

# THE HANDSHAKE



## The Voice of the National Association of United Church AOTS Men's Clubs



### President's message

I was thrilled to be able to ride an elephant while on vacation in South Africa!

It is with mixed emotions that I prepare to pass the mantle of President to Jim McKibbin at the 2009 Biennial.

I "thank you" for the honour of being allowed to serve you and our Lord Jesus Christ the past two years.

In this, our 85<sup>th</sup> year, it is appropriate that we look at what our organization might look like in 15 years when we reach our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Look for our Leadership document in this issue. I do not know who the original author was, but I agree with concepts expressed and recommend it to you. It is worth a read. Please give copies to your club executive and to your Minister for discussion at a club meeting.

Please continue to support your National Council, consisting of officers, committee chairmen and conference representatives. We rely on each to fulfill their responsibilities in service for the ministry of men. If you are asked to take a leadership role in either the National Council or in your local club I would encourage you to accept. Keep up the good work!

Thanks to Harvey Douglas, our western Vice-President, for these wonderful suggestions:

1. Make up your mind to be happy – Learn to find pleasure in little things
2. Make the best of your circumstances - No one has everything and everyone has some sorrow intermingled with gladness of life
3. Don't take yourself too seriously – Don't think that somehow you should be protected from the misfortune that befalls others
4. You can't please everyone – Don't let criticism bother you
5. Don't let your neighbour set your standards – Be yourself
6. Do the things you enjoy doing but stay out of debt and do onto others as you would have them do onto you
7. Never borrow trouble, imaginary things are harder to bear than real ones
8. Since hate poisons the soul, do not cherish jealousy – Avoid people who make you unhappy
9. Have many interests – If you can't travel, read about exotic places
10. Don't spend your time brooding over sorrows or mistakes – Don't be one who never gets over things
11. Do what you can for those less fortunate than yourself
12. Keep busy at something – A busy person never has time to be unhappy

“May the Lord bless you and keep you, May the lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, May the Lord lift up his favour upon you, and give you his Peace” (Numbers 6: 24-26)

I ask this through Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Amen

Blessings, **Bill Love**



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**AOTS, “As One That Serves”**, is a church-related organization of men initiated in 1923 and dedicated to promoting Christian fellowship and deepening the spiritual life of men and developing effective programs of Christian service.

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The Handshake contains news and announcements of the AOTS Men's Clubs and other men's ministry groups or individual members who are interested in sharing their ideas and interests with other men or groups.. It is provided to AOTS members twice yearly, by the national AOTS office. The views, comments and opinions published in the *Handshake*, both printed and electronic forms, are not necessarily those of the National AOTS Association.

*All submissions are subject to edit for content and length.*

Photo submissions: If you want your original photo returned, please enclose a stamped, self addressed envelope with your submission.

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The deadline for submissions to the next edition of the

**PRINTED Handshake is October 31, 2009**

## The Handshake Team

The Handshake is like every other periodical, is produced by a “team”. **Firstly**, you **the readers**. Without readers, there is no reason to produce anything. **Secondly**, by the **submitters of articles** and stories, without which there would not be anything to print and or distribute. **Thirdly**, by the **production team**. My “team”, consists of the make-up crew (myself) and a “**proof reading crew**”. My proof readers are my friend and ardent AOTS supporter, Jonathan Wardlaw, and my wife Jean, my supporter and help mate for over fifty years. Without these two individuals the Handshake would be quite different. A single pair of eyes will never “catch” all those mistakes that seem to crop up with every issue. Even then mistakes are evident, like misspelling the Moderator’s name in the last issue. As a “thank you” to my “crew” I have decided that they would be featured in this issue of the “Handshake”.

*Your Handshake editor, Harold Lorenz*



**Jean Lorenz**—following high school, accepted a position at a bank, followed by a secretarial position at a local home town telephone company, a hospital secretary, then a wife and mother of two girls. When our daughters were in school, she became a school secretary at a local school for over twenty five years. On retiring volunteered at our local Seniors' Meeting Place. Jean was and is an

ardent supporter of her church and the UCW.

**Jonathan Wardlaw**—I arrived at Trinity U.C. in Newmarket, Ontario nine years ago, and still remember reading those bulletin announcements for some strange "AOtts" club. So, upon asking the wrong person at the wrong time, I became a member...

After university, I went on to teaching secondary school senior chemistry. I moved to two different schools in my short career of 14 years, being forced into retirement due to my medical condition. I have been “retired” (does that really mean “tired again”?) since 1998 and been very fortunate to be able to be involved in a variety of activities, many involving my church.

I married in 1990 and have two great kids, ages 16 and 14. Rebecca was first born and, after the birth of our son, Mackenzie, a number of people told me I now had a “millionaire’s family”. I had no idea what they were talking about, but it slowly dawned on me.

I would say more but the *Handshake* editor would not provide me any more ink.

It is through God’s hand that I have had the privilege to experience so many amazing and wonderful things in my life. And again I say, thanks be to God.

# Leadership - Faith, Potential & Limitations

We want to talk about **Leadership**, in terms of **our faith, our potential and our limitations, and how this should/ does affect how we act and react as leaders.** It is important, as a leader, to know and understand **where our leadership is based, where our potential for growth is, and what our own limitations are.** With this firmly established, we are able to work to our best ability toward the goals we have before us. **If we do not, we waft back and forth without direction, with little potential for growth, and with the limitations of where we are personally at the time.** We must not allow ourselves to be in that situation if we are to be those whom others look to for leadership. If we are to realize our full potential, we must look at these three facets of leadership and their importance to each of us individually and to the organization as a whole.

## **Faith: In Jesus Christ in whose name we claim to be serving.**

Unless we are **serving for the right reason,** we are **no different than all the secular groups** who are doing a lot of good work but are **missing the Christian fellowship and nurturing that is or should be the reason behind what we are doing.** Jesus said, "I am among you as one that serves." (Luke 22:27)

**What we are trying to accomplish?** We should be trying to bring all United Church men into a **closer relationship with Jesus Christ through working and fellowshiping together in His service for others.** We need to **share our dream for AOTS with others in our church** and tell them how we feel. Others need to know where we want to go and **they must share that dream with us** if we are to grow in service and numbers. We need to make clear **how we want to make those dreams a reality,** by making a game plan. It is **important to set goals** so we have **something to strive to attain.** These goals do not have to be lofty. In fact, they should be **short-term attainable goals** so that **we have the opportunity to celebrate our successes, to encourage others and to know we are heading in the right direction with our "game plan".** **We should believe that others have the same desire to serve in Jesus' name and have the abilities to share their faith with others, in their own way, that will compliment and help AOTS and men's faith in Jesus Christ to grow to its' full potential.**

We should **encourage and help others** to experience the fullness and potential that we can have as we experience His presence in our lives and share His love with others. We need to encourage others in order to bring out the best that they can be and do within AOTS. We all need to be encouraged if we are going to reach our full potential.

