

canadian adventist

Messenger

July 2015

Building a Future and a Hope

PLUS Actions Speak Louder Than Words (p. 8)
My Healing Story (p. 14) • Yola's Glows (p. 22)
Religious Liberty Inside the Church (p. 46)

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“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

—1 Cor. 10:31, ESV



Simple Christianity

In *Jesus v. the Pharisees* the extremely religious people of Jesus' time repeatedly expressed their anger over the way He approached the practice of religion. To them, this outsider, a man from Galilee, got it all wrong. He was simply not paying attention to the details that clearly defined faith and life for those who worshipped the God of Israel.

Statements surrounding the practice of faith are not rare in Scripture. When you look at those statements that came directly from God through divine inspiration, they are simple and eloquent. Contrast that with the complex expectations that people like you and I have added to what God has said.

Living a life of faith and trust in God was not meant to be complicated. It was to be kept simple and doable. Simple things are more likely to become a part of what we practise on a daily basis. The true essence of Christian faith is found in its simplicity.

Among the Pharisees so many years ago was a young, dedicated, deeply religious leader named Saul. His parents had chosen that name because it meant "asked for" or "prayed for." Saul was a devout student of religion, and when he heard about Jesus, he was disturbed. He had embraced religion in all its complexity, and what Jesus represented seemed wrong.

One day, on a road trip to straighten things out, Saul encountered Jesus. It was a life-changing experience, and so that he would never forget it, he changed his name to Paul. Paul is a baby name. It means "small" or "little." In meeting Jesus, Paul realized—maybe for the first time—how little he and all his complexity of faith really were.

Some years later Paul wrote to the Corinthians a summary of what it means to be a Christian. Here is what he says: "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31, ESV). Simple, isn't it? ■

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Messenger

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Upcoming 2015 Mission Trips



Kenya

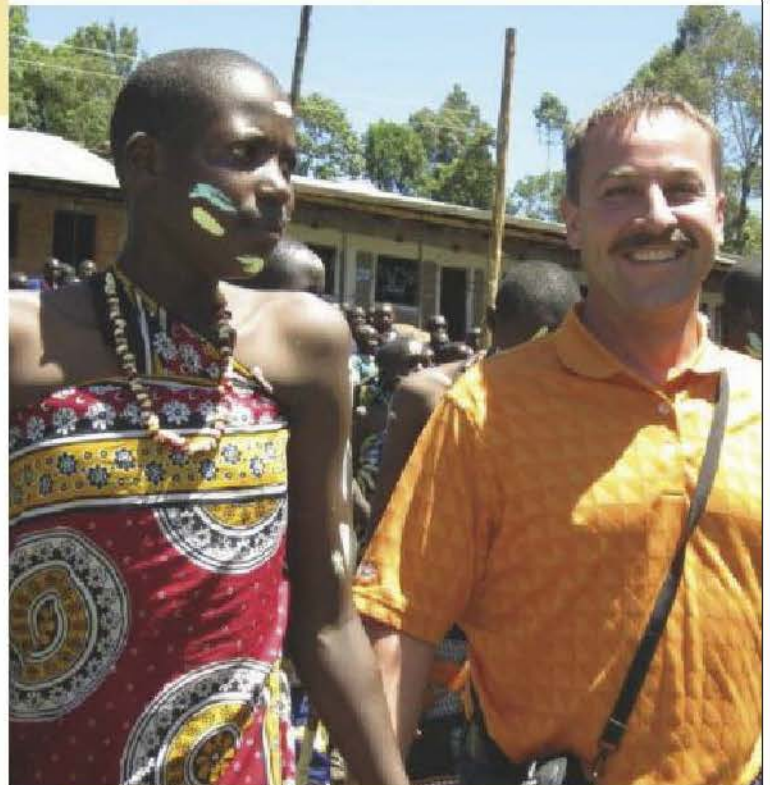
October 20 - November 4, 2015

Join us for 14 memorable days as you tour Kenya, visit A Better World projects, meet the people and see your investment in action!

- ✓ Fully escorted tour of Kenya and A Better World project sites.
- ✓ Help out at schools, orphanages and clinics.
- ✓ Explore the local culture and connect with communities.
- ✓ See the wildlife in the Masai Mara and enjoy the famous game park.

A Better World was founded in 1990 by the College Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church on the campus of Burman University (formerly CUC). A Better World involves community and church members and implements projects in direct partnership with local communities abroad. Over 2500 volunteers have travelled with A Better World!

For more information contact: Julie Stegmaier
jstegmaier@abwcanada.ca or visit www.abwcanada.ca.



Tanzania Medical Mission Trip

October 20 - November 4, 2015

Needed: All health care professionals (Nurses, Doctors, Physios, Pharmacists and Dentists etc). Non Health Care Professionals are welcome as Support Persons on this trip.

To:

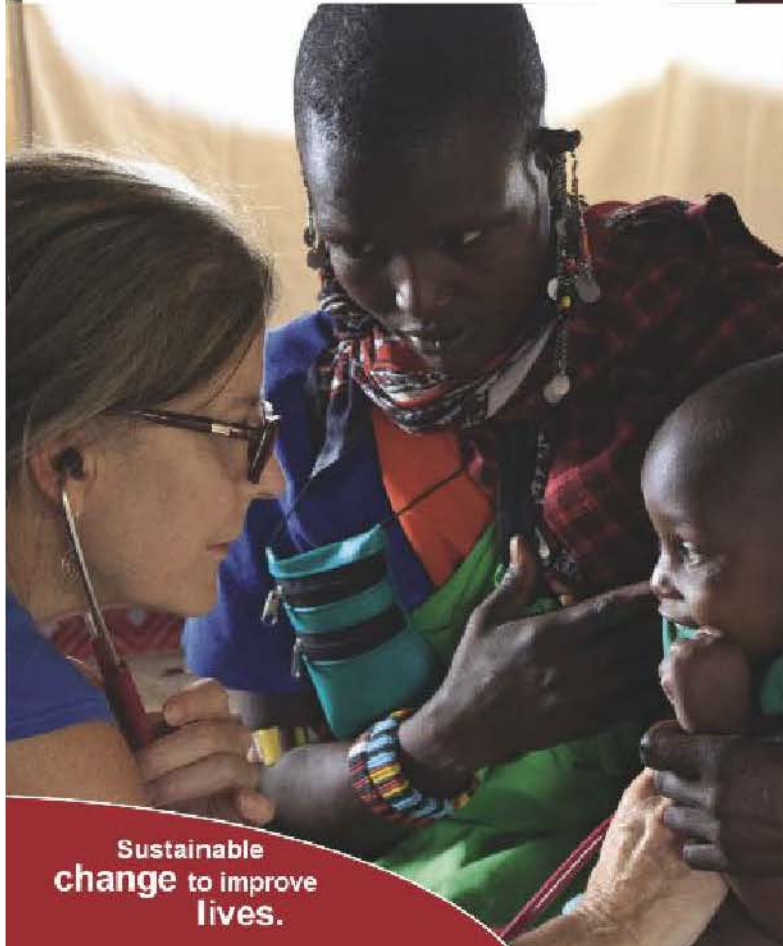
- Provide training for local health care workers
- Assist in the clinics built by A Better World
- Serve in rural medical camps

Team Leaders:

Dr. Ray Comeau & Deryl Comeau RN, BScN, MN
Directors of ABW Canada's Medical Health Projects
Together they have led medical teams for the past thirteen years. Early in their careers, they worked for two years at a remote island hospital in Vanuatu, South Pacific.

For more information: Please email the Comeau's at rdcomeau@abwcanada.ca or visit www.abwcanada.ca to submit your application.

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Sustainable
change to improve
lives.

Temptation of the faithful

Weariness

"Be not weary in well doing." —Matthew 24:13

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28, NRSV). Notice the word "weary" in the text?

The word brings to mind someone who has been carrying obligations for a longtime. Someone who feels, *I'm at the end of my rope, I don't know what to do, and I cannot keep up with this much longer. Maybe it is time for me to cut back, give up my church offices, and take it easy for a while.*

Weary of Struggling with Life's Issues

The Bible story that comes to mind when I think of "weary" is of the man who brings his son to Jesus requesting for Him to heal him of demon possession in Mark 9:14-24. "The man cries out, 'But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.' Jesus said to him, 'If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.' Immediately, the father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief'" (verses 22-24, NKJV).

Can you identify with this father? For many years he had been struggling with his child's need but was hoping that if Jesus could do anything, He could help them. Jesus did respond, and the boy was healed. What a relief to the father. If you are carrying weariness, Matthew 11:28 is for you. Jesus will give you rest.

Weary in Well Doing

The Bible tells us of another kind of weariness found in 2 Thessalonians 3:13: "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing" (KJV).

I have been noticing that many of our faithful supportive members are struggling with "weariness" in their church offices. And it is not because they are looking for an easy ride as a pew warmer or want an indulgent life, but the obligations of life have resulted in fewer and fewer hours in the day to give to their church.

I know it isn't easy, and often we as pastors fail to appreciate the challenges of not only working all day but then coming out to church programs in the evening, or on Sundays for one committee or meeting after another. As pastors we need to put ourselves in their shoes and ask ourselves how we would respond, especially when the board is supposed to finish at 9:30 p.m. but instead continues to 10:30 p.m., or when the one-hour prayer meeting scheduled for 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. extends to 9:15. Engaged members who love their church and are fighting with weariness need to know we respect the loads of life they carry. Overtime in our church meetings should be the exception, not the norm.

Even though Jesus wants us to come apart and rest awhile from time to time, He does not encourage us to cut back and become a pew warmer. Here are a few texts to show we are in a battle that will only be completed when Jesus comes.

2 Thessalonians 3:13: "Be not weary in well doing."

Matthew 24:13: "He who endures to the end shall be saved" (NKJV).

Isaiah 40:31: "Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. . . . They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" (NRSV).

2 Thessalonians 1:4: "We ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith" (NRSV).

For Jesus, "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross" (Heb. 12:2, KJV). Fellow member on the journey toward the second coming, weary at times, continue to be engaged for Jesus because you love Him and for the joy set before you. ■



Ken Corkum is president of the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference.

teen talk

Q: Today my uncle died, and this uncle was a major father figure I needed in my life. Now that he is gone, I feel empty and lost. I can't even cry! It feels like I have forgotten how to. I don't know what to do. I know I'm supposed to have faith—and I do—but I just feel this emptiness and loss. I hope to see him in heaven, but it's just that the way I feel right now is off.

A: I'm so sorry to hear about your uncle! It doesn't matter how religious you are or how much faith you may have in God: once death comes your way, it will always shake you to the core. Jesus Himself supplicated to God to spare Him from its claws! Death is horrible. It's against our nature—we are wired to live eternally! Feeling empty and lost is totally normal. It is our natural reaction to something that is radically alien to what God intended when He created us.

The first few months will be especially hard. You may find yourself doubting about your purpose in life, and even about God's justice and goodness. If that happens, don't be alarmed, because that is also a normal phase in your healing process. The opposite of faith is not doubt, but rejection, so you are safe.

The Holy Spirit is with you. You may not know how to approach God, but the Holy Spirit is praying for you right now with groanings that cannot be expressed in words (see Rom. 8:26). He's got you covered! ■

((hugs))



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

Creation Corner for Kids

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.—Revelation 20:6

Flying foxes

Flying foxes (large Australian fruit bats) enjoy sweet, ripe plums and sometimes feed by their hundreds in plum orchards at night. Of course, flying foxes are not the only creatures that like plums. Birds also like plums and raid the orchards during the day. Unless a farmer watches the orchard day and night, it can be difficult to know what is stealing and damaging the fruit.

The key to knowing what is robbing an orchard is to examine the evidence left behind. Parrots and other birds leave triangle-shaped cuts in the fruit. Flying foxes leave spats on the ground. Spats are dime-sized, pressed-together bits of fruit fibre that flying foxes spit out after they've sucked out the juice.

Think about it.

Often, by the time a farmer examines what's been left behind, it's too late. The flying foxes have stripped the orchard and gone away. Sadly, it will also be too late for many who are deceived by lies about the millennium. Satan has inspired the invention of many wild and mixed-up stories about the millennium that give people the mistaken idea that Jesus's Second Coming will actually be a second chance for people to come to Him and be saved.

Do it!

Study Revelation 20 and other Scriptures about the millennium and know what the Bible teaches on this important subject. Perhaps Jesus will use you to help others learn the truth and get ready for when He comes again.



Tammie Burak and her family enjoy studying and learning from God's creation. You can contact her at tammie.burak@gmail.com or follow her blog at www.creationcornerforkids.blogspot.ca.

Actions speak louder than **Words**



The IMPACT team in Cochrane, Ontario.

PEOPLE HAVE OFTEN SAID, "A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS." I would add to that saying, "A good drama is worth a thousand pictures." Having said that, let me introduce you to IMPACT, a drama ministry group founded at Burman University (formerly Canadian University College), which stands for Impossible Made Possible At Christ's Throne. IMPACT consists of Burman University and Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA) students who have a passion to share Jesus using art forms such as spoken drama, drama to music, praise and worship, interpretive dances, mimes, and personal testimonies.

In these trying times we take the much-needed message of love, acceptance, and hope to schools, campuses, churches, and wherever we are invited. We also go on

mission trips where we share God's love through the arts and provide service to the physical needs of the people in the community.

We recently partnered with STORM Co. (Service To Others Really Matters) on a mission trip to northern Ontario. We left Edmonton International Airport early Sunday morning, April 19, headed for Cochrane, Ont. The town of Cochrane is about a nine-hour drive from Toronto and is the home town of Tim Horton, the founder of the much-loved coffee chain. When we arrived there we were met with blistering cold winds and grey skies, but it did not dampen the spirit of the team to minister.

