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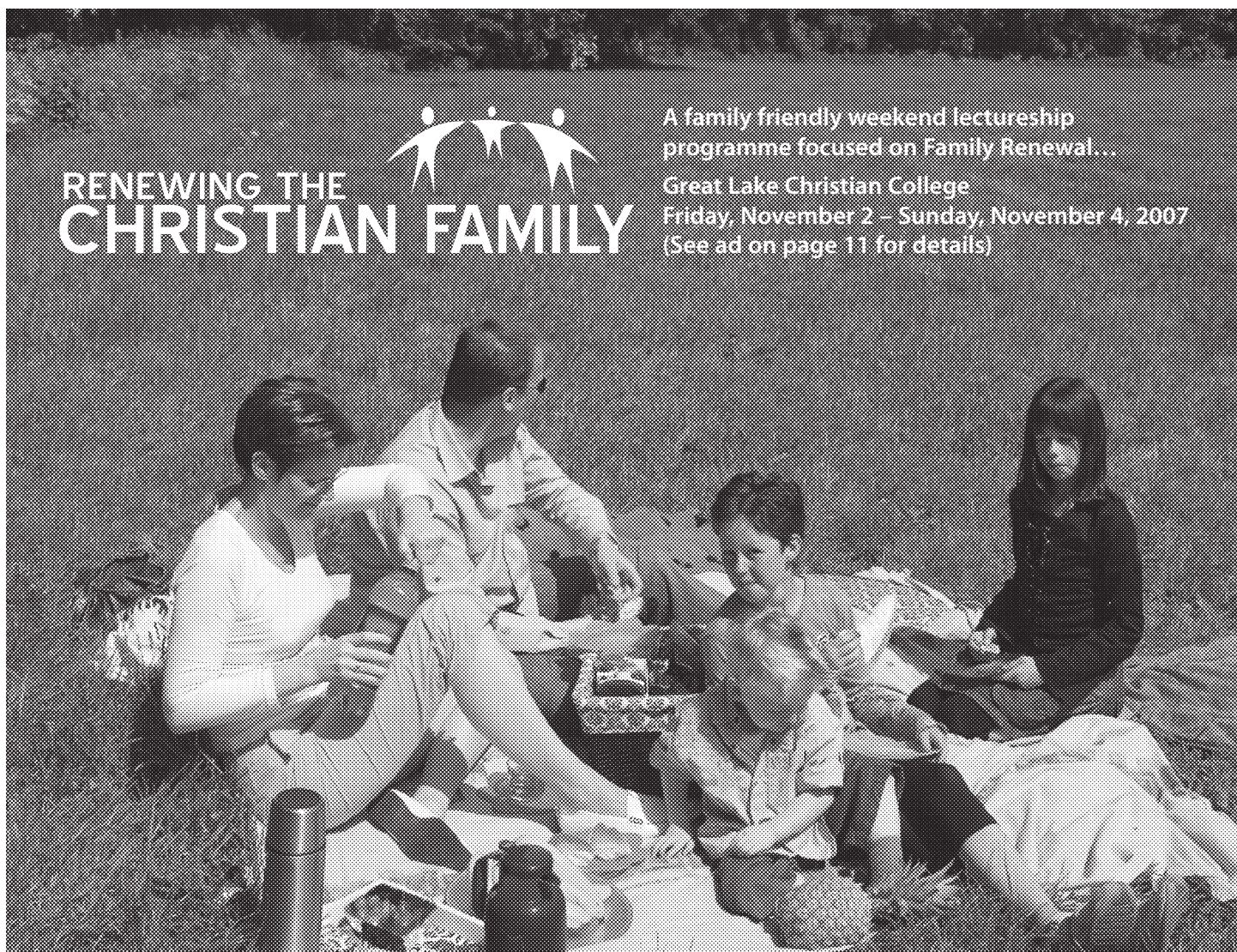
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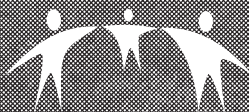
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A Theology of Gender Roles – Gender & Godhead

David Knutson

In 1980 Francis Shaeffer and J.P. Moreland published a book entitled “He Is There and He Is Not Silent”. The title of that work suggested something profound about the existence of God and his self-disclosure.

There are, of course, many things about God and his ways that he has chosen not to reveal. But God has not been silent about gender roles. His actions have been recorded, his commands have been preserved and at least some of his reasons have been revealed. Taken together, these move us toward a theology of gender roles.

We begin this discussion by noting that the Bible as a whole treats the Genesis account of creation as an historical record. It is neither myth nor metaphor. One can scarcely begin to read the Bible before coming to the creation of Man. The scriptures affirm that God created a single humanity, composed of two people with two distinct genders each of whom was made in the image of God. Genesis chapter two expands this story, explaining that God made the man first and then made the woman from a body-part of the man (Genesis 2; 1 Tim. 2:13). Once created, the woman was brought to the man and presented to him as a companion and as a wife. Adam called her ‘woman’ for she was taken from man (Gen. 2).

Now when we first read this, there do not appear to be any self-evident conclusions. The bare facts do not really speak for themselves. The theological significance of the order of creation emerges only as we read further. It becomes quickly apparent that Adam is in charge. By giving her a name, Adam relates from a position of leadership and headship. God reinforced

that headship by making what had been implicit, explicit, reminding Eve that her husband would rule over her (Gen. 3:16).

The apostle Paul explained the significance of the creation order by stating that the man is the head of the woman, for the man was not made for the woman but the woman for the man. For the man was not made from the woman but the woman from the man (1 Cor. 11:3, 9). God gave Adam authority over his wife and that aspect of the husband-wife relationship remains in place. (Eph. 5:23; 1 Pet. 3:1)

What Paul means to say is that God did this deliberately. It did not happen because he was inattentive or somehow distracted. God did precisely what he set out to do. He created a single humanity made up of two separate people, two distinct genders for which he had in mind two distinctly separate roles. He signaled

this by creating one first and then the other.

The Old Testament consistently reflects this headship in the covenants and ordinances of God. Men were called to act as the head of their families and to lead in spiritual matters.

This arrangement persists as we enter the New Testament. When God came to earth in human form, he came as a man. When Jesus chose those who would lay the foundation for the church he chose twelve men from among his disciples to serve as apostles. (Matt. 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16; Mark 3:13-18). When the apostles organized the church according to the will of Jesus, they appointed men to serve as evangelists, elders, deacons and teachers. When the gospel came to the egalitarian culture of Greece, the apostle Paul reminded the Corinthian church about the headship of the man and the distinct leadership

roles given to men and not to women. (1 Cor. 11:1-17; 14:34-40). He repeated these instructions to Timothy, serving in a very different culture in Asia. (1 Tim. 2:8-15) The roles that Paul identified applied equally to the church in each and every culture of the ancient world. (1 Cor. 11:16). Paul makes it clear that distinct gender roles find their source and parallel in the ontology and economy of God. (1 Cor.11:3)

The fact is that the order of God’s creation cannot be undone. Nor can the theological significance of this creation order be removed from scripture. To do so does great violence to the Biblical doctrine of Man and even greater violence to the doctrine of the Godhead.

The scriptures teach that there is one and only one God. They further affirm that there are three members of

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Church Planting #4 – Where to Plant?

by Tim Johnson

“And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.” (Acts 16:10)

Where should we plant new congregations of the Lord’s church today? This is the exciting thing about spreading the gospel. Each congregation is aware of possible locations in which to replicate itself. It’s time to dream and plan! We need to dream big and plan wisely.

As the early Christians quickly spread the good news, why did they go to certain communities? Did they use careful reasoning and weigh the advantages and disadvantages? Or did they simply go to the next community just because it was there? Reasons for their choices are sometimes given in the book of Acts. We don’t know why Philip went to Samaria (Acts 8), but it was an obvious cultural centre, it was close by and others could easily come and help him, as Peter and John did. Later, Peter detoured to Caesarea because Cornelius asked him to come, prompted by the Holy Spirit and an angel (Acts 10). A vision steered Paul and Silas to Philippi (Acts 16), described as “a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a Roman colony.” Paul went to Thessalonica partly because it had “a synagogue of the Jews” (Acts 17:1).

