



The Best Feast Ever

We know that the Feast of Tabernacles is a rare and precious experience. An expression we have often heard and probably used is “the best Feast ever.” How does a “best Feast ever” come about? Can we know ahead of time that this coming Feast will be the best ever?

Was the Feast last year wherever you were – be it at home, your nearest Feast site or a transfer location – your best Feast ever?

Of course, the very first Feast we observed was then, of necessity, our best Feast ever! For me, as for others who are reading this article, my first Feast took place at Squaw Valley, California, in 1966. What an exciting experience it was to be there in a magnificent mountain setting that once hosted the Winter Olympics.

As I recall, that year there were about 5,000 people in attendance from western parts of Canada and the United States. The only other Feast site in North America that year was in Big Sandy, Texas. Back then there were two services every day including a service on the opening night. The blessing of little

only once during the whole Feast that year. All my other meals were odds and ends from the local grocery market where the selection was limited and the prices high. But that didn't matter. It was so thrilling to be there with fellow believers and to be fed spiritually.

By the way, you may wonder what my only hot meal was that year. It was a burger with fries and it was delicious!

Hopefully, the “best Feast ever” will occur for you again this year. The “best Feast” is the result of our Heavenly Father's blessing upon our entire Feast experience. Our primary objective during the Feast is to worship our Creator and to learn more about Him and His ways. This includes reaching out to



Orlando florin Rosu/Hemera/Thinkstock; photo illustration by Paul Wasilkoff

children occurred during the Feast of Tabernacles. Although the arena was drafty and not well lit, we didn't complain. All the messages were so inspired and inspiring that those in attendance could not get enough.

others – especially those who have limited financial means or are new to this way of life.

Wherever you are at this year's Feast of Tabernacles, may God's guidance and blessing be truly evident and memorable.

I remember going out to a restaurant for a warm meal

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Anthony Wasilkoff

Keeping Up With School While Keeping the Feast

How do you feel when the Feast of Tabernacles is approaching and you have to face uncooperative school authorities and teachers because you want to take your children out of school for at least a week or longer? You do not want to hinder your child's success at school, but you have to obey God. Remember that God has commanded you and your family to keep the Feast (Leviticus 23:2, 4), and so, His will for you must come first!

Prior to talking with school officials, be sure to pray earnestly asking God to help you speak those "apples of gold" words (Proverbs 25:11) to bring you favour and the result you desire.

Many parents receive little or no resistance from the school, director of education, or school board. In this age of political correctness, most boards do not want to face bad publicity or a court case due to religious beliefs. Years ago, I knew a young teacher who found herself facing such a litigious situation, but she chose to obey God and left for the Feast. Eventually, the board lost its court case and her job was restored. She put obedience to God ahead of men, and her faith was rewarded.

If you are working with a teacher or principal who shows reluctance to your request for time off for God's Holy Days, remember that the term "Feast of Tabernacles" can be foreign to them. Prior to being called into God's church, I remember having Jewish children in my classroom who took off the Holy Days during the year. I had no idea what these days were and, although I said nothing, I felt some concern and resentment that they were missing so many school days. Little did I realize then that later my husband and I, along with our own children, would be doing the same thing.

When questioned about why we wanted time off from school for our children, I would polite-

ly explain that we did not make these days up, that they are over 3,500 years old and that our family kept them because they were from the Bible and that, as Christians, we believed the Bible was our life's guide. Usually that ended the discussion, as most people do not want to get into a religious debate.

When your child first enters school (and at the beginning of each year thereafter), it is wise to give the teacher a list of the times during the school year that your child will be away for Holy Days. Express that you would be grateful if you could come a day or two before the absence to pick up the necessary books and assignments needed. Explain that you will do everything you can to ensure that your child will make up any missed assignments.

Assure the teacher that you want to work with him/her and would appreciate a call if any problems occur. When your child enters the upper grades and high school, though it is still incumbent on you to let the school know when the absences will be, the student will likely be able to consult with the teacher regarding which books and as-



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signments that are necessary to take to the Feast.

I have found that many teachers appreciated that, not only was the schoolwork completed, but we also had gone above and beyond what was expected. We had our children create a scrapbook of what they did on the way to the Feast, during the Feast and on the way home. They created and decorated a titled cover for the book and took it to school to share with the class on their return. This daily diary showed how our children's lives were enriched in ways that many children never experience. You might even bring back some memorabilia to share with the teachers and all the classmates.

This Feast book might include a marked map of the destination, brochures from places visited, events attended, labeled hand-drawn pictures and/or photos of friends and family accompanied with written stories, menus from restaurants visited and explanations of what was most exciting to visit while there. Doing



Yuriy Poznukhov/Stock/Thinkstock

this report daily (along with the homework) stimulates responsibility, a sense of accomplishment, and eliminates panic trying to get it done at the end of the Feast or after arriving home. Perhaps because of this book, other pupils and teacher(s) will come to see what a joyous and educational time the Feast creates for a family.

