunn was baptized that year. Mrs. Dunn was baptized the following year, in 1979.

Our deepest sympathies go out to Mr. Dunn and his family.

C'est avec grande tristesse que nous annonçons le décès de Mme Jeanne-Martel Dunn. Elle est décédée le 4 février 2015 à l'âge de 70 ans et 7 mois. Elle vivait dans une résidence et a été admise à l'hôpital une semaine avant son décès. Elle laisse dans le deuil un mari aimant, Ange-Marie Dunn, de près de 46 ans de mariage, et cinq enfants.

M. et Mme Dunn ont été mariés en 1969 dans des circonstances uniques. M. et Mme Dunn ont répondu à un article de journal affirmant qu'ils pouvaient trouver leur match parfait avec un ordinateur. Ils ont répondu aux questions et les réponses ont été entrées dans un ordinateur pour tester la théorie. Après avoir répondu à une série de 250 questions, leurs noms ont été envoyés à chacun et le reste de l'histoire vous la connaissez.

Les deux ont commencé à fréquenter l'église ensemble, et en 1978, M. Dunn a été baptisé. Mme Dunn a été baptisé l'année suivante, en 1979.

Nos plus sincères sympathies vont à M. Dunn et sa famille.

Jessica Robertson

Lethbridge Local Strategic Plan—One Year Later

After the 2013 Feast of Tabernacles, the Lethbridge, Alberta, congregation became fired up for growth and change. It was suggested that we come up with goals for our local congregation, so we set aside time after two Sabbaths to establish these.

We followed the same format as the United Church of God strategic plan and came up with goals in the areas of Public Proclamation, Organizational Administration and Congregational Care.

These are the goals we have achieved in a little over a year:

1) Public Proclamation

Under this category, we have focused on volunteer opportunities that benefit church members and our community. These are opportunities to demonstrate love to our brothers and sisters in Christ and to shine as a light to the world around us. We have:

- Donated 16 new Bibles for church members in Sri Lanka, which were delivered by a local church member at Feast of Tabernacles.

- Donated funds for the LifeNets Philippines relief fund.

- Hosted a charity garage sale with funds given to LifeNets. *Good News* magazines and church booklets were available for people to take. Every person that purchased an item was given a leaflet with UCG's logo and website information, as well as information for LifeNets.

- Painted a widow's fence in the community through Project Paintbrush (Volunteer Lethbridge).

- Built and painted a member's fence in Lethbridge. Donna Grieves drove all the way from Medicine Hat (a three-hour, round trip) to finish it off the next day.

- Donated funds to pay for a Feast excursion for the Colombian brethren.

- Participated in a unique fundraising effort called CANstruction for a local Food Bank. Member Robert Teetaert created the design, and Larry Delong allowed some of his employees to help build the structure. Other members helped with donations and searching for specific cans that were needed in the structure. The food bank received 2,152 pounds of food with an equivalent value of \$5,380.00 from the portion of the project in which we were involved.

Our plans for the remainder of 2015 are to repeat the garage sale and Project Paintbrush. We also have an opportunity to do highway cleanup, which will become an annual project.

2) Organizational Administration

All members have stepped up to the plate to serve in many ways. Our small group that drives from Medicine Hat weekly (a three-hour, round trip) are very active in setup and take down of chairs and tables for services, and are among the first to volunteer to wash dishes after

a potluck. Another member from Medicine Hat, Helen Gilham, sets up our literature table weekly. Other members help with the sound system, local church website updates, choosing special music, and making the church calendar.

3) Congregational Care

We introduced a monthly, interactive Bible study. We set the topic a month in advance, and all members are responsible for doing a personal study on the topic. Mr. Delong facilitates the Bible study, and all members have the opportunity to share what they have learned. Recent topics have included forgiveness, Psalm 15, grieving and loss, and lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

We also set aside the first Sabbath of the month to go to a restaurant for supper. Our theme is to try different ethnic foods in our city. These include Ethiopian, Vietnamese, Nepalese, Indian (several times), Cuban, Italian and also North American.

We have soup and sandwiches after our Bible studies once a month. We also try to have a potluck once a month.