God isn’t sending us visions and angels to guide our choice of communities anymore, but His providential guidance may be at work nonetheless. As we have noted, the book of Acts reveals some of the reasoning both God and Christians used. Some communities were regional centres and served as gateways to entire areas. Ephesus provided Paul with a two-year forum to reason daily “in the school of Tyrannus” (Acts 19:9). The result is given in the next verse, “...so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.” The word spread easily from

such regional centres. The presence of a Jewish synagogue in many cities provided access to people who had a basic respect for God and His word—a natural advantage both culturally and linguistically. Major communities received some priority, such as Ephesus, Thessalonica and Corinth, but Athens just didn’t cut it. (Acts 17).

These, and many other considerations, need to be weighed as we ready ourselves to plant new Canadian congregations today. Initially this can be done with general discussion and research on the part of an entire congregation, or use a more complicated method such as the elders of a larger congregation asking for written proposals from its membership stating why certain communities present good opportunities. Whatever the process, let me offer some thoughts.

The obvious may be the closest. There may be a cluster of Christians already living in a suburb of a city where a congregation exists. It may be prudent to form a new congregation there. For example, the old Sanford Ave. congregation in Hamilton began the Fennell Ave. church up on the mountain when the city was growing in that area. The advantages of this strategy are many: an immediate core group with their own finances, no expensive moves involved, and it’s easy for the original church to visit and help out. However, let’s plant to reach the lost, not just for the convenience of families who are tired of commuting.

Doors may be open farther away. Christians may move to other communities through job transfers, employment with new industries or to seek opportunities in economic “hot spots.” A congregation can be planted with the help of a supporting church that wishes to assist and nurture the project. As Jerusalem sent men to assist distant Antioch, an older Canadian church can help found and mentor

a new congregation in another area. With our ever-changing Canadian economy, this makes sense.

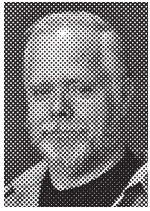
Regional cities with regional influence. What communities are “gateways” to entire areas of a province? Evangelize there, you can evangelize a whole area. The work in Ephesus spread to all of Asia Minor. The Halifax, NS, church helped to start the Kentville church, a community within its orbit of influence. Edmonton has purposely chosen to begin new congregations in northern Alberta. When we laboured in Moncton it became obvious that the city was the cultural centre for the Acadian people who live up and down the coast of eastern New Brunswick. The gospel thrives where there are networks of people in place. Communication is always key. This suits the regional nature of modern day Canada. Planting in such a place is more complicated and expensive than communities closer to home, but should that stop us from great opportunities? Considerations are many: a team needs to form and commit itself, move to the target area, jobs found, families settled, an evangelist supported, plans developed, etc. If these things are handled carefully and wisely, we gain a foothold in an important place where the Kingdom can spread.

The economy is not always king. A community that dazzles offers jobs. There is stability and people tend to stay. Stagnant economies force people to leave. However, some fast-growing places have riches on their minds and have little interest in God. Struggling places are sometimes more open to spiritual matters. How do we weigh such factors? In the 1970’s and ‘80’s Moncton was depressed and struggling, yet the congregation thrived even though some new Christians moved away for work. Later the economy picked up and people weren’t so transient. Some factors are totally out of our

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Does Grey Mean Failure?

Wayne Turner



What does it mean when a congregation that was once teeming with infants and children is now characterized by those who are middle aged or senior? Where forty year olds are seen as the “young people”?

Our first impulse might be to assume that such a congregation is dying—that it has failed to stay relevant with the community around it. Its members may fondly but sadly remember days of thriving Bible school and bus programs, VBS’s with neighborhood children. Looking around on Sunday morning, they may be discouraged by the number of grey-haired (or no haired) heads and wonder what has happened. “Where have we failed?”

We must admit that this greying certainly could be caused by some failure in the efforts of the members of a congregation. But is that the only possibility? Are there other things that could help explain the transition that has occurred? Is there a way of seeing this change that doesn’t lead to discouragement and a sense of failure? How can we reframe what has happened in many places so that we might better understand and see the opportunities?

According to the 2006 Census (Statistics Canada), as it has for decades, the “baby boomer” generation is having a significant effect on Canadian demographics. (Boomers are those born between 1946 and 1965.) In 2007, they were between the ages of 41 and 60. That year, nearly one out of three Canadians was a boomer. (In 1961, 1 in every 3 was under 15.) Additionally, a record 4.3 million Canadians are seniors. (That is 1 out of every 7 Canadians.) Overall, the median age of Canada (where half the population is older and half younger) is 39.5 years of age.

As the size of the greying population is increasing at unprecedented levels, the number of children and youth is declining. The number of those under the age of 15 (5.58 million) dropped 2.5 per cent in just the past 5 years, while the average number of children Canadian women aged 15 to 49 will have in their lifetime fell to 1.6 per woman back in 2002. Given current trends, Statistics Canada projects that in about 10 years, Canada will have more people over 65 than under 15. Over the next 25 years, the number of seniors will double. While this aging trend is not as serious as in some European and Asian countries, it is troubling.

We should note that the demographics for rural areas

and smaller centres showed an even older population than the national figures as many young adults have moved to the larger urban areas for education and employment. So, what would this mean for a congregation in a small community? Could it not expect, given the age demographics of its community, that well over half of its membership would be over 40? (If not even 50 or older?) And that seniors would make up a sizeable part of the congregation?

Perhaps it is time to think about the implications of this information for the way we view our various congregations and the opportunities and challenges we face. Because they are fresh and more open-minded, we still need to be reaching out to children and youth. There are always opportunities with these age groups. However, it admittedly is more challenging for those congregations who may not have very many children of their own to attract new children. It has been observed that it is difficult to attract what you do not already have within the congregation. Older members may feel they lack the energy or patience to work with children from non-member families. Some members may even feel burnt-out after years of teaching children’s classes. It may not be easy, it may take time to show results, but obviously, working with young people is a long-term investment in the future. To overcome their perceived limitations, older teachers may need to co-teach and take more of a grand-parental role. What opportunities does the breakdown of the nuclear family offer for meaningful involvement in these young lives? Similarly, some of our more customary target groups—young singles, marrieds and families—also are looking for caring relationships and a sense of purpose. Although individuals may not

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Can we be the church of the New Testament?

Roy Davison

According to the New Testament we can if we hold fast the New-Testament pattern of sound words, if we obey the gospel of the New Testament, if we worship according to the New Testament, if church leadership complies with the New Testament and if we live according to the New Testament. In this series, a separate article will be dedicated to each of these topics.

Can we be the church of the New Testament?

Yes, if we hold fast the New-Testament pattern of sound words.

Continual shelling during the First World War reduced the countryside in West Flanders, Belgium, to a sea of mud. More than a million men died.

The beautiful Weaver's Guild-Hall at Ieper, built in the 12th century, was reduced to rubble. After the war, the British wanted to leave the whole city of Ieper in ruins as a memorial to the war! Understandably, the people of Ieper thought otherwise! Some wanted to replace the Guild Hall with a modern structure. But city architect, Jules Coomans insisted that the Weaver's Hall be rebuilt.

And with the help of fellow architect, P.A. Pauwels, the building was restored to its original grandeur. When the restoration was complete in 1959, the building looked exactly as it did before. This was possible because they used the original building plans and the same type of stones.

Jesus built His church in the first century (Matthew 16:18). Two millennia later the world is full of denominations that are very different from the church Jesus built. People have used their own plans and their own stones to establish thousands of denominations according to their own liking and for their own glory.

Churches of Christ exist in

all parts of the world because certain people want to be nothing more and nothing less than the church of the New Testament. They must endure much criticism, however, from those who call this an impossible dream, an unattainable objective, an impracticable ideal.

Can we be the church of the New Testament? Why not, if we use the original building plans and the same stones, if we follow the pattern of the New Testament?

The question is: Do we really want to be the church of the New Testament? Or do we prefer something else, something modern or something medieval? Do we want to serve God His way or our way?

Many, if not most people in Christendom do not even try to be the church of the New Testament. Is that acceptable to God?

Jesus said about religious groups in His time: "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will

be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch" (Matthew 15:13, 14).

If we belong to some religious group other than the church Jesus built, we will be uprooted. If we blindly follow blind guides, we will fall into a pit. We must be the church of the New Testament if we want to be saved.

People in denominations—which are conspicuously different from the New Testament church—often try to justify the difference by claiming that it is not possible to be the church of the New Testament.

Can we be the church of the New Testament? Can we be the same church we read about in the Scriptures? Certainly, if we use the original plans, if we follow the original pattern.

Is the New Testament a pattern for the church?

