

The
Toronto Church
Bulletin

[First Edition]



Edited by
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Toronto, Canada

TORONTO CHURCH BULLETIN

Vol. 1.—No. 1.

Sept. 21, 1918.

Affirmation and Invitation.

To the Members and Friends of the Toronto Branch of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; Greeting:

We have entered upon an era of church extension and invite your interest and active cooperation. We solicit your presence at our various church services. Come, and bring others.

God is wonderfully blessing our labors. The social and prayer services are well attended. The Spirit of the Lord is present in testimony and revelation, giving encouragement and counsel. The members bear witness to God's answer to prayer in healing and spiritual direction.

We bear no ill will towards those who have recently withdrawn from the church. Our mission is to save, not crush down: to lift up and help, not to persecute and malign; to extend a welcome hand and offer cheer to all who may be seeking the truth. Many have been led to withdraw under a misapprehension of the real purpose and teaching of the church.

God has but one church on the earth. The wonderful spiritual experiences which the membership of this church have received cannot be destroyed by personal attacks or misrepresentation. The enemy of souls has sought to destroy the church and disrupt the membership; but, thanks be to God, no arm raised against this work will prosper, and those who seek to discredit it shall be brought to shame.

This latter-day work will triumph in spite of all opposition. God called Joseph Smith. He did restore the gospel to the earth through the hand of an angel. He did direct the organization of this his church. He has "established his kingdom for the last time" and it will not be given to another people."

Those who remain true to His covenant will be blessed. God will vindicate his promises. Zion will be established. The gathering of God's people to prepare for the second coming of the Master will materialize. God's purposes will never fail.

If you are in doubt as to any features of the church work, or desire advice or counsel, we will be pleased to confer with you. May God bless and direct you. May he guide your feet in the right path.

Our services are as follows: Sunday: Prayer service at 9 a. m.; preaching at 11 a. m.; Sunday school at 3 p. m.; preaching at 7 p. m. Wednesday evening, prayer service at 8 p. m. Ladies' Auxiliary, Thursday evening. Religio-Literary Society, Friday night.

TORONTO CHURCH BULLETIN

Vol. 1.—No. 2.

Oct. 4, 1918.

“Bishop Evans’s New Church.”

Mr. R. C. Evans has recently organized a brand new church, all his own, in Toronto. He calls it “Bishop Evans’s New Church.” He ought to know! He claims that he was directed by an angel to do this. This angel visitation came at a very convenient time for Mr. Evans. His official work as local bishop of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was under investigation. He resigned under fire. Evidently he was afraid to meet his ministerial and official record!

Nearly a week after his sensational exit from the church he told a very lurid story to the effect that an angel had come to him and directed him to resign his office, withdraw from the organization and organize a church of his own. He states the angel told him: “It is the will of the Lord that you present your resignation to Frederick M. Smith to-night, and thus sever your connection with that organization.”

There is nothing in this purported angelic communication save what Mr. Evans had been advocating for weeks prior to his church exit. Mr. Evans’s angel was a trailer. He offered nothing new. He followed Mr. Evans’s lead. He said exactly the things Mr. Evans wanted said. Good angel, that! We would not be so mean as to insinuate that there was no angel but, well, it is convenient to have an angel tell you what you want said, and thus help you out of an embarrassing situation, now isn’t it? This angel was different from other angels!

It is significant that this angelic appearance is supposed to have taken place about 10 o’clock, Monday morning, June 3. Mr. Evans undoubtedly knew that his resignation would be asked for on that very evening. This accounts for the angel’s haste—“Present your resignation to Frederick M. Smith to-night”—Get there first, so to speak. It was imperative that he do this at once if he would save himself from church discipline. It would be too late to-morrow. It was now or never. This angel of Mr. Evans’s did not desire his protegee to answer to the church officials. He did not desire the people to know what the general church authorities had against Mr. Evans. Mayhap, it might be embarrassing for the angel to have appeared afterwards. Who knows?