## **Potential: Believe in the full potential of the Word of God.**

If we believe that **with God, all things are possible.** We can not only face others and share our faith in Him without feeling awkward about it, but **we can face anything that life has in store for us,** be it financial, relationship, health, or other concerns, because, He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you". **Knowing God's word is so essential** if we are going to be an instrument that is effective in sharing His word and power and experiencing the joy of fellowship and the difference it can make in our lives. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it (to) you". (John 16:23)

**See the full potential of our goals.** If we **let God rule our hearts and forget about what is best for us, we can get a clearer vision** of what our goals should be and how best to achieve those goals. **We so often let our 'wants' get in the way of what is best for us** and so it **clouds our vision** of what we should be doing, individually and collectively, to better serve God and our fellow man. We need to **seek God in our deliberations of what is best for AOTS** and for each of us who are in a leadership role in the organization **to realize our full potential.**

We need to **sit and discuss with others in the organization where we should be going** and how best to get there. When we have a **clear vision of where we are heading,** we can **develop the strategies** that will let us reach our aims and objectives.

We need to look at our organization and see **if we are equipped to help people do the jobs we are asking them to do.** **If people are equipped** to do the job, it will give us the **ability to keep growing, attract leaders and keep morale high.**

*Continued on page 4*

**Understand and utilize the full potential of our members.** We have so many talented and dedicated men in AOTS and we need to **make a conscientious and determined effort to utilize and focus that talent and dedication where it is most effective.** We need a vehicle and system that will facilitate the harnessing of that potential and putting it to work in the whole organization. We seem to have great difficulty in getting people to take leadership roles, which is where we want and need this talent. How can we make it easier for men to demonstrate and share their insights and realize their potential through our organization?

We need to **select people with certain gifts and passions and align them with the job that utilizes those gifts.** All organizations have people that are able to do certain jobs or fill certain needs well. **Talk to each one and find what they are comfortable doing and would want to do.**

**Place a high priority on the job you ask people to do.** This will show that you need their help and appreciate their input.

**Ask for and expect commitment that will encourage others to fulfill their duties** and do their best for the organization.

**Be prepared and able to help** people do the job you are asking them to do. **Discuss the tools available and ensure they meet the needs of the person** who is using them. **Have tools at hand and be sure they know how to use them.** Train people in the **people skills** if they are out there meeting others.

**Develop a personal relationship** with people you want to work with you in the organization. This will lead to a **more dedicated person and someone who feels wanted and needed.**

### **Limitations: Understand that with God there are no limitations.**

We should be prepared to understand and accept that **with God there are no limitations.** The only limitations there are with God are **the ones that we put in place.** Therefore, we could be standing in the way of the realization of God's will for us or any group that claims Jesus Christ as their head. We need to **get in tune with Jesus** and understand **where He wants us to be in His service. That is where and when we can be most effective as we strive to serve in Jesus' name.** "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)

We are **"called" to be followers of Jesus Christ** in whom we can all find fulfillment. As leaders, we should **ensure that all are striving to their full potential** as workers for the kingdom of God.

We should **develop a strategy to equip people** to help them do their job. This may include **getting to know them better, knowing their feelings on various topics and finding where they can serve and how we can best help them accomplish their goals.**

We need to **communicate our desire to help others,** to our members, so they are **more apt to want to accept responsibility, take leadership roles and contribute their gifts and talents** to the organization.

When people have the help and tools they need we **must encourage them to try new things and learn to use the tools and their gifts to the best advantage.**

We have to **celebrate the successes of our members and show and tell others how they got there to encourage others to want to get more involved.** This allows that person to **equip someone else to achieve success** as they have, thus **empowering another to achieve greater service.**

Therefore, if we have **faith in Jesus Christ** in whose name we are serving, in **what we are trying to accomplish** and in the **abilities of others,** we have the basis for a successful organization. If we believe in the **full potential of the Word of God,** see the **full potential of our goals,** understand, and utilize the **full potential of our members,** we have **the means by which to grow** as an arm of the church reaching out in Christian service. If we understand that **with God there are no limitations, work within our own limitations and accept others with their limitations** there is **no limit to the possibilities** for our organization.

*Author Unknown....adapted and revised for this publication*

## AOTS in Minnedosa, Manitoba 2008—2009



Harold Gillishammer  
Manitoba's Queen Bench  
Citizenship Judge

Fifteen or sixteen men have met the first Wednesday of each month in the Roman Catholic church basement, during this past winter. The Minnedosa group are still meeting in the Roman Catholic Church basement because the United Church burnt to the ground three years ago and the new sanctuary and meeting hall have not been rebuilt. It is hoped that the new building will be started in the spring. Contracts and financial agreements are now in place.

Each meeting begins with singing grace; a delicious supper prepared by a couple of the men, a short devotional period, followed by a program. We have had a Citizenship Judge describe the workings of his office and then had each member go through a typical citizenship swearing in program. Another night one of our members showed slides and discussed his working at Rankin Inlet as a druggist in September, 2008. Our Christmas Program had all of the wives attend along with several members of the congregation who could be future or were past members, of the club. The February meeting had the new Anglican Priest come and introduce himself to our club. There is a short business meeting and then everyone helps clean up.

The club has many activities planned for the next while. Shrove Tuesday, the club will provide a Pancake Supper for the Minnedosa district. This will be held in the

Anglican Church basement again this year and the entire proceeds will be donated to the Anglican Church Lift project to help make the Anglican Church more access friendly.

Other projects include the annual June Ladies night round up for the year, ice cream sales in July at the Fun Fest Days and a corn roast in August.