There is usually much to do at the Feast, and we want our children to have as many physical experiences as we can financially afford, but there is one thing we cannot afford to miss while

there – the spiritual family time with our heavenly Father. By example, by discussion and by reading God's Word we emphasize to our children why it is important to appear before our Father each day at the church service. Stimulate a conversation with your family before and while at the Feast about the real reason why we keep the Feast.

Some may think that expecting young children to sit attentively during the services is not realistic. As a teacher who sat through many school assemblies, I have seen how children (even in Junior Kindergarten) were expected and able to be attentive and to participate in the program – sometimes for over an hour.

Let us obey God, keep the Feast, and bring up our children to observe the festivals as well. In so doing, we will teach them vital principles of success that will hold them in good stead for years to come as responsible and capable adults.

Lillie Robinson

Is Ignorance Bliss?

I cannot remember when the saying, "Ignorance is Bliss," first came to my ears. It seems to have been around for a long time. I have been an educator for most of my life and love to study, learn and understand everything around me. I have met many people with the same desire to understand things and thus to erase ignorance.

The dictionary states that to be ignorant is to be "without knowledge, uninstructed, uninformed and unaware." There is quite a large difference in each of these four areas. We are all without knowledge in certain areas of our lives. We are uninstructed, uninformed and unaware of many things. To cite examples in my personal life, I

am without knowledge of the Chinese language although I am aware there is more than one dialect spoken in China. I am "uninstructed" in heart surgery, or any other kind of surgery except cutting up a moose. I am "uninformed" about the newest advances in cancer research and I am "unaware" of an enemy who might be speaking against

me. None of these admissions would surprise you because you, too, have such a list. There is no shame in being ignorant of certain things providing we are attempting to learn about the important things we should know. Wisdom is acknowledging “I do not know.”

There are areas of life in which we should fight and strongly resist being labeled as ignorant.



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Avoid making decisions about people since we may be ignorant of facts that affect decisions about them. We must not simply shut our eyes to our own sins or to the sins of others as though those sins do not exist. We need to improve our knowledge of things that enter into and affect our lives. Increasing awareness and facing reality are important aspects of becoming mature and capable. Ignorance can be costly.

Hosea 4:6 is one scripture that ought to bring us up short. God says: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” Ignorance and rejecting knowledge can be fatal. It is clear from this scripture that ignorance is not

simply accepted by God - not when it is possible to remove it. Israel and her priests had direct information given to them. Closing their eyes to that information and claiming ignorance would not save them. In time we humans can “forget” great truths that we have known.

I was shocked to learn that the Holy Scriptures were left to gather dust in the great temple that Solomon had built (2 Kings 22:8-13, 2 Chronicles 34:14). The people of Israel suffered for their ignorance of those scriptures. I have pondered the tale of the sudden death of Uzzah. He seemed to be doing something good when he touched the Ark to prevent it from tipping. Because of ignorance, the Ark was being brought into Jerusalem incorrectly and, because of ignorance, Uzzah paid with his life (2 Samuel 6:1-7). There had been clear instructions given by God on how to transport the Ark (Exodus 25:12-15).

God does not excuse ignorance when it is caused by carelessness, stubbornness or rebellion against Him. Somehow David “forgot” how the Ark was to be transported. Was he unaware of the scripture? Did he not realize that we need to live by every word that comes out of God’s mouth (Luke 4:4)? God warned His people to carefully obey Him (Deuteronomy 15:5). Ignorance of this sort is certainly not bliss.

Ignorance of the laws of God does not mean the result of breaking those laws will not be felt. God is merciful to those who lack knowledge through no

fault of their own - but even error or sin done in ignorance requires accountability (Numbers 15:22-29). Paul acknowledged his ignorance in persecuting the church (1 Timothy 1:12-16) and noted God’s mercy upon repentance. Repentance can only come when ignorance is removed. God is merciful towards those to whom His way has yet to be revealed. The book of Jonah testifies of His justice. It concludes with God expressing His pity for those who “cannot discern between their right hand and their left.”

Is there a time when ignorance is a good thing? The answer is “yes”. The Bible carries many admonitions against being “informed” through gossip and slander. Rumours and character assassinations that are passed about should be ignored - that is, we are better off being ignorant of such things. Ecclesiastes 7:21-22 has very good advice. We are told not to listen or take to heart everything people say “lest you hear your servant cursing you.”

It is better to remain ignorant about things others say about us. We have the personal obligation to examine our own conduct, words and actions. If we do that, we will not have to answer to anyone. Once we look at ourselves in all humility and move to be close to God - then the words of others cannot hurt us. There are instances when it is better not to know.

It is good to be ignorant in the matter of mind-altering drugs, or to be ignorant about the perversions and corruption around

us. That does not mean we close our eyes to these activities as though they do not exist, nor should we be oblivious of what goes on. The ignorance I am referring to is to be less knowing of the perverse and corrupt experiences. Our responsibility is to shun evil. To do so, we must be able to recognize evil.

It is possible to become educated in knowing what is sin and evil – without getting too close to the actual experience. It is not necessary to know what gods pagan people worship. We do not need to know how they worship their gods (Deuteronomy 12:30).