Mr. Evans “conferred not with flesh and blood.” He was feverishly responsive. Immediately on the convening of the committee of investigation and the local ministry that evening he resigned. It might be well to remark that this talk about the angel is decidedly uncanny. Mr. Evans states that he saw its glory reflected from a looking glass. In his resignation he made no reference to the angelic visitation. It seems impossible that a man who had seen an angel at mid-day would present himself to a company of men, carry out the instructions of the angel to resign, and give no intimation whatever of said visitation, particularly when he was seeking in every possible way to impress most of those men to follow him.

This is not like Mr. Evans. He is nothing, if not spectacular. We can understand how Mr. Evans might imagine he saw an angel and immediately blazon it to the world, but I am sure people who know Mr. Evans will bear me out in this that if he really saw an angel on Monday and kept it to himself until the following Sunday it constitutes the eighth wonder of the world!

Mr. Evans's Personal Grievances.

Mr. Evans, in his letter of resignation to President Frederick M. Smith gave the following reasons for withdrawal from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

"Because I can no longer indorse many of *your* rulings and the many changes *you* have caused to be made in the faith and practice of the church . . . I do not believe in much that *you* and those over whom *you* exert a strange influence have brought into prominence . . . I believe that *you* are leading the people away from the truth . . . There is much in *your* conduct and teaching that I cannot indorse . . . Having been so unjustly treated by *you* during the years that are passed at different times, I have thought to try and settle matters touching branch rights as expressed in our branch papers to *you*, but having received such unfair treatment at *your* hands during the meetings we've had in this city, that I have concluded to *refuse* to be further humiliated."

Not one word in this letter about the angel. The very text precludes the angel story. His was a personal difference with President Smith. He did not like Mr. Smith; hence the resignation. If Mr. Evans could have settled the "matters touching branch rights" he would not have resigned. What then of the angel's visit? What of his confession that when he was a member of the First Presidency nine years before he then knew Joseph Smith was a polygamist and that the church was corrupt? Despite his knowledge that Joseph Smith taught and practiced polygamy, despite the corruption in the church, yet, if he could only have settled the "matters touching branch rights" to his own satisfaction, which means that he was to have his own way in Toronto, he would have remained with the church.

The cat is out of the bag. It was not the command of an angel which inspired the resignation. It was not the corruption in the church. It was not that he knew that Joseph Smith taught and practiced polygamy. No! It was the trouble over "branch rights." He had known of the "corruption" for years, but he never left the church. In fact only last year he unequivocally defended Joseph Smith against the charge of polygamy. What, then, were these "branch rights" which caused the resignation? Mr. Evans had defied the general church authorities; he had run the local church to suit himself. He had failed to report different funds received by him. Members of the local church who did not submit to Mr. Evans's dictation were flayed from the stand and abused until few dared to oppose and many left the church. These were the "matters touching branch rights" which Mr. Evans did not wish disturbed. The general church decided they should be. The resignation followed.

Mr. Evans's angel said: "The leaders of the Reorganized Church are teaching many things that are not in harmony with the will of the Lord." It will be noted that Mr. Evans's informant was quite guarded in his charges. He avoided specifications. It seemingly is not safe even for an angel to be too specific. Mr. Evans claimed F. M. Smith was apostatizing from the faith of his fathers. Would this not have been a good thing if his fathers were such bad men?

Mr. Evans's angel continues: "In many things they (the leaders) have corrupted themselves be-

fore God." Not one instance of corruption indicated—a blanket charge—no specifications. It would be difficult to establish a case of slander against his angel, for we know of no one having seen him except Mr. Evans, and his testimony is indeed conflicting. Mr. Evans has utterly failed to show wherein President Smith wronged him. He said he had made his bed in Toronto and would hold it "until hell froze over." President Smith disturbed his bed before the freezing event happened. Hence the resignation.

TORONTO CHURCH BULLETIN

Vol. 1.—No. 4.

Oct. 18, 1918.

A Very Pertinent Question.

Mr. Evans admits that for nine years he has known that Joseph Smith was a polygamist; that his son Joseph, the late President of the Reorganized Church, knew of his father's iniquity; confessed it; and then with others conspired to destroy this evidence; that the leading men in the Reorganized Church were parties to this infamous procedure, yet, this man who knew all this whilst he was a member of the First Presidency of the Church, did everything in his power during the intervening years to curry the favor of the late Joseph Smith and to avail himself of this great man's generosity and kindness.

