

canadian adventist

Messenger

december 2015

*"On coming to the house,
they saw the child with his mother Mary,
and they bowed down and worshipped him."*

Matthew 2: 11, NIV

FEATURE The
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Embrace

PLUS Bring Back Jesus (p. 3)
Gratitude is an Attitude (p. 17)
Keeping Christ in Christmas (p. 46)

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heart to heart



“She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.—*Matt. 1:21, ESV*”

Bring Back Jesus

I couldn't help but overhear a conversation between two friends who were shopping near me. One told the other how stressed the holidays made her feel. Her friend said she was still paying for the gifts she had given the previous year. No doubt about it, many folks find this a rough time of year.

I actually learned a great deal about Christmas from Dad. I can't recall a time when he didn't reach out to include others in our plans. True, we exchanged gifts on Christmas Eve but always with others who had no family around. They would join us for the evening as well as for a special dinner the next day.

Dad saw an extra dimension to Christmas—a deeply spiritual one. We spent time singing about the birth of Christ. At times we attended religious services with people whose faith differed from our own. Our gifts to one another were meaningful and practical, and our guests were always included. Christmas became a favourite time of year mostly because of the people my father included.

Perhaps we need to push the reset button on Christmas and shift the focus from receiving to giving. All around us are people who may be alone at this time of year. For many, that's really hard. But together we can make a difference. Why not open our homes and hearts to help someone feel valued and welcome?

In the gift of Jesus, the Father makes me feel valued and welcome. Without Christ, I would be devalued as a consequence of sin. Jesus makes a difference. Through Him, God the Father welcomes us into His family. And by that act, God shows us how to live.

Let's bring Jesus back to the holiday season. Are you with me? ■

Mark Johnson is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.



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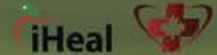
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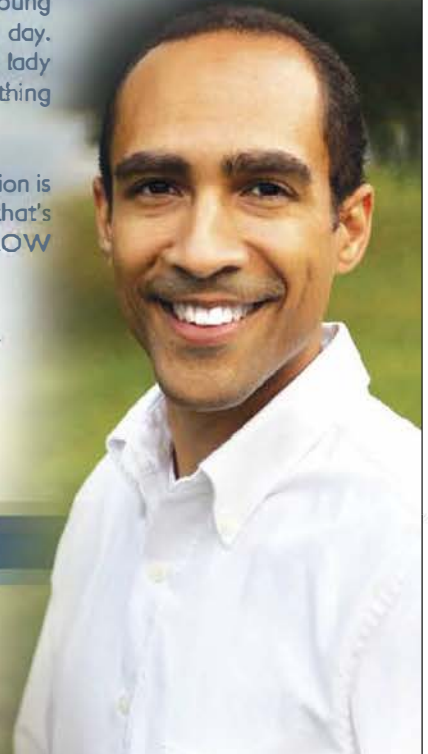
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WHAT'S INSIDE

December 2015



FEATURES

24 COVER STORY The \$7.30 Embrace—Yes, we should be giving all year round, but there is something extra special about giving at Christmastime.

IN EVERY ISSUE

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



The site of an old basketball court will be transformed by the construction of a new school for refugee children.



With the help of donors like you, Raisan and other refugee children will be able to realize their dreams.

“I want to be a doctor.”

IT IS THE WORST HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN THE WORLD TODAY. Four and a half million Syrians are seeking refuge from the brutal civil war that has torn apart their country and shattered their lives. Millions more try to keep ahead of the carnage by moving from village to village within Syria.

The civil war has dragged on for five long years. Hundreds of thousands have died, and many more bear both physical and emotional scars. There is little hope for peace.

Yet children like Raisan still dream. She dreams that one day she will become a doctor to help those who are sick and suffering.

Raisan's father has long worked in Lebanon. His family lived in Syria, and he would send the bulk of his wages home to support them. Fearful for their safety, he told them to leave Syria and move to Lebanon when the conflict became too dangerous. His salary had been more than enough to support them in Syria, but Lebanon's cost of living is far higher. In Syria they had a lovely home, but now they live in a ramshackle two-room apartment under an overpass.

Lebanon's resources have been strained by the influx of over one million refugees.

Children are bearing the biggest brunt of the crisis, and they make up almost half of the refugee population in Lebanon. For most refugee families, food, shelter, and health care are more urgent priorities than education.

The biggest barrier to education for Syrian refugees in Lebanon is the lack of space in public schools. The schools are overwhelmed and simply cannot cope with the sheer volume of refugees. Over 200,000 school-aged refugee children lack access to age-

appropriate education. Denying children an education hampers not only their intellectual growth and emotional well-being but also their future opportunities.

ADRA has been providing food, shelter assistance, and other aid to Syrians for several years. In response to educational need, in December 2014 ADRA opened a school for refugee children with funding from our generous donors and the Canadian government. Raisan is now one of the students.

At first, a space above a commercial bank was rented. Some 120 children registered, and others joined a long waiting list. Mrs. Karan, an Adventist teacher, came out of retirement to become the principal. The other teachers are all Syrian refugees.

The rental space was not ideal, so a new school is being constructed at Middle East University campus on the site of an old basketball court. The new building will have ample classroom space, proper washroom facilities, and an area for recreational activities.

In response to the overwhelming needs, the Canadian government launched the Syria Emergency Relief Fund. All eligible donations made by Dec. 31, 2015, up to \$100 million, will be matched.

ADRA will continue to provide emergency and other assistance to these vulnerable people. Please join us by giving generously so that children like Raisan can realize their dreams. ■

Sharmilla Reid is the director of donor relations at ADRA Canada.



Better Than Excellent

Recently, I arrived early for an event. Shortly after I got comfortable in my seat, another lady arrived. I greeted her by asking how she was doing, and she poured out a long list of minor complaints about her recent experiences. To everyone else who arrived subsequently and greeted her, she repeated the same petty grievances. After a while she sounded like a broken record playing the same sad song over and over again. I sat there wondering, *Does this lady have anything positive to say?*

When I watch television or listen to the radio and hear what is happening in the world—people fleeing having left possessions behind because of war in their country, refugees stuck at border crossings with no food or the basic necessities, people who have lost everything because of floods, hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, or other natural disasters—I think how important it is to have perspective and to recognize all of our blessings.

This lady's woes were miniscule in comparison to what others experience. She has so much to be thankful for. She lives in a relatively peaceful country, and she has a good job and a loving family. She is surrounded by people who appreciate her contributions, and yet she bundled her complaints with her greeting instead of choosing to share how she has been blessed, what God had done and is still doing in her life.

Many years ago I met an old Hungarian gentleman who left one of the most positive impressions on me. Whenever anyone greets him and asks him how he is doing, his response is always the same: "I am better than excellent." And he means it. He always sees the glass half full instead of half empty and has the most infectious laugh. And yet this gentleman has many things about which he could justifiably complain. He was displaced from his country during the Cold War, which forced him to leave a budding career and a high-ranking job as well as all his earthly possessions, except for his wife and two sons. In Canada, because of the language barrier and his age, he had to settle for a job less than ideal for someone with his education and experience. Despite all this, he maintains a very positive attitude. His attitude made every encounter with him a pleasant one and left you wondering how

he could maintain such positivity despite all that life had thrown at him.

Ellen G. White astutely wrote the following statement:

We need not keep our own record of trials and difficulties, griefs, and sorrows. All these things are written in the books, and heaven will take care of them. While we are counting up the disagreeable things, many things that are pleasant to reflect upon are passing from memory, such as the merciful kindness of God surrounding us every moment and the love over which angels marvel, that God gave His Son to die for us. ... If you do not feel lighthearted and joyous, do not talk about your feelings. Cast no shadow upon the lives of others. ... Let your thoughts be directed to the evidences of the great love of God for you.¹

The apostle Peter also admonishes us in 1 Peter 4:9, 10, to "be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (NKJV). We have all received God's manifold blessings through His Son, Jesus Christ and each day these blessings are renewed. They vary each day according to our needs, but we need to share these gifts—God's goodness—with others.

While we may all face real challenges and difficulties in our lives, these should not overshadow or replace the assurance of our salvation and our thankfulness to God for His blessings. These positive assurances will always be on our lips when someone greets us or when we converse with others. This would allow us to respond to the common inquisitive greeting of "How are you?" in a way that is similar to my old Hungarian friend's answer, "Better than excellent." ■

Joyce Jones is the treasurer for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.



¹ *Help in Daily Living* (Ellen G. White Estate, 2010), 29.

teen talk

Q: I believe that my faith is quite strong, but I'm scared of God coming back. I'm scared my faith isn't strong enough to get me to heaven. I'm also scared of being persecuted for my faith. What can I do?

A: OK, pay attention to this, because it has the potential to change your entire life. Ready? Here it goes: your end-of-times anxiety can be transformed into joyful anticipation by a simple change of perspective. Instead of focusing on the apparent uncertainty of your salvation, think of what Jesus's second coming will actually mean for you and the whole planet:

- 1) No more pain, no more tears, no more death.
- 2) Justice is finally done.
- 3) You get to see Jesus in person!

So, rather than being afraid of the trials, persecutions, and all that scary stuff, look at the positive outcome; climb to the tallest rooftop of your city and scream hard, **"BRING IT ON!"**

One more thing: there's no such thing as a "Faith Measuring Algorithm" that calculates your chances to go to heaven. You believe in Him; He saves you. ■



Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them.

—Ezekiel 20:12, NKJV

Seahorse

What fish is like a chameleon, having eyes that swivel and the ability to change colour? What fish has a tail that grasps like a monkey's and has a pouch like a kangaroo's? It's the seahorse.

Perhaps the best-known fact about seahorses is that the males give birth to the babies. The female puts eggs into the male's pouch, and while he looks after the babies, the mother goes off into the sea to eat and swim. Every morning she returns for a friendly visit. Together, the mother and father seahorses change colour and do a little dance. Then mother goes away for the day, leaving the male alone with the babies.

Daddy Seahorse takes care of all his growing babies' needs. His pouch is just the right temperature. It controls the amount of salt that's in the water around the eggs and supplies oxygen and all the nutrients the babies need.

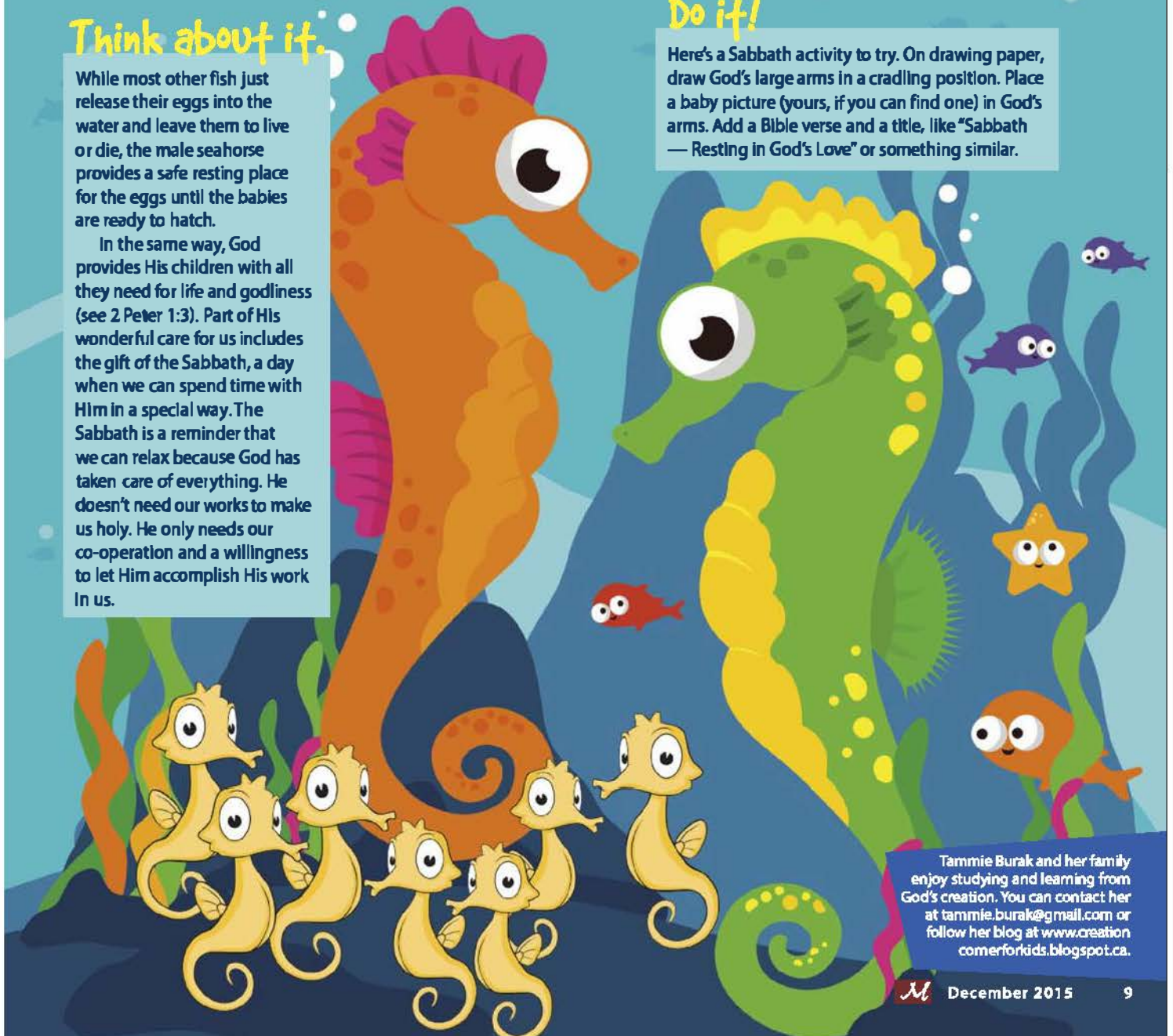
Think about it.

While most other fish just release their eggs into the water and leave them to live or die, the male seahorse provides a safe resting place for the eggs until the babies are ready to hatch.