We have conducted Sabbath Services in Medicine Hat a few times this past summer. Everyone from the Lethbridge area traveled to Medicine Hat to show appreciation to our Medicine Hat brethren for their faithfulness in traveling the 320 kilometers every week to services.

As a result, our local church is not the same as it was two years

ago. Relationships are stronger, and the attitudes of service are more prevalent. As a result of our concentrated effort to grow as Christian brothers and sisters, we have been able to reach out, not only each other, but also to the commu-

nity in a caring and serving way.

Nadine Franko

Editor's Note: All funds collected and donated to the various causes cited above were in addition to regular

tithes and offerings to the Church. In keeping with Canada Revenue Agency legislation, the United Church of God - Canada is not permitted to issue charitable receipts to those who donate time and funds to causes outside our specific mandate.

Canadians Involved with a Good Works Project

In extreme northeastern Brazil lies a land few of us are familiar with. It is a land populated by what one expert has termed one of the three most isolated tribes in the world: the Wapishana. Many Brazilian Wapishana migrated from Guyana across a rather porous border, without passports, especially after the British moved out of Guyana in 1966. There they live on a reserve of 63 square miles, which the Brazilian government fairly recently set aside for them.

With the exit of the British came a severe economic downturn throughout Guyana. Especially hard-hit were the Wapishana people, many of whom worked for British interests. Yet God works in wondrous ways, and at least two of the present-day members of the Maloca de Moscou community in Brazil, who had been forced to leave Guyana due to lost jobs and economic hardships, brought with them the truth of God.

Their exposure to *The Plain Truth* magazine through their English managers had led them to subscribe themselves and grow in the faith over the years. Guyana's loss was Brazil's gain!

In April of 2014, Paul Slytie and Senior Pastor Jorge de Campos toured the area for an assessment to see how the people could be helped. Cassava is the main source of income. They use the slash and burn method so they can plant cassava and, after a year of hard labour, can harvest their crop.

As this method is very labour intensive, mechanization was considered. However, the farms are small, and it would not be fair to upgrade one without doing all of them. A deep well was decided upon as it would be a great help in the dry season and mean the start of a garden, orchard and other possibilities like a fish farm. The well was completed in October with the help of the Good Works Project.

The second phase was to be the return visit of a group to help them accomplish the garden and orchard part of the project. This is our story. A Ministerial and Member letter asked for volunteers to work directly with villagers to prepare land to be farmed. Conditions were to be rustic with volunteers staying in tents, helping with food preparation and participating in daily Bible studies.

In the end, eight people were chosen for the project: Paul Slytie, who has a PhD in soil science from South Dakota; Abigail Syltie, an interior designer from Dallas who is Paul's daughter; Nick and Meagan Lamoureux from Vermont, an arborist and



baker respectively; Angela Helseth a social services worker from Tucson; Jorge de Campos, Senior Pastor for the Portuguese work out of Cincinnati; and the authors of this article, Meagan Garant, a nurse from Kitchener, Ontario, and Lloyd Teetaert from Regina, Saskatchewan, who works in the receiving department of an agricultural manufacturer.

The group was to meet on December 16 in Miami and then fly to Brazil. After flight cancellations and delays, we were blessed by one more delay for our flight out of Miami, which made it possible for all to make the flight.

After a late-night flight, we arrived in Manaus early in the morning. Then a rally ride in a taxi after which we were able to get a couple hours of sleep before we headed back to the airport for the next leg of the flight. Arriving in Boa Vista, we were picked up by members of the church in a hired van. After a short stop at the market and for lunch we were off for the 1.5 hour drive to the camp.

Arriving at the camp, we met brethren and got our sleeping arrangements taken care of. The ladies used the church meeting hall for their tent. Jorge and Paul used the house that was arranged for the minister when he comes. After an evening meal we all turned in early.

