

**Prayer of Thanksgiving:** that God cares for us deeply. Praise be to him! **“Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” “10 ¶ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (1Pe 5:7, 10-11 ESV)**

Please do not forget to pray for all the shut-ins and isolated brothers and sisters in our congregations Mrs. Jack and C. Campbell (Fredericton) and J. Steffes (Caribou, Me), Mr. Ross Bathurst, P. Ward (Saint John) and others.

**Open Hand Food Bank – Moncton** - is in need of grocery plastic bags to give out food to those in need. If you are interested in donating your unused grocery bags, you can bring them to church and someone will collect them and bring them over. Those who want to bring food to give to the **Open Food Bank** may do so by bringing to church and giving it to **Michael M.** of the Moncton congregation.

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#### **ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2019**

Times of worship services: **Moncton** – 10:30 AM every Sunday

**In Saint John** – June 9 and June 23 at 2:30 p.m.

**Communion**- on the second and fourth Sunday of the month.

**Address: Moncton**—70 King St. —Sage building;

**Saint John**—50 Newport Cres., Portland United church.

**Discipleship Group** at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Vautour this coming Wednesday, June 5 at 7:30 PM. **Topic: 1 Peter 5**

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**Monthly GCI prayer guide** is now posted in **Featured Articles** on our [www.worshipim.ca](http://www.worshipim.ca) website.

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**Up Coming Events: the next Canadian GCI ministerial conference** will be from August 5 to 7 with arrival on Wednesday, August 4, 2021. The conference will be held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. All members who want to attend will be encouraged to do so.

**The GCI international conference** will be held from July 29 to August 2, 2020 in Raleigh North Carolina. Members who want to attend are also welcome.

**Church Event: Rising Tide/A Prayer Movement Celebration and Worship.** You're invited to an interdenominational and intergenerational celebration of prayer and worship on June 9 at 6:30 PM at Hillsboro Baptist Church, 26 Braam Crescent, Hillsborough New Brunswick.

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#### **Old Testament Laws: Example of the Apostles (from <https://archive.gci.org/articles/example-of-the-apostles/>)**

Scripture doesn't actually say that the apostles kept the Sabbath, but they probably did (many Jewish Christians were keeping ceremonial laws as late as Acts 21). The apostles went to the temple on the Sabbath and preached in synagogues on the Sabbath, but they also met and preached on every other day of the week. Their example is not a command for Christians today.

**The best way to preach to the Jews would be to go to the synagogues on the day Jews were there.**

Paul, like Jesus, customarily went to the synagogue ([Acts 13:14](#); [16:13](#); [17:2](#)). But there is no reason to imitate the "Sabbath" part of the sentence and ignore the "synagogue" part. The fact that this was a synagogue should alert us to the historical situation and should caution us regarding specific customs. Paul went to the synagogue on the Sabbath because that is when and where people were assembled to hear discussions of Scripture. That is when and where he had a ready-made audience. He went to Jews first, and then to Gentiles, and the best way to preach to Jews would be to go to the synagogues on the day Jews were gathered there.

Paul sometimes kept other Jewish customs, too, such as circumcision, making vows and participating in temple rituals. His *example* isn't automatically authoritative. If we imitate all the ways in which he lived like Jesus, we would have

to be celibate traveling preachers. We need to discern which details of their lives were based on the circumstances they lived in, and which were based on Christianity.

### Free to live like a Gentile

#### **Peter was free to live "like a Gentile," and Paul was, too.**

Paul considered himself under the law of Christ, not under the law of the old covenant ([1 Corinthians 9:19-21](#)). He was free to observe old covenant customs when with Jews, and he was free to ignore them in other situations. Peter was free to "live like a Gentile," and Paul was, too ([Galatians 2:14](#)). Today, we are to obey the commands of Jesus ([Matthew 28:20](#)), and Jesus never commanded anyone to rest on the Sabbath.

In Pisidian Antioch, Paul gave a controversial message in the synagogue: **"Through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the Law of Moses"** ([Acts 13:38-39](#)). The Jews and proselytes asked Paul to speak to them the next Sabbath (**verse 42**), and that is what Paul did. Paul did not demand an immediate change in their Sabbath-keeping custom. Large portions of the audience would have had to work the next six days and would not have been able to assemble on Sunday. Also, it would be good for them to think about and discuss Paul's message for a week. Because Paul waited a week, the entire city was able to hear about the controversy and therefore came to hear him speak (**verse 44**). In the Gentile cities of Lystra and Derbe, however, nothing is said about the Sabbath. Even in Athens, where some Jews lived, nothing is said about the Sabbath. Instead, Paul reasoned "in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there" ([Acts 17:17](#)). Daily preaching is a valid custom, too, if we want to follow the example set by Paul and Jesus.

### Should not make it difficult

Moses was preached in the synagogues every Sabbath, James noted ([Acts 15:21](#)). But James was not encouraging Gentiles to attend synagogues! The new Christians needed to hear about Christ, not about Moses. The Jerusalem conference rejected the view of those who thought the Gentiles had to keep the entire "Law of Moses" (**verse 5**).

#### **The council did not tell Gentiles to keep the Sabbath – nor did Luke, who wrote many years later for Gentile readers.**

**"We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God"** (**verse 19**). Instead of requiring Gentile Christians to keep the Law of Moses, the council told them to abstain from blood, strangled things, idolatry and fornication (**verse 20**). The council gave a lenient decree because strict requirements were being preached in the synagogues (**verse 21**). The Sabbath was part of the Law of Moses, just as much as circumcision was — but no one said the Sabbath was any different than other laws of Moses. The council did not tell Gentiles to keep the Sabbath, nor did Luke, who wrote many years later for Gentile readers.

