

Gospel Herald

For the promotion of
NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY

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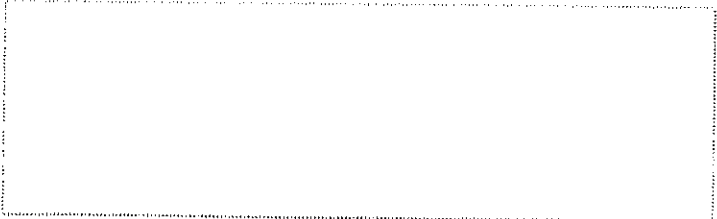
BEAMSVILLE, ONTARIO

September 2002

Vision Canada 2002



Pictured are some of those who attended the Vision Canada 2002 program in Edmonton, June 25 - 28, 2002. Vision Canada was "A Seminar On Church Growth Through Evangelism". We are featuring



some of the lessons from the seminar in the Herald and encourage those who are interested to contact the Edmonton church to obtain copies of the tapes and/or notebook. While they cannot offer you the rich fellowship that was a part of the week for those attending, you can benefit from the presentations on tape or in print.

The Edmonton congregation did an excellent job in making Vision Canada 2002 an uplifting week of study and fellowship. We are sure that all who attended will join in a heartfelt "Thank You" to them for all their work.

Jesus the Christ is Truly the Saviour of the World

E. Daniel Wieb

The events of September 11, 2001 have ushered in a new era in the world, particularly in our part of the world, especially in things spiritual, especially in God's place in the world has been renewed. While that is a good thing, it is accompanied by a renewed effort at tolerance. This clouds the issue that is at the center of the Christian Faith, the fact that Jesus is the only way of salvation.

This is particularly evident when one considers what is happening with regard to Islam. Islam is the youngest of the world's great religions. It claims the second largest number of followers, next to Christianity, and claims to be the fastest growing religious faith in the world. The Islamic faith has much to recommend it to those who may be seeking for a basis for their faith. The climate of tolerance, that is characteristic of our society, provides good soil for sowing the seed of the Islamic faith. Islam recognizes all the great religious leaders of history and

gives place to their teaching. While denying the Deity of Christ and the reality of His crucifixion, Islam gives credence to His teaching.

One who believes in the uniqueness of Christ and the validity of the Holy Bible cannot help but be aware of the fact that our media, indeed, our whole society, are moving away from basic Christian beliefs. That, which is called, "The New Tolerance," is pervasive and is gaining ground. Most people find it easier and much more pleasant to "go with the flow," rather than to insist on one right way.

It is necessary from the outset to acknowledge that we proceed into this and every study on the basis of Faith. While certain facts can be established historically and information can be found to support faith, when the facts are all in, it is faith that undergirds the Christian position. (1 John 5:4,5; Hebrews 11:6). This study will proceed on the understanding that belief in God is a given. For those who deny the existence of God, a different approach is necessary.

The source of our belief is the Scripture. We acknowledge that God has spoken (Hebrews 1:1,2). We accept the fact that God is revealed in these days in Jesus (Heb. 1:2 and John 1: 1-14).

Since Jesus the Christ is our subject, those Scriptures which introduce Him to us, are of primary importance, i.e. the four Gospel accounts. Craig L. Blomberg in his definitive book, *Christ and the Gospels*, says, "Already by the mid-second century, there was wide agreement that there were four and only four narratives that accurately portrayed the life of Jesus." For the next three hundred years other narratives were examined and discarded until only Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were included in the New Testament canon. As the apostle John affirms, "These are written that you might believe..." (John 20:31).

Other New Testament writers confirm and elaborate on the Christology of the Gospels. The apostle Paul speaks often with certainty concerning the Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-8; Philippians 2:6-8), and Peter also often affirms his faith in the Christ (Example Acts 10:36-41).

One might reasonably expect a study of this nature to begin with the prophecies or even with the miraculous birth of Jesus. We have chosen, however, to

begin with the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension and to move backwards to those other events.

Jesus' sense of mission identifies Him as Saviour.

Nowhere does Jesus state more clearly and distinctly His mission than in John 3:14-17. Twice, Jesus connects faith in Him with eternal life and once He makes reference to the fact that, "the world might be saved through Him."

In a cluster of passages, Jesus predicts, in no uncertain terms, His death and resurrection. See Mark 8:31; 9:31, and 10:33,34. In case the disciples do not understand the purpose of His death, Jesus makes it plain in passages like Mark 10:45 and parallel passages.

The analogy of the Last Supper adds to Jesus' understanding of His mission. His reference to the shedding of His blood, and to the covenant which God has made through Him, cannot be easily misunderstood, for as He says in Mark 14:24, "This is My blood of the covenant which is to be shed on behalf of many."

Jesus insists that His death will be followed by resurrection. The resurrection was part of His understanding of the completion of His mission. He saw the resurrection as a vindication of His life and death, thus validating His claims to be the *Messiah*.

Son of Man

No study of the Saviour would be complete without reference to the descriptive titles by which Jesus referred to himself and was referred to by others. Jesus favorite appellation for Himself, used 82 times in the Gospels is, *Son of Man*. He used this term often to show His humanity as in Mt. 8:20 or 12:32. Jesus also used the term to show His authority based on passages like Daniel 7:13,14. In this passage, the *Son of Man* is clearly prophesied to be the one whom God will send to establish His kingdom.

Jesus believed that he was to be the Saviour of the world and used the title, *Son of Man* in reference to His Second Advent (Mk. 14:61,62).

Son of God

Jesus knew that he was the *Son of God* even though he preferred to refer to

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Great Lakes Bible College Short Course

Intro. to Early Christian Literature: GS-522

Date	November 18 to 22
Place	Waterloo Church of Christ
Credit	2 hours
Instructor	Everett Ferguson

This course invites the student to explore the writings of the 2nd and 3rd century Church Fathers. This body of literature forms what is often referred to as the Biblical Foreground to the New Testament as it offers insight into the faith and practice of the early church.

For more information, contact
Walter Straker at 905-792-2297
or studybible@glbc.on.ca

Friendship Evangelism

Tim Johnson

At Vision Canada in Edmonton recently it was my privilege to attend a series of classes on Friendship Evangelism taught by David Lane of St. Louis, Missouri. An interesting man, David is the minister for the Berkeley Heights church of Christ, as well as a Psychotherapist. His two interests have merged to produce a person of unusual understanding and kindness, well suited to teach about this subject.

David explained that we couldn't teach someone the gospel until we've earned the right to do it. People must give this to us. We earn it by serving them with compassion when there is a need in their life. Jesus served others in this way, as we can see from scriptures like Matthew 9:35-38. There it is said that He taught, proclaimed the kingdom, and healed people. He "felt compassion for them because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd." What has been called "Friendship Evangelism" is simply this process of looking for ways to serve individual people, earning the right to teach

them through this service, interesting them in what Jesus is able to do, and finally teaching them the gospel and all about the Lord's church.

It was explained that the church of Christ is "the called out and the sent back." We have been called out of the world into a relationship with Christ and other Christians. We are sent back into the world to call others out of the world - and that is our only business in the world. We have been blessed to be a blessing.

Yet in order to be a blessing to others we must first SEE THEM. When Jesus entered Jerusalem He didn't see the great buildings and monuments, He saw the people and their troubles. He wept over it (Luke 19:41). God wants us to see people in the same way, to develop compassion for "the last, the least and the lost."

To begin, brother Lane recommended drawing up a list of the names of your family members, friends, relatives, associates, acquaintances and even by-passers (those you just happen to meet because of some turn of events). The list will be large

and should be sifted through and narrowed down to no more than ten people you feel are the best prospects. It should be kept in a prominent place where it can be seen daily. Prayers can be offered for the ability to see the needs in the lives of these people, for opportunities to be of service to them, and the boldness and compassion to do so.

Serving these people was described as "random acts of kindness in the name of the Lord and the local church." For evangelism to take place, it's not enough just to be kind to people, for many people who aren't Christians are very kind to others. Somehow people must understand you are serving them "in the name of the Lord." This can happen when you attempt to state what you know about Christ by way of what He has done for you as a person. Some people call this "witnessing" or "testifying." Whatever you call it, it's not enough to "name-drop" by just telling people you know about God and Jesus. The point was well made that we need to share what we

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Announcing . . .

Great Lakes Lectures

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Keynote Speakers:

**Truitt Adair
Wesley Jones**

Evenings at 7:00 p.m.