Until fall, may God Bless each one who reads this report. Submitted by **Harvey Douglas** Western Vice President

## Grace United, Sarnia, Ontario



L to R—Sheila Scott, John Scott,  
Bill Yates, Yvonne Vanderbeld

Grace AOTS Club entertained the ladies at a Valentine Dinner on February 12, 2009. The dinner was open to all and we were pleased to have ten widows from the church join us. We charged the men \$15 and all the ladies came at no charge. A Barbershop Quartet entertained with love songs and stories. A large Valentine's cake was enjoyed by all. The ladies were each presented with a rose as they were leaving. We consider this a great means of promoting AOTS and providing outreach to the general church membership.



President Paul Cooper,  
cutting the Valentines cake

## A message from the "Youth To Camp" coordinator

This is a message to all AOTS clubs, big and small. We need to recognize all of the Clubs that helped support "Youth To Camp" during the summer of 2008. We have some of the names, so I want to take this opportunity to thank all the clubs that sent in their information about their continued support of Christian Camping and request that other clubs send in their information and be recognized for their efforts.

**Consecon-Carrying Place AOTS— Consecon, Ontario. 16 men sent 2 "Youth To Camp"**

**Duncan AOTS— Duncan, British Columbia. 45 men sent 2 "Youth To Camp"**

**Holy Trinity AOTS— Elliot Lake, Ontario. 15 men sent 25 "Youth To Camp"**

**Northminster AOTS— Oshawa, Ontario. 15 men sent 3 "Youth To Camp"**

**St. Andrew's AOTS— Chatham, Ontario. 34 men contributed \$1000**

**Mark Browning—for Youth to Camp**



**Sharon-Hope United Church,  
Sharon, Ontario**

**Sharon Temple, Sharon Ontario  
National Historic Site and Museum**

## A TALE OF TWO CHURCHES

The congregation of Sharon-Hope pastoral charge has history more than a century old. The first records of the Sharon Methodist Church were written in the 1850's where services were held in a small church about half a mile north of Sharon. In 1867, the church purchased land in Sharon on Leslie Street. The Sharon Methodists were part of the Holland Landing charge and later the Mount Albert charge before joining with Queensville in 1883. In 1885 the small village of Hope's church joined with Sharon and Queensville Methodist to form a 3-point charge. Both of these churches joined the church union in 1925 to become part of The United Church of Canada. This 3-point charge continued until 1954; at that time Hope Church amalgamated with the Sharon Church to become one. The congregation continued to grow and the church building became overcrowded.

In 1982 it was decided to work toward the establishment of a new building on 2.16 acres. Based on the history of the area an architectural design was selected to reflect the Quaker heritage of the Children of Peace. The similarities between this building and the Sharon Temple are striking. On December 6, 1987 the Sharon-Hope congregation met in great celebration for the dedication and opening of their new home, an attractive modern fully accessible facility.

In 2003 Sharon-Hope and Queensville decided to become single point charges, thus ending an association lasting over one hundred years.

*Our thanks to the members of Sharon-Hope for sharing this information with us.*

The Children of Peace, the builders of the Sharon Temple, were "plain folk", former Quakers with no musical tradition, who went on to create the first civilian band in Canada and built the first organ in Ontario. Sharon was the most prosperous village in the province. They took a lead role in the organization of the province's first co-operative store, the Farmer's Storehouse, and opened the province's first credit union.

The temple was constructed between 1825 and 1831. It was constructed in imitation of Solomon's Temple and used once a month to collect alms for the poor; two other meetinghouses in the village of "Hope" (now Sharon) were used for regular Sunday worship.

The leader of the sect was David Willson, who was born in New York State in 1778 and migrated to Canada in 1801.

After Willson's death in 1866, the sect slowly diminished. The last service was held in the Temple in 1889. The derelict Temple was purchased by the York Pioneer and Historical Society in 1917, and restored, making it one of the earliest examples of historic preservation in Canada. The Temple is now a National Historic Site and Museum as well as a National Peace Site. The site has a collection of restored buildings and displays pioneer artifacts and historic items related to the sect.

Visit [www.sharontemple.ca](http://www.sharontemple.ca) for the whole story. The above information was gleaned from this site.



## Power Packed Five-Day AOTS Extravaganza

### *Think Tank, Executive Meetings, Biennial and Roundup April 22- 26, 2009*

Planning for this year's national convention was reorganized in the late summer when it became apparent that it would not be possible to organize the National Biennial meeting in the Maritime Conference.

It was decided to combine the Biennial with the Central Region Spring Round-up in April and convene a joint effort at the Salvation Army Jackson's Point Convention Centre.

That was just the start. A planning team was struck with representatives from Central Region conferences who took responsibility to produce the event under the leadership of President Bill Love.

The time was short so a rigorous schedule was established in the fall to discuss and organize the program, recruit speakers and entertainment.

The theme, *Down to the Potter's House*, was adopted to coincide with the theme of the 40<sup>th</sup> General Council of the United Church. The planning committee agreed that the challenges faced by the church were quite similar to those faced by AOTS; with declining membership and participation as a central issue.

In a *Membership Overview* prepared for the Red Deer national meeting, it was reported that the number of clubs and memberships in AOTS had been in steady decline for well over 20 years. The report projected that the current 48 AOTS clubs would drop to 19 clubs in 10 years.

The Regeneration Committee had worked dutifully over the course of the past 5 years with a number of successes, principally in re-establishing a close work relationship with the national church and taking a lead role in development of the men's ministry network. However, this work did not reverse the trend to fewer and fewer clubs.

#### **As the church defined the 40<sup>th</sup> General Council theme, the issues they identified were:**

1. How is God shaping The United Church of Canada?
2. What are we being shaped to hold, to pour out?
3. How do we make space for God's work?
4. In what ways are we being drawn "down" to hear God's word?

The planning committee decided that this theme could easily be adapted to the AOTS context, thus the reason this special 2009 Biennial/Roundup (as it has become to be known) has adopted it.

But there was more. With that very significant challenge ahead of us, there had to be some additional planning and development. It was decided to hold a National Executive meeting on Thursday, April 23 to fine tune a working agenda for the national convention and to review various proposals before the organization; among them a proposal to include women as members. So, the National Executive meetings have been organized.

#### ***But that was not enough either....***

After considering the many questions faced by AOTS and the church, President Bill Love called for a Think Tank to be organized on the Wednesday before the Biennial Roundup. The Think Tank would be organized at Church House in Toronto and was designed to include an equal number of AOTS men with other spiritually-based men and women both inside and outside the church.

