I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made...

PSALM 139:13
I

n this final article about church planting, we will consider two
important questions, as follows: (1) who should attempt it? (2) should it be
left to the professionals? The first is an
obvious consideration because most
of our Canadian congregations are
smaller in size. The second is a choice
being pressed on our brotherhood
today. Both need to be weighed.

Who should attempt to plant a
new congregation? In earlier articles
we examined the merits of one con-
gregation planting another, as com-
pared to a lone evangelist planting
one. Both methods have advantages
in appropriate situations. But here
we will consider the congregational/
team method. Can every congregation
successfully plant another? Does a
group’s size and maturity affect the
outcome?

Perhaps the apostles wondered how
effective they could be when Jesus
said, “...and you shall be My witnesses
both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea
and Samaria, and even to the remot-
est part of the earth” (Acts 1:8b). All
of them were expected to preach the
gospel. In turn, new Christians were
taught that they must also share the
good news. It’s a brotherhood-wide
responsibility. However, not all will
be smooth at it, and not all will do
it in the same way or use the same
method. But everybody can play a part
in taking the gospel to the lost. Church
planting is similar. There’s something
that every congregation can do to
help start new groups. Whatever we
choose to do, it needs to be
done proportionately to size,
with wisdom and in unity.

A larger congregation may be
capable of financing and
spinning off a sizeable team
to plant a new congrega-
tion. It’s more difficult for
a smaller congregation that
doesn’t have the same level
of finances or manpower to
donate to a new work. They
may still be capable of doing it, just
on a smaller scale. Our church history
in Canada has many fine examples of
smaller congregations successfully
reproducing themselves by capital-
izing on some of their families who
had to move into another area. They
simply began meeting in their new
surroundings and planting the seed
as they went. This can be done wisely
today by smaller congregations who
know the communities in their areas
and can help plant another group.
Care must be taken to make sure the
planting church doesn’t exceed the
15-25% congregational limit of man-
power sent out. As noted in previous
articles, exceeding this number would
hurt the sending group too much. So
a small congregation can only send a
small team to plant a new group.

There are other methods smaller
congregations can use, such as team-
ing up with another congregation to
plant a third in a community about
which they are both concerned. The
advantage of this kind of partnering
would be a smaller drain on finances
and manpower for both congrega-
tions.

All congregations can prepare for
the future. Planting a new group can
be a goal. Every congregation can
work to arrange itself to meet the
goal. They can evaluate and choose a
target community, and save up funds
to get ready. The 1½-year old south
Edmonton congregation is already
saving money toward a new church
planting. It’s not time to plant yet, but
the goal is there. Some congregations
may struggle with internal troubles
that prevent a unified effort to plant
another group. Their goal can be to
work out their affairs so that they
can. There’s something we can all do
toward church planting. Most of all,
we can pray that God will use us to
fulfill this great challenge.

Should it be left to the profession-
als? There are interdenominational
organizations today that specialize in
the work of church planting. Used as
a model, our brethren have developed
similar organizations claiming to have
the expertise and resources to help
our congregations reproduce them-
selves. Some of these are connected
with brotherhood universities, and
I’m aware of one that is not. They
do not claim to be the church, but
are separate organizations claiming
to help the church do its evangelistic
work. Often these groups say that
the church is neither equipped nor
interested in planting new congre-
gations. One organization teaches
that the brotherhood does not plant
quickly enough to keep ahead of the
number of our congregations closing
their doors. Whether they are right
or wrong depends on research and
one’s judgment. The real question
that should be asked is the one we
are contemplating; should the work
of planting new congregations be left
to these organizations? Many issues
need to be considered.

First, how do these organizations
function? Typically, they urge
the church to send them men
and their families for testing,
evaluation, training, guidance
and ongoing encouragement.
Certainly an amount of test-
ing and training is wise.
Some organizations insist
that financial support is to
be sent to them alone, and it
will be administered solely by

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NOTICE

All materials for publication must be in the hands of the editors by the tenth (10) day of the month preceding the date of issue. Date of issue is the first of each month.

continued on page 8
In recent months the news media has reported various political leaders who have been caught in scandalous immoral relationships. The criminating evidence was discovered through inappropriate cell phone conversations and text messages. Sex and scandal are not new. More than one leader of God’s people in the Old Testament has also been involved in immoral relationships and cover up. The intimate details have been preserved in the text of the Bible for millions to read.

How would our lives change if we knew that everything we did, said and thought was documented and recorded for everyone to read?

There’s no doubt that our society is becoming more accepting of immoral sexual relationships. We see a growing number of couples just living together, flagrant sex on TV and in the movies, endorsing homosexual relationships and the profusion of pornography. Sexual sin has also entrapped many of our church members who worship with us every week. It’s the secret sin that we don’t talk about because it’s personal, intimate and frankly quite embarrassing.

God’s original design for an intimate relationship between a husband and wife is wonderful and fulfilling. God’s plan was clearly stated in the beginning “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6). Any kind of sexual relationship outside of marriage is deadly. Here is a strong warning. “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral” (Hebrews 13:4). It’s pretty clear, stay out of bed with anyone you’re not married to.

The seventh commandment in the Old Law is “You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14). Do any of these five words need explanation? It’s pretty straight. The tenth command also gives us some more information about sexual temptation and avoiding sin, “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his man-servant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor” (Exodus 20:17). Looking leads to longing and longing leads to lusting.

King David, a man after God’s own heart (1 Samuel 13:14), was involved in sex and scandal. Maybe his story is recorded so that we can learn from his mistakes and understand the grace of God more fully.

Between 2 Samuel 5 and 11, David was not only the king, he was the national hero. He had great victory and success in battle and was admired by his people. He had a great political career and multiplied money, power, fame, authority and influence. His family was growing and he was blessed by God. In fact, he was very spiritual and gave glory to the Lord for working in his life (2 Samuel 7:18-29).

Sometimes when people rise to abundant power, especially at a young age, they think they are invincible, above the law, not accountable. They can begin believing that they are really “all that” as others idolize and look up to them. Being at the top can be a very dangerous place. Many political leaders, business leaders and church leaders have fallen because of power, position and prestige.

King David’s sexual sin did not begin with Bathsheba. David was familiar with God’s law and plan for the family and for kings. The king was forbidden to multiply horses, wives, silver or gold (Deuteronomy 17:14-17). David had already had more than ten wives and ten concubines (2 Samuel 5:13). When a man is not satisfied with his wife, he will not be satisfied with many lovers. Years later David’s son, Solomon, wrote “May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love. Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man’s wife?” (Proverbs 5:18-20). If you compromise in one area, it’s much easier to fall into other sins.

The text message in 2 Samuel 11 helps us understand how great men fall. David was not where he should have been. Kings were supposed to be at war, but David stayed in Jerusalem. Since his close friends and comrades were not with him,
Moving Past Postmodernism
Wayne Turner

Clearly, the Western world is in a time of transition. Nations are rising and falling, human migration is transforming the face of our cities, social attitudes are shifting. Cultural institutions that attempt to shape human thought, such as universities and organized religion, have also undergone a transformation in their approaches to knowledge in the last thirty years. The cracks in their foundations are beginning to reveal the results of postmodern approaches to truth that centre on individuals “constructing meaning” for themselves rather than searching for an external and objective reality.

The “modern” worldview, which dominated Western thinking through much of the 20th century, looked for truth (in religion, “the truth”) and human progress through reasoned, scientific inquiry. Disillusionment with the ills of the modern world in the late 20th century led to “postmodern” views, which questioned the ability of the individual to know anything for certain (“many truths”). In turn, as a new generation that has grown up with reality TV and the Internet responds to the failure of postmodernism’s relativism and skepticism to find “any truth”, or to provide meaning and stability, we want what form post-postmodernism will take?

It appears that there’s bad news and good news.