In the same way, God provides His children with all they need for life and godliness (see 2 Peter 1:3). Part of His wonderful care for us includes the gift of the Sabbath, a day when we can spend time with Him in a special way. The Sabbath is a reminder that we can relax because God has taken care of everything. He doesn't need our works to make us holy. He only needs our co-operation and a willingness to let Him accomplish His work in us.

Do it!

Here's a Sabbath activity to try. On drawing paper, draw God's large arms in a cradling position. Place a baby picture (yours, if you can find one) in God's arms. Add a Bible verse and a title, like "Sabbath — Resting in God's Love" or something similar.



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.

haircuts for humanity



Kelvin Kublall serving a client of Haircuts for Humanity.

SCISSORS, A COMB, AND ELECTRIC HAIR CLIPPERS are all tools of the trade for Kelvin H. Kublall, a fourth-year religious studies student at Burman University. While most may associate these items with barbers' tools—which they are—they are also Kelvin's tools for evangelism. What started out as a necessity would grow to become his passion and now his ministry.

“Being comfortable evangelizing not only with Bible in hand but also with a pair of scissors and hair clippers has opened his eyes to a world of future possibilities.”

Volunteering with Campus Ministries at the Red Deer Soup Kitchen, Kelvin noticed that he and his fellow classmates would almost be too busy with their given tasks to really interact with those they were coming into contact with. Watching the masses go through the lines, he noticed that they were just as interested in human interaction as they were interested in the soup. He sensed that the people around were longing for community, and he knew that he wanted to do more than just hand them a bowl of soup.

Kelvin had always been a bit angry that God had not blessed him with the talent to sing, play an instrument, speak, or pray, but he did have one talent that he could share. Growing up Kelvin used to get haircuts from his mom that did not go over well with his classmates. He got tired of the bullying, so he saved money and went to an actual barber. His life changed after watching the barber at work, and after much practice and analysis he started to cut hair.

This is what Kelvin wanted to propose. He had seen the interaction between client and barber, and he knew that this interaction could lend itself to ministry. The idea was Haircuts for Humanity, taking a bit of his talent to the streets of Red Deer.

Kelvin proposed his idea to his roommate Brian Cruz, a fourth-year religious studies major at Burman, who encouraged him to take it a step further. Kelvin felt that God was leading him, so he began a partnership with the Alberta Conference under the guidance of Pastor Lyle Notice, Alberta Conference Community Services Director and Associate Youth Director. They collaborated with the Red Deer Soup Kitchen and got ADRA Canada to sponsor their urban project. He then organized students to help him in this effort to provide hair washing, hair cutting, and conversation to those who needed it at the Red Deer Soup Kitchen.

It has been a few years since Kelvin set foot on the campus, but he finally has matched his talent and passion and directed it toward a ministry. In a few months he will be graduating, and he is looking forward to that phase of his life.

“I’m not sure if I was called to become a pastor. My mom says I was, but truthfully, I don’t know. I think God is still working with me through this. I do know that I was called to ministry, in whatever capacity possible; I have devoted my life to serving God. Whether it means becoming a pastor or not, that’s why I’m here studying theology,” says Kelvin.

It is no surprise that his favourite class is Dr. Bruce Boyd’s Principles of Evangelism. “Dr. Boyd has encouraged

and enabled me through this class to become more outward focused in such a self-centred world. Evangelism is the opportunity to share the love of God with someone else; it may be vocally, physically, and even secretly. There is no perfect way to do evangelism, but there are various ways to create opportunities to share God’s love with others,” states Kelvin.

Of all the things that Kelvin has learned being at Burman University, this one thing stands out to him: Be comfortable being yourself.

“Since being here at Burman, I learned one very important thing that I wish I had learned earlier. Be comfortable being yourself! They say to ‘Be You at BU.’ I support that 100 percent! Many of us come to university searching for who we really are. Loving who you are and standing for something keeps you from falling for [just] anything. It’s hard trying to fit in, especially when God created you [to be] special, to stand out to be a light, and to be an example for others,” stresses Kelvin.

It is this newfound comfort in being happy with what God has given him that has shaped his path in to his newest venture, Haircuts for Humanity. Being comfortable evangelizing not only with Bible in hand but also with a pair of scissors and hair clippers has opened his eyes to a world of future possibilities.

Currently in his Pastoral Field Experience (practicum), Kelvin has gotten a taste of what it is like to be a pastor. Throughout his entire field experience, it is no surprise that community service is his favourite part. His time at Burman has given him the chance to find himself through God.

“I came to Burman confused and broken, but I feel like my struggle over the past three years here has strengthened my faith in God,” shares Kelvin.

Now that he is about to leave this campus, he wants to leave something behind for his fellow students. “A legacy only leaves memories. I want to leave a cause, something other students can pick up on and participate in. Starting Haircuts for Humanity has opened the doors for many other people trying to get involved in ministry. That’s the goal, empowering others to see their potential through the gifts God has blessed them with and using them for His name’s honour and glory.” He continues, “I’ve had a little taste of ministry, but I can’t wait to be fully immersed where ministry isn’t just my free time away from studying, but ministry becomes my life!” ■

JR Ferrer is the director of communication for Burman University.



Where Are They Now



Ed Teranski and Juanita Neal

Messenger: *Ed, you lost your wife Audrey Weis. And Juanita, you lost your husband Leslie Neal. Subsequently, the Lord brought you together, and you married in 2012. Tell me about your childhood.*

Ed Teranski: I was born on a farm in northeastern Saskatchewan near a small village called Ketchen. I have four sisters and one brother.

Juanita Neal: I was born in Takoma Park, Md. I am the oldest of three sisters and an adopted brother. Providing an Adventist education for their children was a focus for my parents.

M: *Where did you obtain your education?*

E: I graduated from Okanagan Adventist Academy in Rutland, B.C., and earned a bachelor of theology from Canadian Union College. My master's degree was from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

J: All of us children attended church school in Cicero and then attended Indiana Academy. After graduating in 1956, I attended Emanuel Missionary College. It was there I met Leslie Neal, and it was love at first sight. We married in 1957. I received a bachelor's degree in music education in 1961. My master's degree is from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Ore.

Messenger catches up with former leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. In this issue we talk with Ed Teranski and Juanita Neal.

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

M: *Describe your service to the church.*

E: Audrey and I began our pastoral ministry in 1958 in Dauphin, Man., serving in the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference until 1966. We then moved to the Alberta Conference from 1966 to 1970. After pastoring in the B.C. Conference from 1970 to 1978, we transferred back to Alberta from 1978 to 1986, and then returned to B.C. from 1986 to 2000. I retired in 2000. For several years in the Alberta Conference I served as the stewardship and ministerial secretary.

J: Leslie and I began our pastor/teacher sojourn in 1961. The first 10 years were spent in Michigan, Leslie's home state. During the first 15 years my work was part-time teaching music and piano lessons wherever my husband pastored. My first full-time teaching position was at the Camelback Elementary School in Scottsdale, Ariz. In the summer of 1977 we moved to Canada, where I did the rest of my educational work—all for the church except for five years. I taught music and Grades 7–10 in 10 different schools; was principal at Mamawi Atoshtegan Native School, Alta., and at Pleasant Valley Junior Academy in Vernon, B.C. From 1997 to 2001 I was the vice-president for education in the B.C. conference.

M: *As you review your opportunities for service, what brought you the greatest joy and satisfaction?*

E: During my pastoral ministry I very much enjoyed doing public evangelism. I recall in 1969 having 104 baptisms. In 1993 and again in 1995 Audrey and I travelled to the Ukraine for evangelistic meetings. Since then I have raised funds for 28 church buildings and have made 12 trips. This has brought great satisfaction.

J: From the time I was a little girl, I was encouraged by wonderful teachers and pastors to be a "worker for God." I am blessed as I witness my students' accomplishments, see them succeed, and watch them grow in the Lord.

M: *Tell me about your family.*

E: Audrey and I had twin boys, Ron (Laurel Mundall) and Randy; and twin girls, Dona (Rod) Fleck and Lora (Charles) Toop. I have seven grandchildren.

J: Leslie and I had four children, Lenita (Randall) Skoretz, Leslie III (Heidi), Rodney (Kandi Goltz), and Charla (Mark Willis). I have nine grandchildren.

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

E: We live in Walla Walla, Wash., and I am still raising funds for church buildings in the Ukraine. I sometimes teach the Sabbath school lesson and preach.

J: I volunteer in a number of areas and enjoy serving as organist at the Village Seventh-day Adventist Church in College Place, Wash. ■



Where Will I Go Now?

IT WAS A TYPICAL FEBRUARY EVENING IN ONTARIO—clear, sunny, and subzero. Exiting the airport terminal, Jenn and Mike gasped as the icy air entered their lungs and slammed against their skin. After they spent 10 days in Hawaii to celebrate their 10th anniversary, the frigid Ontario air, although expected and familiar, was still shocking to them. They scurried to the car, loaded up their bags, and headed for home.

Hawaii had been magical, but Jenn and Mike were anxious to see their two beautiful kids—Max, 8, and Chloe, 5—at the other end of the 45-minute stretch of highway.

Then suddenly, there was black ice; brake lights; careening transports; skidding, skating vehicles. Then, the piercing bellow of car horns, the screeching of metal on metal, the shattering of glass—and the lives of six people, among them this young couple, lost in the wreckage.

While losing their parents was heartbreaking beyond words for Max and Chloe, what happened to the children in the months and years following the tragic deaths of their parents was a heartbreak of a different kind. And it is one that could have been avoided.

Jenn and Mike were like many couples and parents their age: in their late 30s with children, a modest suburban home, and a family pet. Some family relationships were strained, mostly because of Jenn and Mike's decision to join a faith that was different from their respective Catholic and Presbyterian upbringings. Even though their families were loving and well intentioned, Jenn and Mike had faced harsh criticism for joining the Seventh-day Adventist Church and for sending their children to a private Seventh-day Adventist school. This made choosing a guardian to be named in the will for their children a difficult, emotionally loaded issue—and one that Jenn and Mike had put off for too long.

Firstly, no one really believes he/she will die young. Secondly,

you do not want to offend or hurt the feelings of family members and/or close friends by choosing one over another. Thirdly, placing the burden of raising your children on someone else is of great concern. There is no one who will look after your kids the way you do, so ask yourself, who is the next-best person?

One of the hardest things for your remaining family to do is to pick someone to raise your children after you have died. Make sure that the person you choose as a guardian is willing to accept this appointment permanently.¹ Write down the reasons for your choice of who you want to take care of your children and detail any specific wishes regarding the raising of your children, such as those related to cultural and religious beliefs and education.

If there is no will at the time of death, guardianship of children is left up to the courts. Friends and family can step forward and try to obtain custody; however, a judge decides who is best suited. For reasons you couldn't anticipate, your children could end up in foster care.

Had Jenn and Mike known that the tensions among their family members would lead to many years of expensive litigation and their kids being shuttled from one home to another, surely Jenn and Mike would have taken the time to make a will that named a guardian for their precious, beloved young children.

Choosing a guardian is not easy, but it is very important and necessary. Although we live as if it is not, life can be fleeting and cut short. You do not want your children to wonder, *Where will I go now?*

The care, as well as the religious and cultural upbringing and education of your children, is up to you in life—and, if you have a will naming a guardian, it can continue to be up to you even if you're gone. ■

Leah Keys writes from Newcastle, Ont.

¹It is a good idea to name a single individual as a guardian, not a couple. If a named couple divorces, for example, this will create legal issues regarding the guardianship of your children. It is also advisable to choose a second and completely separate guardian, in case something happens to your first choice that makes it impossible for him/her to act as guardian for your child/children.

Students eagerly help the less fortunate



Parkview Adventist Academy students helped with Neighbours' fifth annual project held in Blackfalds, north of Red Deer, in May.



In 2013, Gateway Christian School students took part in a project in Bentley, Alta. They have been involved in three of five projects. Tasks included baking for families, demolition, yardwork, cleaning, and assembling furniture.

Some students are pulling out their hammers to help the less fortunate—and they're making a big difference because of their genuine interest. Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA), a boarding school and day academy in Lacombe, Alta., and Gateway Christian School in Red Deer, Alta., have volunteered on several projects with Neighbours, a division of A Better World Canada (ABW), which is a Central Alberta-based international development organization formed 25 years ago as part of College Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lacombe.

Since 2012, Neighbours has helped families with everything from renovating a flooded basement to reconfiguring a home for a terminally ill child.

Neighbours project co-ordinator Randa Ziakris said the high school students have been a great addition to the volunteer team. "The young people have been very enthusiastic and have been very instrumental in the completion of the projects," said Ziakris. Rod Jamieson, vice-principal at PAA, said the school has long fostered an attitude of serving and giving back in the community. Besides Neighbours, the Grade 10 to 12 school of 100-some students holds a Service Day on which they pick up litter, do yard work, and visit senior citizens.

Gateway, a Kindergarten to Grade 12 school of more than 700 students, has also encouraged students to think beyond themselves through various service projects. It is also part of an Alberta Education pilot project called Moving Forward With High School Redesign, with a goal to develop ethical citizens and engender respect, empathy, and compassion.

"It is great to go to Zimbabwe, but there is also mission work here," said Teresa Tataryn, former vice-principal at Gateway. Gateway students participated in three Neighbours projects, including landscaping a yard for a woman with multiple sclerosis.

High school students at both schools have shown strong interest in Neighbours projects. Tataryn described how students were seen running down the hall so they could get to the signup list.

"Our students have really been excited about being involved," added Jamieson regarding the Neighbours projects. "They've never questioned why they're doing this."

Elizabeth Oyelana, a Grade 12 student at Parkview, enjoyed her experience with Neighbours and says her classmates who participated did too. Students readily signed up because it was something they wanted to do, she said. One of her tasks included putting boards up on a house exterior.

"I think it has encouraged me to do more for people around me," said Oyelana, 17. "It didn't take a lot of my time, and it was really easy to do—but it makes a big impact."

The students of the Christian school are also illustrating the work of Jesus to the rest of the community. "We're showing our faith through our actions, through ministering and serving," said Oyelana.

