

NATIONAL AOTS NEWSLETTER

"As One That Serves"

Volume 10, Number 2

May, 1987

An Open Letter to the AOTS Members and Their Executive

A long time ago — it just seems that way — Fred Holberton approached me to take the task of Editor for the National AOTS Newsletter. With considerable help from one of my favorite ministers, Paul Mullen, the Newsletter has been published. Now Fred Holberton's term comes to an end. A new man will appear on the horizon and he may want a new Editor.

Until I hear from the new Communications person, I'll be available.

It has been fun, a good experience, but you AOTS

men are 'hard to work', or maybe you never read the Newsletter, or are too busy (smelling the roses) . . . I say even the women of the UCW have more zip and organization than many of us men. Of course I could also say its the same at my house.

Have a good summer and if I'm needed I hope to hear one way or the other.

Your Editor
Ken Turner

Hospital Project

The Hospital Project was officially started in the summer of 1983. To date the success and support of this endeavour has been overwhelming.

This year the project enters its fourth phase. To date, the Hospital Project has undertaken to:

- a) support two native Canadians for educational assistance at R.W. Large Memorial Hospital for a total of \$14,500.
- b) purchase of a Cardiac Defibrillator and monitor at the Baie Verte Peninsula Health Centre for \$10,390.

c) purchase a B-Scan Ultrasound, a Furopter and a Portable Slit Lamp for the Wrinch Memorial Hospital at a cost of \$10,000.

d) purchase an Oximeter and an Automated Coulter Counter for the Bella Coola General Hospital. Total cost was \$12,000 of which the AOTS Hospital Project paid \$10,000.

This final project was approved by the National Executive at its meeting in February of this year, and they plan to present the funds at the National AOTS convention this summer.

Get a friend to tell you your faults, or better still, welcome an enemy who will watch you keenly and sting you savagely. What a blessing such an irritating critic will be to a wise man, what an intolerable nuisance to a fool!

Charles Spurgeon

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The Perfect Church

I think that I will never see
A Church that's all it ought to be
A Church whose members never stray
Beyond the straight and narrow way.

A Church that has no empty pews
Whose pastor never gets the blues
A Church whose Deacons always Deak
And none are proud and all are meek.

Where gossips never peddle lies
Or make complaints or criticize
Where all are always sweet and kind
And to each others' faults are blind.

Such perfect churches there may be
But none of them is known to me
But still I'll work and pray and plan
To make my Church the best I can.

Financially Speaking

(Mr. L Clark never gives up — from 625 La Jolla Circle, Florida, he again reminds us to get busy with our club memberships. Ed.).

The Biennial Convention meeting this summer in Regina will be asked to consider a motion to change the financial basis of member dues for the National Association from INDIVIDUAL dues (augmented by Second Mile Support) to an AOTS CLUB ALLOCATION FEE of \$100.00 (augmented by Second Mile Support).

This motion was approved by the mini-National AOTS Council at its meeting on December 6, 1986.

The National Finance Committee asks all Clubs and members to consider the "pros" and "cons" of this change and be prepared to debate the issues thoroughly before making a decision. Whatever the decision, our National AOTS structure must have a sound financial basis to support our national fellowship.

1987 dues of \$7.00 per member (or \$10.00 if you voluntarily prefer) are needed to finance the national organization for the present year. Any change approved at the Biennial will not come into effect until January 1, 1988.

Please help boost Second Mile Support, Memorials at Funeral Homes, Bequests and other donations. All may be sent directly to:

Robert A. Lewis, Treasurer
National AOTS Men's Clubs
RR#3, 105 Lamp Road
Amherstburg, ON
N9V 3R3

A tax receipt will be issued.

Lloyd Clark
Chairman
National AOTS Finance Committee

SOME NOTABLE QUOTABLES

In order to effectively minister, church leaders must establish priorities for their work. We must first be committed to Christ, then to one another in Christ, and finally to the work of Christ in the world.

— Ray Ortlund

The secret of every discord in Christian homes and communities and churches is that we seek our own way and our own glory.

— Alan Redpath

Heard From:

Duncan AOTS, BC — A great Burns Nite and they have money left in the bank!

Fairfield United, Victoria, BC — A great newsletter reporting the AOTS Roundup at Brechin United, Nanaimo.

Bellefair AOTS, Toronto #558 — Harry "Crown Life" Wolfrain never forgets to send his newsletters.

Langley United AOTS, BC — reports new officers elected for 1987.

St. Andrews, Moose Jaw — Keep their newsletters coming.