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*Women's and Men's Classes
at 10:00 and 1:30*

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Hosted by Great Lakes Bible College and Great Lakes Christian College

Vision (for) Canada

Wayne Turner



Many congregations, like people, find themselves mired in the rut of routine. Week after week, the regular schedule of services helps accomplish the activities of worship, assembly and fellowship that are part of the life of a New Testament church. Sometimes, in the process, any sense of direction and purpose fades into the background. The answers to important questions like "Who are we?", "What are we trying to do?", or "Why?" are not heard or understood as they should be. In the exodus, after Israel had circled Mount Seir for several days, God finally said, "You have circled this mountain long enough. Now go north." Like Israel, we need to stop going in circles and head in a specific direction toward a goal.

We often use the word "vision" to describe this goal. As God's people, we should share His vision for the church. In the parable of the wedding feast, the master sent out his servants to invite everyone so that "my house might be filled." One of the greatest descriptions of this vision comes from Revelation where John sees "a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues..." (7:9). Jesus described His purpose as coming to "seek and save the lost", to bring abundant life, and to give His life as a ransom for many.

Virtually every Christian would acknowledge that one of the primary purposes of the church is to seek and save the lost" - that the Great Commission is the "marching orders" for the church. However, it seems that few feel personally responsible for being actively involved in evangelism in Canada. Could the church in Canada be accused of a lack of vision?

It isn't that individual Canadian Christians are not evangelistic. Canadians have gone throughout the world to preach the gospel. For example, Canadians have preached in India, Papua New Guinea, Japan, Okinawa, Ukraine, Yugoslavia, and Zambia. Many Canadians are working with congregations in the United States. Admittedly, our country is a challenging field. It is a secular society characterized by religious tolerance and spiritual modesty, where religion is personal and private, where efforts at converting others are seen as politically incorrect. Given that many congregations are small with very limited resources and unable to provide more than subsistence levels of support, it is easy to see why many who seek to preach will either head to the U.S. or to work in a more responsive part of the world.

Current estimates show that neither the churches in the U.S. nor Canada are growing substantially. The churches in Africa are. Estimate provided through the Department of Missions at Abilene Christian University suggest that church membership has doubled in the past decade and that there

are now as many congregations in Africa as in the U.S.! Combining Africa and Asia (including India), it would be safe to conclude that there are now more churches of Christ and members outside North America than on this continent. From this, we can also conclude that there are now more non-Caucasian Christians around the world than "whites." The face of the church around the world has changed, and it is exciting! The vision from Revelation is coming true.

It is inspiring to see the enthusiasm, commitment - the passion and fire that these Christians have, first for the Lord but also for sharing Him with their countrymen. They have a vision of reaching their nations with the gospel. One man, converted in Liberia through World Bible School, fled to Guinea as a refugee with his family. He is the only African preacher in the country. Yet, he has established sixteen congregations. With growth like this in Africa, and the lack of growth here, how long will it be before churches overseas begin sending missionaries here?

It is thrilling to see that Canadians have been involved in evangelism throughout the world. However, where is the vision and passion for preaching Christ to Canada? How many congregations here are growing compared to those that are comfortably sitting idly by or even declining and dying? Where are new congregations being planted or even planned? When Christians move to towns without congregations, do they view this as an opportunity to start one, or do they just find an existing group that seems "close enough" to the New Testament pattern? Where is the passion and excitement of sharing the Word of Life with a nation that needs to know Him?

May we all rise up out of any ruts to rekindle the vision for Canada. May our hearts be stirred by God's fire for those around us who are lost. May we commit ourselves to sharing Christ with every person in this country. May we each say, "Here am I, Lord. Send me."

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Multicultural Evangelism

Adapted from C. Philip Slate

Time was, in the 1950s, for example, when the use of week-long gospel meetings and the more private use of Jule Miller's filmstrips would make sense to a lot of people in the USA and Canada. That time has largely passed because of the massive changes in our society. The Protestant values that provided the standards for life have either disappeared or been pushed aside. Rather, we must live with multiple systems, all competing for people's allegiance in what have been called "culture wars." People have learned to learn differently, and have their own standards of measurement. Concepts of universal absolutes have yielded to "pluralism." Truth is subjectively determined.

Additionally, Canada is a nation of many cultures, a product of colonialism and immigration patterns. In many cases people from non-English speaking backgrounds have assimilated into the predominately Anglo society. But in other cases people have retained much of their cultural heritage, living in ethnic blocks and retaining both language and cultural values from the past. In several countries, Canada included, "the world has come to our doorstep" (chapter title in Greenway and Monsma, *Cities: Missions New Frontier*). Even when they speak French or English (as 2nd, 3rd or 4th languages), their value systems and basic orientations to life are different because of ethnicity. Language is only part of the picture.

What can be done about this situation? Does it mean the gospel is "bound" so that it can no longer be effective and potent? My answer is "No." In some respects Canada is very ripe for the gospel, if we will learn to articulate it differently, but biblically, and use congregational life effectively. In his various writings, Reginald Bibby has indicated that surveys in Canada indicate large percentages of the populations say they want what churches say they provide. But somehow a connection is not made. In *Unknown Gods* he claims "churches are inept religious companies that cannot get the faith out of the warehouse." To what can that be attributed?

The first step in all of this is to identify the groups of people and blocks of thought that bind people together in each city or town. Only after identifying

whom the people are can one develop a meaningful response to them. It does not seem appropriate to outline all the ethnic groups in Canada since that information is readily available. Rather, the focus will be on evangelizing in a multicultural situation.

What Is Culture?

It is important to grasp the concept of "culture" if Christians are to grapple responsibly with the matter of multicultural evangelization. While it is difficult to settle on a single definition of the concept, most anthropologists are content to describe "culture" by referring to its various components rather than a single sentence definition. Overall, however, a culture involves shared and patterned values and actions largely inherited from the group to which one belongs. A culture usually involves all ages and the entire gamut of life, which means a distinction needs to be made between social groups within the culture and the culture itself.

By understanding a dozen or so components of all cultures one can get an impression of what a culture is and how it functions:

- a. A way of life. Provides answers to pressing questions and needs.
- b. Multi-individual. It is shared and patterned behavior, not idiosyncratic.
- c. A total design for living. It makes sense to those enmeshed in it.
- d. Unconsciously learned, at least a lot of it is.
- e. Regulates behaviour, but is not deterministic. People have choices.
- f. Determines and focuses values.
- g. Preserves contact with the past.
- h. Gives direction to those involved in it.
- i. Has explicit and implicit features.

- j. Has ideal and actual aspects.
- k. Amazingly integrated – except when it is in a state of radical flux or change.

l. Always changing.

From this broad perspective, some observations are in order. Roll these together for a concept of how a culture functions. However, people can break out of their culture or change within it; the deterministic view of culture is now a very minority position. As long as cultures can and do change, there are opportunities for the gospel of Christ to be an option. All cultures will change anyway, whether they hear the gospel or not. Since culture provides the grid through which people see reality, all responsible teaching of the gospel must take culture seriously, as Paul did (1 Corinthians 9:19-22).

Why Evangelization Must Take Cultures into Consideration

It is naive to say, "There is one God and one gospel, so what we need to do is *continued from page 14*

Upcoming Event

Topic: "His Love Compels"
(Jesus anointing, deeds, death and resurrection, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus' body the church)

Speaker: Dr. Thomas Olbricht
Retired Professor of Bible at
Pepperdine University, California
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CHRISTIAN YOUTH

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Is Forgiveness Even Possible?

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32) “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” (Colossians 3:13)

I wish that I could tell you that the day will come when we will all have learned so much from Jesus that we will no longer ever hurt one another. I believe that time is coming, but not here on earth. We imperfect human beings relate to one another in imperfect ways and sometimes the hurts we cause one another are deep and painful. Paul’s teaching in the above two passages is clear, we are to forgive whatever grievances we have against another. We are to forgive with the same generosity and grace that God has forgiven us. To make it even clearer, Jesus in commenting on something He had said while

teaching His disciples how to pray said this, “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” (Matthew 6:14-15) When we choose not to forgive others we are putting our own salvation in jeopardy.