Tataryn said they've had conversations with students at Gateway about responding to the needs of the person next door, without judgment. It's a nonjudgmental attitude that is bridging the gap between the less fortunate and students. Families appreciate these young helpers, including Oyelana.

"There's lots of food, and they thank us when we come in and when we go out," she said.

Tataryn, who has since moved to another Red Deer school, said she believes the Neighbours projects have benefited not only the families but also the students themselves. "Students will come back and say their conversations with families meant something to them," Tataryn said. "They saw tears in the eyes of recipients. They felt needed... I think on both sides, it has made a difference." ■

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

Before you quit

facebook



I am taking a break from Facebook. That seems to be a common post I read online these days. Pastors and professionals will proclaim they have reached their boiling point. Many will claim they are tired of the rude, divisive comments that are circulating on the web. Some will claim they just have too many “better” things to do, while only a few will admit they are addicted and consumed with social media.

Before you take the dreaded steps of deactivating your account, let me offer some suggestions on how to find balance between your online life and personal, tangible world. But first, let me share a story.

I joined Facebook begrudgingly, even though I am known as a “media savvy” person. Less than a week after I joined, a young woman contacted me via Facebook’s private-messaging function. She was in a crisis. She had made some poor life choices and was now considering a possible abortion. The way she reached out to me helped me understand that her generation communicated differently than mine. She was not going to find my phone number on the back of the church bulletin. She was not going to call the church secretary and make an appointment to see me. Rather, in her world, she communicated through social media.

So before you cut the cord, let me make a few recommendations:

Decide what your top three ways of communication will be.

How can people reach you? Is the telephone or email the best way for people to connect with you? Nowadays there are too many options to number: Instagram, Twitter, Periscope, Google, LinkedIn, to name a few. Limit your communications to what you can manage and what offers the most diversity to reach a wide group of people.

Set up specific times you are going to engage in social media.

Time management consultants suggest that you schedule your email work during certain times a day. Therefore you are in control of when you communicate with individuals. Some people spend all day replying to emails as they come in. As a result they are less productive with other tasks. In the same way, schedule specific times during the day to interact on social media.

Set up a secret group.

As a pastor and public speaker I receive numerous friend requests every month. (I have made the choice to accept every friend request as a way to minister to others.) However, since I do not personally know 90 percent of the 2,000 “friends” on my Facebook page, I have created a secret group under my account. This group is limited to my close friends and family (about 50 people). It is within this private group where I share my vacation photos, pictures of my children, and political ideas or rants. My public Facebook page is limited to lifting up Jesus and encouraging others.

Let social media be a tool in your box to reach people for the gospel. Over the years, I have ministered to many people on the edges of Christianity through Facebook. It can be a powerful entering wedge to building God’s kingdom. However, it is like every other resource. You must be in control of the medium. ■

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.





The Climb



Words by God —Isaiah 40:28-31, NIV

For the last few months, I have pressed full steam ahead in my recovery process from surgery. I have eagerly exercised and worked hard at improving my walking and strength, celebrating the little victories along the way. Each week it looked as if I could do a bit more than the week before.

When this month came, I felt a little discouraged by some of the setbacks in my improvement. I seemed to take a couple steps backwards instead of moving forward to other areas I needed to work on with my strength. I found myself unable to do some of the bask exercise routines I had been able to do a few weeks ago. My legs simply were not strong enough to do the activity without injury.

The experience reminded me of what the doctors and physiotherapists had told me when I first started: Your improvements will build and continue to grow, but don't be discouraged when you reach a plateau, when it peters out and you feel like you're getting nowhere.

The process of healing and recovery is just like life. There will be times in your life when you go full speed ahead—feeling as if nothing can slow you down and as if you are on top of the world—and other moments when you reach a plateau and the ground and scenery are so steady it seems you're walking backwards.

For some, reaching a plateau might look like a struggling spiritual life, a stagnate ministry, feeling

unsuccessful at work and in relationships, or difficulty healing from past regrets and hurts. During times when you sense that the next step will hurt, remember that God is right there to walk with you through everything you're facing.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Josh. 1:9, NIV).

The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (Isa. 40:28–31, NIV)

In those plateaus of life, keep moving forward even if you get discouraged. Don't give up. God is still working as you wait. Enjoy where you are in life's journey right now and keep pressing forward with the Maker of the mountains and in the hope of all the adventures and peaks still yet to climb.

Be Blessed. ■

Tia Lawrence is a member of the Comox Adventist Church on Vancouver Island.

Tia's blog—refreshwithtia.com



Watch "Soar" by Meredith Andrews on YouTube: <http://goo.gl/gzJNGS>



Gratitude is an Attitude

"How can we possess an attitude of gratitude and thankfulness amid trials, difficulties, and constant exposure to bad news in the media?"

In his insightful book *The Progress Paradox: How Life Gets Better While People Feel Worse*¹ author Gregg Easterbrook explores why our society experiences more conveniences, material possessions, and better living standards than previous generations and yet often longs for the "good old days." He observes that "the fundamental reason so many Western citizens don't seem pleased with their lot, or even to believe their lives are mainly favored, is the discontinuity between prosperity and happiness."²

The book draws upon three decades of wide-ranging research and thinking and provides some thought-provoking suggestions about how to bring a positive mindset into our 21st-century living. Easterbrook says, "Society is undergoing a fundamental shift from 'material want' to 'meaning want.'³ The qualities of forgiveness, gratitude, and optimism, often lost sight of in our secular world, are the factors that would turn people from depression to fulfillment and satisfaction.

What does all this have to do with prayer?

The qualities that we need in order to feel fulfilled are God's gifts to us when we maintain a close connection with Him in prayer. In other words, by spending time with God, we become like Him.

Let's look at gratitude and being thankful.

The apostle Paul underwent some of life's most difficult circumstances and trials. Yet his writings reveal he had a mindset and spirit of thanksgiving. In 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 he says, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (NKJV).

How can we possess an attitude of gratitude and thankfulness amid trials, difficulties, and constant exposure to bad news in the media? Prayer is key. It takes time for God to excise the spirit of selfishness and worldliness from our hearts. When we give God quality time each day, He uses it to build into our lives those qualities of gratitude, generosity, and forgiveness that honour Him and bless others.

One of the marvellous transformations in the natural world is the metamorphosis of a caterpillar becoming a butterfly. It may take from a month to a year, depending on the type of butterfly, to make the change. However, the caterpillar spends a significant portion of that time in its cocoon. God needs cocooning time with us to enable the divine graces to transform our nature. He does not generally have a number of "months" to accomplish the transformation in a linear process, but He can use the quality times we spend with Him each day to fashion attributes such as gratitude into our characters.

Butterflies delight people with their beauty; Christians who possess God's characteristics bless the world and add joy to their own lives.

Gregg Easterbrook's book was not written to advocate Christianity and prayer, although he does allude to their benefit. He talks about how attitude changes can change our world for the better, and then, cooperatively, we can help change the rest of the world through compassion, generosity, and grace. Given the trends in our world toward violence- and fear-based rule, it is now critical that an avalanche of Christian grace is manifested in our world to help people realize that living for God is best.

Let us make daily prayer a priority so that God's qualities, such as grace, gratitude, and generosity, may bless the world, honour our God, and bring joy to our own hearts. ■

Donald Corkum is prayer ministries coordinator for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada and church planting coordinator for the Alberta Conference.

¹ New York, NY: Random House, 2003.

² 94.

³ xix.



barry's

blog

Freedom,
religious freedom,
runs both ways."

Religious Grandparents Must Respect the Right of the Parents

Judge E. M. Ritchie, a provincial court judge in British Columbia, ruled with the wisdom of Solomon when she passed judgment in the case of grandparents who insisted on taking their granddaughter to church against the wishes of the child's mother.¹ Ritchie ruled that the grandparents must respect the decision of the child's mother and not impose their religious beliefs on the child.

No doubt, the result is very difficult for the grandparents to accept. Every religious parent I know wishes to pass one's faith on to their children as well as their children's children. It is natural. The Bible says, "Children's children are a crown to the aged," (Prov. 17:6, NIV). And those of us who grew up in the Christian church often heard the following direction to parents:

And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them

diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deut. 6:6-9, NKJV)

Our heart's desire is that not only our children but also our grandchildren and great-grandchildren experience our faith and pass it on. Rather than motivated by religious pride, we are motivated by love for our offspring; we simply have a deep desire for our children to live life to the full and to spend eternity with the Lord.

However, such religious passion has to be subject to the desires of the parents of the child. Western

democracies have long held that parents are properly placed to determine what religious training is in the best interests of the child. The state and all others who are not parents have no place to interfere with that sacred responsibility.

Family configurations today have complicated the normal process of passing on the faith, as this case illustrates. The grandparents did not know of their grandchild until around the time she was born. Their son informed them that he had fathered a child but did not tell them who the mother was. The grandparents had to search on their own to find the mother and child. Three weeks after the girl's birth, they introduced themselves. The father in this case has no custody and does not pay child support. However, the paternal grandparents desired that their granddaughter be considered part of their family. They often babysat and had her stay at their home. On Sundays they took the girl with them to their Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall for worship.

A dispute over religion arose. The grandmother, who the court said was "a well-meaning, determined grandmother with strong views about what she wants and what she feels is best" for her granddaughter, desired to take the child to church. She and her husband took their infant grandchild to church without permission, which the girl's mother tolerated at the time. However, she informed them later that she no longer found it acceptable. The grandparents ignored the mother's request. The mother then decided that they could no longer have the child overnight. But the grandparents did not honour that direction; they took the child yet again. Finally, the mother decided they could only visit the girl at her house in the mother's presence.

Judge Ritchie noted in her ruling that the girl's mother is responsible for looking after the girl's best interests, including in religious matters. It was not for the court to interfere with her choice unless the choice was not in the child's best interest. The grandparents have to respect and not undermine the mother's decision.

Judge Ritchie reasoned as follows: "Balancing all of the factors set out, and having considered all of the evidence presented, I am concerned that the [grandparents'] demonstrated inability to respect and comply with [the mother's] decisions on religion will continue to cause conflict. It is not in [the child's] best interests to be exposed to that conflict."

Ritchie noted that "many people with strongly held religious views ... do not discuss those views in front of others, and specifically not in front of other people's children." In this case the grandparents "do not appear to be capable of not exposing [their grandchild] to their religious beliefs." Until they could show the court or the mother that they can respect the mother's decisions on religion, their time with the child would have to be supervised and limited.

That was a reasonable decision. One can sympathize with these "well-meaning" people who desire to pass on their faith to their progeny. Freedom, religious freedom, runs both ways. I have the freedom to live my life in accordance with my faith and the freedom to teach such faith to my children. However, there comes a time when my children have to make the faith their own. They, in turn, decide what will or will not be taught to their children. As a grandparent, all I can do is watch and pray. This will be difficult if the faith is not actively passed on. However, as grandparents we must be willing to allow the Holy Spirit to work in His time in such matters. The greatest witness to one's faith is living a life of love that Christ modelled.

The principle at stake here is freedom of choice, which is universal. All people are free to choose for themselves what they make of the metaphysical realities. The grand questions—Who are we? To whom do we owe allegiance? What is the purpose of life? These questions occupy our search for meaning and understanding. Religion, for many of us, answers these fundamental questions. As Christians, we seek the truth of God and His requirements as contained in the Scriptures. This ancient faith has been passed on from generation to generation and we hold them to be true today as they were 2,000 years ago.

Judge Ritchie's judgment continues the principle of freedom to choose one's religion without fear or hindrance. A parent gets that choice in our law. That is not inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture when it says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6). The parent is to train the child. The grandparent is to work in co-operation with the parent. ■

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

1 A.R. and B.R. v. M.W. and L.R., 2015 BCPC 285, *The Canadian Legal Information Institute* (CanLII), <http://canlii.ca/t/glnrj>, accessed Oct. 22, 2015.

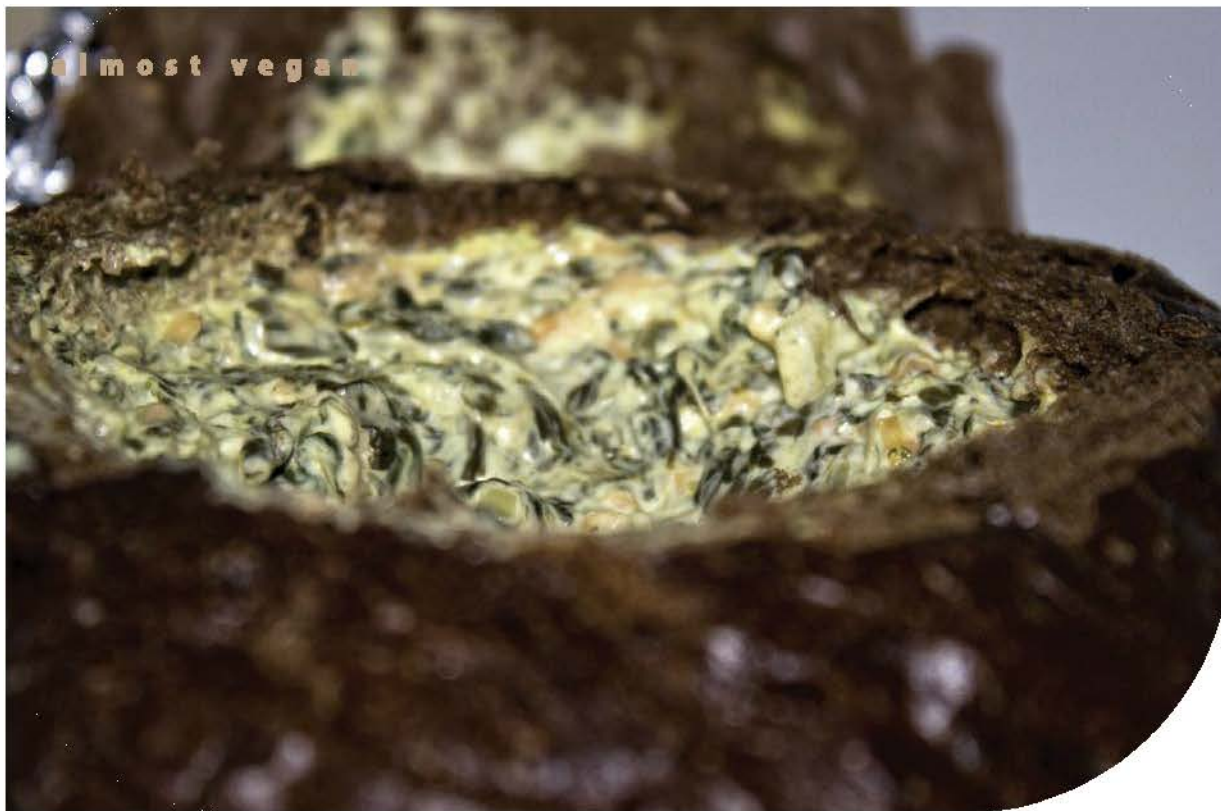


Photo: Benjamin Chant

Almost vegan

Christmas is a time of year that often has us setting aside healthy eating for comfort food and treats. While healthy is always a goal, it is not always easy—or even possible—when you attend parties and family gatherings. But there are still ways to sneak healthier food into the mix. While not something you would eat all the time, this dish is still a healthier alternative to the saturated-fat-laden cheese snacks often found at parties.