Upon arriving in Cochrane, we met with Alison Down, the Adventist Bible worker/pastor in Cochrane. Her heart of service and passion for Jesus was very evident to all of us as we quickly became acquainted with her. We spent the first night there and then took the Polar Bear Express to the town of Moosonee. We stayed with Jun and Pat, who housed us all and helped transport our group around the city. We also met Luther, the Bible worker for Moosonee, who helped make sure we were provided for and whose father, Frank, made sure we never went hungry.

On the first day in Moosonee we went to an elder's home and presented a program for the youth. The next day we travelled by helicopter to Moose Factory Island, where we visited the elder's home and hospital. We toured the island and saw the fur companies after which the island is named. Some of the team presented dramas for the Moosonee radio station. The next day we went to the only local grocery store and gave away free tracts, books, hugs, and prayers to the customers.

We soon had to say goodbye to Moosonee and take the Polar Bear Express back to Cochrane. In Cochrane we performed in the Innisnew Friendship Centre on Thursday and Friday nights, helped at the Cochrane Polar Bear Habitat (home to polar bears Ganuk and Inukshuk) by creating food bowls for the bears in the shape of animals and other objects. We spoke live on the Cochrane Christian radio station (CFCJ-FM), where we shared some of our stories and dramas.

On Sabbath we led the main service at the Adventist church, and on Sunday we were invited to lead the main service at the Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church. It was a sad moment when we had to leave our new friends behind in Ontario and return to Alberta.

This mission trip was eye-opening for me and for our team, as it helped us see the desperate need that lies in Canada. It showed us how drastically a simple message, song, or drama can change people's lives and fill them with hope. The people in those cities, who have less amenities than I do, are content with what they have and ministered to us as much as we ministered to them.



The IMPACT team performing a skit.

I hope to go on more mission trips this upcoming year as a result!

These are just a few of the experiences we had on the mission trip, but IMPACT is not limited to just mission trips; during the school year we conduct programs on campus and different events around Alberta. The team meets weekly to worship, plan, and practise, which takes a lot of effort. We encourage our team to write new scripts and come up with fresh ideas, so we are constantly learning and growing.

I joined IMPACT in February 2014, and it has left a significant impression on my life. It has helped me understand that sharing the gospel does not necessarily have to be in the form of a sermon, nor is it just a drama. It is something that we accomplish in our daily lives. William Shakespeare says in *As You Like It*, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players; they have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts." What better way to reflect Christ than to live out what Christ has done in my life?

IMPACT has also helped me uncover my talents for acting, script writing, and directing. I have also had the opportunity to be a student leader in IMPACT, which helped develop my leadership skills. This has allowed me to have more faith in my abilities, develop the characteristics of a team player and leader, and grow a closer relationship with my Savior.

I'm excited for next year as IMPACT becomes more linked with Campus Ministries. I look forward to IMPACT having a stronger presence on campus, and I'm sure Burman University will be blessed because of how God works through the team. I can hardly wait for next year as it opens a new chapter for Burman University and IMPACT. ■

Joel John is a second-year Biology major at Burman University.

Where Are They Now



Beverley and Glendon Corkum

Messenger: *Where were you born? And tell me about your childhood.*

Glendon Corkum: I grew up in a small village in Nova Scotia about 10 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. The house I lived in had my grandparents living in one section along with my parents, and my brother in another section. My grandfather went to the United States to find employment. While he was there, he came in contact with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Our family was Baptist, but when he introduced us to his newfound faith, all but my father became Adventists.

Beverley Corkum: I had the privilege of growing up on a farm in Michigan. I am a third generation Adventist on my mother's side. My father was not a believer.

M: *Where did you get your education?*

G: At 17 I left home for Oshawa Missionary College (now Kingsway College), where I became grounded in my faith. From there I went to Atlantic Union College and received a BA degree. I received a graduate degree from Andrews University, where I met my wife. For seven summers I paid for my schooling by selling Christian books. The first year I travelled by bicycle. During these summers my relationship with Christ grew much

Messenger catches up with former leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. In this issue we talk with Glendon and Beverley Corkum.

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

deeper. I praise God for a wonderful educational system.

B: I spent nine years in a one-room country school and then on to a local high school. At Andrews I got a BA in Elementary Education.

M: *Where and in what capacity did you serve the church?*

G: We began our ministry in Yarmouth, N.S., in 1962. We then moved to New Brunswick, where we pastored five churches before going to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) from 1967 to 1970. Returning from the mission field, we went to Ottawa during the time the Benjamin St. church and school were built (1970-1975). After a couple of years of home-schooling our children, we decided to start a school. Mabel Eastman taught at the Ottawa Church School from 1919 to 1921. She married H.M.S. Richards, and the school was known as the H.M.S. Richards School. Unfortunately, the school closed after the Richards moved away in 1922.

Our next service was in Windsor, Ont., from 1975 to 1979, and then we moved back to the Maritimes as lay trainer, evangelist, and pastor (1979-1986). A call from the West brought us to Calgary from 1986 to 1991 and then to Seattle, Wash., from 1991 to 2001. Our next assignment brought us back to the

Maritimes to pastor three churches. We ended our ministry in the Yarmouth area, where we had originally begun our church service.

B: I was involved in children's ministry and teaching in each district we served.

M: *What brought you the greatest joy in your ministry?*

G: My greatest joy was winning souls to Christ. I held many seminar series during my years of ministry.

B: My greatest joy was knowing children were in a safe Christian environment, and helping families and churches provide their children with a personal experience with God.

M: *Tell me about your family.*

G & B: God has blessed us greatly with four children and nine grandchildren, all of whom are faithful to God. Verlaine Linrud (Dan) teaches school in the Portland, Ore., area; LaVonna Bussey (Barry) teaches piano in Oshawa, Ont.; Anita Nunn (Mike) is a nurse in Redding, Calif., and Alan Corkum lives in his own apartment near Verlaine.

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

G & B: We are taking life easy in Bridgewater, N.S., serving God where needed. ■



It is Sabbath morning on an unusually warm day in May. The sun shines brightly through the tall, rectangular windows of the sanctuary, illuminating the brilliant cotton-white walls, cathedral ceilings, and hues of spruce and hickory of the sanctuary. It is an inviting, joyful space, which immediately lifts the mood of churchgoers as they trickle in for the main service.

She Made A Difference

This is the vision that Muriel Weekes had for her church. She wanted people to walk into Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church in Markham, Ont., and feel uplifted and cheerful. She wanted her church, the house of the Lord, to be inviting, warm, and hospitable—much like Muriel Weekes, herself, was.

To everyone who knew her, she was a woman with a big heart and an open home. She spent her entire life caring for others, in her lifelong career as a nurse as well as in her personal life. Well into her 80s, after she had moved from her home and into an assisted-living facility, she could be counted on to welcome friends and strangers alike in for a glass of her favourite beverage, “Mauby,” a recipe that travelled with her from her native Barbados to England and then to Canada. Muriel was home-proud and loved being hostess: no matter the place she called home, it was sure to be neat, clean, and inviting, greeting her guests with the smells of goodies baking in the oven and feasts bubbling

on the stovetop.

Muriel’s attitude of sharing, giving, and hospitality extended far beyond her home into her church and community roles. For many of her 20-plus years as a member at Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church, she served as a deaconess, a “prayer warrior,” a choir member, and a volunteer at the Adventist Community Services Centre. Also, during these years she continuously and generously supported the church building by improving or providing for the physical needs of the church. She believed that God’s house should not—and would not—be neglected and that it should be a place where people feel welcome and comfortable.

This was so important to Muriel that she contacted the Ontario Conference and, through its Planned Giving and Trust Services department, arranged to leave what little funds she had to the church she loved. True to her humble and giving nature, she told no one of her planned gift. After her passing, as her family and

friends mourned their great loss, Muriel surprised everyone yet again with the greatness of her love, hospitality, and support—with a bequest of \$15,000 left to Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church for the improvement of the church building itself, in the way of new blinds for the sanctuary windows and an upgrade to the reception area. Muriel may not have been a woman with much money, but she was a woman with a huge heart, and she wanted more than anything to share what she had with her family, friends, church, and community.

It is a bright morning in May. Churchgoers trickle into the sanctuary of the Apple Creek Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the memory of Muriel Weekes shines brightly through the open blinds and in to the welcoming house of the Lord they are proud to call their church. ■

Leah Keys writes from Courtoice, Ontario.

A Better World volunteers receive coveted Central Alberta awards

A Somali native and a high school student have led different lives in Central Alberta, but they share one goal in common. Zainab Mohamoud and Kelsey Olsen are keen to help children in East Africa. Both have partnered with A Better World Canada, a Central Alberta-based international development organization formed 25 years ago as part of Lacombe's College Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Mohamoud is overseeing a school project in northern Somalia, while Olsen led her school club to raise money for a Kenyan orphanage. Mohamoud grew up in Somalia, a country that saw its central government overthrown in 1991 and underwent more than two decades of ensuing civil war. She left for Ethiopia and moved to Canada in 1997. After being in Toronto and Calgary, Mohamoud attended Red Deer College and was hired at the Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association. Mohamoud felt fortunate to receive a higher education in Canada, because back home it's tough for girls to go to school.

"Girls get married very young, so it is not seen as a good investment to send them to school," said Mohamoud.

In May 2014 she began raising money to build a Grade 1 to 8 school for girls and boys. Mohamoud sent a proposal to A Better World, which agreed to support it. So far, about \$40,000 has been raised, including \$10,000 from A Better World. People can donate online through A Better World and receive a tax-deductible receipt.

She is excited several Somali communities in North America are investing in the project, including ones in Toronto, Ont., Columbus, Ohio, Minneapolis, Minn., and Boston, Mass. Mohamoud is also grateful for Central Alberta's support.

"The money is really going to the people [in Somalia] who need it. I want to see the Somali people have an opportunity for an education and to have a better future, not just mere survival."

She also taught immigrant women about breast cancer awareness and helped organize Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation fundraisers. Mohamoud left her job as breast cancer screening project co-ordinator at the end of March so she can oversee the project in Somalia.

Her dedication to immigrant women and Somali children earned accolades among Central Alberta women. In March, Soroptimist International of Central Alberta awarded Mohamoud the Ruby Award, given to a woman improving the lives of other women and girls through her professional and/or volunteer work.



Photo by Debbie Olsen

Zainab Mohamoud (left) and Kelsey Olsen received Soroptimist International of Central Alberta awards in March, in part because of their volunteer work with A Better World Canada.

The Soroptimist chapter gave Olsen the Violet Richardson Award, a recognition program for girls aged 14 to 17 who volunteer in their schools or communities. Olsen, 17, belongs to the Rotary Interact Club at Lacombe Composite High School, sponsored by the local Rotary Club. In the last several years, the club has raised money for a micro-loan project in Guatemala and an ABW school project in Haiti. As club president for 2014/2015, Olsen led the club of 20 students to raise \$2,000 for a water well at an ABW-sponsored orphanage. Lacombe Rotary Club agreed to match the funds. Olsen also donated \$500 from the Soroptimist award.

"Helping out with all those projects makes you forget about yourself, and it makes me happier," said the Grade 12 student. "I have more gratitude for all the things that I have."

The award also recognized Olsen for organizing summer dance camps for girls. Olsen plans to take registered nursing this fall and later go on a trip with A Better World. She believes her desire to volunteer comes from her parents, Greg and Debbie, and three older brothers.

"It's a huge honour to get the award," Olsen said. "It makes me want to help even more." ■

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

DYING TO SELF

I AM GOING TO TELL YOU A DEEP, DARK SECRET.

Something that ministers normally would not admit to anyone. If pastors revealed this to some people, it could destroy their ministry.

There have been numerous times in my life that I have been spiritually dead. OK, maybe *dead* is too strong of a word. Let's just say I've been in a spiritual coma before.

There have been times I didn't pick up the Bible for personal spiritual growth for weeks. I would wince at the idea of getting on my knees to pray. I did a pretty good job faking it. I was able to get by preaching Bible-based sermons and praying for *other* people. Don't get me wrong: I loved God. But in my haste and busyness, I neglected my own spiritual growth.

CAN YOU RELATE?

I thank God that every time I went through my desert experience, I was drawn back to a personal time with Him. But I must admit, it didn't come easily.

I liken spiritual discipline to physical exercise. It takes only a few days of skipping the gym before your body begins to get soft. The lack of exercise has numerous side effects, seen and unseen. This concept works similarly in personal devotion.

I have a theory: A church is only as spiritually healthy as their pastor. In a recent conversation, Pastor Royce Odiyar reminded me about what Ellen White once said, "Our ministers need first to be converted to the truth themselves. Then they can go forth everywhere, bearing the message of truth for this time."¹

Being converted on a daily basis requires us to die to ourselves (see Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3). This is harder than it seems, because we are all selfish and self-consumed. And yet, that is the journey.

MY PRAYER FOR YOU

Dear Father, You never give up on us, and for that we thank you. The role of a pastor is so difficult. Every day we fail to live up to the ideal. Some of us are running on empty. Others of us are running on fumes. God, please restore our hearts. Fill our hearts with love, joy, and grace. May our hearts turn to you everyday. Give us clean hearts, and may we return to you daily. Amen. ■

*Kumar Dixit is the pastor of Oakridge Adventist Church in Vancouver, B.C. He is the author of *Branded Faith: Contextualizing the Gospel in a Post-Secular World*. You can follow him on Twitter @kumardixit.*

¹ Manuscript Releases 3:193.

My healing story

 Words by God —Romans 8:28, NIV

For the last five years my faith has been tested. I experienced many health problems and trips to the hospital with no resolve. When I was 15 years old, I was diagnosed with a large symptomatic pineal gland cyst in my brain. It caused constant headaches that would only worsen, full body pain, weakness, insomnia, fatigue, nausea, seizures/tremors, fevers and chills, vertigo, loss of consciousness, vision difficulties and inability to read, among many other symptoms, and, for the last year, a paralyzed left leg.