Anne Martin and Lloyd Paul were asked to assist in the organization of this meeting and played a leading role in the development of the agenda. A full report on the Think Tank will be made at the Biennial/Roundup

We hope and pray for the best.

Thanks to all,

**Jim McKibbin** National President-elect

## Spiritual Life and Leadership Column

*“What good is it for man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?”*

Mark 8:36

### **“Bah Humbug!”**

Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* is one of the best known and loved stories in the English language. It appeals to people on many levels. One reason I like it so much is because it provides powerful and timeless leadership development. The principal character, Ebenezer Scrooge, begins his career as a passionate, driven young idealist, only to become a bitter, lonely old man. He’s a business and financial success but a failure as a human being. You might say that Scrooge developed a rather large work-life balance problem.

Scrooge’s story is one of revelation, reflection, and renewal. It begins one Christmas Eve with a visit from the ghost of his old business partner, Jacob Marley, miserably fettered in long chains and condemned to walk the earth seeking to do the good he failed to pursue during his life. But as bad as his fate is, he warns Scrooge’s promises to be worse. In the seven years since Marley died, Scrooge had forged an even more “ponderous chain” – but one that he had a chance of casting off if he is visited by the spirits of Christmas past, Christmas present, and Christmas future. While Scrooge is understandably reluctant to welcome them, the spirits ultimately help him to remember his life as it was, see his life as it is now, and preview the bleak future that awaits him if his existing path remains as it is. Awakening Christmas morning, his power to change is still intact. Scrooge is a man transformed. He alters the course of his life – and the future to which it leads.

Scrooge’s experiences are a good example for any leader to follow. We need to look back to understand what has created the attitudes and behaviours that shape our current circumstances. We need to take a good look around us today to really see what’s happening and where we fit into the current picture. Would the young person we once were be proud of what we have become?

Finally, we need to project our current course into the future. If we keep doing what we’ve been doing we’ll keep getting what we’ve been getting. Is that good news? Are we on the right track to our preferred future? Or are we continuing to lead in the same old way while expecting different results from our organizations? Of course, that’s the path of getting what we’ve always got. But, of course, to change them, I need to change me.

Ultimately Scrooge’s story is one of renewal and hope. By changing his current thinking and behaviour, he changes his future – and enriches the lives of others.

*“The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones”*

CHINESE PROVERB

**George Bishop** – *Spiritual Life and Leadership Chair*



## Trinity AOTS Newmarket, Ontario are invaded by the Red Hatters



Some Trinity AOTS men meet informally EVERY Monday morning for fellowship, conversation and breakfast at the local “Bayview Diner”. On February 16th, “Family Day”, we were visited by some of our wives in their “red hat” outfits. The staff of the diner entered into the fun of the morning and took this photo while the young waitress, conveniently dressed in “red”, replenished the coffee supply. Our thanks to the ladies and the diner staff for making this an enjoyable time.

**Harold Lorenz**

## Holy Trinity AOTS Men's Club, Elliot Lake, Ontario

Our December Christmas breakfast meeting on December 10, 2008, was well attended. We sold tickets for \$5.00 each and \$10 a couple. An enjoyable breakfast was enjoyed by the forty-five attendees.

Santa made a short visit with gifts for the ladies present. Ruth Blewett and our own Ken Little lead us in singing Christmas carols.

Ken Lane had a great game with all of us putting our thinking caps on—with prizes for the winners.

Our out going Club President Richard Paul Deitriche, presented a short Christmas message entitled “Sharing Jesus’s love with everyone all year round”.

Our new officers for 2009: Dwight Smith, President; Bill Laking, Vice President; Ken Lane, Treasurer; Bob Lansbough, board member; Richard Paul Deitriche, Past President and acting Secretary.

At our February 14th meeting we had three new men join our club.

*Submitted by* **Richard Paul Deitriche**

## Twenty Third Highway Psalm

The Lord is my Chauffeur who shall relax my nerves  
He makes me slow down by schools and play grounds  
He directs me carefully through road construction  
And regains my confidence.

He guides me through rush hour traffic  
For he is my Chauffeur  
Even though I fear road rage drivers.

Through the highways and expressways  
Of reckless drivers and speeders,  
I have no fear for You are with me.

Your angels and love are with me  
And my nerves are at ease.  
You prepare a blessing so I do not speed  
In the presence of radar guns.

You cover me with your honesty  
And your gracious love surrounds me.  
Surly goodness and love awaits me  
When I arrive home to my loveable family.

And I will be grateful for you being my Chauffeur  
Until my life ends peacefully here on earth.

*composed by* **Richard Paul Deitriche**

## President-elect Jim McKibbin Speaks at Emmanuel College

In the fall I received an invitation to speak to a first year class at Emmanuel College on the subject *Community, Value and Poverty*.

The invitation was extended by Marilyn Legge, who is the June Callwood Professor in Social Justice at Victoria College and Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at Emmanuel College.

I had retired from Statistics Canada earlier in 2008 so the topics were still very fresh in my mind and I was happy to accept the request and ultimately make two presentations, one entitled Value and Community and a second entitled Poverty and Community. Here is a brief summary of the presentations.

### Value and Community

The issue of value is central to the question of Christian ethics. We see expressions of value throughout scripture. They provide great food for thought and prayerful consideration, such as the different perceptions of value in Jesus' story of the Return of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32).

So value and how people value things is subject to our socio-economic and cultural condition as people. We do not live in a vacuum. We live in a world where our understanding of the world is very much defined by how we stand in it. We bring our inherent perspective.

As life develops, there are those who flourish and those who do not; those who continue to flourish and those who do not.

As we measure life in contemporary society, we place a reliance on the measurement of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Essentially, GDP is a measure of a country's output. Growth in GDP is deemed to be the constant goal of nations. However, in pursuing the goal of GDP growth, we need to come to terms with those factors which contribute to growth.

There is the famous analogy related to the infamous Exxon Valdez incident—that the Exxon Valdez contributed much, much, more to the growth of GDP by spilling its oil in Prince William Sound than it would have by delivering that same oil safely to port. In that respect wars are also great for GDP. GDP also treats crime as economic gain and a positive contributor to GDP.