People who want to do their own thing, do not like patterns. Thus, they simply declare that the New Testament does not provide a pattern for the church. What does the New Testament itself say? Does the New Testament claim to be a pattern?

Paul told Timothy: "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 1:13). Paul told Titus to "speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1).

An elder must hold "fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict" (Titus 1:9). The law is for anything "contrary to sound doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:8-11). Apostate Christians "will not endure sound doctrine"

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(2 Timothy 4:3,4). Thus, these 'sound words,' this 'sound doctrine' is a pattern that is to be held fast by preachers and elders, and this pattern will be rejected by people with itching ears who want to please themselves rather than God.

Paul wrote to the Romans: "But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered" (Romans 6:17). 'Form of doctrine' can be translated 'pattern of doctrine'. Notice that it does not say that this pattern of doctrine has been delivered to us, but that we have been delivered to a pattern of doctrine! Rather than being subservient to sin, we are now subservient to a pattern of doctrine that we must obey from the heart!

The New Testament is our pattern. Only false teachers claim otherwise.

We certainly can be the church of the New Testament if we hold fast the New Testament pattern of sound words.

To follow the New Testament pattern, our speech must be pure. We must avoid theological formulations, and use Scriptural words to express our faith.

These words are not accidental. They are from God. Paul wrote:

"These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches" (1 Corinthians 2:13). Peter wrote: "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). To be the church of the New Testament we must use the language of the New Testament in our teaching and preaching.

Human interpretation of these Spirit taught words is not allowed. We must observe their true meaning. "And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:19-21).

These Spirit taught words come from Christ. We can be the church of the New Testament if we abide in the word of Christ. Jesus tells His followers: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall

make you free" (John 8:31, 32). His word will judge us, John 12:48.

Jesus has given us His word through the apostles and the Scriptures.

The first church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42). The church is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20). If we continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, we will be the same church.

The holy Scriptures, inspired by God, provide all the information we need to be the church of the New Testament. In his first letter to Timothy, Paul said: "These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:14, 15).

In his second letter Paul admonishes Timothy further: "But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

This pattern is normative and must be followed accurately. Paul told the Corinthians not to go beyond what is written (1 Corinthians 4:6). John warned: "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

Yes, we can be the church of the New Testament, but only if we have the same faith and obey the same gospel contained in the New Testament. Jude wrote: "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting



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you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Paul wrote to the Galatians: “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8).

The New Covenant must be kept.

In Greek, the word for testament and for covenant is the same [diaghkh]. A covenant is a formal, solemn and binding agreement relative to the performance of certain actions. A confirmed covenant cannot be annulled or changed (Galatians 3:15).

The New Testament is a God-given covenant! It was ratified when Jesus died on the cross (Hebrews 9:16, 17). Through this covenant God grants blessings on specified conditions. This new covenant lays down the requirements for being a Christian and a church of Christ. These specifications cannot be changed. God, as sovereign Lord, has defined the conditions. We can be the church of the New Testament, but only if we comply

with the provisions of the covenant God has given us.

Under the old covenant, God told Moses exactly how the tabernacle was to be made: “According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it” (Exodus 25:9). “And you shall raise up the tabernacle according to its pattern which you were shown on the mountain” (Exodus 26:30).

The necessity of following this pattern is mentioned twice in the New Testament. Stephen said: “Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen” (Acts 7:44). In Hebrews it is explained that the tabernacle was a “copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, ‘See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain’” (Hebrews 8:5).

God foretold that the old covenant would be replaced: “Behold, the days

are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke” (Jeremiah 31:31, 32).

Can we be the church of the New Testament? Yes, certainly. If we follow the pattern of the New Testament, if we comply with the conditions and provisions of the new covenant, if we abide in the word of Christ, if we continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine, if we hold fast the pattern of sound words, if we use the Scriptures for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction, if we obey from the heart that form of doctrine to which we have been delivered, if we do not go beyond what is written, if we hold fast the faithful word, if we have the same faith and obey the same gospel, if we abide in the doctrine of Christ... we can be the church of the New Testament.

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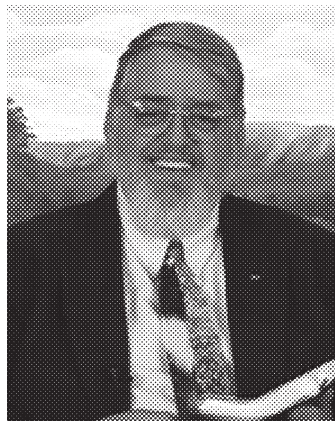
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A Heritage of Love

*“Rejoice with those who rejoice;
Mourn with those who mourn.”*
Romans 12:15

We had just flown home after attending a wedding. We had enjoyed a wonderful time; the bride was beautiful (they always are). The ceremony was a wonderful celebration of the love and commitment they have for each other. Family and friends celebrated the beginning of a new family. We had just finished unpacking and sat down together in our living room to relax. The telephone rang bringing us news of a horrible tragedy, BonnieLee answered and was crying in seconds, she pulled the phone away from her ear to tell me that my brother's wife, Roberta and son Daniel, had just been killed in a car accident and that two daughters, Aylanna and Elise, were in hospital, Elise in serious condition and a friend also in hospital. We began to make plans to travel as soon as possible to Chalk River to be with Jeff and his family.

Almost immediately we began to hear from friends who were thinking of us and praying for us, they were mourning with us. We heard of a number of churches who spent time at their midweek Bible Study talking about what had happened and praying for us. They contacted us asking if there was anything that they could do to help our family as we mourned. The love of our brothers and sisters in Christ was evident as they mourned with us.

Paul, in the context of teaching about sincere love, instructs us to rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn. Rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn are essential parts of loving relationships. We rejoice with those who rejoice because we are happy for their successes and are not jealous of their good fortune but are happy to rejoice in their good fortune. We mourn

with those who mourn because we hurt with them as they mourn, we don't try to cheer them up or seek to snap them out of it but just hurt with them and be with them as they mourn.

The love, support and encouragement we receive as we mourn the loss of a dear sister-in-law and nephew did not come as a surprise to us. It is a part of our heritage of faith and something we have seen so many times as we or others were hurting. I am constantly thankful to be a part of a church family that is so loving and supportive. I know that there are those among us who do not act in love, some battle like school children, others have critical spirits that seek to destroy and not build up. We are not perfect and neither have we ever been perfect, but we do have much to be thankful for and much to learn as we look at our heritage of love.

I am thankful for the encouragement I have received from those who love me. In times of discouragement it seemed that God always sent someone (often more than one) with a word of encouragement that helped to keep me going. When I had done something right there were so many that sought to rejoice with me and show appreciation for what God was doing in my life. Even though we are thousands of kilometres away from our brothers and sisters in Christ we still receive this same encouragement through email, telephone calls and letters. We daily thank God for this encouragement.

I am thankful for the grace and forgiveness that has been shown by my brothers and sisters in Christ. I am not perfect! I hope that you don't find that too shocking or too discouraging, but I am not perfect. I speak when I should be silent and in discouragement often make critical comments that would be better left unsaid. This isn't my only fault but time, space and perhaps my own pride prevent me from going into too great a description. At times my brothers and

sisters, in their love, have corrected me and shown me my error and then show grace as they forgave my sin. At other times they allowed me the time to see my own mistakes and again illustrated God's grace as they were quick to forgive. I thank God for the grace and forgiveness of my brothers and sisters in Christ.

I am thankful for the loving acceptance that I was shown by my church family especially in my youth. I like most other kids was sure that I didn't fit in at church. I was sure that I didn't have the ability to serve as the older ones did and was sure that I could not be as good as they were. I thought that if they really knew me and how full of doubts I was they would not accept me as they do. Yet they just kept on loving me, forgiving me and accepting me until I began to believe that I really did belong and that I didn't have to be good enough but that Christ would make me good enough.

I am not sure that I ever heard it stated as a policy or motto but throughout my entire life my brothers and sisters in Christ have done all they possibly could for the young people in the church. The Christian Colleges, High Schools and Bible Camps that we have in Canada are a result of a fellowship that sought to do all they could for the young people. Even today we have few youth ministers in Canada but when I was growing up I don't recall any. Yet the congregations I was apart of sought to do the best they could for the young people with regular activities both social and spiritual. This has had a profound effect on my life and the lives of many of my contemporaries who remember with fondness the evenings spent together often in the home of the adults who were sponsoring that particular evenings activities. We not only built relationships with other young people but also with the adults that were involved. I thank God for those encouraging times!

