

Peace in the Unknown (p. 11), A Different Side
of the Gospel (p. 22), The Joy of Sharing (p. 37)

october 2020

canadian adventist
Messenger

A Conversation With
**Dan and Donna
Jackson**



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heart to heart

“Then those who revered the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord took note and listened, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who revered the Lord and thought on his name.”

—Malachi 3:16, NRSV

Conversations

These words from the book of faith remind us of the joy and opportunity of sharing thoughts of God with neighbours and other friends. Often, we have friends who come from other great communities of faith. Perhaps other words are used to refer to God. Still, according to the prophet Malachi, God listens when we speak of Him, regardless of what we call Him.

God blesses each of us with strength, faith, friendship, and insight. When we use public transportation, attend a function, or do any other activity, God is always an appropriate topic of conversation—any day of the week. And through those encounters, our understanding of God deepens.

I enjoy asking friends what God has done around them lately. This is an opportunity for us to hear interesting faith experiences from one another that we would otherwise miss.

Have you explored lately what God's been doing with a friend of yours? Often our understanding of God is very similar to the beliefs of our neighbours.

Maybe, like me, you have discovered how closely the understanding of God is expressed in both the Bible and the Qur'an. Those who have read either of these two books, have a lot in common to discuss among themselves.

Have you discovered the enjoyment of a good conversation with someone of another tradition that has aided you in your search for a better understanding of God?

Have a wonderful conversation with someone about God! And remember, God likes it when He finds people talking together about Him. ■

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



October 2020

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FREEDOM OF RELIGION



Q: *My co-worker is a Muslim woman. Recently, her Mosque began allowing women to attend prayer on Fridays. She asked our boss if she could have Fridays off to attend prayers and the worship service. He responded that she should “adapt to Canadian culture” if she wants to live in Canada. She is a permanent resident, not a citizen. What can I tell her?*

A: Your boss was incorrect to suggest that Canada has a religious “culture.” Canada has no official church and is committed to religious pluralism. Among religious people in Canada, Christians remain the largest group, but those claiming to have no religious affiliation are now about 30 percent of the population.

With this background, it is hard to understand what your boss meant when he said that your co-worker should “adapt to Canadian culture.” Did he mean that she should act like a Christian (which is still the largest religious group)? Or did he mean that she should disavow religious participation (which is the fastest growing group)? Regardless, he is incorrect and risks legal liability for your employer.

There are a variety of religious belief systems that co-exist in Canadian society. Each person in Canada is free to hold whatever religious beliefs they wish, and your co-worker’s immigration status does not undermine that protection. Your co-worker has the right to be a practising Muslim. (By the way, Islam is the second-largest religious group in Canada, behind Christians. In 2011, 3.2 percent of the Canadian population identified as Muslim.)

The right to be a practising Muslim is protected in the workplace through each province’s human rights laws. Employers have a duty to accommodate employees’ religious beliefs to the point of undue hardship. As long as your co-worker’s belief is sincerely held, she is entitled to be accommodated. When asked for a religious accommodation, employers should discuss this with the

employee and keep an open mind. It doesn’t sound like your boss has done that.

Depending on the nature of the workplace and the requirements of your co-worker’s religious beliefs, the employer may be required by law to adjust the schedule to allow her to observe holy days and religious rites, such as prayer. I understand that your co-worker has not attended these prayers before because she was not able to. That does not preclude her from being accommodated now. Her situation changed. As long as her desire to attend Friday prayers is sincere, your boss should be looking for ways to adjust the schedule, provided it does not cause undue hardship.

Depending on the size of the employer’s organization, institution, or corporation, there may be a human resources department that can be approached to address this issue. If your co-worker is part of a union, it should be consulted since it must represent workers’ rights in the workplace.

If the employing entity is relatively small and your boss is the final decider, your co-worker may need some assistance in writing a formal written request for accommodation. She should express a desire to work with the employer to find a reasonable solution. It would be useful for your co-worker to consult a lawyer with human rights experience who can help, because if asking doesn’t work, she may need to file a human rights complaint. ■

Kevin Boonstra is a lawyer in British Columbia. Send your religious liberty questions to messenger@adventist.ca.

Disclaimer: This article is written for general information only. It is not legal advice and should not be relied on as legal advice. All individual circumstances are different. If you have a legal issue or problem, seek the advice of a qualified lawyer in your area.

Helping Our Neighbour

“He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘You go, and do likewise.’”—*Luke 10:37, ESV*

ADRA’s purpose is “to serve humanity so all may live as God intended.” Pretty simple, right? Unfortunately, the needs of this world are significant, with billions living in conditions far from what God originally intended for his children.

We are fortunate to live in Canada, a land where many enjoy bountiful blessings. However, many among us are struggling.

There is a stark contrast between the lives of the Indigenous people and the rest of the population. Indigenous Services Canada recently reported that the life expectancy of Indigenous people in Canada is 15 years less than the rest of Canada, their infant mortality is two to three times higher, and their rate of diabetes is four times higher than that of other Canadians.

These statistics tell us of the crisis in our own backyard—statistics we are more accustomed to associating with countries in the less developed world.

When we think of who our neighbours are, how can we not be concerned with the situation of our Indigenous peoples? In the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus tells the lawyer to go and do likewise. We are to take care of the needs of our neighbours. The Indigenous are our neighbours—and our brothers and sisters.

At ADRA, this is a part of our mission.

