

New Church Canadian

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the General
Church in Canada



ONE BIG, BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY

By Rev. Michael Cowley

As the summer winds down and we head into the new school and church year, we all know what's ahead. We're in for shorter, cooler days of autumn, as well as more cars creating longer delays as parents, staff and students resume travel to and from classes. This cycle has gone on "forever".

Some of us will be relieved to have the long, sweltering days disappear; while others will lament as they watch the best days in Canada coming to an end.

Which are you? Or, do you find that you are inside so much more than "back in the day" that it really doesn't make that much difference? We've been out and about a lot, and I'd like to share some thoughts about our July adventure.

SUMMER OF '26

For Gwenda and me this has been an epic summer of awesome travel and outdoor adventure. Although I've traveled several times on land all the way across Canada, Gwenda has not. So we set out July 13th for a cross country trip to Grande Prairie and Dawson Creek, then south to the Cascadia New Church Camp, and then east through Mt. Rainier Park, Yellowstone, the Black Hills and the Badlands to name a few spots. As said, it was an epic trip, especially as we are fortunate to have a nice RV to travel in, and we

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were lucky that we had no major vehicle mishaps or problems.

I won't get into a long "travel-log" of the whole three weeks, but touch upon some items especially related to spiritual highlights along the way.

COURAGE

The beauty along the north shore of Lake Superior defies description. We wanted to visit the Terry Fox Memorial where the quality of courage is found in every element of his story. Just before reaching Thunder Bay from Newfoundland, Terry had to stop, as his cancer had returned and spread. This is where the monument sits, where his personal Marathon of Hope had taken its last step. But only his physical running came to an end. He fought on and the spark of hope first ignited in a few, spread infectiously to many. Even before his young life was cut short, while he lay in hospital, his mission caught on fire throughout Canada and across the world. There are so many great athletes we can cheer on with their mates. Terry's dedication brought every Canadian onto his team, and no athlete has done more in their lifetime, through sheer dedication and courage, than Terry Fox. I have no trouble believing he has a special place in heaven, exemplifying what it means to have a generous spirit and serve a need far greater than our own.

DIGNITY and REPENTANCE

Many people honked angrily at Terry early on for slowing them down in traffic. He was forced off the road a few times. How could they know what this handicapped guy would ultimately achieve? They just knew it was an inconvenience to have to share "their lane" with such a person. Would I have acted with such impatience and prejudice heading toward MY important destination back then? This question of entitlement was "in my face" a number of times as we toured the Canadian Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg. Display after display highlighted the discrimination and injustice toward so many groups across Canada and the world. The list of issues we can focus on with our neighbour was pronounced around every corner of the magnificent building.

We in the church are blessed with mitigating teachings about how so many "types" of people populate the heavens, people so very different than ourselves. And we're challenged to love and behave toward others as the Lord loves us. Our visit there offered a renewed vision of what genuine dignity and respect are when prejudice and contempt enter our thoughts. It offered a time of reflection and opportunity for repentance for past and present actions of disrespect and derision which come habitually to one raised in an earlier, less informed, and spiritually enlightened, era.

DEDICATION

We arrived in Grande Prairie, parked the RV and drove to Dawson Creek for Church then back again for an afternoon service. I use the heading "Dedication" for this leg of our trip as we find these two isolated groups continuing to seek the Lord's Word in worship services and jointing together in each other homes to host the services and pastors. As with most churches, summer services can be sparsely populated, but these dedicated members attend, some driving over an hour, to join in worship and fellowship. It's an honour to serve you.

COMMUNITY

I'll close with a few words about our time in community with the members of the Cascadia New Church. These are: Canadians mostly from southern B.C., and Americans from Washington and Oregon who have formed one congregation, far scattered geographically, but of one heart as to the spirit. Terry Fox's cancer gave rise to his heroic mission to help alleviate suffering, similarly the Covid scourge gave rise to these three groups joining together virtually to fight isolation and alleviate church participation atrophy.

For several years now they have held a retreat to join together with people they usually only see on a Zoom screen. Gwenda and I were gratefully enriched with their story and their ministrations; reflective worships with wonderful music, pastoral leadership and spiritual instruction, edifying group discussion after talks and in men's and women's small groups, time for socializing, and the most creative and engaging morning children/family worships kicked off each day. Add to that the delightful meals and even the obligatory "talent" show (intentionally demoted to a "variety" show lest a call for talent would discourage participation) proving great entertainment and, yes, some amazing talent too.