I do not write of a church family that was or is perfect. I do write of my appreciation for how I was influenced by the good that was and is being done. I write of the love and encouragement that was shown me and I write of a positive example that we should all seek to follow.

Brothers and sisters love one another!

WORKS FOR ME

Don Hipwell

40 Years in the Wilderness – 2

Ernie Stirrup

During my early years I went through a period of feeling that I was not worthy to be accepted as a true follower of Jesus. I firmly believe this is one of the major obstacles that hinder a person. Another thought that frequently came to mind was that God's instructions on how to become a Christian were too simple. The truth is that the instructions are very simple if I believe and accept the truth within God's Word. The walk, however, is not always simple.

Approximately 18 months ago I decided that I would read the Bible for myself, without the influence of my denominational upbringing. I also listened to tapes of lectureships that I had attended 30 to 40 years ago. It was a bit of a shock to realize that the man-made instructions of my youth were not to be found in the Bible!

Another problem I had during my 40 years of wandering was that there were, and still are, kind, caring and wonderful people outside the church who claim a faith in Jesus. Their teaching, however, about baptism and once saved, always saved, is in error. Contrast that with people in the church who teach the truth but are themselves not likeable! It took a while for me to realize that my obligation is not to like or dislike people, but to love all, especially the brethren.

One of the important words in the Bible is a short one, but it can make all the difference in the world to a statement. My understanding of the word "and" is a coordinate conjunction which joins together things of equal importance. Jesus said, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16a). That statement alone negates my infant baptism in the Anglican Church 70 years ago in the United Kingdom. In my study of the Bible I read we must be first taught by the written or spoken word before we can accept Christ as our Saviour. The correct and only way to learn this is by studying the Bible, God's Word.

After 40 years, there is no doubt in my mind that the Holy Spirit touches the

heart of one who is genuinely searching for the truth. My study confirms to me that He leads one through the Word. That is why it is paramount that I read the Bible constantly and listen and accept what others say, providing it is confirmed by Scripture.

I understand that physical life and spiritual life both have a beginning. My spiritual life began when I finally realized that faith that did not include obedience was of no value to me. The more I read, I noticed the word 'baptism' was mentioned many times with regard to one becoming a Christian. I counted over 20 times. The water did not save me but the act of baptism completed my obedience to the instructions given. (Remember Mark 16:16 and the word 'and'.)

You can imagine the excitement both here in Ottawa and in West Chicago when my son, Paul, baptized me while we were visiting the family in December. I can assure you no one was happier than my wife, Rose, who had waited patiently for that day.

The points of interest I have related to you are a few of many. Most are encouraging. If there is one main point that I want to relate to you regarding my many years of attending the church of Christ in Canada, the U.S.A. and the U.K., is that we are imperfect and do not deserve God's grace. However, through the acceptance of His Son, Jesus Christ, we are secure in the knowledge that as we walk the path outlined in Scripture, we shall be admitted to heaven one day. In other words, my acceptance is conditional on God's terms, not mine! I once believed there were many tracks, all leading to the station. Therefore, I incorrectly thought that one person's belief was as good as another.

I would like to inform you that the Key to the Kingdom T.V. program played a large part in my realization of what I needed to do regarding my relationship with God and His Son, Jesus. I arranged my business appointments so I could watch and listen to this wonderful

ministry. Max Craddock makes the message easy to understand and always quotes from the Bible only. I encourage you to watch also.

Although I give all the credit to God for patiently waiting for my decision, people played a very important role. I have no hesitation in mentioning my wife, the late Walter Dale and Earl Weldon, Dean Clutter, Roy Merritt, my daughter, Kelly, and son, Paul. All provided encouragement over many years.

Although we have had our ups and downs in Ottawa, God has blessed us with a number of eager and devoted men who are willing to teach and preach. This is not only encouraging to the brethren but also for our preacher who is dedicated to teaching God's Word.

Please pray for my family and me, and we will reciprocate. Continue to include all Christians throughout the world in your prayers. Many are suffering persecutions, discrimination and other forms of hardship but continue to set an example of faith and determination for us all. I am convinced that the road blocks and discouragements were instituted by Satan, who is forever trying to disrupt the unity of the church. He has won the odd battle but will not win the war between good and evil. The Bible promises this.

Ottawa, ON

BARRIE LADIES DAY

*Working in God's Garden
"Bloom Where You
Are Planted"*

*Saturday, October 13, 2007
Registration 10:00 am*

At

*Barrie Church of Christ
345 Grove St. E. (at Cook)*

*Contact:
Marilyn dela Cruz
(705)720-2329
E-mail: pacunio@aol.com*

*Please register by
September 29, 2007*



by Walter R. Straker
750 Clark Blvd.

Bramalea, ON L6T 3Y2
Fax: 905 792-8623

E-mail: bramaleacofc@bellnet.ca

Reminder: To be published in the following month's Gospel Herald, each congregation's information should be sent to Walter Straker before the third last Tuesday of the month. Please clearly mark the email or the envelope: "NewsEast."

ONTARIO

Beamsville: "Mission Emphasis Sunday" was held August 19 to let the congregation know of mission work being done by the congregation and other Ontario Christians. On August 2 Ruth Zimmerman returned home from Papua New Guinea. The congregation has a new web page: beamsvillechurchofchrist.ca.

Bramalea: Lance Lawrence, Paul Neves, Walter and Shirley Straker participated with the Sendai team in its 2007 "Let's Start Talking" FriendsCamp. Paul, Walter and Shirley also attended the annual 2007 Asia Mission Forum, which was organized by the Sendai mission team and held this year in Kuta, Bali, Indonesia. (See more details below regarding these activities.) The congregation invites Ontario Christians to attend an evangelism workshop, September 16-19, to be taught by Jerry Tallman of Rochester, Michigan, and held at the Bramalea church of Christ. Jerry will preach Sunday a.m. on the need for evangelism, to encourage members to attend the workshop. In his workshop Sunday evening at 6 p.m., and Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m., he will present an in-depth and practical method of personal evangelism. Copies of his book, "His Eternal Plan," will be available at the workshop.

Fenwick: The Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society's annual meeting was scheduled for Saturday, August 25. Speakers Jerry Rushford, George Mansfield and Don Hipwell discussed the topic: "Restoration in the Maritimes and the Niagara District."

Great Lakes Christian College: A Great Lakes Christian College fund-raising tour is planned for October 22-24, 2007, by Verstraete Travel and Cruises. For

information, contact Earl Clint at earl.c@sympatico.ca.

Niagara Falls: A youth rally, entitled: "Shepherd, Warrior, Survivor" – based on the life and times of David, is planned for September 28-30. The event will include a Bible Bowl on the life of David and a "Survivor Challenge" at a nearby park.

Owen Sound: The 2007 Ladies' Renewal is scheduled for September 21-23 on the topic: "Freedom in Christ." Speakers will be Faith Thompson, Kathy Russell and Sharon Osborne.

Tintern: The congregation enjoyed a "Fellowship Sunday" on July 29 with 165 in attendance. The mission trip to Neskantaga was delayed due to a scheduling conflict in the northern community. The "Church in the Park" was scheduled at Ball's Falls Conservation Area on Sunday, September 2.

Toronto (Harding Ave.): The Third International Ladies Lectureship was held in Toronto, August 11-14, was well attended with over 200 ladies from as far away as Africa and the Caribbean. The theme for the programme was "A Beautiful Life" and the lectures, workshops and fellowship were inspiring. (More on this lectureship will be in the October issue of the Herald.) DVDs of the theme presentations will be available in about six weeks. The cost of the package will be \$15.00 plus mailing. If mailing outside Canada, it is more cost effective to mail a larger package to one address. Therefore, if several sets are ordered together there will be a cost savings. Orders can be sent to cocill@coharding.com or to maxc@strathmorecofc.ca and the DVDs will be sent as soon as they are available.

Toronto (Scarborough): The Scarborough Congregation rejoices at the baptism of Karen Bernard and Tashay Mignott on August 20. Plans are being made to help with donations and clothing to help the people affected by the hurricane in Jamaica. (See information on page 15)

West Hamilton: Ed Van Alstine submitted this statement on July 16: "Those remaining and still meeting at Mohawk College have unanimously agreed for unity with the Fennell Avenue congregation. On July 8, 2007, we discontinued meeting at Mohawk College, and joined with the Fennell Avenue congregation in their worship as one body."