We have limitations. We vary in ability to understand, to remember and assimilate. We also have differing potentials in our lives. All of us fall short in the comprehension of God and spiritual matters. Paul stated that we see through a glass “darkly”

as though it were coloured or smoked glass (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Faith means being somewhat ignorant of certain matters – and yet trusting God (Hebrews 11:1). There is a third heaven mentioned in the Bible, which is where God the Father lives (2 Corinthians 12:2, Revelation 4:1-11). The glimpse we have of this marvel is framed by the limitations of our understanding. It is fair to say we have vast areas of ignorance about the third heaven, God’s throne, God’s power and majesty. It is acceptable to have areas of ignorance and not knowing everything leaves us with less stress and things to fret about – the date and method of our death is one example. These can be areas where “ignorance is bliss.”

In the final analysis, ignorance of God is not bliss. We cannot



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hide behind ignorance. We are to get a big eraser and erase any ignorance about God. How do we do this? God says to ask, seek and to knock – and then it will be opened (Luke 11:9).

Robert Berendt

Member Profile: Joyce Greba

On a September day in 1958, I married Adam Greba. He had inherited the family farm and our first years on the farm as newly-weds were a challenge. I had always lived in town except for my first two years of teaching in a country school – a stipulation of a loan I had received from the School Board.

One day when Adam and I were visiting our neighbours, I noticed a magazine opened to an article about Easter. I



photo provided by Joyce Greba

read it through and as a result ordered a subscription to *The Plain Truth* magazine.

I was a member of the Anglican Church in our town for a number of years and was involved in many of its organizations such as Sunday school, youth group, and women’s auxiliary. One summer, I was asked to give sermons. At that time, I disregarded the apostle Paul’s admonition for women to be silent in the church reasoning that, after all, “I was

doing a good work.” Following that service people commented favorably on the sermon. My background material came from articles in *The Plain Truth!*

Adam and I were baptized in March of 1973 and became members of the Worldwide Church of God. The nearest congregation met in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, which was an hour and half away from the farm. In later years, when our church strayed from Biblical truth, there was no question of staying with it. Rather, the question faced was “Where do we go?”

I was a widow when my daughter, Colleen, and her husband, David Hofer, sent me a plane fare to go for a visit with them in Vancouver, Washington. During a dinner at their home, I met with Mr. and Mrs. Dean Wilson and Glen White. After conversing with them, and later with Colleen and David, I had an answer to my “where to go” question: the United Church of God!

Not long after I had come home, I had my first ministerial visit from Mr. and Mrs. Wasilkoff. Between eating peas in the garden and drinking tea at the kitchen table, I became acquainted with them and with the United Church of God. Having found a church keeping God’s commandments and preaching the truth, I became a member of the United Church of God.

I do not live near a congregation and so, in the beginning, audio tapes were sent to me and later I received DVDs. Now on the Sabbath, I have a telephone

Adam, my husband, and I were blessed with two children: Colleen and Russell. Russell and Teresa have three children (Alysia, Kyle and Devin) and two grand-children (Adrienne and Blake). They had a fourth child, Quinn, who died when she was seven months old. Adam did not have the pleasure of seeing all his grand-children and great-grandchildren. He only saw ten-month old Alysia. Bone cancer took Adam in 1987 when he was only 56 years old.

In response to tragedies in life, I say the following:



photo provided by Joyce Greba

hook-up with the Regina congregation. On alternate Sabbaths, I am able to listen to cybercast sermons through a phone hook-up with a Regina member.

During the first three years in UCG, I kept the Passover by myself following the instructions the church had sent on how to observe the Passover in the home. After another family came into UCG, I drove to their home to observe Passover with them.

A few years later, I went to Winnipeg, Manitoba, to keep the Passover with Dave and Sarah Hofer who are my son-in-law’s parents. After the first Day of Unleavened Bread, thanks to the generosity of our children who provided airfare, we flew to Washington. I also kept the Feast of Tabernacles with them.

Every cloud has a silver lining no matter how dark it may look.

When on your own and you find no answer; go read God’s Holy Book.

On your knees speak to your Heavenly Father. Seek help in Christ’s holy name.

He who with God is eternal, never changing always the same.

He will give you strength and assurance. He will give you mercy, hope and love.

Look not to your own understanding. The silver lining comes from above.

Joyce Greba

Canadian Ministerial Conference

On June 13-14 of this year, the majority of elders in Canada gathered in Mississauga for a bi-annual conference. It was scheduled to begin with a barbeque at the home of Anthony and Linda Wasilkoff. However, the weather did not cooperate so alternate plans were made.

Guest speakers for the occasion were Victor Kubik and Aaron Dean. They gave split sermons in the Toronto congregation. Rainer Salomaa traveled to Hamilton to speak in that congregation.

Following a quick dinner, the conference began in earnest at the National Office with some

opening comments by Anthony Wasilkoff. For the remainder of the evening, Victor Kubik discussed “The Future of the Church” followed by wrap-up comments.

On Sunday, forty-five minutes were taken out of the conference time to have a short meeting of the National Conference. This was to finish off details related to being compliant with the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act.