HOME AGAIN, HOME AGAIN, JIGGETY JIG

It was wonderful to see so much of our amazing Canada, to visit and serve church members and friends across this big, beautiful land. I hope to be on staff again next year at the Cascadia Retreat.

As the summer wains, a new "church year" begins. I'll continue to travel to serve both west DC/GP and east with services in Muskoka and Ottawa, and two "bonus" trips to serve in London, England. How nice this summer to meet old and new friends, and here's to hoping, wherever you are that your spiritual journey with the Lord continues to lead you "from strength to strength." (Psalm 84:7)



CANADIAN NEW CHURCH WOMEN'S WEEKEND: OCTOBER 23-25, 2026

By Jenn Beiswenger

Are you a woman interested in joining with other, like-minded women for a weekend of inspiration, service, food & fun? *This is the last official call-out for our fall 2026 women's weekend, Friday, October 23rd afternoon/evening through early afternoon on Sunday, October 25th.* The physical gathering will be in Collingwood, ON, but long-distance participants are warmly welcome to join via zoom!



For more information and to get onto the mailing list, email jenn@beiswenger.net. We look forward to a fulfilling weekend with our New Church 'sisters'!

GENERAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

By Freya Williams, Membership Outreach

The General Church has about 5,400 members, spread across 43 countries. Our data tells us this is about 35% of our potential members – those 20 and older, baptized in the New Church. We aren't alone in that percentage; it seems to fit with the current trend for nation-wide church membership. But we'd like to be better than average. So what can we do to raise that percentage? Here's what I've been working on:



Streamlining the membership process: There is a simple and quick online form at www.newchurch.org/join, and we've spent the last few years trying to circulate that link to congregations, pastors, secretaries, and individuals.

Regularly inviting potential members to join: Every year, membership invitations are sent. Sometimes we identify groups based on age, like the letter sent to all baptized individuals when they turn 25. Sometimes it is based on something more unique, like attendance at the Assembly. No matter what the group, success is hugely impacted by the quality of contact information I have for the names in our database. If you or someone you know thinks their contact info is out of date in our records, please use the form at www.newchurch.org/contactinfo to help us stay in touch!

Creating print materials: We now have literature on church membership and corporation membership. I distribute these, slowly but steadily, through emails and letters to potential members, but the designs are also available to congregations. If you'd like help getting materials printed locally, or you'd like to collaborate on a more specific piece of literature for your society, please reach out, Freya.Williams@newchurch.org.

Coordinating with pastors: At the bottom of the membership form there is an option for "societal affiliation." When someone selects a particular congregation, I can reach out to the pastor to let him know that there is a new member in his area, who is eligible to join locally.

Building relationships with new members: Over the years, a series of follow-up steps have been developed for those newly joined. My hope is not only to make new members feel welcomed, but also to make sure they understand how they can serve and be served by the church in this new role, and know where to go with questions.

So what can you do, if you want to help gain new members for the church? The best thing is to be willing to talk about membership. People are often shy about "pushing" membership on others, but free decisions really hinge on a fullness of understanding – and having the facts helps with that! I hope you will consider learning more about what it means to be a General Church member, and why it matters for the health of our church.

REGIONAL PASTOR & EVP NOTES

By Rev. James Cooper

Carmel Church News

We are happy to report that the Carmel Church School has made good progress on recovering from the fire that damaged several classrooms at the end of the last school year. Some of the classes will still be meeting in temporary quarters for a while, but the 2026-2027 school year will start on schedule.

Congratulations to Rev. Mark Allais and his family who have all become Canadian citizens!

Calendar Items

Welcome back from summer and the start of the new school year! We wish you all the best of luck and happiness as we go forward with our busy schedules once again.

As mentioned before, we haven't been able to sort out a full time pastor for our congregations in the United Kingdom. So, for the next year, various ministers will make extended visits to Michael Church in London. Rev. Michael Cowley will be visiting from September 15 through October 13, and Rev. James Cooper will be visiting from October 15 through December 7. There will need to be visits again in the spring of 2027 but the dates have not been fixed yet. Since it's easier to find someone to make a 4 day trip than move overseas for a month or two, we are working to cover our Canadian schedule with as little disruption as possible, and will keep you informed as things progress.