The bad news is the “dumbing down” of mainstream culture as knowledge and thinking have become increasingly relative and subjective. Both religious and secular observers have recently noted the public’s apparent disdain for thinking. In a recent Christianity Today review of 21st Century Apologetics by Timothy Keller, Anthony Sacramone asks, “...in an ADHD world in which factoids supplant facts, rage overrides reason and the sui generis self (lit., of its own kind, unique – Ed) knows none of the permanent things, how does the Christian soul-winner keep cool, engage the easily distracted and defend the faith...?”

In “Dumb and Dumber: Are Americans Hostile to Knowledge?”, a New York Times article, Patricia Cohen relates the appearance of Kellie Pickler, “American Idol” contestant on “Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?”, who was asked, “Budapest is the capital of what European country?” Pickler replied, “I thought Europe was a country.” When told that her 5th grade partner’s answer was Hungary, she said, “Hungry? That’s a country...I’ve never heard of it.” Cohen goes on to mention that a number of writers “bemoan the state of American culture.” She focuses especially on Susan Jacoby’s new book, The Age of American Unreason. pointing out that Jacoby feels that there is now a “generalized hostility to knowledge.” Jacoby’s summary of the prevailing attitudes is “(that) too much learning can be a dangerous thing... and... that there is no such thing as evidence or fact, just opinion.” Cohen notes, “Not only are citizens ignorant about essential scientific, civic and cultural knowledge, she said, but they also don’t think it matters.”

Nicholas D. Kristoff, op-ed columnist for the New York Times, in “With a Few More Brains...” quotes Jacoby, “America is now ill with a powerful mutant strain of intertwined ignorance, anti-rationalism, and anti-intellectualism.” As an example, Kristoff points out the widespread belief in flying saucers and government conspiracy theories, including the 9/11 attack.

Although these comments refer to American culture and thinking, can Canadians be very far behind?

Even more serious is the corresponding decline in the religious world. What was once a general Biblical knowledge underpinning North American culture has been displaced by a widespread Biblical illiteracy even among many of those who profess some form of faith. In a sometimes well-intentioned attempt to communicate to a culture that is not attracted to reasoned, study-based approaches to learning spiritual truth, outreach methods are increasingly being based on consumer and entertainment preferences. Someone has observed that some church lobbies seem more like food courts in malls. Sociologist Alan Wolfe is concerned that the call to self-denial and sacrifice has been displaced by a watered-down, feel-good religion that caters to religious consumers. Doesn’t this sound like the blind leading the blind? How can people find real hope and faith in Christ, or the meaning and answers for life that Jesus offers? How can people find spiritual satisfaction when they are only being... continued on page 9
Christian people speak often of family values, the sanctity of marriage and the horrors of broken families. We definitely care a great deal about family, as we should, and the Bible has much to say about family, too. For instance, Jesus himself taught that God’s ideal for marriage was a man and woman in life-long partnership and that a marriage should only dissolve when a spouse has chosen another’s bed. Moreover, several New Testament writers speak of the commitment a husband and wife should have for one another, and that children and parents should treat one another with appropriate respect. Yet, Jesus placed marriage (and family!) second to following him. Accordingly, marriage and family are important, but they are not our most important commitments as Christians.

One only has to spend a few moments in western Canada to find that family is important in the local churches of Christ; one soon finds out that family is often the glue holding our congregations together. Shortly after moving to Canada, I learned how interconnected church and family were. When we introduce ourselves here, we immediately follow up with which family is ours. Because of this, ministers and elders in western Canada also need to be part family counselors. In addition, families are the earthen vessels that pass the gospel from one generation to another. Family ties are one of the strengths of the church in Canada—however, it may also be a serious weakness in participating in God’s mission.

Sociologist Reginald Bibby has done some serious cultural analysis of the state of “Christianity” in Canada. In Restless Gods: The Renaissance of Religion in Canada (2002), he addresses the place of family in the life of Canadian churches. “For all the talk about evangelism,” says Bibby, “groups of all kinds were failing to demonstrate much success in recruiting people outside their own boundaries. Most were growing by adding people who were primarily their own—children and geographically mobile members” (p. 24). In another place, Bibby asserts that churches in Canada generally grow in two ways: birth and marriage. That is, either we give birth to future members or our children marry people who then also become members. In his earlier work, Unknown Gods: The Ongoing Story of Religion in Canada (1993), he observes that churches in Canada were often “family shrines.” In these churches a few families hold all of decision-making posts, both formal (elders, deacons) and informal (highly respected members). Regarding a congregation he once attended he states, “For all the external signs of engaging in outreach, I increasingly had a great difficulty being convinced that people in my small church really wanted things to change. New people would have upset the organizational applecart” (269).

Some of what Bibby observes rings true for us as well. It is entirely possible that we have so much biological family around us that we do not feel the need to invite new people into our church family. Even if folks try us, they might not find the welcome they seek. I often ask church leaders in workshops I hold, “Who does your church exclude?” The first response is usually that their congregation is very friendly and welcoming. I quiz deeper, “Would the handicapped find a welcome here?” Most of our older buildings are not up-to-date and so we usually have to admit that a wheelchair-bound visitor would find it difficult to move around. We could ask the same about the blind and the deaf, although most of congregation would probably adapt if they had a member with such needs.

But let’s look even deeper. As the morning service adjourns, do we have room at our families’ tables for those who are not physical family? Do people have to know the same people as you to be welcomed? Do people have to have attended the same (unnamed) school to be part of the circle? If a visitor really wanted to become a member, could they find a clear way in? If they had leadership potential and desire, could they learn what it would take to be a Sunday school teacher, deacon, or elder in your congregation? Before answering these questions, think about how successful your congregation has been in the past ten years at bringing in new people and assimilating them into the...
The Heart of the Servant

We live in an unhappy world filled with unhappy people. We hear frustrated unhappy people saying that all that they want is to be happy, yet they continue to do things that make them unhappy. They measure success in ways that make them truly miserable. They are successful if they have or make a lot of money. They are successful if they own a big house and have lots of things to put in their big house. They are successful if people respect them in their field of work and they have many employees that answer to them. They would be successful if their job would make them happy, yet are unsure of what it would take for their jobs to make them happy.

They believe that they could be happy if those around them would make them happy by doing things the way that they want them done. If those in their lives would give lots of compliments then they could be happy. If those they have relationships with would just meet their needs, then they could be happy. If the church would have the programmes that would meet their needs, then they would be happy.

They are at the centre of their world and as a result their world is spinning off centre. We will never really be happy when we measure success the way the world does. Even if all those around us did precisely what we want them to do in order to meet our needs (make us happy) we would still not be happy. Other people do not have the ability to make us happy!

Our greatest needs cannot be met by other people; our greatest needs can only be met by God. One of the greatest needs that we have is to be involved with serving others. The happiest people I have ever come in contact with are those who engage themselves in serving and are passionate about serving God and others.

Jesus shared this lesson with his disciples when he gathered with them for one last meal. Jesus knew that his time was quickly coming to an end and that he had the opportunity to teach but one lesson. Does he teach on a particular doctrinal point? No! Does he share with them some specifics about what his bride the church will look like? No! He shares with them an object lesson on serving.

Foot washing was not a ceremonial thing that they did before important dinners it was a practical necessity. They walked either barefoot or in sandals on the same roads that animals traveled on. When they reclined at the table their feet came close to the noses of others, thus foot washing became a practical necessity. It was usually a job reserved for the lowest servant in the house, but there were no servants present when Jesus and his disciples gathered for dinner. Jesus saw his disciples positioning for the places of honour at the table and knew the argument that it would provoke if he asked one of them to volunteer to serve. So... Jesus gets up from the table takes his outer clothing off and wraps the towel that had been provided around him and takes the basin of water and goes from one disciple to the other washing their feet and drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. When he finishes, he seeks to reinforce the lesson that he has just taught by example. He says, “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord’ and rightly so for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet you should wash one another’s feet” (John 13:12-14 NIV). Jesus was not seeking to introduce ceremonial foot washing into Christian worship but rather to teach his disciples to serve each other.