So, the reliance of the GDP as some kind of an intrinsic value is a notion to set aside. We are seeing much of this great unraveling now as we traverse ourselves through the current world-wide economic crisis.

*Here we are bailing out the GM's of the world! "Who would uh thunk it?"*

But AOTSers who experienced economic depression might have "thunk" it. And there might be more than a few AOTSers who are uncomfortable with the notion that it's the folks at the top getting the current bailout and the folks at the bottom who are being bypassed.

Value is a matter beyond the capacity of GDP to estimate. At the same time there is a measure – a re-jigged GDP called the Genuine Progress Indicator. GPI is an attempt to measure whether a country's growth, increased production of goods, and expanding services have actually resulted in the improvement of the welfare (or well-being) of the people in the country.

In many respects the components of GPI are what contribute to international rankings of the Human Development Index and Quality of Life Index. For more on GPI link to: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/gpi.htm>

### Poverty and Community

There are two kinds of poverty: absolute poverty and relative poverty. Absolute poverty occurs when people have nothing. How is nothing defined? According to the UN it is defined as severe deprivation of basic human needs; specifically the absence of any two of the following 8 basic needs:

1. Food (body mass index below 17)
2. Safe drinking water
3. Sanitation facilities
4. Shelter
5. Health treatment availability
6. Access to education
7. Access to information
8. Access to services

For the most part in Canada we see relative poverty. This is a poverty that is measured in the socio-economic relationships we have in the country and how those relationships change over time. We know that the gap between rich and poor is growing and that it has been growing over time. In many respects the middle class is disappearing. Armine Yalnizyan, Research Director for the Community Social Planning Council for Toronto, writes:

"In terms of the earnings gap, the average earned income of the richest 10% of Ontario families raising children was 27 times as great that of the poorest 10% in 1976. By 2004 it had risen to 75 times. In terms of the after-tax gap, the ratio of the incomes of the top to the bottom grew from 8 times in 1976 to over 11 times in 2004. The first time the after-tax ratio broke through to double-digit territory in the past 30 years was in 1999. It has been on an upward trend ever since."

So there has been a significant growth in inequality – certainly income inequality. And it may be worth remembering that our outlook on life is often coloured by what it is we can do (and afford) and what it is we cannot.

Between communities there are great disparities of income and therefore of inequality. In a significant study on the ethno-racial communities of Toronto, author Michael Orenstein reported wide divergences when he measured the *incidence of low income by community*. Those from the UK or France and other European immigrants showed levels between 7% and 13%.

More recent immigrants showed much higher: Albanian (40%), Iraqi (43%), Taiwanese (43%), Ethiopian (58%), Afghan (61%) and Somali (73%).

More than anything, our perspective on the world is determined by the place we find ourselves in the world. We would do well to remember that, especially the next time we are asked to consider the statistics of value, poverty and community.

*As Anais Nin said, "We do not see things as they are. We see things as we are."*

Submitted by **Jim McKibbin**



## MANITOBA DISTRICT COUNCIL

### United Church AOTS Men's Club

Our "District Council" normally meets once per month between October and June. The original membership was made up from representatives of AOTS Clubs in the City of Winnipeg. Its purpose then, as now, was to bring together men nine times a year from different United Church AOTS Men's Clubs to share their ideas. Time has served notice that things are changing. Within the last decade we have lost Westworth U. C. AOTS Men's Club and Grey Street U. C. AOTS Men's Club. Only two AOTS Clubs remain – Atlantic-Garden City and Windsor Park. Normally ten to fourteen men attend our meetings. These include men from the two current AOTS Men's clubs, individual National members and members of former Winnipeg AOTS clubs.

The January 2009 meeting was a joint venture with Windsor Park U.C. AOTS Club. Council members met with Windsor Park AOTS on Monday, January 26 to share a dinner catered by their UCW ladies. We then stayed for a power-point presentation on life in Laos by Arthur Mann, the Club's theme speaker for the evening. Following this, Council members adjourned to a different room in the church so that both groups could carry on with their meetings separately.

Manitoba District Council business included reports from Treasurer Don MacKenzie, Winnipeg Presbytery representative and National AOTS representatives Ernie Orpin and Jim Lawrence, Atlantic-Garden City representative, Don Druce, Windsor Park representative Charlie Klein and Westworth Men's Group representative Fraser Muldrew.

#### *Other business included:*

- a) Sending \$200 to Agape Table (a local Church's soup kitchen);
  - b) Sending \$90 to Operation Eyesight (to restore sight to two people in the Third World);
  - c) Spend \$75 for flowers for ladies in Riverview Health Centre on Mother's Day.
  - d) Noted that Youth Music Bursary applications have been sent electronically to thirty-one Winnipeg Presbytery churches. To date (Feb.20), four applications have been received, with March 31 being the final date to apply. We have approximately \$1,200 to allocate from the proceeds of a concert held last April at Westworth U.C. to build up the Bursary Fund.
- Next Council meeting is set for Feb. 23, 2009.

**J.S. Lawrence**, Secretary, Manitoba District Council

## In Remembrance



**Reg Attwell**—Died November 20, 2008. Long time member of Brechin United Church, Nanaimo B.C. Served on the Vancouver Island AOTS Council and National AOTS Devotional Committee Chair. A good friend of the men of Duncan B.C.

**John Cowans**—Died December 6, 2008. Well known educator and former school board assistant-superintendent. He served the Duncan United Church on many projects and was a good voice for the choir.

**Art Mann Jr.**—Died December 9, 2008. Art was referred to as Duncan's "face of pharmacy". He attended many National Conventions over the years and was made a "Freeman of the City of Duncan" in 1998.

**Keith McDonald**—Date unknown at time of printing. Served on the National Council as Spiritual Life Chair 1985 to 1987. He was President of Duncan United AOTS in 1976.

*Our thanks to Ernest Stafford for the above information*

**George Allan "Al" Smith**—February 28, 2009 in his 94th year. Al served AOTS in many ways. President of Toronto Conference AOTS, an ardent worker at Camp Scugog for many years and the list goes on. Al was instrumental in starting the AOTS Club in Trinity United in Newmarket, Ontario. We have all lost a good friend.

*Harold Lorenz—Trinity United, Newmarket, Ontario.*



**Bishop's Falls United AOTS—50 Years of service with AOTS**

L to R: Back Row : Roy Pilgram, Harold Smith, Wayne Boyd, Nathan Goodyear, Bill Dawe, Aubrey Goobie, Bob King and Victor Budden.