The Board of the General Church In Canada will have its next meeting at 11:00 a.m., Toronto time, on Saturday, September 12th.

Carmel Church in Kitchener will switch back to 11:00 a.m. every Sunday when school Starts. See their website for additional programs being offered. <https://www.carmelnewchurch.org/>

Olivet Church in Toronto continues to have their regularly scheduled services at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday. The installation of the new air conditioning system should be complete soon. It can now be truly said that, "it's cool to go to church at Olivet." See their website at <https://www.olivetnewchurch.org/>.

Services will be held on the dates listed below at 11:00 a.m. at the church in Dawson Creek, B.C., and at 4:30 p.m. in Grande Prairie, AB.

- September 20 – Visiting pastor
- October 4 – Rev. James Cooper. Please note that my wife, Karen, will be joining me for this visit. Karen is the Secretary of the General Church in Canada and would like to give a brief presentation after church about the value of membership in the GCIC.
- October 18 – Rev. Michael Cowley
- November 8 – Rev. Michael Cowley
- November 22 – Rev. Michael Cowley
- December 6 – Rev. Michael Cowley
- December 20 Tableaux – Rev. Michael Cowley.

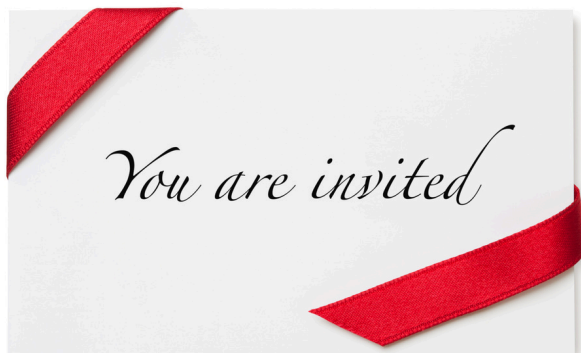
In the Pacific Northwest, the Cascadia group meets regularly by Zoom with live and virtual ministers. Please see their excellent website for information about the location of live services and Zoom links. <https://www.cascadianewchurch.org/>

List of ministers serving Canada

- Rt. Rev. David Lindrooth (David.Lindrooth@newchurch.org)
- Rev. Mark Allais (Pastor@carmelnewchurch.org)
- Rev. Todd Beiswenger (Pastor@olivetnewchurch.org)
- Rev. Michael Cowley (Revmichaelcowley@gmail.com)
- Rev. James Cooper (retired) (Rev.james.cooper@gmail.com)



DAWSON CREEK GC/GCIC RECRUITMENT EVENT



On Sunday, October 4th, after church, we are going to host a recruitment event for the church. One of our purposes is to help anyone who is a regular churchgoer but isn't a member of the General Church or the General Church in Canada become a member. According to our records, many of you are General Church members, but not necessarily General Church in Canada members. (We have a list and we can check.) Even if you are a member, you might wonder,

“why should I come?” Here are some reasons:

- A free meal
- Door prizes
- Games
- Fellowship with your church friends
- Learn about what both the GC and the GCIC do for you—why should we care?
- What is the GC Corporation, and how does it differ from just being a member of the Church?
- Children welcome, babysitting will be available, and there will be a prize for every kid in attendance
- Did we mention free food and door prizes?!

Seriously, the “serious” presentations will be brief, and we think you'll learn things you didn't know. Our intention is to have a bit of business mixed with some fun. Jim will briefly discuss what the General Church does, what the General Church in Canada does, and why it's good to be members of both, or even possibly a GC Corporation member. The presentation will be interspersed with lunch, a couple of all-age games, door prizes, and membership forms to fill out.

It will be held at the Dawson Creek New Church after the church service on Sunday, October 4th. If you are planning on coming, **RSVP by September 30th** to Karen Cooper: karenanncooper@gmail.com or 416-508-1471. We hope to see you there!



General Church In Canada

newchurch.ca

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**Editorial Deadline for the
November - December 2026 Issue:
October 20, 2026**

Comments, letters and articles are welcome!