Windsor: In September the congregation began a new series for the Sunday a.m. sermons and Wednesday night Bible class. "Rejoicing in this Day" is the sermon series' title; "Discovering Jesus,

Discovering Joy" is the Wednesday class topic. From October 28-30 the congregation plans to host a meeting with Ray Miller, former preacher now living in Arizona.

QUEBEC

Montreal (Verdun): The new building purchased by the congregation in May has the potential of 10 classrooms, an auditorium that will seat 125 (with the potential to expand to seat 200), and 12 private parking spaces. In June the Choctaw, Oklahoma, congregation sent 20 members to distribute flyers in the neighbourhood of the new church building. They stuffed 10,000 mailboxes, visited members' homes, helped the church learn new songs and even presented songs in French that they had learned for the occasion.

*FriendsCamp, July 27-29, 2007:

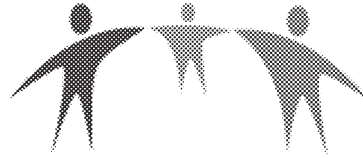
Forty individuals attended this closing event of the 2007 Let's Start Talking sessions. Bramalea, Ontario, members, Lance Lawrence, Paul Neves, Walter and Shirley Straker worked with brethren from York, Nebraska, and the Sendai brethren. Groups of LST students and Sendai church of Christ members were led in Bible study, singing, praying and recreation. Please pray that the LST readers will continue to search and be led by God to accept and serve Him.

***Asia Mission Forum, August 4-8, 2007,** was held in Kuta, Bali, Indonesia. one hundred brethren from 12 countries enjoyed fellowship and teaching. The theme was: "If My People, Who are Called by My Name..." – reflecting on the character of missionaries as the people of God in the Asian community. A 7:00 a.m. devotional began the day, followed by morning and evening Bible lessons, worship time and small group discussions. The Sendai team and interns (Ben Berry, Joel Osborne, Jon and Michiko Straker, Debi Hobelman and Erica Towell) organized this year's event. Visiting speakers were Steve Sikes, Kerry and Becky Holton, Dottie Schulz, Steve Allison, Nao Fukushima, Mark Hooper and Gigie Carranza. Besides the Bramalea, Ontario, members who attended, the only other Canadians attending were Jason Moriarty and his wife, Sheryl, who are sponsored by the Calgary church of Christ to work in Papua New Guinea. Afternoons were open for fellowship, sightseeing, or shopping. Possible venues for the 2008 AMF are Kerala, India, or China.

2007 GREAT LAKES LECTURE SERIES

FRIDAY NOV. 2 - SUNDAY NOV. 4

RENEWING THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

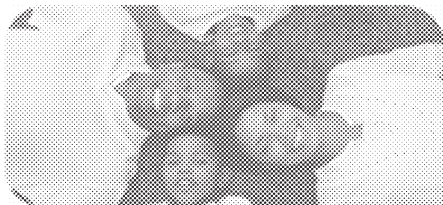


PRESENTERS:

- KEVIN VANCE
- JEANIE JOHNSON
- ED GRAY
- LEE WHITFIELD

PROGRAMS:

- CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES
- NURSERY AVAILABLE
- LATE NIGHT YOUTH EVENT
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4875 KING ST., BEAMSVILLE, ONTARIO



by Marion Waugh
 3427-82 Street
 Edmonton, AB T6K 0G7
 Phone: (306) 545-0550
 E-mail: waughr1@shaw.ca

(BC news supplied by Barbara Lewis)

ALBERTA

Camrose: A team from Waterview Church of Christ, Texas, arrived to help with the first annual VBS. Along with the congregation here, they set up a pirate room, superhero room and a sea world room. Children from our congregation, Edmonton congregation and from the community attended. John Orr presented some practical and useful lessons on living the Christian life. The whole congregation was encouraged and spurred on to walk the narrow road by having a life of faith, prayer and God glorifying action. There were also visitors attending these lessons. The Waterview team also did some service projects. They sang at 3 different senior centers. A campfire devotional was held one evening, and the team led the Assembly on Sunday morning. The boys led the singing and prayers around the Lord's Table. Three of the boys had short lessons prepared for our Sunday morning sermon. The Bible class divided into 2 groups and guys led the men's class and the girls led the ladies class.

South Edmonton: A variety of community guests have attended the Sunday morning and Wednesday CARE groups. We attempt to share the gospel with each of them. Advanced planning is being done to heavily advertise a gospel meeting to coincide with the congregation's first anniversary, Sept. 7-9. Funds will be donated by members that weekend to help finance a future church plant. A new web site is being constructed to further in-house communication and with the community.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Burnaby: Garnet Andrews, our deacon serving in Missions, has given three special presentations

on how to honour the Lord with our material possessions. Garnet is an Investments Director for Telus, and has been studying and living the principles from Scripture that he shared. Youth director, Mike Parker, was the morning speaker three Sundays in August while Kirk Ruch was on holidays. The finance ministry congratulated the group of individuals working on the Mexico missions for their recent success in registering their activities as an independent Canadian Charity known as the "True North Helping Hands Society." Having charity status, the Society can administer its own programs and issue official donation receipts. Contributions may be given to any one of the three directors of the Society.

Oakridge: Men of the congregation agreed to help the congregation in Apopa, El Salvador, where our song leader's sister is a member, by sending them \$1,000. Since the house they were renting was repossessed by the bank this church has been meeting under a tarp. They have purchased a lot, but have been unable to build a place of meeting on it as most of the membership is very poor. Phanael and Cleta Cabanizas have placed membership with us, and others are expected as soon as other relatives of people in our congregation arrive from Mexico and El Salvador.

Order your supplies from the Gospel Herald Bookstore.

Local: 905-563-7503

**TOLL FREE:
1-866-722-2264**

Nanaimo: Our congratulations to Sharon Welch and Gordon Buzzard, who were baptized into Christ on July 15, preceding their wedding on the July 28. Many of our congregation participated in a family camp at the Spruston Road Bible Camp from Friday evening through Sunday, Aug. 12. The worship service in town was suspended in the morning in order to complete a great weekend at the camp.

Salmon Arm: "Our celebration of 50 years as a congregation in this small town on the banks of the Shuswap Lake was a time of refreshing, renewal and recognition of how our lives change due to circumstances, either planned or unplanned, can and should be productive and useful in the Kingdom. Recognizing that God has a plan for us, we need to be ready to do what He asks of us and remember that no one is useless. All are needed in the work of the Lord. We

are heading into the fall season and a time of growing, stretching, learning and leading for our entire congregation. Several service areas have been laid out and our members have decided where they would be the most useful. These areas are: Education, Evangelism (both outreach and local as well as serving those who are missionaries that we support), Fellowship, Service and Worship. We, as a congregation, are very excited about our roles and our desire to grow both internally and in outreach."—Report from Marie Taylor

MANITOBA

Winnipeg (Central): We rejoice with Kristina Rajic on her baptism into Christ. August 27-31 Paul Birston taught on "Contemporary Religion in Canada" for Great Lakes Bible College at Camp Omagh, near Milton Ontario. The goals of the course included understanding our religious neighbours so we can better communicate the gospel and love of God to them.

Men's Retreat Oct. 12 to 14, 2007 – Edmonton

"God's Manly Man"

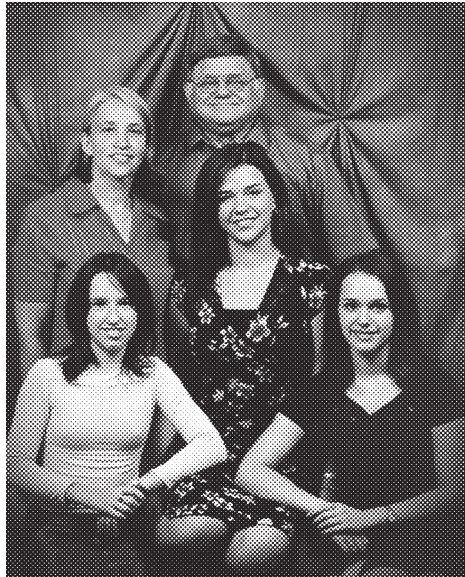
God calls upon us men to be "men"— and there's never been a more needed time! But being a "man" to God is not the same as being a "man" in the eyes of the world. What are the differences? What does it take for us to be manly men, in the eyes of God? God has issued the challenge to us. What will we do with it?