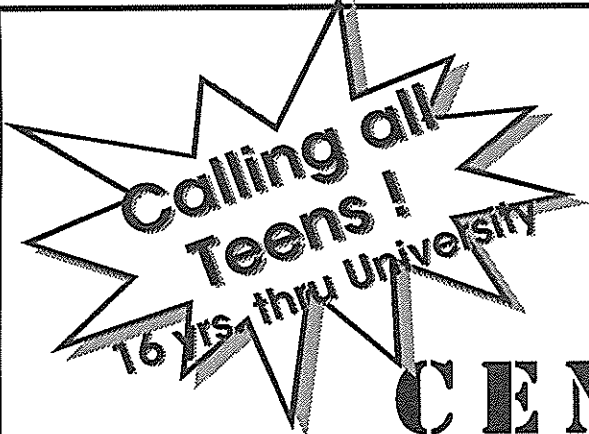
I know that some who read this will be thinking, “Brian, you don’t know what I’ve experienced. You don’t know the pain, the shame, the mess my life is in because of what someone did to me.” “You have no right to preach to me about forgiving such a person until you’ve walked a kilometre in my shoes.” Those who think that are correct. I have not walked a kilometre in their shoes and I don’t know their pain or shame or the mess their life is in as a result of what someone has done to them. And it is not my wish to add a layer of guilt to the pain they

already have. Yet I have discovered a truth in scripture that cannot be denied, we must forgive to be forgiven by God. I’ve also discovered some things through hard personal experience. When I choose not to forgive I’m hurting myself more than I hurt anybody else. The one who has harmed me may not care whether I forgive them or not, but by not forgiving I begin to destroy my self and begin to separate myself from God.

Reading this article will be difficult for some because of the freshness and the severity of their pain, in fact some may have already put it aside. Yet this important topic must be written about and explored as we seek to live together on this planet.

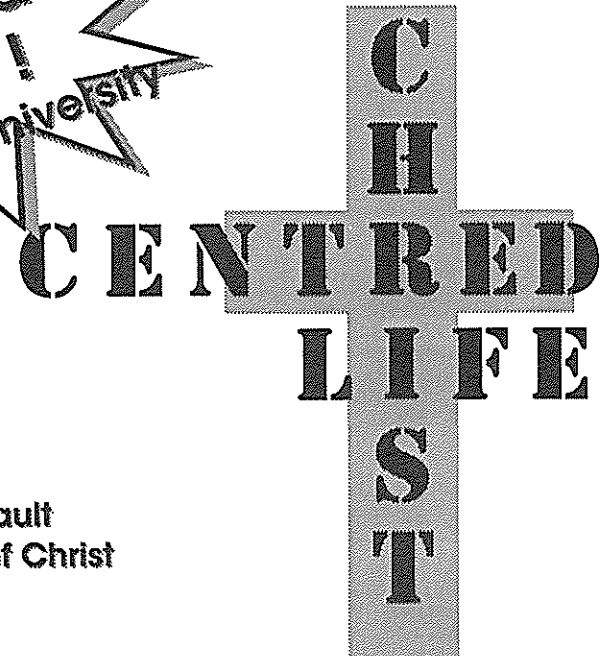
Some may find it difficult to forgive because of some wrong ideas about forgiveness. Some believe that by forgiving they are saying that what was done to them was all right and they cannot justify the evil that has been done to them. Forgiveness is recognizing that a wrong has been done and that you wish to let go of the pain of that wrong and move forward. God in forgiving us did not change wrong to right. When we forgive others we don’t change wrong to right, we simply choose not to hold it against them forever. Some in speaking about their pain say that it is too fresh to forgive; they see forgiveness as an action, when it is really a

continued on page 15



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The Survey: Churches of Christ in Canada, 2001

Geoffrey Ellis

This is the third decadal survey undertaken by the editors of the Gospel Herald that utilized a similar format. The survey was made possible by the willing participation of many churches and the helpfulness of congregational reporters. To each who shared in the effort, heartfelt appreciation is expressed.

Membership totals were received for 62% of the congregations; the questionnaire was returned by 54% of the churches. Three listings of churches of Christ in Canada were accessed: the "Directory of Churches" published monthly by the Gospel Herald, the 2001 Canadian Church Directory: Churches of Christ edited by Cory and June Vance, and the web site listing of Christians assembling by Steve Rudd (www.bible.ca). The Gospel Herald lists 130 congregations and the Directory 132. The Gospel Herald lists six congregations not found in the Directory; the Directory lists seven churches not found in the Gospel Herald listing. The Rudd web site listing includes 21 churches, ten of which do not occur in either the Gospel Herald or the Directory.

The total listing of the family members by the Directory were compared with the total number of members reported in the survey for those congregations occurring in both. By this means a factor was determined for each province by which the membership of those churches appearing only in the Directory could be estimated. The projection of total members of Churches of Christ in Canada in 2001 of 6,757 is thus a reasonable approximation.

The first mailing of the survey took place in early November 2001. Hoping to accelerate the process, 80% of the forms were sent via the Internet. Unexpectedly, the response to the electronic questionnaire was low. This required a return to the postal service in March of 2002. The slowness by which these results have come together is regretted, and apology is offered for personal contributions to the delay.

Once again the Gospel Herald is indebted to Jim Dale for his willing application of his computer skills in the collating of the survey. Thanks are also extended to his wife, Amy, for her cheerful imputing of the data.

It is my hope that concerned leaders and workers across Canada will examine thoughtfully the findings of the survey. Surely both encouragement and concern are stimulated by our collective progress as the 30-year profile emerges. For example, trends such as the aging of our congregations and the shrinking of our younger Bible school student numbers need to be considered. The shrinkage of atten-

dance averages and congregational size averages in Ontario and Saskatchewan is troublesome. This is offset by improvements in these areas in Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec.

The slow growth of the number of congregations of Churches of Christ in Canada needs to be revisited by all of us. Church planting should become a priority for all congregations in Canada. It has been observed, "The apple tree does not exist to grow apples but to produce more apple trees." Let us determine that each church will plant a church in the coming decade. A church planting church is a growing church!

A Snapshot of Churches of Christ in Canada, 2001

- Total number of congregations – 151
- Total (projected) number of members – 6,757
- Average number of members per congregation – 45.5
- Average Sunday a.m. attendance – 62.1
- Average Sunday p.m. attendance – 36.4
- Average mid-week attendance – 28.6
- % of churches reporting Sunday p.m. services – 45%
- % of churches reporting mid-week services – 73%
- Congregations served by elders – 1 of 3
- Congregations served by deacons – 1 of 5
- Congregations served by preachers – 4 of 5
- Age groupings in educational programs – to grade 9, 29%; high school and university, 17%; younger adults, 9%; older adults, 45%
- Average number of baptisms per year per church – 4
- Average net gain in members per church per year – 2.5
- % of churches conducting special meetings – 60%
- % of churches using mail, TV, phone or radio in outreach – 34%
- % of churches using correspondence courses – 44%
- % of churches conducting home studies – 52%
- % of churches engaged in church planting – 15%
- % of churches contributing to foreign missions – 53%
- % of budget directed to foreign missions on average 17%
- % of churches maintaining programmed benevolence – 39%
- % of churches responding in benevolence as needed – 56%
- % of budget directed to benevolence on average – 8.1%
- Places of assembly – in church buildings, 77%; in rented facilities, 15%; in homes, 8%
- Churches disbanded and organized since 1991 – 19/22

Churches of Christ in Canada, 2001: The Profile

Geoffrey Ellis

Churches of Christ in Canada in the year 2001 numbered 151 congregations. Previous surveys reported 147 churches in 1991 and 133 in 1981. Membership projections for the three survey years give 6,757 in 2001, 6,550 in 1991 and 5,789 in 1981.

The estimated average membership of Churches of Christ in Canada in 2001 was 45.5. This compares with 44.6 in 1991 and 43.5 in 1981. The average Sunday a.m. assembly attendance in 2001 was 62.1 compared with 56.2 in 1991 and 64.7 in 1981. In 2001 45% of the churches reported holding Sunday p.m. services with an average attendance of 36.4. In 2001 73% of the churches reported meeting

mid-week with an average attendance of 28.6.

The survey secured the age profile of the congregations' membership: The percentage of members in 2001 under 25 was 19%; between 25 and 50, 43%; and over 50, 38%. The percentages for 1991 and 1981 respectively were: 20%, 53% and 27%; and 24%, 49% and 27%.

Sunday Bible classes in 2001 found 29% of the students in classes through grade nine, 17% of high school and university age, 9% younger adult (from about age 22 to the mid-thirties), and 45% older adults.