I had to drop out of school and was no longer able to volunteer or participate in many of the things I loved to do. I never knew what the day would hold or if I would have to adapt to more new symptoms. The cyst continued to grow and put pressure on the surrounding area in the centre of my brain. It was a challenge suddenly being in a wheelchair and unable to walk anymore. Many of the everyday things people take for granted I had to rely on others for assistance. It was difficult because there was nothing the doctors or we could do to help the situation. All we could do was live in hope that one day God would heal me and take away my pain. It was a long road and struggle to find anyone who could help or perform the life-changing surgery I needed.

We were finally told that there was no one in Canada who could perform the surgery, and so we began to prayerfully search outside the country for help. My mom discovered many news articles of other Canadians seeking treatment in Texas and finally found the neurosurgeon's name in a Houston paper. It did not take much time to get an appointment with Dr. Kim, and within a month we were in Houston, Tex., meeting with Kim and his team. They looked at my MRIs and did the assessment and booked the surgery for six weeks later.

I was so grateful that God had brought me to the right place in His timing with the surgeon who had the best technique to remove the cyst. One of the first things you notice about Dr. Kim is his heart. He really cares about his patients, and it shows in how he treats others.

The surgery was not covered by Canadian healthcare, so we are fundraising the money needed for the procedure and recovery. When we went down, we did not yet have all the money for surgery, so we had to walk in faith believing that God would provide our needs even when it seemed impossible to us. I was admitted into the hospital early for blood transfusions because my blood volume was 19 (normally, for my weight and size, it's 45) and I had zero iron storage in my body. It was too low for surgery, so we prayed and trusted that God would look after everything. God had promised that He will be with us no matter what. He had brought us this far and I knew that He did not bring us here to simply turn around and leave; He would carry us through because He is faithful in all He does. God sent us many people to remind us that He was watching over us and taking care of all our needs; God used hospital staff, new friends, and even strangers to give the same message of hope. It was a huge blessing and gave us the assurance we needed every step along the way.

God's peace and presence was with us as I waited for surgery. It was a privilege and blessing to know my family, friends, and many others were praying for me.

After surgery one of the first things I noticed was that the pressure in my head was gone! It still amazes me how connected and intricate the human body is: a 2.6-centimetre cyst could cause my entire two-page list of various symptoms, and once it was removed, almost all of my symptoms disappeared with the surgery. My headaches and the constant pain and daily symptoms that could come without explanation or warning were finally gone! I did not know what to expect with my paralyzed leg or how long it would take to





finally be able to walk again. Days passed by and I still could not move it, but some of the muscular structure was returning to parts of my leg.

One night while I was sleeping, my mom noticed that my toes began to tap, and in the morning she told me the exciting news. Each day we watched the changes of what symptoms and improvements were happening in my body, and the day I was able to walk a couple of steps was a day of celebration and praise!

To this day, I am amazed by God's incredible healing power and the people He chooses to use to perform His miracles. I am so blessed and grateful to be able to move into the recovery process of resting and healing from the many years I suffered with my health. Now I can have my life back and be able to step into a new season of my relationship with God, family, and friends and all that my Father in heaven has in store for me. It is a new journey of faith and walking forward into the plans God has for my future one step at a time.

One of many lessons I have learned through this entire process is that God works in the details. His hand is in the people you meet—the nurses, doctors. In every way He has already provided before we even ask, even when we don't know what to ask for. God knows our hearts and His plans for us are good. Nothing we experience (no matter how difficult the struggle) is ever wasted; we just need to trust His heart that He loves us more than we can imagine and knows what's best for us. He has a purpose in the craziness of life, even when we don't understand how in the world He can create something beautiful out of the mess: "[Our God] is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power" (Eph. 3:20, NIV). ■

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

Refresh with Tia



Watch "Write Your Story" by Francesca Battistelli on YouTube: <https://goo.gl/RtHO6m>

www.gofundme.com/helpTiaNow





For Analynn—It's Personal

For Analynn Bruce, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is very personal. It has profoundly touched her life spiritually, professionally, and romantically.

In 1994, Analynn was visiting friends in South Sudan, one of whom was working for ADRA Sudan. Recreation options were limited, and she volunteered with ADRA to pass the time. She enjoyed the work and the people. She had grown up as a Catholic in the Philippines, and this was her first exposure to Adventists.

ADRA Sudan had just recruited an expatriate logistics manager, but at the last minute he decided against taking the position. Having seen Analynn's skills in organization and coordination, the country director offered her the job.

While working at ADRA Sudan, her friend invited her to the Adventist church. She found the services and messages interesting and joined a Bible study group to learn more. On Oct. 7, 1995, Analynn was baptized in the Nile. Her mother, a lifelong Catholic, saw positive changes in her daughter and told her, "Whatever faith you are accepting, stay with it, because it is making you a better person."

After a few years, Analynn moved from Sudan to Kenya, to support the ADRA programs in war-torn Somalia. Soon afterward, Todd Bruce, a Canadian, joined the ADRA Somalia team. As they worked through the challenging situation, they grew closer. He proposed to her on a heavily guarded rooftop a few minutes before she climbed into a vehicle with armed guards to catch a plane. They married in 2003 in Nairobi, Kenya, with the help of their colleagues.

"Our ADRA friends took the lead in planning and coordinating the wedding, and we pretty much were responsible to only say 'I Do.'" ADRA's involvement in her conversion, romance, and wedding knitted her heart ever closer to ADRA and to God.

When the Asian tsunami overwhelmed Southeast Asia in December 2004, they both accepted calls to join the response, even with their infant daughter, Teresa, in tow.

In 2007, Todd accepted a position to lead a project in Laos. Analynn was pregnant, and he planned to be back in time for the birth. However, their daughter, Angela, arrived three weeks early while Todd was still away. ADRA Thailand staff and their families stepped up and took care of everything!

"ADRA has been there for my baptism, my wedding, and the birth of my second daughter—it's very personal!"

After moving to join Todd in Laos, Analynn learned that ADRA Canada was looking for a Programs director. She got the job and they moved back to his home country in 2011.

"I feel very blessed to be able to contribute toward life-changing support to people around the world. Working for ADRA is very satisfying and personally rewarding in so many ways. On top of the professional growth I have experienced with ADRA, the spiritual and personal rewards are priceless. I know that God has guided me all this way, with His perfect timing." ■

Heather Grbic is the church relations coordinator at ADRA Canada.





30 DAYS OF IMPACT

To celebrate our 30th anniversary, starting July 17, ADRA Canada will be sharing 30 days of stories of how we have impacted lives. Join us in celebrating by sharing your story on Facebook, by emailing stayintouch@adra.ca or by calling us!

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ADRA[®]
Canada

almost vegan

FOR THE PAST YEAR, *Messenger* readers have enjoyed an introduction to “almost vegan” cooking from Afia Donkor. As she moves on to pursue other projects, we thank her for starting us on this journey, and now welcome Keith Chant as our new culinary tour guide.

Almost vegan

Farmers’ Market Salad

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups uncooked rotini
- 1 package Yves beef tenders
- ¼ cup Italian salad dressing
- ½ cup yellow pepper
- ½ cup red pepper
- ½ cup red onion
- ½ cup celery
- ½ cup carrots
- 1 cup tomatoes
- ½ cup radishes
- ½ cup cucumber
- ½ cup fresh peas (raw)
- ½ cup black olives, cut in half

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Cook pasta to desired tenderness. Drain and cool (do not rinse pasta).
- Cook beef tenders according to package directions. Cool and then chop into smaller pieces.
- Dice all vegetables and mix everything together in large bowl.
- Pour salad dressing over and mix thoroughly. Adjust dressing and salt and pepper to taste. Chill.

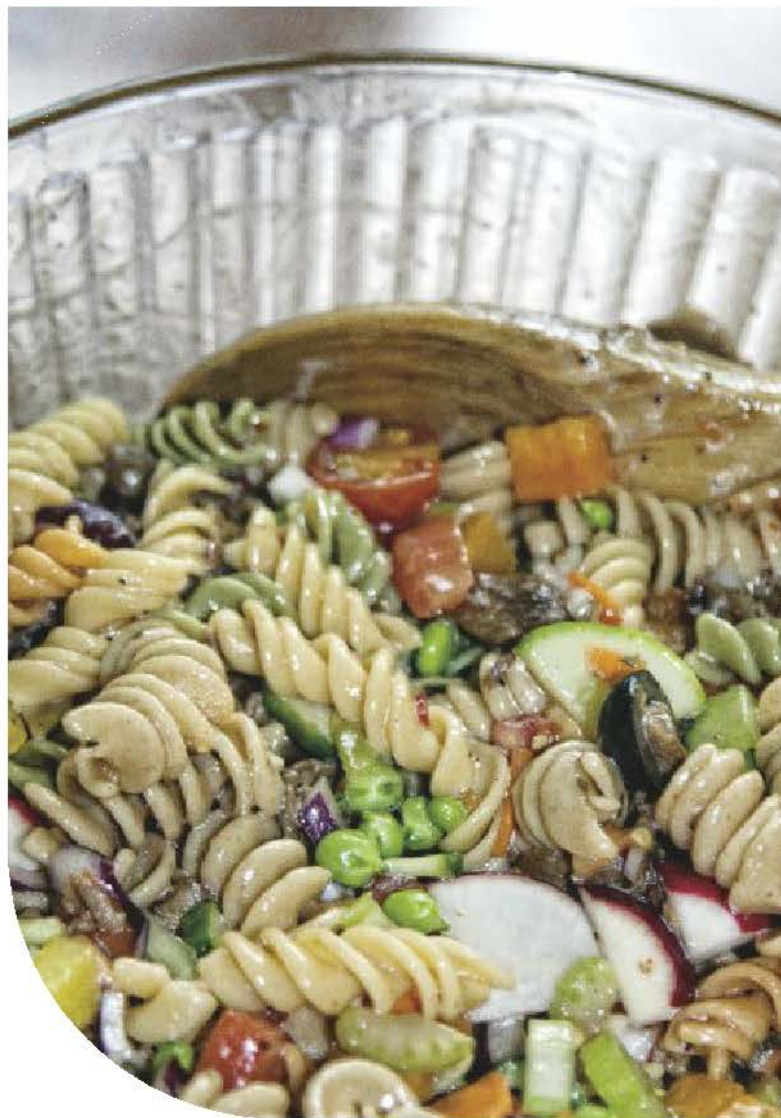


Photo: Keith Chant

A lifelong vegetarian, I discovered two years ago that I was allergic to dairy and eggs, which marked the start of our family’s transition to an “almost vegan” diet.

We have always enjoyed cooking, and the transition to vegan scared us a little because vegan foods have had the reputation of being bland and flavourless. So as we began adapting our recipes, we determined to make them appetizing and break the stereotypical view of vegan dishes. Over the coming months we will discuss some of the tricks we use to make our cooking flavourful.

WHEN SUMMER ROLLS AROUND we enjoy visiting our local farmers’ market and eating the fresh produce we find there. The following is one of our favourite summer recipes, and we adjust it all season long according to what produce is available. ■

Keith Chant is the IT Services manager at the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. Keith, along with his wife, Cheryl, and son, Ben, enjoy baking, cooking, and experimenting with flavours and recipes.

VOAR—a comfort and a blessing

Elvin Falkenham is a famous local dairy farmer just outside Lunenburg, N.S. Born in 1923, Elvin witnessed all the remarkable changes the 20th century brought to small-town living. A bit of a character, Elvin said, "I was the youngest and my father's favourite, so I got many a 'pounding' from my older brothers because of this." In the 1930s Elvin started his dairy career by peddling milk with a horse and wagon. Years later, on the first day of spring in 1945, he married his sweetheart, Marian. Today Elvin and Marian still call Lunenburg home. Most of their children now get old-age pension.

A farmer his whole life, Elvin has sat on the Dairy Bureau of Canada and had a book published by the Lunenburg Heritage Society, entitled *Please Pass the Butter: Recollections of a Dairy Farmer*. The title, he said, was inspired by a sermon his Lutheran pastor had preached. Elvin sent a copy of his book to Billy Graham and received a lovely letter from Graham saying, "Thank you so much for the book, but I had to wait ages to read it, as everyone in the office passed it around before it got to me."

Elvin first tuned in to VOAR in December 2014. A lady who cooks for the couple told him about the station. He has been hooked ever since. The best part, says Elvin, is being able to tune in during the night when he cannot sleep, and listen to the wonderful programs and music. Elvin called with his second donation to "support the wonderful work of you people in Newfoundland!" Both in their 90s now, Elvin asked us to



Photo: iStock Images

remember him and Marian in prayer, as Marian is suffering from a health challenge. We thank the fine folks of Bridgewater, N.S., for making VOAR Christian Family Radio available for Elvin, Marian, and the countless other residents tuning in to get a blessing. ■

Sherry Griffin is station manager at Voice of Adventist Radio (VOAR) in Newfoundland.



Bebeque Johnson

ON THE
ROAD WITH

Becky

If you were to start reading a book and then realize it was about your entire life, would you read it to the end? Why or why not?

AT THE RED DEER, SHERWOOD PARK, AND COLLEGE HEIGHTS CHURCHES IN ALBERTA.

Tori Toppe: "No. If I read to the end, I would feel obligated to live my life to the same ending as the book. If I don't read it, I can at least keep up the illusion of having my own choice."

Jane Holmes: "Oh yes, I would. I know I'm a slow learner, but God is an excellent teacher, and He is patient with me. I look back on how He has led me over the years, and it amazes me... I think the last chapter is always the best. Praise the Lord."

Frank Unger: "No. My life is a journey and I enjoy being surprised by God at every turn. I will get to the last page in due time, but for now I will enjoy the mystery of my unfolding relationship with Jesus."

Hana Holka: "I would probably read the chapters that I've lived so I can reflect and learn and try to use good or bad experiences to do better or learn from my mistakes. But I wouldn't read the end."



barry's blog

"Living together in peace is a testimony to the strength of this country."