L to R: Front Row: Joe Saunders, Harold Tulk, Chair Wilson Stuckless, Vice - Pres Eastern Canada Gary Ross, Jack Butt and Fred Boone

**Bay of Quinte Conference AOTS Fall Rally, November 1, 2008**

On Saturday, November 1st.2008, The Bay of Quinte Conference AOTS Men's Club held its 49th Fall Rally at the Wellington United Church, Wellington, Ontario.

We opened with *O Canada* and a welcome from Rev. Audrey Brown. We appointed a Sergeant of Arms from Stirling Club, any accessed fines to go to the Wellington food bank. (you can be "fined" for almost anything, it's a lot of fun)

Bill Wilson, of Consecon, led us in a sing-song. We then went through a series of welcomes, reports and awards by various persons and clubs. New business, date for the 2009 Fall Rally and nominations for election was chaired by President Al Anthony. Our special guest speaker was Padre Sid Horne of Trenton on "Military Chaplaincy, enjoyed by all. Seventy-five people were served dinner including National President Bill

Love who was touring the area. After dinner, there was entertainment by Sebastian Fallow, a young, excellent local musician.

President Al Anthony made closing remarks followed by installation of the 2009/10 executive by Craig Watson, Keith Elliott, Garnet Thompson, and National President Bill Love.

Al Anthony, Past President

Jim Waterfall, President

Randy MacDonald, Secretary/Treasurer.

President Jim Waterfall gave greetings to all. Rev. Brown gave the benediction.

Yours in AOTS, **Jim Waterfall**,  
President, Bay of Quinte Conference.

**Not a wise move:**

A husband and wife are shopping in their local Wal-Mart. The husband picks up a case of Budweiser and puts it in their cart. "What do you think you're doing?" asks the wife.

"They're on sale, only \$10 for 24 cans," he replies. "Put them back, we can't afford them," demands the wife, and so they carry on shopping.

A few aisles further on along the woman picks up a \$20 jar of face cream and puts it in the basket. "What do you think you're doing?" asks the husband. "It's my face cream. It makes me look beautiful," replies the wife.

Her husband retorts: "So does 24 cans of Budweiser and it's half the price."

Heard over the intercom: "**Husband Down on aisle 24!**"

## Grace United Church, Sarnia Ontario—Men's Group



**L to R—Bill Palmer, Marvin Bildfell, Gord Wakling, Jack Cleave, Al McLean & George Werezak.**

This men's group, which is made up mostly of AOTS members, has been meeting regularly for two hours every Wednesday morning for over ten years. The attendance varies from 5 to 9 men each morning. We start and finish with prayer.

### OPENING GROUP PRAYER:

*God of all being, in our sharing today we seek to become more aware of our neighbours in the world in which we live and the work and needs within our local community and church. May we learn from each other and support each other in Christian Fellowship and through our mutual sharing, may we experience the divine within each of us. With the example and inspiration of Jesus, we seek to offer ourselves as individuals and through collective efforts, to those in need of our care and service. Amen*

As part of Grace's small group ministry we gather for Christian fellowship to learn from each other. We are men adjusting to natural events like retirement, changing life circumstances and personal health. We seek opportunities to serve and enrich each others' lives, our local community, Grace United and the broader church.

Our meetings include coffee and conversation. We often begin with reflections that can comprise a diversity of issues including world affairs, issues in our local community or church, a debrief of the week's sermon, a review of a book or magazine article. After our opening prayer we pass a stone and each person shares, in a confidential way, recent experiences and concerns. As a result of this sharing there are often discussion topics that emerge and are explored in more detail. The mutual sharing reveals opportunities to serve in Grace, the broader church, our local community or the wider world.

Our opening and closing prayers illustrate what we are trying to achieve.

We have no executive and there are no assigned tasks or preparation, other than cleaning the coffee cups. Members are welcome to attend and participate as life circumstances and personal wishes permit. We welcome new attendees whether they are members of Grace or not.

### CLOSING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

*God of all being, we give thanks for our many gifts and blessings. May the example of Jesus guide us and inspire us during the coming week to use these gifts in the service of our neighbours. Amen*

Through our fellowship we have developed a strong bond of support and fellowship. A program such as this is a good extension of the work of the AOTS Club.

Submitted by **Marvin Bildfell**

## Greetings from the Membership & Fellowship Chair



How nice to return to spring and thoughts of camping. Bay of Quinte AOTS is already busy painting interiors at Camp Quin-Mo-Lac on Moira Lake.

Many thanks to those who have given their time to make the camp ready for the fast approaching season.

Hope everyone enjoys spring and has a great summer.

Yours in AOTS, **Al Anthony**

*The photo on the left was taken by the your Handshake editor in 2007 when he had the pleasure of attending Bay of Quinte AOTS Fall Rally. This is a wonderful camp and is heavily supported by the AOTS.*

A little boy was in need of \$100.00 to buy a new wagon. He didn't get very far with his parents, so finally he decided to ask God for the money. He sat down and wrote a letter to God. When the Canadian postal authorities received the letter addressed to "God, Canada", they decided to send it to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister was so amused that he instructed his secretary to send the little boy a \$5.00 bill. The Prime Minister thought this would appear to be a lot of money to a little boy.

The little boy was delighted with the \$5.00 bill and sat down to write a thank-you note to God, which read: "Dear God: Thank you very much for sending the money, however, I noticed that for some reason you sent it through Ottawa and those blankty blanks took \$95.00 in taxes!!!!!"



### A Lesson Learned

A guy was sitting quietly reading his paper, when his wife walked up behind him and whacked him on the head with a magazine.

“What was that for?” he asked.

“That was for the piece of paper in your pants pocket with the name Laura Lou written on it,” she replied.

“Two weeks ago when I went to the races, Laura Lou was one of the horses I bet on,” he explained.



“Oh honey, I’m sorry,” she said. “I should have known there was a good explanation.”

Three days later he was watching a ball game on TV when she walked up and hit him on the head again, this time with an iron skillet, which knocked him out cold.

When he came to, he asked, “What was that for?”