Despite his claim that he knew of criminality in the church, Mr. Evans still remained with the church. He accepted ordination. He continued to retain a prominent place in the church. By both tongue and pen he eulogized the two Joseph Smiths. He made their names synonyms of virtue and truth. He associated, in seeming fraternal purpose, with the men whose characters he now so bitterly and unjustly assails.

He very cheerfully and eagerly received the generous contributions of the devoted members of the church in carrying on his work. If, as Mr. Evans concedes, he knew nine years ago, and before his release (not resignation as he calls it) from the First Presidency of the Church, that the leaders were corrupt, yet continued to represent the church, are we to infer that he would have continued to represent the church if his "branch rights" had not been interfered with? Would he have remained with the church if the angel had not appeared and he could have settled his differences with President Smith?

If your answer is "Yes" you thereby question his integrity. If you answer "No," then you nullify his claim for angelic direction. If he would have resigned without the angel's direction, then the coming of the angel had nothing to do with the resignation. That was a foregone conclusion. If he would not have resigned without the direction of the angel, then it follows that knowledge of all this corruption would not have led to the resignation and he would have continued to do what he had been doing for the nine years before; that is, to paint Joseph Smith as a paragon of virtue and lead the people to believe that he was a righteous man and a prophet of God. He now claims to have known all this time that he both taught and practised polygamy.

Speaking of covering up iniquity—What was Mr. Evans doing for nine years during which time he now admits he knew of this corruption in the church yet throughout this period of time he, in his public speeches and written documents took an entirely opposite position?

Was he not doing what he charges against the late President Joseph Smith, i. e.,—"covering up"? Let

Mr. Evans answer! Why did Mr. Evans only last year, in his discussion with the Reverend Mr. McKenzie deny that Joseph Smith was a polygamist when he now affirms that, at that time, he knew Joseph Smith was guilty of teaching and practising polygamy? Why? Will those who are accepting Mr. Evans's lead to-day without question please answer this one question, Why? As we view it, Mr. Evans cannot extricate himself from the unfortunate dilemma in which he has placed himself. Is it not possible that this is the reason why he persistently refuses to meet me in public discussion?

We wish it distinctly understood that in our discussion of Mr. Evans's church work we have not, nor do we wish in any way to reflect on the character or honor of Mr. Evans. We are dealing with his claims as a public man. We believe he has made a great mistake—that those who have followed him have made a mistake. We are but trying to show wherein and thereby do good to all concerned.

TORONTO CHURCH BULLETIN

Vol. 1.—No. 5.

Oct. 25, 1918.

Mr. Evans Writes An Important Letter.

Mr. Evans claims that an angel told him to resign his position as bishop and withdraw his membership from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He claims he was told to:

“Bid the people to fear not to withdraw from that organization, for in many things the leaders have corrupted themselves before God; they have placed their trust in the arm of flesh and are seeking to walk according to the wisdom of this world and to conform to the spirit of this world. The honest in heart have not been deprived of the spirit, yet many of them are praying for deliverance from the bondage into which their leaders have led them; many are now discouraged, but when they hear the message that will go forth from thee, they shall rejoice and throw off the yoke of bondage and come forth and perform the work that God has designed shall be accomplished before the coming of the Lord.”

Mr. Evans claims the angel also said:

“And now, I am commissioned to command you to organize the Church of Jesus Christ so that those who have and may receive the voice of the Good Shepherd may be safely cared for within his fold and by reason of the church organization shall be of assistance to each other.”

If Mr. Evans was commanded of God to leave the Reorganized Church and to form a new church it follows that the Reorganized Church is rejected of God. Being rejected it cannot be in favor with God. It has no future so far as God is concerned. If Mr. Evans's church is right the Reorganized Church is wrong. The issue is clear. Both cannot be the Church of Christ.

It is quite interesting in this connection to review a communication from Mr. Evans to one of the leading men of the Reorganized Church in 1908. At the time, Mr. Evans was a member of the First Presidency of the church. He then claimed that God was wonderfully blessing him. He therein describes an extraordinary vision which he claimed to have received relative to the Reorganized Church; which, if true, at once stamps the Reorganized Church as a divine institution. If this vision was of God it still remains to be fulfilled. If this recent vision which Mr. Evans relates is correct the former one cannot now be fulfilled. The question arises, Which of

these two visions is correct? Both seemingly cannot be true. If the first one is false, the reliability of the second one is in question, as the claim to divine inspiration is thereby clouded. If the vision of 1908 is not true, Mr. Evans ceases to be a competent witness so far as visions are concerned.