Religious neutrality of the State: *Yes, but ...*

The mayor of Saguenay, Que., and his council members were wrong to open their public meetings with prayer. That was the message of a recent Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) decision.¹ The regular public prayer at the start of the council meetings, said the court, clearly favoured one religious community: Christians, and more specifically, the Roman Catholic Church. The court was unanimous in its holding that public officials ought not to favour one religion over another.

Mr. Simoneau is an atheist living in Saguenay. He regularly attends the public meetings and was uncomfortable with the reciting of the prayer and the making of the sign of the cross by the mayor and council members after the prayer. He was also troubled by the religious symbols (crucifix and Sacred Heart statue) that were in the chamber. The mayor refused Simoneau's request to stop the practice and remove the symbols.

With the help of the *mouvement laïque québécois* (MLQ), a group that advocates for secularism in government, Simoneau took his complaint to the

Quebec human rights commission. The commission refused to investigate the religious symbols but was of the view that the prayer was indeed discriminatory and that there was sufficient evidence to submit to the Quebec Human Rights Tribunal.

MLQ supported Simoneau's application to the tribunal. The tribunal granted the application, stating that the prayer showed a preference for one religion at the expense of others and breached the state's duty of neutrality. The city and mayor were ordered to cease the recitation of the prayer, to remove all religious symbols, and to pay \$30,000 in compensatory and punitive damages to Simoneau. The Quebec Court of Appeal overturned the tribunal's decision. The Court of Appeal said the city's actions were not in violation of the religious neutrality of the state, because the prayer was not identified with one particular religion and the religious symbols were works of art.

The Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) rejected the Court of Appeal's decision. Given that Justice Gascon is from Quebec, he got to write the decision. Gascon noted that over the years a legal principle had developed:

namely, when it comes to religion, the state must be neutral. The state must not interfere in the area of religion and beliefs. That means it should neither favour nor hinder any belief or non-belief. And since Canada is a free and democratic society, said Gascon, it must encourage everyone, regardless of beliefs, to participate freely in public life. That public space must be neutral. There must be no coercion in matters of spirituality. Every person's freedom and dignity must be protected, especially since Canada is a multicultural society.

Justice Gascon noted that state neutrality does not mean that the state cannot celebrate its religious heritage. However, it must not do so in a way that discriminates against other religious and non-religious communities.

The mayor's statements indicated that he (the mayor) saw his use of prayer as a personal obligation to maintain the faith of Christ. "I'm in this battle because I worship Christ," he said. "When I get to the hereafter, I'm going to be able to be a little proud. I'll be able to say to Him, 'I fought for You; I even went to trial for You.' There's no better argument. It's extraordinary. I'm in this fight because I worship Christ. I want to go to heaven, and it is the most noble fight of my entire life."²

The mayor and his fellow councillors were of the view that the city has just as much right as any other citizen to claim religious freedom. The Supreme Court disagreed: The state is to have no religious opinion; it has no place in this sphere. It is to be neutral—plain and simple. "The state, I should point out," said Justice Gascon, "does not have a freedom to believe or to manifest a belief."³

The court's reasoning will go a long way to ensure that the religious as well as the non-religious are protected from state interference in matters of conscience and religion. That is a good thing. The last thing we want, as people of faith, is to have the government enforcing its own religion on us. We do not want the state to be interfering with how we live our spiritual lives. It has no business telling us what we ought to believe or how we are to put those beliefs into practice. In matters of conscience the state is to be impotent.

Mr. Simoneau had felt ostracized at the council meetings in Saguenay. The council members would

enter the chamber and then pray. The meeting would begin two minutes after the prayer. This was seen as a compromise for those who did not want to be present for the prayer; they could wait outside until the prayer was over. When the prayer would end, the non-religious would enter the chamber for the meeting to begin. The problem, of course, was that it made the non-religious feel they were "outed" for their conscience. Their lack of agreement with the prayers were on public display. It "resulted in a distinction, exclusion, and preference based on religion—that is, based on Mr. Simoneau's atheism" turning "the meetings into a preferential space for people with theistic beliefs."⁴

The principle of religious neutrality is a good one. However, it is still something that must be monitored with a cautious eye. I am concerned that it could be used to argue that any state recognition of a religious community, a religious institution, or religious individual could be in violation of this principle. In other words, I would not want people to come to see the principle as requiring a strict separation of church and state—I argue that there can never be a strict separation. For example, ministers of religion perform marriages in Canada. When they do so, they do it as agents of the state. The Supreme Court has said that ministers of religion are not forced to perform weddings that they deem to be against their religious beliefs.⁵ Would it not be ironic if religious neutrality came to require ministers of religion to officiate *against* their conscience?

Or consider religious schools. Most Christian elementary schools, secondary schools, and universities issue diplomas and degrees recognized by the state. Would it not be an injustice if this principle of state neutrality were to be applied in such a way that private educational institutions could issue state-recognized diplomas only if they maintained the secular beliefs of the state, thus having to pay for state recognition by compromising or paying with their beliefs?

Of course, I may be worrying unnecessarily. But given the arguments being used recently in such cases as Trinity Western University's, I cannot but be wary. ■

Barry W. Bussey is Director of Legal Affairs at the Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC). You can read his blog at www.lawandreligion.ca.*

1 *Mouvement laïque québécois v. Saguenay (City)*, 2015 SCC 16; Supreme Court of Canada, judgement given by Gascon J., 15 April 2015, <http://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/15288/index.do>.

2 Para. 116.

3 Para. 119.

4 Para. 120.

5 Reference re Same-Sex Marriage, [2004] 3 S.C.R. 698, 2004 SCC 79, at para. 58.



Mel holding a variety of GLOW tracts in front of Yola's Caribbean Veggie Cuisine.

Yola's GLOWs

Mel had wasted no time in putting into action a plan to share his faith with others through GLOW, and because he did, a young woman's life had already been touched.

It was Saturday night, and Afia, feeling hungry, decided to stop at a restaurant called Yola's Caribbean Veggie Cuisine. Mel, the man at the cashier, took her order, then went to the back of the store. A few minutes later he returned with her food. As he handed it to her, he looked at her as if trying to remember something. He then said, "Have you been here before?" She responded that she had visited before, though only a few times. Still looking carefully at her he asked, "Are you a lawyer?"

Suddenly, something dawned on Afia, and raising her eyebrows, she said, "Yes. Were you at church this morning?" It was a strange and seemingly off-topic question, but as Afia spoke these words, she and Mel began to laugh. In that moment they both realized that Mel had recognized Afia as that morning's speaker at his church, where she had talked with the congregation about GLOW.

GLOW, which stands for Giving Light to Our World, is a ministry initiative geared for ordinary people, young or old, that involves the use of tracts on various topics from addictions to God and suffering. That morning Afia had spoken about several ways members could use GLOW to share their faith in everyday life — anytime, anywhere.

Still laughing, Mel motioned to Afia to follow him and led her toward the ladies' washroom. "There was a young lady just here," he said. "She went to the washroom and when she came out she said, 'Mel, where did you get these?' She had in her hand several tracts." With a delighted smile Mel explained that after getting nine packs of tracts from the GLOW team that morning, he had put one of each in the women's washroom, and the lady was so interested that she took them all.

Mel then pointed to a table to the side on which he had laid the nine packs of tracts, explaining that he was packaging them into packets of nine to put on all the tables in the restaurant so that people who came to eat would have tracts to take with them.

Overjoyed at this news, Afia gave Mel a hug. When she said goodbye and walked out of the store, she left praising God. Mel had wasted no time in putting into action a plan to share his faith with others through GLOW, and because he did, a young woman's life had already been touched.

Jesus once said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work" (John 4:34, NASB). God's work was Jesus' job description. To us who strive to live like Jesus, it should be ours as well. The work God has given us, the opportunities He has opened before us, are tools that can be transformed into powerful methods of outreach that will bring glory to Him and the good news of His love to those around us. God, therefore, calls on us to get creative and to use the opportunities He has granted to give Him glory and to share His love with others, just as Mel did. ■

Lifestyle Canada Education Service (LCES), a charity organized to better fulfill the mandates of the literature ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church across Canada. If your life has been impacted by the literature ministry, please contact us at mail@lifestylecanada.org. We want to hear your story.



review

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

app review

App: HeavenBound

In Brief: HeavenBound is a single-player Bible trivia game designed to help you know your Bible better. You select your game piece, enter your name, and then progress around the board by correctly answering biblical questions. There are three levels of difficulty, which vary in the amount of time allocated for each question (60, 30, and 15 seconds), but the questions remain the same. Each question has a Bible reference for lookup; however, after you answer a question, it tells you whether your answer was correct or incorrect and then immediately proceeds to the next question, without pausing to show you the correct answer and without giving you the opportunity to see why you may have gotten it wrong.



Wow Factor: A fun way to learn Bible trivia and facts.

Meh Factor: Does not give you the correct answer if you get a question wrong.

Developed for: HeavenBound

Price: Android—Free; iOS—\$5.79

Works on: Android, iOS

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



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

prayer life

Finding a Pattern for Prayer

*Whenever it was time for the season of prayer,
I was always overcome by a sense of fear.*

Growing up as a child in my little home church, I remember often attending Wednesday night prayer meetings. Whenever it was time for the season of prayer, I was always overcome by a sense of fear. Fear, not because I didn't have the desire to pray, but because I was not sure of what to say or if what I said would actually be meaningful. After leaving many of the meetings with the desire to have prayed but not having actually prayed—and thus feeling frustrated with myself—the following thought came to me: *Listen to how others, including my dad, pray, and see if a pattern emerges in their prayers.* The idea was to follow that pattern. However, this exercise became tedious, as I could not discern a consistent pattern in the prayers I heard.

How many of our people, including our youth, attend church regularly but have a similar experience when it comes to praying? Chances are, if they can discover a pattern for praying, they would have an easier time formulating and expressing their thoughts when praying according to that pattern. Thankfully, the Scriptures

have patterns for praying, such as in Daniel 9 and Nehemiah 1. Let us look at Nehemiah's example:

Firstly, Nehemiah acknowledged God's greatness. Despite the adversities that were facing Nehemiah and his people in Jerusalem, he begins his prayer by acknowledging God's greatness. In doing so he declares the Sovereignty of God: "Lord God of heaven." Then he speaks of His holiness: "O great and awesome God," followed by a description of His faithfulness: "You who keep your covenant and mercy" (verse 5).

Secondly, the prayer includes a confession of sins (verses 6, 7); thirdly, a remembrance of God's promises (verses 8, 9). Finally, Nehemiah petitions God for His help (verse 11). It is significant that Nehemiah lays a petition before the throne of God only after first declaring the majesty of God and His word. Is there a pattern in this for us? ■

Eustace Williams is the director of personal ministries and School of Evangelism for the Ontario Conference.



July 2015

23

Building a Future and a Hope

by Lynn McDowell





Ed Dejarlais

Almost 30 years ago First Nations convert Ed Dejarlais wrote in the Canadian Adventist Messenger of his vision for a community of First Nations Adventists. He called for partners and donations to help build a centre where the truth could heal and transform the lives of others as it had transformed his.

Ed's dream was the beginning of something big—something that is transforming the lives of First Nations families with hope: Mamawi Atosketan Native School.

Despite 20 centimetres of new and unexpected snow, the mood in the packed gym of Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS) on April 25 was upbeat. Supporters joined SDACC president, Mark Johnson, and vice-president/director of Education, Dennis Marshall, for a historic Milestone Celebration. There was much to celebrate, but the tone was spiritual. People came to reflect, to thank, and to mark God's leading at Canada's only mission school and the North American Division's (NAD) newest senior academy.

This year, MANS celebrates 12 years at its location on conference-owned land five kilometres from Maskwacis (formerly Hobbema), its new senior academy status, and MANS's first Grade 12 graduating class. While all this success could have taken the open house theme in several directions, staff decided to model the biblical principle of expressing thanks to God and to those who shared His blessings. "Hats Off to You" celebrated and thanked regular Adventist church members for laying the school's strong foundation.

The different ways that individuals contributed—donations of time, talent, and treasure—became the focus of heartfelt acknowledgements from students, teachers, and Alberta Conference leaders. Ken Wiebe, Alberta Conference president, specifically thanked the approximately 98 individuals who put their backs as well as their hearts into the project by helping with the construction.

SDACC's President Comes Home to the Leading Edge

For Johnson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC), it was a homecoming as well as an opportunity to show support for Canada's leading-edge approach to transforming First Nations communities. The North American Division's (NAD) other First Nations school, Holbrook in Arizona, uses a residential school model—something that carries a

dark history in Canada and which modern First Nations parents in Canada would never subscribe to.

"I think that this is a tremendously important part of what we're doing," said Johnson, who, along with his wife, Becky, choose Maskwacis as their home church in 2008 when Johnson became president of the Alberta Conference, and have been members ever since.

"I grew up in a church that was located in a community surrounded by reserves," says Johnson. "I deeply appreciated their set of values, the way that they came at life, and the way they attempted to make the best out of circumstances that were, in some cases, not so good.

"We as individuals need to be supporting the work among the First Nations. We need to be actively, seriously contemplating how we will speak to that great reservoir of spirituality that exists within the culture of the First Nations, and walk with them about Jesus and how to live between the weekends in a way that is workable and will bring glory to God."

Glory in the Everyday

MANS is a "between-the-weekends" answer Johnson sees as critical to connecting with First Nations and their spiritual inclinations—a "sermon in shoes." Students were not shy about expressing their appreciation.