She replied, “**Your horse called.**”

### What was the penance for this one?



The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic Elementary School for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The Nun made a note, and posted it on the apple tray:

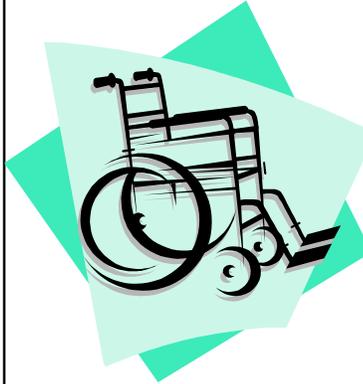
**“Take only ONE. God is Watching.”**

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

A child had written a note:

**“Take all you want. God is watching the apples”.**

### Going Home



Hospital regulations require a wheel chair for patients being discharged. However, while working as a student nurse, I found one elderly gentleman fully dressed and sitting on the bed with a suitcase at his feet, who insisted he didn’t need my help to leave the hospital.

After a chat about the rules being rules, he reluctantly let me wheel him to the elevator. On the way down I asked him if his wife was meeting him. “I don’t know”, he said. “She’s still upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her hospital gown?.

### Your Brother’s Keeper



A Sunday School teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds.

After explaining the commandment to “honor” your Father and Mother, she asked, “Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?”

Without missing a beat, one little boy, (the oldest of a family) answered, “**Thou shall not kill.**”

### Temptation



Smith climbs to the top of Mt. Sinai to get a close enough to talk to God. Looking up, he asks the Lord...”God, what does a million years mean to you?”

The Lord replies, “A minute”.

Smith asks, “And what does a million dollars mean to you?”

The Lord replies, “A penny.”

Smith asks, “Can I have a penny?”

**The Lord replies, “in a minute.”**

## Looking Forward *A Perspective on AOTS*

Looking forward with AOTS is matter of coming to terms with the fact that we are getting older and smaller. This phenomenon has been in place for over 20 years. And in spite of the great efforts of the Regeneration Committee the trend has not been reversed.

As president-elect of AOTS for the past two years and a member of the Regeneration Committee I have had a lot of time to consider the future of this great organization.

In the study commissioned by President Bill Love it was reported that we would see a rather significant drop in the number of clubs over the next 5 and 10 years. The projection, based on an assessment of conference representatives, was that there would be 19 clubs in 10 years down from our current level of 50.

### **A Negative Story?**

The bottom line seems to be, that for the most part, our children are not participating in church affairs as much as we would prefer. Our sons are not joining AOTS. Our daughters are not joining UCW. Many of them don't attend church regularly at all. In our country, our growth as a nation is no longer dependent upon the natural increase in the population. We are now dependent on immigration for our growth.

And no one comes to Canada as a member of the United Church of Canada. People come with myriad other designations and understandings of spiritual moral development. People assess meaning in life out of their own background and upbringing.

In order for us in AOTS to connect with society's broader understanding of spirituality, faith and meaning, we need to be more outgoing and intentional in our work. We can do that. This is one of our challenges. So our dilemma is not unique. In this respect we share weal and woe with our beloved church where attendance has decreased significantly and giving's remain at the level of where they were 20 years ago.

What lies ahead for AOTS and the church will be dealt with at our Biennial Roundup in April and at the church's 40<sup>th</sup> general Council in August in Kelowna. The theme for both conferences is Down to the Potter's House (Jeremiah 18: 1- 7). While I am writing this article in February in advance of any decisions being made there are several issues on the agenda.

### **Finances**

The church is in a financial crisis. Twenty years ago Mission and Service giving's were \$30 Million per year. This last fiscal year ended those same M&S giving totaled \$29.7 million dollars per year and when the rise in the cost of living is

factored in there is a huge difference is between what was given then and what is given now. In fact the church laid off over 10% of its staff in a cost saving move in mid 2007.

In AOTS there is a similar story. Fewer clubs mean less dues provided to the national. The national presence in the minds of many club members is negligible. Many do not see value in being AOTS members. They would rather just have a local congregational men's group.

Thank goodness for the Handshake and the website because without them there would be very little to show rank and file members what their dues gets them.

### **Looking at the Positives**

It is certainly not all gloom and doom. There is much we can do. And there is much we can offer. Yes it is true that we are getting smaller and to repeat a mantra offered by Beatle George Harrison: All things must pass. Harrison got the phrase from Matthew 24: 6-8. In the King James Version it is written as follows:

*And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places. All these are the beginning of sorrows ("birth pangs" in NRSV).*

So we are at a watershed for AOTS and the Church. The life dynamics of contemporary society have changed. There is different world for our children and our grandchildren.

For us, as an old organization, we can reap the benefit of being around for awhile. We have some assets. For the church, we have more franchises than Tim Horton's. For AOTS we have a solid history of servant leadership which we can continue to practice and to teach. And we will.

As we do, though, we will need to listen, to those who have decided to take a pass on AOTS, to understand how we can best deliver that message of servant leadership espoused by Jesus in Luke 24: 26. For in the final analysis, it is not the continuing of the organization which is decisive but the delivery of this sacred message: I am among you As One That Serves.

**Jim McKibbin** *President Elect*





Greetings AOTS Men:

Blessings in this holy Lenten season as we walk with Jesus the way of the cross. This 40 day period invites us to do some soul work and to deepen our commitment to follow Christ. An openness to listening for God's Spirit, an openness to listening for God's call on our lives, examining how we use our time, what our priorities are, these are all elements of soul work. Trusting in God's desire to transform and renew us can give us courage on our journey. May this time be a gift to us and to the communities we travel with.

Recently I received details from the United Church of Canada's 2007 Statistics. These are forms that each year all our pastoral charges complete. On the Statistical form are some questions relevant to my work –

- 1. How many pastoral charges have AOTS clubs?*
- 2. How many members are there?*
- 3. How many pastoral charges have an identifiable men's ministry?*
- 4. How many men are involved?*

*We have 2260 pastoral charges in the United Church of Canada; 89 Presbyteries and 13 Conferences.*

*87 pastoral charges reported an AOTS club with a membership of 1921 men.*

*553 pastoral charges reported some identifiable men's ministry involving 13,289 men.*

We have a total of 640 pastoral charges doing men's work involving 13,289 men. So over one quarter of our pastoral charges have an identifiable men's ministry happening. This is exciting and encouraging news. Men across our church are gathering for a variety of purposes. Strengthening, resourcing and developing a network with this group of men is one of the opportunities I have in my work. There is plenty to do!