The Ministerial Conference resumed with a DVD in which Randy Stiver discussed some common doctrinal challenges faced by the church and how to

answer questions about them. An hour was devoted to discussion just before the lunch break.

Following a lunch catered by office staff, Victor Kubik spoke on “Creating an Environment for Growth.” This was followed by Aaron Dean who provided an international perspective. He discussed unique difficulties and presented ideas that have worked in various international areas.

The day was rounded off with a lively question and answer session. More discussion was to be had during dinner which was at the National Office.

UNC

National Conference/Council Meetings

The week of June 7-14 was an especially busy one at the National Office. On Tuesday, the Compliance Task Force met to work on a policy to bring us into compliance with the government’s anti-spam legislation. The Ministerial Services Team and Media Team each conducted meetings on Wednesday. Then on Thursday and Friday, the National Council held its annual face-to-face meeting. On Sunday morning there was a short but fruitful meeting of the National Conference followed by a Ministerial Conference for the remainder of the day.

During the Council meetings, Rainer Salomaa gave a report from the Council of Elders explaining how the COE committees were realigned. He also showed a pro-

posed logo for the church.

Anthony Wasilkoff informed the Council that the office lease expires April 1, 2016. Office staff are working to negotiate renewing the lease or finding a different location. Edwin van Pelt reported that the auditor would be in the office during the week of June 22 for the annual audit. He also reported that 20 new donors were added to the database during the first three Holy Days of 2015.

The Media Team reported that, just prior to the Feast of Tabernacles, there will be a “trailer” running on the Beyond Today programs promoting a personal appearance by Darris McNeely in Calgary.

During the Ministerial Services Team Report, Feast Coordinators provided updates on how plans for the fall festival are progressing. The foremost challenge for all is that many people do not register for Feast attendance making it difficult to plan. It was also reported that several sites need additional help to provide the various activities.

The Ministerial Services Team is actively looking at the need for trainees, especially as some senior pastors will soon retire.

A resolution to disband the Women’s Advisory Committee was put forward. The National Council members presented their thoughts on the resolution and were in agreement with it.

The Committee was established in 1996 and has only been called upon once since that time. The motion to approve that resolution was adopted unanimously.

Paul Wasilkoff was asked to give a presentation about the UCG-Canada website. He began by explaining that the online donation process is Interac-based and can be used through most banks in Canada. He noted there is minimal security risk for individuals using this process since we do not store their personal banking information on our site. He requested guidelines from the Council regarding some technical details on the ucg.ca website. He was instructed to maintain UCG-Canada's pages for the Good News and Beyond Today.

The Strategic Planning/Finance Committee discussed insurance concerns. They also discussed the office lease and what would be an acceptable increase in monthly rent. They reviewed the possibility of the church leasing a car for a pastor who does much driving. Dates for council meetings for the next year were suggested and approved.

The Governance Committee worked on creating a new council evaluation form. The Compensation Committee is looking at the need for an area wage adjustment for employees living in areas with a higher cost of living. Salary ranges of employees continues to be evaluated to ensure they are appropriate for a charity.

The Compliancy Task Force

proposed a policy to comply with the Anti-Spam legislation. This policy was approved with the proviso that it would reviewed by a lawyer and may need tweaking at a later date.

UCGIA President, Victor Kubik, was present during the last



Victor Kubik

day of Council meetings. He gave a report on current developments at the Home Office. He related that many U.S. pastors are retiring in the next few years. The Home Office has just hired six ministerial trainee couples and will also be looking at bi-vocational pastors. These would be pastors who either volunteer their time or work for a stipend.

There was a short discussion regarding a new logo for the church. It was pointed out that a logo would not replace our church seal.

Aaron Dean mentioned how many of the young people are rising to the occasion when they are given opportunities. He shared details of a recent trip he made to Kenya.

Michael Erickson put forward a resolution for hiring a trainee. The resolution was adopted. This

resolution gives the Director of Operations the directive to hire a trainee or two within the current fiscal year. Victor Kubik mentioned there may be hiring possibilities from the USA, if UCG - Canada is not able to hire from within. An additional resolution was approved to hire a part-time employee for the National Office.

Mike Whyte was reappointed to the Amendment Committee since his three-year term had expired.

The National Conference held a short meeting on the morning of Sunday, June 14, with all but two members present. The purpose of this specially called meeting was to approve a resolution required for us to comply with the rules of the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act.

The National Conference approved a resolution for collecting, counting, verifying and reporting National Conference absentee ballots. After the resolution was approved, signatures were collected to go along with that resolution. Paul Wasilkoff explained a potential method to conduct ballots via the Internet to save time and the expense of sending documents by registered mail.

Rainer Salomaa encouraged more elders to allow their names to be placed on the ballot for National Council. The National Conference was then informed of the decision of the National Council to hire a ministerial trainee.

Linda Wasilkoff

News From Across Canada

Camp Wildrose

Camp Wildrose celebrated its sixth year in July. Thirty-four campers, along with a number of volunteer helpers, enjoyed four pleasant, sunny days of fun activities.