As we view it, Mr. Evans must take one of two positions. First: That the first vision was of God and will eventually be fulfilled. To do this he must necessarily renounce his present position, confess that he has made a mistake, and seek reinstatement in the Reorganized Church. Second: Stand by his present position and repudiate the vision of 1908.

The first course seems the most consistent. It is beset with less difficulties. The only alternative, as we view it, is to renounce the vision of 1908 and stand by the one of 1918. If he was mistaken in 1908, what assurance have we that he may not be mistaken now?

To summarize: In 1908 Mr. Evans had a vision showing a wonderful endowment being conferred upon the leading quorums of the Reorganized Church. Such an endowment has never, as yet, been received by the Reorganized Church. No such accessions have ever come from the Utah Church. If the vision is true, the fulfilment is yet in the future. How can it be if the Reorganized Church is rejected of God?

The next issue will contain the vision of 1908.

TORONTO CHURCH BULLETIN

Vol. 1.—No. 6.

Nov. 1, 1918.

A Vision of The Reorganized Church.

(An extract from letter written by R. C. Evans to President Joseph Smith on January 8, 1908.)

“In the summer of 1907 when on my great western mission, I went out into a lonely place, in the mountain to pray. While at prayer I was enveloped in a blaze of glorious light and saw the following vision. I saw the First Presidency receive a marvelous endowment, the description of which I may not give at this time. While under the influence of the power that had been with them, I saw them bless the Quorum of the Twelve, and great was the blessing conferred upon them. In turn the Seventy and the High Priests were blessed by the Presidency and the Twelve. Many of them at once spoke in tongues and were immediately commissioned to go to the nations of the earth, in whose language they had spoken, and it was given to the Presidency to know that these men thus sent, would, on arrival to the nations, they would at once preach in the language of the respective nations to whom they were sent, and that great would be the result of the work that they would perform in the name of the Lord.

“I saw a large concourse of people coming toward us from the Utah Church. They stood some distance from us and there they stood gazing on the wonderful works of God being performed by the brethren above referred to. They saw the blind instantly restored, the lame walk, the deaf hear, and many marvelous works were performed by the First Presidency and those that had been blessed or ordained.

“Then I heard one of the leading men of the Utah Church say, ‘We have as a church, tried to atone for the past, we have reformed our lives, and in teaching and practice, have tried to return to the old path. Our former sins and the sins of our fathers have made us a hiss and a by-word in the mouth of the nations, and we have thought that the Lord would acknowledge us as the true church, established by command of God in 1830. We have set forth the

claim that our presidents were in succession to the prophet Joseph the Seer, but we must admit that the Lord has not blessed us in this and, as we now behold him in blessing the Reorganized Church, which church we have so long despised, here we behold his elect and anointed. Let us forsake all our errors and follies, and go to the Reorganized Church and plead for admission under the law.'

"Some refused to go, but seeing the wonderful power of God resting upon the representatives of the Reorganization, thousands came forward and entered the church. Many were baptized, confirmed, and ordained, and were blessed with the endowment, and many were sent on missions.

"The strange part was, that some of them were received into the church without baptism. Some were blessed by the Presidency, and in their blessing they were acknowledged without rebaptism or reordination. They were few thus acknowledged, but the church in astonishment saw the great power of God attend the priesthood of those men and accepted them.

"I may add, that I do not wish you to think that the men now holding the prominent positions in the church, were all present, for that would lead you astray, for there were many new faces present, and some were absent altogether. Thank God I was permitted to see and know the men that were present, and some that are not at all prominent now were among the leading men of the church, while some that are now prominent were occupying other positions. Some of those now occupying were dead; some had fallen by the way, but *the church, as a body, was living under the light of the Lord.*"

May we inquire whether Mr. Evans was among those "living under the light of the Lord?"

(To be continued.)

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