

# The Dawn Magazine

90th Anniversary Edition  
1932–2022

*“O send out thy  
light and thy  
truth: let them lead  
me; let them bring  
me unto thy holy  
hill, and to thy  
tabernacles.”  
—Psalm 43:3*

**THIS ISSUE OF** *The Dawn* marks ninety years of continuous and uninterrupted publication as a monthly magazine. From its humble beginnings during the dark days of the great economic depression of the thirties and the war years which immediately followed, it has proclaimed the kingdom of righteousness and peace soon to be established over all the earth. The light of Truth has gone forth far and wide to reach a hearing ear under the wonderful banner of the psalmist’s words, “O send out thy light and thy truth.”

The message of the “Gospel of the kingdom” has been well received by many who hunger and thirst for Truth in these turbulent and troublesome times. (Matt. 24:14) Various messages are received on a

regular basis by the Dawn that testify to the deeper appreciation and understanding of God's Word that has been realized by many, and some have responded by giving their lives in full consecration to our loving Heavenly Father.

### **WITH TOLERANCE AND GOODWILL**

This printed message continues to be sent forth in the spirit of tolerance and goodwill toward all. It has never been *The Dawn* magazine's policy to force the views presented herein upon those who may differ in their religious beliefs. The messages of this publication are sent forth from the combined efforts of many who willingly share in the work of the Lord's vineyard. This work has been and continues to be carried out by those who have labored directly at the Dawn's physical facilities and by many others who also participate, electronically and otherwise, in many different locales. Taken together, the worldwide "Dawn family" of workers is grateful for this wonderful privilege, and we give thanks and praise to God.

### **A LABOR OF LOVE**

The first issue of *The Dawn* magazine in October 1932 was a labor of love from those who shared in its inauguration. It came as a result of a complex set of circumstances during a very difficult time in the experiences of the Lord's people. For sixteen years a leadership vacuum had existed due to the death of the Bible Students' founder, Brother Charles Russell. Brethren had scattered in many different directions, and efforts were being made to bring them back to the faith "once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 1:3

Since its inception, various Truth-related activities have been carried out by the Dawn as a witness to the Gospel message. These efforts have included, in addition to the monthly Dawn magazine, several reprintings of the six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures* and *Tabernacle Shadows*. Over the years, the Dawn has expanded its publishing and printing operation, which today includes more than 75 literature offerings in many languages, consisting of books, booklets, and tracts, which cover a wide range of Bible topics.

Other endeavors have been extended to the use of radio, television, magazine and billboard advertising, the Internet, and other forms of electronic media, in the presentation of the Truth. Overseas activities have also been encouraged in numerous foreign countries, and many cooperative efforts continue in this regard. Although these and other activities have continued to be carried out throughout these many years, this special 90th anniversary article will focus mainly on what led to the Dawn's creation and its early development.

## **EARLY DAYS OF THE HARVEST**

Many years prior to the publication of the first *Dawn* magazine a series of events was taking place under the watchful care and everlasting providence of our loving Heavenly Father. On August 19, 1891, W. Norman Woodworth was born in Berwick, Nova Scotia, Canada, and at an early age he was drawn to the Truth. He gave his life to God in total consecration in 1907, and soon afterward began his ministry as a colporteur traveling by bicycle or walking over the back roads of eastern Canada and the United States.

Brother Woodworth was born into a Christian home, and was influenced by his father, who had been previously associated with the Advent Church. His father had received Volume Four of *Studies in the Scriptures*, which brought him into the Truth when young Norman was two years old. Other members of his family traveled to a nearby city in Nova Scotia to hear Brother Russell speak while he was serving in the area on a pilgrim trip. As a result of their interest in the true Gospel message, some gave their lives in consecration to the Lord and formed a small ecclesia. Thus, Brother Woodworth was exposed to the Truth very early in life and became a devout student of the Bible and a loyal servant of the Lord.