Reporting on leadership, the survey found that 1 in 3 churches had elders (cf. 1 in 4 in 1991 and 1981). Deacons were found in 1 of 5 churches (cf. 1 of 5.4 in 1991, and 1 of 5 in 1981). Preachers served in 4 of 5 churches in 2001 (cf. 5 of 6 in 1991 and 4 of 5 in 1981).

The churches made an average gain of 2.45 members per congregation in 2001 (cf. 1.25 member gain per church per year in 1991). This included an average of 4.03 baptisms per congregation (cf. 2.9 in 1991 and 7 in 1981). These baptisms were categorized as: from church families, 1.59; from a previous "churched" condition, 1.0; and from a previous "unchurched" condition, 1.44. Congregations averaged 3.62 members transferring in compared with 2.86 transferring out. Decreases included an average of .67 deaths and 1.67 lapses per congregation per year.

The survey found that with respect to outreach, 1 church in 6.58 is involved in church planting; 1 in 1.88 participates in foreign missions, and these averaging 17.9% of their budgets. One of 2 churches engages in home studies, 1 of 3 in TV, radio or phone outreach, and 1 of 2.3 in correspondence course work. Almost all congregations (96%) are involved in benevolence outreach; 59% do benevolence as needed; 41% of the congregations have a program of benevolence; 1 of 2 congregations report a

benevolence budget with an overall average of 8%.

Three in four of Churches of Christ in Canada met in their own buildings in 2001 (cf. 2 in 3 in 1991); 1 in 7 met in rented quarters (cf. 1 in 5 in 1991), and 1 in 12.5 met in homes (cf. 1 in 8 in 1991).

Thirty-Year Comparison Age Profile of Members

1 = 1981, 2 = 1991, 3 = 2001

%		<u>Under 25</u>	<u>25-50</u>	<u>Over 50</u>
BC	1	35%	44%	21%
	2	28	49	23
	3	19	47	34
AB/NT	1	30	54	16
	2	22	61	17
	3	20	46	34
SK	1	21	44	35
	2	19	47	34
	3	19	33	48
MB	1	25	39	36
	2	16	48	36
	3	25	35	40
ON	1	22	48	30
	2	16	50	34
	3	18	44	38
PQ	1	25	55	20
	2	25	57	18
	3	30	46	24
NB/NS	1	8	62	30
	2	16	59	25
	3	12	34	54
Nation	1	24%	49%	27%
	2	20	53	27
	3	19	43	38

OWEN SOUND Ladies Renewal

Date: September 27, 28, 29, 2002

Theme: Rejoice Regardless

Scriptures: Philippians 4:4-7
& 4:13; James 1:2-4

Speakers: Nelle Merritt,
Ina Smith, and Ruby Ford

Location: Riverview Bible Camp,
near Chesley

Registration: Friday Night -
4:00 - 7:00

Cost: \$30.00 per person & \$40.00
for mother and daughter.
Each additional daughter is
\$10.00. Grade 6 - High School

Contact: Donna Muzzell
1-519-371-4301

**Register early, as
numbers are limited!**

Thirty-Year Comparison Average Church Membership

	1981	1991	2001
BC	36.6	31.7	35.8
AB/NT	53.0	73.2	82.0
SK	47.8	46.3	43.2
MB	45.1	49.3	71.0
ON	49.5	46.7	44.7
PQ	40.0	37.1	52.8
NB/NS	16.3	19.0	12.9
Nation	43.5	44.6*	45.5

(*Adjusted in 1996)

Forty-five-Year Comparison Number of Congregations

	1966	1981	1991	2001
BC	10	22	29	26
AB/NT	4	9	12	10
SK	22	18	15	18
MB	9	10	9	7
ON	52	63	69	77
PQ	3	4	7	5
NB	1	2	1	3
NS	2	4	4	3
PEI	0	0	0	0
Nfld	1	0	0	1
NWT	1	1	1	1
Totals	104	133	147	151

Thirty-Year Comparison Number of Members (Projected)

	1981	1991	2001
BC	779	974	931
AB/NT	371	722	830
SK	861	710	778
MB	451	444	497
ON	3069	3536	3367
PQ	160	285	264
Mar	98	103	90
Nation	5789	6550	6757

Note: The 1981 membership totals included estimates for non-reporting churches. The 1991 membership totals were revised in 1996. The basis for the 2001 projections is given in "The Profile."

Churches Disbanded or Organized Since 1991

	Disbanded	Organized
BC	Boswell	Courtney
	Cranbrook	Kelowna – Rutland
	Langley	N. Vancouver – Deep Cove
	Powell River	Vancouver – City
	Salt Spring - Ganges	
	Vancouver – East Side	
AB	Alliance	Medicine Hat - 2
	Edson	
SK		Saskatoon – Hub
		Whitewood
MB	Arden – Neepewa	
	Winnipeg – West Side	
ON	Blind River	Aurora
	Concord	Brantford – Followers
	Griersville	Burks Falls
	Iroquois	Crow Lake – Nestor Falls
		Huntsville – 2
		Kingston – 2
		Ottawa – Iglesia de Cristo
		Peterborough (reactivated)
		Tecumseh
		Toronto East
PQ	Merger (Chinese/French)	Toronto West
	Lachine	Whitney
	Sherbrooke	
AP	Truro	St. John
		Moncton – 2
		St. Marys

Note of Thanks

I appreciate very much the many people who took the time and effort to attend the celebration of my 80th birthday and retirement from managing the production of this paper and the bookstore. It has been a long and sometimes stressful job but it has also been rewarding because of the opportunities for service. I thank you for providing those opportunities and for expressing your well wishes at this time.

Not only do I appreciate those who attended and expressed their sentiments but also the many who mailed in cards, phoned or sent e-mail messages. Many of the messages were such that all I will need to do, if I'm having a bad day, is get them out and read them. Thanks for providing these nice words of encouragement. They are treasured.

I hope to be able to continue to serve but without the constant pressure of meeting deadlines. My best wishes are with those who will continue the paper and the bookstore service.

Eugene C. Perry



by Walter R. Straker
750 Clark Blvd.
Bramalea, ON L6T 3Y2
Fax: 905 792-8623
E-mail: straker@echo-on.net

ONTARIO

Beamsville: Ruth Zimmerman returned from Papua, New Guinea on July 24 and plans to remain in Canada for six months. Vacation Bible School began on Saturday, August 24, with a fun fair and registration, with special Sunday services and classes August 26-28. A special VBS program for parents and children was held Wednesday evening. Sarah Beth Whitfield became Mrs. Eric Knutson on August 10.

Bramalea: Jonathan Straker arrived in Sendai, Japan on August 10, after spending four days in the Tokyo area. Joel Osborne reported their first baptism. Her name is Hanako Toyama. She started studying with LST reader, David Moon, who is working full-time in Sendai, teaching English, and she continued throughout the winter with the preacher, Mawatari-Sensei. On August 4, the congregation had their evening service with Singspiration at Camp Omagh and everyone enjoyed it. Al and Linda Meakes were back with the congregation on July 21, and Al spoke Sunday morning. Kurt Whittington spoke and gave a report of his trip to Tanzania on July 28. George Barber led the congregation in a song service on Sunday

Church of Christ Newmarket requires a Gospel Preacher

Send resume with information concerning your experience as a preacher, teacher, work with youth, outreach, education.

Our congregation is interested in a man concerned with outreach and building up Christians.

Send to The Elders,
Newmarket Church of Christ
P.O. Box 21581
Newmarket, On.
L3Y 8J1

evening, August 11. George and Janice Barber live in North Carolina. New members who have moved into the area are Nana Afriyie and daughter, Clena, formerly from Ghana, and Brian Van Alstine, from Hamilton, who is teaching at a local high school. Allison Knutson left for ACU to work on her Masters degree; Mark Knutson returned to Harding for his last semester; Kurt Whittington returned to Oklahoma Christian, Ashley Whittington to begin at Harding and Jonathan Knutson at Rochester College in Michigan. Owen and Linda Whittington and family are leaving the congregation to move to Ohio at the beginning of September. Evertt Huffard presented his power-point lessons on Islam, Saturday and Sunday, September 1-2.

Brantford (Costain): The congregation has recently received a long-term lease on a large section of a Community Centre located in one of Brantford's most needy areas. The building, owned by the city, offers access to classrooms, a gym, and a large room designed as a meeting/worship centre. "We are committed to making a difference in our new neighbourhood. We're already offering worship and Bible study times, a drop in centre for seniors, a literacy program for primary children, and social activities for all ages. We are confident the Lord will continue to supply our needs."

