

What If ... ? (p. 5); Working Hard or Hardly Working? (p. 14);
Does Anyone Hear Us? (p. 16); Good Seed (p. 29)

may 2015

Canadian Adventist

Messenger

I Made a Bet with God and Lost

How a commercial fisherman
became a fisher of men.



PM40069337

“One thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

—Philippians 3:13,14, ESV



Pulling Together

One summer day back on the farm, the tasks all completed and daylight still left, my brother and I decided to recreate the travels of the pioneers. Ours was a scaled-down event involving our play wagon and the family's two dogs, Lassie and Laddie.

It didn't take long to put together a harness with odds and ends from the barn, and with the dogs hooked up, we were ready to head West. Brother and I hopped in the wagon for the journey, but when I yelled "Giddy up," Laddie laid down while Lassie pulled. I hopped out of the wagon and tried everything I could think of—treats, pep talks—I even propped Laddie up, only to have him tip over when I stopped holding him. Nothing worked. The trip West was finished before it started.

Adventists, too, are on a journey. Within the church, so much depends on us working together. The church is a high-stakes proposition. God designed it to be a place where people plan and pack for a trip far bigger than the one my brother and I were thinking of so long ago. Not only that, God designed the church to be a welcome centre, a place of evangelism, that would encourage people who had never thought of making such a journey to sign on.

Satan, understanding better than we do what the church is all about, has thrown every resource into disrupting the journey. He induces some to lie down on the job. Others he distracts by suggesting a different destination in the hopes that we will not be pulling together toward a common goal.

In the years since the aborted trip on that summer evening, I've pondered the lesson that it taught. Each of us has an agenda; we only move ahead when we move together. No journey is possible unless I am willing to stand up and do my part.

Our journey as a church is much bigger than one with a toy wagon and a team of dogs. Jesus has chosen the destination for this one: heaven. Sometimes it may feel like the team is going in different directions, but Jesus is the team leader and it is His business to sort that out. We need to pull together. ■

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FEATURES

24 COVER STORY | Made a Bet with God and Lost—How Daniel Guilboche went from commercial fisherman to a fisher of men.

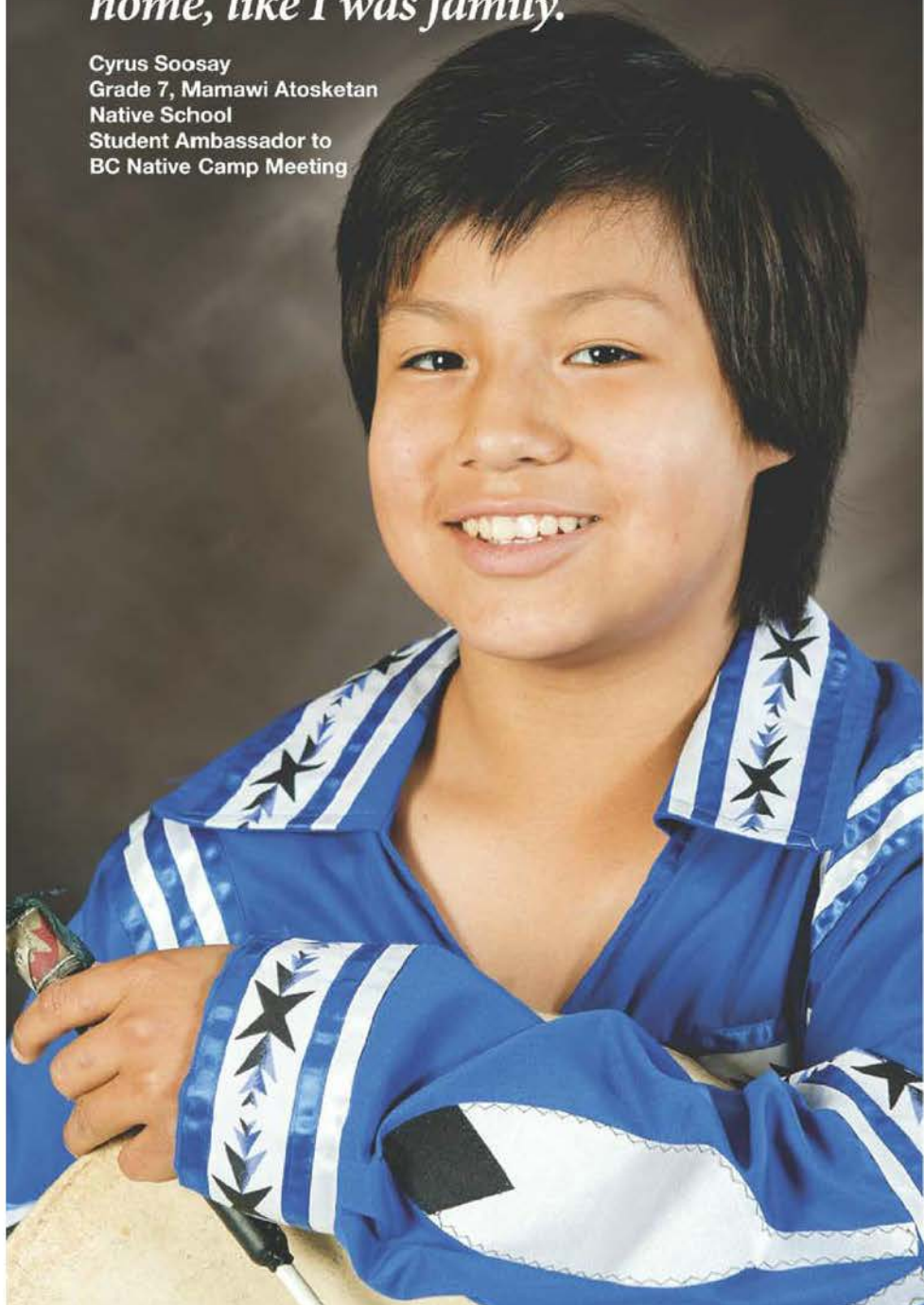
IN EVERY ISSUE

- 2 HEART TO HEART**
- 5 PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE**
- 6 TEEN TALK**
- 7 CREATION CORNER**
- 8 CANADIAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**
- 10 WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**
- 11 PLANNED GIVING & TRUST SERVICES**
- 12 A BETTER WORLD**
- 13 THE CONNECTED CHURCH**
- 14 REFRESH WITH TIA**
- 15 APP REVIEW/PRAYER LIFE**
- 16 ADRA CANADA**
- 18 ALMOST VEGAN**
- 19 VOAR/ON THE ROAD**
- 20 BARRY'S BLOG**
- 22 LITERATURE EVANGELISM**
- 23 EDUCATION**
- 28 KINGSWAY COLLEGE**
- 30 PARKVIEW PROFILES**
- 31 MAMAWI ATOSKETAN NATIVE SCHOOL**
- 32 NEWS**
- 40 ANNOUNCEMENTS/ADVERTISEMENTS**
- 46 FROM THE EDITOR**
- 47 BACKWARDS GLANCE**

What's it Mean to You?

"I loved going to Port Hardy. They made me feel at home, like I was family."

Cyrus Soosay
Grade 7, Mamawi Atosketan
Native School
Student Ambassador to
BC Native Camp Meeting



Connecting with First Nations Adventist at BC's Native Camp Meeting made a deep impression on Cyrus. Though few if any of these people were of his tribe, the warm connection and Christian brotherhood was real—so real that Cyrus wrote a letter to the Port Hardy pastor a year later.

"They're great people there," reflects Cyrus after his experience as a featured musician. For many, the regular Grade 6 field trip is a first experience outside Alberta—for some, a first extended time away from their reserve homes—and it makes a lasting impression.

Though younger than the rest of the group, Cyrus' skill as a traditional Cree singer and drummer secured him a place on the bus. He soaked up the new First Nations culture and the whole Native Camp Meeting experience.

Connecting with First Nations Adventist in the unique spiritual setting of Camp Meeting is an experience Cyrus and his classmates can't get in a classroom. They will remember it wherever life takes them, as First Nations MANS teacher Ramona MacKenzie remembers her introduction to Adventism through education (p. 31).

"It exposes them to a greater Christian community, and the kids come back with a completely different outlook on Christianity," says Principal Gail Wilton.

"They are learning to trust, to let go and let God."

See and hear Cyrus' interpretation of "Jesus Loves Me" using traditional Cree music elements at www.albertaadventist.ca/cyrus.



MAMAWI ATOSKETAN NATIVE SCHOOL
Ponoka, Alberta



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH
Alberta Conference

What if ... ?

"What if you and I were to spend time mingling with men and women as one who desire their good?"

The March 2015 issue of *The Signs of the Times* cited a Fox News report that might surprise you: "A McDonald's church?" Paul Di Lucca, creative director at the church branding agency Lux Dei Design, is concerned that 3 million people leave the faith every year, while 70 million people eat at McDonald's restaurants every day.¹ According to the article, he thinks he may have an answer to declining church attendance. He is raising \$1 million to build the first McDonald's church called McMass Church, which would literally house a McDonald's restaurant.²

Di Lucca says, "Christianity is unable to capture modern audiences. There's a lack of innovation and lack of design thinking in church communities." So he thinks a McMass church could help churches "break new ground."³

Did this capture your attention and get you thinking? What is it that the church is not doing? And how do we reconcile this question with the words of the founder of Christianity when He says, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32)?

I do not profess to have the answer; however, you may want to take the time to study the success secret of growing vibrant churches in your community. What is it that they do that makes them relevant in their communities? Since we cannot take everything they do and transplant it to our context, what elements can we adopt and adapt?

Before you ask if I am an advocate of a McMass church, let me clearly state that I do not think the answer lies in a personal adherence to a particular concept or a new way of doing things, because you are well aware that regardless of what one does, he or she will always have followers. In fact, this is the reason

why we have so many denominations in the world. Therefore, my opinion is irrelevant here. But what I do know is this: regardless of the relevance of our fundamental beliefs, if they are not well packaged, well presented, and lived daily, they will profit us nothing. In fact, 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 confirms this.

While it is important to work on new ways and methods to reach the postmodern mind, it must be done with the conviction that if we lift up Christ, He (not you, not I, not the methods) will draw all men and women to Himself.

Thirty years after the ascension of Christ, the disciples were able to grow the first-century church from what was considered an insignificant Jewish sect to a major force in the Roman Empire. How did they do it? The answer is found in the book of Acts. Please let me draw your attention to what Ellen G. White says on pages 143 and 144 in *The Ministry of Healing*. I adapt it for the purpose of this article:

What if you and I were to spend time mingling with men and women as one who desire their good?

What if you and I were to show our sympathy for them and minister to their needs? Wouldn't it be easier for us to win their confidence? Wouldn't it be easier for us to invite them to follow Christ?

She also says, "Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit." May God help us! ■

Emile Max is president of the Quebec Conference.



¹ p. 5.

² "Religious Group Wants to Build McDonald's in a Church," Fox News, Nov. 28, 2014, <http://www.foxnews.com/leisure/2014/11/28/businessman-wants-to-build-mcdonalds-in-church/>.

³ The McMass Project was a real project launched on the fundraising website IndieGogo, but the project did not receive much financial support.

teen talk

Q: I don't believe in Christmas or Easter, because the Catholic Church created them. Jesus wasn't born in December. Why would the Adventist Church celebrate Christmas or Easter? What does the Bible say about it?

A: Without getting into denomination-driven wars, I'll say that, as a Christian, nothing gives me more joy than reflecting on Jesus' birth, His life on earth, His selfless sacrifice for us, His amazing resurrection, and His soon-to-happen, glorious second coming. Is this joy constricted only to a certain set of dates? Absolutely not. It is a 24/7/365 state of mind. The Bible says, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Phil. 4:4).

Do we want to spread that joy in our circles of influence? Of course we do! With that in mind, it doesn't matter if the rest of the world is celebrating the birth of Jesus at the wrong time of the year. In fact, what better opportunity do we have to openly talk about Jesus than when most people's hearts are open to that very same subject? By the way, Easter is linked to the timing of Passover, which is the feast event that, according to the Bible accounts, corresponded with the timing of Jesus' death.

Don't bury the good news because it may be celebrated on the wrong day—instead, spread it! ■



Do you have a question for Pastor Josué Sánchez? Email it to messenger@adventist.ca.

Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire," says the Lord Almighty. "Not a root or a branch will be left to them.—Malachi 4:1, NIV

Pompeii Worm

Named after the Roman city of Pompeii, which was buried by lava and ashes from the volcano Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, the Pompeii worm is a tube worm that lives on underwater volcanic vents in the ocean. The Pompeii worm is small, no more than 13 centimetres (5 inches) in length. But what it lacks in size, it makes up for in its amazing ability to withstand high temperatures.

The Pompeii worm lives stuck to the sides of black smokers, which look like chimneys on the deep ocean floor. The water that pours out of the chimneys is heated by magma, or molten rock, as it seeps out of cracks in the earth's crust. At its tail end, the Pompeii worm is in almost-boiling water, around 160 degrees Fahrenheit, or 71 degrees Celsius. It's a mystery how the worms can live at this temperature without being cooked alive.

Think about it.

The Pompeii worm doesn't squirm in agony nor shriek with pain in its super-hot tub home, because God created it to live comfortably in those conditions. Our loving Father would get no pleasure from inflicting pain upon a little worm, much less from forever torturing humans made in His own image. Sadly, many people believe God will keep wicked people alive forever so He can watch them burn endlessly in hellfire. This teaching makes our kind, merciful Creator look like a cruel ogre and keeps people afraid of Him, which of course, makes Satan very happy.



Do it!

Study what the Bible says about hell so that you can tell others the truth about it. Find links and resources at creationcornerforkids.blogspot.com.

Burman University Awards Night



The happy recipients of awards and scholarships distributed at Burman University Awards Night.

JUST OVER \$210,000 IN AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

were given to 137 student recipients at Burman University's (formerly Canadian University College) annual Awards Night ceremony, Tuesday, March 31, 2015. Of the money distributed at awards night, \$155,000 came from endowed or annually funded scholarships provided by Burman University's alumni and friends. The remaining \$55,000 came from government or other institutional sources.

Mason Leitch, a second-year biology major was honoured to have been awarded the Deans' Scholarship for Excellence in the Division of Science. He expressed his appreciation to the donor: "Thank you for sponsoring my education. It is a huge blessing to attend Burman University. This scholarship helps and makes a big difference for myself and my family. I plan to continue on the medical track and make a difference in people's lives. Thank you for making a difference in my life," wrote Leitch.