With Christmas around the corner, there are often many events to attend and dishes to figure out and bring. We find that this is a great party dish; the recipe makes enough to share with a crowd and is always one that everyone enjoys. ■

Keith and Cheryl Chant, along with their son Ben, enjoy baking, cooking, and experimenting with flavours and recipes.

Spinach Dip and Loaf

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 loaf pumpernickel bread
- 1 pound fresh spinach leaves, steamed
- 2 containers (227 grams each) Tofutti Better Than Cream Cheese
- 1 cup Daiya Cheddar-Style Shreds
- 1 cup Vegemaise (vegan mayonnaise)
- 1 teaspoon dill weed
- ¼ cup diced onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- black pepper and salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Mix all the ingredients, except bread.
- Chill the dip until ready to put into the loaf.
- Cut off the top from the round loaf.
- Remove the top, then scoop out the bread from inside, leaving a shell of about one inch thick.
- Fill the shell with the dip.
- Close the bread with the round top, wrap with foil, and bake at 325°F for two hours.
- Serve on a platter with the scooped-out bread and crackers for dipping.

What a Day That Will Be



Cassie Sautter

Paul and Cassie (Gill) Sautter have listened to Voice of Adventist Radio (VOAR) since they started coming to Newfoundland, in 2002. Cassie was born on Pinchard's Island. She graduated from the Grace Hospital in 1958. Like so many young Newfoundland women, she met and married an American serviceman. Paul and Cassie made Southern California home. They were married for 53 and a half years.

Recently, we were saddened to hear that Cassie passed away. Memorial services were held in California and Newfoundland. Paul kindly explained how VOAR had helped with the memorial service. He said, "Mona, Cassie's sister, asked her granddaughter and grandson to sing at the service. One Saturday, after your Sounds of Worship church service, you played 'What a Day That Will Be,' and I said to myself, 'That's it! That's what I'd like them to sing.' They sang it beautifully."

In August, Paul dropped by to give his donation. Many years ago, as a boy, he started donating to overseas Christian radio broadcasting with money he earned from his paper route.

As he signed his cheque, we smiled; this American is still supporting overseas Christian broadcasting.

We were not the first Adventists they met. Cassie worked as a nurse practitioner with Doctors Ken and Richard Hart through an outreach program at Loma Linda called the Social Action Community Health Centre.

We are so thankful not only that we heard Paul and Cassie's story but also that God allowed us to step into it and take part in it. Their gifts have become a part of our 85-year legacy that God has multiplied into eternity. ■

Sherry Griffin is the station manager at VOAR.



Rebecca Johnson

ON THE
ROAD WITH

Becky AT THE PARIS AND BRANTFORD
CHURCHES IN ONTARIO

Why do you want to go to heaven?

Sophie Mandzuk: To meet Jesus, who died for me.

William T. Jamison: To have all my questions answered.

Patricia Kennedy: The most important of all is to be with Jesus, my Saviour and forever friend. Then, to live with all the believers and all my loved ones who accepted Jesus.

Veronka: I want to go to heaven because I will get to see Jesus.





Addison's Tummy

"Mommy, I have to share Jesus with someone or I'm gonna burst!"

Eight-year-old Addison was out shopping for clothes with her mother when she got a funny feeling in her stomach. It was not pain. It was not hunger. It was something ... different. And it wouldn't quit. Finally, Addison turned to her mother and said, "Mommy, I want to share Jesus with somebody."

Addison's mother looked at her, a little surprised, then searched through her purse to see if she had any GLOW tracts. She did not, but she knew there were some in the car. So when she and Addison returned to the car a little later, she got some tracts for Addison to use.

The funny feeling in Addison's stomach only intensified. By the time she and her mother came to the next store, Addison said, "Mommy, I have to share Jesus with someone or I'm gonna burst!" But when Addison's mother pointed out the dressing room attendant, Addison said, "No, she's not the one."

At the checkout line Addison's mother asked if any of the cashiers were the one with whom she wanted to share Jesus. Addison looked. There were several women cashiers and one man, and Addison began to pray that God would send her to one of the women. But God, it seemed, had other ideas. Their turn came, the Number 5 flashed on the screen in the lineup, and it was the checkout number at which the male cashier happened to be standing.

Oh no! Addison thought, but she went bravely with her mother. When everything was finished, the cashier asked, "Is there anything else I can help you with?"

"Yes," said Addison's mother. "My daughter has something she wants to share with you," Addison, clutching a tract, took a deep breath, swallowed hard, and said, "I believe in Jesus, and I have this little GLOW tract that I want to share with you. I hope you like it." With that, Addison stretched out her hand and gave the man the tract "A Gift for You."

Until this moment there had been a steady buzz of chatter from the clerks and the customers waiting in line, but suddenly, everything was still and quiet as all eyes turned to the little girl at the counter.

"Do you believe in Jesus?" Addison asked the man.

"I pray," he answered.

"Are you a Christian?" Addison asked.

"Half," the man answered. Then he said to her, "Will you please write your name on the tract? I want to pray for you." Addison did, then her mother, looking at the man's name tag said, "We'll pray for you too, Wali."

With that, Addison and her mother said goodbye and left as everyone quietly looked on.

The strange feeling in Addison's tummy vanished. Now she felt joy, happiness, and excitement because she had shared Jesus.

Romans 10:13-15 says that God sends preachers to save people. But it also explains who a preacher is: anyone who shares the good news of the gospel. That means a preacher can be a little child, an aging adult, and anyone in between. The preacher of Romans is not just your pastor; it's you!

Every day the Spirit of God sends preachers. He calls. He whispers. He pleads with us to share Jesus with others. When that call comes, what will you do? Eight-year-old Addison, filled with the love of Jesus, said yes when she recognized His call. Will you? ■

The Near North Miracle



Courtney Hara, *teacher* and *back row left*, and teacher, Janelle Mutya (*back row right*), with students of Near North Adventist Christian School.

“MIRACULOUS” AND “FORMATIVE” are words that most aptly describe the establishment of the school in Barrie, Ont.

The idea of a church school was birthed in our hearts and minds by the quiet promptings of the Holy Spirit. Over the span of the last 10 years, the vision had gone through dry spells as well as periods of great vitality and excitement. Then, in September 2014, a survey indicated that the congregation was committed to the establishment of a school.

As the idea gained momentum, our church voted to pursue the school feasibility study as required by the Ontario Conference. Our previous attempt had failed two years earlier. The requirements were daunting: financial plan, fundraising, firm commitment from parents. We had so much to do, and we had to do it all within just a few months; we did not know where to start. The most vexing obstacle was the zoning bylaw of the city, which revealed that our church property would not allow for a school. A re-zoning application would cost more than \$20,000, and there would be no guarantee of approval. My predominant thought was that it would take a miracle to overcome the seemingly overwhelming challenges. Yet our loving Creator impressed me that He would work it out for us.

On Feb. 28, 2015, we presented the feasibility report with its sober financial findings, along with our recommendation to rent a space for a school. Our church voted to rent and start a school for September 2015. We were now able to submit an application to the conference for approval with the caveat of finding an appropriate place to house the school.

After contacting and meeting with five different real estate agents and making several visits to the city of Barrie, not even one space, unit, or building met the city’s zoning requirements for a school. After nearly three months of searching, we were still unsuccessful. As Education secretary, I was tasked with the

job of finding a suitable property for the school, and I poured my heart into the search. In my frustration I cried out to the Lord. Praise Him for hearing my prayer and those of the committee and the entire church. Praise God for the large faith and commitment of our Ontario Conference education superintendent, Don McIntyre, in supporting and providing his guidance during this whole process. As a result, God worked the most faith-building miracle thus far in our school-starting journey.

One day a former member of our church showed up on my business doorstep and informed me of a space that had become available when another school relocated. I went to see the place, and it seemed just the right size and in the right location. Hope welled up in my heart as I felt the Lord’s hand working for us. The church secured the location.

It was May, and we were hoping to open the school in September. Our pastor, seeing the great needs before us and the shortness of time, canvassed the church board to select a few more members to be a part of our committee to help finish the work.

It was now the end of June, and we had no teacher. Without a teacher, there can be no school. The conference advertised the position, and prayers were poured out for the right candidate. After interviewing five excellent candidates, it became clear that God had chosen one of them, Miss Janelle Mutya, who has become known as our “miracle teacher.” The ease and the grace with which she runs the school are beyond anything we have expected.

Today, a few weeks since the start of the new school year, the Near North Adventist Christian School, as it was named, has 11 happy students. The school was, by all means, a miraculous work of the Lord. It was also most educational for the adults involved in the process. It was indeed a great lesson in faith.

The experience was also formative in the fullest sense of the word. During the process of setting up a church school for our children, the Lord revealed the true meaning of the broad scope and high aim of education Ellen White spoke of in her book *Education*, where she talks about education not being confined to children in a school or in courses of study; rather, true education is a lifelong walk with the Lord in faith.¹

We expect more miracles to continue at our school. In fact, we need them! We invite you to be a part of this beautiful journey by your prayers and your support. The potential is great, the demands are daunting, and yet it presents an opportunity to be one of the largest evangelistic efforts in the near north. By educating children and families to follow Jesus, we may witness the greatest miracle of all: transformed people who live for Him. ■

Vesna Cestarc is a member of the Barrie Seventh-day Adventist Church. She is the education leader in her church and a firm believer in Adventist Christian education.

¹Ellen G. White, *Education*, p. 13.

Embrace



The man's options, however few they were, were running out. He repeated that he had to get to Chilliwack, saying again, "You can't leave me here."

A couple of years ago I did something called A Dead a Day in December, and last year something called 12 Days of Giving. I guess it was a personal effort to be more aware of opportunities to be generous (even if just in spirit) and to positively respond to these opportunities in ways I perhaps do not (but should) normally: in the Spirit of Christmas, the season of giving.

I shared some of those encounters on Facebook. I did not do it to brag or be Pharisaical; I simply wished to inspire others to do the same. I was hoping others would report their encounters too. Maybe it would start a groundswell of giving. I, for one, am inspired when I read the accounts of others, and I was getting some positive feedback and encouragement as well.

When Christmas 2014 rolled around, I began wondering what to do. What to call it? When to start? But before I figured out all the answers, it started.

Our new assistant cook at Camp Hope is Vincent Enriquez. Vincent is a really great individual, and we are blessed to have him on our team at the camp. Currently, Vincent still lives in Prince George (seven hours away on good roads), travelling back and forth to the camp for busy times. On wintery roads, this commute can send chills down the back of the most seasoned driver. Vincent's Filipino upbringing did nothing to prepare him for winter driving, so on occasion he travels by Greyhound bus between home and the camp.

Vincent and his wife, Emily, had just had their first baby a couple months prior, and it was especially difficult for him to be away from home. After a busy fall season, he was missing his family so much that he decided he needed to go home. Now, on this day, with our rental groups gone and deep cleaning done, he had our blessing to leave. The plan was to put him on the late-night 9:35 p.m. bus from Abbotsford to Prince George.

Vincent holding a pre-purchased ticket in his hand, we pulled into the bus depot at about 9:25 p.m. The depot had closed at 8 p.m., and there were only a few

people waiting outside. A few more people were waiting in vehicles, just as we were, and I noticed two men standing right where the bus would pull in and park. Everyone there was intending to board the bus, I assumed.

In a few short minutes the bus pulled in. We grabbed Vincent's luggage and walked over to the bus together. A couple of people may have disembarked, and then the driver also got off and started processing the tickets of boarding passengers. He was wearing a high-visibility vest and doing the checking in with his smartphone. One could tell he had done this many times before, as he was efficient and quick. It soon became obvious that the only ones getting on the Prince George-bound bus were Vincent and the two men.

The two men were the first to start getting checked in. The first man completed check-in and boarded the bus. The other fellow was about 6 feet 2 inches, dressed fairly nicely, with a patch on his coat that said something akin to "Canadian Messenger." I recall wondering very briefly if it had anything to do with the *Canadian Advertiser Messenger*. He also had a boody on; it was fairly chilly that night! His shoes were black leather with a bit of a shine to them, and he had a carry-on bag and driving gloves, the kind that expose all the fingers at the knuckle. He looked like the proverbial "man in black," and I confess, in my mind I stereotyped him as a bit of a "tough guy."

Initially, I did not pay much attention to his verbal interaction with the bus driver but soon noticed there seemed to be a problem. Apparently, he did not have a printed ticket, only some kind of confirmation number. Whatever it was, it was not processing. The driver phoned into an office somewhere and verbally checked the number with someone on the other end. The man in black had a flip phone with the number on it, and the driver was reading the number off his screen.