Grimsbey: Darlene and Jen Tice were baptized on Tuesday, June 18. The brethren plan to have their annual "Sunday in the Park," on September 15. Their Vacation Bible School was entitled, Bugs "R" Us and was held August 12-16. Walter Johnston celebrated his 80th birthday at the church building with the congregation on Saturday, July 27.

Meaford: "Nathan Pickard, who is currently involved in post-graduate studies at Abilene Christian University, is home for the summer and spoke at the morning worship on July 7. This Sunday was also the last of four trial junior worship times. Scott and Tereasa Mansfield served at Camp Omagh July 13-27. Brian and Bonnie Cox were home for a family wedding and Brian spoke at the morning service on July 21. The congregation has been collecting supplies for both Strawberry Point Christian Camp and Camp Omagh and also has been involved in helping send campers. - Scott Mansfield

Newmarket: The congregation rejoiced in the baptisms of Brian and Crystal Ellis at the end of July.

Owen Sound: The ladies renewal is scheduled for September 27-29, with the theme "Rejoice Regardless." Speakers are to be Nelle Merritt, Ina Smith and Ruby Ford.

St. Catharines (Ontario St.): Helen McNeill was united with Christ in baptism on Thursday night, July 25. Helen is Don Whitfield's fiancée.

Tintern: Close to \$1600 was collected for Zambia relief. The brethren's "Veggie-Tale Bible Camp" was a success with the atten-

dance peaking at 81 with 200 at the Friday night program. The adults and teens have a combined class for Wednesday evenings. John Stanley baptized Linda and Keisha Harriette into Christ. On July 22 Joel and Amanda Lock, Marianne Holston and Gord Azzoparde, along with brethren from Waterloo, went to Costa Rica on a mission trip. On August 25 the Tintern congregation had a series of three power-point presentations on Islam by Evertt Huffard; the origin, the doctrine and approaches to Islam. Evertt Huffard was a missionary to the Middle East for a number of years and has written a book on Islam. He is very knowledgeable on this subject. David Peirce reported to the congregation about his work in Thailand, where he is involved in the Let's Start Talking program.

Toronto (Bayview Ave.): Jonathan Hilborn will be attending Rochester College in Michigan this fall and Elizabeth Hilborn will be attending the University of Toronto. Dave Knutson has been filling in as guest speaker.

Toronto (Strathmore Blvd.): The second Sunday of each month the congregation is enjoying a time of singing following the evening service. Her father, Jean, an elder at Strathmore, baptized Vanessa Volcy into Christ on July 28. Marlon Molina went with a group to do mission work in Costa Rica in July. Niki and Ruth Etienne went to Haiti with a team to do medical mission work in August. A long time member of the congregation, Margaret Cargin, passed away at Grove Park Home in Barrie on Friday, August 16.

Waterloo: The brethren had "Faith Mountain Family Adventure" week, starting on August 11. Brother Adam Vasquez has returned from El Salvador. Adam was baptized in February 2000 in Waterloo but has spent the last ten months in El Salvador. David Dimmick and Kristen Kirkland were to be married on September 6.

Windsor: Mark Galvin was baptized into Christ at the Plymouth Church of Christ on July 14. He and his fiancée Sandra, will be married October 5 and plan to reside in Windsor. Chad and Kim Cellaire were married in Port Huron on August 10. Anas and Colleen Raja were married in Windsor on August 23. Oscar Duran, one of the elders, is teaching an adult Bible class for members with English as a second language.

Vandeleur: Aileen and Ian Boyce celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on August 3.

NEW YORK

Buffalo (North Buffalo): George and Kay Whitlock celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 7. The congregation invited the community to their annual picnic on August 18. At the present time members of the congregation are visiting with eight men in their prison ministry. Sunday evening services begin September 8 at 7:00 p.m.



by Marion Waugh

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Edmonton, AB T6L 6J1

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E-mail: waughr@telusplanet.net

(The help of Barbara Lewis in gathering news is appreciated.)

ALBERTA

Medicine Hat (Crescent Heights): Plans are being made to hire an evangelist to work with us. We have been blessed to have someone come every third weekend to preach. That Sunday, after morning worship, we have a potluck and monthly business meeting. Every second and third Thursday afternoon, ladies meet at the building for bible study. We receive encouragement from the study and fellowship.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Abbotsford: Two Sojourner families, who spent two weeks with us, were a big help in making the transition into our new meeting facilities last month. Our last meeting at the Columbia Bible College chapel was on July 31st when the church met for a song-prayer service, with coffee and dessert served afterward as a thank-you fellowship to the Sojourner families. John and Willodene Wedler hosted a prayer breakfast for the congregation at their home on July 27. The congregation held a special prayer service for Laurel McMillan and her family on Aug. 8. Ray Fillion spent three weeks working with the school in Haiti last month. Allan Nienhuis has constructed a website for the Central Valley church, and has added the revised version of Velma Forman's website to it. The address is: members.shaw.ca/allanjn/cvcc.

Burnaby: Nine members of the Burnaby congregation attended the "Celebration 2002" lectureship at Camp Berachah, Washington, over the July 4th weekend. Among the speakers were Evertt Hufford, who spoke on the subject of "Why Muslims Can't Say Yes to Jesus", George Johnson spoke on "Church Planting", and Gerald Sapperton, whose lecture on "Saying Yes to Jesus Even in Illness", came from his personal experiences in dealing with cancer. Video highlights of the Abilene wedding of Joel Ruch and Jessica Sargent were seen at a reception while the couple were here in July. They returned to ACU where they will serve as dorm parents while working on their Masters Degrees. Kirk Ruch currently has between 12-15 students in his "Roots Class". Most of those attending the class are of Chinese, Taiwanese or other Oriental cultural background, and eager to learn the basics of walking with God. Kirk's series on Minor Prophets of the Old Testament

has been outstanding. Harvey and Betty Wood celebrate their Golden Wedding anniversary this month.

City Church (E. Vanc.): We have prepared our papers for application to the Federal government to be recognized as a non-profit church to allow for contributions to be tax deductible. We are working together toward a planned seminar in January to teach us how to develop small groups for evangelism and building up one another. The classes on Saturdays are getting more and more exciting. One of the young women from China who visited our worship service some time ago is back and studying with us on Saturday evenings. We have plans to send Bible courses to brothers and sisters in remote parts of the world as a way to build them up through study of God's word. A woman working on Baffin Island, the mother of one of our members, is studying the Bible long distance with her son!

Delta: Ian Close, son of John and Alice Close, was married to Jen Claydon of Vancouver on July 27. Darren Williamson was in Toronto to research material for his doctorate.

Kamloops: The church conducted a day camp for children the week of Aug. 12, with between 15 and 20 participating. Dane Bengard continues his studies of the Spanish language in preparation for a trip to Cuba with Ray Gonzales of Mexicali, Mexico, in January. Daryl and Kristine Bell continue to struggle to start a congregation of the Lord's church in 100 Mile House. Their phone number is 250 395-5164. If you are passing through and can meet with them or give them a word of encouragement, it would be appreciated.

Maple Ridge: Todd Brunner is now putting out a weekly bulletin in keeping with our needs. We had 22 present for a worship service in July. LIFE groups met in the Johnston home throughout the month of August. The wedding vows made 25 years ago by Andy and Sharon Aaron were repeated at a reception at the Burnaby building on August 10. They were married on Aug. 13, 1977, by Sharon's grandfather, E. P. (Ted) Lake, who preached for the Burnaby congregation for several years following his return from mission work in Norway and England.

Prince George: A Creation Evidences Seminar was conducted in Prince George the

last weekend in July with Warren Wilcox, professor of Apologetics at Bear Valley Bible Institute near Denver. The Pete Heiniger family from Brainerd, Mn, joined Garth Hilton, who has been the evangelist for the church over the past year, on July 30. In addition to a Sunday morning assembly at the Columbus Community Centre at 10 a.m., Bible study is offered from 11:30 to 12:30. An informal home devotional called "Flock Groups" is conducted on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month at 2 p.m., and a Bible study at 7 on Tuesday evenings. Glen & Debrah Eddie relocated in the Vancouver area on Sept. 1 after Glen accepted employment with a Social Agency in Richmond.