On Thursday morning, we arose early to eat breakfast at 7:30. This was followed by a compass check (first one by Nick was on teamwork). The local people had already tilled an area about the size of two football fields. They had fenced it and then portioned off an area for a small garden and put chicken wire around it to keep stray free-range animals out. After much discussion and finding that things are not as easy to come by there as at home, we moved about 20 yards of manure to the garden

area, spreading it around by wheelbarrow and anything else we could find for carrying it. The next challenge was to find lime and get it tilled in. A few of the men worked on the sprinkler piping from the well to the garden. Nick had great experience with this as he had helped his father who worked in this field of expertise.

After a long and hot day as temperatures were running around 30C, we came back to the camp for a relaxing evening of fellowship and games with the local brethren. The locals spent most of the evening playing guitar and singing.



provided by Megan Garant

Friday morning, the ladies asked Meagan to bake a cake for the Sabbath. Off we went to start on planting. We made rows, dug furrows and planted seeds. It was great to see the eagerness and desire to learn new ways. After lunch we sat around and discussed biblical topics. The children coloured, joked around and even drew pictures of us.

On Sabbath morning, we had a later breakfast and morning services. After a snack we had a Bible Study at 4:00 p.m. Mr. de Campos informed the brethren that they will be printing the Portuguese *A Boa Nova* (*The Good News*) in Brazil and they would have to assist. This includes having the *A Boa*



provided by Jorge de Campos

Nova magazines delivered to their camp, stuffing them in envelopes (along with a new subscriber letter in some), putting on address labels and taking them to the post office. They will be the front line for the Portuguese work in Brazil.

Jorge de Campos is the only Portuguese-speaking minister in all the Church of God churches and United Church of God is the only one that has booklets, sermons and a magazine in the Portuguese language.

Sunday, another beautiful sunny day, we were to start planting the orchard. On inspecting the garden, we found that some of the plants were already up, which doesn't happen that fast in our cooler Canadian climate. Banana, mango, cashew, sugar cane and others were plotted out and planted.

That afternoon we had a journey into the jungle to see monkeys but to no avail. We worked in the garden for a while longer and then played volleyball, tag and other games with children of all ages. Having finished planting and burying the piping of the sprinkler system, we set out to see the cattle. They had been given eight cattle through the Good Works program. That herd has now grown to 12.



provided by Megan Garant

The pasture has very good grass and lots of space to increase the herd. The big need is a horse or two to help round them up when needed. Motorcycles are used for most things but are not feasible to herd cattle.

The time came for the group of volunteers to leave causing many tears to be shed. The brethren in Brazil had opened up their homes and hearts to us and we are very grateful. We have many blessings we take for granted here in Canada. Having completed our part of this project, they will always be in

our memory and hearts. Galatians 6:9-10 tells us not to be weary in well doing and do good to all



provided by Jorge de Campos

men and especially to those of the household of faith. We believe God's hand was in this project by

the things that happened along the way. The friendships made will last a lifetime. Every one of us had something burned into us other than by the sun. We may never see each other again but it has changed us all. We had some great times and some scary times.

Brethren, please take time out of your day to pray for this small group of people whom God has called in the far reaches of this earth. They are a very dedicated people and have a big job to do.

Lloyd Teetaert & Meagan Garant

“Pentecost” from page 12

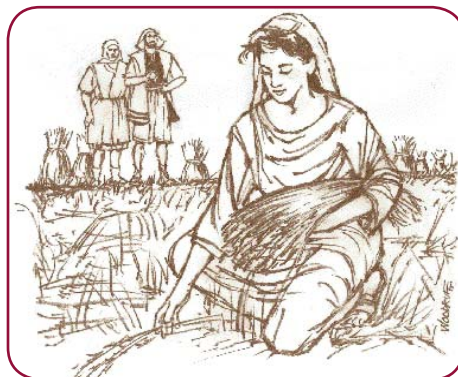
implication is that other fruit will be harvested later.

James wrote about converted Christians saying, “Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures” (James 1:18). Paul referred to brethren as those “who have the firstfruits of the Spirit” in Romans 8:23 and alluded to several first-century Christians as the firstfruits of God’s calling (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:15).

Christ is called the “firstborn of many brethren” in Romans 8:29 and “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” in 1 Corinthians 15:20. He is the “firstborn over all creation” and “firstborn from the dead” (Colossians 1:15, 18). All of this is closely linked to the Feast of Firstfruits.