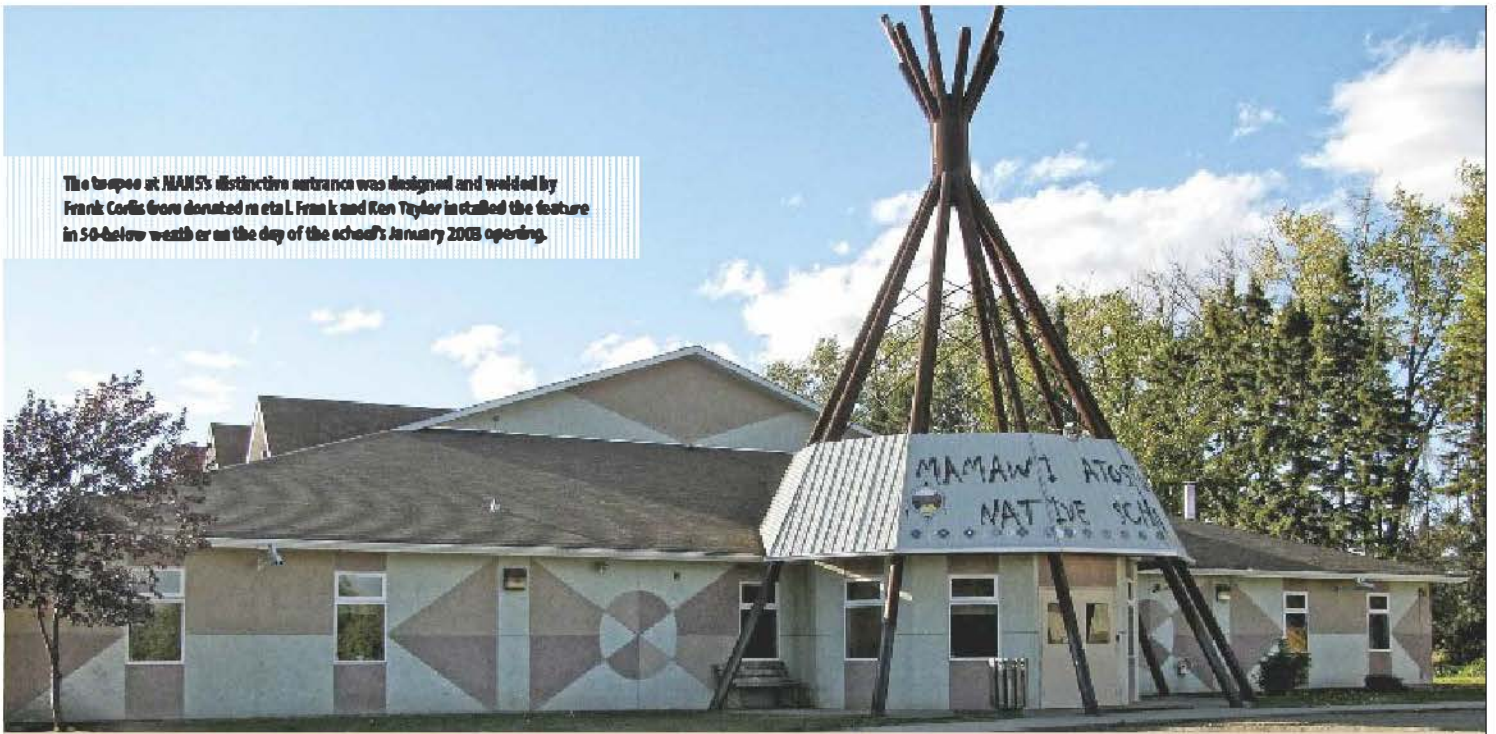
Medallions beaded by Grade 10 student Krista Abt, a student at MANS since Grade 1, were presented to the following individuals: developer/contractor Alfred Breidkreuz and building developer/contractor Ken Taylor for "Time Invested"; Sandra Kiehlbach Toms, who was the founding teacher/principal of the school at its first location on the reserve in 1985, for "Talent Invested"; and Elizabeth Tym as representative of deceased founding donor Mary Krysovaty, for "Treasure Invested."

Students presented customized MANS mugs packaged with cookies made by Grade 2 and 3 students to those who contributed labour or cash to construct the present building. Handmade thank-you cards were

(Photo, left) Parent Lirvina Potts applauds the school's values, which align well with her own. As program coordinator for the Samson Band with a special interest in helping to heal sidelined women, Lirvina values the MANS environment and staff that identified her daughter's leadership ability early on. "My mom says she's really proud of what I'm doing," says 17-year old Elisha, who worked alongside Banman University students for three summers putting on VBS at reserves in Western Canada.



The topee at MANS's distinctive entrance was designed and welded by Frank Corlis from donated metal. Frank and Ken Taylor installed the feature in 50-below weather on the day of the school's January 2003 opening.



Members of MANS's musical sign language group, Total Praise, happily and confidently perform at the Milestone Celebrations. Photo: Kelly Dreger



La bous volunteers Pat and Victor Latschi returned to MANS for the Milestone Celebrations. "We had a great experience," says Victor. "You filled the auditorium to overflowing—very impressive."



Brayden Omeasoo-Steinhauer, assistant director of MANS's musical sign language group, Total Praise.

displayed on tables. One Grade 5 student wrote, "Thank you for helping me have a safe place to go to school. Thank you for building our school. We love our school. We all love you for making our school."

Big Changes for Brayden

The change in the life of Brayden Omeasoo-Steinhauer shows the effect of MANS's "sermon in shoes." His Grade 6 teacher, Cheri Notice, an accomplished American Sign Language artist, uses this medium to teach music and powerful spiritual lessons to her students. Brayden's young sister had recently been killed, and as Brayden struggled with his emotions while signing "I Know That I Can Make It," Notice realized something deep was happening for him.

Brayden has emerged as a superior talent. He is a youth who, at 14, has a capacity for determination and a will

to help others that no one would have suspected. Now assistant director of MANS's musical sign language group, Total Praise, he grows daily in his confidence as a leader who wants to encourage and help others. When Notice shared Young Peacemakers, the First Nations Bible curriculum, with her class, Brayden was among those who responded to the invitation to become a "Peacemaker"—no small commitment on a reserve divided by gang violence. Brayden's family supports his new direction and his ambition to attend Burman University and to become a teacher or lawyer.

The Home-School Connection: Sharing and Reinforcing the Good

Through the simple but powerful stories of the Bible, parents are also reached as children share what they're learning.

"They're such willing missionaries!" Gail Wilson, principal, says of MANS students. "It's natural for them to share." She relates an example of the long-term power of families sharing their experiences and what they are learning at MANS about the Bible: A father with a rough history recently enrolled his daughter in Grade 1. "My grandmother was a godly woman," he told Wilton, "and she told me the Bible stories. That's what got me through a lot of tough times, and I want my daughter to learn those stories too."

Hope: The Common Denominator

Whether it's Brayden the conductor or Krista the budding entrepreneur/artist, there is a common thread when they talk about MANS: They want a good future, and Mamawi Anoskiman gives them hope. For them, MANS is a manifestation of God's goodwill expressed in Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans that I have for you ... to give you a future and a hope" (NASB).

New Growth and Friends in the Community

Even before the NAD recommended expanding the school in its post-accreditation visit report, Calgary contractor William Piersanti designed and built a two-room addition to accommodate the rising class of 2015. He was touched by the story he had heard at campmeeting of MANS students who, fearing the harsh realities of their high school options, had asked to be failed at the end of Grade 9! They did not want to leave the school that had shielded them from gang violence and impressment and allowed them to focus on their studies.

About the time Piersanti started addition construction in 2013, Camrose Rotarian Ron Grue heard a presentation on MANS's high school growth aspirations and saw some of its students perform. He was impressed and turned up at the school a few days later.

The Rotarian found Piersanti and Steven Van Rensberg labouring on the addition. Having managed several Rotary building projects overseas, Grue immediately knew he had found kindred spirits. Over the next weeks, Grue watched and interacted with staff and students on a day-to-day basis. He firmly believes that MANS is giving First Nations kids a real hand up and making a fundamental change. He has become a staunch supporter of MANS in the local business community.

Broad Church Support: ASI, NAD, SDACC

As the need for a new building was affirmed by the NAD, the Alberta Conference applied to Adventist Lay Services Industries (ASI) for help to further expand MANS's high school. Though it is unusual for ASI to fund a first-time application, MANS was one of the projects selected from over 300 applications. The NAD Stewardship Department has designated MANS as a 2015 investment project—something that can only happen for North American projects once every five years.

To send a clear message of support to MANS's ground-breaking graduates, the SDACC provided \$1,000-scholarships for Burman University to each 2015 grad. The gesture deeply touched the parents of the graduates.

Change, One Ripple at a Time

When asked what he would say to people who wonder whether Adventist education can make a difference in a tough environment, SDACC vice-president Dennis Marshall smiled. "Well, simply invite them to Mamawi," he declared with a chuckle. "They will see the difference."

"The students are so welcoming," said Marshall, recalling his visit with the NAD accrediting team. "Very hospitable," he added. "They are willing to take you to their different classes, they are willing to speak with you, and they are very polite. I really believe that the school is doing a wonderful job."

As the crowd melted away from the Milestone Celebration after sharing a meal, Toms, who first established the Adventist education presence on the reserve, reflected on the afternoon. She was astonished at the mission school's transformation from a small lean-to on a church with 17 students crowded cheek-to-jowl, into a complete Kindergarten to Grade 12 facility that turns away dozens of students each fall.

"Our little drop in the bucket sometimes doesn't seem very important," said Toms. "But," she continued with an air of new understanding, "when everyone puts their own little marble in, pretty soon you've got something amazing!"

"That's pretty powerful." ■

Lynn McDowell, Director of Planned Giving/Philanthropy, continues to be amazed at the changes in students she's observed.



Mark Johnson and MANS student Krista Abt, beadwork artist, present Elizabeth Tyn with a beadwork redaction created by Krista. The students and conference wished to recognize Elizabeth's role as personal representative in fulfilling the wishes of founding donor Mary Grayson.

part of the family



Lydia and Eduardo Solá

LYDIA SOLÁ, communications assistant, has been a part of the Kingsway family since August of 2014. Born in northern Ireland, Lydia met her husband, Eduardo, of Brazil, while studying in Europe. They moved to Canada from the Netherlands just after they got married so Eduardo could pursue his graduate studies in music at the University of Toronto. They began attending the Brazilian Seventh-day Adventist Church in Toronto, where they heard about Kingsway College through church members.

They eventually met Roberto and Fabiane Campos, who is the Student Work supervisor at Kingsway. The Campos family opened up their home to Lydia and Eduardo, offering their basement if they would ever be in need of somewhere to stay. Lydia and Eduardo

made the decision to move to Oshawa, taking Roberto and Fabiane up on their offer. "They treated us like their own family, and we feel blessed to have such wonderful, selfless, and kind people in our lives," says Lydia.

Lydia found full-time work going door-to-door looking for donors for Sick Kids Hospital and the Red Cross, and then at Tim Hortons with Fabiane's daughter, Stephanie. Wanting to get back into her field of study, design, she began looking for a new opportunity. The Communications Assistant position opened up at Kingsway, and Lydia was hired. She has been an incredible asset to the Enrolment/Development department in the short time she has been here. Prior to getting married, Lydia worked as a designer for the Stanborough Press, the

Seventh-day Adventist publishing house in England. "I count myself blessed to be working in my field, as well as working for the church again."

In Ireland, there is a very small community of Adventists, and there is only one elementary-level Adventist school in the whole country. There is an Adventist boarding high school in England (Stanborough School), but Lydia did not know about it until she was past high school age. All of Lydia's church friends attended public schools. At the time, all schools were either Protestant or Catholic, so there was always a religious aspect to their assemblies, such as singing Christian songs. However, Lydia still felt she did not have much in common with her classmates. "I was very different from my schoolmates in my values and opinions, and never had much in common with them. It was difficult to make good friends." However, studying in a public school strengthened Lydia's relationship with God. He was her friend during her time there; she kept a Bible verse in her pocket that she would read to remind herself that she was really not alone. She wishes that she had the opportunity to attend an Adventist high school. After experiencing the environment of Kingsway, Lydia believes that she would have thrived here. "Adventist education gives your child the best opportunity to thrive, to be happy, and to feel accepted for who they are. To be sure, sin and temptations are a part of our decayed world no matter where we are, but I believe that here there is a higher possibility that children can find peers and teachers who will accept and nurture their relationship with Christ."

Lydia is committed to Adventist education because the world is getting worse by the minute and the temptations that young people face now are much more intense than the ones we experienced in our youth. Adventist education allows our young people to learn and grow in a safe environment, eliminating some of the distractions and cares of the world and ultimately guiding them to the cross. ■

Christina Lister is the development coordinator at Kingsway College.

My PACeS Journey

PACeS actually turned out to be beneficial in many more ways than I initially expected.

Kaitlyn Satelmayer

My journey into Seventh-day Adventist education started my first year of high school, in September 2013. I had been in a private school from Kindergarten through Grade 8. The school provided an excellent Christian education and taught some amazing Christian values, but it was not an Adventist school and I often didn't agree on everything theologically. When I graduated from junior high, I wasn't really sure where to attend high school. I had the option to attend public high school or another private Christian school, but neither of those options impressed me as being beneficial to my spiritual journey.

My first choice was to attend a Seventh-day Adventist school. However, there were no Seventh-day Adventist high schools close to home, and I did not like the option of going to a boarding school. Unbeknownst to me, my mom had been researching different school options, and she presented the idea of an e-school called Prairie Adventist Christian e-School (PACeS) to me.

PACeS actually turned out to be beneficial in many more ways than I initially expected. One aspect was the freedom it gave me. My family travels quite a bit throughout the year. Whether the travel is for business or pleasure, all I have to do is make sure we have a good internet connection, and I am in school.

Most of my teachers are in Canada; I have had teachers in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and New Brunswick. This year my math teacher was teaching from Japan for most of the year. I suppose he did not mind working night shift, because that is when he

taught us! So this school also provides cross-country and international flavours.