We can follow Jesus’ example of humility and serving by having a heart like Jesus. What is the heart or attitude of Jesus? In Philippians 2:5-11 we see that although Jesus had equality with God he didn’t see it as something he had to grasp on to. He made himself nothing by taking the nature of a servant. He further humbles himself by coming to us as a man. He humbled himself still further by dying in one of the most humiliating ways devised by men. He died on a cross and not for his own sins but for our sins. As a result, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him a name above any other name. That at the name of Jesus every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord so that God will be further glorified.

In Philippians 2:1-2 we find the motivation for serving. If you have received any encouragement by being united with Christ, then serve. If you have received any comfort from his love, then serve. Your fellowship with the spirit that dwells in you will motivate you to serve. If you have any tenderness or compassion then please make my joy complete by serving together.

How do we serve together? We must be like-minded, not identical but like-minded. We must love each other and share a common spirit and purpose. The loving each other and the common spirit and purpose describe how to be like minded. We practice humility by doing nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. In humility we consider others better than ourselves. We don’t look at what is good for ourselves but we seek to benefit others. Humility doesn’t mean you think less of yourself but that you think of yourself less.

In Romans 12:1 we find that when we are motivated by God’s mercy to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, serving God with our lives in a way that is holy and pleasing to Him, we are worshiping God in the most spiritual ways. The heart of the servant is the heart of Christ. This humble heart serves and through his/her serving worships God.
Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Lord’s Church in Ottawa and a special time of tribute to Roy and Nelle Merritt who established this congregation in 1958

You are invited home for a weekend of celebration. If you have a history with the Ottawa congregation we would like you to join in an enjoyable time of reflection on how the Ottawa congregation began and grew.

Please let us know if you will be able to attend.
Email: estirrup@hotmail.com or phone 613-596-3276 or 613-733-2580

NOTE: If you have pictures relating to the past of this congregation and would be willing to loan or give us a copy, it would be greatly appreciated. (All originals will be returned if your name and address is included)

Send them to: Ernie Stirrup, Riverview Park Church of Christ, 1515 Chomley Cres., Ottawa, ON K2B 8E8
them. Much like missionary societies of the past, they assume the financial controls, make decisions who they will support and terminate the support if the church planter does not produce according to the organization’s standards and time-table. The goals and work of the organization are financed by monthly support from participating congregations, a percentage of the weekly collections from the churches it plants, and sometimes large lump-sum donations are expected of cooperating churches. These details may vary with different church-planting organizations, but most are similar.

Second, is this system of church planting as efficient as it claims to be? One wonders, when so much money is needed to support the organization itself, in addition to the work it claims to do. Wouldn’t it be more cost-effective for each congregation to spend its resources directly on its own evangelistic work?

Third, is it fair? By what standards does such an organization approve an evangelist? Is his personality the key? Must he show the ability to hustle-and-bustle? Is he proficient in marketing? Unfortunately I’ve known one excellent evangelist who was evaluated and dismissed as a good candidate, ultimately discouraging him. He went on to do great work in a foreign country without the organization’s involvement. One wonders if men like the apostle Paul, criticized for his “unimpressive personal presence” and “his speech contemptible” (2 Cor.10:10), would be accepted by an organization? Is this fair?

Fourth, and most importantly, do such church-planting organizations violate congregational autonomy? The true test of this Biblical principle is whether the organization seeks to control congregations in some way. After hearing one organization’s claim that the church is not doing its job, and that they can do better directing and managing the church’s funds, evaluating and hiring preachers and directing the work of church-planting, it would seem that a degree of control is being exercised. We do ourselves a service to remember the past agonies of the brotherhood over similar organizations that eventually sought control.

I believe there is no organization better equipped to plant new congregations than the church itself. It has the various talents needed, it can raise and efficiently manage the funding required, it has the wisdom and skill to evaluate the best locations and make up the teams and it possesses the ability to encourage and help a new work to be a success. Let’s commit ourselves to the world’s most important work, and do it well here in Canada.

Edmonton, Alberta

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**Remember Someone Special**

You may honour a friend or family member by making a contribution or you may want to make a memorial gift in memory of a special person. In either case, we will send an appropriate letter to the honoured person or to a family member acknowledging your thoughtfulness. You are welcome to use the convenient form below to let us know your wishes.

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offered distractions or momentary bandages instead of real solutions and substance?

Is there any good news? Winnie Hu, in another New York Times article, suggests that there may be. She notes a growing trend among university age young people who are enrolling in philosophy courses. She sees this, in part, as a search for answers to the “big questions”—the “life examined.” She speaks of a “new generation … who are drawing modern-day lessons from the age-old discipline as they try to make sense of their world.”

In other words, these young people are looking for understanding and meaning. Could this be seen as postmodernism’s ultimate inability to provide any real answers? But why are they looking for these answers in university philosophy departments and not churches? Is it because they can only see the emptiness of today’s dumbed-down and watered-down religion? That the postmodern heritage passed on to them has left them distrustful of religious institutions and simplistic answers that show little difference from any other part of society? However, speaking in another age of skepticism that looked to human philosophy for guidance, Paul described the result as “their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened” (Romans 1:21).

Peter tells us that it wasn’t through silver or gold (or anything else of this world) that we were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down from our forefathers. (1 Peter 1:18). The New Testament repeatedly reminds us that the Gospel is not based on the wisdom of men or conforming to worldviews that rise from human thinking. Discipleship is daring to believe in and to confront culture with God’s eternal truth. Jesus included loving God with the mind, as well as the heart and soul, in the greatest commandment. To teach truth, we must know it and then live it. How many church members today have replaced solid Bible study with the casual reading of popular religious writers – the substance of scripture with what is little more than “religion light”? How many have abandoned the meat of God’s word for something that could not even be considered spiritual milk? And how many of us have allowed that word to transform our beings so that our daily life, as salt and light within our culture, testifies to the reality and power of God’s truth? For a post-postmodern generation, this may be the entry point to the deeper conversation about the reasons for the hope that we have (I Peter 1: 15).

Postmodernism has had a significant impact on our world. It has challenged the way people think and know. It has led some to rethink, doubt and even abandon their beliefs. At the same time, it has also created a void—a spiritual emptiness. There is a growing number of young people looking for understanding, meaning and direction. Will God’s people be there to help them find the way?
Reminder: To be published in the following month’s Gospel Herald, each congregation’s information should be sent to Walter Straker by the 10th of the month preceding the date of issue, which is the first of each month. Please clearly mark the email or the envelope: “NewsEast.”

ONTARIO

Beamsville: Alaina Moore, granddaughter of Mark and Marion McDonnell, was baptized by her father, Ron Moore, when she was home in Nova Scotia for March break. The congregation participated in a Good Friday service at the building on March 21. They received reports from the following mission points: Papua New Guinea: Craig and Jeri Ford report that Lonsdale, Theresa and Lilly were recently baptized. They ask for prayers that God will give them clarity and vision to provide leadership for the church there; for ongoing Bible studies with Roger; for the upcoming time of transition as the Reeses are gone from the end of April to the beginning of August, and the Williams family leaves for sabbatical in late May for a year. France: Max and Prisca Dauner report that they had some 30 visitors out of a total attendance of 90 on Easter Sunday.

Bramalea: The overall topic for the spring Sunday a.m. adult Bible classes is: “Christian Fellowship,” with lessons on “Concepts of Fellowship in the New Testament,” “Fellowship with Christians,” “Scriptural Foundations” and “Stewardship.” The “Foundations” class is studying Jerry Tallman’s book: “His Eternal Plan,” as is the Oakville/Mississauga small group. A special collection was taken up by the congregation on March 30 to assist Jonathan and Michiko Straker and $2,630 was donated. A seminar: “Reducing the Risk: Street Proofing the Church against Abuse,” is scheduled for May 24.