During his welcome, Mark Haynal, president, commented that none of us have gotten to where we are at this point in our lives without significant help and support from other people. "The cycle of one generation helping the next is a beautiful thing," Haynal told the students. "I challenge those of you who will receive help tonight to continue this cycle once you are able."

“Hello, you have reached Burman University. How may I help you?”

This is the greeting you may well receive when you call the Hilltop on or after May 1, 2015. Graduation will have ended a few weeks earlier, and the last graduating class as Canadian University College will be already out and exploring the new world of possibilities before them. This school is no stranger to change and growth, and with the support of our alumni and friends all over Canada and the world, we continue to push for better opportunities for our students.

The support we receive from our alumni and friends gives us hope as we begin this new chapter. Voices from alumni like J. D. Victor Fitch, CUC president from 1991 to 1997, encourage us as we move forward.

“This will be the seventh name change since the school began in 1907 (which, by the way, is a year before the founding of the University of Alberta). Each time a new name was needed to represent growth in the school’s offerings from a canvassing school at its beginning, to a high school, a junior college, a senior college and then



BURMAN UNIVERSITY

an accredited university college. Now we need our name to identify our university status. This change means further growth and strengthening as an institution of higher learning.

My appeal—The Lord has led and guided this school since 1907 and He will continue to lead and guide today. No matter the name, it will not affect my commitment to, or support of, the university. I pray that the result will not be divisive but rather a joining together of our constituency, board, faculty, staff, and students for even greater days of enhanced learning and expanded opportunities for each student.”

—J. D. Victor Fitch, *alumnus and former CUC president, 1991-1997*

The Burmans

The Burmans’ entire life was dedicated to service. Early on in their careers the Burmans were stationed in Alberta, where Charles became the first president of the Alberta Conference. Leona also served the Alberta Conference as the Sabbath school secretary and in the Youth People’s Work department.

As Alberta Conference president, Charles urged that building a school would be the best way to inspire colporteurs. This idea gave way to the Canvassers’ School that would one day become Burman University. Always working as a team, Leona Burman worked alongside Charles as a staff member at the Canvassers’ School. Only a few months working with the students at the Canvassers’ School convinced Charles that a secondary institution was needed. As a team of action the Burmans, with a logging crew, embarked to gather lumber even before a site or conference approval was granted. Charles led a crew of 18 men, eighteen horses, three bobsleds, and a cutter to the woods west of Leduc. Leona, with student Hazel Edwards, joined the crew to provide support and cook for the loggers. In three weeks the crew had cut 1,700 logs and piled them on the ice of the North Saskatchewan River.

In 1907 Alberta Industrial Academy was established. The school functioned with four staff members, Charles as the principal and Bible teacher and Leona as the

preceptress along with teaching English, geography, physiology, and acting as the school nurse.

Charles and Leona Burman cared for not only the academic needs of the AIA students but also for their physical needs. When seeing student Camille Armeau canvassing in the cold without a topcoat, Charles took off his and gave it to the student. On another occasion, noticing student Willie McCready’s worn-out shoes, he bought him a new pair. It was because of their tireless service that the students addressed the Burmans as “Ma and Pa Burman.”

Leona Burman wrote, “The teacher never gets his reward in the pay envelope. It comes with the years as he watches the students he has taught develop into strong men and women able to carry responsibilities.”

This institution was established by the sweat and sacrifice, vision, and courage of Charles and Leona Burman, who dreamed of a school where men and women would be prepared for lives of service. Their dream lives on in the mission of Burman University, which is to prepare students to think with discernment, to believe with insight and commitment, and to act with confidence, compassion, and competence. ■

JR Ferrer is the director of communication for Canadian University College.

Where Are They Now



Daniel and Elaine Skoretz

Messenger catches up with former leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. In this issue we talk with Daniel Skoretz.

Interview by J.D. Victor Fitch, Messenger Staff Writer.

Messenger: Tell me about your childhood.

Daniel Skoretz: I grew up in Buchanan, Sask., and was the seventh child in a family of nine brothers and five sisters. My parents spoke the Ukrainian language and were faithful members of the local Catholic church. When I was young, my father stated that I should become a priest. The seed was planted, and I thought about being a priest.

M: I have heard you say your mother was a very unique person. Why?

D: Mother was a very faithful person and wanted to know more about God. She had no formal education—could neither read nor write—yet she raised 14 children, many of whom received college degrees, including graduate degrees. Each child was treated fairly and knew a mother's love.

M: How did you become a Seventh-day Adventist?

D: My parents sent me to St. Joseph's Catholic College in Yorkton, Sask., hoping I would become a priest. While I was there, Elder Conrad Samograd came to our home and gave my mother the book *Works and Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists* and told her about Canadian Union College (CUC, now Burman

University). She then encouraged me to attend CUC. Initially I resisted, but later reluctantly applied. It was many years later I discovered it was her way of learning the message of the Adventist Church.

M: What changes did this make in the direction of your life?

D: The opportunity to give my heart to Jesus was first presented to me at CUC. When someone gives his or her heart to God, it changes everything. My relationship with God changed, and as a result, my goals and opportunities changed. I now purposed to serve God wholly, and that for me meant accepting God's call to ministry. As I returned home and shared my experiences with my family, many changes happened there also. In addition to my parents, eight brothers and one sister became members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Four in the family became ordained ministers, and three others were also church employees.

M: Where did you receive your education?

D: After attending St. Joseph's, I attended CUC for several years and completed my undergraduate degree at La Sierra University (LSU) in California. I have two master's degrees; one in education from LSU and the other in public health from Loma Linda University.

M: In what capacity did you serve the church? When and where?

D: My first church employment was as a pastor in Saskatchewan, followed by the Alberta Conference in the 1950s. I then served in church administration in Alberta and Ontario in the departments of Home Missions, Sabbath School, Public Relations, and Radio and TV. From 1968 to 1971 I taught and chaired the theology department at CUC. I taught in the Department of Public Health at Loma Linda University from 1971 to 1978. During this time I coordinated an off-campus Master in Public Health program for the Alberta Conference. From 1978 to 1982 I served in the ministerial department of the General Conference. Since 1983, I have served as a pastor in the Southeastern California Conference.

M: Tell me about your family.

D: Elaine (Gimbel) and I have two daughters and two sons. Donna Lee (Paul) Lehmann; Sherilynne (Douglas) Will; Randy (Lenita) and Robert (Lynetta). We have 10 grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

M: Where are you now, and what are you doing?

D: Although I officially retired in 1996, at age 87 I continue to pastor two churches and live in Loma Linda, Calif. Elaine has been an integral part of my ministry through all the years, and because of her I am able to continue to serve. ■



Our Students, Our Children, Our School

Not long ago, the Burman University¹ community lost a great friend and supporter. When Carol Clark died, she left a portion of her estate to the university, specifically for the building of a Learning Centre and Student Commons (LC). At the age of 92, forward-thinking Carol Clark had seen that Burman University needs this learning centre to take the university into the 21st century.

To understand her vision for the future, we must look at her past. Carol's love of learning began when she was a child with the support of her parents. Thirsting for knowledge, she spent her time absorbed in books. Later she insisted her daughter, Sheila Clark, teach her to use the Internet. Sheila says her mom was always "curious" and "loved to read to satisfy that drive to learn."²

Mother of six, grandmother of 11, great-grandmother of three, Carol cared deeply about her family's interests and education. Sheila, now Burman University's library director, and her mother frequently talked about the "library of the future with all its possibilities." Carol was also actively involved with many university students, with whom she often visited and "engaged in lively conversations." Sheila explains that her mother "wanted them all to have the best Christian education possible" and "understood the importance of the 21st-century library."

So why does the campus need the proposed Learning Centre and Student Commons? For starters, some students describe the library, the only place with quiet, study areas, as a place to be avoided. It is gloomy and confined, and access to technology is very limited. A single room accommodates student work/study groups, and there are no rooms with the technology and equipment librarians

and teachers need to instruct and assist students. Finally, there are few places on campus where students can meet and work or study together comfortably.

Burman University needs the new learning centre to meet the needs of 21st-century students. They need tables with outlets where they can plug in laptops and devices, as well as more computer labs and rooms with computers and projection equipment, where librarians can show students how to access and use digital resources and where students can create and rehearse presentations. They need spaces where they can work and learn together, such as group study rooms and flexible spaces with moveable, comfortable furniture, as well as quiet reading spaces.

Students learning collaboratively and digitally is the way of the future—and the present. Without proper access to technology and work space, without a new learning centre, students do not and will not be able to have the tools they need to compete in the work world or graduate school. Without a modern facility, current and prospective students may choose to study elsewhere. The need for a new learning centre is an issue that must be addressed.

Carol Clark's vision was to bring Burman University into the 21st century. This Learning Centre project will help our students get the kind of education they need to succeed beyond the classroom. ■

Leah Keys is a staff writer for the Planned Giving and Trust Services Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

>> For more information on the proposed Learning Centre and Student Commons, please contact Rhonda Bonet-Graham at rhandagraham@cauc.ca or 403/786.2532. <<

¹ Formerly Canadian University College.

² All quotations are from Carol Clark's daughter, Sheila Clark.

Investment model
attracts business leaders to



humanitarian causes



WestJet co-founder Don (Bennie) Bell opening a new school in Kenya.

A Better World Canada has long been in the investment business. Just ask Eric Rajah, co-founder of the Central Alberta-based international development organization governed by Lacombe's College Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church. The volunteer-run charity is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, thanks in part to Rajah's philosophy that it should operate like an investment company.

"Since I'm in business, I always see people as an investment," said Rajah. A Better World follows an investment model when it comes to assessing potential projects and completing them. For one thing, the community must support the project and help out with cash, labour, or local materials, as they are able. A Better World also regularly checks up on its projects and makes sure it is getting a return on these investments, Rajah said. "With these principles in mind, every two years we organize a business trip," he added. "It includes sponsors and those who may end up investing after seeing the projects up front."

As part of the trip to Kenya, each participant contributes some money to a project that would be ready for a grand opening when they arrive. The recent Executive Team trip took place in October 2014 in the midst of an ebola crisis in West Africa and terrorist concerns in northeast Kenya. Some people decided not to travel because of what was happening in various parts of Africa and the Middle East. Team leaders Kathy and Peter Lacey originally had a group of 26, but by the time the trip went ahead, the number was 18. Most were business leaders from Central Alberta.

"It was a really interesting group of people, because they are so well-networked within our home community and also nationally," said Kathy. "They can benefit A Better World dramatically."

The executive team assessed current needs at each site and brainstormed on what could be done to help further. "We looked at opportunities and obstacles in order to help these people move forward in their lives," she added. For example, the executive team was shown a faulty water pump at one stop. Dennis Hueppelsbeuser, a farmer who owns about 10,000 acres near Blackfalds, just northeast of Red Deer, Alta., had a look. "He came up with a good solution to a difficult problem," said Kathy.

Kathy and Peter see the value of these executive team trips after leading several of them. As Rajah says, it's their vision to do these. Kathy is an active volunteer who was named Red Deer's Citizen of the Year in 2011. Peter was recently named 2014 Canadian Dealer of the Year by the Western Equipment Dealers' Association. Peter said these trips are great in two ways. "It's a combination of encouraging potential donors," he said, "and providing advice from a business standpoint on some of the projects."

Don Bell, co-founder of WestJet, and his wife, Roxane, travelled with the Laceys last fall. "We have seen firsthand the impact A Better World has made on thousands of people," said Bell. "We want to be involved." ■

Laura Tester travels with A Better World and is a freelance writer for newspapers.



Communicating the value of our children

There are a great many children in my church. They are everywhere. They seem to dominate the Sabbath schools; they have their own kids' church and serve as ushers, deacons, and music leaders. In fact, this coming Sabbath the youth will be preaching the sermon. Sometimes during the church service young children can be heard, loudly. There are times when they interrupt my sermon with a loud laugh or a comment.

When I first started my ministry at Oakridge Adventist Church, it was a different environment. The children were hard to find. They were hidden downstairs in the basement, behind the fellowship hall. The kids were hardly seen and barely heard from. In fact, there were two homemade posters that adorned the "mothers' room" that read, "Quiet. This is a training ground." Parents would tiptoe throughout the church, looking apologetic and embarrassed whenever their children were vocal.

I promptly tore down the posters. Then we started reminding parents that church was a safe place to grow and bring their children—even if they were loud. I told the congregation about my friend who has a church in Los Angeles that has many children attending also. The church's website domain is noisychildrenwelcome.com. Wow! Doesn't that speak volumes? Doesn't that immediately convey the tone and hospitality of the church?

Children who are seen and heard in the church convey several things. First, they represent health and vitality in the congregation. In other words, they demonstrate that the church is willing to adapt and accept young people as the future. Second, children are contagious. Once parents realize that a church accepts their (loud) children, other families will hear about it and attend.

Many years ago a young mother named Susanne brought her two daughters to church every week.¹ Her husband was not a Christian, but Susanne made a commitment to participating in the Sabbath school and church service every week. She often sat alone in the back pew, self-conscious of any sound her daughters,

then aged three and one, would make. She came to church prepared with Goldfish crackers, crayons, and activity books. One Sabbath, a well-meaning woman turned and shushed Susanne's daughters. The elderly lady, a visitor who didn't know the culture of the church, took it upon herself to be the Sabbath sheriff. "Can you keep your daughters quiet? This is God's sanctuary," she admonished.

I praise the Lord that my wife happened to be in the lobby that day as Susanne proceeded to leave church early with her daughters. With tears in her eyes, Susanne relayed the story to my wife. Thankfully, we were able to reassure this humiliated mother that her children were welcome, even when they were disruptive.

Can you imagine if that visitor had approached the situation differently? What if she had turned around and offered to hold the baby? What if she had turned to the mother and recognized the tough situation Susanne was in and praised her for bringing her daughters to church? What if she would have just kept quiet?

What can we do to develop a culture where children are the VIPs in the church? What policies can your church board and elders adopt that will communicate to parents that they are welcome even with noisy kids? ■

Kumar Dixit recently accepted the position of ministerial/young adult director of the British Columbia Conference. He also practices ministry at Oakridge Adventist Church in Vancouver. You can follow him on Twitter @kumardixit.



¹not her real name.



Working hard or hardly working?

 Words by God —John 15:5, NIV

Is there such a thing as too much good? Maybe it's not in the word *good* but in the intentions behind it. We can have the best intentions but still miss the point. On the other hand, if our good is just being spurred on by our own desires instead of God's plan, then it will never be truly satisfying or *good enough*.