All my classes are live. I can see and hear my teachers, and they can see and hear me—just as if we were in a brick-and-mortar school. Just as we do in regular high school, I listen to the teachers teach or lecture, ask questions, and interact with my friends in class—yet all from the comfort of my home. The class sizes are small, which leads to a much more intimate environment. The teachers are always available to answer questions either online or through email and phone. They have always been available to answer all my questions.

One of the most wonderful experiences of PACeS is the constant immersion in a Seventh-day Adventist Christian environment. The teachers uphold high Christian values, and these are passed on in the classroom experience to us. We start class with prayer, which helps us to remember to focus our minds on Jesus.

I am completing Grade 10 this June and plan to continue with PACeS until I graduate from Grade 12. I am confident that my decision to start and continue with PACeS was a good one. I would recommend it to high school age students who are looking for a fun, flexible, interactive, and positive Seventh-day Adventist school experience. ■

Kaitlyn Satelmayer is currently finishing up her second year with PACeS. She plans on attending a Seventh-day Adventist university in the future.

Parkview Profiles

by Katelyn Ruiz

"There is such diversity here, so many different people. ... There is just so much going on for a smaller school!"

Jasmine Welch, of Parkview Adventist Academy's Class of 2015, has made a significant positive impression in a short time. Her campus involvement in her one year here has helped her experience a level of community life she had not known prior to PAA.

In 2013 Jasmine's parents, Rosemarie and Derrick Welch, accepted a call to work in the Alberta Conference. As the family moved from Victoria, B.C., to Lacombe, Alta., Jasmine went directly to a boarding academy in the United States, not really having the chance to get acquainted with her new home in Alberta. "I had never even been to where I lived," she admits. "It was hard to come home to Alberta and not know anybody."

Wanting to explore the local option for Adventist education, Jasmine joined the prospective students at PAA Days 2014. After an exciting introduction to campus life, she still doubted whether she would fit in. Jasmine then began working at Foothills Camp. "[There] I reconnected with old friends and met some other really good ones, and they were all excited at the possibility that I could come to PAA," says Jasmine.

At the successful conclusion of her senior year at PAA, Jasmine is glad she chose to stay in Alberta. "It's hard starting out," she says, "especially for my personality, just because I'm the kind of person whom [people] take a while to get to know, ... and I take a long time to make friends. It can be hard to go to a new school, but here I've seen that once you get to know everyone, they're really nice."

Thinking of her experience this year, Jasmine lists some of her favourite aspects of PAA's environment: "There is such diversity here, so many different people. The teachers are really great. Ms. Bishop, PAA's principal, is just awesome. There is just so much going on for a smaller school."

Jasmine has enjoyed a wide variety of school activities. She joined the PAA Panthers in both volleyball and basketball and was able to participate in two of this year's big tournaments, even though one was in conflict with her semester finals and diploma exams. "Ms. Bishop arranged it so I could leave right after the test and still make it for the games." Jasmine felt she belonged at PAA as one of the team. She says, "I felt like I was really contributing and part of it all."



Jasmine Welch

Playing sports created for her some deep and meaningful connections with her teammates, but it wasn't until she took part in PAA's Belize mission trip that Jasmine felt she really came out of her shell. "I would never have expected to become friends with some of the students who went on the trip, but mission trips are cool because seeing people outside of the school environment helps you to see them for who they really are." Jasmine and her younger sister, Kiara, both went along with their parents. From the heavy physical labour of the worksite to the Vacation Bible School program planned by Mrs. Welch, Jasmine was happy to share it all with her new friends.

For her worship talk, Jasmine recounted an experience about how her contact lenses had irritated her eyes. Living without the contact lenses, however, had left her nearsighted. She used this as an illustration to encourage her peers to see how nearsighted we all are when it comes to planning our lives without faith. "God doesn't give you the full picture, but with Him, you can see everything in His plan."

It was definitely part of God's plan to have Jasmine attend PAA, where she has blessed her classmates, her teachers, and the entire community. Her life demonstrates how one person can make a difference and confirms that Adventist education is where that person can prepare to serve. ■

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

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Evangelistic Series in Ottawa Triggers a Synergy of Churches, Members for Mission

“THERE WILL BE NO MORE TEARS IN HEAVEN,” reminded Pastor Chris Holland, speaker/director of the It Is Written Canada television ministry, to his audience at the Nepean Sportsplex Auditorium in the closing message of the Discover Hope evangelistic series in Ottawa on Saturday, May 30.

Implied in Holland’s statement is the fact that until we get to heaven, tears will be the bread and butter of our human experience. But while tears usually denote deep emotion, they are not necessarily a sign of turmoil or distress. Indeed, on closing day there were tears in the candidates’ (and their relatives’) eyes as they surrendered their hearts and sealed their decisions for Jesus in the baptismal pool.

The baptismal ceremony, which took place in the shallow end of the Olympic pool of the Nepean Sportsplex complex, was streamed live from the pool to the audience following it on big screens up in the main auditorium of the venue. Pastors and members in the area hope that the 17 newly baptized converts are nothing but the firstfruits of a more abundant harvest to be reaped after a follow-up plan is implemented and additional outreach activities are introduced by this fall.



The series, which ran from May 22 to 30 at the city venue in western Ottawa, was launched after weeks of intensive geographically targeted advertising through the mail, door-to-door flyer distribution, billboards, bus signs, radio ads, and personally delivered invitations. On the first weekend, members and visitors enjoyed not only the preaching of the Word, which provided a contemporary view on old-time prophecies, but also inspirational music by Winnipeg-based singer and ADRA ambassador Christine Wollmann. This was just a sample of what was to come, as numerous local talents used their musical gifts for inspirational singing and performing.

For the speaker of the series, whose evening messages were simultaneously interpreted into French by volunteer bilingual members, a highlight of the Discover Hope initiative was undoubtedly seeing all the churches in Ottawa and their pastors coming together in unity.

"The churches came together in prayer. The churches came together in work," said Holland. "The early church experienced explosive growth only in unity, and that kind of unity was experienced in our days together."

According to Manuel Donoso, pastor of the local Nepean Seventh-day Adventist Church, just a few minutes away from the venue, the best thing that happened was to bring the churches to work together as a team. "This is something I had never seen before in the area," he said.

The chair of the Steering Committee for the series, Pastor Orlando Pule, agreed. "The meaning of synergy—that the whole being greater than the simple sum of its parts—has been very true in our case," said Pule. "As a region, we were able to accomplish more together than if we had tried to reach the city on our own."

Overall, there is a growing sense that this series could be a launching pad for increasing God's kingdom in eastern Ontario.

"Momentum is a great thing," said Pule. "I believe the folks in the area have responded well to working together as a region, and we have to keep the region engaged and focused on soul winning."

Pastor Holland also believes that the series could be a defining moment for spreading the message of the gospel in Ottawa.

"If the churches continue on a path of unity and comprehensive evangelism, they will truly succeed in reaching the masses," said Holland. "God has smiled [during the series], and He is calling upon us to continually lean on Him and see His amazing grace transform Ottawa."

On the other hand, local church members and pastors are convinced the special week of meetings was never meant to mark a climax in regional evangelism but just a renewed way of



Pastor Marcos Pasaggi baptizing new member, Vittorio Dordani.

approaching mission in the nation's capital.

"This was not the end; this was just the beginning," stressed Pastor Joseph Duchesne, secretary of the Eastern Ontario Ministerium, which groups a dozen pastors from the Ottawa Valley to the very border of the province of Quebec. "It is a flame we pastors and members need to take up and definitely carry forward."

Back in the baptismal pool, tears were once again part of the emotions felt not only by candidates but also by their privileged few relatives and close friends, just a few feet away, who witnessed the new members rise up from the baptismal waters to a new life in Christ.

"This was one of the most powerful and moving experiences of my life," said Zara Phillips,

mother of two of the youngest candidates. "I definitely sensed the presence of the Holy Spirit, and looking at all the faces, it was clear that all candidates were filled with joy."

Her eldest son, 12-year-old Samuel, seemed to agree. "I felt really happy and proud that I made the right decision," he said with a broad smile.

In an evaluation follow-up meeting with regional pastors, Jaskov Bibulovic, Ontario Conference Evangelism and Church Growth director, encouraged pastors and biblical instructors to keep working with a focus on soul winning.

"Pastors, make sure your Sabbath services are open to visitors," said Bibulovic. "As you preach every Sabbath, keep focused on evangelism."

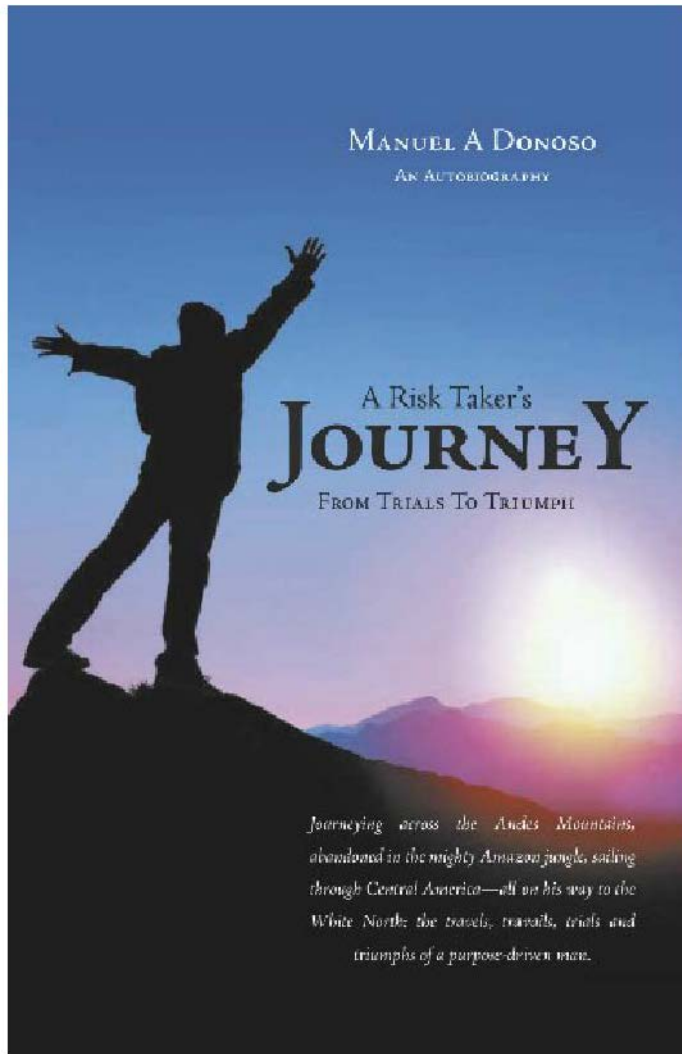
Additional plans for the next few months in the area include an increased presence in the community, personal invitations to Bible studies, evangelistic reaping ministries at various churches in the area, and a custom plan catered to meet the needs of two specific groups of people—those who have been attending church for some time but so far have never made a decision for Christ, and some members who have been away from church and felt Holland's messages were a divine invitation to come back to the fold.

The general feeling of the organizers after the series was one of calm confidence that the event was God-led.

"I felt the Holy Spirit present in the meetings," said Bibulovic. "The unity of the members could easily be sensed. Now it is time to enjoy the present and move on."

The guest speaker seemed to echo Bibulovic's assessment. "My prayer and hope is that the unity achieved continues, and Ottawa is won for Jesus," said Holland. ■

Marcos Pasaggi is the pastor of Ottawa Spanish and Kanata companies.



A travel book to win souls? Fantastic!

An elder hands you a book about a South American travel adventure. He says it is one of the best soul-winning tools today. What should you do with this book?

Here is a hint: Read it.

That's what best-selling author and North American Division prayer ministries coordinator Ruthie Jacobsen did with Manuel Donoso's autobiography, *A Risk Taker's Journey: From Trials to Triumph*. That's what Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada president, Mark Johnson, did. Ditto for Peter, a wealthy Middle Eastern Muslim artist and businessman.

Jacobsen wrote to Donoso, who is also pastor of the Nepean Adventist Church in Ottawa, "God is going to bless many souls through the reading of this book."

Johnson did more than write the author. He wrote to the Adventist Book Centre managers. "If I were an ABC manager," he wrote, "I'd want to make it [the book] available to share as a ministry tool. If I were a pastor, I'd want to have it available to share with people in my extended church family. If I were a person in the pew, I'd be captivated by it and want to share this with family and friends."

Meanwhile, Peter, the wealthy Muslim artistic businessman, suggests that every Muslim should read *A Risk Taker's Journey*.

A travel adventure can be that well-received and relevant? Absolutely. The book tells how Donoso was abandoned in the Brazilian jungle and about the strangest romance that never happened. It tells how he eventually came to Canada, and had a real romance with Judy, who, according to the book's dedication, was "a girl so nice I married her twice." That dedication is true. But it's less romantic than it sounds. The second marriage happened because the first failed.

Between romance and adventure, there's much in the book about salvation by faith, the Sabbath, and God's miracle-working power. But the book says almost nothing about religion before the last few chapters.

By then, the reader—hooked by the travel and romance—transitions seamlessly to what really matters: the gospel of Christ, how to understand the Bible, and how the Great Physician can heal even a broken marriage.

One reader invited Donoso to lunch at the parliamentary restaurant. He introduced Donoso to fellow members of parliament, including senior cabinet members. After lunch he declared, "I suppose I have to go to church on the Sabbath now. When I'm in town, I'll come to your church." A seamless miracle performed by God, using a simple travel book.

That's why you've got to read and share *A Risk Taker's Journey*. If it's not yet at your local ABC, don't wait, and don't panic. Go to www.arisktakersjourney.com. ■

Frank A. Campbell, a member of the Agape Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church, edited A Risk Taker's Journey.

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Alberta

Be Courageous!



Attendees of the 2015 Pathfinder Retreat.

As a teen growing up today and navigating this post-postmodern and post-secular landscape, it's difficult to have the courage to transform the world rather than conform to it. The world is waiting for young fearless leaders to rise up and take the world by storm, sharing and showing positive leadership that inspires the next generation to be what previous generations missed: courageous to go against the grain and step outside comfort zones.