Word came back that this number had expired. They checked it again, carefully going over the same number. Same results. The man paused in stunned silence. The driver did not say explicitly that it was no longer valid; he did not have to. It became painfully obvious that the



What giving does for us, what it does inside for the heart, is immeasurable.

bus driver was not going to let this man ride, despite the man's surprise and incredulity as to what just happened.

The driver then turned his attention to my friend Vincent, took his ticket, and proceeded to check him in.

The man in black continued to stand there in shock, for it seemed he had really been counting on this bus ride.

He piped up, "But my girlfriend gave that number to me. It has to be good." While the sentimentality of that pronouncement might have warmed the hearts of many, it did not touch the heart of the driver, and it got the man no closer to getting on the bus. He said, "I have to get to Chilliwack. You can't leave me here; I have no other way of getting there."

All along I had assumed he, too, was going to Prince George, but it turned out he was actually just going to a neighbouring town, 25 minutes away.

Usually, once Vincent gets on the bus, my typical bus protocol would be to stand there a minute or so longer until I see that Vincent is seated. If I see him again through the window, I wave; if not, I turn and leave. But this time I somehow needed to see how this drama would unfold, and I determined to hang around. Vincent and I said our goodbyes, embraced briefly in a festive yet manly hug, wished each other a merry Christmas, and then he disappeared up the steps into the bus.

The man in black, who apparently had no money, now asked if he could pay when he got to Chilliwack, but the driver said no and would not budge. The man's options, however few they were, were running out. He repeated that he had to get to Chilliwack, saying again, "You can't leave me here."

By now I thought that I should get involved and covertly found some cash in my pocket, I asked the driver how much a ticket to Chilliwack would be, and he told me it was \$7.30.

Only that much, I thought, *all this over \$7.30!* I pulled two fives out of my pocket that I had so secretly

found and handed them to the bus driver. He took the money, but he had trouble making exact change and thus drew the attention of the man in black. I was just in the process of turning to him to tell him, "Merry Christmas! Pay it forward to someone this season..." when he embraced me in a huge, enveloping hug. It was not just a bear hug; it was a grizzly bear hug.

This was not your ordinary, everyday hug. In fact, I cannot recall the last time I have had one like that. It lingered for five to seven seconds—you know, the kind that might make guys uncomfortable. But while this big man in black hugged me, his breaking, cracking voice was saying, "Thank you, thank you, thank you." It would have felt quite awkward if it had not been one of the most sincere hugs I had ever received.

He pulled back, and our eyes met. Grateful eyes, greatly relieved eyes, sincere eyes. His gratitude was so obvious that he need not have said a word, not one. We shook hands, my bare hand in his gloved hand. It was a very strong, firm handshake. It, too, said thank you.

I was not really sure what else to say, so I quickly muttered, "Merry Christmas. Pass it on to someone," and turned and walked back to my car. Even after I got home that night, I could still smell his after shave or cologne on my sweater. Nothing obnoxious or repulsive, just lingering evidence of our embrace.

It is hard to really describe the feeling of such an experience, but it felt good. It warmed my heart and gave me a glow inside. While it may seem trivial—at a small expense of \$7.30—it is not about the money. It is so much more than the dollar value. That situation with the man in black reminded me that people and relationships are so valuable. Maybe that is why the Bible says it is better to give than to receive. What giving does for us, what it does inside for the heart, is immeasurable.

So I guess, ready or not, here we go again into another December. Yes, we should be giving all year round, but there is something extra special about giving at Christmastime.

So what can you give this Christmas? Your time? Your musical ability? Your hospitality? Your creativity? Your undivided attention? Your forgiveness? Let us make an effort this holiday season to be *generous*, and remember that generosity comes in many forms, some of which cost nothing at all. ■



Bill Gerber is the camp director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in British Columbia.

Inspired to start your own groundswell of giving?

Here are some ideas to help you get started. Involve your children, grandchildren, Bible study group, church community, neighbours, or co-workers. You get the idea!

Remember, **A Season of Giving** does not have to be expensive or extravagant. It does not even have to be a single season. It can be a thousand small gestures and kind words that add up to a life of service. Christmas is a good time to start because people generally tend to be more open to giving and receiving at this time of year, but keep it going for as long as you can!

- ❁ **Start small.** Do you know your neighbour? Start with a smile and a friendly greeting. Evangelism is more effective when shared with someone with whom you have already established a relationship. Cost: Free.
- ❁ **Care packages.** Fill Christmas stockings or Ziploc bags with personal care items, such as soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, toque, gloves, warm socks, granola or energy bars, a restaurant gift card, or a bottle of water. Keep them in your car to hand out when you are stopped at a red light. Or better yet, get out of your car and walk around the downtown core to hand them out in person. Cost: \$3+ per bag.
- ❁ **Sweet treats.** Bake a batch of cookies or treats to share with shut-ins or the elderly in a care facility. This time of year can be particularly lonely for those who do not receive visits from family. A few minutes of fellowship often mean more than the treats themselves. Cost: \$5+ per batch.
- ❁ **Brighten someone's day.** Make a point of sharing compliments with people around you, particularly those with whom you might not connect, such as your mail delivery person, a store cashier, or public servants. Cost: Free.
- ❁ **Pay it forward.** Next time you are grabbing a drink from your local coffee shop, pay for the person

behind you in line and encourage them to pay it forward. Not only will you bless the next patron, but it will also bring a smile to the barista's face each time someone else pays it forward. Cost: \$1+.

- ❁ **Send cheer.** Pick up a box of Christmas cards and write uplifting thoughts or Bible verses. Mail them to people who need encouraging—perhaps someone you have not spoken to in a while or even an inmate in a Canadian prison (see www.prisonfellowship.ca/pen-pal/ or www.canadianinmatesconnect.com). Cost: \$2 each (card plus postage).
- ❁ **Break a sweat.** If you are young or energetic, consider sharing your strength. Shovel a driveway. Carry groceries. Collect runaway shopping carts in store parking lots. Cost: Free.
- ❁ **It stinks to work on Christmas Eve.** Remember that not everyone gets to enjoy Christmas at home. Hospitals, police and fire stations, even convenience stores stay open 365 days a year. Why not bring employees a homemade baked good and thank them for their service? Cost: \$5+ per batch.
- ❁ **Tape it up.** As shoppers come out of stores with gifts in hand, offer them a roll of adhesive tape for wrapping their presents. You can also attach a small tag or GLOW tract to brighten their day and make a connection to your church or ministry. Cost: \$1+ per roll.
- ❁ **Mind the children.** It can be difficult for parents to find the time to go Christmas shopping (or run any other kind of errand!) with small children afoot. Offer a childcare service to allow a couple of hours of kid-free time. You do not have to set up a whole daycare for 30 children; try making the offer to one family at a time to keep it manageable for yourself. Cost: Free.

Be sure to come back and share your stories of giving. We would love to feature it in next year's *Canadian Adventist Messenger* December Issue! Send your stories and photos to messenger@adventist.ca.

Aimee Perez is a staff writer for Canadian Adventist Messenger

A Season of Giving





Kenyon, Kyle, Candy, and Lance Flash. The Flashes have had their children in Christian education since Junior kindergarten.

Kingsway College

"a great place to work"

The exercise that teaches the hand to be useful and trains the young to bear their share of life's burdens gives physical strength and develops every faculty. All should find something to do that will be beneficial to themselves and helpful to others. God appointed work as a blessing, and only the diligent worker finds the true glory and joy of life.—Ellen G. White, Counsels on Education, p. 166

AS PARENTS, WE BELIEVE THAT A WORK PROGRAM AT A SCHOOL IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE. When we were looking at high school options for our children, Kenyon and Kyle Flash, one factor that interested us was the Kingsway College School Year Work Program, more commonly known as simply "the work program." This program was established at Kingsway at the school's inception in 1903. The program provides each student an opportunity to work on campus and helps develop cooperation, resourcefulness, knowledge, and ownership. Job opportu-

nities are diverse, and a student can choose to work in various jobs such as janitorial, administrative, cafeteria, maintenance, or making wood furniture at the College Woodwork.

Given that Kingsway offers our children an opportunity to help pay their own school expenses through the work program, we embraced this model. The boys work five hours a week, which is the maximum for community students (students living off campus), and the earnings from the work program go directly toward their tuition. In addition to funds provided by the boys' work and our contribution as

parents, our local church (Ajax Seventh-day Adventist Community Church) provides additional assistance. The children's financial responsibility of paying a percentage of the overall costs means they have a tangible stake in their education and future.

Our youth must be prepared to strive for academic excellence, for spiritual growth, and to make a meaningful contribution to our society. It can be very difficult for a student to land a summer job, but Kingsway College's work program provides a unique opportunity for our children to have four years of work experience and history after high school to put on their resumé. This is critical, as potential employers prefer candidates with experience. We explained this to our children and how it will give them an advantage over peers who do not have the same experience and skills. Learning to successfully balance work and school is also invaluable in helping them build time management skills.

We believe this experience will greatly aid them in transitioning to adulthood. They will acquire transferable skills in the work program, such as punctuality, responsibility, accountability, and ownership—all life skills learned by forming good work habits.

Currently, the work program is structured so that older students are offered more demanding jobs in College Woodwork or in the maintenance department. These positions offer hands-on technical/trade training. Each student's work supervisor can also provide a reference, which is extremely beneficial as he or she continues in education and career. We remind our children that having job references plays such a critical role in the hiring process.

As parents, we feel privileged that Kenyon and Kyle have been afforded this opportunity to be a part of Kingsway College Work Program. It is our hope that each of them will make the most of this journey through high school, and we know that if they do, each will have a successful transition from adolescence to adulthood. We are hoping that they see the goodness of our Lord through this experience. ■

Candy Flash is mother to students Kenyon and Kyle, and writes from Ajax, Ont.

Jump in Enrolment Brings New Challenges

AT MAMAWI ATOSKETAN NATIVE SCHOOL (MANS) the 2015/2016 school year started with four new portable classrooms as an interim solution to an ever-increasing demand for student seats: 201 students enrolled (a 15 percent increase since last year), and we have a waiting list. As with all growth, there are some "growing pains."

Until The Bridge Campaign is completed and the new school building can be constructed, the high school will be "portable," but the classroom experience and teacher dedication are still solid.

Holly Kay, who moved into the high school section this fall from Grade 5,* demonstrates what it takes to care enough to work and model Christ in the classrooms of Canada's growing mission school.

Dear Student,

I know you are looking at me with the entire anger your body can manage. I know you are seething because I do not allow you to treat me like a verbal punching bag. Do you know why?

I do not allow you to swear at me, because I need to show you that it's OK to require people to treat you well.

I do not allow you to treat me horribly, because I need you to know what it looks like for someone to stand up for oneself, which may one day give you the courage to do the same.

I do not allow you to scream at me, because I need you to see that it's not right for a person to be treated that way.

I am not OK with your choice to ignore me, because I need you to see that it's OK to say, "I am worth listening to."

I am not OK with you walking past me when I say "Hello," because I want to show you that you have a voice and that you need to make sure it's being heard.

I am not OK with you putting your head down when I am trying to speak to you, because I need you to hear me when I say, "You need to stand up and be heard."

I know that when you disrespect me, all you see is me in your face, but I'm not just standing up for myself.

I am standing up for you.

I stand so you can see what it looks like.

I stand so you can see that those who require respect from others can be people to emulate.

I stand so I can hold your spot until you are ready to take it.

So you can try and ignore me; I will require you to hear me.

You can try and push me; I will require you to stand up.

You can try and get me out of your face; I will require you to see me.

You can try and remove me, but I'm committed to saving your spot for you.

You will not move me. Because I am standing until you learn how to.

Sincerely,

Your teacher, Ms. Kay ■

Lynn McDowell is director of Planned Giving, Alberta Conference, and campaign manager of The Bridge Campaign to build a high school building at Mamawi Atosketan Native School.



Photo: Darlene Reinche

Mamawi Atosketan Native School is the first stop for two new portables, purchased by the Alberta Conference for use around the province. Arriving in August, the portables will move on to other conference ministries when the recently launched Bridge Campaign and the high school building are completed. To receive updates on the progress of the campaign, go to www.mans1.ca/bridge-campaign.

(Right) Students enjoy MANS's "welcome back" supper with their families.



*See the June 2015 Messenger for Holly's reflections on being a MANS teacher.

Parkview Profiles

by Katelyn Ruiz

"Whether it's sports, education, music, or a religious focus, PAA has all of those—and more—to offer."

Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA) has a worldwide family of alumni and Christian supporters who believe in the importance and influence of Adventist education. Often these relatives reunite with the campus as they bring their own children to experience the same learning environment that they once enjoyed. This is true of Daniel Self, whose father, Dean, is a graduate of PAA and whose mother, Suzann, now teaches in the Alberta Conference.

"I have always known I was going to come to PAA," the Grade 11 student says. "When I was younger, my parents always talked about PAA as the school I would attend. My dad really liked it when he came to PAA, and he still has many friends from his time here at school. I wanted to come here too."

Having enjoyed his first year of high school at PAA, Daniel is well on his way to making the same types of memories and connections that will bring him back to this campus for years to come.

At PAA Daniel has developed his personal abilities on many different fronts; he joined the Panthers in basketball, volleyball, flag football, and soccer while working as a lifeguard on campus. He is also a diligent student who strives to understand difficult content and succeeds academically. Daniel also serves on his class executive committee for student government and enjoys connecting with others through challenging debates and spiritual conversations. All these areas of engagement make Daniel's experience well rounded and complete.

"It doesn't matter what you like or want out of your high school education," Daniel says, "I can guarantee that PAA will have this for you. Whether it's sports, education, music, or a religious focus, PAA has all of those—and more—to offer."

PAA's programming is made possible thanks to campus resources and facilities, as well as the commitment of Adventist teachers. Daniel acknowledges PAA's committed staff as he shares, "I've never seen a school where they've had the teachers available on demand. The after-school time with teachers is something that most high schools wouldn't have, and the teachers here are so highly educated. Quite a few of PAA's teachers were the valedictorians of their own classes, and many now have or are getting their master's degrees. They're really good here."