Vancouver: Approximately 85 people from Vancouver Island and Mainland churches participated in the annual Family Camp at Spruston Road the first weekend in August. Guest speaker Wade Hodges from Bellingham, Wa., delivered six addresses covering the theme of "Cultivating Faith in the Soil of Doubt" during the 3-day camp. There were 125 present for the Sunday morning service on the 4th. Under the supervision of Dave Blanchard, youth minister at Eastside in Portland, a group of 28 young people conducted Bible stories, crafts, and entertainment for the children during the adult sessions. Darren Williamson was in charge of the camp again this year. The Family Camp concluded the season. The season began with a Junior camp,

continued on page 17

Youth Minister Needed

The **Winnipeg church of Christ** is seeking the services of a full-time youth minister. We are a church of 200+ with elders, deacons and a full-time evangelist.

You will work with a youth ministry committee appointed by the elders. Primary duties are teaching, mentoring and leading in service and activities with our teens and college-age young adults. Assisting in the public worship assembly with a focus on song leading is also an important part of this ministry.

The youth minister must be a dedicated Christian with formal training in Bible or youth ministry preferably with a bachelor's degree or currently working on a degree. You must be able to demonstrate from current activities or previous experience the ability to work with teens.

Send your resume including personal references to the Youth Committee, 217 Osborne Street South, Winnipeg, MB R3L 1Z4 or email to: central@winnipegchurch.ca

Barbara Lewis

Japan: John and Autumn Sproul and family from the Lynden congregation in Washington left on July 17 for Lubbock, Texas, where John will study at Sunset International Bible Institute for two years. They plan to intern with the City Church in Vancouver for six months after school, and then move to northern Japan to work in the city of Sapporo. Autumn is the daughter of Steve and Marcia Hasbrouck. Their eldest daughter, Rochelle, who lives in Sapporo, tells them that the young missionaries there are studying the video series on "Acts" by Abe Lincoln. It is one of the series from the satellite program that was sent to help these young men and women get an in-depth Bible study in English each week. If you know of a place where there are Christians who have no trained teachers or evangelist, but would like to study the Bible in this way, Sunset will be glad to help you help someone else. E-mail Bill Powers at: satelliteschool@hotmail.com.

India: UNICEF and other world health and educational institutions have released the following facts about Indian's children: There are 27 million live births each year. Of that number, nearly 1.8 million die before their 1st birthday. Another 2.4 million die

under the age of 5. India now has the largest number of children in the world under the age of 15, estimated at some 380 million. Of these, at least 137 million live below the poverty line. The number of children working instead of going to school is thought to be around 11 million. Of the children between the ages of 6 and 14 years, 42 million do not attend school, 25 million of which are girls. However, literacy rates rose from 52% in 1991 to 65% in 2001. India is now close to the eradication of polio. The reported and confirmed number of new cases fell from 2,817 in 1999 to 265 in 2000. Mota Daniel was a Hindu who worshiped idols - and trees, following in the footsteps of his grandparents. However, his grandmother encountered a gospel preacher and became a Christian. She told Mota that although the idols had eyes, ears, and mouths, they could not see, hear, or talk. He writes: "My grandmother deposed the idols and taught me that Jesus Christ is the living God. Now I have changed my entire life and stopped worshipping idols. I came to the conclusion that Jesus is the real God and there is none other on this earth. I took baptism and am proclaiming the kingdom of God in the nook and corners of the remote villages...without fear." - from July India Newsletter published by Ron and Karen Clayton

Papua New Guinea: The Melanesian Bible College held its annual graduation on Sept. 8 with nine 3rd year students and four 2nd year students able to return to their home villages to preach and teach. As they have for several years, Andy and Carolyn Masters and Wayne and Martha Simpson from Memphis took their annual holidays to be present for the graduation and to attend the national "kibung" (lectureship) in order to strengthen all of those associated with the college and work in PNG. (One year they carried 3 large suitcases of medical supplies down from members of an Arlington, Tx., congregation. A member who was an airline employee was able to transport them from Dallas to Memphis. So the three suitcases traveled from the Metroplex all the way to PNG for free. Amazing how the Lord works things out to save us trouble and expense when we ask for solutions to our problems!) Velma Forman completed five days of travel from Lae when she arrived in Vancouver on Sept. 12. She was fortunate to be able to take advantage of a good special fare that the

Niugini and Singapore Airlines had when she purchased her tickets in August. After "touring" congregations in BC in October, Velma will travel to Memphis and Nashville, where she hopes to help organize a container of medical supplies to assist the general hospital in Lae, as well as her clinic and local health centers. Jason and Sheryl Moriarty, who work in Madang, expect to arrive in Canada on Oct. 1, for a 3-month furlough. After a month of visiting friends and supporters here, they will be spending most of the next two months in the States. They report that during the month of June, three people from the elite ruling class on the island of Manam, which is governed by a central chief system, were baptized. One of them is chief of a village, with great authority and influence over the people living in it.

Donetsk, Ukraine: Jay Don and Mary Lee Rogers had an interesting experience on June 24 when they were taken to Artomosk to visit salt mines. Given old coats and hard hats, they were carried 900' below the service by an ancient elevator. (Mary Lee noted that is nearly as far down as one of the World Trade Centers was up.) The mine has what is called a "hospital wing". It consists of small rooms with beds for people with asthma or other breathing problems. It is claimed that small children can be entirely cured by breathing the salt air. For the pleasure of those getting the treatments, a huge room over 100' high with floors, ceilings and walls all of pure salt is supplied with two nets and soccer equipment. The Rogers had a close call in July when the van in which they had attended their first Ukrainian funeral narrowly missed being hit by a car that catapulted over an embankment a few feet in front of them. This was especially unnerving because of the long and strange (to them) funeral they had just witnessed in 38 degree heat. The man was a former student of the Satellite School Don now heads.

Ethiopia: One of the most beloved preachers in this country died about three months ago. Tenabo Chanklu had been a preacher in the Lord's church for 34 years. At a National Preachers Conference in 1998, all those who had been taught by Brother Chanklu were asked to stand, and over 100 stood up! During his lifetime, he had visited a majority of the nearly 700 congregations in Ethiopia, and at the age of 86, made a walking tour of 45 congregations, covering a distance of more than 50 miles. In the western region of Ethiopia, construction on a much-needed new preacher training facility was expected to resume by the end of August.

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OBITUARIES

Johnson, Nellie May

After a lengthy illness Mrs. Nellie Johnson entered into that rest for which she had prepared herself in Christ Jesus.

We will miss her greatly. In her 93rd year Nellie ceased from her labours. Her life is itself her greatest eulogy.

Predeceased by her husband, Donald, some 18 years ago, she leaves to mourn daughter, Linda and husband, Dave Bonis, of St. Mary's; son, Ronald and wife Marjorie of Atlanta; daughter, Margaret and husband, Gordon Murtell of St. Catharines. She will be greatly missed, as well, by seven grandchildren. The grandchildren served as pallbearers at the funeral service.

Nellie's roots reached back to a childhood that could have made her bitter. The death of her father made it necessary for her, as a child, to experience a number of foster home situations, from Western Canada to Quebec. These were not happy times. In time, she settled on Manitoulin Island and eventually came to southern Ontario.

In 1927, she and her husband Don obeyed the gospel together and her loyalty to Jesus never wavered throughout the years.

She loved to travel and the highlight of her life in later years was a trip made to Hawaii with her friend, Dorothy Ellis. She spoke frequently of Dorothy's kindness.

Nellie enjoyed quilting. It was a time spent with ladies of the church, as well as, a time for creativity. She loved to garden and, of course, her ability at Scrabble was known by all who visited with her. Her family remembers, fondly, her abilities in pie making, apple or cherry, both of which she did excellently.

Above all Nellie was a Christian. She reflected the kindness and grace of Jesus. That, in itself, is our assurance and hope that allows us to say that her death, rather than a termination, was a transition into that life where complete abundance is hers.

While we will miss her impish smile and the twinkle in her eye, memories of her and her faith are the comfort that is ours.

Daughter Margaret and son, Ron, spoke lovingly of her and Murray Smith was honoured to officiate at her funeral.

Donald Everett Preston

Don was born in Whitchurch, York Co. on Aug. 3, 1932, the son of Alex and Viola Petch Preston. His siblings are: Eugene (m. Edna); Clare (m. the late Elsie); Grant (m. Edith); June (m. Lewis Kent); Alex (m. Shirley); Clark (m. Donna); Fred (m. Barb).

At about age 18 he took a body shop apprenticeship programme and eventually started his own business, in 1979.