And last but not least,

St. Paul's U.C. tell us we are so busy adding up troubles that we don't have time to count our blessings.

There is a subtle false teaching that says we can be evangelical without being evangelistic. It has us believe we "go" to church rather than we "are" the church.

— Chris A. Lyons

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"I am among you As One That Serves"
Luke 22:27

Travelling Accoutrements

Vancouver's gavel continues to roam — from the Centennial Club in Victoria to the Chemainus-Ladysmith Club in November, to Brechin in January and on to Campbell River.

At last report (March 10) it was about to move again. Reg Attwell, President of the Brechin Club, claims that this same gavel with accompanying book has been on the move since it was made and presented to AOTS by Marc Grimmett in April of 1953! It is alleged to have mystic powers which build fellowship.

Notes from the Central Mainland Marine Mission Log Book

(Reprinted from the "Handshake")

B.C. coastal areas have the same recession the province has. Some of the villages have 60 - 65% unemployment. There is a special need for men's used work clothes, gloves, toques, etc.

Our address is:

Central Mainland Marine Mission
M.V. Thomas Crosby V
PO Box 10
Prince Rupert, BC
V8J 3P4
Phone 624-6610

We will be offering Mission Observation Tours from May 3 to September 16, 1987. These tours give an opportunity for persons to visit most places and meet most of the people who live in isolation in this north coast mission field.

We can carry seven passengers per trip at a cost of \$55.00 per person per day between our travel points. You can meet us at Prince Rupert, Bella Bella or Port Hardy depending on the trip segment you chose. We are waiting for the 1987 ferry connecting times before finalizing our time table. Contact the office at the above address to get on the mailing list.

Great changes are taking place here; partly because of the recession, partly due to a rise in aquaculture, partly because of the natives insisting on being recognized in land claims and partly by new developments in logging. Confusion is present in people's lives — but with your help and support, the Church is there with love, support and leadership for all.

Fulfilling Our Purpose

Oak Bay United Mens Club has FOUR annual club projects. A Garage Sale in April, a Strawberry Tea in June, with the men preparing the berries the night before and serving them between 1 and 3 the next afternoon, a Christmas Banquet held every December for men and women who normally would not have friends or family to share a visit for Christmas with transportation and entertainment provided, and a Nut Sale.

The visit of National President Jack Arthur to the BC area seems to have been a high point in the fall meetings of many AOTS clubs in that part of the country.

Good luck to "THE HANDSHAKE", a quarterly AOTS newsletter serving the BC area, which is entirely supported by advertising, and seeks to encourage all men of the church in their Christian endeavours by acting as a clearinghouse for information about mens' groups' activities.

United Church Fredericton Men's Fourth Annual Retreat was held February 20 - 22. Rev. Brad Little addressed the theme "Go Forth with Boldness".

The 32nd Stanhope Men's Conference will happen on September 18-20 of this year with Rev. Ross Howard addressing "A Deeper Spiritual Life".

The Fifth Maritime Men's Festival of Faith will be held June 10 - 12, 1988 at Mount Allison University, Sackville, NB.



Televangelists

Top televangelism programs are ranked almost the same by the USA's two major audience survey services, Nielsen and Arbitron, the LA Times said Mar. 28, although the hard numbers vary considerably, with Arbitron's being the higher. The Bakker show was rated 13th in the last counting in November 1986. Robert Schuller's "Hour of Power" was first, with 1,277,000 viewers (Nielsen; or with 1,729,000 according to Arbitron). For perspective, the Times pointed out that The Cosby Show is seen in 28.4 million homes and the 66th place program, "Spies," was seen in 8 million homes last week, or four times the homes watching either Schuller or Jimmy Swaggart, whose program reaches 1,046,000 (Nielsen; or 2,080,000 according to Arbitron).

Other top ranked religious TV shows include Oral Roberts' "Expect a Miracle," "The World Tomorrow" from Worldwide Church of God ministers David Hulme, David Albert and Richard Ames; Richard DeHaan's "The Day of Discovery"; Jerry Falwell's "Old Time Gospel Hour"; Kenneth Copeland's "Believer's Voice"; D. James Kennedy's "D. James Kennedy"; Father Elwood Keiser's "Insight" from Paulist Productions; Pat Robertson's "The 700 Club"; George Vanderman's "It Is Written" from Seventh Day Adventists; and Fred Price's "Ever Increasing Faith."

Charismatic, Pentecostal, Evangelical, Fundamentalist: These terms seem to be confusing the public and some analysts have been trotting out definitions in the media, while admitting that the lines are somewhat blurred.