The theme for our Alberta Conference Pathfinder winter retreat this year was "Courageous." Just like Daniel and his three friends, pathfinders were encouraged to be courageous!

Our guest speaker was youth pastor Alex Portillo from the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference. With his urban, laid-back, and conversational style, he engaged the pathfinders with his deep and yet creative presentations. As Portillo shared, he sounded much like a 21st-century urban biblical poet, straight out of the book of Psalms.

It was leaked to the audience that he performed poetry, and with the overly excited and hyped crowd encouraging Pastor Alex, he shared an inspirational lyrical "written" that consisted of fast-paced biblical similes and metaphors sewn together with spiritual content. The audience was in awe!

Over the course of the weekend a recurring theme was mentioned every night. As he spoke about Jesus and His acceptance of people who did not fit the perfect profile, Portillo stated, "Remember as a child of God you are loved, you are valuable, and you bring honour to this house."

On Sabbath morning during Sabbath school, each club presented a story, song, or skit on the theme "Courageous." One parent stated, "It was just amazing to see the amount of talent within our pathfinder clubs; we should definitely give more time for clubs to express themselves creatively."



Guest speaker, Alex Portillo, youth pastor from the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference.

It was not hard to see that the weekend was all about Jesus and His courageous faith. Jesus had the ability to love and accept people even when He was judged for it. When we start to see people as Jesus did, it will take faith and courage to look past perhaps the cold stares, unimpressed dispositions, and judgmental attitude. There is a saying that goes, "Jesus came to comfort the distressed and to distress the comfortable." As long as we decide to be courageous, it will sometimes be uncomfortable, but with Christ by our side, nothing is impossible. Let's be courageous! ■

—Lyle Notice, Associate Youth Director, Alberta Conference

British Columbia

Love Diné

Deer Lake School Mission Trip to the Navajo Nation



(Left) Deer Lake students helped with several construction projects while on their mission trip to Navajo Nation. (Above) Students take a break to enjoy the desert landscape.



Sand, shrubs, sun, and the sound of your own voice are all that fills this deserted part of Arizona. About six hours from Las Vegas, Nev., lying in the middle of nowhere is the Navajo Nation. The Navajo Nation is a semi-autonomous Native American-governed territory covering 27,425 square miles, occupying portions of northeastern Arizona, southeastern Utah, and northwestern New Mexico in the United States.¹ They have been struggling for a long time with diabetes, unemployment, and the effects of extensive uranium mining before environmental laws were passed. During the week of March 19 to 26, I truly saw God's love through their eyes.

As high school seniors we experience many pressures mounting until graduation. So while I first viewed this trip as a getaway, I ended up taking away more than I gave, in the most uplifting sense.

After a two-hour flight and six hours on the road, 53 Deer Lake School students, teachers, and families arrived at the destination exhausted. As the sun fell behind the desert landscape, we finally arrived at the Red Mesa Community Centre, where we would be staying for the majority of the mission trip. The next morning, we woke up to the smiles of the Fowler family, our Navajo hosts. Sadly, those smiles faded away when the father of the family, Alan, revealed the sad news that his nephew had been shot the previous day. Unbeknownst to us, the sudden death had affected the community so dramatically that assumptions began popping up, questioning if our presence was a bad omen. I then knew that this was truly a mission trip. We had something to prove and we needed to bring hope to a hopeless place.

The next couple of days were an exciting blur. We hosted a cooking class on diabetes prevention, prepared a banquet, sorted items for the Fowlers'

yard sale ministry, and worked on several construction projects. About halfway through the week, a group of girls headed out to invite the community to our banquet and cooking class. While the turnout for the banquet was fantastic, our cooking class didn't receive much response. When the clock struck six, no one had arrived. Suddenly, just as our hope had extinguished, a woman walked through the doors. She smiled at our greeting, and we learned that she was now returning to her native soil after 15 years. I was able to imagine the journey she had been through and I could see that she was a person who never gave up, regardless of her circumstances.

With only a few days left, I remember heading outside on a breezy evening. The sun had just set and the sky was turning from a light airy blue to a calm, dark black. As the stars began peeking out, I remember thinking to myself, *Thank you, God, for placing me here at this moment in time. God, you love these people. I know that you will take care of them no matter what. Please give them strength and hope to face another day.* ■

—Aaron Guillen, Grade 12 Student, Deer Lake School

EARTH DAY

The sun shone brightly the whole day on April 23, 2015, at Memorial Park in Maple Ridge, B.C., as Earth Day was being celebrated with the theme "Water." Most of the earth is covered with water, and it is essential to our very existence.

Lynell Adams set up our booth with the Seventh-day Adventist Church sign

and lots of our literature as giveaways. Prayers were offered to the folks who passed by.

A dish of water and a bubble-maker, as well as other gadgets, were there to entertain the children so they could be occupied while their parents perused the materials presented. Many of the church

members came to support Lynell and interact with the folks who came by.

May the Holy Spirit keep working on the hearts of those who attended so that one day soon we will meet them when Jesus comes. ■

— *Trudi Charles,*
Communication Secretary,
Maple Ridge church

Newfoundland

Ronald Richard "Pop" Stagg

September 7, 1913–May 15, 2015



Richard Stagg was born to Esau and Ellen Stagg on Sept. 7, 1913, in Northern Cove, Cape Freels, Nfld. Richard's early life, with parents and four siblings, was spent in Cape Freels, where he completed schooling until Grade 3 before turning to full-time and regular fishing and logging work with family.

Richard married Inez Stokes, of Cape Freels, and together they had four sons,

Ronald, Wesley, Cluncy, and Eugene. Some years after Inez's death, at the age of 80, Richard married Dorothy Burt, of Clarke's Beach, Nfld. They have lived together and supported each other over the past 20 years at their home in Barenood, Nfld.

In 1959, influenced by the decisions of his wife Inez and a Bible study program from the Voice of Prophecy, Richard made the decision to commit his life to the Lord and embrace the biblical teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This faith decision required a family move, as Richard needed a place to work where he could keep the Sabbath, and his family would have a church and church school accessible to them. This they found in Bay Roberts, Nfld. Richard was baptized that year by Pastor G. O. Adams and joined the Bay Roberts Seventh-day Adventist Church. He commenced sales work at Batten's Warehouse, a business

owned by local Adventists, and his family attended the Bay Roberts church and church school.

Throughout his life, Richard's dedication and commitment to his church was very meaningful. He served in many church capacities, including deacon, Sabbath school superintendent, and church elder. He believed in the precious truths of God's Word and gave what support he could to see them proclaimed around the world.

Richard passed away peacefully in Carbonear, Nfld., on May 15, 2015. He was 101 years of age. His family and friends fondly remember him as a man who loved the Lord, treasured His truth, and looked forward in faith to the soon return of Jesus Christ. ■

— *Jason Williams, pastor,*
Bay Roberts and
Conception Bay churches

Ontario

The Assurance of Salvation Northern Ontario Campmeeting

September 2-4, 2015 at Camp Noronto, Monctville, Ontario



Bill Santos
Pastor, Ontario
Conference of
Seventh-day
Adventists
(former speaker of
It's Written Canada)



North American Division

Adventist Christian Fellowship and My Church Summit



Conference attendees including coordinators Iben Pickell (second row, sixth from right) and Geraldine Guehl (second row, second from right).



Participants were divided into round-table discussions centred on Millennials and their reasons for staying in, or staying out, of the church as well as identifying their unique gifts and talents.



Mark Johnson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, inspects a community service project.

This May I had the privilege of attending the Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) Institute and My Church Summit that took place May 22 to 31, 2015, at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ont. The combined events were part of a 10-day conference sponsored by the North American Division (NAD), ACF, and the Ontario Conference. This conference was spearheaded by Ron Pickell, ACF coordinator, and Gerardo Oudri, Ontario Conference youth director.

The conference began with the ACF Institute (ACFI), an intensive seven-day training program for campus ministry leaders that equips students to lead and grow an ACF chapter on their campus. ACF is the official NAD organization for Adventist campus ministry on non-Adventist campuses. Each ACF chapter is a student-led organization that has a two-fold mission of supporting and nurturing Adventist students on secular campuses and reaching out and ministering to non-Adventist students. The institute helped train leaders for both purposes, combining in-class learning modules with real outreach activities.

Every morning students started off their day by going through the Greater Things Bible studies, followed by in-class learning modules. The afternoon segment consisted of various outreach activities, allowing students the opportunity to apply their in-class learning to real life. There were over 90 participants from all

over the United States and Canada, each from varying fields of study such as geology, mathematics, English, physics, communications, and from all levels of post-secondary education. It was quite obvious that these were highly intelligent Adventist young adults who are passionate about their faith and looking for ways to authentically live it out on a secular campus. For example, one participant shared how her professor noticed her constant joy and began asking her about the Sabbath.

On May 28, ACFI transitioned into the My Church Summit. The summit was a response to the recent Barna study that identified 70 percent of Adventist Millennials leaving the church. The My Church event brought together Adventist students from non-Adventist campuses to host a dialogue with church leadership about young adults' engagement with their church.

Through the My Church Summit, church leadership sent a message to Millennials: they care about what we think and are prepared to listen to and hear our experiences. Participants heard this message loud and clear as they saw leaders from all levels of church structure taking the time to come and listen to the voices of young adults.

Honoured guests included James Black, NAD Youth Ministries director; Debra Brill, vice-president of Ministries for the NAD; Gilbert Cangy, General

Conference (GC) Youth Ministries director; Mansfield Edwards, president of the Ontario Conference; Dan Jackson, president of the NAD; Stan Jensen, communication director of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC); Mark Johnson, president of the SDACC; and Jiwan Moon, GC Public Campus Ministries director.

Participants were divided into round-table discussions centred on the following four questions:

1. Why are Millennials leaving the church?
2. Why are Millennials staying?
3. What do Millennials need from the church?
4. What gifts and talents do Millennials want to share to advance the mission of the church?

A committee of delegates representing each conference was formed that organized the points raised in the discussions and drafted a final report that was officially submitted to NAD Youth/Young Adult director, James Black.

Participants wrestled with each question and asked difficult questions of themselves and their church. However, one comment stood out for me: "Why don't we expect more from our young adults? Why are we content to settle for mediocrity as if that is their highest potential?" That is when

it dawned on me, my age is not the true hindrance; it is my expectations of myself.

So the pertinent question to the church is: What do we expect from our young adults? Do we hold them to a higher standard, believing in their potential? Are we entrusting them with greater involvement in the church or are we simply content to praise them for arriving to Sabbath school on time? Are we challenging our young adults to attain greater heights in all areas of their life? Are we content to allow them to go to school and attain an education without impacting their campus for Christ?

If we are not asking and expecting much, we should not be surprised when Millennials respond with little enthusiasm or lack of involvement toward the church or their faith.

If there's one thing that these participants taught me, it's that they are not willing to settle for mediocrity academically, spiritually, or in any other avenue. Are we? ■