Brantford: Recent guest speakers were Scott Mansfield, Glen Robbins, Ralph Perry, Jamie Azzoparde and Jim Holston. The congregation’s Wednesday evening study is on the Christian graces. The ladies class is studying “Women of the Bible.” They participate in “Food Share” and the clothing drive for the community.

Cambridge: Greg Whitfield reports: “The first Sunday morning of March blew us away: we had 12 people from the community and 12 of us. The third Sunday was more surprising: we had 15 from the community and 11 of us. The three-person increase was through the work of the guys (the young people from the community who attend). They had randomly ‘hung out’ with a neighbour in their building and invited him to church. He ended up coming with his girlfriend and her son. It seems as if they are better at inviting friends to church than we are.” The congregation invites those who come out Sunday morning to also come out in the afternoon to eat lunch and ‘hang out.’” The members at this new congregation believe “it is evident to us that God has been working in this community long before we got here.” However, they feel they have two big problems: 1) they want to meet the needs of the new people; and 2) they feel they lack depth of teaching and fellowship for their established members. They ask for prayers as they tackle these problems. A church retreat was scheduled for April 4 and 5 at Samson and Susman Ling’s home.

Fennell Avenue (Hamilton): Art Ford arrived back from Papua New Guinea the weekend of March 8. The congregation thanked several of its members for their work with the mini VBS on Thursday during spring break. Ten children attended and had a great time.

You are invited to a
Come and Go Tea
For Ardath Sanna-White’s 80th Birthday
June 1, 2008, from 2 to 4 p.m.
Church of Christ Fellowship Hall
113 Nelson Street W., Meaford, Ontario
Best Wishes Only
time. Art attended the Ohio Valley University Lectureships this year, beginning Sunday, April 6. The lessons this year are on the book of Philippians.

Fenwick: The congregation was represented at the Pelham Home and Leisure Show for the first time on April 18-20. New Testaments, pens, trinkets for kids, and information about Christ’s church were distributed and asked for prayers for positive results. Greg Smith was with the congregation from April 25-27. Evening sessions were open to the community and area congregations (“The Mission of the Church”) and Greg led the congregation in setting goals during the day on Saturday. The ladies are hosting their third annual ladies’ day on May 31, with Sherry Stephens and Dorothy Dennis speaking. A special collection was taken March 30 for a church planting effort in Wauseon, Ohio. People from Wauseon have helped the Fenwick congregation with its vacation Bible school in the past, so $400 was sent.

Tintern: The Missional Workshop with Dr. Mark Love was held on March 30th. It went well and there were over 250 people in attendance at the Empire Theatre at the Penn Centre in St. Catharines. The series continued on Monday and Tuesday evenings, with 90 people in attendance. Dr. Love’s presentation provided us with much to think about and do. CDs or online download of each program is available. Go to http://ephesians2eight.com for details. On Friday April 18th Tintern held its monthly kids youth night with games, crafts and snacks.

Toronto (Bayview): The congregation expressed its appreciation to David Knutson who travels most Sundays to share his teaching with them. Currently, they are studying the book of Acts. Michael Tease preached a powerful sermon, and Geoff Ellis also shared an uplifting message for the congregation. Bayview attended and supported the work of the “Training for Service.” Maggie Hilborn and Christine Koehler taught a grade 3 and 4 children’s class. The lesson was from Matthew 5:44, 45: “Love your enemies.” God has blessed us with wonderful, zealous, young believers who are the future of His work. The ladies’ class met on Saturday, April 12, for Bible study and fellowship. “The Six Gifts of Hospitality,” by Laurel S. Sewell is being studied. The congregation asks for prayers in the Lord’s work at Bayview and for those of their number who are ill, in distress or looking for employment.

Toronto (Strathmore Blvd): March 29 and 30, Max was in Ottawa for a meeting with the Riverview Park congregation. A very encouraging time of study, worship and fellowship was shared. It also provided an opportunity to take Key To The Kingdom on the road and film two programmes in Ottawa. Following a very enjoyable potluck in Ottawa after the Sunday morning service, we travelled to Kingston in the afternoon and filmed a couple of programmes there. Several from the congregation came to observe and had also prepared a potluck supper for us. Two pot lucks in one day!! It was a fulfilling weekend, both spiritually and physically. The young adults enjoyed an Inter-congregational games night, dinner and devotional evening on Saturday, April 19, at the Strathmore building. Individuals from four area congregations joined with the Strathmore young adults for the activity. April 5–15, Jean Volcy, Gerry Ellis and Derrick & Faith Wilson were in Haiti to work with the congregation. Jean had established in his home town of Fonds Pariisen. In spite of some political problems, they had a very successful time working there. (See Jean’s report on page 14.)

Quebec:

Montreal (VilleÉmard): Correction: In 2007 the congregation had nine people baptized, four restored and 14 placed membership, not three baptisms and four placing membership as reported in the April NewsEast. These latter figures were for 2008 as of March.

St. Catharines Ladies Honoured:
The “over-Eighty Ladies” of the Ontario Street congregation in St. Catharines, ON, were honoured at a meeting of the Monday evening Bible Study Class with a beautifully-arranged dinner and presentation of plaques commending their (many!!) years of Christian service and example. Two were unable to attend: Aileen Hilchey, who was represented by her daughter, Julie Culp and Judy Fisher of London. Left to right: Ruth (McPhee) Wilson, Nelle Merritt, Alice Conn and Dorothy (Wallace) Ellis.

New Preacher at St. Catharines:
Jeremiah Cisco, new evangelist with the Ontario Street Church of Christ in St. Catharines, ON, and his daughter Patsy, a student at Great Lakes Christian High School, now have their Permanent Resident Cards which means they are free to remain in Canada and pursue Canadian citizenship. Jeremiah’s wife, Mary, received her card earlier. The two were warmly welcomed by the congregation following a Sunday evening worship service with a surprise reception where Canadian flags were on abundant display. After prayers and an emotional thanksgiving from Jeremiah, the two cut and served a special cake and the celebration ended with the singing of “O Canada.” The Coscios are originally from Liberia.
**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**Burnaby:** The Burnaby young people hosted their 9th annual Youth Rally from April 25-27 at the Spruston Road Bible Camp on Vancouver Island under the direction of Mike Parker. Starting on Friday evening, the theme of “Getting Real” featured Nanaimo’s new preacher, Derek King, as the principle speaker. While Kirk Buch was teaching a session in a Ministry Resource Workshop at Cascade College in Portland on April 6, our associate minister, Mike Parker, shared the Word with us in the morning assembly, and Erol Dogan gave evening worshippers an insight into his December mission trip to Israel and Egypt, complete with photos. Justin Andrews also brought a report on his two-week mission trip to Thailand with the outreach team of the Pacific Academy he attends.

**City Church (Vancouver):** In April, Steve and Marcia Hasbrouck had estimators give them final prices on the shipping of their belongings to Japan. Marcia expects to fly to Hokkaido on May 19, and Steve will follow on May 31, bringing 16 years of living in Vancouver to a close. They will be missed, not only by this congregation, but by all the others in the area. Steve preached for the Oakridge church three from the south-side, will be illustrated by a board game (Risk, Clue, Battleship, etc). Three brothers from the north-side congregation, and three from the south-side, will preach these lessons. We are also investigating FriendSpeak as a way to reach into our heavily-populated ethnic area. Thanks for your prayers and we ask that you continue. - Tim Johnson

**Edmonton North:** This year’s ladies retreat is titled “Life is a Jungle. Who is Your Guide?” The guest speaker is Terri Fanning of Lubbock, Texas. Carolyn Elford was baptized and added to the Lord’s family during the Alberta Spring Fellowship weekend.

**Red Deer:** Blair Roberts, Bible Teacher at WCC and Kirk Hinnegardt, minister of Church of Christ in Regina are the guest speakers at the Men’s Day. The theme is “Pursuit of Manliness”. The lessons are entitled Manly Commitment, Manly Self-Control, Manly Speech and Manly Spending.