The world has a great many needs, and thankfully, passionate people want to step out and help. However, sometimes we can get so wrapped up in the good things we do that the deeds cease to be rooted in Christ and it becomes more about the good deeds themselves. Here is why this shift is dangerous: Jesus asks us to stay connected to Him and He will work *through us for His purposes*. When the purposes become our own, we often stop listening to what He has in mind for us and focus on our own plans instead.

It is hard to keep up with everything on our own; it becomes more like a cup with a leak. As much as we try to fill it up, the cup still empties because it is worn and damaged. As broken people in a broken world, we have this desire to do something to make it all better, but we cannot do it on our own. What is broken cannot fix brokenness. But our Creator, the Author and Perfecter of our story, wants us to take part in His plan of redemption and healing. He desires that we stay connected and attentive to His voice so He can use us for His purpose to touch the world around us.

I think we often want to race ahead when it seems

things aren't happening fast enough, or we think that God will love us more if we work harder for Him. The truth is that God loves us, not because of what we do but because of who we are. We are good enough for Him *because* of His grace and unconditional love for us. It's not about our long list of things to do; it's about something much bigger and greater—it's about Him.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5, NIV). On our own we are like the withered and dried-up branch, but if we stay connected to the life-giving vine (Christ), we will flourish. He is the One who gives us life and replenishes our souls.

So, how do we know if we are following His desires and not our own? We ask and keep tuned in to Jesus. Before launching into new plans, listen for what His heart says. There you will find what you're looking for: a connected relationship with Jesus, one in which you know Him and He knows you. No amount of good deeds can ever compare to the wellspring of life you can find in Him. I can assure you Jesus and His plans for your life are more than good enough. ■

Be Blessed

Tia Lawrence is 20 years old. She is a member of the Comox Adventist Church on Vancouver Island. Tia's blog—refreshwithtia.com



 with Tia

 Watch "Thrive" by Casting Crowns on YouTube: <http://goo.gl/V9MHO>





review

Keith Chant, Manager, IT Services, SDA Church in Canada

app review

App: Pitcalm

In Brief: At the 2014 Oshkosh Pathfinder Camporee, a new honour was introduced: God's Messenger. There are several ways to earn this honour, including scoring 200 points in the new Pitcalm game. In the game you advance around a 19th century village earning points for correctly answering questions about Ellen G. White's life. The game allows you multiple tries at each questions until it is answered correctly, but the more incorrect guesses, the fewer points awarded. It is well laid out, easy to use, and a great opportunity for learning about the life and ministry of Ellen G. White.

Wow Factor: Get enough points in the time allotted and earn a Pathfinder honour.

Meh Factor: A larger database of questions would have made this a more challenging experience.

Developed for: Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.

Price: Free

Works on: Android, iOS

Link: <http://goo.gl/1Kbtm>



To suggest an app for review, email messenger@adventist.ca.

prayer life

Free in Three

What is it about three days?

Two-time Olympian and exercise physiologist Pete Pfitzinger answered the question of recovery in a column that appeared in the November 2000 issue of *Running Times*: "Your best strategy for future success after a marathon is to take a well-deserved break. Allow yourself *at least three days* completely off from running."

Patients who have undergone a surgical procedure will often experience a positive turning point in their recovery *after three days*.

Interestingly enough, it would appear God gave Jonah two three-day journeys to contemplate his recovery: "And Jonah was in the belly of the fish *three days and three nights*" (Jonah 1:17). "So Jonah arose, and went up to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of *three days' journey*" (3:3).

Scripture also reveals Mary and Joseph, too, had a three-day journey of recovery. "So when they did not find Him [Jesus], they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that *after three days* they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:45, 46).

In my own life, I have become acutely aware that should I get knocked off my devotions (or inadvertently leave Jesus behind), I find myself in a *three-day search* to recover my sense of connection with Him.

Don MacLafferty's In Discipleship ministry offers beautiful materials and a retreat for people seeking restoration with God, which happens so last *three days*.¹ It challenges us to ask ourselves the hard questions and re-examine where we're headed.

As a younger woman I used to regularly do an extensive cleanse that unavoidably began with difficulty. But by the *third day*, it was relatively easy.

What is it about three days?

At this point, I recognize that the three-day journey back to God is worth the time. No matter your current state, we're all just a few short days away from recovery and a fresh view of our mission. ■

Sandra Nelson is the prayer coordinator for the Manitoba/Saskatchewan Conference.

¹www.indiscipleship.org/about/



Millions of people have fled or are trapped by the Syrian and the Iraqi crises.

"Does Anyone Hear

THE FIRST THING I NOTICED about Erbil was its shape. From the air it appeared to be an almost perfect circle. Erbil is the capital city of Kurdistan, an autonomous region in Iraq's northeast. It is located 88 kilometres east of Mosul and 178 km northwest of Tikrit.

Dating back to approximately 5,000 BC, it is one of the oldest continually inhabited places in the world and is rich in history. Its Citadel, an impressive walled mound, was placed on the list of World Heritage Sites in June 2014.

Signs of construction were everywhere. Gated communities, hotels, shopping plazas, and cranes were ubiquitous. In one luxury neighbourhood, a developer is building a replica of the White House. It is hard to believe that just short distances away, two of the world's most brutal conflicts are being waged.

Millions of people have fled or are trapped by the Syrian and the Iraqi crises. Erbil is in a safe zone, protected by the Kurdish Peshmerga soldiers. Two million people seeking safety have fled from the conflicts to the areas surrounding Erbil. University professors, government workers, teachers, housewives— these are some of the people who have fled the violence.

They have found relative safety, but not much else. Some have been able to find a tent for their families in a UN-managed refugee/internally displaced persons (IDP) camp. Some are spending their limited funds on renting houses, apartments, or rooms. Often two or more families are crammed into one room, unable to afford more space. The luckier ones have been taken into the home of a host family. The unfortunate ones take temporary shelter in construction sites.

Qahira* and her family lived a very normal life in Sinjar. They had a large house in the centre of the city. Her brothers had good jobs. She never thought that she and her family would have to flee their homes and become dependent on other people.

On Aug. 1, 2014, they heard that ISIS was heading for their town. They were told that they should leave, as the Peshmerga soldiers were withdrawing. On Aug. 3, 2014, they fled.

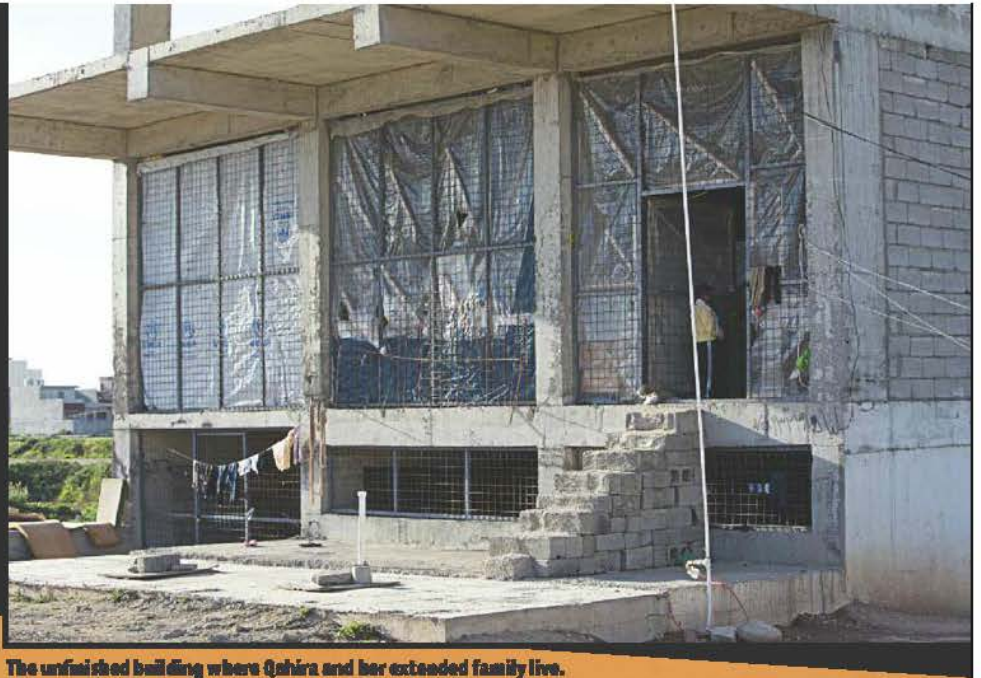
While on the road they were overtaken by ISIS fighters. They were all made to leave their vehicle. Her brothers were taken a short distance away from the rest of the family. Within minutes they witnessed one brother being shot and the other kidnapped. Terrified,

*Not her real name.



A UNHCR refugee camp on the outskirts of Erbil, Kurdistan.

Uz?!"



The unfinished building where Qahira and her extended family live.

they fled on foot. Everything they had been able to take with them was left behind in the vehicle. They ran without their money, jewellery, documents, and other possessions.

August was the hottest time of the year. As they walked through the desert, they passed no villages. There were no bathrooms, no places to find water or food, and nowhere to rest.

Qahira's family and thousands of other Yazidis ended up trapped by ISIS on the barren and waterless Sinjar mountain for days until they were liberated by the Peshmerga with the aid of US airstrikes. After their rescue, they made their way to Erbil.

They had no money for rent. Someone was able to direct them to a construction site where they were able to find temporary shelter, but when the building was finished, they had to find somewhere else to live. The building they are currently living in will be an apartment building, but when I visited, it was an empty shell. A series of flat concrete slabs. Chinks in the cement block wall let in the cold air. The front of the building is protected by plastic sheeting attached to a wire enclosure.

Seventeen people live in four UNHCR (UN refugee agency) tents erected on the concrete floor. Somehow they have managed to get a large, worn, brown carpet to cover a part of the floor and some pillows for them to sit on. There is no running water, no bathroom, and no privacy.

Life has been very difficult—not just physically, but mentally. The people in the surrounding neighbourhood have been very kind and have brought them food. Other

agencies have provided tents, a heater, and some household necessities. Despite all their hardships, their main concern is that their children have not been able to enroll in school.

"A year is so precious for children. The most basic right for a human being is to get an education," Qahira told me. Their children have not only been denied an education but also have been getting sick because their living conditions are not healthy.

"Does anyone hear us?" she asks.

ADRA Canada has heard. Qahira's family and hundreds of other vulnerable families were given blankets and winter clothing. With funding from the Canadian government, ADRA Canada will be helping to provide shelter to families like Qahira's in Iraq.

ADRA Canada is blessed to have one Sabbath every year dedicated to the ADRA Disaster and Famine Relief Offering (DFRO). This year the offering will be collected on May 9, 2015. This offering allows us to help people affected by famines, floods, earthquakes, conflicts, and other disasters. Your generous donations allow us to extend compassion and mercy to people in distressing circumstances.

"Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives" (Titus 3:14, NIV). Thank you for your prayers and your ongoing support of our ministry. ■

Sharmilla Reid is director of donor relations at ADRA Canada.





Photo: Afia Donkor

Almost vegan

Ontario Campmeeting, 2012. The service was over, it was lunch time, and I was outside talking with a couple from my church, when they popped open their trunk to reveal the little picnic lunch they had brought. Fruits in one container, salads in another, and a container of neatly packaged egg salad sandwiches. Determined to come up with a good vegan alternative, I went on a hunt and gathered some ideas.* The following campmeeting, I came laden with tofu egg salad sandwiches of my very own! ■

Afia Donkor is a lawyer in Ontario, Canada.

*Sandwich inspired by "Egg Salad Made Vegan" recipe on the blog *Made Vegan: Real Food, Made Vegan*, at <http://madevegan.com/2012/04/egg-salad-made-vegan/>, and aololi recipe in the cookbook *Give Them Something Better*, by Sarah Frein and Stephanie Howard (Sanare Life, 2011).

Tofu Egg Salad

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 package extra firm tofu
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons red onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons cold soy milk (I use So Nice Organic Soy Milk, unsweetened. Silk brand should work as well)
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons light-tasting oil (grapeseed, organic canola, avocado oil, etc.)
- 2 tablespoons honey
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

- Squeeze out as much liquid from the tofu as possible (I do this in small handful-sized chunks) and crumble into a large bowl. To this bowl, add celery, onion, and garlic and mix to combine.
- In a blender, blend the rest of the ingredients. You should get a mixture that is mayo-like in consistency, but if you don't, that is fine.
- Combined blended sauce with tofu and veggie mixture until mixed and evenly coated, and chill for at least one hour in refrigerator. Enjoy!

SHE WORKED AS AN ONCOLOGY NURSE AT A CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. Many times we heard from her when there was a little one who especially needed to be covered in prayer. Two, maybe three, times a week she would call. She always made the calls joyful, almost as if she knew God was already answering. She believes in prayer. She didn't always attend church but tuned in faithfully to her favourite Christian station. Through her own personal struggles, Voice of Adventist Radio (VOAR) has been, and still is, a source of hope.

She is a donor. She never lets a Sharathon go by without sending in her gift. This year it came with a request to set aside a Day Sponsorship in memory of her mother, who recently passed away. She wanted us to call her to discuss the message she would like aired in her mom's memory. We called, we prayed, and we cried together over the phone. We've known her for over 25 years. Today she is the sole caregiver for her ill sister.

As she went through various trials, we have seen her hold others up, and we have also seen her struggling. She is thankful that the Lord is holding her close, even when she has moments of doubt. She knows the Lord uses struggles to teach us to depend on Him. She is a child of the King. She is one of the ones He died for. She thanked us for reminding her of that. She holds on to the hope of Christ she hears about through VOAR. As believers, we are "strangers in a strange land." But we are also something more; we are missionaries with a message to share. A message that lets her know that she can face every circumstance with complete confidence, not in ourselves, but in God, who is capable.

She's a caller ... we call friend. ■

*Sherry Griffin is manager of
VOAR Christian Family Radio.*



She's a Caller



Bebeque Johnson

ON THE
ROAD WITH

Becky AT THE GRAND FORKS, LAKES DISTRICT, AND
VANCOUVER FILIPINO CHURCHES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

*Which biblical character do you
relate to the most, and why?*

Jeannette Sholander: Martha. She was always doing the work and needed to take more time with Jesus.

Sarah Bacabac: I really admire Job and how loyal he was despite all the different challenges he faced and how he was able to overcome.