Daniel Self

Beyond the core academics, there are many more ways for students to challenge themselves at PAA. For Daniel, the schedule allows him to experience life outside of his comfort zone: "I really enjoyed the options classes even though I wasn't particularly good at them. Welding and construction are not my strengths, and I had to work hard, but I enjoyed it because I didn't know very much about it to start. Teachers like Mr. Spens, who is great at photography, taught me a great deal. At PAA you can always get better at something."

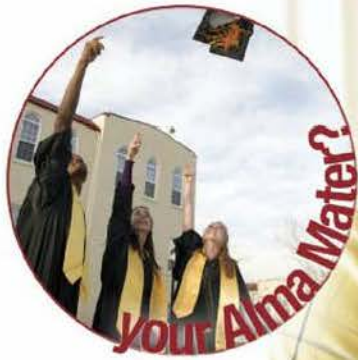
Coming from a family committed to growing together as Christians, Daniel instantly recognized the value of PAA's unique Adventist approach. He speaks of that influence, saying, "I like the spiritual aspect here. There are more people who believe what I believe. We do church together, chapels together, and it's almost like having an extended family, because you see one another everywhere you go."

PAA has started the second year of community-building worships, which means that the student body is divided into small groups (called "family groups") among all the teaching staff. For example, Daniel's family group is made of up eight students who come together from a variety of backgrounds, including Nigeria, Hong Kong, the United States, and Canadian First Nations.

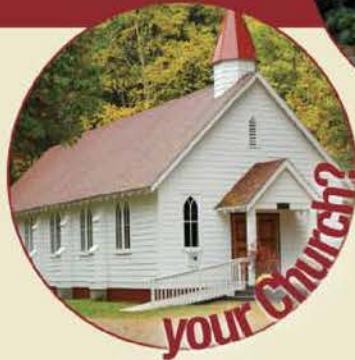
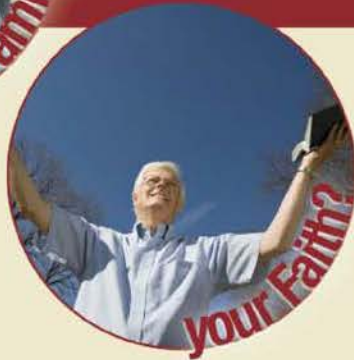
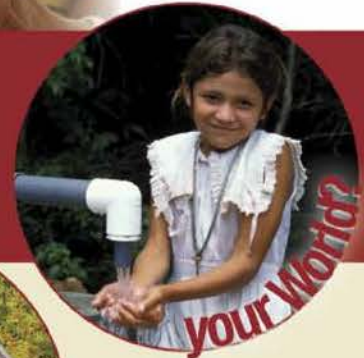
"I really love my family group," Daniel says. "We're so diverse but have a lot of fun together."

Family connections will always be important to Daniel, and PAA has given him more people to care for and support him as he grows. ■

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



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Charles Spurgeon

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Maritime

Maritime Women's Retreat



(Left to Right) Brigitte Zebalun, Cathy Ross, and Cindy Greenwood

Upon arrival, the registrants of the women's retreat at Pugwash in September were greeted in a way they had not expected. Walking through the door into the meeting room, each participant was given a gracious welcome by a lovely maiden (Irene LeBlanc) dressed in a costume reminiscent of Bible times. A tent, beautifully decorated and comfortably appointed, was the focus of the room. Stepping inside, one could easily imagine the nomadic life of some of the Bible characters. Middle-Eastern-inspired costumes were available for those who chose to dress up and have their photo taken. Irene LeBlanc had used her artistic talents to create the costumes and props

and donated them to the event.

This setting provided the perfect atmosphere for the topics our guest speaker, Jo Ann Davidson, professor of theology at Andrews University, presented. Throughout the weekend Jo Ann skillfully led us in a stimulating study about inspiring women of the Bible, then focused on various children featured in Scripture, examining their attributes and faith. A close look at Proverbs 31, a chapter that might prove to be discouraging to some, revealed insights into practical ways we can become wise and make good decisions as we live according to God's ideals. As we went through this chapter, we learned that we can become women of strength

and beauty when we recognize that our source of power is a willing God.

Our guest speaker for Sabbath school was the "Queen of Sheba," aka Claudine Belhomme, who interactively guided the audience through a stimulating and thorough study of Proverbs 9:1-6, 13-18, in first person.

The weekend culminated in Jo Ann's presentation on the greatness of our God, who has plans for us, provides for us, is faithful, and is able to fulfill His promises. She also highlighted God's expectation that we look after His creation and provided practical ways we can do so.

Those of us who attended this delightfully inspiring weekend left refreshed and renewed by the hopeful messages and practical insights we gleaned from our biblical study of these topics.

"The women's retreat was a much-anticipated event, with our gracious Janice Fournier providing delightful surprises and catering to our needs. Dr. Jo Ann Davidson shared the message of God's care for all His creation. We left feeling spiritually refreshed and thankful." This was one of the many comments shared in appreciation of the weekend.

Yet again, it was another well-planned event by Janice and her team for the women of the Maritime Conference! We look forward to coming back next fall, and we encourage all of our women to take advantage of a retreat that is especially designed for the ladies in our conference. ■

—Carolyn Willis, member,
St. George SDA Church

Quebec

A Saturday Night That Changed Our Community Service

It was December 2014. I was in Brazil on vacation and for my sister's wedding. I was missing my friends from church in Brazil, as I had been living in Canada for over six years, so I decided to spend a Sabbath with them. I knew they had been doing great projects in church, but I didn't know that day was going to change my spiritual life forever.

On Friday night we went to a busy avenue and held signs that read, "Wanna talk?" "How was your day?" "Free hugs," to name a few. We spent three hours talking to strangers on the street, giving them attention and speaking about Jesus when they asked why we were doing that.

On Saturday night the church held their service where they usually do: outdoors. That's right, at a park. This way more people felt the urge to look, hear, and even stay.

On Saturday afternoon church members went to a clinic to give spiritual support to recovering drug users.

But it was that Saturday night that really struck me and completely changed my view of the way our church currently does community service.

We drove to a poor neighbourhood in the outskirts of São Paulo to throw a Christmas party for the homeless people and the regular members who attended that church. We brought gifts and food, decorated the front of the church, and patiently waited for the program to start. While I was waiting, I started doing small talk with Siria, a lady who was running after her cute little toddler, Samuel. That conversation made the whole difference.

That church had between 50 to 80 regular homeless attendees. Everything started when, one day, her husband got home for lunch with a car full of homeless people, their cats and dogs, and their dirt and smell. They served lunch for about four homeless people in their own house and let them use their shower. Then they started doing this regularly, until some other church members suggested that they

provide this care at church with the help of all members.

For about 10 years that church has been providing lunch on Sabbath for all the homeless people who show up. They can also use the shower and get clean clothes from there. This couple also gives them free haircuts. The result? Many homeless people are attending church service, participating in Bible studies, and being baptized. We are talking about an underprivileged church sharing with those who have even less.

I decided to replicate the idea in Canada. Our friend Denise, a talented hairstylist, accepted the challenge of offering free haircuts, and the rest of the volunteers would distribute food, personal care products, and warm clothes for our cold Montreal winter.

Since January 2015, we have been going to downtown Montreal once a month to offer material and emotional help to the homeless people we find on the streets. We started giving away socks, then we included other winter gear, food, books, and messages of hope. Our focus is on spending time talking to the people we meet and offering them prayer.

There are not many of us, and realistically, we cannot definitively end poverty in our city, but we can offer a little word of comfort every time we see someone in need. We don't ask ourselves if they deserve help; we simply help them because that's what Jesus asked of us (see Matt. 25:35).

I hope you also have the chance to see God's work being done in a way that touches you and encourages you to start a project in your local community. Remember, all of us have talents, all of us need to serve, and all of us need help, too.

If you ever happen to be in Montreal, drop by and help us in this mission. Our winters are cold, but we have a Brazilian heat in our hearts that will warm you up. ■

— Mirian Perez



Free haircuts are one of the services offered to those in need in downtown Montreal.



Montreal church members offering free lunches to the homeless.

Ontario

Marian Kossovan's Farewell Concert in Windsor Church



Pastor Marian Kossovan gives a farewell concert at Windsor Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Marian Kossovan has been the pastor of the Windsor Seventh-day Adventist Church for almost eight years and has blessed the Windsor churches not only with his vibrant sermons but also with his gift of music, singing with his deep Ukrainian voice.

On Oct. 17, 2015, at 6 p.m., Kossovan put on his last musical concert, entitled "My Spiritual Journey From Ukraine to Canada." He wove his personal testimony into the concert and thanked

God for the privilege of serving as a pastor in various places within Canada.

This is the first time that more than 400 people came to church to attend his concert. There were many non-Adventist people, including pastors from other Christian churches. He made it a memorable evening for all.

Encouraged by Scott Bastien, a long-standing musician in our church, Kossovan sang a variety of songs that he himself had composed with the help of others. He invited Wendell Phipps to sing one of the songs with him, and when he challenged himself to sing a song in the Rwandan language, three of his Rwandan friends sang in the background. He did an excellent job! For his final song, the students of the Windsor Adventist Elementary School joined him.

The people were moved to tears by the way he presented the message. The Windsor church members and visitors who attended the concert will never forget the way the Holy Spirit works on people's hearts.

We, the church members, wish him God's blessings as he goes on to his new appointment to pastor in British Columbia. ■

—Pastor S. P. Chand, Associate, Communication Department, Windsor Seventh-day Adventist Church

British Columbia

Filipino Adventist Churches in British Columbia Aligned for Christ

To God be the glory! With God's help our health evangelism was a success, and we saw commitment and unity from all the churches that were involved.

All six Filipino Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Metro-Vancouver area worked together to accomplish the mission to REACH¹ the thousands of Filipinos in the Lower Mainland with a Christ-centred message of hope and wellness.

For the months of May and June, the Filipino churches worked to put on a series of gospel-oriented health presentations by

Pastor Luis Bon Jr. from the Philippines, entitled A Journey Through Life's Intricacies ... Happiness Unfold! The series culminated in the Filipino Association of Advent Believers in British Columbia (FAABBC) campmeeting held June 26–28, 2015, at the Camp Hope Lodge in Hope, B.C.

As a result of the seminar, many inquired and showed deep interest about Jesus. Also, nine individuals accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour and joined the church through baptism and profession

of faith: Kase Nicole Veniegas, Roberto Mercado, Lucy Mercado, Carlito Urbano, and Thelma Urbano were baptized at the Filipino campmeeting, followed by Remie Delos Reyes and Dominica Bagunu, as well as Felmer Macadangdang and Bob Bailey.

The head elders of five of the churches —Ed Flores from the Vancouver Filipino SDA Church, Theody Malabanan from the Burnaby Fil-Can church, Ben Berto from the Abundant Life Community church, Cris Garzota from the Fraser Val-

ley church, Florante Reyes from the Surrey Filipino church—as well as Ron Carcellar, president of FAABBC formed the organizing committee to get the five Filipino churches and newly organized Bayanihan Canadian group, aligned and working together smoothly. Charles Ed Aguilar, BC Conference communications director, in collaboration with Levi Estores, Jorge Tenorio, and Ken Naidoo, the pastors of the five Filipino churches, provided guidance in the process.

The six Filipino Adventist churches are currently following up with and discipling the seminar attendees. ■



Pastor Luis Iban (left) with some of the new members following their baptism.

¹REACH is an acronym and stands for (1) Revival and transformation, (2) Education for discipleship, (3) Alignment within the church, (4) Community outreach and evangelism, (5) Healthy leadership and management. It is a North American Division-wide initiative that encourages local churches and conferences to live by Christian example and collaborate toward common outreach goals with vision, purpose, and planning. See www.nadadventist.org/article/13/reach-north-america.

Sports Fest a Success



Officers of the Filipino Association of Advent Believers in British Columbia (above) and Filipino Adventist church members met for a day of social gathering and sports.

On Sept. 13, 2015, the 2015/2016 officers of the Filipino Association of Advent Believers in British Columbia (FAABBC) were inducted, and the members of the six Filipino Seventh-day Adventist churches met for a whole day of social gathering and sports at the grounds of Deer Lake School in Burnaby.

This gathering was the joint plan of the officers of the association and the head elders of the six churches. The FAABBC officers were sworn into office by Pastor Charles Ed Aguilar, communications director of the British Columbia and Yukon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The officers are Ronald Carcellar, president; Theody Malabanan, executive vice-president; Matthew Reyes, vice-president for youth and religious affairs; Michael Sarte, vice-president for sports and social affairs; Freddie Bagunu, vice-president for community services; Angie Berto, secretary; Irene Amancio, associate secretary; Ed Flores, treasurer; Roger Magalin, associate treasurer, Vancouver Filipino; Adel Calaguian, associate treasurer, Burnaby

Fil-Can; Josue Lumalang, associate treasurer, Fraser Valley; Edith Velasco, Surrey Filipino; Lunyngning Waro, Abundant Life Community; Mila Talento, auditor; Florante Reyes, PRO; Susan Olit, PRO; Levi Estores, advisor; Charles Ed Aguilar, advisor; Chris Garzota, advisor.

Reaching out to the thousands of Filipinos in British Columbia is one of the primary goals of the association. The association provides the human resources to help in the implementation of various social, civic, and spiritual activities. Apart from the induction of the FAABBC officers, the members enjoyed volleyball, basketball, badminton, and other games. The children had their own games as well.

It is the FAABBC's hope and prayer that with more frequent collaborative outreach events and gatherings, the six Filipino churches will experience more unity, camaraderie and focus on mission. ■

— Angie Berto, Abundant Life Community Company

Church in the Valley Celebrates Grand Opening



Photo: Tina Cooke

After two years of construction, Church in the Valley, a Seventh-day Adventist church, celebrated its grand opening on Sept. 12, 2015. Members of the community, government, dignitaries, and British Columbia Conference leadership participated in the grand opening ceremonies. Over 1,000 people attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony, which included a morning worship service and performances by Trinity Western Choir.