Please send submissions to Lindsay Hyatt

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General Church in Canada Worship Services



Carmel New Church
Kitchener, ON
11 AM Sunday
in person & online



Dawson Creek New Church
Dawson Creek, BC

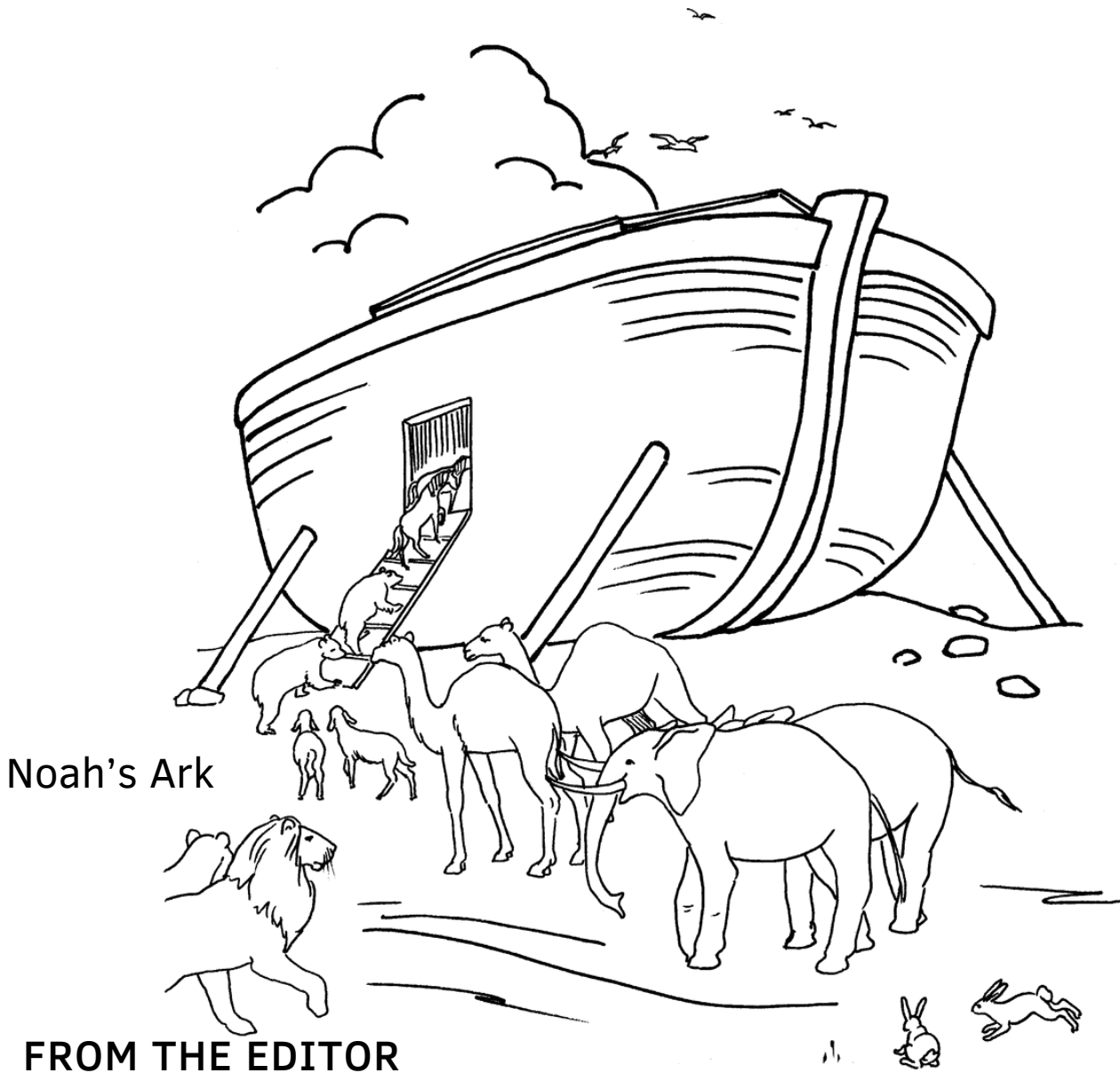


Olivet New Church
Etobicoke, ON
10:30 AM Sunday
in person & online



New Church Canadian

c/o 279 Burnhamthorpe Rd.
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Noah's Ark

FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue of the New Church Canadian. Submissions for the next issue are welcome by October 20, 2026. Please email your article to NCCEditor@outlook.com or mail it c/o Olivet New Church.