## **JOURNEY TO BETHEL**

After faithfully serving as a colporteur for several years, in 1910 Brother Woodworth left his home in Nova Scotia, Canada to make the voyage by boat with other brethren who were returning to Brooklyn, New York. This was where the International Bible Students Association (IBSA) was located, and affectionately known among the brethren at that time as “Bethel.” Bethel was the home where workers were housed and was appropriately given the name which means “The House of God.” The IBSA was the very center of the harvest work that was being conducted from there by Brother Russell. As a young man of deep conviction and love for God, it was Brother Woodworth’s utmost desire to serve full time in the harvest activities.

Once at Bethel, he had opportunity to meet many new brethren and to work with Brother Russell,

who was quickly impressed by his enthusiasm and love for the Truth. Brother Woodworth was soon invited to become directly involved in a new “high tech” project that was being planned, which approximately seventy-five other brethren were already participating in. He was advised to learn everything that he could about electrical circuits, running slide projectors, and other related equipment that was being developed at that time. Brother Russell also asked him to take jobs for short periods of time, and at various locations, to learn the ins and outs of running different types of projection equipment.

## **THE PHOTO DRAMA**

When all of the various plans and features from many sources had been completed, the Photo-Drama of Creation was unveiled by Brother Russell to the general public as a new and dramatic type of witness activity. This new high-tech project, state of the art at that time, had been mostly kept quiet because it required tremendous effort and planning. It involved the orderly arrangement of many colored slides along with a motion picture presentation that showed God’s plan of the ages and the wonderful message concerning his eternal purpose for mankind. These efforts resulted in one of the most dramatic and eye-catching presentations of the Truth message ever accomplished until that time, and it was greatly blessed by God.

Brother Woodworth was commissioned to travel extensively throughout the United States and Canada to show the Photo-Drama slides and motion picture presentation. Countless audiences of interested

people came to see and hear the Word of God and his plans for the human creation that were being promoted in this entirely new manner. The project was a great success and Brother Woodworth served faithfully in this work over the course of the next several years. During this time, he also gained valuable experience in lecturing, and had greatly improved his mechanical abilities. All of these experiences made him well prepared for the eventual and challenging tasks that lay ahead, including the establishment of the Dawn Bible Students Association, serving as its general manager and as editor of its forthcoming magazine, *The Dawn*.

### **BROTHER RUSSELL DIES**

When Brother Charles Russell died in October, 1916, many drastic changes began to take place at the IBSA. Shortly after his death, a 7th Volume was printed by the Society and was claimed to be the posthumous work of Brother Russell. This incident alone proved to be a severe test among many of the brethren at Bethel, and unfortunately this was only the beginning.

Other tests of fellowship and loyalty to the Truth soon followed that also began to divide the brethren who were serving there. Some who had worked at Bethel for many years began to realize that an adverse spirit was developing, and they began to leave. Brother Woodworth also left at that time to take employment elsewhere.

### **USING THE AIR WAVES**

During this turbulent time, radio was still in its infancy, but its potential was soon realized and greatly improved upon as a new method of mass

communication. The prospects seemed endless, and in the early 1920s the new management at IBSA requested Brother Woodworth's help in using the new media for their witness activity.

We are fortunate to learn about these important events firsthand from his memoirs which were written during the final years of his life. He recalls, "Soon after I arrived in Brooklyn, the Society [IBSA] became interested in this new method of communication and began construction of the necessary buildings, including a home from which to operate it. It was not long before the first program went on the air. Music became an important feature of programming, and the Society decided to form a small orchestra to participate in this."

At that time, an orchestra of eighteen members had been formed of which Brother Woodworth was one, having volunteered to take up the trombone for the occasion. These brethren provided music that was soon broadcast over the new medium of radio. Others were also called upon to give an occasional short lecture or to read news reports. The radio work was located on Staten Island, one of the five boroughs of New York City. An elaborate modern studio was constructed during the years 1922-24, and, in the course of time, a pipe organ was installed which eventually replaced the orchestra. The station used the call letters WORD, which appropriately identified the Society's intended purpose as a tool to witness to the Word of God.