To answer these questions and more, please plan to attend our 2007 Men's Retreat hosted by The Edmonton North church of Christ on October 12 to 14 at Camp VanEs which is an excellent facility in the outskirts of Edmonton.

Our facilitator, Don Partain of Missoula, Montana has preached God's Word for over 35 years and has a wealth of practical experience to lead our thoughts and times of reflection.

For more information on the retreat and registration forms, go to our website www.edmontonchurchofchrist.org or contact the church office at church5@telus.net

Barbara Lewis
4920 N. Penn Ave.
Spokane, WA 99206-4475
e-mail: ray-bjl@comcast.net



The Pinczuk family

UKRAINE: J. Rick Pinczuk's long years of preparation show that his entire life, since becoming a Christian, has been devoted to developing an effective evangelistic ministry in Ukraine. He is finally realizing his ambition and seeing it bear fruit.

Rick was born in 1947 in Ansbach, Germany, where his parents had gone to escape Polish domination of their homeland. After a few years, Hitler came to power, and at the beginning of the war, they were isolated in German migrant camps. Two infant daughters died there for lack of medical attention. When the allies liberated Western Europe the family, along with many others, was taken in by a German family with whom they lived until 1950, during which time Rick and a sister were born. His father, who had preached in a restoration movement in Ukraine, managed to immigrate to Perth, Australia, rather than face almost certain death from the Russians who had taken over his country and

tried returning Ukrainians as Nazi collaborators.

His father continued to teach his children the Bible during several years in an Australian migrant camp before they began looking for a place to worship God with other people. After visiting numerous evangelical churches, they came in contact with missionaries promoting the concept of "Restoring New Testament Christianity in the Twentieth Century". They were convinced by Marvin Phillips and others, that they had found the same "Lord's church" that they had known in their homeland, and were among the first to become members of the church in Perth. (At 94, Rick's mother is the oldest member in Western Australia.)

In 1967, Rick was baptized by Mack Lyon, who was working with Claude Guild. Rick was encouraged to go to Harding University, which he did the following year. He was determined to prepare to return to his people in Ukraine with the Gospel whenever the opportunity came. At Harding, he contacted Otis Gatewood, whom he knew to be interested in Russian evangelism. Brother Gatewood introduced him to Stephen Bilak, in whose home he spent his Christmas vacation. He was invited to come to Lausanne, Switzerland, to help in an evangelistic mission launched from that location the next summer, where periodic visits behind the "Iron Curtain" could be made. These visits, Rick says, showed him the spiritual horror of living life without knowing God.

After graduating with degrees in Bible

and Journalism in 1971, Rick spent the next 12 years working for churches in Carman, Man. and Kingston, Ont. At the same time, he did post-graduate work in the Slavic Languages and Literature in several Canadian universities, earning his MA in 1976. Upon receiving several scholarships and encouraged by his professors to continue his academic education, he moved to Ottawa to attend the University. He served the church, sometimes commuting to Kingston to preach. Upon receiving his doctorate, he moved to Beamsville to begin the Slavic Evangelism Ministry program, which was designed to recruit and train students for future evangelistic work. It was here that he met and married Carol Bauman, who, in 1982, was the first woman to graduate from Harding's 2-year Christian Communications Program. Carol was born in Kitchener, ON, in 1953, and was baptized in 1971. Eventually three daughters, Eleah, Natasha, and Larissa, were born to this union.

Rick and Carol moved to Grimsby, Ont., in 1984, where Rick carried on the work of the Slavic Evangelism Ministry and preached. They were able to turn sheds on their property in Grimsby into a print shop. With the donation of a printing press from Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, TX., Rick was able to translate tracts and pamphlets into the Ukrainian language. He was successful in getting a great deal of literature to Europe, where it eventually made its way behind the "Iron Curtain". During this time, he made several trips to the States

to interest congregations into sponsoring his effort. In 1985, the Ridgewood church in Beaumont, TX, agreed to oversee the work, which it continues to do. In 1986, Rick and his family began commuting to Niagara Falls every other Sunday to work with Henry and Dorothy Boland. This partnership continued for the next 10 years.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, Rick was able to start a weekly Bible TV program in Kiev. In 1990, courtesy of the Beaumont church, he and his family toured Western Russia and Ukraine to assess what needed to be done to establish Christianity in these

continued on next page

If you were not able to attend
Vision Canada 2007

you can obtain the
outlines/notes/manuscripts

of the presentations by going to:

www.strathmorecofc.ca

click on **Vision Canada** where you can download
the lesson files

You can obtain audio CDs of most of the
presentations by contacting

Bruce Robinson

His contact information is also on the web site

Mission News... continued from page 13

vast areas dominated by atheistic communism for over 70 years. Democracy had brought about phenomenal changes, and Rick was able to move his family to stay permanently in 1997.

The Shevchenko church of Christ was established and registered in Kiev. It meets in a hall adjacent to their Slavic Evangelism Ministry offices where Bible materials are translated, published and distributed, humanitarian aid given and various seminars conducted throughout the year.

Situated on the northern shore of the Black Sea, Ukraine is the second largest country in Europe. With a population of 52 million, it was proclaimed a Republic in 1918. However, by 1920 Bolshevik troops had overrun a large area, creating a communist state which resulted in its being incorporated into the Soviet Union. Stalin's reign led to impressive industrial growth that transformed the land into one of the most developed parts

of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, he launched a vicious attack on Ukrainian culture by exterminating a large part of the intelligentsia and unleashing a man-made famine in 1932-33 that led to the starvation of over 6,000,000 people. The part of Ukraine under Polish control conquered by Hitler had also led to widespread massacres, in addition to that of the Jewish population. During the Cold War period, the push by Moscow to move Russians into the industrial regions of Ukraine brought about a courageous movement by Ukrainian dissidents, but they were harshly repressed. Gorbachev's "glasnost" encouraged further dissatisfaction with the Soviet system of exploitation, and the Ukrainian parliament proclaimed independence on Aug. 24, 1991. Over 90% of the voters indicated their support, and the new president, Leonid Kravchuk, met with Boris Yeltsin of Russia and Shushkevich of Belarus to dissolve the USSR.

In addition to overseeing the Slavic

Evangelism Ministry and preaching for the Shevchenko congregation, Rick conducts numerous home bible studies, takes care of on-field internships, promotes a prison ministry and counsels local preachers and church leaders regularly to help resolve issues and problems within their fellowships. He has been on the Board of Directors of the Ukrainian Bible Society for the past 10 years. A great deal of help—from bedding to medical equipment—has been given to the Boyarka Orphanage for the Vision Impaired, including Bibles written in Braille.

With some 60 members, the Shevchenko congregation holds workshops, seminars, retreats, a summer Bible camp and area-wide fellowships. It is now involved in establishing new congregations in other parts of Ukraine. For the women, there are special Ladies' Bible Conferences and a Dorcas Sewing Ministry. The young people publish an impressive quarterly magazine. Rick has translated 350 hymns to use in all of the congregations. For internet teaching, he revised and translated Otis Gatewood's "There Is a God in Heaven", and more recently has worked with a former atheistic scholar, Dr. V. V. Maliuk in a treatise on "Science and the Bible", which shows how many modern discoveries are pre-dated in the Bible. They are also hoping to publish a parallel version of the gospels in Ukrainian, Russian, English and what is called "Living Ukrainian" this year.

The political and economic changes taking place in Ukraine without civil strife has been phenomenal. The Ukrainian language has been reinstated as the official language to replace the Russian forced upon them, and the government is committed to making it a Christian nation. Approximately 53% of the population is Ukrainian Orthodox, 20% Ukrainian Greek Catholic, and 27% Protestant.

There are 1,000,000 Ukrainians in Canada, with some 100,000 in the greater Metro Toronto area.

(Note: The Pinczuk's email address is jpinczuk@gmail.com.)

Mailing address:
Oleny Telihi Street, #8,
Kyiv, Ukraine 04112.
Contributions to the SEM should be sent to:
Ridgewood Church of Christ,
2455 Commerce Street, Beaumont,
TX 77703-5098.)



WESTERN
Christian

Changing lives...one student at a time!

Career Opportunities

August, 2007

Contact: Dorothy Davis

We are seeking to fill the following positions:

High School Recruiting Officer: The primary function of this position is relationship development of new students for Western Christian High School. Student retention is an important part of this position. You will identify and document prospective students, utilize a contact management strategy for contacting and recruiting students, provide regular reports related to contacting the prospective students, help identify and implement relationship development events and be responsible for recruiting and managing a defined number of students per year.