When he was young, Don had a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, black leather jacket, skull and crossbones! He got Margaret McVanel to ride with him and they were married on July 3, 1954. Throughout forty-eight years of married life he was a loving and supportive husband.

In June 1955 Debbie was born; then in July 1964 Darlene. Debbie married Richard Chen and their children are Shawn and Shevon; Darlene married Don Lee and they have a little boy Michael.

Don was always much involved in the life of the church. He liked to study the Bible and knew it well. His parents started the Church of Christ in Sundridge; he served as an elder for some years at the Newmarket Church of Christ. More recently he and Margaret were members at the Barrie Church of Christ.

Don loved to tell stories and he had an infectious laugh. He and Marg were like "two peas in a pod" and shared much of their time together, their family life tied closely to his business. There was always laughter and much good food at their house.

At the time of his death Don was enjoying still being busy. He

suffered a heart attack while working in his shop Friday afternoon, July 5. It had been a usual Friday, which included a trip to the store to buy toys for Michael and some time to play with them.

At his funeral service, Wes McLeod gave a eulogy, as did Don's daughters and son-in-law Don; David Johnson, Barrie elder, offered the word of encouragement. Interment is at Grenfel Cemetery.

He rests in peace.

Claude Cox.

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**Great Lakes Bible College
Great Lakes Christian College**



Building Foundations of Faith

continued from page 5

to bring people to Christ, who unites everyone." There is much truth in that statement, but it also contains some dangerous oversimplifications.

No one can deny that in the early church there were congregations that were culturally Jewish (Acts 10:45) though they had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. On the other hand, there were the "churches of the Gentiles" (Rom. 16:4) that accepted Jesus as the Son of God but did not become culturally Jewish.

The important meeting in Jerusalem (Acts 15) and the information gleaned from the Epistle to the Galatians indicate that Gentiles were not required to become culturally Jewish to be fully accepted by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and that Jews were not required to give up their Jewishness – to become Gentiles – to be accepted by the Lord.

That Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles and Peter to the Jews (Gal. 2:7,8) does not indicate two gospels. There was one gospel, one faith (Eph. 4:5; Jude 3), but the initial messages, the initial points of contact were different in order to make sense on the front end. Contrast the sermons to Jews (Acts 2:13-26; 3:12-16; 7:2-53; 13:16-47) with those

to the Gentiles (Acts 14:15-17; 17:22-31). Though the effort was to bring people under the dominion of Christ, the beginning points were different.

Evangelizing in a Multi-Cultural Situation

At the communication level there are several groups of persons to whom we must be sensitive as we formulate our message. These include many Roman Catholics who are very discouraged and even disagree with the Pope, many people in Mainline Protestant churches who are disgruntled, students at university, secularists, New Age people, Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and others who need to be approached differently.

The focus here, however, is on ethnic groups. One needs to identify the cultural enclaves in one's area of work. Often there are people who do not live in enclaves who are moving away from their ethnicity and assimilating into Anglo culture. Ethnicity is important in evangelizing when people hold to it in such areas as language, value system, historical memory, and even marriage.

General Guidelines for Evangelizing in the Midst of Multiculturalism

1. Prayerfully establishing rapport, building relationships. This is especially important between people who are from different ethnic backgrounds. The biblical doctrine of loving the neighbour is critically important for evangelizing as well as expressing allegiance to Jesus.

2. Increasing the circle of Christian friends for the non-Christian that is ethnically different. This tends to produce a sense of acceptance and safety. Both social activities and evangelistic Bible studies are good settings for increasing the circle of acquaintances. When Christian people behave consistently with their faith, they serve as salt and light.

3. Somewhere along the line the people with

whom you work must be introduced to the church as a community of believers. This is critical in Canada since most people do not see church life and behaviour as worthy of their active participation. Being a New Testament Christian involves group life; Christianity – like Judaism and Islam, but unlike Hinduism and Buddhism – is an assembling religion. What it does when it "comes together" has a way of speaking good or bad news to outsiders. Graham Cole has written about the "book of Ruth evangelism", by which he means "we shall see increasingly post modernity-shaped people join the people of God before they join the God of the people."

4. Once in a study/teaching situation the message needs to be formulated to appeal to the person(s) involved. Bibby has pointed out that a high percentage of Canadian people are intrigued with mystery, fascinated with the supernatural and "want to find out how to make life more meaningful." Forgiveness of sins is important but needs to be made part of a bigger picture. Some people may be more interested initially in the meaning of life than the forgiveness of sins. "The right church" is not initially a big issue. The doctrine of God is critically important. One cannot assume that everyone who affirms belief in God has a realistic idea of who God is and what He is like. There is a great value in communicating the biblical story line, from beginning to the final judgment. The individual pieces about which people get exercised must be put into the picture to make sense.

The Importance of the Congregation

What goes on in the local church is the group expression of Christian beliefs. In that setting, Christian theology is to be translated into relationships and other behaviours that serve to interpret for outsiders what it means to be a Christian. People normally realize that accepting Christian truth involves identification with certain groups, so it is important for the group to be perceived as living by Christian standards. Outsiders need to see people living consistent with the hope they have, to know what is out there beyond physical life. They should see compassion for those who hurt, whether near or far. They also should see a sense of love and community among believers. A sense of belonging is important, both to Christian experience and for communication to outsiders. And, they should see

Journey into Yesterday

by Ruth Coles

Ruth relates in a personal way the story of 13.5 years serving in the Papuan Waria of Papua New Guinea with her husband, Reg.

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people holding tenaciously to beliefs that give one place in the universe and significance as a person.

Moving From Information to Action

Here are some suggestions for planning and developing multicultural evangelism.

1. Create a responsible study group that will get its mind around some of the helpful information on this subject.

2. Identify the groups or entities with which your church has an opportunity to work.

3. Develop a strategy or course of action designed to engage that group in an appropriate manner.

4. Appoint a person or couple to motivate the group and hold it accountable for what it agrees to do.

5. Identify factors in the congregational life that will either enhance (e.g., friendliness toward outsiders, non-class, non-assembly times to associate, etc.) or hinder (e.g., quarreling, poorly planned assemblies, coldness of members toward visitors, etc.) your work with the targeted non-Christians

6. Be sensitive to the areas of church life that will likely be strange, or at least different, to the ethnically different outsider or new convert. What about your hymns, your openness with each other, prayer terminology. The solution to this is not to lower the bar but to teach the significance of these things.

(Editor's note: Philip Slate taught a three-part class on Multicultural Evangelism at Vision Canada in Edmonton, July 25-28, 2002. He has preached and taught in some 28 countries as well as having served as Chairman and Professor of Missions at ACU and Professor and Dean at Harding Graduate School of Religion. He is presently the Missions Coordinator for the North Boulevard congregation in Murfreesboro, Tenn. This article was adapted from his material in the Vision Canada notebook. For a tape of the complete presentation, contact the Edmonton congregation.)

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journey with many steps. Please allow me to share some steps to forgiveness.

• Step One:

Recognize that a wrong has been done to you, try to get past the shock and denial so God can heal you.

• Step Two:

Find a safe person to speak with and to pray with. Find someone who will help you in your effort to forgive, not further fan the flames of your resentment.

• Step Three:

Stop fanning the flames of your anger and resentment. Some never allow themselves to heal and forgive because they are constantly thinking about the hurt, causing anger and resentment to grow. We must put the brakes on this if we are ever going to forgive. I know this is easier said than done but we must do it. When we are hurting, angry, and resentful it is hard to think of anything else and if we, for a moment, find some way to distract ourselves, Satan our enemy is right there to remind us of our pain. I have only one suggestion, pray! When thoughts about the hurts you have experienced come to mind, stop whatever you are doing and pray. When the fires of anger and resentment begin to burn within you, pray. Pray by yourself and pray with others, but don't stop praying. I am amazed at how Satan seeks to remind me of hurts and slights that are decades old, in an effort to make me angry and resentful. Prayer is the only thing I have found that works.

• Step Four:

Made the decision to forgive. Don't wait for someone to apologize or show repentance. Don't put foolish conditions on your forgiveness - just forgive. If I had a dollar for every time I have heard someone say, "When that person comes crawling on their hands and knees and begs for forgiveness, then I'll think about it", I would have a lot of dollars. In all honesty, I have never seen someone come crawling on their hands and knees and beg for forgiveness.