Children aged five through fifteen assembled into age groupings and took part in a number of skill building activities such as canoeing, archery,



photo provided by Susan Davis

orienteering, crafts, softball, soccer, teamwork challenges, photography and cooking classes. Each activity was instructed and organized by volunteers. The children had a wonderful time and all the activities went very well.

Due to the lack of rain, the lake for canoeing was a bit shallow and weedy, but many water fowl and a muskrat were seen. The children learned how to follow directions and use a compass in orienteering class which led them to discover hidden treasures! In arts and crafts, the children made checkerboards or tic-tac-toe boards on tree stumps, as well as wood frame pictures with leather stenciling.

Teamwork challenges are always a hit with campers as they learn to work together to complete a task or solve a puzzle. Yummy cinnamon buns made by the campers were enjoyed at snack time and many of the pictures you see here or on the future slideshow were taken by the children themselves in photography class.

Christian Living classes are also an important part of camp. Some lessons included stories or real life scenarios that used God's Word to explain solutions. Other concepts on living a Godly life were emphasized using science experiments and demonstrations. By using visual instruction, we often find the children are enabled to remember lessons for many years.

Camp is never without its challenges! Fireside time on some evenings was literally



photo provided by Susan Davis

"dampened." One large thunderstorm provided opportunity for us to practice teamwork skills as we pulled collapsed tents into the garage. Campers happily watched a movie while the volunteers organized new sleeping arrangements. All ended well and dry!

With warm temperatures, the oldest children were able to go tubing behind the motor boat



photo provided by Susan Davis

at a nearby lake. Meanwhile the younger ones cooled off with water squirting toys and a game of Drip, Drip, Drop (similar to Duck, Duck, Goose but with water).

Our final day of camp ended with a hotdog barbeque and picnic-style games. Families from Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Alberta came together to build unity and strengthen bonds with other church family members. Camp Wildrose is an amazing experience for church members of all ages. Registration for camp begins in February, 2016.

Susan Davis

New Elder

In 2010, after 39 years of managing supermarkets and being regional sales manager in the London, England area, Peter Corrigan retired. This year did not just mark his retirement, but also a marriage and move to a different country! Peter married the former Wendy Culff and moved to Canada. On Pentecost this year, he was ordained as an

elder in the Vancouver Island congregation.

Peter and Wendy have diligently served the Vancouver Island congregation with set-up for services, song leading and hospitality. Peter also assisted with speaking assignments in his role as deacon. As an elder, we anticipate he will continue this service and more!

In June, Peter and Wendy attended their first Ministerial Conference. There they met oth-



photo provided by Peter Corrigan

er elders and elders' wives from across Canada as well as Victor Kubik, Aaron Dean and their wives. The conference provided a good opportunity for the Corrigan's to make valuable connections as well take part in several educational sessions.

UNC

Windsor Tea

On May 9, the ladies of the Windsor, Ontario congregation held their first "Afternoon Tea Celebration." The creative talents of Karen Brdar resulted in hand-crafted place cards with personalized scripture verses from

Proverbs 31 defining each lady's strengths and accomplishments.

To add to the festivity of the occasion, each guest brought her



Marilyn Anderson

favourite tea cup. The collective efforts of all who attended provided a delectable array of sandwiches, scones, quiches, a trifle, fruit and specialty teas.

The afternoon was most enjoyable and, it is anticipated such occasions will continue!

Mary Brdar

50 Years In Winnipeg

On August 22, 2015, the Winnipeg congregation celebrated the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Church of God in this area.

We began services with an informal pre-recorded message by Mr. Glen White from Stevens, Montana, who started the church in Winnipeg in 1965. Mr. White recalled stories and trials of the early days of Dave and Sarah Hofer, Mary Hofer, and Michael Hoffer who were original members of that group and remain with us today. He recounted many very fond memories of the 10 years he spent here, even while dealing with the many di-

verse languages – all twelve of them. He reminded us to continue to hold fast and strive to become pillars in the Temple of God (Revelations 3: 11-12).

Mr. Herb Teitgen, current pastor of the Winnipeg congregation, also pastors the Fargo and Mandan areas of North Dakota. He presented an interesting history of the Church of God starting in 1920 with Mr. Herbert Armstrong and his many struggles in the early days, correcting errors that crept in and Mr. Armstrong's ordination in 1931. He continued with: the growth of the church in the Willamette Valley in the state of Oregon; the first radio broadcast over 100-watt KORE radio; the struggles securing the \$2.50 cost for the air time in 1933; the first *The Plain Truth* magazine distributed in 1934 with 200 copies; the understanding of Leviticus 23 and the struggles to convince some to keep the Holy Days had to be dealt with.

In 1939 one hundred thousand copies of *The Plain Truth* magazine were sent out. In 1942 radio station WHO began broadcasting nationwide and *The Plain Truth* distribution increased. The church needed a headquarters so Mr. Armstrong secured property in Pasadena, California. In 1946 Belknap Springs in Oregon provided the first Feast location. The renovation to the Pasadena property continued, and in 1947 the Ambassador College started with four students. Three years later there were four hundred and fifty students. The Church began

to understand that we could become a family.