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You are invited...

**Origins in Ogema:** Remembering Our Roots Western Christian College and High School Heritage Series

Ogema Museum Hall, Ogema, Saskatchewan

Sunday, June 8, 2008

Please join us for Origins in Ogema, a day of remembering the first winter Bible school in Saskatchewan.

The program includes

- Sunday morning worship
- Tour of historic sites

Reflections and appreciation by President Kevin Vance Unveiling the Western Christian College heritage sign

Please register in advance so we can plan meals, meetings and tours.

For information or to register, please contact Cindy Emmons at (306) 545-1515 ext 225 or cemmons@westernchristian.ca.

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**MANITOBA**

**Winnipeg (Central):** After Sunday, May 11, we will no longer be meeting in our building on Osborne St. The building has been sold, with possession changing hands on May 27. For the near future, on Sunday
Fiji: "We are still in cyclone season here but have not experienced any additional named cyclones since we last wrote to you. We have, though, received over 10 inches of additional rain. Thankfully we have not experienced any more flooding and our container has remained dry inside. All the books have not experienced any additional rain since we last wrote to you. We have, though, received over 10 inches of additional rain. Thankfully we have not experienced any more flooding and our container has remained dry inside. All the books I brought out of the container that were water damaged from the last time, are hung up drying, that is, when we have sunny conditions. I have them hanging on a rotary clothes hoist and under the car port. One side effect of water damage to books is that they now smell, another side effect is that they are much bulkier. (The swelling of the paper doesn’t go away when they are dried out. Either way they will never be back in my office but perhaps they can still be useful in less confined spaces. (As I was writing this report we have a low pressure cell over the island and are experiencing cyclical winds, rains and thunder. It blows the rain into the louver windows along the front of the house, which are 10 feet back on the veranda. We have had over 1.5 inches of rain in 15 minutes and it is still coming in waves and the electricity is flickering. Kathy did towels this morning and they are wetter than when she hung them out in the veranda. We have no electric dryer so the wind needs to continue but without the driving rain.) "We are aware that inflation and higher prices have an affect on what we have available to spend. We are not immune to these fluctuations either. We get hit with a double whammy in Fiji because we have to contend with currency exchange as well as inflation. Our gasoline now costs $6.47 US per gallon. Flour, rice and all other import grocery items have increased in cost every week. Potatoes from New Zealand are now $1 US per pound, double the price in December. Fees for electricity and water have also increased. With the devaluation of money and the increased prices we are spending 25% more than when we came last June, but our support remains the same. We are grateful to those who support our work and make it possible for us to be here. We know that many congregations in the USA are having to cut back on expenditures due to this economic downturn, but pray and plead that you look with mercy on your mission work and missionaries and not resort to cutting back on the Lord’s work in foreign fields. We have no way of making up for the inflationary increase in costs other than your generosity and it is even harder when we are so far away.” (March Report from Tobey Huff)

Iraq: “There are great things happening in the Middle East that you’ll never hear about on the news. In light of the brutal repression of God’s Word and Christianity by radicals in the Middle East, it is exciting that a way to get the Bible to Muslims has been found with less physical danger to our brothers there! When one older villager found out that our WBTC ministry partners were passing out Scriptures he asked, ‘Why do you endanger yourselves and come to this area? This place is a forgotten and violent area.’ They responded by saying, ‘Our purpose is to show the love of Christ; we want to share this with you and give it to you.’ After they shared the gospel, he begged them to return, saying that their visit gave him a new hope. Other people in the area were complaining about the New Testaments. A religious elder from one of the tribes told them, ‘If you don’t take these books you are idiots. Jesus is accepted by Islam; you must believe what He said.’ After they had helped his family, he followed them from home to home to make sure that no one bothered them. This opened the door to finish the distribution of the New Testaments, and he even asked for extra copies so that he could continue giving them away after they left.”

(Report from Dale Randolph, CEO of World Bible Translation Center)

Haiti: “For the last 15 years, the mission in Central Haiti has never stopped growing one way or another. The most amazing is the growth of our schools. This week 448 students took the state exam. There are 363 students at the mission and 85 at the other school in the hills. An adult class started two years ago now has 35 students. Their day starts by saluting the flag, singing spiritual songs, and prayers. We enjoy many of them at church on Sunday as well. “A year ago a goat project for some of our school children was started. There are now 30 pregnant goats. All female offspring eventually return to the mission. The males stay with the families. When the offspring are old enough, they go to other families and so the growth comes from within. In June of 2007 a program was started to help families become self sufficient. Individuals received the equivalent of $100 US dollars and history was made. Today 170 people have signed a contract and received the loan. So far all of them are successful and paying back their loan. Most repay within 24 weeks or less. As of March 20, 87 are subscribed and waiting for their $100. Micro-credit is only one part of the Micro-finance initiative. Savings accounts have been established for people and they can now put money aside for the first time in their lives. Only the initial loan comes from the bank. As they repay part of it each week, the proceeds go toward funding new loans. The 87 are waiting for enough money to be generated. We are very excited that this venture is successful, and has been able to improve the lives of so many families. We hope to reach 500 participants next year."

continued on page 15
Haiti Fifth Mission Trip Report  
(April 5-15, 2008)

Jean Volcy, a native of Haiti, and an elder of the Strathmore Blvd. congregation in Toronto, returned to Haiti in December of 2002 with a mission. That mission was to establish a congregation of the Lord’s Church in his hometown of Fond-Parisien. With the aid of several brethren from Port-au-Prince (Haitian capital), and Yvon Beaudoin of Plessisville, Quebec, a very successful campaign was realized. During that campaign there were 12 baptisms, including Jean’s sister. With the Lord’s grace, the church was established as planned. About once a year Jean, accompanied by his family and/or some other brethren, travel to Haiti (Fond-Parisien) to help strengthen the church down there.

This year (April 5-15, 2008) three brethren from Strathmore: Gerry Ellis, Derrick Wilson and his wife Faith, accompanied Jean in the fifth mission trip to Haiti to encourage the church. Eight barrels of food items, clothing, etc., received from several in Canada were shipped to Haiti ahead of time for distribution to the brethren and other needy individuals in the community. They also brought along other items including a PA system as well as tools to build some pews for the congregation down there. Unfortunately, due to some unrest in the capital, customs were not open to deliver the barrels. This prevented Jean, Gerry, Derrick and Faith from distributing the goods themselves, but brother Jean Elmera, evangelist at the Delmas 28 Congregation in Port-au-Prince will receive the goods and proceed with the distribution on our behalf. He will send some photos, which we will share.

At Fonds-Parisien, from Sunday April 6 to Sunday April 13, a campaign of evangelization was held every evening. The theme this year was taken from Mt. 27:22 (In French): Que ferai-je de Jesus (What shall I do with Jesus?). As usual, Steve Gill (from Strathmore) made the banner for the campaign (Thanks Steve). During the 8-day campaign the gospel meetings were held in both the church’s rented place of worship, as well as in two Town Squares. Jean reports that attendance was so great that when they met at the place of worship it was full, and that dozens of people had to stand outside. The entire community was very welcoming. In fact, one of the community leaders pleaded with them to have the first open air meeting in his Town Square. Not only did he attend all the meetings, he brought more visitors along than anybody else. The owner of the hotel where Jean, Gerry, Derrick and Faith stayed also attended some of the meetings. He drove them sometimes in his private car to the meetings. There was one baptism, and several have shown good interest in the Word. The brethren at Fond-Parisien will follow up.