Ella: I personally feel that I can relate to Timothy from the New Testament. I really admire that he doesn't let his age hinder him from serving God to the best of his ability. He was just a kid when he was called to the ministry. He had plenty of God-given mentors to guide him along the way, and I'm thankful that God still puts people in our lives today.

Carol Meservia: Mary Magdalene! How Jesus related to her—His forgiveness, His love!





barry's blog

"... religious freedom is not only an individual right but also includes communal dimensions."

Religious Freedom: A Communal Right

On March 19, 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada released its long-anticipated *Loyola* decision¹ and came very close to saying that religious corporations, by definition, have religious freedom rights inherently protected by the Charter. It was only one vote short: Three out of the seven judges were prepared to go all the way to recognize religious freedom rights for a religious corporation (and not just religious individuals), while the other four did not see a need, at this point, to decide the question of religious corporations in the *Loyola* case. *Nevertheless, the entire seven-member panel of the Court ruled that religious freedom does have "communal aspects,"* and in the end, the decision in favour of *Loyola* is a major step forward in the evolution of religious freedom since the Charter came into effect in 1982.

Background

The case centred on the Quebec government's insistence that Montreal's *Loyola* High School, a private Catholic school, be "neutral" in its teaching of the Ethics and Religious Culture curriculum. However, that is a very difficult obligation to impose on a religious school whose mission includes to pass their faith on to Catholic students and staff. *Loyola* had no problem being "neutral" in teaching about other faiths; however, it requested an exemption from teaching its own Catholic faith and the ethics portion of the course in a "neutral" way. The Quebec government denied the request and, instead, demanded the school be "non-confessional" in teaching the course. After almost a year since the court hearing, the *Supreme Court of*

Canada has ruled that the Quebec government's position violated the Charter right of religious freedom.

Religious Freedom As A Communal Right

The Quebec government argued that religious freedom was solely an individual right and that religious corporations, such as *Loyola* High School, had no right to claim religious protection. The Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC) intervened with written arguments, claiming that religious corporations do indeed have the right to religious freedom.

While all seven members of the Court were of the view that *Loyola's* freedom of religion was infringed, the Court split in its reasoning 4–3 over the issues of religious corporate rights and the remedy in this particular case. Both opinions, however, held that religious freedom is not only an individual right but *also includes communal dimensions*. This is significant. Justice Abella recognized that "individuals may sometimes require a legal entity in order to give effect to the constitutionally protected communal aspects of their religious beliefs and practice, such as the transmission of their faith."² But she did not think it was *necessary* to decide whether corporations enjoy religious freedom in their own right under s. 2(a) of the Charter to decide the case. Religious freedom, she maintained, must "account for the socially embedded nature of religious belief, and the deep linkages between this belief and its manifestation through communal institutions and traditions."³

Failure to recognize this aspect of religious freedom would

denigrate religions that emphasize communal worship and other communal activities.⁴ When the state told Loyola how it was to teach Catholicism, it was “telling them how to teach the very religion that animates Loyola’s identity.”⁵ Further, it interfered with the rights of parents to transmit the Catholic faith to their children, because it prevented “a Catholic discussion of Catholicism.”⁶ The Minister’s refusal to allow Loyola to teach Catholicism as a Catholic institution assumed that engagement of one’s own religion on his or her own terms was disrespectful toward others. That assumption was unreasonable.⁷

Justices McLachlin and Moldaver were unequivocal in their acceptance of the Charter’s protection of the “communal character of religion”:⁸

*The individual and collective aspects of freedom of religion are indissolubly intertwined. The freedom of religion of individuals cannot flourish without freedom of religion for the organizations through which those individuals express their religious practices and through which they transmit their faith.*⁹

McLachlin and Moldaver held that a corporation was entitled to religious freedom protection¹⁰ as long as it was constituted primarily for religious purposes and operated in accordance with those religious purposes.¹¹

Since a corporate organization does not demonstrate a sincere belief as an individual, it must show that its belief or practice is consistent with its purpose and its operation.¹² Such beliefs and practices are more static and less fluid than those of an individual, which makes the inquiry into past practices and consistency of positions more relevant than it would be if the claimant were an individual.¹³ In this case, the beliefs and practices of Loyola were consistent and ought to be protected. The Minister’s refusal to accommodate those beliefs was in violation of the Charter right.

McLachlin and Moldaver’s decision forms a great foundation for a future case to clearly outline the boundaries of the religious freedom for religious corporate bodies. It is an incremental development in the right direction.

Remedy

Justice Abella decided that the Charter right to religious freedom was not infringed by requiring Loyola to “teach ethics of other religions in a neutral, historical, and phenomenological way.”¹⁴ She is of the view that learning about other belief systems in denominational schools is particularly important.¹⁵ It requires flexibility and delicate handling by making some adjustments to the program. However, the state is not to abandon its objectives nor are Loyola’s teachers to “shed their own beliefs.”¹⁶ The Minister needs to strike a proper balance between the Charter protections and state objectives in reviewing Loyola’s proposal.

Therefore, Justice Abella sent the matter back to the Quebec government to reconsider its decision in denying Loyola the opportunity to use its own approach to reach the government’s objectives in teaching the Ethics and Religious Culture course. However, Justice McLachlin was of the view that this was

unnecessary. The Quebec government, according to McLachlin, should simply grant Loyola the exemption forthwith. Loyola has waited long enough for a remedy.

Unfortunately, the Court did not grant Loyola its legal costs. That is a very unusual result—especially because the Court ruled against the decision of the Quebec government. One wonders whether this is something we can expect more of in the future of religious freedom cases. Should a religious organization have to pay its legal costs when its religious freedom has been violated? I think not.

Concluding Thoughts

There are a number of takeaways from this decision:

It is a very positive decision. The fact that all seven justices recognized the “communal aspects” of religious freedom is very significant. It is an incremental but important step for a future court decision to clearly enunciate the boundaries of corporate religious freedom.

It is evident that the Court struggled to arrive at its decision. A 4–3 division is evidence of the intensity with which the Court must have operated.

It is unfortunate that the majority did not give Loyola the remedy forthwith, nor give its legal costs. After waiting seven years, Loyola must still wait to see if the Quebec government will, in fact, give the exemption.

Church spires continue to pierce the skyline of small-town Canada. While they remain faith monuments of previous generations, they are also evidence of the communal aspect of religion. It is reassuring to see that the highest Court recognizes the communal aspects of religion. However, the recognition of religious freedom rights for religious corporations waits for another day. ■

Barry W. Bussey is vice-president of Legal Affairs at the Canadian Council of Christian Charities. You can read his blog at www.lawandreligion.ca.

¹ Loyola High School v. Quebec (Attorney General), 2015 SCC 12. Found online: <<http://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/14703/index.do>> accessed March 20, 2015.

² Para. 33.

³ Para. 60.

⁴ Para. 60.

⁵ Para. 63.

⁶ Para. 64.

⁷ Para. 69.

⁸ Para. 91.

⁹ Para. 94.

¹⁰ Para. 95.

¹¹ Para. 100.

¹² Para. 138.

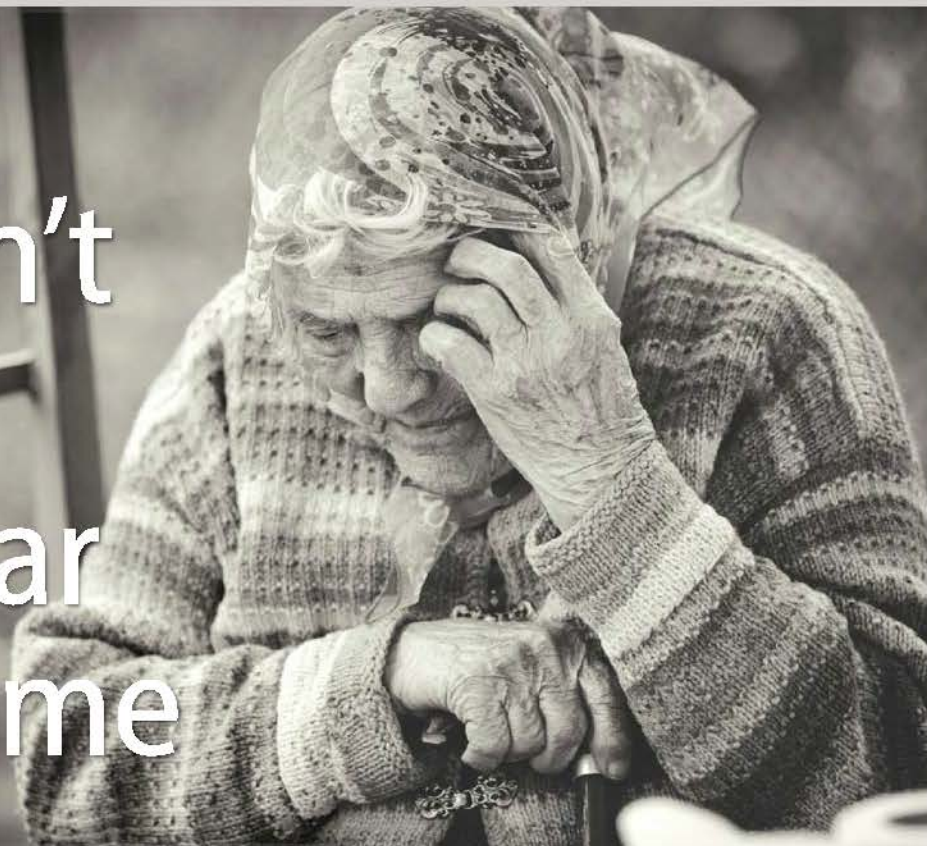
¹³ Para. 139.

¹⁴ Para. 71.

¹⁵ Para. 72.

¹⁶ Para. 78.

God doesn't want to hear from me



A WOMAN SAT ON THE FRONT STEPS of a house in Moncton, N.B. Her nails were ragged, her hair was falling out, and she had a worried and depressed look on her face. Lyndia, a student with Canada Youth Challenge (CYC) approached her, introduced herself, and explained why she had come. Then, seeing the woman's expression, she pulled out a book called *Steps to Happiness* and said, "Maybe this book would be good for you, because you seem like you are a little worried about something."

"I can't pay for it," the woman said. "I don't have any money to even pay for my own house, and I'm going to get put out. I don't have a job, I don't have any family, I don't have any friends, and to top it off, I'm going to hell because I have done so many bad things in my life and God can't forgive me."

Lyndia listened quietly, then said, "Have you ever tried to ask God for forgiveness? Have you ever tried talking to Him like a friend, the same way you are talking to me?"

"God doesn't want to hear from me," the woman replied. "I don't have anything to pay. I'm just a poor person, and God doesn't want to hear me."

"God is not like man," Lyndia responded. "He doesn't hold things against us; we just have to cry out to Him. He is waiting to help us. We are the ones who walk away from Him. He doesn't leave—He is standing with His arms open to receive us." Lyndia then placed the book *Steps to Happiness* in the woman's hands and said, "I want to give this book to you as a gift." Lyndia also gave the woman a copy of all the *GLOW* titles she had and

another book called *History and Hope*. In that book Lyndia wrote, "From your friend Lyndia, I hope you get better soon."

The woman was overjoyed, and when Lyndia asked to pray with her, she said, "Oh yes! I'm so happy! Can I hold your hand?"

Lyndia took the woman's hand, said a prayer, then said, "You don't have to be afraid. Just call on God and ask for forgiveness."

"Just like that?"

"Yes, just like that. Just say, 'Lord, forgive me,' and don't just say it, believe it."

"I believe! I believe! And I feel better already!" the woman exclaimed. Then she said, "Can I hug you?"

"Of course!" Lyndia responded, and as they hugged the woman said, "Do you have to leave right now? I'm so happy you came. You made my day! I was so stressed and so depressed"

Lyndia then asked the woman if she would be willing to fill out an information card so that a local pastor could contact her. The woman agreed, eagerly filled out the form, and asked if the pastor could call her that very night.

The world is filled with people burdened with guilt and convinced that God has forsaken them. God sends us to reveal the truth: He loves, He forgives, and He longs to welcome them home. Through us God sends joy and hope to a broken world. All He needs are willing hearts that will gladly say, "I'll go." ■

Lifestyle Canada Education Service (LCES) is a charity organized to better fulfill the mandates of the literature ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church across Canada. (LifestyleCanada.org)

WEST COAST ADVENTIST SCHOOL

Helping Kids Fall in Love With Jesus

I remember the first time I met Kiersten Wong five years ago on a warm summer day at camp meeting when she popped by with a group of kids to take part in a prize draw at the West Coast Adventist School. She was one of the quiet ones in the group. After the others acquired their prize and left, she remained.

She came up to me with a broad smile, announcing, "I'm going to your school in the fall."

"That's great!" I exclaimed. "And you are ..."

"Kiersten," she said, still smiling from ear to ear.

Although I was still smiling on the outside, I felt disappointed inside, because I didn't recognize her name as a student signed up for the fall. I launched my usual speech for students in that boat. "Well, this school isn't like other schools," I said. "Students who aren't come to a building, they actually do their school at home. So this probably isn't the school you've been signed up for."

Still smiling, she reassured me with a curt head nod. "Oh, no! This is the school. This is going to be my school!" Then she was gone. I smiled to myself as I watched her go, wondering what school was going to be blessed by the presence of this bubbly young lady.

Throughout the week, she popped by often, always with the smile, always saying, "I'm coming to your school!" I wasn't sure which of us she was trying to convince—herself or me. But she kept smiling, and so did I, although mine was more of a "knowing" smile.

It was I who received the surprise when Kiersten's registration form arrived—an d not only Kiersten's but also Nicole's, her younger sister. Today Kiersten is a Grade 11 student planning on graduating from West Coast Adventist School (WCAS) next year, while Nicole is in Grade 8. And Kiersten's enthusiasm about "her" school? Still the same as the first day we met!

But the enthusiasm doesn't stop with Kiersten and Nicole. Their mom says, "The most positive thing, for me, as a parent with WCAS, is having that assurance that whatever they are learning, their teachers will try to look at it from a biblical point of view." Mrs. Wong loves that the teachers paint a positive picture in her girls' walk with Christ, reassuring them in their faith as young women. "So for us as parents, that has been the biggest blessing," she said, "and the fact that West Coast has really been like a family. It is an extension of the Adventist message ... in education."

The Elias family also recognizes the compassion that committed Adventist teachers bring to their children, Lilliana (Grade 5) and Sebastian (Grade 8) have been part of the WCAS family for five years. Mr. Elias observes, "This program engages our children. It allows them to take some responsibility early in life for their education. They aren't just spectators; they are participants." Mrs. Elias, like Mrs. Wong, focused on the Bible teaching as standing out for her when it comes to her children's education: "I just can't say enough about it! The Bible curriculum we are using is wonderful! It is helping the kids to fall in love with Jesus personally."