The new 61,400 square-foot building is located in Langley, B.C. This building features a 900-seat worship auditorium, state-of-the-art audio system, commercial kitchen, youth centre, gymnasium, and Acts of Kindness Community Service Centre.

For the congregation, the move is not only a move into a larger facility but also a rebranding for the congregation formerly known as the Aldergrove Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Why did the church choose "Church in the Valley" for its name? David Jamieson, lead pastor of Church in the Valley, explained that the church wants to meet

people in the valleys of their lives. "That's what church is all about," Jamieson said. "When people are going through difficult or troublesome times, they need to know that there is someone who cares and that there is a God who loves them."

Church in the Valley intends to make an impact throughout the Fraser Valley community. "We decided in our hearts and minds that we don't want to be just a church in the building. We want to serve people outside the walls of the church throughout the entire Fraser Valley," said Jamieson.

This was true even nearly 20 years ago when the church was spurred on by visionaries who asked, "If the doors at the Aldergrove Seventh-day Adventist Church were to close, would anyone even notice? Would anyone care? That's when the church began its community outreach ministry, eventually naming it Acts of Kindness (AOK). Since its inception, the ministry, now recognized throughout the Fraser Valley, has helped over 12,500 families.

Leaders of the church continued to dream. At the 2001 vision summit, they imagined outgrowing their current building by continuing to reach out to the community. The church grew as they hoped. In 12 years, Church in the Valley has baptized over 300 members into its family. Additionally, the weekly church attendance increased from 250 to 550.

"Now here we are 14 years later with a new building that is better able to help us serve the community and connect people with Christ," Jamieson said.

The new Acts of Kindness Community Centre, adjoining the main church building on Old Yale Road, provides Church in the Valley, for the first time, a centralized place to do the majority of these ministry activities.

The centre includes a three-bay garage for its CARS ministry and Single Moms' Oil Change; a clothing and food pantry, a meal for the homeless and underprivileged called Welcome Inn, a bedroom suite for guests in need of short-term housing;

and a common space with a kitchen for healthy living classes.

While the new building size, design, and features are impressive, its beginnings and purpose are simple. The initial building design was conceived on a napkin by David Jamieson, Randy Melnychenko, and Lorne Brownmiller on a flight home to British Columbia. Not completely unexpected, this is not the first time a big dream has started on a serviette.

The floor plan of the church centres on community, a clear reflection of Church in the Valley's values and mission.

Daniel R. Jackson, president of the North American Division and main

speaker at Church in the Valley's grand opening, congratulated the church and prayed that God would continue to use Church in the Valley in a mighty way.

At the end of his spirited sermon highlighting the nature, function, and glory of the church, Elder Jackson reminded the audience, "The fact that the building is almost finished does not mean anything other than the work has just begun."

So the dream and mission of Church in the Valley continues.

Testifying to its mission of leading people to Christ, Church in the Valley hosted their 12th annual Acts of Kindness

Charity Golf Classic on Monday, Sept. 14, 2015. The funds raised from this event will provide support for AOK programs in the coming year. To date, the golf tournament has raised over \$500,000 for community outreach.

Next, Church in the Valley wants to raise awareness that, with a larger facility and expanded programs, there are even greater opportunities for individuals to get involved and connect with one another.

We thank God for what He has done in the past, and we look forward to what He will do in the future. ■

—Jenae Williams, Member,
Church in the Valley

One Hour With God

If you had God's undivided attention for one hour, what questions would you ask Him? Would you want to know the winning lottery numbers, or why there is so much violence done in God's name?

The Vernon Seventh-day Adventist Church recently hosted a seminar series with atheist-turned-pastor Ern Brake, who spoke to some of the world's more pressing questions. Ern's goal, while addressing our questions about God, was

to have participants go away having experienced God in a powerful way and come to a better understanding of what the Bible says about this world and the next.

One participant said, "I loved how Pastor Ern took all the Bible texts on a certain subject and showed how the difficult, sometimes contradictory, texts were in fact not contradictory at all—they all meshed together in perfect explanation."

Another long-time Seventh-day Adventist said, "I appreciated how Pastor Ern chooses his words. He is definitely 'seeker friendly' and careful not to use Adventist jargon."

This was a timely and meaningful series and comes highly recommended. ■

—Jill Rhynard,
Communication Secretary
for the Vernon Seventh-day
Adventist Church

Alberta

REACH Calgary Training Seminars a Success

The Calgary Central Seventh-day Adventist Church was buzzing with excitement and anticipation on Sunday, Oct. 18, 2015. The gym was filled with people from the various churches, all eagerly sharing with one another what they had learned over the past five days and their thoughts on how to share it with their communities.

The purpose of these workshops was to give church members the opportunity, ideas, and tools to reach their communities for Christ easily and effectively. These sessions are a vital step in the upcoming *It Is Written* evangelistic meetings to be held here in Calgary in April 2016.

The five-day training event began on Wednesday, Oct. 14 at the Garden Road church. It continued to be hosted at different local churches during the weekend. Throughout this time, Chris Holland, speaker of *It Is Written Canada*, highlighted ways to

find and give Bible studies, how to start small groups, and gave practical ideas on reconnecting with missing members. He clearly showed us the importance of comprehensive evangelism and our responsibility to touch those around us with Christ's compassion.

At the Calgary Central church, the Sabbath and Sunday workshops expanded the choices by adding topics on health. Many speakers from both Canada and the United States were invited to be part of this event. Each focused on different areas of health outreach. We were indeed privileged to have speakers such as Dr. Randy Bivens, chief operating officer of the Weimar Institute in California; Darlene Blaney, nutritional consulting practitioner and the founder and president of Total Health School of Nutrition, and our very own Alberta volunteer health ministries director, Evelyn Cole-Kissinger of *Lifestyle Matters*

in Michigan; Simbarashe Charumbira from Edmonton, Alta.; Dr. Edwin Noyes, author and lecturer from Oregon; and David Fiedler from Enderby, B.C. No matter which workshops were chosen, the theme was the same: you don't have to be a health professional to touch your neighbours with the good news of our Adventist health message.

As someone who attended and enjoyed the workshops, I found it especially encouraging to see how easy it was to use these tools for outreach. In my conversations with church members, I realize that many have a strong desire to do something meaningful in our communities. This weekend was a wonderful start.

So what's next? Calgary Central Church will be putting into practice much of what they learned, by hosting their first community health expo on Jan. 17, 2016. Some of the other potential programs individual members of the various churches are working on include

- Forgive to Live seminars,
- Diabetes Undone and Depression Recovery seminars,
- cooking schools,
- addiction recovery programs,
- small group Bible study,
- and much more.

God is moving among His people, and this special weekend inspired each of us to work together with Him as we REACH Calgary with our message of hope and wholeness.

Check out www.reachcalgary.ca for more information on the specific topics from this seminar. ■

— Joanne Burns, Calgary Central Church



Chris Holland was one of the seminar presenters at five-day training event held at the Garden Road church in Calgary.

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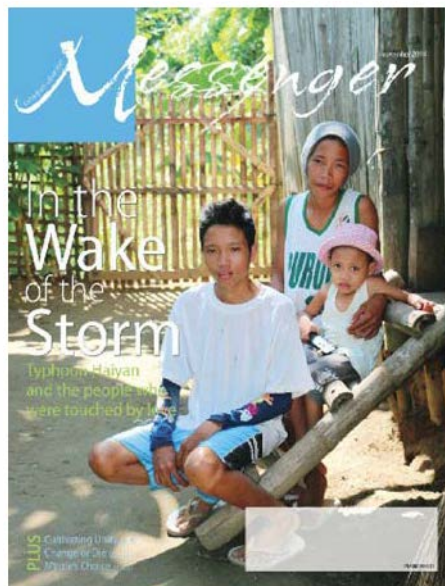
Canadians Win at Society of Adventist Communicator's Convention

At the annual convention of Society of Adventist Communicators (SAC), held October 15–17 in Chantilly, Va., a small group of Canadians gathered to take in the event. Conference communication directors Brian Bell (Man-Sask), Halsey Peat (Ontario), and Lucian Stefanescu (Quebec) joined SDACC communication team members Swan Jensen and Aimee Perez, as they came together to learn, support, and connect.

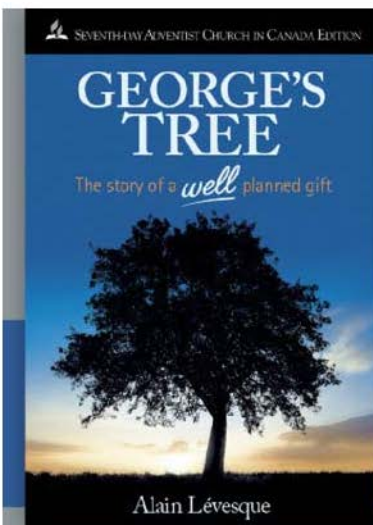
Kryzia Abacan, Canadian University College alumni and recent Andrews University graduate, also experienced SAC for the first time and presented the findings of her master's thesis on effective public relations strategies for student administration, using her time at CUC as a case study.

During the awards gala, Abacan won the student award for Best Feature Writing for her article "Finding Love When It's Least Expected" in *Envision* magazine. Canadian-born Melodie Roschmann also won the Young Professional Award for young talent in the communication field. Finally, *Canadian Adventist Messenger* took home the Best in Class award in the Print: News category for their story "In the Wake of the Storm," featured in the November 2014 issue. ■

—Aimee Perez, staff writer, *Canadian Adventist Messenger*



Cover story, "In the Wake of the Storm," won the Best in Class award in the Print: News category.



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>> SDACC REVOLVING FUND REPORT: As of Aug. 31, 2015, there were 432 depositors with a total deposit of \$27,921,97. There were 84 loans with a value of \$25,582,631.

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

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- Every individual named in the announcement must be aware of the submission and have granted the submitter approval for printing.
- Obituaries must be submitted on the appropriate form, completed and/or approved by a family member of the deceased. The forms (both printable and electronically submittable) are available at www.adventist.ca/messenger.
- The Messenger assumes no liability for typographical errors or responsibility for inaccuracies originating in submitted material.
- For more information about Messenger announcement policies, go to www.adventist.ca/messenger, click "Writers' Guidelines" then click "announcements."

Announcements

63rd TJA/CAA Alumni Homecoming Weekend—Crawford Adventist Academy will be holding its 63rd Alumni Homecoming Weekend on May 27–29, 2016, honouring TJA classes of 1981 (Grade 11), 1976 (Grade 10), 1971 (Grade 10), 1966 and all classes prior; CAA Classes of 2006, 2001, 1996, 1991 and 1986. We welcome all our alumni and families, former and current administrators, board members, faculty and staff, parents, friends and supporters. Please contact the Office of Advancement, Derrick Hall, VP of Advancement, 416/633-0090/toll-free 866/960-2125 ext. 234 or dhall@tadsb.com; Judy Cardona Gamez, Advancement Assistant, ext. 248, or jgamez@tadsb.com. Visit our official website, www.tadsb.com; follow us on Twitter @TJACAAAlumni; like us on Facebook, "The Official TJA/CAA Alumni Group." (5/16)

New Members

ALBERTA

Leanne Marcinyk was baptized in Sylvan Lake, Alta., on June 27, 2015, by Warren Kay. She is now a member of the Sylvan Lake church.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Anthony Chariton was baptized in Kelowna, B.C., on Sept. 12, 2015, by Cam Koronko. He is now a member of the Rutland church.

Michelle Dobroskay was baptized in Hope, B.C., on Aug. 1, 2015, by Rob Follenberg. She is now a member of the Rutland church.

Jennifer Ivascu was baptized in Kelowna, B.C., on Sept. 12, 2015, by Rob Follenberg. She is now a member of the Rutland church.

Caydon Nicol was baptized in Kelowna, B.C., on Sept. 12, 2015, by Rob Follenberg. He is now a member of the Rutland church.

Jenna Volkwyn was baptized in Kelowna, B.C., on Sept. 12, 2015, by Cam Koronko. She is now a member of the Rutland church.

Births

Emily Grace Andrew was born on June 16, 2015, to Carleen Blabey and Joerg Andrew, of Rendsburg, Germany.

Weddings

Leanne Adams and **Jason Marcinyk** were married on June 21, 2015, at Foothills Camp, Alta., and are making their home in Red Deer, Alta. Leanne is the daughter of Len and Leila Adams, and Jason is the son of Jack and Penny Marcinyk and Val Winder.

Obituaries

Alfred Akre was born on April 1, 1923, in Strongfield, Sask., and died on Aug. 27, 2015, in Saskatoon, Sask. He and his family farmed near Strongfield. Later, he also installed floor coverings, including for the local church and church school in Saskatoon. Alfred and his wife, Marjotie, assisted many people through the Dorcas Society and later with Adventist Community Services. Alfred is predeceased by his wife, Marjorie Akre. Surviving: sons, Leland Akre of Saskatoon, Kevin (Kathy) Akre of Cochrane, Alta., Collin (Janice) Akre of Winnipeg, Man.; two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Alan James Atkinson was born on Feb. 22, 1948, in Southampton, England, and died on Sept. 1, 2015, in Kelowna, B.C. He studied religious studies at Canadian Union College

and at Andrews University Seminary. He served as a pastor in the Manitoba-Saskatchewan, Maritime, and B.C. Conferences. Alan worked as a Bible instructor and band and choir director at Sandy Lake Academy. He also served as Pugwash camp director for a number of summers. Alan is predeceased by his parents, James and Sylvia Atkinson. Surviving: three daughters, one brother, and four grandchildren.