A number of upcoming events will give us opportunities to strengthen our men's work. In April we are having a consultation at Church house with a number of leader's of the AOTS and other men involved in Men's work in the United Church of Canada coming together to talk. Then at Jackson's Point we have our Biennial AOTS gathering including the Annual meeting, all connected with the Round-Up. We will have time to work, sing, and pray together and share some of our stories. We will focus on the scripture passage from Jeremiah 18:1-6 which is also the focus for our General Council meeting in August in Kelowna, BC. God working the clay and reworking it. The text is rich for our men's work and for our church.

I look forward to seeing some of you at the consultation and others at the Annual meeting and Biennial-Roundup

Blessings to each of you.

**Lloyd Paul**

Men's Ministries Network  
The United Church of Canada

[lpaul@united-church.ca](mailto:lpaul@united-church.ca)



# UNITED CHURCH AOTS MEN'S CLUBS

National Biennial/Roundup  
April 24—26, 2009

## **“DOWN TO THE POTTER'S HOUSE”**

### **AOTS: 87 Years of Service**

Jackson's Point Salvation Army Conference Centre

### **Theme Speaker: Lloyd Paul**



Lloyd Paul is in full-time ministry at Runnymede United Church in Toronto. He is also responsible for leadership work in Men's Ministries for the United Church of Canada. Ordained 25 years ago, Lloyd's first settlement was the 4 point charge at St. George's on the west coast of Newfoundland where there was an active AOTS club. He has fond memories of working with AOTS as well in Picton and in the Bay of Quinte Conference. Raised in the United Church, he is proud of the ethos and courage of our Church and the wonderful and gifted people who are part of our congregations. Lloyd brings a keen understanding to both the circle and soul of men's ministry in the church. Lloyd will provide Friday evening's presentation, Saturday morning's keynote address, and lead us in worship on Sunday.

### **Minister Jackie Harper**

Jackie is Bay of Quinte Conference Minister: Congregational Wholeness & Right Relations. Prior to joining Bay of Quinte Conference Jackie worked at the National Office of the United Church.

**On Saturday afternoon, Jackie will present a workshop seminar on the evolution of marriage from scripture times to now.**

## **Entertainment: Friday and Saturday nights**

**Ministry of Music: The Dale Butler Trio**

## **Workshops**

**AOTS extends a special welcome to all spouses of AOTS members**

REGISTRATION FORM

**UNITED CHURCH AOTS MEN'S CLUBS**  
**2009 BIENNIAL/ROUNDUP NATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
**APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup> – 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2009**

**JACKSON'S POINT SALVATION ARMY CONFERENCE CENTRE**

1890 Metro Road North, Jackson's Point Ontario  
 (905)722-3501 Web:www.sajpc.com

Surname \_\_\_\_\_ Given Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Club \_\_\_\_\_ Home Church \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate preference \_\_\_\_\_

Special Requirements/Requests \_\_\_\_\_

The Conference Centre is wheelchair accessible and air-conditioned. Prior notification for special accommodation needs, food allergies, etc., is required.

For **EARLY BIRD SAVINGS**—mail (postmark) or e-mail by **March 31, 2009**

**Late registration** applies after **March 31/09. NO REFUND** for cancellations after **April 15/09**

**NOTE: First time attendees entitled to a \$100 discount.**

REGISTRATION FEES (circle applicable number)

No.	(Early Bird by March 31)	Total
1	Early Bird Double Occupancy	\$175.00
2	Late Double Occupancy	\$200.00
3	Early Bird Single Occupancy	\$210.00
4	Late Single Occupancy	\$235.00
5	Friday Only Without Room and Breakfast	\$ 20.00
6	Saturday Only Without Room and Breakfast	\$ 35.00
7	Sunday Only Without Room and Breakfast	\$ 20.00
8	Early Bird Weekend Without Room and Breakfast	\$ 75.00
9	Late Weekend Without Room and Breakfast	\$100.00

Cheque enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to "AOTS National Biennial/Roundup".

**Please submit post-dated cheque (April 24, 2009) for full amount to make on-site registration simpler and reduce the accounting required.**

Spouse's Registration – complete separate Registration Form.

Flight Info: if you are arriving by Plane: Airline \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival Time \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Flight # \_\_\_\_\_ Airport \_\_\_\_\_

IF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE, ARE YOU ATTENDING April 23/24 MEETINGS. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Mail registration to: Paul Cooper, Registrar**  
**1310 Maynard Rd**  
**Sarnia, Ontario N7S 4V8**

**Phone: 519 542-9237**  
**Email pcooper@ebtech.net**

Registration confirmation will follow receipt of payment

*The 2009 Conference is being convened by London Conference, Four County AOTS*

# 2009 Biennial/Roundup



London Conference, 4 County AOTS is pleased to invite you to a combined National Biennial/ Central Region Roundup Conference at Jackson Point Conference Centre on the south shore of Lake Simcoe, just north of Toronto, Ontario on Friday April 24<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

The theme this year is “Down to the Potter’s House”. What is God calling us to do? How are we being shaped by God? Keynote Speaker is Lloyd Paul, Minister at Runnymede United Church in Toronto, as well as a participant in Men’s Ministries at the National Office of the United Church of Canada. Lloyd has asked **“Just as AOTS goes through the process of recreating itself, all participants are asked to bring something that they have created and made new. There will be time set aside when the story behind these creations can be shared.”**

Please refer to the AOTS website ([www.aots.ca](http://www.aots.ca)) where additional information is posted.

To encourage new participants, a \$100 discount on the registration fee is available for all first time attendees. The Early Bird Registration, prior to March 31<sup>st</sup> has been kept as low as possible to make this Conference affordable.

Prior to the Conference, the National Executive will be meeting to bring forward its vision of AOTS for the future. This conference will be an opportunity for all to participate in this process.

AOTS extends a special invitation to all spouses of AOTS members. Women and men are invited to participate in all aspects of the program. On Saturday afternoon Jackie Harper will lead a workshop seminar on the evolution of marriage from scriptural times to now.

Of course there will be an opportunity to socialize with participants from all across Canada, participate in workshops, enjoy Saturday night entertainment provided by the talented Dale Butler Trio, worship together Sunday morning and enjoy the scenery of Lake Simcoe during ample free time.

We look forward to seeing you there.

**David Morris**, Central Region Vice President