These two families have found through West Coast Adventist School what every family is looking for in every Adventist school. They want their children to be educated with the skills they need to survive, but even more, they want their school to help their kids fall in love with Jesus each and every day. ■

R. Lee Richards is the principal at West Coast Adventist Christian School.

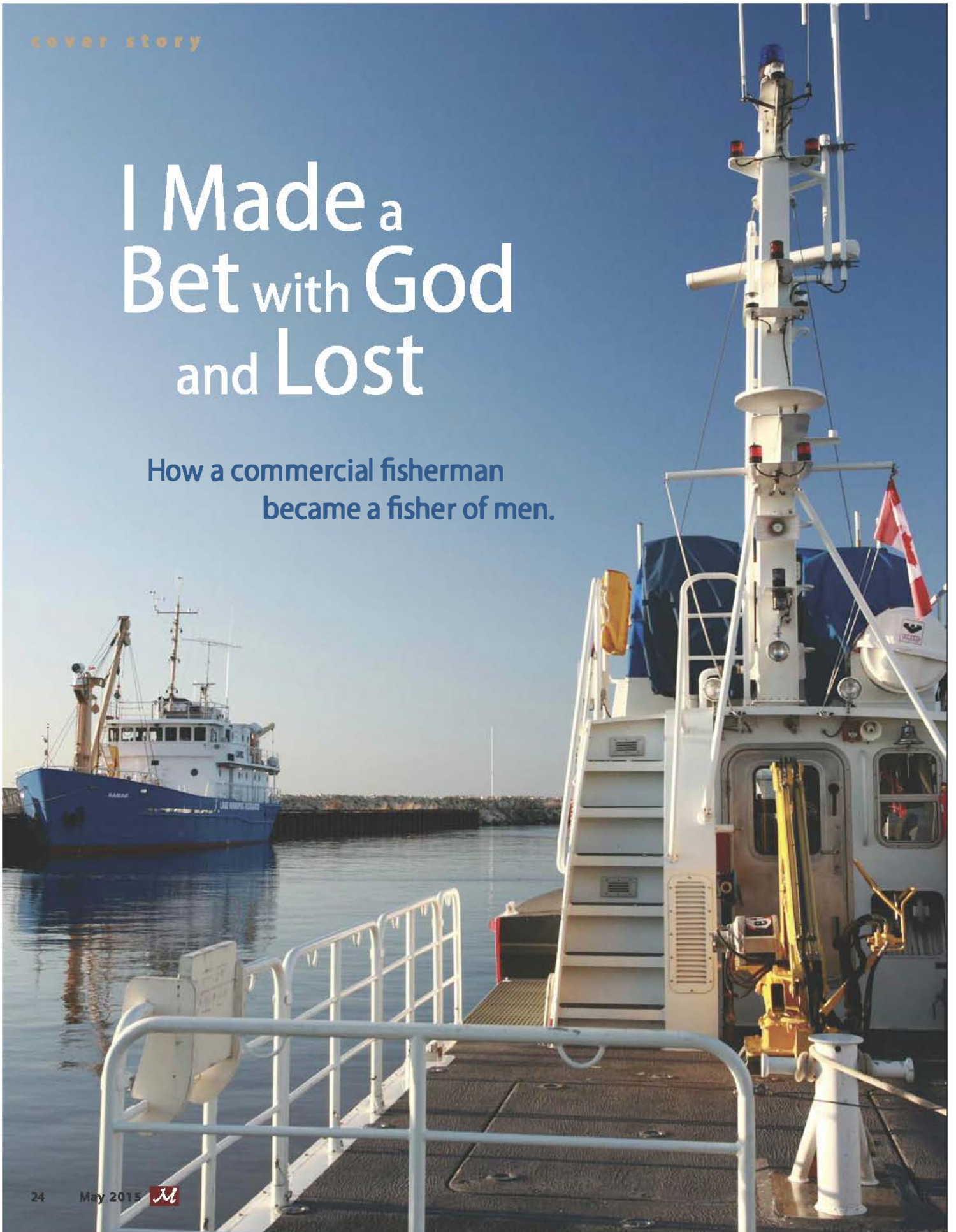
From top to bottom: Lilliana Elias; Kiersten Wong; Sebastian Elias and his mother, Nicole Elias; and Nicole Wong and her mother, Iris Wong.



cover story

I Made a Bet with God and Lost

How a commercial fisherman
became a fisher of men.





I grew up in a northern Manitoba community surrounded by lakes, rivers, and forests.

Grand Rapids, Man., is a small community that boasts a large hydro dam that supplies Manitoba, neighbouring provinces, and the United States with electricity from the Saskatchewan River. It is in this small community where I grew up with my parents, two older stepbrothers, and three younger sisters. My grandparents had a tremendous influence on my life growing up. Although the Saskatchewan River divided our homes, with my grandparents residing on Misi-pawistik Cree Nation, and my parents and I living on the Métis side, I was able to spend large amounts of time with them, harvesting wood with my grandfather and camping on the weekends during fishing season. It was while spending time with my grandparents that I became familiar with the Cree language, which became invaluable to me.

As a young boy I learned commercial fishing on Lake Winnipeg from my father, and in between fishing seasons I would also hunt and trap on my own. I remember one particular fishing experience with my father and stepbrother. While they were lifting their last net on a windy day, it became entangled on the propellers of our two outboard motors. As my dad let go of the net at the front, the boat shifted toward the wind, and water immediately started flowing into the back of the boat. The boat did not have water wells, so I desperately began to tear the net from the motors while my brother tried to bail the water out. Meanwhile, my dad went to the front of the boat to try to maintain some balance. At my father's command, I cut the fishing

net with a knife, but the boat was still filling up rapidly, and we were several miles from shore.

Of the two outboard motors, the 40-horsepower motor never started on the first pull, but in order to direct the boat into the wind and meet the waves head on, I had to attempt to do just that. The motor miraculously started right away, and we were spared from sinking. Once both motors were started, we headed slowly toward the safety of the shore. This incident was never spoken of again, but the experience left a lasting impression on me about God's mercy and care. Sadly, my father passed away when I was 17, and with my brother's help I took over our father's commercial fishing licenses.

As time went on, I fell away from God and lived my life in the world. Besides commercial fishing, I was gifted as a natural athlete and excelled in track and field, curling, baseball, and hockey. The same year my father died I was recruited to try out for the Brandon Wheat Kings of the Canadian Western Hockey League. A miscommunication with my coaches ended with me falsely thinking that I had been dropped from the A squad to the B squad, and after a few weeks I returned home on my own accord. I will never know how far I could have gone had I continued with the A squad. My hockey skills, however, continued to open doors for me, and I excelled as a stellar defenseman for the Manitoba Junior A hockey team, The Pas Lumber Kings. In my last year of Junior A, I was awarded the MVP for the Norman League, and a scout from the Winnipeg Jets

even showed interest in my talent, but God closed that path to me.

One clear starry night, as I stepped outside my parents' house and looked at the heavens and the unnumbered stars, I said to God, "I bet you there is one thing you can't show me—and that is the one true church!" I was sure God would not be able to answer my request because of the many denominations I knew existed. But as God always does, He did answer—but in His own timing.

Because my father was Catholic, we attended the local Catholic church, where I was entrusted with the duties of altar boy. In my younger years, I joined a local church group for youth in Grand Rapids. It was in this group that I first heard the good news of salvation found in Christ alone, and soon I gave my heart to the Lord. A few years later I heard about God's true Sabbath for the first time, but it went right over my head, and I wasn't able to grasp its significance. Interestingly, during this same time frame, every Friday a local high school teacher named Paul Dara would take my family and me to Winnipeg, a four-hour drive south, to attend church on Saturday. It was this teacher who, along with some of the local leaders, shared the truth about the Sabbath; however, the excitement of this new truth was silenced by my priest, and the Sabbath was never spoken of again. Still, the message remained in the back of my mind for many years.

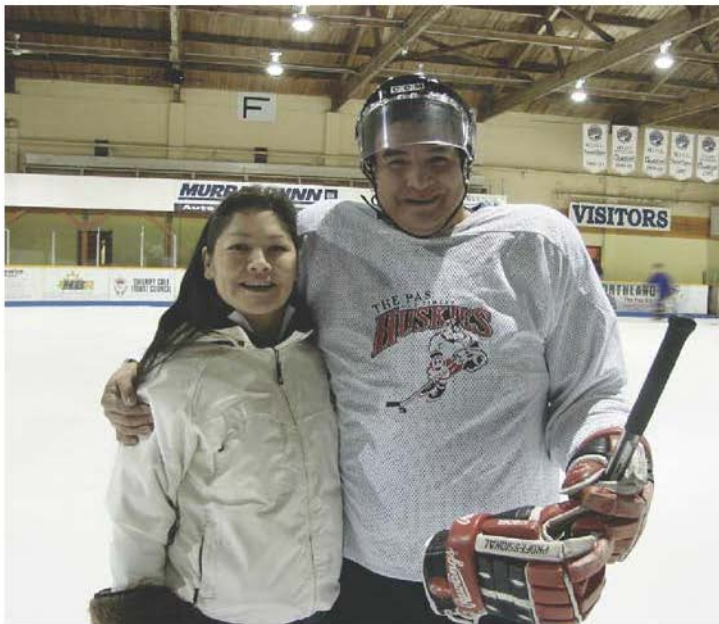
After my Junior A days of hockey I was offered a

scholarship at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, but I couldn't bear the thought of travelling so far from home, so instead I went to a local college, intent on becoming an electrician.

I enrolled in an electrical program at a local college in The Pas, Man. During this time a young woman had returned to Opaskwayak Cree Nation and lived across the street from where I boarded. We eventually became friends and started dating. In 1983 Gina left to attend the University of Regina in Saskatchewan. It was during one of my visits to see her that she invited me to a Revelation prophecy seminar, and I ended up attending the whole prophecy seminar series.

When the invitation was made to follow Jesus all the way, Gina held back to ensure that I was not making the commitment solely because she was. She waited as long as she could, but I had not made the move to stand. So at the very last call she stood, feeling disappointed that I was not interested in giving my life to Jesus. Unbeknownst to Gina, I was waiting for the exact same indication from her! I did not want to commit until I could see that she was willing to give her life to Jesus too. Thankfully, she had stood up, and while the little group who stood for Jesus began to pray, I quietly stood behind her, happily knowing that she had made the decision to follow Jesus as much as I wanted to.

Gina and I married in October 1984, and we became an instant family of four, blessed with Gina's children,



Above: Daniel's hockey practice in The Pas in 2006. Photos taken were for use in one of the Native Now Health video series.

Right: 1994 CBC graduation with Daniel, Gina, and Daniel's brother Joe (L to R).





Above: Tyson, Danette, Tannis, Daniel, and Gina Guiboche.
 Top right: Daniel, Tannis, and Danette Guiboche in 1986.



Left: Gina with their infant son, Lawrence George Guiboche in January 1988 at the Royal University hospital in Saskatoon, SK.



Tyson (then aged four) and Tannis (then aged two). Later on we tragically lost an infant son at eight months old due to a congenital heart defect. In 1989 the family was blessed with a daughter, Danette, and then blessed again with a son, Daniel, in 1992.

In 1989 when Gina finished her Bachelor of Arts degree and I completed my GED, we moved to Canadian Union College (CUC), as I felt a strong call from God to be a pastor.

As a boy I had dreamt of a certain tall structure, and in an effort to find out what it was, I had searched for it in Grand Rapids and surrounding areas, to no avail. But as Gina and I inspected the last rental house option at CUC, I looked out the back window and was taken aback by what I saw. I had finally found the structure I had dreamt of so long ago! It was the tall silo near the old furniture factory. At that moment I knew I was in the right place and that I was indeed following God's plan.

During my last year at CUC, when prospective religious studies graduates interview with all of the Canadian conference presidents in hopes to be offered a call to a pastorate, I elected to meet with only one person: Lester Carney, president of the Manitoba-Saskatchewan conference at the time. I shared with him that I felt that God was calling me to work with my own First Nations people in The Pas, especially on Gina's reserve, Opaskwayak Cree Nation. God once again answered my prayer, and I was hired to work specifically with First Nations people.

On July 1, 1994, our young family moved to The Pas. I began my on-the-job training and, over the years, held several evangelism series with different evangelists and was blessed with several baptisms. Without an available home church, the group rented space from the Anglican church on the reserve. Meetings specifically

for the youth were held in my home, and these youth called themselves "Youth for Christ."

Six years later I was officially ordained as a minister. Over the years God continued to lead in our ministry, and I was assigned to different churches in addition to the Opaskwayak Cree Nation/The Pas. My work expanded into other churches located in Hudson's Bay, Sask.; Swan River, Man.; and Winnipegosis, Man.

In 2012 I accepted a call to the Prince Albert and Shellbrook, Sask., district. Although we have faced very challenging situations in our family over the years with respect to health and relationships, my wife and I have remained true to God's calling. In the end, God not only answered my bet and won but also blessed me even more and transformed me from a fisherman into a fisher of men. God does amazing things with our lives when we choose to follow the path that He ordains for us. ■

Daniel Guiboche is pastor of the Prince Albert and Shellbrook churches in the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference. He and his wife, Gina, are the only First Nations couple in pastoral ministry within the North American Division.

An Investment in Eternity



Back row, fr: Vania, Prudence, and Conrad Smith. Back row, fr: Mikah and Leah Smith.

PRUDENCE SMITH shared with me her feelings about Christian education and why she believes it is important in the lives of her children and others. Prudence is the mother of three girls: Vania, 15, a student at Kingsway College; and Leah, 11, and Mikah, 8, who both attend College Park Elementary School in Oshawa, Ont. She has been married for 24 years to her "wonderful husband, Conrad." They moved to the area from across the city three years ago because they wanted their children to continue studying at Adventist Christian schools.

Kingsway College particularly impressed Prudence and her family because of the work study program; they believe it teaches life skills that the students will need as they progress through school and life in general. They also like the multicultural environment that Kingsway offers.

Adventist education has always meant much to Prudence and her family. She

went to an Adventist high school in Jamaica for the entire five years of her high school experience. The students wore uniforms and were easily identified as Seventh-day Adventist students in the community. Prudence said, "It is truly an opportunity to develop the whole person, in that the focus is not just on academics but equally on spiritual development. Christ and God were always the centre of everything we did."