Jean is happy to report that the congregation is doing well in Fonds-Parisien that they are getting stronger in the Lord, and are also helping in the community as much as they can. For example, during the week, they receive about 50 children (different age groups) in the community who cannot afford to go to school, and teach them. While Jean, Gerry, Derrick and Faith were down there, they had the opportunity to visit a property for sale on the main road that was owned by the leader of the congregation. It was building land, and located on the main road, which could serve the church as a place of worship. The owner of the property was very interested in the church and their plan to have a church on the land. He offered the church a very low price, which was agreed to. The church will now be able to have a permanent place of worship in Fond-Parisien.
For $25,000 (Twenty five thousand) US. The property would be perfect for the “Mission Center” in Fond-Parisien. It is a large property where a place of worship and several other houses could be built to be used for school, cafeteria/orphanage, a place where missionaries could stay during their visit, etc. There is also a 60% finished block (brick) house already on the property. This house alone is worth over $10,000 US. Jean, Gerry, Derrick and Faith think it is a great opportunity and strongly recommend that all efforts be made to purchase that property for the church, considering the size of the land and its prime location.

Jean says, thanks to everyone for your prayers, and financial assistance, and looks forward for your continued support. Any who requires further info or would like to help may contact any of the following brethren:

Jean Volcy (Elder) at: jean.volcy@cibc.com
Marvin Johnson (Elder) at: majmrj@sympatico.ca
Steve Gill (Elder) at: steveg@gillart.ca
Peter Dwomoh (Elder) at: peterdwomoh1@hotmail.com
Max Craddock (Evangelist) at: maxe@strathmorecofc.ca
Strathmore Church of Christ
346 Strathmore Blvd.
Toronto, Ontario
M4C 1N3
Phone: (416) 461-7406

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Peter Dwomoh (Elder) at: peterdwomoh1@hotmail.com
Max Craddock (Evangelist) at: maxe@strathmorecofc.ca
Strathmore Church of Christ
346 Strathmore Blvd.
Toronto, Ontario
M4C 1N3
Phone: (416) 461-7406

mornings, we will be meeting in River East Collegiate, 295 Sutton (east off Henderson Highway). From May 18, we will be meeting at 10 a.m. on Sunday. If you are planning to visit Winnipeg, please call to confirm times and locations. Other than the Osborne Street address, all our other contact information will be the same as in the directory at the back.

WASHINGTON STATE

Vancouver, WA.: Patty Kunkle is appealing to all those hoping to join the group going to Mexico this summer to contact her as soon as possible. Members of the “True North Helping Hands” organization expect to make the trip down to work from June 29 to July 5. This year they will be building two more classrooms, as well as reinstalling the electricity and renovating the existing doublewide trailer. Those planning to join them may e-mail Patty at <mailto:tnhelpinghands@msn.com> and are also invited to visit the web-site at <http://www.truenorthhh.org/>.

Our newest sister, Tania Jean who obeyed the Lord who was baptized during our campaign.

Mission News… continued from page 13
by the end of this year.”Other programmes are in the works and I hope that within a year we will be able to help more people feed their families. The church is still strong and the evangelistic programme into the hills continues once or twice a month. One village has baptized 85, and now has at least 200 worshipping on Sunday morning. I pray that you will continue to be generous so that many more Haitians will be liberated both from poverty and from a life without Jesus. It can be done! (Report from Ray Fillion)

Japan/Singapore: Jonathan and Michiko Straker continue to study missions at Abilene Christian University, to work with the Highway 36 church of Christ just outside of Abilene. Jon will take two short courses before going to Japan this summer. Ben Berry also is completing his first semester's graduate work and will take summer school. He and the Strakers meet weekly with a group of Japanese students. Crimsen Ruhnke is still in the US with her mother but they feel her mother’s chemotherapy treatments have been completed successfully. Joel Osborne is in Singapore being mentored by and assisting the church there. In January, he spent time in Sendai, and also attended the nationwide New Year’s gathering at the Mito church. In February he began his mentoring/learning in Singapore. In March, he and several others from Japan and Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia participated in the Cambodian campaign. Around 180 children were touched in that effort. Joel says: “This year we taught English, Japanese and Mandarin to the kids, washed their hair with lice shampoo and gave haircuts!” Jonathan, Michiko, 2-year-old Hijiri and their new baby, as well as Joel plan to return to Japan at some point during the next few months to assist the Sendai congregation, to visit and to renew contacts. Please keep the Asian work in your prayers. For information or reports, contact Bramalea Church of Christ: mail@bramaleacofc.ca; Jonathan Straker: jstrake@yahoo.com; or Joel Osborne: joelosborne4@yahoo.com.
common life of the church. (If this concerns you, see Lyle E. Schaller, *Assimilating New Members* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978]).

While Bibby’s research may help us take a hard look at ourselves, we depend ultimately on the teachings of Jesus to place family, church and discipleship in proper perspective. One time, Jesus’ family came to take him away because they believed he was crazy. When his family, which included Mary and his brothers, approached where he was teaching, they sent word to see him. To this Jesus asked the messenger, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” Looking around at the rag-tag crowd listening eagerly to his message, Jesus said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother” (Mark 3.32-35). To feel the sting of this, imagine your son or a significant family member saying something like this about you. Jesus gave preference to his seeking-God’s-will family over his physical family.

However, Jesus has more to say regarding family. Luke records Jesus teaching, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14.26-27; cf. Matt 10.37-38). To be a disciple of Jesus is to value your relationship with Jesus more than your relationship with your own family. When these come into conflict, our physical family must lose if we are to be faithful to Jesus. We always pray that we do not have too many of these kinds of choices. But some among us had to make that choice, just to become a Christian.

This topic is of personal importance to me. My mother and father were strangers to the people of God. I am a Christian today because a Christian woman invited me to a Vacation Bible School when I was seven years old. I had no physical family in the church and the physical family I had was not able to teach me God’s ways. I was a stranger and the church took me in and gave me a place to belong. Consequently, I have always looked to the church to be my family wherever I have lived. I understood that when I accepted the call to follow Jesus that my present family—my wife, my daughter, and any extended family I have—all come second to my loyalty to Jesus.

This topic has become important to me for another reason. I now live in this country and I want our churches to grow and to prosper in every way. We all know that we are not growing and I have come to suspect that in some degree we are the problem. The protection and nearness of our families may give us the false illusion that we are doing well, yet all the while church after church is on the verge of closure; as many as four have closed in Saskatchewan since I arrived here in 2003. As these churches die, they often find themselves being mostly members of a single-family group. I know several such families and they are my heroes for keeping the doors open, but they know that if revival is to occur, it must involve those who are not biological family.

I do not write this as a final word, or even as a word of judgment, but as a place to begin a very difficult conversation. I recognize I could be butchering a sacred cow here, but we must be willing to lay this one on the altar if we are serious about following Jesus. I may have overstated my case a bit here or there, but maybe not. Is it possible we are not inviting people into the family of God because we have “enough” family on earth?
“Things work out best for those who make the best of the way things work out.”

Growing up we’ve often heard from either our parents or from a schoolteacher that when you were about to write a difficult exam you just need to do the best you can. No one should expect any more from you. That often sounded pretty good but when you got your exam results back you wondered if you could have done better. Certainly there’s always room for improvement, but one needs to recognize that at that particular time when they wrote that exam they did the best they could. So take the credit for giving it your best.

Spiritually, when faced with making the right decisions or saying the right things we too may question whether we’ve done the best we could. Perhaps after studying with a friend you sit at home wondering if you should have said more or listened more. Battering yourself with questions over whether your effort was your best will only make that pleasant opportunity unpleasant if repeated.

No one is perfect nor should they ever expect to be so. Only God is. But He can help us make the best of any situation if we allow Him. We can make the best of old age, financial difficulties, marriage struggles or raising children. Yes, we can even do our best studying with a friend if we ask God for His help prior to and during that study.

But sometimes it’s hard to think positively and feel that we’ve done our best. Yes, making the best of any situation is a matter of focus, an attitude that says, “No matter what happens, no matter what lies ahead, we will do the best we can with the help of the Lord.” And it’s then that things work out best for those who make the best of it (with God’s help).