- This is a full time or part time position, depending upon the candidate's qualifications.
- Start date is September 4, 2007.

Application for High School Recruiting Officer: For full consideration, submit your application including your resume, cover letter and references to the Human Resources department immediately at: email: business@westernchristian.ca, drop off/mail: 100 - 4400-Fourth Avenue, Regina, SK S4T 0H8, phone: Dorothy at (306)545-1515 x 223, or fax (306) 352-2198.

Director of Development: The primary function of this position is to serve as the lead fund-raising officer, have responsibility for all fund-raising and development and will assist the President with alumni and public relations, planned giving, donor relations and other advancement functions. Applicant must have a significant profile and service record within Churches of Christ. Applicant will need to be available to travel up to 50% of the time.

- This is a full time position.
- Start date is July 1, 2008.

Applications for Director of Development: For full consideration, submit your application including your curriculum vitae, cover letter and references to Kevin Vance, President immediately at: email: kvance@westernchristian.ca, drop off/mail: 100 - 4400-Fourth Avenue, Regina, SK, S4T 0H8 Cell: (306)529-4409, or fax (306) 352-2198.

All applicants must be a committed Christian and an active member of a local church.

Benefits are provided according to board policy.

Job descriptions and qualifications are available at our website: www.westernchristian.ca.

All information received will be kept in strict confidence and only for employment-related purposes.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Edwin Broadus

If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope for Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men” (1 Corinthians 15:17-19).

Christianity is grounded in history, and more particularly a specific historical event—the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The biblical claim is that Jesus “was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4). Is this true? This is the fundamental question for our faith, and thus there is no better place to begin with unbelievers than with the evidence for the resurrection.

Those who reject Christ’s resurrection do not usually do so from lack of historical evidence. Few deny the crucifixion of Christ, for it is amply testified to by competent witnesses. But there is precisely the same kind of historical evidence for his resurrection. Why then is one event almost universally accepted but the other rejected by so many? The obvious answer is that the resurrection, if it occurred, was a supernatural event, and many unbelievers have decided even before they examine the evidence that such an event is scientifically impossible.

As believers, unless we want to speak only to those who are already persuaded, we must address this obstacle to faith. We don’t want to belittle or ridicule the difficulty many have in accepting the resurrection. How would we react if a contemporary told us today that someone has been raised from the dead in 2007? To say the least, we would need very strong proof.

The contention of Christians is not that resurrections are everyday occurrences. But we do contend, with good reason, that if there is a God it is possible for him to raise the dead. What we are asking, then, is for enough openness to this possibility to move skeptics to honestly weigh the evidence for the resurrection of Christ. To put it another way, we are asking that

skeptics not rule out, on philosophical rather than evidential grounds, the possibility that there is a God and that he has elected to intervene at a time and place of his choosing in events on this earth. As Paul phrased it, “Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?” (Acts 26:8).

Once we get past this philosophical obstacle, we believers are still obligated to present compelling evidence for the resurrection. The kind of evidence available is like that for any credible

Jesus’ claim is that he was raised from the dead

historical event. Historical evidence is not the same as scientific proof, for at least with the scientific method nothing is proved unless it can be repeated experimentally. But historical events, by their very nature, are each unique, for despite what we say history does not really repeat itself. It is important to recognize this distinction between scientific and historical evidence, since many people think that nothing is proved unless by the scientific method. Fortunately, however, many today realize that not all knowledge comes through science.

As in many courtroom cases, those of us who affirm Christ’s resurrection are dependent on the testimony of witnesses and upon circumstantial evidence. With witnesses, the question is whether they are competent and truthful. Those who witnessed the resurrected Christ were people who, as one of them said, ate and drank with him. They were people who had a healthy skepticism at first (like Thomas) and had to be convinced. And there were also people who became so convinced that Jesus had actually been raised that they not only publicly proclaimed this as fact but they also went to prison and even died for this faith. Circumstantial evidence includes the empty tomb, leaving the burning question, how did it become empty? If enemies stole the body, they would have produced it quickly and silenced

the disciples. If friends stole the body, they would not have willingly died for proclaiming what they knew to be a lie.

Add to this what we know about Jesus Christ. As N.T. Wright, a noted contemporary New Testament scholar, has pointed out, without the resurrection Jesus was only another interesting first century revolutionary. What makes him different is that he passed through death and came out, by his resurrection, on the other side. Unless Jesus was actually raised from the dead as he himself claimed, we cannot really explain him. Nor can we explain, without the resurrection, the faith of the apostles and other early Christians.

Jesus’ claim is that he was raised from the dead and that he now lives. This, too, is what we believe, and we believe it because this is what the evidence, which we have tried to sketch out briefly, demands. Our faith, then, rests upon historical truth that we need to understand and need to be able to present to those who doubt.

Burlington, ON

HURRICANE RELIEF

The Scarborough Church of Christ is accepting "Donations and Clothing"

for the Members of the Churches of Christ in Jamaica affected by the hurricane.

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...for further info on clothing drop off or pick up. Devon will be going to Jamaica early September.

the godhead. These are identified for us as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. All are equally God. All are equal in essence and being. Theirs' is a shared divinity whose sum is; one God.

What emerges within scripture as further revelation about God is that the persons of the godhead have voluntarily assumed distinct and separate roles. These roles predate creation and remain beyond The Judgment. They act as bookends for our existence.

There are three prominent features attending these divine roles. The first is organizational. The godhead functions as an hierarchy. God the Father has had authority over God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Thus, the father sent the Son to be the savior of the world. And God the Father sent the Holy Spirit to empower the Son and to indwell His people. The Son in turn sends the Holy Spirit to dwell within and to be with his people. Though equally divine, these three do not act—for the present—from a position of equal authority.

The second thing about these roles is that they have been voluntarily entered into. Jesus agreed to the incarnation. He agreed to submit to the Father while on earth.

There is every indication that these roles are not interchangeable. God the Father has at no time ever been the Son or fulfilled the role of the Son. In Gethsamene, the Son did not implore

the Father to change places with him. All three persons of the godhead have been true to their roles no matter what the cost.

It is reasonable therefore to conclude, that at the very core—at the very essence of the being of God, there is a nature of humility and condescension. No one could have suspected it. There is no apparent reason why God should be humble. Nor can we conceive why it could ever be right for God to submit. What we learn from the godhead is a unique truth about God that is found nowhere else.

While the doctrine of the godhead is 2000 years old, it is hard to find anyone marching in the streets, demanding equal rights for the Son. The theological form that this protest is taking is to deny the doctrine of the godhead altogether. After all, one cannot reasonably worship a god of submission and humility while promoting 'egalitarianism'. What is truly alarming is that this denial has even surfaced within the church of Christ.

The Bible teaches that what God is in his essence and in the godhead is reflected in creation. There is only one God and only a single humanity. But being made in the image of God also suggests that mankind must reflect the truth about the godhead. To that end, God has made a distinction between men and women from the very beginning, giving to each a uniquely separate role. He served

notice of this by creating one first and then the other. Like the roles of the godhead, human roles cannot be exchanged. They are God's doing and not our own.

Denying that such roles exist denies the essential truth about God. It disowns the God who in three persons created the world. It is ashamed of the God who from eternity purposed to save us from sin by taking upon himself our humanity. And it renounces the God who condescends to dwell within us, sent by both the Father and Son. The great irony is that God is willing to do what we are not.

Should the church renounces these roles it will cease to reflect the true nature of the godhead. The writers of the New Testament knew this and made it very clear that in God's new creation, the roles of men and women have not changed.

We are very much aware that the world is watching us. The great danger is that we will be embarrassed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and decide to preach another. The great privilege remains for us to conform to the image of God himself, honoring him from within the roles that He has given.

This alone puts the wisdom of God on display. It elevates God's will above our own and invites the world to ask why? To which we must reply "I'm glad you asked; let me tell you about my God".

Waterloo, ON

control. Let's not dismiss hundreds of thousands of people just because their economy isn't recommended by Maclean's magazine. Those people aren't moving anywhere, they're lost and may be open to hope.