Prudence and her family believe that the church, school, and the home together educate the child. Her parents were firm believers in this three-fold approach as well. Prudence says that spending 24 hours in environments where God was uplifted is what grounded her as a teenager. This led them to make the decision to send their own children to Adventist schools.

When Prudence and her husband, Conrad, were expecting their first child

they decided that Prudence would be a stay-at-home mom, because they wanted to be the main influence in Vania's life during the early stages of her development. They adjusted their financial situation, keeping expenses at a minimum so that they could afford Adventist education. Then, when their second and third babies came along, they decided that "they should have that same opportunity," and these children, too, experienced Adventist education beginning with Kindergarten.

Some people say that paying for an Adventist education is a sacrifice, but Prudence and her husband see it as an investment in their children's spiritual future and their eternal life. Prudence says, "God wants us to give them the best, and for us that is Adventist Christian education."

Prudence and Conrad feel that Adventist education is an extension of the Christian values they teach at home and, by extension, at church. They want to have their children immersed in a curriculum they (the parents) are comfortable with. The couple expressed some concern about the new sex-education curriculum being implemented in Ontario public schools, which will introduce sex education to children at a younger age than before. "They [the students] are going to be taught things that we do not necessarily consider age-appropriate." Adventist education offers Christ-centred, dedicated teachers and staff who are always there to support and encourage students and parents alike.

Students begin their day with worship and continue throughout the day in an environment where Christ is always lifted up. For Prudence, Kingsway College aligns with her Christian values and beliefs, and she would recommend Kingsway to other parents who are looking for a Christ-centred environment and Christian education for their children.

To conclude, Prudence quotes her favourite Bible verse: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13, NKJV). ■

Lydia Sola is communication assistant at Kingsway College.



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Parkview Profiles

"A year and a half ago, I started studying the Bible with Pastor Steve Reasor and my baptism was such a special memory."



Xakeila Byron-Stanley

Xakeila Byron-Stanley has a story as interesting as her name (pronounced Zah-lay-lah). Coming to Lacombe from Spain in the second semester of her Grade 10 year, the graduating senior looks back on her time at Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA) with gratitude. For Xakeila, Parkview Adventist Academy is the place she really grew up.

"PAA gave me a better environment in which to develop and become more of myself. It's a unique community, a big school that feels like a small school."

Before her time abroad, Xakeila lived in McBride, B.C., where 16 students filled her previous classroom. She adjusted well to life on the Hillsop: "I made friends quickly and studied very hard. Everybody was very accepting here. It didn't take long to fit in at all."

Not content with simply being part of the crowd, Xakeila stood out as a volunteer when she began to throw herself into projects all over campus. No act of service went unnoticed. From baking for her classmates to building churches in Belize, Xakeila, now serving as a Grade 12 class president, is filled with love to overflowing.

It is unusual to find a teenager like Xakeila, who balances the more challenging choices of youth with the maturity of a growing Christian. Her recent baptism, at Alberta Campmeeting 2014, was celebrated with a few close friends from PAA who met by the river at 5:30 a.m. to welcome Xakeila into her new life with Jesus as the Sabbath sunshine broke over the horizon.

Xakeila shares, "A year and a half ago, I started studying the Bible with Pastor Steve Reasor [PAA's Chaplain during her first year at school] and my baptism was such a special memory. It really encapsulated the whole time I have been here at PAA with friends and mentors from all over campus joining together. Everyone I have met here became my new family."

Through baptism and her time at PAA, Xakeila's new family has been able to provide a kind of support

that her biological family cannot. Her parents separated just before final exams in her first semester of Grade 10, and Xakeila's mom has been very vocal in opposing her faith. "I had some of my mom's friends approach me concerned about me being sucked into a cult, and I was so mad that she couldn't believe my relationship with God is what got me through. It was a real struggle for me," says Xakeila.

Broken families were never God's plan, and for many, a situation like hers would be a great stressor, but for Xakeila, it was an opportunity to build both friendships and faith. One of her favourite connection points is a weekly Bible memorization group started by PAA alumnus Taylor Lakusta-Wong. "We meet at 7 a.m. on Tuesday mornings, and I've found that my day was actually the best when I did Bible memorization. I feel so strong after starting a day with a group of people who voluntarily join together to worship God. Memorizing passages like 1 Corinthians 13 and Romans 8 also makes it difficult to be mad at people throughout the day, because you started off that day closer to God."

Xakeila will continue pursuing a life that leads closer to God, even though, she admits, people are sometimes reluctant to talk about their faith. "Even in an Adventist school," she says, "people are shy. They are so scared about their peers judging them. It's part of figuring out what they believe, and this is a good place to start."

According to Xakeila, "PAA is a place where people are willing to help one another. In tough times I had friends and teachers supporting me with encouragement and prayer," and that is the real power of Adventist education. ■

Katlyn Ruiz is the director of public relations at Parkview Adventist Academy.

Good Seed

MANS's First Nation Teacher Links Her Conversion and Mission to Adventist Education



SEEDS OF TRUTH were planted in the life of Ramona MacKenzie during her elementary school days while attending Thunder Bay Academy in Ontario for Grades 1 through 6. Today she teaches Native Cultural Studies at Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS). Her Ojibway heritage provides a natural connection to the K-12 students at Canada's mission school in Alberta.

"Going to an Adventist school was the best thing that happened to me in my childhood," says Ramona. "The environment was safe, so even if I was sick, I went to school." That same tenacious attendance continues to be the pattern with Ramona's First Nations students and throughout MANS, principal Gail Wilton observes.

Sometimes we overlook the worth of our Seventh-day Adventist schools, but it was in an Adventist elementary school that the seeds of truth and change were planted in Ramona's life. At an early age Ramona was deeply touched by the Adventist understanding on the Sabbath. During her tumultuous teen years, she refused to attend churches of other faiths because they did not honour the Bible Sabbath. Her convictions remained dormant for several years and were even clouded by some less than stellar choices along the way, but she never forgot what she had learned in those early years.

Education the Key to Change

By age 17, Ramona knew that she had to make some changes in her life. She accepted an invitation to live with an aboriginal Christian friend who led Ramona to express a pivotal heartfelt prayer to God and begin to live a life in Christ. "From here on, things began to change," Ramona relates. "Education became the key for me."

Ramona recognised and appreciated the diversity that she had experienced in her Seventh-day Adventist community. She proudly claims two families—her birth family and her "Christian family" that includes former teachers from Thunder Bay Academy. She has taken the good from each family and now extends the torch of Christian education to others. "Becoming a Seventh-day Adventist has been a huge blessing," says Ramona.

Prior to pursuing an education degree, Ramona spent two years in South Korea on a mission assignment. She graduated from Canadian University College (now Burman University) in 2008 and taught in Port Hardy, B.C., for two years. In September 2013, Ramona accepted a position to teach Native Cultural Studies at MANS.

Building Bridges and Mentoring

"I am responsible for helping the students connect who they are in their culture and how to relate with other cultures in their life journey," says Ramona, who sees each day as a bridge-building experience. Ramona's cross-Canada life experiences have connected her to numerous key people who now help her mentor MANS students to make positive life choices.

Ramona smiles broadly and confidently as she reflects upon being able to continue the cycle of love, prayer, and dedication that she received. "I'm living a dream!" she beams. ■

Linda Steinke writes for the Alberta Conference education department.

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British Columbia

Not By Might—But By His Spirit



Guests enjoy a plant-based meal prepared by Better Living Centre members.



The Better Living Centre in downtown Lillooet, B.C.

Lillooet, B.C., is a beautiful little town along the Fraser River that, during the gold rush days, was the largest centre north of San Francisco and west of Chicago. Today Lillooet has a population of around 2,500. The building housing the Better Living Centre (BLC) in downtown Lillooet was at one time the liquor store, then a medical center. In the early 2000s the building was purchased by church members, and today 15 to 25 regular worshippers attend church services. These few believers gathered together to ask the Lord to guide them in reaching out to their community. Over the past year and a half, He has led us, step by step.

One of our members attended the Health Share weekend at Camp Hope and then shared a book written by David Fiedler, *d Sozo: Reversing the Worst Evil*, with the other group members. Subsequently, the pressing thought was that if you can't do anything but teach someone

how to cook, then do just that! That thought prayerfully led to a program of plant-based cooking demonstrations and nutrition classes. God was slowly breathing life into us, and each time we prayed for His will to be done, He moved us a step further.

Our first plant-based cooking demonstration was held in November 2013. Two young ladies with wonderful personalities and ample experience in cooking healthy, plant-based foods were invited to teach the class; they make the classes fun as well as enlightening. We gave out personal invites to our friends, and about 25 attended. People loved the class and offered suggestions for future classes, and thus began our monthly cooking classes from January to June 2014. One of our key presenters is moving away, but our other young stay-at-home mom will work with a group of us to facilitate the cooking classes for 2014/2015.

As BLC members we decided to practise what we preach and have weekly fellowship dinners after church featuring plant-based foods. Currently, people who attend the cooking classes come to these fellowship dinners. One of our members shared NEWSTART¹ videos so we could become more informed and better educated in matters of health. Our Sabbath afternoon hikes have also become a uniting factor for our BLC family.

With more prayer another door opened. The annual Lillooet Apricot Festival, held the same weekend that Camp Hope begins, offered us another chance to open the BLC doors to the community. Most of our members were heading to camp, and the few who could stay prayed for help, and God provided seven community members who had attended the cooking demonstrations to help with the work. We served haystacks with vegan apricot-mango ice cream (a

recipe developed by one of our members) and had NEWSTART videos playing while 60 to 65 people came in to eat.

The next day we conducted health and wellness assessments. In addition to the BLC team and community volunteers, we had a staff member and students from Fountainview Academy give a helping hand with massages, blood pressure readings, etc.

September 2014 we showed the documentary *Forks Over Knives* and served peanut butter smoothies and various flavours of popcorn. In October Phil Brewer from Silver Hills Guest House hosted a three-session workshop on health. We served a plant-based lunch for the 40 people who attended. On Nov. 30, 2015, we will host our second annual "Holiday Treats" plant-based food cooking demonstration. The classes will run once monthly through June.

Throughout these BLC changes,

our small group of 15 to 25 people have strongly supported different needs through generous giving. We purchased a new 48" TV, sent a child to summer camp, and have the funds ready to create our yard garden. The door of the district court house opens onto the sidewalk to our yard. We will create a welcoming, peaceful place for those who await their day in court. If God wills, we will open our doors for these same people on court days—perhaps for a warm tea or a comforting word.

This past year we have also facilitated a First Nations Wedding Reception, a memorial luncheon, and most importantly personal ministry of our members. Friendships are growing as people's needs are being met through day-to-day contact and through attendance of these events.

Our suggestions for other small churches looking for outreach ideas: (1) get a sense of your community needs

by talking to your friends, (2) organize your facility and group, and (3) pray, pray, pray. Dream big. Remember, it is not you—but God—who provides, and He can perform miracles. Sometimes at our planning meetings, we have only two or three people. But with God and communication with one another, plus much prayer, His Spirit is working.

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me."—Ellen G. White² ■

—Elaine Roque, Lillooet
Better Living Centre

See more at: <http://goo.gl/D1oGEH>

¹NEWSTART is an acronym denoting Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunlight, Temperance, Air, Rest, and Trust in Divine Power.

See Welmar Institute, www.newstart.com.

²The Ministry of Healing, p. 143.

Kelowna Silver Tips Pathfinder Club Relunched!

After several years of inactivity, the Kelowna Silver Tips Pathfinder Club officially relaunched on Sunday, Nov. 4, 2014. A special ceremony was held at Okanagan Adventist Academy (OKAA) for the occasion and was followed by registration and refreshments in the Silver Tips Club House, attached to the OKAA gym.

The event included singing, words from the club's new director, Wayne Clarke, as well as a greeting from a Kelowna mayoral candidate Kelly Row and a representative from St. John's Ambulance.

Brian Wahl, BC Conference youth director, phoned in to officially declare the club relaunched and offer a prayer for the renewed Pathfinder club.

The Kelowna area Adventist churches wanted to officially relaunch a club with a great history.

Until it ceased functioning a few years ago, the Silver Tips Club was one of the longest-running clubs in North America.



A special ceremony was held at Okanagan Adventist Academy (OKAA) at the relaunch of the Kelowna Silver Tips Pathfinder Club. Refreshments and registration followed at the Silver Tips Club House, attached to the OKAA gym.

With such a great history, a club house, and the churches of the Kelowna area aligning to support this club, we believe there are great things in store.

Between 10 and 15 young people have registered for Pathfinders so far.

Several older high school students have volunteered as counsellors. It has been great seeing a team of volunteers, now over 10 strong, come together to relaunch the club.

Please keep the Kelowna Silver Tip

Pathfinder Club and its leaders in your prayers as they grow God's kingdom in Kelowna through this excellent ministry. ■

— Rob Folkenberg,
Youth Pastor, Rutland
Adventist Church

See more at: <http://goa.gvDomyt>

Alberta

Over 350 Youth Gather for Teen Youth Rally

Youth from Yellowknife, Edmonton, Ponoka, Lacombe, Red Deer, Calgary, and Lethbridge gathered at Foothills Camp for the annual Alberta Conference teen youth rally. David Benjamin, assistant youth director, sat quietly at the registration table scrolling through lists on his computer. Within a very short time youth began to fill the lodge cafeteria, not in search for food but searching for their room location and trying to find out who their roommates would be for the weekend.

The theme for this year's youth rally was "Chosen." The idea behind the theme was that too many times youth feel rejected by peers, rejected by society, and sometimes even rejected by their church community, so in coming together this year, youth would leave feeling encouraged knowing that God loves them and has chosen them for a specific purpose.

The speaker was Josué Sanchez, pastor from the Man/Sask Conference. Pastor Sanchez engaged, encouraged, and challenged his listeners through his powerful stories and provocative illustrations. With his seamless and simple messages, he lifted up Christ while lifting the spirits of the youth. Sanchez said, "I share my personal story wherever I go. There is power in sharing your story. Stories have a way of touching people in that they leave imprints on their lives forever."

On Saturday night, Sanchez shared intimately from the inner depths of his own heart. He let the youth in on his personal struggles from childhood, which included bullying, depression, and suicide. His authenticity and candidness touched



Pastor Josue Sanchez (front, centre) with the CBC team that did pre, dress and labors. Prepare participants for the weekend.

on sensitive subjects and opened doors for conversation on topics that are often overlooked and sometimes over-simplified.