In 1953, Radio Luxembourg became available to bring the message to Europe. Two years later, in 1955, "The World Tomorrow" program appeared on television. *The Plain Truth* circulation, increased and by 1986 eight million copies were mailed to many parts of the globe.

Mr. Teitgen reminded us to hold fast to the truth we have received and be prepared to endure. We were further exhorted to let the peace of God be a help when we face trials as we continue the work Jesus mentioned in Matthew 24:10.

Following our church service and a trip down memory lane, we all gathered for dinner at a local restaurant and did what all the brethren of the Church of God love to do – socialize.

Lloyd and Carol Syvret

Twin Twentieths

Twenty years looking forward seems like a long time, but looking back over the past twenty years, it seems to have passed very quickly! This year marks twenty years since the United Church of God first began. It has been a remarkable journey in so many ways.

Two Canadian congregations each recently celebrated their twentieth anniversary. Their celebrations were similar in many ways while also showing the

unique "personalities" of each group.

On the Sabbath of August 15, the Toronto congregation, with 104 in attendance, celebrated its beginning. The first pastor and wife, Gary and Barbara Antion, who currently reside in Cincinnati, Ohio, were invited to this special occasion. Mr. Antion gave the sermon entitled "Thank You Brethren" to a packed hall. There were guests from the Hamilton and Kitchener congregations as well as a few who had known the Antions many years before. Mr. Antion reminisced about the founding years of the congregation in Toronto as well as the establishment of The United Church of God-Canada. Special music was performed by the Toronto church choir, directed by Lillie Robinson and accompanied on the piano by Kevin Ford.

The cafeteria was beautifully decorated setting the stage for a delicious pot-luck meal following services. A beautiful (and delicious) cake to mark the occasion was the focus of the dessert table. The Toronto congregation had



Denia Haynes

taken up a collection to present gifts to Mr. and Mrs. Antion in honour of his recent retirement. Following the dinner, the group

was treated to a PowerPoint presentation put together by Ed van Pelt. It showed photos of various activities through the years and included interesting statistics about the congregation.

Two weeks later, the Calgary congregation celebrated its beginning. The pastor, Rainer Salomaa,



Rainer Salomaa

ma, invited Anthony and Linda Wasilkoff to attend this celebration. The Calgary hall featured a Happy Anniversary banner behind the podium. Several photo albums displayed on a table brought back many memories for those in attendance. In addition to the usual Calgary congregation, there were guests from Lethbridge, Edmonton and the Okanagan bringing the attendance up to 74 and creating an exciting buzz in the hall.

The Pastor read a touching special greeting from Glen White, one of the former pastors. The first pastor of the congregation, Anthony Wasilkoff, gave a sermon entitled "Ten things I've Learned in 20 Years."

As has been the case in Calgary for many years, the Peterson family presented special music. Jim Peterson, along with his three daughters, and two sons-in-law

and several grandchildren performed special music that included five instruments! It was quipped later that there were



Rainer Salomaa

more people performing special music that day than attended the first service!

Once again, the ladies out-did themselves with a scrumptious meal that included everything from fresh corn on the cob to venison to cabbage rolls. This time the special anniversary cake was a delicious Black Forest cake. While everyone ate, rotating photos of the past 20 years could be seen on a screen.

I was privileged to attend both of these celebrations. In each case, there was delight and excitement as people were reunited after a number of years. There was also a bit of sadness as we thought of those who are no longer with us. In Calgary, we received word that one of the founding members was in hospice care with only a short time to live.

So many individuals from twenty years ago have since died and others are no longer meeting with United. But, it is very encouraging to see so many remaining faithful members. It is shocking

to return to an area after 15 years to see those who were small children are now grown or nearly so and tower over me in height! It is also encouraging to see young adults who are now becoming actively involved in the church.

In January 2016, we will mark 20 years of UCG-Canada's official existence. That was when a group of elders and founding members from across Canada (Toronto, Calgary, Okanagan, Prince George, Vancouver) got together to determine how the church board would be set up. Thereafter, the Bylaws for the Church in Canada were drafted and were eventually accepted by the government.

Our 20-year journey has been full of ups and downs. We have witnessed many births, baptisms and weddings. On the other hand, we have been saddened by deaths and splits in the church. Through it all, we have learned a lot and, hopefully, grown spiritually. Personally, I have made friends with people I might never have gotten to know so well. Together we have forged ahead in uncharted waters and learned things we never thought we would know. My personal thanks to so many individuals who have been there to help, encourage and participate in this journey.

Linda Wasilkoff

Windsor Picnic

Our loving Father overruled the prediction for rain on Sunday, August 2, and gave us a sunny,

warm day to enjoy our first picnic. The brethren of the Windsor congregation, along with three guests from Toronto, met at Lakeside Park in Kingsville located on Lake Erie from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Having acquired the lovely gazebo with beautiful hanging pots of flowers all around, we were assured of welcoming shade for eating and visiting. There was plenty of room for everyone to sit together in our own folding chairs and to eat the abundance of food at the six picnic tables provided.