### Every day of the week

In Corinth, Paul again started in the synagogue, and there he argued every Sabbath ([Acts 18:4](#)). But soon Paul left the synagogue and began teaching next door (**verse 7**). After this, nothing is said about the Sabbath, and Paul could have taught every day of the week. Even while he made tents, he could discuss the Scriptures with anyone who had time to listen. In Ephesus, Paul preached every day of the week for two years ([Acts 19:9](#)). This is a valid custom, too.

On his way back to Jerusalem, Paul stopped seven days in Troas ([Acts 20:6](#)). But we do not hear anything about the Sabbath. What we hear is that the church ("we") waited until the first day of the week to come together and break bread, and Paul preached after the Sabbath was over (**verse 7**). Why wait till then? Apparently the first day of the week was the time that the believers could get together. Although Paul was in a hurry (**verse 16**), he waited until the first day of the week. This is a significant example, too.

In short, we are never told that Paul rested on the Sabbath, or that he taught anyone to rest on the Sabbath. What we are told is that he used the day as an evangelistic opportunity, and that he could use any day of the week to preach about the Savior. His example shows liberty, and nothing about requirements.

Paul taught on the Sabbath ([Acts 18:1-11](#)). Was he teaching the Gentiles to keep the Sabbath? This passage says only that he taught in the synagogues for a few Sabbaths — after that, it does not say when he taught. Although it may have been on the Sabbath, it may have been on other days, too, as it was in Athens and Ephesus. And the passage says nothing about avoiding work on a particular day of the week. The book of Acts tells us what Paul did on a few Sabbaths and a few other days. If we want to know what Paul himself taught about the Sabbath, we must turn to his epistles.

### Review 13

- The apostles could keep Old Testament laws when they were in a Jewish culture.
- They could also "live like a Gentile." What would that mean in the first century?
- Gentiles do not have to keep the laws of Moses. What would that include?
- Why did the church in Troas wait until the first day of the week to meet?

## West African Leadership Conference



Greetings from our brothers and sisters in Africa!

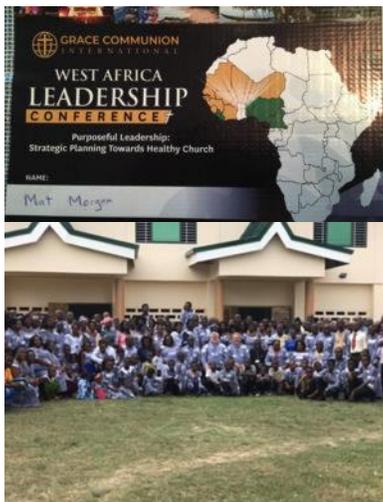
From left to right around the table: *Kalengule Kaoma, Nsama Kaoma, Gardner Kunje, Margaret Okai, Emmanuel Okai, Greg Williams, Takalani Musekwa, Margaret Musekwa, Jane Gachanja, Anthony Gachanja*

Greg Williams, GCI President and Mat Morgan, GCI Secretary-Treasurer recently participated in the West African Leadership Conference held in Accra, Ghana. Formal meetings were attended by Kalengule and Nsama Kaoma, Superintendent of Africa, Emmanuel and Margaret Okai, Regional Director of West Africa, Gardner Kunje, Regional Director of Central Africa, Takalani and Margaret Musekwa, Regional Director

of South Africa along with other pastors, spouses and members from West African countries.

What a privilege and blessing to see how devoted GCI members are participating with Jesus in this part of the world where exciting things are happening! While there, we shared and learned from helpful presentations on the theme of "healthy church," and participated in lively worship with our brothers and sisters from West Africa, including Ghana, Benin, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo. Some members from

other West African countries were not able to attend due to visa complications, cost and other travel realities. Although absent, they remain in our thoughts and prayers. President Williams, Superintendent Kaoma, and Regional Director of West Africa, Emmanuel Okai dedicated a new church building in Katunse, just outside Accra, that also served as our meeting place part of the conference. The building is beautiful and modern, sitting on about 15 acres of land that also contains a school, a soccer field, apartments and other church support facilities. Papaya, coconut and other trees populate the property, which is dotted with healthy goats and chickens.



We are happy to report that the members in Ghana are enthusiastically participating with Jesus in sharing the gospel as a vibrant and healthy expression of him. The Katunse church is a shining example of a healthy church that is developing leaders, planting churches and has developed a local financial infra-structure that supports Gods' work in that region. They are planting new congregations around Accra. Eight of 11 churches in Ghana now have their own buildings. We thank God for what he is doing through his servants in this area and for their example of living and sharing the gospel in this healthy church environment.

After the conference ended, we were able to visit the newly planted Cape Coast church facility and pray with pastor Pastor Isaac Bright Buckman and his wife Lois, Deacon Earnest Dadzie and his family, and Mr. Sam Ofori. They are celebrating their new building, still under construction, and looking forward to sharing the good news about Jesus in this community, not far from the infamous slave castles.

Thank you for your prayers for our brothers and sisters who live so far away, but who we are closely connected with through the love and hope that comes only from Jesus. We are all GCI!

GCI principle website and Moncton Websites—[www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org), [www.worshiphim.ca](http://www.worshiphim.ca), [www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton](http://www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton); For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website. *Contact Information: Pastor's contact information: email—[evautour47@outlook.com](mailto:evautour47@outlook.com)*