"This is an occasion on which youth from all over the conference can come together to get closer to God and one another. We see this as an opportunity for our youth to meet one another, socialize, and share in a time of worship," said Kevin Kiers, the youth director.

On Sabbath afternoon three different activities were available for the youth to participate in. Downstairs in the lodge, Pastors Robbie and Oscar from Edmonton helped to organize Bible games and social activity. Pastor Natufe from Calgary opened the Scriptures with an interactive Bible study, asking hard questions such as "Is it easier for a person to be lost or easier for

a person to be saved?" He concluded his study by saying, "For a person to be lost that means they are fighting against the most powerful force in the whole entire universe—the power of God's love." For those who wanted to get out in a nature and experience God's "second book," they followed Kevin Kiers on a nature walk, they explored God's creation by journeying to a conservation area at the camp, where they were met with hot chocolate to keep them warm and toasty.

As the night was coming to a close, the place to be was at the gym. Packed with players eagerly waiting to play basketball and soccer, teams were created and off the games went.

Sunday morning as bags were being packed and rooms were being cleaned,



Some of the girls in their pajamas waiting for the evening program to start. They wore them to keep warm.



Attendees singing during praise time.

one could sense a longing for more time at the camp. One young person exclaimed, "This was too short; we need to have this for one whole week!"

As Pastor Josué wrapped up his devotional thought, he made it clear that no matter what the youth do, God's love will never fail them, and he reminded them that they were indeed called, selected and chosen by God for a greater work and a greater purpose.

As I reflect over the weekend, I am reminded of a text in the book of Jeremiah, "Before you were formed in the womb I knew you" (NKJV). We all tend to feel unloved, unwanted, unaccepted, and underappreciated at times. It is more than evident that when no one else wants us, when we are not picked, forgotten, and looked over, God chooses us—not only once, but all the time, every day!

I am so thankful that the gospel of

Jesus Christ is a gospel of love, community, and inclusivity. When God is truly present in the mix, no one is ever left out. The reality is God chooses us, but we need to choose Him and choose to be more like Him. ■

—Lyle Notice, Associate Youth Director, Alberta Conference

Alberta SAGE Trip Inspires Heritage Church Service

Recently, the Alberta Seniors in Action for God with Excellence (SAGE) group, led by Keith Clouten and Ellen Bell, as well as several seniors from other western provinces toured 11 of the eastern states of the USA. This tour visited the heritage village at Battle Creek, the Miller Farm, Hiram Edson's farm, and other historical heritage sites of the birthplace of the Advent movement and the beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Upon returning home, three of the tour group (Lyle and Bonnie Walker and Edith Holden of the Mission church in B.C.), wanted to share their experience. They prepared a script and invited 10 of the young people from their church to take part. The idea was to bring us back to our beginnings and to show that many of the founders and leaders were very young when they studied and prayed their way through the doctrinal pillars of the Seventh-day Adventist movement.



Mission church youth bring Adventist history to life.

The 10 young people impersonated those young people of long ago and made the story come alive. It is true, we believe, that there is "nothing to fear for the future except as we shall forget the

way God has led us, and His teachings in our past history."¹ ■

—Bonnie Walker, Mission Adventist church, British Columbia

¹ Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, p. 196

Ontario

Welcome Reception for New High Commissioner and Consul General



Mr. Lloyd Wilks, Jamaica's Consul General to Toronto, Her Excellency Janice Miller, Jamaica's High Commissioner to Canada, and Mansfield Edwards, President of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The newly appointed Jamaica's High Commissioner to Canada, Her Excellency Janice Miller; and Jamaica's Consul General to Toronto, Mr. Lloyd Wilks were hosted at a special ceremony by the Jamaican Canadian Association. Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference, was invited to welcome them and offer a special prayer on their behalf, which preceded tributes and other ceremonial procedures.

Miller holds a Bachelor of Arts (First Class Honours) in history, French, and politics from the University of the West Indies (UWI) at Mona, Jamaica, and a Master of Philosophy degree in international relations from the UWI, at St. Augustine. The High Commissioner-designate pursued the Foreign Service Program at Oxford University on a Chevening Scholarship and has received training in (a) public administration and policy analysis and (b) strategic planning, through the University of Peking, Beijing, and Carleton University, Ottawa, respectively.

Lloyd Wilks, who honoured an invitation to worship at the Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church last year, has been appointed Jamaica's new Consul General to Toronto. Wilks, with over 25 years of experience in the Jamaican Foreign Service, holds a Master of Science in international business from the South Bank University in London, a Master of Arts in diplomacy and international relations from the University of Westminster, London, as well as Bachelor of Science in geography and the social sciences from the UWI. ■

— Mansfield Edwards, President, Ontario Conference

Snow Collapses Roof of Ontario's Camp Frenda Buildings

Snow build-up has caused the roofs of Camp Frenda's kitchen, dining hall, and part of the worship room to collapse. No one was hurt in the collapse at Ontario Conference's camp site in Muskoka.

The roofs collapsed around 8:55 a.m. on Monday, March 9, 2015, shortly after staff worship.

"I had just gone into the kitchen," said Susan James, a member of the food services team, "when I heard a loud crash. It all happened so fast. I quickly ran outside. I just thanked God that we're all ok."

She later recalled that as the walls buckled, the door flew off its hinges, and it was thrown across the room, where it made a huge hole in the wall.

News of the collapse reached camp director, Glenn DeSilva, in Oshawa, within few minutes of the collapse. DeSilva immediately left Oshawa to give support to the team of workers and to ascertain the damage.

"When I arrived at Frenda, I could see that the staff were still stunned by the collapse," said DeSilva. "They had clearly been through an ordeal. The thought of it taking place a day earlier when a church group was here must have been playing on their minds."

"The buildings were in a mess. It was a scene of devastation. The roof had completely caved in over the dining hall, part of the kitchen, and a section of the fireside room, our main assembly room.



My first thought was, *Thank God that no one was hurt!* Truly, it was providential that no one was in the building. Also, I cannot overlook that just a few minutes earlier, the staff had met for worship in the room where the worst damage occurred. Surely, God was in control as they worshipped Him."

Gary Hodder, Ontario Conference executive secretary, visited along with the president and treasurer of the conference the following day. "A feeling of sadness came over us as we saw the devastation," said Hodder. "We knew that the building will have to be replaced, so it was like saying goodbye to a good friend. So many children have been served by it over many years. Yet, there was also a sense of optimism because it provides us with an opportunity to erect a new building that will serve the children and youth of Ontario for many years to come."

When questioned in regards to how the roof collapse will affect summer camp, DeSilva confidently responded that the summer program will take place as planned.

"This summer promises to be one of our best ever," he said. "We have just completed planning an exciting program for our campers. We have already arranged for a temporary kitchen unit, and campers will have the pleasure of eating and worshipping under a huge tent, just like during the old days of camp. It will be fun!"

Camp Frenda is located beside the beautiful Lake Rousseau near Port Carling, Muskoka. For more information about Camp Frenda and its summer program, visit campfrenda.com. ■

—Halsey Peat,
Communication Director,
Ontario Conference

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Reaching Ottawa for Jesus Christ

Ottawa is the capital of Canada," Mansfield Edwards, Ontario Conference president, told pastors in Ottawa nearly three years ago. "The eyes of the nation are upon her. Whatever happens in Ottawa will be felt throughout Canada."

Thus began the spark of an idea: How can Ottawa's Adventist churches reach the nation's capital city for God?

For over two years the region's pastors prayed and worked together, seeking a way to reach the population of the nation's

capital with God's last-day message of hope and salvation. God began opening doors. With the help and encouragement of Jakov Bibulovic, Ontario Conference Evangelism and Church Growth director, the pastors worked on a plan requesting of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC) that Ottawa be considered for the Mission to the Cities initiative that was launched by the General Conference in 2013 in New York City.

Mission to the Cities is the Seventh-day Adventist Church's five-year emphasis on sharing Jesus' love and the hope of His soon return with people in some of the world's largest cities. Starting with New York City, Mission to the Cities is a wholistic approach to sharing the gospel in urban settings. In 2014 each world division focused on a city in their territory. In 2015 each union will focus on a city in their region.

The idea of making an impact on the nation's capital resonated with the SDACC. Consequently, Ottawa was selected for the east and Edmonton for the west.

As the region's pastors and churches began working together, a plan was formed to reach both the English and the French populations of the greater Ottawa area. As a result, the SDACC made available \$150,000, and the Ontario Conference added \$40,000 plus maximum allocations for all the area churches, companies, and groups.

For the past two years, churches, recognizing that successful evangelistic meetings depend on effective pre-work, have been busy. Churches encouraged members to be trained for evangelism through the Ontario Conference School of Evangelism (OCSE). Additional training was also provided for congregations in creative ways to reach their neighbours for Christ. Since January 2015, the area hosted a number of conferences and seminars, including a prayer conference, "Be Inspired and Be the Change," led by Joseph Kidder from Andrews University, and a youth and young adults conference led by Judge Donald McLeod. This was followed by other community-based seminars on stress and depression throughout Ottawa.

Besides health outreach, they also ran a number of family life seminars for the community in March. They concluded with a two-day marriage seminar, "Mad about Marriage," with Mike and Gayle Tucker, on March 20 to 22.

On March 27 to 28, Elder Daniel Jackson, North American Division (NAD) president, was present for Ontario Conference's second annual SEEDS conference. Held at Ottawa Seventh-day Adventist Church, the conference focussed on planting new congregations and growing the church. It was a key factor in helping to maintain the momentum going into spring and summer.

The final pre-event will be held on the weekend of April 10 and 11, when the NAD Family Ministries director, Claudio Consuegra, and his wife, Pam, will be hosting a community outreach parenting seminar entitled, "Help! I'm a Parent!"¹

All preparations lead towards the spring evangelistic campaign with Chris Holland, It is Written Canada speaker/director, to be held at Nepean Sportsplex from May 22 to 30. This short campaign will be a reaping event, but it will not signal the end of REACH Ottawa. Pastors and lay leaders of Ottawa are committed to continue the work of reaching the people of the nation's capital for Jesus.

Large goals have been set, among them a God-sized goal of doubling the number of churches/groups in Ottawa by 2016. The fall of 2015 will see the area churches holding their own evangelistic campaigns. The emphasis on youth, family, and health will continue, as will the wonderful cooperation between pastors and lay people. Lay people will be challenged at the SEEDS conference to consider being a part of a church plant somewhere



Chris Holland, It is Written Canada speaker/director.

in the region. Last but not least, the work of trying to reach the French population of Ottawa will extend into 2016 and beyond.

As the region's pastors and churches commit to praying together and asking God for the faith to dream big dreams, they are confident that God will be glorified and that a large number of souls will be in His kingdom as a direct result of the efforts of this great project. ■

— Joseph Duchesne, Pastor,
Cornwall and Hawkesbury churches

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¹ Details of these events and more may be found at www.reachottawa.ca.



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Go to YouTube and watch the video "Pugwash Memories: The Early Days" (<http://goo.gl/hXTH89>), which covers 20 years of history from the early 1950s to the early 1970s. This video will bring back awesome memories for many and interest new members of what the camp was like in the "good ol' days." This 39-minute video is a compilation of several 8MM film clips. ■

Thank You for your support!

Dear friends. For the past five years our Canada-wide offering has increased to 2014's record total of \$95,000! This offering benefits our only Seventh-day Adventist university in Canada: Burman University (formerly Canadian University College). This directly benefits the youth we serve from across Canada and beyond!



Jerrold Ritchey
VP for Advancement

Materials including special return envelopes will be available at all churches for the May 30, 2015 Canada wide offering. If you have given in past years please continue. If you have not, would you kindly consider a gift this year? Your support is very wisely invested in helping to educate Canada's future leaders! Thank you for caring!

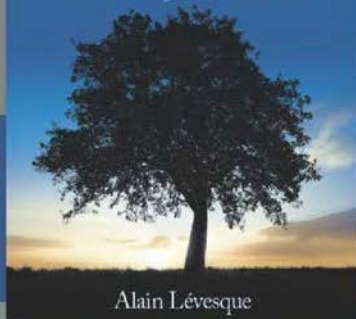


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>> **SDACC REVOLVING FUND REPORT:** As of March 31, 2015, there were 430 depositors with a total deposit of \$27,045,539. There were 83 loans with a value of \$23,557,682.

For more information or to make a deposit, contact Girty Quiambao—quiambao.girty@adventist.ca; 905/433-0011.



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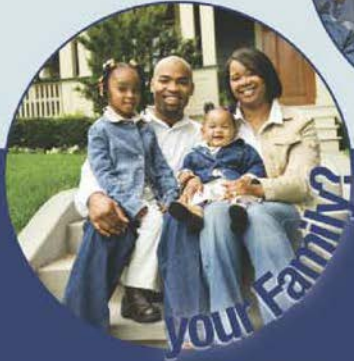
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- All announcements (non-profit events, new member notices, birth announcements, weddings, anniversaries, obituaries and tributes) should be emailed to Almee Perez (perezaimée@adventist.ca) or faxed to her attention at 905/433-0982.
- Every individual named in the announcement must be aware of the submission and have granted the submitter approval for printing.
- Obituaries must be submitted on the appropriate form, completed and/or approved by a family member of the deceased. The forms (both printable and electronically submittable) are available at www.adventist.ca/messenger.
- The Messenger assumes no liability for typographical errors or responsibility for inaccuracies originating in submitted material.
- For more information about Messenger announcement policies, go to www.adventist.ca/messenger, click 'writers guidelines' then click 'announcements.'

■ Announcements

62nd TJA/CAA Alumni Homecoming Weekend—Crawford Adventist Academy will be holding its 62nd Alumni Homecoming Weekend on May 22-24, 2015, highlighting our TJA Classes of 1980, 1975, 1970, 1965, and all classes prior; CAA Classes of 2005, 2000, 1995, 1990, and 1985. We welcome all our alumni and families, former and current administrators, board members, faculty and staff, parents, friends, and supporters.

Please contact the Office of Advancement, TADSB—Derrick Hall, VP of Advancement, 416/633-0090 or toll free 866/960-2125, ext. 234, or dhall@tadh.com / Judy Cardona Gomez, Advancement Assistant, ext. 248, or jgomez@tadh.com.