John Pahomey brought a "Bean Bag Throw" game which challenged several of us by awakening old skills.

Because of the warm fellowship enjoyed by all, our pastor, Patrick Read, encouraged us to meet together next year, making this an annual event.

Marilyn Anderson

Member Recognition

Stephanie McCorkill, a member in the Edmonton congregation, was interviewed earlier this



photo provided by Stephanie McCorkill

year by Marc Montgomery of CBC Radio International (<http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2015/04/27/>

canadian-dentistry-goes-to-kenyan-villages/). Stephanie is the daughter of Rick and Heather Berendt and the granddaughter of Robert Berendt.

Stephanie is in the process of becoming a dentist, which in Canada, takes about eight years of post-secondary education.



photo provided by Stephanie McCorkill

First she had to get a Bachelor's degree and now has finished three of the four years required to get a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree.

This past year two friends from her program approached her with the idea of going on a mission trip. The three young ladies were able to do this through an aid organization called "A Better World" based in Lacombe, Alberta. The organization put them into contact with a dentist, Dr. Hill, who would supervise and teach the three dental students as they went to help people in Kenya.

Prior to this, Stephanie and her friends treated patients in their university dental clinic. So, they went to Kenya with competency in many different areas of dental work. Dr. Hill was there to oversee the work they did and give assistance as needed.

Because of donations to the organization, the group was able to

take some military-type dental equipment with them. Thus, they were able to do fillings and extractions and were also equipped to have suction. Of course, this was all dependent upon the generators working! Another problem they encountered was sterilization. While they had the necessary sterilizing equipment, there was only one person available to take care of it, making it necessary to always check that the equipment that was needed for any procedure was sterilized. Even so, they were able to give Canadian standard dentistry care to the people coming to the clinic.

Treating patients in Kenya was different from treating patients in Alberta. In Kenya, most had a distinct lack of access to den-



photo provided by Stephanie McCorkill

tal care. In fact, many had never seen a dentist. One five-year-old boy came into their portable clinic with a dental infection that caused his face to swell so much he couldn't open his eye! It brought home to Stephanie the importance of good dental care and how a lack of it can affect general health. Now Stephanie appreciates the health care we have in Canada more than she did before this experience. Another difficulty was nutritional deficiencies resulting in underdeveloped enamel on children's

teeth making them more prone to cavities.

Stephanie noted that some people from remote tribes recognized the importance of dental



photo provided by Stephanie McCorkill

health. They take a stick from the acacia tree, soften the end until it is almost like a toothbrush and then use it to brush their teeth. It seems they realize that if they don't take care of their teeth they could have a lot of pain.

The trip for Stephanie was rewarding and full of intense learning. Normally during one day in her university clinic she would treat two patients. In Kenya, she treated anywhere from ten to twenty per day. This meant she received a lot of experience very quickly. A definite added plus to her experience was that her husband, Scott, was able to go along on the trip to assist in the project.

She would repeat the experience, but practicality dictates it will not be possible this coming



photo provided by Stephanie McCorkill

year since it would be just before taking the National Dental Examining Boards exam and graduating. However, she looks forward to possibly going to Kenya again sometime in the future as a mentor taking other students.

As Stephanie enters her final year of dental school, we wish her well knowing her Kenya experience and lessons learned from it will always be remembered with fondness.

UNC

Hiebert Anniversary

Richard and Marlene Hiebert of the North Battleford, Saskatchewan congregation celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary on May 2. They were honoured by the congregation with a cake and a card on the following Sabbath.

Richard was a teacher and school principal and served at numerous schools in the area. Marlene was employed at Bank of Montreal and had responsibilities in various departments, including being manager of the local branch. Marlene was assistant manager when she retired.



Adeline Sanoy

Richard and Marlene are kept busy in their retirement with family and golfing. Marlene enjoys curling in the winter and volun-

teers at the Food Bank. Richard is active in the local historical society and writes for the local newspaper, *The New Optimist*.

Their pride and joy is their family – four children, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild!

Adeline Sanoy

Twin Golden Anniversaries

On the Sabbath of July 11, brethren in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, honored two couples who were celebrating 50 years of marriage during the month of July.



Adeline Sanoy

They are Glen and Shirley Rogers of Neilburg and Lloyd and Marlene Sitter of Edam. The couples were presented with cakes, cards and a small gift.

Mr. and Mrs. Rogers live on a farm and have three adult sons. Mr. and Mrs. Sitter live in the village of Edam where Lloyd is a semi-retired mechanic.

Adeline Sanoy

Andrusko Obituary

Sonia (Frederickson) Andrusko was born in Canora, Saskatchewan, on January 19, 1943, the youngest of eight children born to Martin and Lucinda Frederickson. The Frederickson family had

a farm just north of Stenen where she came to love animals and the prairie farmland.



Rainer Salomaa

Sonia attended a one-room school three miles from the farm. She rode her favourite horse, Kentucky, there and back through all kinds of weather. After attending high school in Sturgis, she moved to The Pas, Manitoba, where she worked as a nurse assistant at the hospital.

