

The Soviet calendrical adventure finally came to an end on June 26, 1940, when the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet abolished the [6-day week]....

To appreciate the role played by religious sentiments in the downfall of the six-day week, note that, along with their restoration of the seven-day weekly cycle, the Soviet authorities also reestablished Sunday as the official weekly day of rest. Had it not been for powerful religious pressures which it apparently could not resist, the government could have easily chosen any of the other six days of the restored cycle, given the fact that Sunday—the religious associations of which resonate even in its name, *Voskresen'e*, which means “Resurrection”—had officially been dead for almost eleven years!

The complete failure of the eleven-year Soviet calendrical experiment, just like that of its French predecessor 140 years earlier, attests to the tremendous resilience of tradition in general and of religion in particular. In both France and the Soviet Union, some desperate attempts were made by two of the most ruthless totalitarian regimes in history to completely destroy the Judeo-Christian seven-day week. In both societies, to this day, it still remains the dominant “beat” of social life.

—From *The Seven Day Circle*, Eviatar Zerubavel (1985)

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

See print copy for song.

Old Orchard Church
September 13, 2009 — 10:15 to 11:45 a.m.

Then Jesus said to them,
“The Sabbath was made for man,
not man for the Sabbath.
So the Son of Man is Lord
even of the Sabbath.”

~ Mark 2:27-28 ~

Celebrating Jesus Christ, Lord of the Sabbath

All who are weary and burdened,
Jesus bids you come to Him.
He promises the rest you so desperately need!
Rest for the soul: Rest from guilt. Rest from futility.

The Old Covenant Sabbath commanded rest
and forbade human work upon the threat of death.
As good as it was, it pointed to something better—
to Messiah, true Lord of Sabbath Shalom.

Blessed be the name of Jesus,
Through whom and for whom all things exist.
Come, on this day of worship and rest,
Come near unto God.
Bless Christ for his grace, sing his worthiness!
By his work on the cross we have begun our Eternal Rest.

Alleluia!



Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson:

Genesis 1:31-2:3, Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:15

Gospel Lesson: Mark 2:23-28

Sermon

“Grace for Our Not Knowing”

Hosea 6:1-10

Ron Lutjens, senior pastor, preaching

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

The Order of God and the Arrogance of Man

On September 24, 1929...the Council of People's Commissaries of the Soviet Union modified its decree of August, adding that the new workweek would be a five-day, rather than a seven-day, cycle, with workers resting every fifth, rather than every seventh, day.

To appreciate the antireligious significance of this move, note that, originally, the days of the week were even supposed to retain their traditional names, with only Saturday and Sunday being removed from the weekly cycle....These two weekly bastions of Judeo-Christian religious sentiments were clearly the main targets of a regime vehemently determined to fulfill the Marxist dream of crushing the “opiate of the masses.” In fact, when the Commissar of Labor expressed his concern about the future of Sunday, he was told explicitly that the calendrical reform was introduced essentially to “combat the religious spirit.”

As in France 140 years earlier, the main purpose of abolishing the seven-day week in the Soviet Union was to destroy religion there....Altering the length of the weekly cycle was supposed to pull the entire social and economic life of the Soviet Union outside the sphere of relevance of the traditional seven-day rhythm associated with its three major religions (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism), so as to make that rhythm of no use for any purpose whatsoever (and, thus, both obsolete and dispensable). In a social world where one's most important affairs would all be regulated in accordance with a five-day rhythm of activity...only once every thirty-five days, when the traditional and new weeks would coincide, would a Soviet worker be able to actually attend church on Sunday, mosque on Friday, or synagogue on Saturday. Thus, on any given traditional weekly day of public worship, only one fifth of the entire Soviet work force (and not the same people every week) would be able to attend services, the other 80 percent being at work!....

However....workers' widespread discontent soon led the authorities to reconsider the matter, and, on March 16, 1930, the “Government Commission of the Council of Labor and Defense on the Transition of Enterprises and Offices to a Continuous Production Week” began recognizing families' requests for synchronized days off work as a legitimate factor to be considered upon designing work schedules.

In a speech, [of June 23, 1931] Stalin singled out irresponsibility as the most urgent problem and the worst enemy that had “crept into our enterprises as an illegitimate companion of the continuous workweek”....He recommended abandoning the [5-day week] altogether....

From December 1, 1931, with very few exceptions, work throughout the Soviet Union was structured in accordance with a new, six-day week....

As in France 140 years earlier, it was the essentially traditionalistic rural population who spearheaded the movement to preserve the seven-day week....

Continue on the back.