Our synthesis: "Charismatic" and "Pentecostal" are nearly synonymous. Both emphasize a second visitation of the Spirit on believers who already have been born again, individually, into a strong personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Manifestations of this high-level indwelling of the Spirit include the ability to heal and be healed by the Spirit, speaking in tongues incomprehensible to non-believers and even some other charismatics, and favoring these experiences over theological doctrine as marks of true faith.

"Evangelical" characterizes the Christian who is transformed by a new birth into a personal relationship to Jesus Christ and who is committed to public testimony about personal salvation. All Charismatics and Pentecostals are Evangelicals, but not vice-versa.

"Fundamentalists" also are Evangelicals but in contrast to Charismatics and Pentecostals, Fundamentalists mistrust the idiosyncratic visitations of the Spirit and depend instead upon theological doctrines rationally built upon a literal understanding of Biblical revelation.

Within the world of televangelism there is great competition for adherents but more importantly perhaps there is struggle over these different attitudes and approaches. Thus it is startling to find Fundamentalist Jerry Falwell taking over the Charismatic/Pentecostal "ministry" of Jim and Tammy Bakker.

Within the Charismatic stream there is animosity between those who, like the Bakkers, believe worldly financial and status rewards come to those of great faith, and those who, like Jimmy Swaggart, believe the gospel is more "sober" and not given to amusement parks and ostentation in possessions.

"Protestantism" describes not only all of the above, but a host of mainstream denominations plus many thousands of

fiercely independent congregations such as Jerry Falwell's Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, VA. Robert Schuller pastors the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, CA, a congregation of the Reformed Church in America, the same body which claims National Council of Churches' General Secretary the Rev. Arie Brouwer. The Rev. Marion G. "Pat" Robertson is by personal membership a Southern Baptist but his operation is in no way connected with that 14.6 million member denomination which has two large television networks of its own — ACTS, for the public, and a large internal education and training network operated by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Two New York Times Columnists on Mar. 28 shredded the warring televangelists. Said Russell Baker, "The Protestant churches I knew (as a boy) tended to value poverty so excessively that for a long time I ascribed saintly qualities to the poor. Certainly the preachers were all poor and the Sunday School teachers . . . taught and retaught the lesson of the Good Samaritan as well as the awful news that getting rich would make it harder for you to get into Heaven than for a camel to pass through a needle's eye . . . The striking aspect of the modern television preachers is the astonishing volume of cash they take in and the unashamedly crass techniques they use to milk the faithful . . . Their grotesque empires are inflated beyond what is possible for other businesses with comparable cash flow by the fact that they pay no taxes. Lord, how the money rolls in! . . . Too many of these birds seem to think their TV ratings will suffice to make the Angel Gabriel swoon. They have forgotten the camel test."

Said Tom Wicker, "All the TV spellbinders demand of their vast audiences not just faith in God but the most elemental trust in the preachers themselves, as purveyors of truth and rectitude . . . The greatest offense . . . will go unpunished, if the dazzled audience for televised religiosity retains faith in its propagators. That offense is the narrowness, exclusivity, and lack of charity — the bigotry — of their message: . . . heterosexuality only, and only within marriage; maintenance at all costs of the traditional family — father at work, mother in the kitchen, short-haired children saying 'No' — regardless of how troubled and personally damaging the arrangement may be; political conservatism; the virtues of affluence; the damnation of liberals, welfare recipients, non-Christians and sometimes Catholics; denunciation of any government effort to protect the rights of individuals — particularly from religious bigots.

"From these 'ministries', despite their constant appeals for money, all too little is heard about racism, hunger, the poor and the homeless, tolerance of dissent and differences, personal generosity, or the universal brother-and-sisterhood of all mankind. Jesus washed the feet of the poor and set no political tests for His followers; but that example seldom provides the text for prime-time preaching, which thrives instead on bigotry disguised as Christianity."

— from CHURCHNEWS DAILY DIGEST

The true function of a preacher is to disturb the comfortable and to comfort the disturbed.

— Chad Walsh

No, It's Not Over Yet

Reflections (belated) on the SEASON of Easter

The Easter Bunny may have done his duty, the candy makers may be counting their profits, the Easter banners may be rolled up and put away for another year, but no, its not over yet.

When Ken Turner, one of my favorite editors, asked me to write an Easter message for this edition of the AOTS NEWSLETTER, he added "even though it may be a bit late". That got me thinking.