Sonia moved back to Stenen to be married to Bill Andrusko on July 28, 1961, and they had 53 years of marriage during which she worked on the farm alongside her husband. The Andruskos had five children. It was a great pleasure for Sonia to share in the accomplishments of her children and grandchildren and she was happy to travel to watch competitions, tournaments or concerts.

Sonia loved God and people, and she loved serving both. She was a supporter of both the school and her church communities.



Rainer Salomaa

Sonia died on June 16, 2015. She will be greatly missed by her husband, Bill; her children Cheryl (Jim), Lanie, Theresa (Vince) and Michael; and her grandchildren Kira, Kobi, Siena and Alicia. She was predeceased by her son, Shaun, and two brothers.

Rainer Salomaa expressed: "It was a pleasure to have known her for about four years and to see her amazing grit, to see her sparkling eyes, and to see beyond a shriveled body into a wonderful mind that refused to quit."

UNC

Plant Obituary

Marva Mary Plant was born on March 21, 1953, in Fort Graham, British Columbia. She passed away on July 13, 2015, in her home in Tsay Keh Dene, British Columbia, after a five-year battle

with breast cancer.

Marva was a beautiful woman who truly loved nature and the activities one can enjoy living in a remote part of British Columbia. Many memories of her fish-



Jim Plant

ing, hunting, hiking and "picking rocks" (which was her passion) will be fondly remembered by those who knew her.

Marva worked more than 30 years with young children as a teacher's aide in the community of Tsay Keh Dene. She is lovingly

remembered for her dedication by her students and co-workers.

Marva is survived by her loving husband, James (Jim) Plant; children, Ruby (Nathan), Denice (Vern), Elizabeth (Darin) and George (Amy); and a brother, sister and grandchild.

A memorial service was held at the Tsay Keh Dene Community Gymnasium on Wednesday, July 15, 2015. Most of the community and many from other Native bands came to show their respect for a woman who was an example to all. Michael Erickson, United Church of God pastor for our area, officiated at the funeral.

Following the service, Marva was interred in Akie Cemetery. The community gathered for a dinner to honour her.

Jim Plant

"Purpose" from page 16

heart was. Perhaps like nothing else our offerings reflect where our heart is and where we want our treasure to be. Matthew 6:21 tells us: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Our attitude in giving offerings is very important to God because it reveals where our heart is. Let us remember to purpose in our heart. For where our treasure is, there our heart will be also (Matthew 6:21). He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also

reap bountifully (2 Corinthians 9:6). Tithing is required. But if we only carry out that which is required (our duty), then we are considered unprofitable servants.

It should be perfectly clear to all of us that we can rob God by not tithing or not tithing properly. We can also rob Him by not giving any offering or by not properly considering the blessings He has given us and by not taking the time to "purpose in our heart." We can even rob God by not being a cheerful giver, which can occur if we don't purpose and plan or we give beyond

what we are able.

God expects of His family to give offerings that are purposed and planned, generous and cheerful. His annual Holy Days are an opportunity for us to express our gratitude for our calling and the blessings, both physical and spiritual, that God bestows upon us throughout the year.

Our offerings, whether given on the Holy Days or at other times during the year, give us the opportunity to express in physical terms where our heart is spiritually.

Michael Erickson

As We Purpose in Our Hearts

A question that is sometime asked this time of year is “How much should I give for an offering?” No specific amount in regard to Holy Day offerings is mentioned in the Bible. However, God’s Word does include guidelines and principles that can help us determine how much to give and how to give.

In Deuteronomy 16:16-17, we find that we are not to appear before God empty-handed, and that we are to give as we are able, according to the blessing of the LORD our God which He has given us. God knows how much He has blessed us!

We must remember that we cannot out-give God. We are to give as we are able. The blessing(s) we are to consider are not limited to just financial blessings. We must also consider the blessings of having a job, a happy family, good health and spiritual knowledge and understanding, which are difficult to put a monetary value on. But, to be true to scripture, we must consider them all when we determine the amount of our Holy Day offering.

It helps to consider this in light of other principles from God’s word. We read in 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his

heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Many years ago I read an article in *The Good News* magazine by Leroy Neff. He pointed out that the Greek word for “cheerful” in the verse above is defined as: cheerful; joyous; prompt to do anything. He also noted that some lexicons even use as a synonym the



jim pruit/istock/Thinkstock

word “hilarious.” This shows that God wants us to give joyously and happily, not grudgingly or just because we are required to.

The result of giving with this attitude and according to how God has blessed us is described in the following verse: “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

As it is written: ‘He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.’ Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God” (2 Corinthians 9:8-11 NIV).

Our offerings truly are a question of right attitude or heart. Our attitude and heart plays a big part in giving an offering that He finds pleasing. This is shown in Luke 21:1-4, “And [Christ] looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, ‘Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.’”

The widow’s attitude was such that she wanted to give all that she did have. Christ used her as an example of generous giving in the eyes of God. Even though the rich gave much more, they did it out of their abundance. Christ was not rejecting the offerings of the rich, but by comparison, the widow gave much more. She truly showed where her

See “Purpose” on page 15