The world is coming to Canada. Our big cities teem with Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Latin, Caribbean and African people. We don't have to move overseas to find these people, they live down the street. A wise preacher recently said "We aren't going to foreign countries to preach

the gospel, so God is bringing them to us." Are there brethren among us with these backgrounds who can lead the planting of new works in the huge linguistic communities among us? Our brethren in Waterloo, Strathmore and in Montreal have been great examples of multicultural evangelism. Newcomers to Canada are coping with change and want guidance. Some come from atheistic cultures and are curious about Christ. Congregations with a heart for such people can choose a community and

plant a new church.

Before we can decide "where," we must settle "why." Why should we plant a new congregation somewhere else? Why not just play it safe and be comfortable where we are now? The reason is the cross. Jesus died to save not only our souls, but the souls of people in the next community, the next province and beyond. How are they going to hear? Do we love them enough to try? And will we continue to grow if we don't try?

Edmonton, AB

Christ at the Door of Your Heart?

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

One of the most familiar expressions uttered within Christendom is: “Christ stands at the door of your heart.” Many have been the preachers who have urged their hearers to “invite Jesus into their hearts” in order to be forgiven of sin and made a Christian. Someone said if you repeat a statement enough times, people will come to accept it on the basis of sheer repetition and familiarity. The admonition that “Christ stands at the door of your heart” has been repeated so frequently that, for many, to question it is unthinkable. One would think that since this approach to salvation is so widespread, and the expression is so predominant, that surely the statement can be found in Scripture—even if only in so many words. How disturbing to realize that **the statement is not found in Scripture** and that the Bible simply does not teach this doctrine!

The phraseology is reminiscent of Revelation 3:20—the passage usually quoted to support the idea of Christ standing at the door of one’s heart. But observe the context. Revelation chapters two and three consist of seven specific mini-letters directed to the seven churches of Christ in Asia Minor near the end of the first century. At the outset, one must recognize that Revelation 3:20 is addressed to Christians—not non-Christians on the verge of conversion.

Second, the verse is found among Christ’s remarks to the church in Laodicea. Jesus made clear that the church had moved into an unfaithful condition. They were **lost**. They were unacceptable to God since they were “lukewarm” (3:16). They had become unsaved since their spiritual condition was “wretched and miserable and poor” (3:17). Thus, in a very real sense, Jesus had abandoned them by removing His presence from their midst. Now He was on the outside looking in. He still wanted to be among them, but the decision was up to them. They had to recognize His absence, hear Him knocking for admission and open the door—all of which is figurative language to say that they must **repent** (3:19). They would have to return to the obedient lifestyle so essential to

receiving God’s favor (John 14:21,23).

This means that Revelation 3:20 **in no way** supports the idea that non-Christians merely have to “open the door of their heart” and “invite Jesus in” with the assurance that the moment they mentally/verbally do so, Jesus will come into their heart and they will be simultaneously saved from all past sin and counted as Christians! The **context** of Revelation 3:20 shows that Jesus was **seeking readmission into an apostate church**.

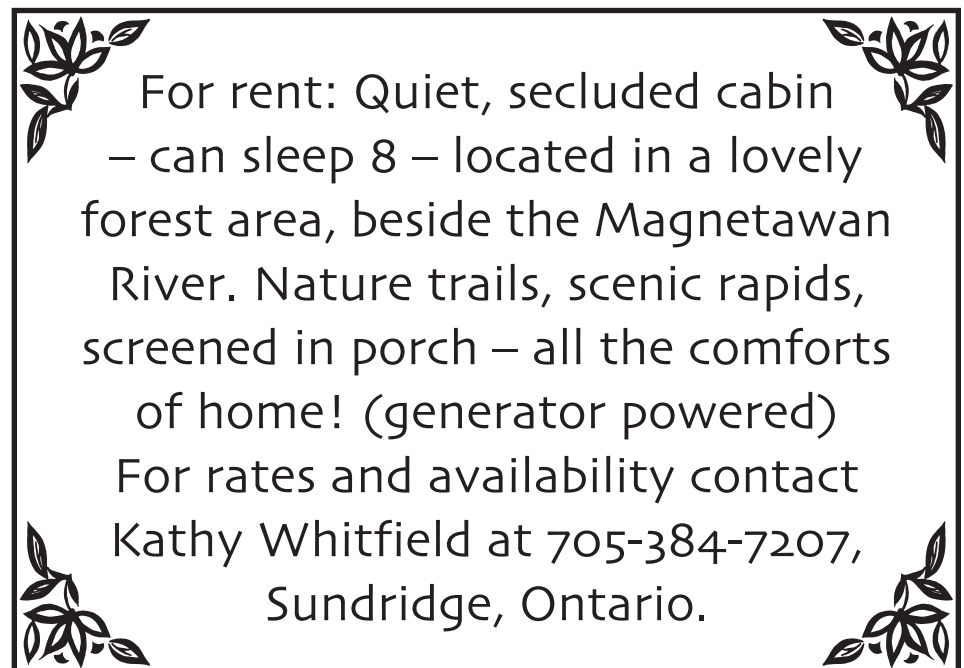
“But doesn’t the Bible teach that Christ does come into a person’s heart?” Yes. But not the way the religious world suggests. Ephesians 3:17 states that Christ dwells in the heart **through** faith. Faith can be acquired only by hearing biblical truth (Romans 10:17). When that biblical truth is **obeyed**, the individual is “saved by faith” (Hebrews 5:9; James 2:22; 1 Peter 1:22; et al.). So Christ enters our lives when we “draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of **faith**, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience (i.e., when we **repent** of our sins) and our bodies washed with pure water (i.e., when we are **baptized** in water)” (Hebrews 10:22). Here is the New Testament (i.e., non-denominational) way to accept Christ.

Montgomery, AL

OBITUARIES

Roberta and Daniel Cox

Suddenly as a result of a motor-vehicle accident at Pembroke, ON, on Tuesday, July 10, 2007. Roberta Cox age 45 years and Daniel Cox age 7 years. Beloved wife and son of Jeffrey Cox of Chalk River, ON. Loving daughter and grandson of May and Ernest Geck of North Bay, ON, and daughter-in-law and grandson of Roy Cox and the late Audrey Cox of Burford, ON. Dear mother of and brother of Joshua Cox and his wife, Chelsea, of Deep River, Benjamin Cox of Hamilton, ON, Amanda Cox of Waterloo, ON, Elise, Melissa, Jessica and Aylanna Cox all at home. Loving grandmother and uncle of Jordan Cox. Loving sister and nephew of Bill Geck, Suzanne Pilon, Ernest Geck Jr. (Cheryl Young) all of North Bay, Kathryn Geck-Hunter of Arizona, Deborah Newton (Mark) of Barrie, ON, Melinda Cunningham (Darryle Copland) of Trenton, ON, and Christina Oickle (David) of Pembroke, ON. Also survived by several nieces and nephews. A memorial service was conducted at the Calvary Pentecostal Church, Deep River, Saturday, July 14, 2007.



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Editorial... continued from page 4

initially see themselves as “church goers”, what opportunities may exist for mature Christians to reach out with the love of Christ to disconnected and lonely younger adults in our communities? The wisdom and kindness of older Christians can provide a model of what Jesus brings to life.

Finally, how much thought have we given to reaching out to those approaching or even at the other end of life? Empty nesters are often looking for new directions now that their children are launched. What about those who are newly retired or those who have lost spouses? Granted, some older people may tend to be set in their ways, less open to something different, dare we even say, a little more closed-minded and stubborn. However, it has long been noted that those people most open to change are those who are undergoing some change in their lives. Typically, we have viewed new neighbourhoods

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with families who have just moved in as offering the greatest opportunities. Don't older people experience changes? What about those who downsize their housing, retire, change their social and family activities, experience health changes? Given that many of these people may not have given time or attention to God or faith, with age they may be realizing the coming inevitability of death and be more open. Reaching out to Canada's seniors will require sensitivity and creativity. Again, they are more likely to be reached through caring relationships with those who share common interests and activities—sewing, quilting, golfing, curling, even going for coffee.

The family connection in a strong congregational fellowship offers relationships that many people do not have. Are our congregations welcoming for those who are older?

Canada's population is greying. Right now, one Canadian in seven is a senior. A greying church does not necessarily mean it has failed or is dying. It can simply mean that it shares the same age demographics as its community. And it can mean that its members have an opportunity to reach out to those people who are most like them. In the Scriptures, God's people served to the end of their days. He still has work for his seniors today.

GLCC & GLBC Partnership Dinner

September 29, 2007




A WAVES quilt to commemorate their milestone of \$1 million to GLCC will be offered by auction.

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