During the late 1920's, Brother Woodworth began to develop a "question and answer" method to send out the message of God's Word over the air waves. The general format consisted of an "earnest" seeker

of Truth who would ask questions about Bible prophecy and other related subjects, while a well-versed student would provide a “frank” answer while quoting directly from the Bible. From this basic outline emerged the popular and well-known *Frank and Ernest* radio programs that were later broadcast over network radio stations in many locations in the United States as well as in other countries around the world.

## **DISMISSAL**

Due to the changes in management, and the general policies at the IBSA after 1916, Brother Woodworth’s services gradually became no longer appreciated. He was brought before the board of directors and was asked to either conform to the new policies or leave. He subsequently resigned and the *Frank and Ernest* programs were dropped by the IBSA. He provides an interesting account in his memoirs as to what happened at that time.

We quote: “The day that Brother Dawson actually quit the service we talked matters over and decided to visit some brethren who had left the Society soon after Brother Russell’s death. I did this with the certain knowledge that it would lead to embarrassment and trouble when it became known in headquarters, and it did. One morning I found a note on my desk instructing me to appear in Brother Rutherford’s office at once. I did so. He asked me if it was true that I had made this certain visit, and I acknowledged the truth. He told me to be back at his office in an hour, and when I returned, I was confronted by the board of directors.

“When asked if I believed that the Lord had an organization, and that the IBSA was that organization, my reply was that I did not believe that any man or any group of men had a monopoly on God’s truth. That settled it. I was glad then that I had stayed on until this clear-cut opportunity of presenting the real reason for leaving came to me. There was no doubt then that to remain in the service with this group meant that one had to obey them rather than God.”

### **TIME OF CONFUSION**

During this period of time, the scattering and confusion among the Lord’s people was becoming more desperate. Some brethren preferred to remain loyal to the IBSA, believing that conditions there were only temporary and things would be made right by God in his own due time and manner. Others were summarily dismissed for opposing the new order of things, and many simply left of their own accord. A few brethren who possessed the proper spirit of the Truth and were loyal to its fundamental teachings, left the IBSA to form new groups of Bible students. This provided them with the liberty of thought and fellowship that they had enjoyed in previous years.

In the meantime, however, special efforts were being made to contact those brethren who had become scattered and isolated from the flock of the Lord’s people. This was done by way of personal contact whenever and wherever possible and by holding special meetings for that purpose. After 1916, and throughout most of the decade of the 1920s, was a time that is best described by the

Prophet Zechariah who wrote, “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.”—Zech. 13:7

## **REUNION IN PITTSBURGH**

In the fall of 1929, a group of brethren considered the possibility of holding a Reunion Convention in the Old Bible House Chapel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. They believed that it would be the proper time and place to hold a special service in memory of Brother Russell, as it had now been thirteen years since his death. They also hoped that a convention would well serve the interests of the Lord’s people, help bring the scattered ones together again, and provide spiritual food for all. Arrangements were made, and The Reunion Convention of Christian Bible Students was held on November 1-3, 1929. The effort proved to be a very rich blessing for all, and it became the first of many annual Reunion Conventions to be held in Pittsburgh during the autumn season.

Following the convention a special Souvenir Report was made available for those who wished to cherish the memory of the special occasion. Pictures of the speakers and their discourses were included as well as other Truth-related information. One of the interesting features of the report was the reprinting of the Convention Committee’s letter that had been written prior to the convention. This correspondence clearly showed their keen interest and determination to hold such an event. This was especially true in light of the scattering and

confusion that had continued among the Lord's people since 1916. As part of the letter the committee officially approved that a Reunion Convention be held, that they recognized our Lord Jesus as their Head, and that they were not subject to any human organization. The letter was signed by the five brothers on the Convention Committee.