Jesus Christ instructed His

church to go forth and harvest, preaching the gospel, baptizing and teaching believers to observe all things that He commanded (Matthew 28:19-20). The church that will be the harvest is also used to do a part of the harvesting. God will have used seven different periods of harvesting, as



Mike Woodruff

represented by the seven candlesticks in Revelation 1:12-13, 20. The work of the church must be complete before Christ returns. He will marry His bride, who will have made herself ready (Revelation 19:7-8).

An Old Testament parallel is found in the book of Ruth, where Boaz and Ruth culminate a union during the early barley harvest. A virtuous Gentile woman is grafted into an Israelite household, becoming a part of the genealogy of the Messiah. Gleaning instructions are even given in the section of scripture having to do with the Feast of Firstfruits (Leviticus 23:22). God is logical. He is organized. He has a plan. The blueprint of His plan can be found in the meaning of His festivals.

The Feast of Pentecost is so rich with meaning – how He is calling a small firstfruit, how He provides the gift of His precious Holy Spirit, how ultimately, He will pour out His Holy Spirit upon “all flesh” (Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:14-17). But that is another, larger harvest and it is pictured in the fall festivals.

Rainer Salomaa



Pentecost: A Vital Part of God's Master Plan

The book of Acts begins with about 120 disciples of Jesus Christ waiting during the interval between the Passover season and the Feast of Pentecost.

They were following Christ's instructions found in Acts 1:4-7 where, "... He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, 'which,' He said, 'you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.' ... 'But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.'"

The Passover had taken place in A.D. 31. Christ had made His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, close to the time that the Passover lamb was to be chosen (John 12:12-15; Exodus 12:2-3). He washed the disciples' feet and introduced new symbolic meaning for the bread and wine during the Passover. Later, He suffered horribly, poignantly demonstrating how our sins bring suffering. On the Sunday morning after his Wednesday crucifixion, He was approached by Mary Magdalene, but would not allow her to touch Him because He had not yet ascended to the Father (John 20:17).

Why? It is because He was the wave-sheaf offering, pictured in Leviticus 23:10-11. This was a "sheaf of the firstfruits" that was offered to God. The early harvest season in Palestine began with it being waved before the Lord on

the Sunday morning, following the Passover during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Before Christ could be touched, He had to be accepted by the Father. Later that day, after appearing before His Father and then returning, He did allow certain women to touch Him (Matthew 28:9).



aaron007/Stock/Thinkstock

The disciples were told to wait. They did. They gathered together, fifty days after the Sunday appearances of Jesus Christ, to keep the next festival (Leviticus 23:9-22) – the Feast of Harvest (Exodus 23:16), also called the Feast of Weeks (Exodus 4:22), or in Greek, the Feast of Pentecost, which means "fiftieth." Acts 2:1 records that, "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."

On that day, a remarkable event took place. God poured out His Holy Spirit on the assembled international group and used miracles of hearing and speaking in

various languages to communicate to that startled group of believers.

That Pentecost in A.D. 31 marked the beginning of the early New Testament church. Thousands of years earlier, possibly on another Pentecost, God had given Israel the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai using similar types of attention-getting methods. Now He had given mankind the ability to become Godly in thoughts, attitudes and actions through the precious gift of the Holy Spirit, given en masse to the embryo of the New Testament church.

The disciples had kept the seven days of unleavened bread. They had kept these days without possessing the Holy Spirit, a lesson being that God expects us to be willing to put sin out of our lives by our own efforts. Mankind has needed to put sin out for six thousand years, but has not generally done so. Peter declared that anyone who has been called, repents and is baptized can receive the precious gift of God's Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39). Through that gift, God helps us, but only after we first begin the process of removing sin out of our lives.

The harvest of spiritual fruit began with God's calling of a small elect from the time of righteous Abel. That harvest accelerated on the day of Pentecost and continues to this day, ultimately culminating in a spiritual resurrection from the dead at Christ's second coming. Scriptures describe those called out ones as firstfruits. The

See "Pentecost" on page 11