It’s always intriguing and some-
David did not have accountability. If David was leading his warriors as he did in the past, this chapter in his life would not be written.

David had selective hearing when he asked about the woman on the roof. He was clearly told that she was the wife of Uriah the Hittite (2 Samuel 11:3). David should have heard the words, “She is married, she belongs to another man, she is not available, stay away, go back to bed... alone.” Lusting after another person is so strong that Jesus equates it with the action of immorality. “But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:28). Christians and secular psychologists agree that lust is very destructive and addictive. Some research has concluded that pornography is more addicting than alcohol or cocaine. Solomon said it straight up “My son, give me your heart and let your eyes keep to my ways, for a prostitute is a deep pit and a wayward wife is a narrow well” (Proverbs 23:26-27). Once you’re entrapped in a deep pit or a narrow well, there’s no getting out. Just stay away from the edge or you might fall in.

David received a text message from his neighbor. “I’m pregnant - Bathsheba.” Often one sin leads to lies, deceit, cover up and scandal. David brings Uriah, Bathsheba’s husband, home from war and had a shallow conversation. Uriah is told to go home to his wife, hoping he would sleep with her and think he was the father. Uriah was a valiant soldier and wouldn’t spend the night in comfort while his troops were fighting. The next night David got Uriah drunk and tried the same tactic. It still didn’t work. In fact, Uriah was a better man when drunk than David was sober. So another text message was written by David, sent in a sealed envelope to the commander. The memo: murder Uriah ASAP.

Lust is a never satisfied hunger. Many who begin by being aroused by soft-core pornography end up in some very hard-core, even illegal, sexual sins. Paul said it this way, “Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more” (Ephesians 4:19). It’s a craving that can’t be filled, a thirst that can’t be quenched, a hunger that’s never satisfied.

There are many reading this who are addicted and trapped in sexual sin. To be free from any sin, we must believe that God wants us to be free.

While our sin is against other people, it is ultimately against God. After David sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah, his family, the army and the nations, he confessed his sin against God, “Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are proved right when You speak and justified when You judge” (Psalm 51:4). When Joseph was being seduced by Potiphar’s wife, he resisted and said, “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:8-9).

We must be in control of what we look at. We, like Job, must commit to this statement, “I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl” (Job 31:1). A few verses later he speaks about the destructive results an immoral relationship, “For that would have been shameful, a sin to be judged. It is a fire that burns to Destruction; it would have uprooted my harvest” (Job 31:11). Jesus said we should be so serious about sin, we will do whatever we need to do to overcome, even, as a last resort, gouging out our eye (Matthew 5:29). Hopefully, poking out eyes is the last resort as we consider drastic measures for drastic times.

Sometimes it is easier to flirt with temptation instead of fleeing. As Joseph did, we must run from temptation. To a young, single minister, Paul wrote, “Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Timothy 2:22)

There is something about sexual sin that is different than all other sins. It is not only a sin done with the body, but done to the body. Since our body belongs to the Lord, we must use self-control. Paul wrote, “Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body” (1 Corinthians 6:18-20).

Sin is very serious. Paul is straight up when he writes about overcoming temptation. We don’t just suppress sin or control temptation, we kill it! The text tells us, “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.” (Colossians 3:5) There should be no evidence of sexual sin in the Christian’s life. To the Ephesians, Paul wrote, “But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people” (Ephesians 5:13). No evidence, no clue, no trace.

God’s love is so immense that He wants us to be a part of His family. God’s grace is so abundant it can forgive all of our sin. God’s Spirit will give us power and wisdom so that we can overcome our sin. After all His love, grace, forgiveness and power worked for King David. It’s still there for you and me. To the woman caught in adultery, Jesus said, “Then neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin” (John 8:11). Free from guilt, free from punishment, free from addiction, free to live free.

Royal Oak, MI
Support our trip to Quetzaltepeque, El Salvador July 28 to August 8

Dear Brethren:
May our God in heaven bless every one. Once again, The Spanish Ministry at Strathmore Blvd Church of Christ, appeals to you for your prayers and support for The Central América Mission trip. This year we are going to Quetzaltepeque, El Salvador.

Here is some information about the congregation

The Quetzaltepeque congregation was started in 1975 in the outskirts of The San Salvador Volcano. During the 1980’s civil war, many brethren moved to Quetzaltepeque where they started meeting in a small rented house. In 1990, the church got 400 mts² of land by credit to build their own place of worship, it took them 10 years to pay for the land.

In November, 2006, they started to build their building and until today they have only finished the main auditorium with a seating capacity of 200 people.

The church, through their preacher Alexander Castellanos, contacted us for help to finish their building, which will help provide a better place to worship God. At the moment they need to fit doors, windows and a main gate. Also they need to finish the wiring, floors, painting and add two more children’s classrooms and bathrooms.

If you would like to see pictures of this congregation and the work, please go to www.iglesiadecristo.ca and “click” on Central American Mission.

For more information please contact: Santiago or Marlon Molina @ (416) 751-6879 also <smolina@iglesiadecristo.ca> <marlonm@strathmorecofc.ca>

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ATT. Santiago Molina
Strathmore Church of Christ
346 Strathmore Blvd, Toronto ON. M4C 1N3
Parker, Helen Margaret

Helen Margaret Parker was born April 30, 1918, in Walter’s Falls, Grey County, Ontario, the oldest of three children born to Alfred and Millie Dixon. She peacefully passed away on February 20, 2008, at the Weyburn Special Care home in Saskatchewan. She was preceded by her dear husband, Allison Parker on January 24, 1979, at the age of 68, and also by her brother, Harvey, her sister Jessie Manarey and an infant granddaughter.

Mom’s faithful involvement in the Lord’s Church was an important part of her life. She was also a strong supporter of Christian education and for many years faithfully supported Western Christian College.

A celebration of Mom’s life was held on February 26, 2008, at the Weyburn Church of Christ, with Scott Wade officiating. A number of Mom’s family and members of the congregation participated in the service. The eulogy was given by Deanna Cook and Curtis Parker during which they shared many special memories of their grandmother. Pallbearers were Robert Cook, John J. Harvey, Curtis Parker, Jason Parker, Andrew Parker and Ashley Parker.

Interment took place following the service at Hillcrest Cemetery in Weyburn.

Mom is lovingly remembered by her children, Dorothy (Leonard) Graham of Beamsville, ON., Ken (Donna) Parker of Kelowna, BC, Elgin (Yvonne) Parker of Oyama, BC, Doug (Marion) Parker of Regina, SK, and Ruth (John) Cook of Weyburn, SK; 17 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; brother-in-law, Harvey (Olive) Parker; sister-in-law, Muriel Parker and brother-in-law Mervin Manarey.

Our sincere thanks for personal visits, telephone calls, cards and notes to Mom during her many years in Weyburn Special Care Home. To God Be The Glory!

– Submitted by Dorothy Graham

Peterson, Roger

Roger was born on April 28, 1927 to Margaretta and Hjelmer Peterson. He was raised on the family farm 10 miles south of Radville, SK. Roger’s siblings were, sisters Lillace Whiffield, Ruth Bailey, Bernice Whiffield and brother, Robert. He was preceded by his brother Dwayne, who died in infancy.

Roger graduated in 1945 from Radville High School and in the fall of 1946 he attended Moose Jaw Normal School. His first teaching position was in Gladmar.

He also taught at Pebble Hill in the Horse Creek area for a period of time in those early days.

Roger attended Bible school for three winters and spent two summers in Thessalon, ON, doing carpentry, preaching and working with the young people of the church in that area. He began teaching at Radville Christian College in 1951. Roger and Helen Sinclair first met at R.C.C in 1949. While leading a summer Bible school in 1953 in Thessalon, Ontario, Roger began a courtship with Helen. They continued a long distance relationship by mail and in 1954 Roger traveled to St. Catherines, ON, married Helen and brought her back to Radville so he could continue teaching at R.C.C. To this union six children were born: Wadell, LaVonne, Clayton, Lowell, Bradley and Michelle.