When I started preaching regularly ten years ago, I decided to bring a little discipline into my preparation. I undertook to follow what is now the New Common Lectionary. In its wisdom, the lectionary follows the tradition of setting aside EIGHT full weeks as the Season of Easter. Granted, by the end of it all, the chocolate bunnies are a

bit stale, but nonetheless, it is at least saying that Easter is a significant event in the life of the Church. Granted as well that it is a real challenge to keep the Easter message alive for eight weeks without resorting to artificial respiration and other life support techniques.

The struggle from the pew, however, and in all forms of real life, is to keep the message alive not only for eight short Sundays, but for the whole 52. And not only for Sundays, but the whole seven days of the week. Living the Easter experience is an involving endeavor!

So its not over yet. And that, come to think of it, is a good part of the message of Easter — No, it's not over yet!

Happy Easter — right through until this time next year!

— Paul Mullen

Resurrection

Mary Ann Bernard

Long, long, long ago;
Way before this winter's snow
First fell upon these weathered fields;
I used to sit and watch and feel
And dream of how the spring would be,
When through the winter's stormy sea
She'd raise her green and growing head,
Her warmth would resurrect the dead.
Long before this winter's snow
I dreamt of this day's sunny glow
And thought somehow my pain would pass
With winter's pain, and peace like grass
Would simply grow.

The pain's not gone.
It's still as cold and hard and long
As lonely pain has ever been,
It cuts so deep and far within.
Long before this winter's snow
I ran from pain, looked high and low
For some fast way to get around
Its hurt and cold.

I'd have found,
If I had looked at what was there,
That things don't follow fast or fair.
That life goes on, and times do change,
And grass does grow despite life's pains.

Long before this winter's snow
I thought that this day's sunny glow,
The smiling children and growing things
And flowers bright were brought by spring.
Now, I know the sun does shine,
That children smile, and from the dark, cold, grime
A flower comes.
It groans, yet sings, and through its pain,
Its peace begins.

"Are You a Comfy Christian?"

— from the South Porcupine DIALOGUE, Feb. 1987

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion (Amos 6:1)

I do not think God's chief difficulty today has anything to do with the sins of the unbelieving world, but rather with the sins of believing Christians. So many of us Christians are rather like that small girl who, returning from a party, was asked by her mother if she had been a good girl. She replied after some thought, "Mommy, I wasn't good and I wasn't naughty. I was just comfy." It seems we try to retain just enough sin in our lives to enable us to get along comfortably in the world, and yet at the same time we do enough of the will of God to keep our consciences from giving us too much trouble in the Christian way.

Are you a comfy Christian? The problem of God has to do with the people of God and their sins, all so very different and so very much their own. The businessman's sins may differ from the preacher's, the mother's sins may differ from the daughter's; the sins of age may differ from the sins of youth. But whatever they are, they remain our sins — yours and mine — and they constitute the problem of God. It is this factor in the spiritual situation that we must face up to before God.

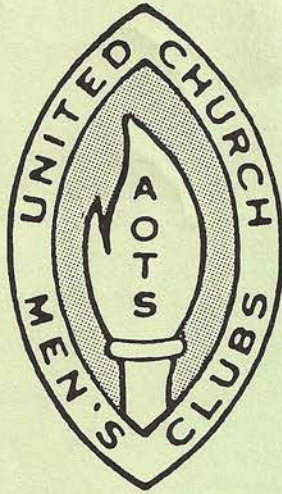
A great Christian once said that revival consists in a new obedience to the will of God. How often God has to say to us, His children, what our earthly parents so often said to us, "When will you learn to do as you are told?"

— G.R.

A mechanic can take material worth \$5.00 and make an article worth \$50.00. That is skill.

An artist can take a fifty cent piece of canvas and paint a picture on it, and make it worth \$1,000.00. That is art.

God can take a worthless, sinful life, put His spirit in it, and make it a blessing to humanity. That is salvation.



**YOU ARE
INVITED**
to experience . . .



15th AOTS NATIONAL CONVENTION

Regina, Saskatchewan

July 31 to August 2, 1987

- See the Queen City
- Hear Dr. Maurice Boyd speak on "The Gospel of God's Grace"
- Feel the power of Christian fellowship
- Share your thoughts, concerns about the ministry of United Church men
- Learn about issues facing Christian men and families today

Theme speaker will be Dr. Maurice Boyd of the Metropolitan United Church, London, Ontario.

He is a speaker who is stirring, inspiring, dynamic, provocative and unforgettable.

Registration forms or additional information about registration are available from:

Ross Evans, Registrar
24 Castle Bay
Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 4X4
Telephone (306) 586-5313