—Nina Lim

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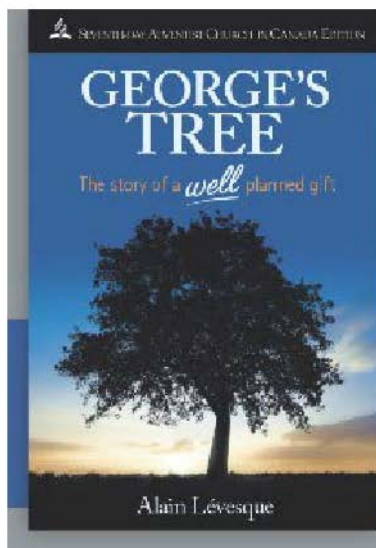
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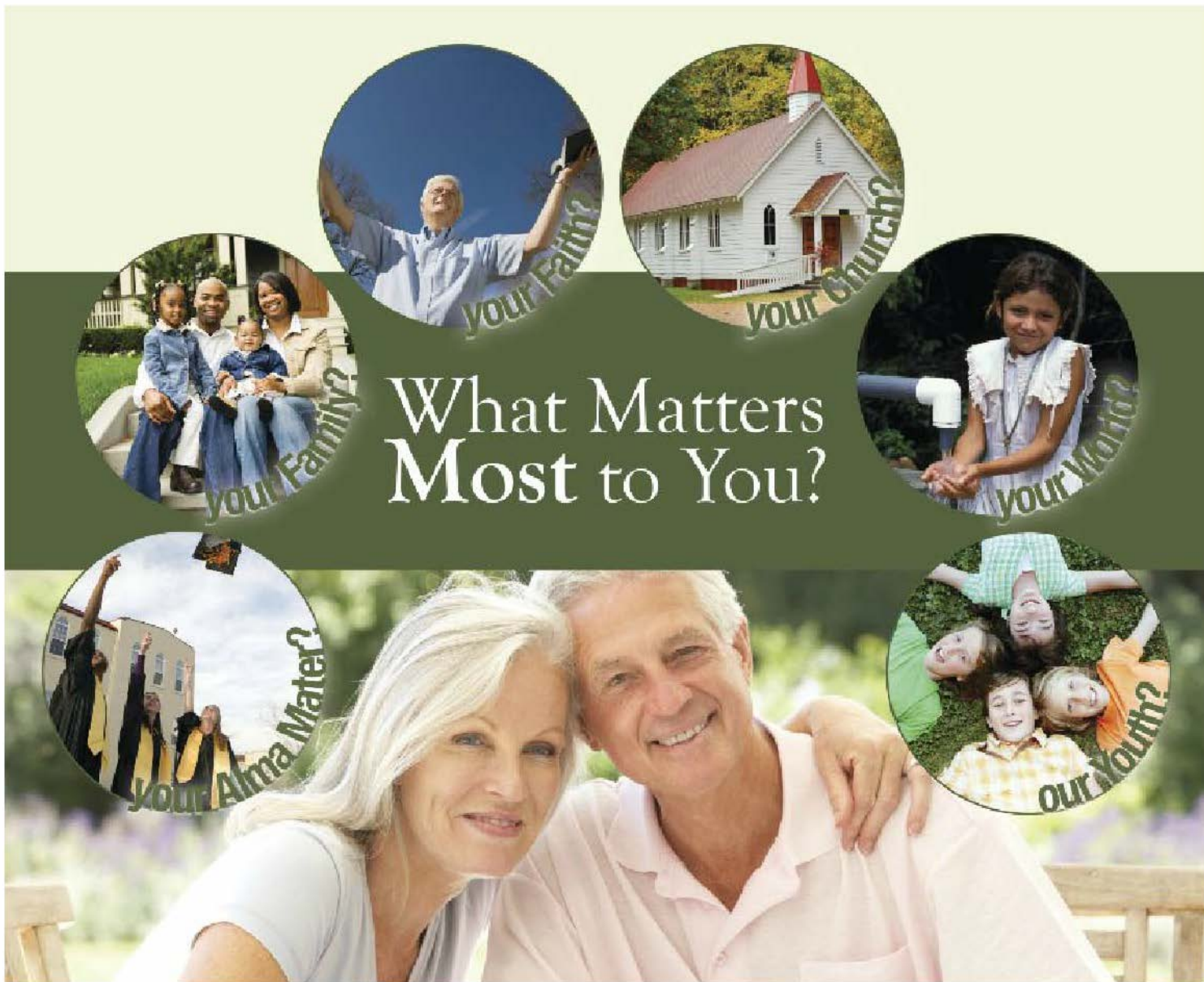
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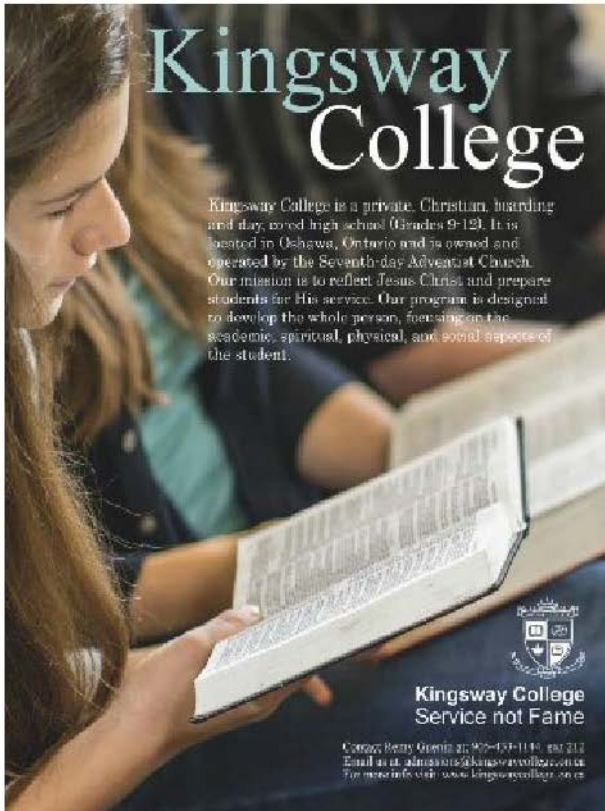
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Missing Members

The Lincoln Pioneer church is looking for the following missing members: Sean Hngas, Chris Irvine, Pam Stewartson, Mary White, Susan Wtabitua. If you have a current phone number and address for any of these people, please contact Carole Minnick at 905/957-3667 or caroleminnick@outlook.com

New Members

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Gary Blence was baptized by Cameron Koronko on April 18, 2015, in Kelowna, B.C. He is now a member of the Rutland church.

Colter Shipowick was baptized by Cameron Koronko on April 18, 2015, in Kelowna, B.C. He is now a member of the Rutland church.

Amber and Yeorgios Sintihakis was baptized by Cameron Koronko on April 18, 2015, in Kelowna, B.C. They are now members of the Rutland church.

Debbie Welsh was baptized by Cameron Koronko on April 18,

2015, in Kelowna, B.C. She is now a member of the Rutland church.

Legal Notice

Maritime Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church Inc.

Notice is hereby given that the forty-eighth Regular Members' Meeting of the Maritime Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Inc. will be held at the Camp Pugwash cafeteria, 2197 Gulf Shore Road, Pugwash, N.S., on Sunday, September 27, 2015, beginning at 9 a.m., Atlantic Time.

This meeting is called for the following purposes: Election of a Board of Directors; Election of a Standing Bylaws Committee; Election of officers of the Conference; consideration of proposed changes in the Bylaws of the Conference; the transaction of other business as may properly come before a Regular Members' Meeting.

The member churches of the Maritime Conference are represented at this meeting by delegates chosen on the following basis: one delegate from each church plus one additional delegate for each 40 members or major fraction thereof.

Delegates who are members of the Organizing Committee are asked to meet at the place of the session on Sunday, September 27th at 8 a.m. Atlantic Time.

*John Fournier, President
Paul Lewallyn, Secretary
Ed Sharpe, Treasurer*

Births

Emlyn Oran Lionel Davis was born on Sept. 26, 2014, to Jaymee (née Kiebyk) and Takoda Davis, of Kingston, Ont.

Parke Allen Schmidt was born on April 3, 2015, to Erin (née Gallant) and Tim Schmidt, of Wainwright, Alta.

Obituaries

Ralph Atwood was born on Feb. 23, 1934, in Oak Park, N.S., and died on March 14, 2014, in Lethbridge, Nfld. Ralph served in the Canadian Air Force and obtained his religious studies degree from Andrews University before pastoring in B.C., Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland. He is predeceased by his first wife, Donna; and parents, Ralph and Maysie Atwood. Surviving: wife, Theresa (née Samson); sons, Warren (Andrea) Atwood of Dartmouth, N.S.; Wayne Atwood of Dartmouth; stepson, Wilmore

(Tracey) Samson of Shoal Harbour, Nfld.; daughters, Cheryl (Gary) Goodrow of Dartmouth, Angela (Al) Brauer of Victoria, B.C., Maria (Chris) Bautin of Lake Echo, N.S.; stepdaughters, Bonna Soper of Halifax, N.S., Natasha (Adam) Long of Edmonton, Alta., Cynthia (Dustin) Winsor of Salmon Arm, B.C.; foster daughter, Elizabeth of Dartmouth; brother, Ted Atwood; sister, Mary Ann (Ralph) Thompson; 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Ella Moud Blakeney was born on April 10, 1921, in Jeddore, N.S., and died on April 16, 2015, in Halifax, N.S. Ella was vice-president of her graduating class at Oshawa Missionary College in 1945. She earned an RN degree from Glendale Sanitarium and Hospital in 1951, B.Sc. in Nursing from Walla Walla College in 1956. She worked in church-owned hospitals in North America as well as a missionary service for 14 years at Karachi Adventist Hospital in Pakistan. She is predeceased by her parents, Thomas and Minnie Blakeney; and brother, Robert Blakeney.

Elvin (Al) Reed Crawford was born on Jan. 6, 1924, in St. George, Ont., and died on April 27, 2015, in Salmon Arm, B.C. He was a long-time member of the Salmon Arm church. Al is predeceased by his son, Howard Crawford; daughters, Shirley Crawford, Linda Canelon; parents, Norman and Violet Crawford; brother, Norman Crawford; sisters, Wilma Myers, Peach Trotter. Surviving: wife, Dorothy Crawford; sons, Norman Crawford, Edwin Crawford, Lyle Crawford; stepsons, Harvey (Sherry) Jones, Kelly (Shari) Jones; daughter, Rita Crawford; stepdaughters, Jean (Ross) Watts, Linda (Shane) Dunbrack, Gladys (Hort) Neumann; sister, Ilean Jodowin; 28 grandchildren, 43 great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.

George Koronko was born on Aug. 16, 1918, in Perdue, Sask., and died on March 11, 2015, in Lacombe, Alta. George was a deacon, Sabbath school superintendent, and lesson study teacher in his lifetime of service to the church he loved. He is predeceased by his wife, Eva (née Solanik) Koronko. Surviving: son, Kevin (Livia) Koronko of Canmore, Alta.; daughter, Kellie (Gerald) Berg of Lacombe; two grandchildren.

Fred Serrano Mina was born on May 9, 1932, in Calapan, Mindoro Philippines, and died on March 23, 2013, in Richmond Hill, Ont. He worked as a treasurer of Philippine Union College (PUC), accountant of Adventist University of the Philippines,

treasurer and administrator at Manila Sanitarium, alumni president of PUC, and trust secretary of the North Union Conference. In Canada, he was an elder at Mt. Zion Filipino church, Sabbath school teacher, and president of the Golden Circle seniors' club. Fred is predeceased by his parents, Marcelino and Maura Mina; brother, Nehemias Mina. Surviving: wife, Epifania Mina; daughters, Suzette Frias, Summe Conopio; sister, Marcelina Kintana; six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

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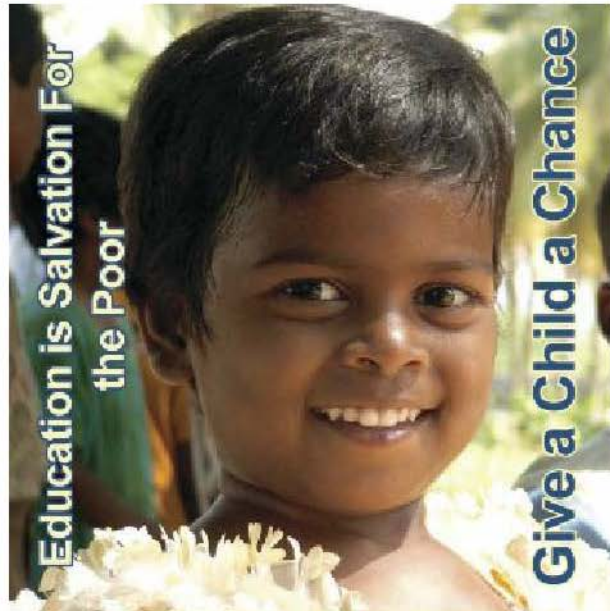
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from the editor

religious liberty inside the church

WE ALL HAVE FAVOURITE QUOTATIONS. Here is one of mine, by a well-known pioneer of the Adventist Church, John N. Loughborough. The statement appeared in the Oct. 8, 1861, *Review and Herald* article, which contains a well-known warning against the formation of creeds:

The first step of apostasy is to get up a creed, telling us what we shall believe. The second is, to make that creed a test of fellowship. The third is to try members by that creed. The fourth to denounce as heretics those who do not believe that creed. And fifth, to commence persecution against such.

Besides my day job at the *Messenger*, I like to keep my finger on the pulse of the church by managing an online forum. The forum has some members who were disenfranchised from the Adventist Church, individuals whose church membership was revoked because they asked questions. One member was ridiculed for asking why we do not celebrate Sabbath at the same time as those in Jerusalem. Another asked about the Jewish feast days. The response he received was not kind.

Perhaps the apparent unwelcoming atmosphere for questions is a sensitive subject for me because in my early days as an Adventist, I sincerely asked an evangelist why it was acceptable to hang a picture of our God, Jesus, in the church. Wasn't that breaking the second commandment? At the time, this was a serious question to me, but the answer I received was bathed in sarcasm and insult.

Questions are a good thing; they can lead you back to the gospel and strengthen your faith. I believe that truth not only withstands examination, but demands it, and thus we should not fear but rather encourage sincere and thoughtful questions in the church. In Acts 5:39, Luke says, "But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God! So they took his advice."

I want to make it very clear that I stand by the 28 *Fundamental Beliefs*, which are a summary, or iteration, of some of the big-picture understandings the Adventist Church has come to over the years. But while these iterations can serve as a helpful guide and springboard for

discussion, they are often misused. Echoing Loughborough's statement, I don't believe that the fundamental beliefs should be viewed as a definitive test on which we will need to obtain a perfect score in order to inherit eternal life. The very fact that the 28 beliefs used to be 27, suggests that beliefs continue to be fleshed out. If our faith is a living faith, God will continue to impress our minds. At no point has an individual or church organization "arrived"; therefore, we should not impose a particular understanding on a person, test that person's faith by it, or impose consequences on a person because he or she holds (or doesn't hold) a particular belief.

To sum it up, I believe that our church should foster an open and welcoming environment that encourages discussion. We, as Adventists, are strong believers in religious liberty. I support that 100 percent. Maybe we need some within the church, too. And I certainly think it is scary when people in the church want to "stone" them for it.

However, having said that, I do not appreciate it when individuals turn every conversation to the "new truth" they have found, when they single out a question as the end-all-be-all question and use it to drive home the one supreme point they believe supersedes all others. I especially do not appreciate it when people are so intent on enforcing their theology that they hijack new believers, visitors, or any other vulnerable individuals as they walk through the door on Sabbath morning, interested in little else other than sharing their "new truth" and making new adherents. Sadly, that kind of questioning smacks of an agenda, and that agenda often does not build others up.

So while the church should foster the freedom for members to ask questions and develop understandings (see 1 Thess. 5:21), it should lovingly teach people to refrain from abusing that freedom, preying on others, and condemning people who simply do not see a given subject the same way.

So how do we stay true to our commitment and refrain from dogmatism and yet be accepting toward members who appear to be dogmatic about a particular belief? How do we foster a tolerant atmosphere that is open to questions and still lovingly treat those who believe their questions are more important than any other question anyone else may have (and thus appear to be intolerant)? Perhaps no easy answer exists. Either way, we need to be patient with those who ask questions. Many people ask questions out of sincerity and not because they have an agenda. Let us do as Jesus did: point all people (including our dogmatic members) to the author of love, giver of love, and teacher of love. He wants us to have a living relationship with Him, not with a creed. ■



Stan Jensen, editor
Canadian Adventist Messenger

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