Visit our official website, www.tadh.com; follow us on Twitter @TJA/CAAAlumni; like us on Facebook "The Official TJA/CAA Alumni Group." (5/15)

■ Missing Members

The **Marina Seventh-day Adventist Church** is looking for the following missing members:

John Fritsen, Albert Goheen, Christine Goheen, Elizabeth Goheen, James Goheen, Christina Scaduto, Erica Scaduto, Kay Scaduto, Gunther Zimmer. If you have a current phone number and address for any of these people, please contact Pastor Robert Rod at 250/816-0630 or email rodnanaimo@gmail.com.

The New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church is looking for the following missing members: Michael Alguire, Jean Anderson, David Barton, Louise Bacon, Robbie Barton (Charbonneau), Krysal Brandow, Cheryl Bray (Mouldry), Angelo Burton, Denise Cagliasso, Lisa Caribane, Barbara Conroy, Daniel Conroy, Dave Conroy, David Crafton, John Docherty, Johanna Fitzpatrick, Joshua Fitzpatrick, Mamie Gray, Shildy Gray, Paul Hancock, Chantal Henry, Nicole Henry, Madison Holloway, Heber James, Donna Jarman, Fred Johnson, David Jordan, Ryan Kohn, Julie Krueger, Dian Landon, Barbara Mason, Jamie Maxwell, Andrew McGivery, Andrew Moores, Elizabeth Moores, Dena Myers, Paul Newman, Maryanne Nicholson, Rebecca Nicholson, Betty O'Brien, Abdul Aziz Obateh, Sanjana Parra, Marlene Proulx, Sherrine Kay Raymond, Marie Rochon, Stephen Rochon, Judith Rubelow-Williams, Chris Rushon, Carolyn Sicaud, Larry Sicaud, Tammy Smith, Tracy Smith, Jennifer Southward, Julia Trimble, Trevor Turner, Olivia Ulp, Albert Wells, Marie Wilkins, Roger Wilkins. If you have a current phone number and address for any of these people, please contact Pastor Frank Delf Erba at 905/404-9357 or fdell@tadh.com.

■ Births

Erna and Kjetil Soren Mogae was born on Feb. 23, 2015, to Sydney and Susan Mogae of Bedford, Nova Scotia. A brother for big sister, Orville.

■ Weddings

Ivy Lugo and **Darryl Budal** were married on April 27, 2014, in Hamilton, Ont., and are making their home in Hamilton. Ivy is the daughter of Virginia and Maxwell Lugo, of Zamboanga Del Norte, Philippines, and Darryl is the son of Oadene and Ron Budal, of Hamilton.

■ Anniversaries

Arthur and Dorothy Spensat of Abbotsford, B.C., celebrated their



65th wedding anniversary on June 16, 2014. They were married in College Heights, Alta., and celebrated by taking a holiday in Maui. The Spensats have two children, four grandchildren, and nine grandchildren.

■ Obituaries

Loren Krenzier was born on Oct. 27, 1924, in Leola, S. Dak., and died on Jan. 13, 2015, in Calgary, Alta. He spent 36 years as a pastor in Alberta and Ontario, and served as communication director for the Ontario Conference and Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. Loren is predeceased by his parents, Bernhardt and Orila Krenzier. Surviving: wife, Ruth (née Scharf) Krenzier; daughters, Gaylene (Dun) Border of Portland, Ore., Donna Krenzier of Portland, Janice Krenzier of Calgary; four grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Murdoch Nicholson was born on Dec. 17, 1940, in Victoria, B.C., and died on Jan. 8, 2015, in Whitehorse.

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Yukon. His mission was to drive the elderly to church, oversee the church board, have prayer meetings in his home, and roll up his sleeves and wash dishes after potlucks. Surviving: wife, Marilyn Nicholson of Whitehorse; son, Jacob Nicholson of Abbotsford, B.C.; daughter, Rachel (Michael) Spitzer of Westwood, Ont.; brothers: Malcolm Nicholson of Comox, B.C., Cheryenne (Patricia) Nicholson of Orillia, Ont., Raymond (Lynn) Wear of Honeymoon Bay, B.C.; one grandchild.

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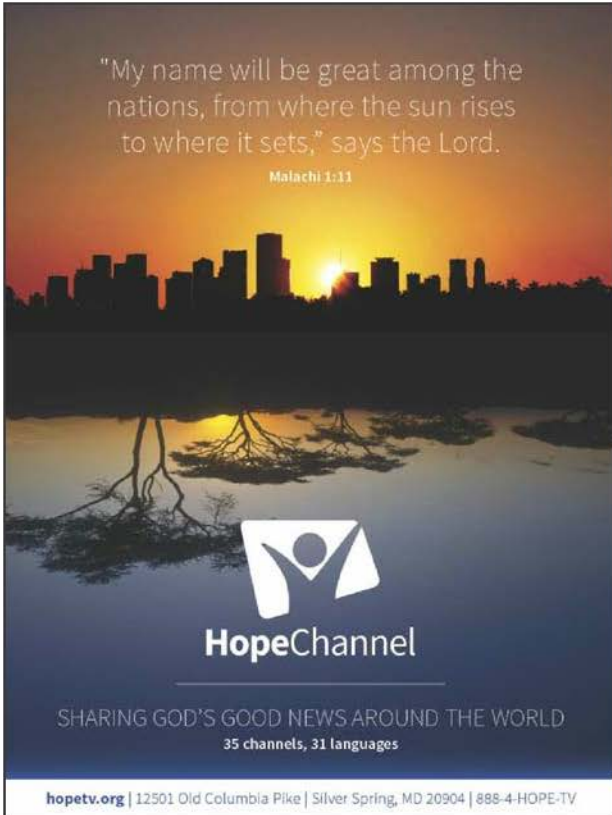
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Madison College Alumni Association would like to include any graduates, attendees, or friends who may not already be on our mailing list, to receive the quarterly newsletter and any other communication. Write PO Box 17435, Madison, TN 37116 or by e-mail madison.collegelae@ymail.com. (5/15)

"My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets," says the Lord.
Malachi 1:11



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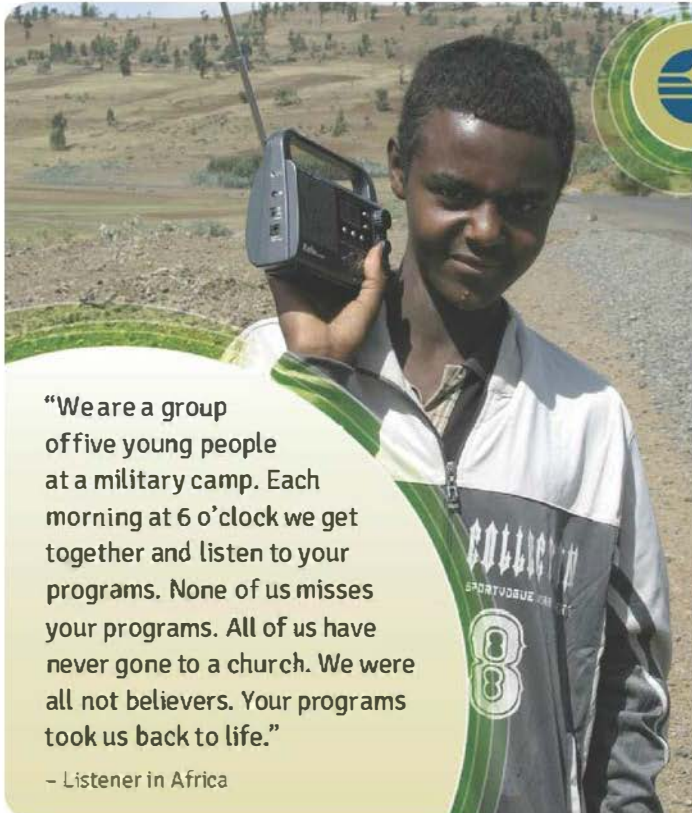
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Union College seeks professor specializing in emerging media. Minimum 5 years' experience in public relations or integrated marketing communication essential, as is commitment to staying current with constantly changes in practice. Doctorate preferred; master's required. Email cover letter and CV to Michelle Velazquez Meznard at mimesmar@ucollege.edu. (5/15)

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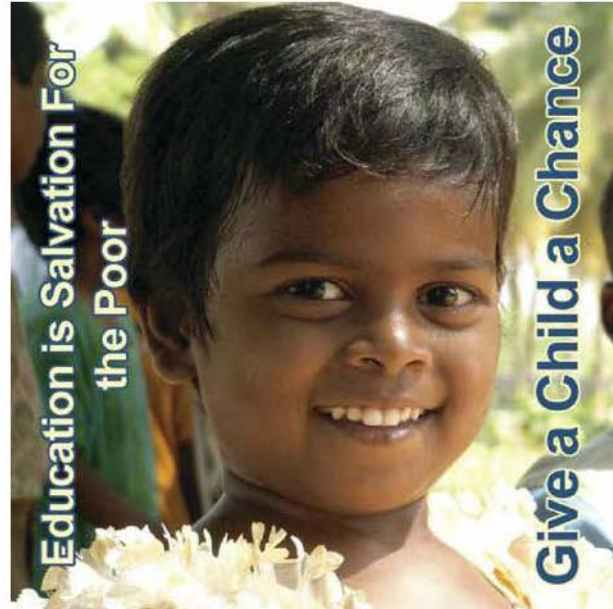
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Sandy Lake Academy's dorm parents will be retiring this June and we are actively looking for new dorm parents for the upcoming 2015/2016 school year. The ideal candidate would be a husband and wife team who have a passion for youth and Christian education. SLA is a Maritime Prep-12 Adventist school with a small dorm (max. 18 students) located in beautiful Halifax, Nova Scotia. For more information and where to send a resumé, please contact Kelly Loxdale, kloxdale@gmail.com. (6/15)

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Chilliwack BC SDA Church is actively recruiting families with children in Grades K-7 for our established two-room church school. Is it time for you to relocate to the beautiful Fraser Valley? For more information, contact Murray McLeod, principal, Chilliwack Adventist Christian School, 604/378-8069. (5/15)

SDA Business Connections is an online directory for Adventist church members to find services offered by fellow church members. We are looking for more businesses to enlist. Are you self-employed or a business owner? Visit www.sdabusinessconnections.com or call Albert 647/772-3762 or Lisa 905/438-1770. (5/15)



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from the editor

Stories to Share

I RECENTLY ATTENDED SONSCREEN, an annual Adventist film festival that was held at La Sierra University this year.¹ My heart was full of joy, because I knew that while the church may have gotten off to a slow start with respect to this medium, it is now embracing it. I am proud that, at their young ages, college and university students are creating short films that leave lasting impressions on people's lives. After all, what is a film but simply another way to tell a story?

Jesus was a master storyteller; He drew crowds to Himself and packaged eternal truths into stories that people were able to grasp and apply.

Another highlight of SONscreen was a private screening of *Old Fashioned*, a feature-length film produced by Adventists, one that made its debut in theatres on the same weekend as a very different "romance" movie. *Old Fashioned* earned the highest-ever weekend sales for a faith-based movie that played in less than 300 theatres; this is quite a feat.²

Another feature film is currently in the works, and it tells the story of our Adventist war hero Desmond T. Doss. The film, tentatively called *Hacksaw Ridge*, stars Andrew Garfield and is directed by Mel Gibson. Filming is set to begin in Australia later this year.³

I am pleased to say that I was the one who took the story to Bing Crosby's eldest grandson, Gregory Crosby, a third-generation filmmaker. Despite a number of stops and starts over a period of 15 years, Gregory has been a constant force in pushing this project forward. We were able to meet with Desmond Doss personally before he passed away to receive his permission to make a feature film.

Although Desmond is a well-known hero in the global Adventist community, our denomination is full of stories of many other heroes waiting to be told to a larger audience. Stories can be powerful. I was an Adventist Book Centre manager for about 20 years, so I am very familiar with the Adventist books that were in constant demand because of their appeal, namely, because they contained great stories that touched people deeply, profoundly, and permanently. Do not be afraid to take the reins, speak up, and bring these stories to the forefront so that others may hear and be blessed. ■

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stan".

Stan Jensen, editor
Canadian Adventist Messenger

¹ See <http://sonscreen.com>.

² See <http://oldfashionedmovie.com>.

³ For details about this film and how it came to Hollywood, please see Michael Peabody, "Gibson Filming Project Based on War Hero Who Refused to Carry Weapon," *Religious Liberty TV*, April 7, 2015, <http://goo.gl/1l0xJu>. For current updates on the release date and other details, bookmark <http://goo.gl/jiHOvVI> in your web browser.

THE COUNTRY OF KENYA in East Africa may be far away in physical distance, but the land and its people have long held a special place close to the hearts of Canadians. Adventist missionaries have travelled there with great success, as shown in the reports below.

This month we take a look back at a small sampling of the work that has been done in Kenya.

Surrey Sends Literature

Members of the Surrey church in British Columbia, recently sent three mailbags of literature totalling 126 lbs, to the Afro-Mideast Division at their new headquarters in Kenya, Africa, to be used

by the local church members in their mission outreach.

Church members donated Bibles, Spirit of Prophecy books, *Primary Treasures*, etc., and various denominational magazines and booklets. More than enough money was also freely given to cover the cost of mailing.

In a letter of heartfelt thanks we learned our shipment arrived in good order within two weeks.

Because of the high cost of paper for printing in that area, the need for this type of literature is great. Surrey has now started on its second shipment.

Margaret B. Turner

Members of the Surrey, B.C., church collected 126 lbs of Bibles, Spirit of Prophecy books, and other materials to send to Kenya for their mission outreach. *Canadian Union Messenger*, Sept. 28, 1979, Vol. 48, No. 18, p. 8.



Newly-trained rehabilitation assistants help Daniel walk for the first time in his life, following surgery to both knees by Doctor Odira.

Non-profit organization A Better World, founded just two years prior out of the College Heights Church in Lacomb, Alta., focused their humanitarian efforts on physiotherapy at the Rendu Bay Adventist Hospital. *Canadian Union Messenger*, Nov. 1992, Vol. 61, No. 11, p. 8.



Mr. and Mrs. D.R.L. Arden and their two oldest children. This photo was taken before their third child was born that same year. *Canadian Union Messenger*, Dec. 9, 1939, Vol. 28, No. 25, p. 6.



Kendu Youth in training, East Africa

A news piece from Ralph Watts, president of the Southern African Division, related reports of over one hundred Kisii people being baptized at campmeeting in Kenya. He said, "Seventh-day Adventists have the largest number of Christian converts among these progressive Kisii tribes people." *Canadian Union Messenger*, Aug. 12, 1953, Vol. 22, No. 16, p. 1.

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