When I think of Roger as my colleague and friend, I remember him as being consistent in some very important ways;

Consistent in his love for God and the church. Over the years Roger served as song leader, deacon, Bible teacher, preacher and elder for different churches.

Consistent in his commitment to Christian education. Roger earned three degrees from Abilene Christian University: A bachelors degree, a Masters of Arts in Bible in 1959 and a Masters of Psychology and Counselling in 1971. He taught at Radville Christian and Western Christian at both Weyburn and Dauphin.

Consistent in his love for family. The large gathering of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who are here this afternoon are witness to this. Roger was always eager to boast about his love for his twenty grandchildren and five great grandchildren who were all, in his words, “the best looking grandchildren in the country.”

Consistent in his belief that home would always be a place where hospitality was practiced. Shirley and I have been in their home many times over the years both during times of plenty and times when things were not so plentiful. One thing that did not change was the warm welcome. When Roger built the home Lowell and Darla now live in, the large kitchen and living room were built to accommodate large gatherings.

I think the thing that most impresses me as I reflect on my friend’s life is that he lived by the belief, “if a need arises and I am called to meet that need I will do the best I can to answer the call.” It was this belief that caused a telephone line to be built to the campus at Radville, that put Roger on the road to raise money when the school at
Radville was in dire need of funds. It was this belief that saw him as chorus director, builder of lab tables, science teacher, dorm supervisor, Bible teacher, psychology instructor and principal.

Roger filled many roles at Western until he decided to take a break from the class room in 1979. In the fall of 1982 a principal's position became open in Fillmore, Saskatchewan. He was encouraged to apply and for the next five years served in that capacity. In 1987, after he retired, Roger was asked to fill a three months position as a Bible teacher at Nigerian Christian Bible College, so Roger and Helen packed their bags and off they went to Africa where he taught the first and second year ministerial students and preached to village congregations on Sunday.

When Western moved from Weyburn to Dauphin, Manitoba, a principal was needed to assist the school in this transition. Roger was asked if he would become the principal, so in 1989 Roger and Helen moved to Dauphin, Manitoba, where Roger was principal for the next four years. After another year in Dauphin teaching college level psychology on a contract basis, Roger retired again, and he and Helen moved back to their family home in North Weyburn.

Shortly after they moved back to Weyburn they were asked to teach another term at Nigerian Christian Bible College so they packed their bags again and once more set off to Africa. After their term there they returned to North Weyburn and became a support and encouragement for family and friends as they settled back into life and service there.

His work lives on in the lives of the students he taught in Gladmar and Pebble Hill, Western Christian and Nigerian Christian Bible College. There is a boy in Africa named Roger and a girl named Helen; named by their parents in honor of the work done by Roger and Helen in their community.

Even as Roger's health began to deteriorate, he continued to be a source of love and strength, laughter and joy for his children and grandchildren, creating lasting and loving memories that remain his legacy. The love of his family, even when it was difficult for Roger to communicate, was evidence to all of his love and impact. It reflected his love for the Lord and was a testimony to his life as husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, friend and mentor to many.

– Adapted from a eulogy given by David Lidbury

Elford-Kowch, Neita Joyce

Neita Joyce passed away peacefully at home with her family by her side on Sunday, February 24, 2008 at the age of 53 years. She was preceded by an infant brother Larry; her loving parents Ed and Helen Elford and a special brother-in-law Eugene Kowch.

Neita leaves to mourn her passing her husband and best friend Nestor Kowch, son Jason (Erin) Leier; grandchildren Kara Joyce and Caleb Josef; step children Darrol (Tracy) Kowch, Cheryle (Tony) Renwick, Kerri Kowch (Tony Yan) and Scott Kowch; step grandchildren to whom she was Baba: Alison Kowch and Seth, Duncan and Harvey Renwick; sisters Sharon (Mandry) and Cheryl (Ian); brothers Lloyd (Ruthanne), Dale (Kathy), Calvin (Mary) and Russell (Milessa); along with cherished nieces, nephews and special friends.

Special thanks to Dr. M. Casey, Dr. J. McHattie and Dr. J. McLeod and the staff at the Cancer Clinic for their compassionate care. A memorial service was held at the Regina Funeral Home, Hwy #1 East Regina, SK on Wednesday, March 5, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations in Neitas' memory may be made to Regina Palliative Care Inc., 4F 4101 Dewdney Avenue, Regina, SK S4T 1A5.

May God bless those who mourn at this time and grant to them the special blessing of His comfort.

Thanks for your continued prayers everyone and your kind messages sent to the family this time.

- Information provided by Marion Waugh

Saskatoon Church of Christ is seeking applications for a spiritually minded individual to join us in ministry on the Canadian prairies.

- We are seeking an individual with ideas and vision for taking the message of God’s wonderful grace to the world around us.
- We are seeking an enthusiastic, energetic individual who will work to equip us and others to be the church of Jesus in our community.
- We are seeking a person whose heart is filled with a love for God, and whose life is in tune with God’s Spirit and His leading.

The Saskatoon Church of Christ began meeting in homes almost 60 years ago and currently has about 110 attending each Sunday. We have had a long history in support of world missions, but are coming to the awareness that our own community represents a significant mission field as well. Our members come from a variety of age groups, occupations, and ethnic backgrounds, and are led by a team consisting of four elders, our ministers, and their wives.

As our minister, you will provide the encouragement and exhortation for our personal and congregational spiritual development; will work to enhance our congregational structures and organization; and will facilitate the training and implementation of a service based outreach. Our congregation values the ability to discover the Bible’s truths, and to make meaningful application of these truths to our lives in the world today. As such, an undergraduate or higher degree in Bible, Ministry, and/or Missions would be considered an asset.

We desire to have our new minister in place by 1 August 2008. We offer a competitive compensation package with health benefits, professional development and mission leave, as well as three weeks of annual vacation.

If God may be calling you to this work, please send your resume, references, and a recording of some recent sermons by email to transition@saskatoonchurchofchrist.org, or by mail to:

The Transition Team – Saskatoon Church of Christ
Attn: Monica Taylor
134 Cardinal Crescent
SASKATOON, SK , Canada S7L 6H6

For additional information on our congregation and our city, please visit: http://saskatoonchurchofchrist.org http://www.saskatoon.ca

May 2008
ICE LAKE (Manitoulin Island): 1-1/4 miles South of Hwy 540, Sunday: classes 9:45, worship 11 am; 7:00 pm Sun.; Contact: Gerard Filleul, (705) 325-8532, wjolk@hotmail.com; RR #1, Gore Bay, ON P0P 1H0

KENORA: 101 Norman Dr.; Sun. 10, 11; P.O. Box 2905, FNX 8X8; Earl Patterson, ev., 548-2245.

KINGSTON: 446 College St., K7L 4M7; worship Sun. 9:30 a.m.; evening: 6 to 6 Friday “Introduction to church to church” 1 to 3 p.m., Gordon Gibbons ev. – (off) 635-5670, 300 Borough Dr. Scarborough, ON M4J 4W7, publication time. Copy must be in our hands 12 noon on publication date. Advertising Rates

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5th ANNUAL GOSPEL MEETING & CONCERT
JUNE 27-29, 2008

Theme:
Only the Strong Survive

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Christopher Landrum 1, Evangelist
Broadway Church of Christ in Dayton, Ohio

Earlvin T. Greene Evangelist
Newark Church of Christ in Newark, N.Y.

Friday, June 27    7:00pm—9:00pm;
Saturday, June 28   6:30pm—9:00pm
A cappella Group Singing

Sunday, June 29
Worship & praise—9:45am
Fellowship meal—1:00pm

Gospel Concert:
2:30pm—5:00pm
A Cappella Group Singing

SCARBOROUGH CHURCH OF CHRIST
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