If you choose to wait for someone to apologize you may be destroyed by the anger and resentment before they come, if they ever do. Choose to forgive, cancel the debt, close the books on yesterday and move on.

• Step Five:

Pray for whoever has done you wrong. Christ is not asking that we grudgingly let others off the hook and avoid them for the rest of our lives. He asks that we forgive and try to mend relationships. I find it impossible to remain angry and to avoid those for whom I am praying. Pray for whoever has done you wrong.

Forgiveness isn't easy, neither is it a few short steps and it is behind us. Forgiveness cost God His only Son, in the most painful death ever devised by man, for a world that continues to reject Him and His sacrifice. Forgiveness will cost us something, maybe some pride, maybe some of our tough guy routine, at times it will maybe feel like a piece of our heart is required in order to forgive. Yet without forgiveness we doom ourselves to a life of anger, resentment and bitterness. Without forgiveness we give up our claim to heaven. Yes, the cost of forgiveness is great, but the cost of not forgiving is even greater.

Please God, teach us to forgive others as you have forgiven us.

Brian Cox
Wunnumin Lake

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A new position is being created January 2003 to improve services to residential students and their families.

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Himself as the Son of Man. He claims intimacy with God, the Father, in passages like Matt. 11:27. He acknowledges the popular understanding of His relationship to God in Mark 14:61, 62, but, even here, he prefers the title of Son of Man when He speaks of His mission.

Messiah

Jesus claimed to be *The Christ*, i.e. *The Messiah*. He makes the claim most plainly when talking to the Samaritan woman as recorded in John 4:24,25. It is interesting that this Samaritan woman concludes, "...this One is indeed the Saviour of the world." (Jn. 4:42) Jesus reminds His hearers that there is only one *Christ*, but that many will come claiming to be the *Christ*. (Matt. 23:20; 24:5, 23).

It is safe to conclude that Jesus knew He was *the Christ*. He claimed to be the *Son of God*, and he used the term, *Son of Man* in reference to His mission as Saviour of the world. It is also safe to conclude that Jesus was aware at a very early age that His mission was "to seek and to save that which is lost."

The Testimony of God

The God of Heaven, Himself, bears witness to the fact that Jesus is the Saviour of the World.

Jesus' miraculous birth is testimony

enough in itself that he is the Saviour (cf. Matthew 1:21; Luke 2:11; John 1:1,14).

At His baptism and transfiguration, God spoke of Jesus as His Son whose message must be heeded (Matthew 3:17; 17:5).

Apostolic Testimony

Not only did Jesus claim to be the Saviour. Not only did God declare Jesus to be His Son and, thus, to be the Saviour of the world. The Apostles, who were commissioned to disciple the nations, spoke of Jesus as Saviour.

Nowhere in Scripture is the purpose of the Christ more clearly stated than in the opening chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews. In the opening verses, the writer establishes the pre-eminence of the Christ. See 1:1-3. Note also the affirmation of Jesus' mission and its results (2:9-11).

The writings of the apostle Paul are replete with affirmations of the saving power of the blood of Christ. We have already made reference to Paul's understanding of the Gospel message (For example, Colossians 1:13-20; Romans 5:6-10).

Following Peter's confession of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God," Jesus increased his statement of Mission (Matt. 16:21). Peter was to proclaim Jesus as Lord and Christ and to proclaim that Jesus is the only way to salvation (Acts 2:36; 4:12).

The apostle John, near the end of the apostolic period, elaborates on the fact that the way to eternal life is through the *Son of God* (1 John 5:11,12; 2 John 9).

We conclude this part of the presentation with brief reference to prophecy. Certainly, there are numerous prophecies, which point to the redemptive plan of God in Christ. Perhaps the most significant for this study is that found in Isaiah 53. The prophet's reference to Christ's vicarious suffering is, perhaps, most fittingly acknowledged by Jesus in John 10:14-18 as he speaks of the Shepherd laying down His life for the sheep.

The prophet continues in verse 12 by referring to the death of the Saviour which Paul echoes in 2 Cor. 5:21 as he writes, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God through Him."

The Psalmist also refers, prophetically, to the saving power of the Christ in

Psalm 40. The writer of the Hebrew epistle uses this reference to conclude, "For by one offering, He [Jesus] has perfected for all time those who are sanctified (Heb. 10:14).

The Scriptural Conclusion

It is clear from the above discussion that the Scriptures plainly claim that Jesus the Christ is indeed the Saviour of the world. In summary, there are a few other passages that underscore this conclusion (Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5; Galatians 1:4ff and Ephesians 3:11).

Ramifications and Applications

No lesson is complete until some practical application is made. It is well and good to know the Truth and to establish theoretical principles based upon facts but it is essential to conclude by a challenge to action based upon such Truth.

Jesus, Himself, furnishes the application of the fact that He is, indeed, the Saviour of the world. His commission to the faithful, following His resurrection is clear and undeniable (Luke 24:45-47; Matt. 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16). We deny the fact that Jesus is the Saviour when we refuse to witness for Him and spread the message to others.

We must never overlook the underlying principle of living the Christian life (John 15:12). We deny the fact that Jesus is Saviour of the world when we fail to love as He loved.

The judgement scene depicted by Jesus in Matthew 25 is a clear warning that there is more than doctrinal correctness to be considered in acknowledging Jesus as Saviour. We deny that Jesus is the Saviour of the world when we fail to practice Christian charity towards those who need help.

Conclusion

We close this study by calling upon believers to rally around the cross. Jesus prayed that His followers be one in Him (John 17:21). Let us be motivated by the call to arms stated by Jude (Jude 3) that we may contend earnestly for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints.

References:

Blomberg, Craig L. *Jesus and the Gospels*. Nashville, Broadman and Holman. 1997
Beauchamp, Gary R. *He Told it Like it is*. Christian Communications Inc. 1984

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ROG OJO

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personally know about Him in what we state to the people we have served.

For example, Mr. Lane stated what he described as the best testimony he has been able to come up with to date: "The best thing that ever happened to me is to be exposed to Christ and the church of Christ." He said this statement almost always prompts some sort of response from people he has just helped in some way. For instance, people will often ask what the church of Christ is. He answers, "We are a ministry-sensitive fellowship. We have an interest in people, because everybody has some hurts, habits and hang-ups. We believe that there is therapeutic value in the Word of God that when its principles are properly applied, can help anyone." Further questions can be answered with a description of our desire to restore the New Testament church and be all that God wants us to be as His people. Some sort of literature should be given to them (a business card about the church was suggested) and an invitation to come and see for themselves. The goal in all of this is to teach the gospel to people after earning their interest, trust and agreement to listen.

It was pointed out that Christians sometimes have difficulty with friendship evangelism because many of us have so thoroughly isolated ourselves from the world that we have forgotten how to develop meaningful relationships with new people. There is a difference between "loving the world," which we must not do, and "loving people," which we must do to save them. Rather than isolating ourselves from the lost we need to choose to be where people are, take the initiative to make new friends, be willing to talk and try to leave people with a favourable impression. This is showing the beauty of the gospel in our lives. If we can do this, we will find opportunities to serve them and begin the process of friendship evangelism.

It's a temptation for many of us to become too blunt with people as we try to share the gospel message with them, or to attempt to speed up the teaching process because we are anxious to see them obey. There are times when directness is needed. But in our skeptical age, Canadians do not trust a raw approach from religious people. Friendship evangelism is a well thought-out way to interest the people in our lives, and earn their agreement to examine the message of Christ.

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then 85 teens at a teen camp followed by a Senior Camp. With a professional general contractor from Eastside to oversee the work, the Portland group stayed over the remainder of the week to make repairs and improvements to the Spruston Road facilities.

MANITOBA

Dauphin: Stacey Wieb served as the summer intern for our church assisting with odd jobs as required. There was a Jesus Manifest prayer walk at the Selo - Ukrainian site on July 7. Jesus Manifest weekend was July 12-14.

MONTANA

Three Forks: On June 23, John Shrable was baptized into Christ. The Sunset International Bible Institute course "Historical Christian Evidences" is being taught in the adult Sunday morning class. Definite thought and prayer are being given to the direction of our youth ministry and this could become an important and fruitful ministry here. We continue to receive a steady stream of visitors and the warmth and love of our congregation has had an impact on some. With the help of 5 Sojourner couples and work bees through out the summer, we will be constructing our new church building.

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Saturday, 7 p.m. – “I Choose Death”

Sunday, 11 a.m. – “Close Your Eyes And Run”

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