## **RADIO ECHOES**

In 1931, a concerted effort was made by the Bible Students ecclesia in Brooklyn, New York to reach more of the scattered brethren. They did this by reviving and sponsoring the former *Frank and Ernest* radio program that had been dropped by the IBSA. They believed that it would be an effective witness to send out the Truth over the air waves. Dialogues were prepared and a contract was made with radio station WOR, which was one of the most powerful in New York City, to run the program for a period of thirteen weeks. Brother Woodworth took the part of "Frank" and Brother John Dawson was "Ernest."

Program dialogues were printed commercially and interested listeners were offered a copy as a four-page Radio Echoes tract that was sent out twice each month. The response to the broadcast was encouraging, but when the contract expired the programs were discontinued due to a lack of available funds. Because the radio tract was being sent out to interested listeners it was decided that all funds should be concentrated on the printed message. The tract, therefore, continued to be sent out despite the fact that there were no more radio programs being broadcast. The Radio Echoes

pamphlet had been favorably received by many and the brethren decided that it should be expanded into a regular full-size Truth magazine.

## **THE DAWN MAGAZINE**

What had originally been the biweekly Radio Echoes tracts was now enlarged and renamed to become *The Dawn* magazine, which began to be published at the beginning of each month. The mid-monthly radio tract was also continued and sent out on the 15th of each month, essentially providing a biweekly magazine. This arrangement continued until the end of 1933 when the radio tract was discontinued.

The first issue of *The Dawn* appeared October 1, 1932, and was published in Brooklyn, New York. The early issues of the magazine were printed by the use of an old press that had been obtained and installed in the basement of an apartment building where one of the brothers from the Brooklyn ecclesia lived. It required human energy instead of electrical power and was operated by a foot-pedal mechanism. It was very difficult to produce quality printing with the antiquated machine. During cold weather it was necessary to wear warm clothing while attempting to get *The Dawn* printed, and the only heated place was in the office, to which the brethren frequently went to get warmed up.

Brother Woodworth became editor of the magazine, and prepared the articles for publication. He also volunteered to run the press. Other workers from nearby locations came in to help prepare the magazine for mailing and to perform other service-related duties.

## THE ENSUING NINETY YEARS

Space will not permit us to detail all the events and activities associated with the Dawn over the ensuing ninety years. We will merely highlight a few things. Starting in 1944, *The Dawn* magazine and other books, booklets, and tracts were printed and shipped at the Dawn Plant in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Beginning in the late spring of 2020, the printing and shipping operation moved to Longwood, Florida, a suburb of Orlando.

*The Dawn* magazine remains a monthly publication containing 64 pages. It has a beautiful multi-colored cover design that is changed from time to time on an ongoing basis. It continues to carry the subtitle “A Herald of Christ’s Presence,” as it has since 1933. The statement of beliefs, “To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach,” has continued to adorn the back cover since 1936.

In addition to publication in English, *The Dawn* magazine is printed in a number of foreign languages. At the present time these include: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Portuguese and Croatian. Printing is done by the use of modern, clean, computerized equipment. Volunteer workers, both on-site and remote, work each month to prepare the magazine for publication and mailing to our readers. Similar processes are used for the reprinting of books, booklets and tracts, as well as for newly written literature.

In summary, *The Dawn* magazine’s main purpose and general format remains relatively unchanged since its inception ninety years ago. An editorial committee continues to function in preparing the articles and to send forth the message of the light

and Truth of God's Word to those who hunger and thirst for understanding.

It is by the Lord's grace and strength, in which we daily trust, that *The Dawn* magazine continues to serve the spiritual interests of the household of faith as it has done since October, 1932. The brethren who share in this work consider it a labor of love under the wonderful banner of the Apostle Paul's encouraging words which were written to the church at Corinth. "We are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."  
—I Cor. 3:9 ■