

Divisions in the Church

Divisions in the Two by Two Church

List of Divisions

Revised August 29, 2025

Divisions in the Two by Two Church

William Irvine's Abdication and Excommunication, 1914-19

Edward Cooney's Excommunication & Purge; Division of 1928

Bob Barlow's Breakaway Sect from the Two by Two Church – 1970s – Queensland, Australia

The Sri Lanka Split, 2016-17 – Peter Morrison

Montana & Alaska Purging, 1990 – Truitt Oyler, John Starkweather & Bob Ingram

Vietnam Division Account, 2009-2014 – Canadian Workers Takeover

Alberta Incorporation and Purge, 1999 – Willis Propp

Alaska Division, 1989 – Bob Ingram

Australia, 1950s – Bill Carroll & Edward Cooney (**Victoria**); Willie Hughes (**South Australia**)

East-West Division in North America – “*When the West broke away from the East*” – Jack Carroll & George Walker, including the Colorado Disturbance in the 1930s and 1938 World Conference of Workers. Rulings on Divorce & Remarriage, Overseers no longer allowed to marry.

Greece Division, 1985 – Nikolas Papadakis

Canada 1968-69 – Willie Martin

Colorado Disturbance, 1938 – Ed Cornock, George Walker

ULTIMATIMS from WORKERS

Alberta: “Are you prepared to support the ministry in our actions regarding taking meetings out of homes and putting people out of the fellowship. Yes or No?” (**Alberta Account** by Don Galloway)

Alberta: Jim Knipe to Jordans: “Do you support the ministry in Alberta in their decision to put people out? It’s a matter of standing behind this ministry or not...just give us a simple yes or no answer.” (**Alberta Excommunication Tapes**)

Alaska: “Accept the decisions of the Elders of the Ministry as just and final, and encourage others to do the same.”

Montana: Truitt & John were asked to step aside from the ministry for preaching “divisive doctrine.” Reportedly, at the end of the meetings where he delivered his counter doctrine message, Everett Swanson would ask the Friends who agreed with him to stand to their feet. The majority did, and those who did not stand were disfellowshipped. At a Manhattan Convention held in the 1980’s, Friends and Workers were asked to show which side they were on by standing to their feet during a meeting. Most of the Oyler relatives scattered across the state did not stand, and were excluded from fellowship.

Willie Martin: “Jim Abbott came to our home and told us if we continued to associate with Willie, we would have to leave the truth.” (**Willie Martin Account**)

Ron Campbell wrote: “I once questioned the South Australian overseer William Hughes about the leaders’ reasons for concealing the truth of the internal divisions between senior workers and overseers when, in actuality, young men and women give their lives and all to this cause, honestly believing that all serve and none rule. When asked why young workers were not told the truth his reply was, ‘If we did, none would go!’ ”

Marg Vogt: “nine elders in Adelaide went to the Head Worker in that State, John Baartz, and pleaded for love to reign. This came about because while

Ron Campbell was home, he was very popular with the people and an excellent preacher, and there was much jealousy against him. Soon after, these nine elders received letters stating that they and their families were to cease fellowship!”

East-West USA – George Walker to Irvine Weir: “I would not like you to go to California now. I am sorry but I may have to cut the West off.”

Vietnam – Nguyen Family: “The two main things that we did not agree with in his letter were that the Workers ‘deserve our highest respect’ (it is our Lord’s place in our heart, not Workers). And that Uncle Hoa ‘is not considered a part of the teacher staff in this country now.’ Seeing my father disagreed with his letter, Lyle Shultz told him: ‘I can’t take care of you any more.’ My father replied, ‘God will take care of us.’ (**Vietnam Account**).

Rittenhouse: “He put before us two choices: (1) either be led by him or (2) be excommunicated. There were three of us and we said, ‘We choose to be led by the Spirit.’ The three were excommunicated. In the light of this incident and many others, we cannot accept your statement, Jack—quote: “No person has ever been excluded from the Fellowship of God’s People without just cause.” (Letter by **Rittenhouse & Sweetland**, July 16, 1954)