Frederick Lloyd Bell was born on July 8, 1922, in Winnipeg, Man., and died on June 18, 2015, in Lacombe, Alta. He graduated from Canadian Union College in 1953 and served as a pastor in British Columbia, followed by 11 years of mission service in Rwanda, Burundi, and Kenya. Upon return to Canada, he served as administrator of Rest Haven Hospital in British Columbia and Branson Hospital in Ontario. He ended his career at the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada in the areas of Trust Services and Risk Management. Surviving: wife, Elizabeth Bell; son, Bob (Ellen) Bell of Lacombe; two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Elizabeth Lila (née McDowell) Bell was born on April 17, 1923, in Glenarm, Northern Ireland, and died on June 25, 2015, in Lacombe, Alta. She was a devout supporter of her husband, Lloyd, in his role as pastor and church administrator. She served as a church school teacher, librarian, and secretary. However, most of her life was spent assisting her husband. As a gifted and gracious hostess, she regularly entertained many visiting church administrators and members who enjoyed her wonderful hospitality. Lila is predeceased by her husband, Lloyd Bell. Surviving: son, Bob (Ellen) of Lacombe; two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Howard Boucher was born on March 30, 1932, in Spencers Cove, Nfld., and died on Sept. 13, 2015, in Bowmanville, Ont. He was a dedicated member of the College Park Church orchestra in Oshawa, Ont., for over 40 years. Howard is predeceased by his parents, Harold and Alice (née Holzer) Boucher; son, Ron Boucher. Surviving: wife, Jean (née Munroe) Boucher; sons, Gordon Boucher of Edmonton, Alta., Allan Boucher of Edmonton; daughter, Wanda (David) Newman; daughter-in-law, Brenda Boucher; sisters, Hazel Hamilton, Juanita (Alex) Ramsey; six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Jack Glover was born on March 14, 1920, in Portage la Prairie, Man., and died on Sept. 13, 2015, in Swift Current, Sask. He was baptized in 1963 with his family at the Rest

Haven church in Sidney, B.C., and has been active ever since in serving and supporting the church he loved. Surviving: wife, Lorraine Glover; sons, Graham (Sharon) Glover of Swift Current, James (Mary) Glover of Swift Current, Richard (Cheryl) Glover of Kitwanga, B.C.; daughter, Geraldine (Howard) Homenchuk of Medicine Hat, Alta.; seven grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Marie (née Aaserude) Knopp was born on March 28, 1923, in Terrace, B.C., and died on June 30, 2015. Marie is predeceased by her husband, Rhineholt Knopp; former husband, John Charles; parents, Emil and Mary Aaserude. Surviving: sons, Murray (Deb) Detmold of Fruitvale, B.C., Brent (Donna) Detmold of Calgary, Alta.; daughter, Marsha Joy (Roy) Ennis of Nansaimo, B.C.; brother, Lloyd (Eleanor) Aaserude; sisters, Gertrude "Trudi" Charles of Maple Ridge, B.C., Marjory "Jackie" Hemrich of Maple Ridge; 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

D. Ruth (née Welch) Lennox was born on April 11, 1934, in Luron, England, and died on July 20, 2015, in Victoria, B.C. She was a physician serving in Nigeria, Ghana, and Ethiopia for nine years, as well as relief work in India and Nepal. She also served as the women's ministries leader in the B.C. Conference and head elder at Abbotsford church. Ruth is predeceased by her brother, John Welch. Surviving: husband, John Lennox; sons, Philip (Lorena) Lennox, David (Lisa) Lennox; daughter, Annette (Phil) Hubbard; brother, Antony (Katy) Welch; sister-in-law, Amy Welch; four grandchildren.

William Nelson was born on Oct. 1, 1924, in Arlee, Sask., and died on Sept. 12, 2015, in Oliver, B.C. He was the youngest of 10 children, a faithful member of the Osoyoos, B.C., church, and school teacher for 42 years in the United States and Canada. William is predeceased by his parents and all of his siblings. Surviving: wife, Aris Nelson; sons, Wilf (Madene) Nelson of Prince George, B.C., Frank (Janine) Nelson of Grover Beach, Calif., Kevin Nelson of Osoyoos; daughter, Colleen (Eduardo) Gonzales of Fillmore, Calif.; nine grandchildren.

Eufemia (née Vinoya) Rodriguez was born on Sept. 17, 1923, in Pangasinan, Philippines, and died on Sept. 22, 2015, in Brampton, Ont. Eufemia "Nanay" Rodriguez was a founding pioneer of the Bramalea Fil-Can church. She unfailingly lived her life in service to her family and the church that she so dearly loved. She is predeceased by her husband, Andres Rodriguez; parents, Vicente



and Mamerta (née Estrada) Vinoya; son-in-law, Nathaniel Garcia. Surviving: sons, Orlando (Rebecca) Rodriguez, Jonathan (Doreen) Rodriguez; daughters, Violeta Garcia; Mely (Orsalim) Ariga; Mila (Wilfredo) Nepacena; Elisa (Ernesto) Robles; Rebecca (Jalme) Ramos; Lemda (Alex) Bravo; Merlita (Ruperto) Becbec; Miriam (Chadler) Romano; 29 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Anne Samograd was born on Nov. 25, 1920, in Mundare, Alta., and died on April 21, 2015, in Vegreville, Alta. She served as a teacher in Wisconsin and California for 10 years, and Education supervisor in Southern and Southeastern California conferences for 15 years. She also resumed teaching in Alberta, deriving satisfaction from church, garden club, and other community service. Anne is predeceased by her parents, Samuel and Maria Samograd; brother, Gaylen Samograd; sisters, Tillie Schumm, Carrie Marbock, Ellen Pomer. Surviving: brother, Clarence Samograd; sister, Ollie Herrmann.

Carl William Spano was born on April 13, 1934, in Brooklyn, N.Y., and died on Aug. 8, 2015, in Auburn, Wash. Surviving: wife, Joan (née Smalling) Spano; son, John William Spano; three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Dale L. Thomas was born on July 22, 1946, in Hope, Mich., and died on Aug. 30, 2015, in Hendersonville, N.C. He served as publishing director for the Ontario Conference from 1997 to 2006, and associate publishing director for all of Canada from 2006 to 2007 under the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Dale is predeceased by his parents, Raymond Arthur and Leona Almira (née Cole) Thomas; brother, Mack Thomas. Surviving: wife, Joy Thomas; sons, Mack L. (Mary Jane) Thomas of Cherranaga, Tenn.; Ken; L. (Tiffany) Thomas of Killdeer, N.D.; John L. (Chanda) Thomas of Asheville, N.C.; brothers, Clyde (Myrtle) Thomas of Ringgold, Georgia, Daniel (Marge) Thomas of Greenville, Tenn., Olan (Phyllis) Thomas of Ocala, Fla.; sisters, Kay (Bob) Nelson of Tenn., Ann (John) Sowers of Ind., Nancy (Roger) Sermetshelm of Calif., Penny Thomas of Mich., Suzanne Fletcher of Ore.; five grandchildren.

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Tributes

M. John and Patricia Tataryn celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary by spending summer vacation with



their daughters, grandchildren, and Pat's sisters, Beverly Gramms and Rita Hirschhorn. The Tataryns have three children and three grandchildren: daughter, Debbie (Marion) Paley; granddaughter, Jessica of Loma Linda, Calif.; son, Ronald (predeceased) and Brenda Tataryn of Saskatoon, Sask.; daughter, Holly (Ned) Espiritus; grandsons, Kai and Kalani of Yaca Ville, Calif.

We thank all those who sent cards and phone calls wishing us heaven's blessings. We thank God for our family and friends. Our prayer is that we will all be ready for that great celebration when Jesus comes.

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Hymn History Tour of England—Burman University president, Dr. Mark Haynal, will be leading a one-week tour of sites related to some of your favorite hymns June 9–15, 2016. Please see www.hymnstor.org for more info. (1/16)

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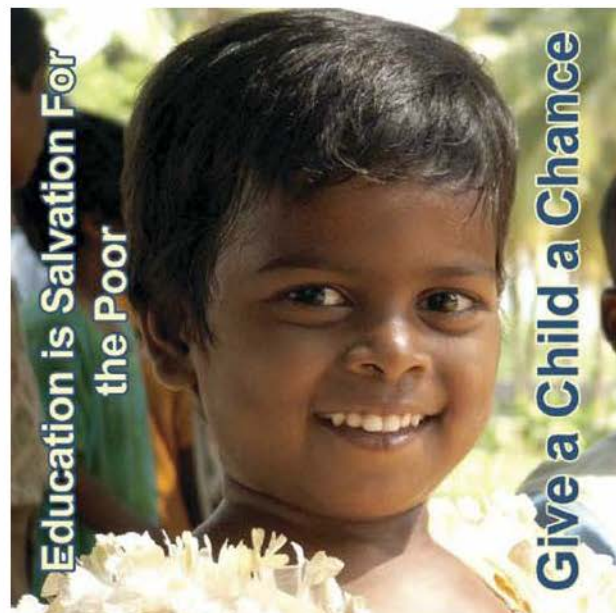
Union College seeks a Seventh-day Adventist Master's Prepared PA faculty member. The ideal candidate will have clinical experience in Family Practice and Emergency Medicine. Prior teaching experience is desired but not necessary. Start date June 1, 2016. Send CV and references to Jodi Chewakin, jochewak@uccollege.edu. (1/16)

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from the editor

keeping Christ in Christmas

KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS involves a great deal more than the design on a Starbucks Coffee cup. It is far more significant than protesting against stores that say "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas." As a Christian I find these kinds of protests and causes quite embarrassing.

Here is what I do not find embarrassing: people who help those in need. Full stop. What does keeping Christ in Christmas actually look like?

Keeping Christ in Christmas looks like people from all walks of life who provide a warm, delicious meal to fellow human beings who are hungry, or warm blankets and new socks to those who, regardless of the reason, live outside the loving shelter of a family home.

Keeping Christ in Christmas looks like a group of ladies I met who visit women in prison and send gifts to their children during times of celebration, such as Christmas and birthdays.

Keeping Christ in Christmas looks like providing money to a struggling single mom so she can purchase gifts for her children. I have a friend who received this gift for a few years, and I saw the significant impact it had on her life.

Keeping Christ in Christmas looks like making sure the lonely and disenfranchised among us and in our community feel and know—with confidence—that someone is thinking of them and taking action to alleviate their brokenness and pain. Sometimes you will find the loneliest people in a crowd at church.

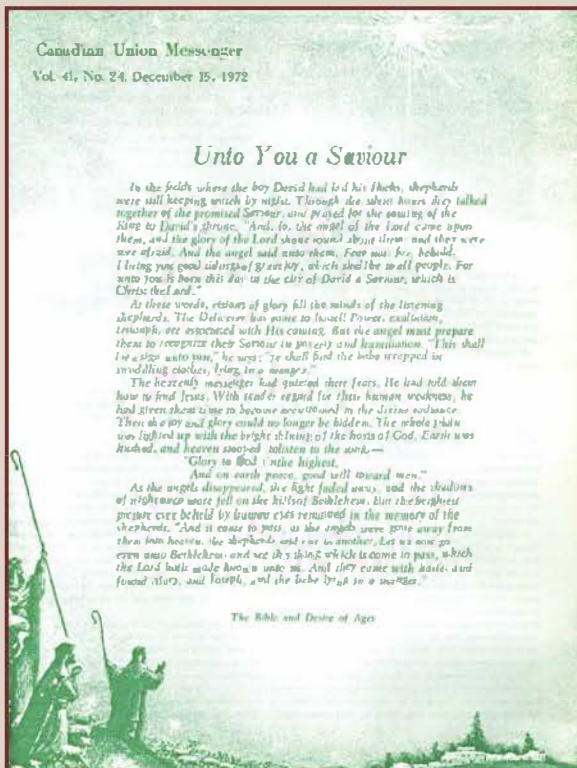
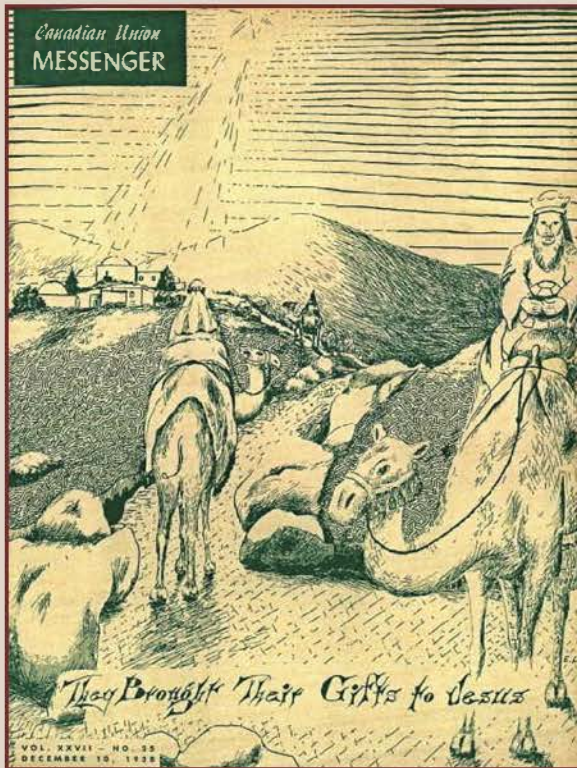
Keeping Christ in Christmas looks like rereading the Christmas story with family and friends. The Nativity is especially meaningful to those of us who have been to the shepherd hills in Bethlehem and visited the caves that were used as manger at the time of Christ. Memories of walking around homes in Nazareth remain vivid as we read and imagine the story in the Bible. Mary (who was approaching her due date!) and Joseph's 111-kilometre journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem came into perspective when I travelled that same journey—in the comfort and convenience of an automobile. The Christmas story is full of details and significances we can reflect on.

Last but not least, keeping Christ in Christmas does *not* look like taking offense at others' misdeeds. It is about helping people and making a difference in someone's life, such as purchasing something from the ADRA gift catalogue (adra.ca/giftcatalogue) in the name of a friend, spouse, parent, child, or grandchild. ADRA Canada does work we can all be proud of. They make a difference even by allowing us to make a difference. ■

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Stan". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Stan Jensen, editor
Canadian Adventist Messenger

IT IS DECEMBER. THE CHRISTMAS SEASON IS UPON US. What joy it is to spend time with family, both biological and chosen, share cheer, and spread love. This month we take a look at bygone decades to enjoy Christmas-themed cover art from the pages of the *Messenger*.



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