In Wikwemikong on Manitoulin Island in Ontario we have sponsored the Outdoor Adventure Leadership Experience (OALE) program. This program takes youth on a 10-day outdoor adventure canoe trip where they learn about their culture, history, and identity. They explore their own strengths and weaknesses, develop their characters, set life goals, and make practical plans to achieve them. While the school dropout rate for Indigenous youth on reserve is an alarming 48 percent, participants in the OALE

program have a 100 percent graduation rate.

In partnership with the Igloolik Seventh-day Adventist Church group, we have met the needs of many members of the community. Our COVID-19 response has provided food, food vouchers, and essential hygiene products, giving critical assistance until additional government support arrived.

In Alberta, we have been supporting Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS) as they provide a feeding program for their students, all of whom come from the neighbouring reserves. Parents send their children to school, encouraged by the knowledge that they will be fed healthy food. Full tummies enable the children to focus on their classes. They are happier and have more productive days. The communities served by this school recognize the positive influence of the school, and band leaders are supportive of the school’s presence on their land.

As I think of these examples of how we are helping our Indigenous people, I recognize that the task at hand is significant. These projects only scratch the surface of the needs in our own country.

ADRA, partnering with our local churches, conferences, and union, is creating new ways to make a positive and lasting impact for the beautiful people who make up our Indigenous peoples of Canada. As we focus on serving the Indigenous peoples, I would like to solicit your prayers for guidance on this daunting task. When God tells us to go and do likewise, He will also provide the way if we are willing to follow His leading. May others be blessed as we follow His leading. ■



Steve Matthews is executive director for ADRA Canada.



GET UP AND GROW!

Autumn, my most favourite time of year! Did you know that autumn is also a planting season?

Many seeds are planted in the spring. Maybe you were busy helping in the garden this year. But did you know that God provides another season to plant seeds that come from the forests and fields? And He uses the most amazing creatures and even the weather to do just that!

SAMARAS

Do you know what a samara is? Maple trees grow amazing “winged seeds.” They look like little helicopters, and when they come off the tree, they twirl and whirl, travelling long distances in the breeze. When they land, they sit upright and “wait” for a paw, a foot (maybe yours!), or the weight of snow to push them into the ground. The winglike parts detach, and the little seed waits for the warm rain and springtime sun so it can begin to sprout. It won’t be long before a teeny, tiny maple tree starts to grow.

ACORNS

Do you know what an acorn is? Oak trees produce small brown-capped seeds called acorns. In the fall, the acorns drop from the trees with a “kerplunk” and provide a wonderful nutty feast for birds, mice, squirrels, bears, and deer. They also provide a tiny house for some insects to dwell in during the winter.

Squirrels store their food supply for the long winter ahead, but sometimes they “forget” where they left them. It makes me laugh to think those saucy rodents are always scurrying and hurrying all summer not knowing that they are unintentionally working for God by planting more and more oak trees. Maybe they’re surprised to find an oak tree growing where their tasty snack once was.

FEATHERED FARMERS

Do you know any feathered farmers? Yes, that’s right—

farmers that have feathers. You see them every day. Seed-eating birds consume lots of seeds from fruit-bearing trees and plants. *But how are they farmers?* you may wonder.

Well, God has made birds to be wonderful seed spreaders. Sometimes they drop seeds from their beaks while flying. Sometimes after eating, they drop them in their poop. Even the feathers on their wings and feet help spread airborne seeds to new places to grow.

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Jesus told a parable about a gardener who was sowing seeds. The little seeds landed in various places. Some landed on the hard road and were stepped on. Some were eaten by birds. Some fell on rocks, and although they sprouted, they died because they had no water. Some fell among thorns and were choked out by the weeds. Some of the seeds fell on soft, moist soil and they sprouted up and grew magnificently (Luke 8:5–8).

The soil conditions are like our hearts. Now, my friends, what kind of heart do you have? When you learn about Jesus, does your heart become hard and full of prickly weeds, or does it become soft and warm with love for Jesus? If you want a loving heart, just pray to Jesus and you will *bloom* where you’re *planted*. ■

Lorie Neily is the director of children's ministries for the Maritime Conference.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada



Creation Corner for Kids

You also are like living stones. As you come to Christ, you are being built into a house for worship. ... You are God's special treasure ... so that you can give him praise. God brought you out of darkness into his wonderful light.—1 Pet. 2:5–9, NIRV

Garnet

Have you ever walked on a beach with pink sand? If you have, you know what it's like to have garnets between your toes. Garnets are usually pinkish-purple stones that may look a little like rubies. If you hold one to the light, it makes a pretty, pink glow.

Garnets are not as expensive as rubies, because they're not preferred for jewelry-making. But geologists look for garnets anyway because they often point to something even more valuable than rubies: diamonds. Diamonds are sometimes found with a certain kind of garnet because they both need the same conditions to form. So if geologists can find the right garnets, they can also find the diamonds.

Think about it.

Garnets are called indicator stones because they indicate, or show, where diamonds can be found. Christians should be like indicator stones that point to Jesus, the Rock. Just as gemstones sparkle as they reflect light, we should reflect the beautiful character of Jesus to the world around us and point people to Him.

If you ask Jesus to transform you into a gem for His kingdom and co-operate with the Holy Spirit as He polishes your character, He will do it.

Do it!

Next time you go to the beach or a river, take a shallow bowl or gold pan. Garnets are heavier than sand and will stay in the pan when you spin the sand out.



Tammie Burak and her family enjoy studying and learning from God's creation.





“ I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits.”—Martin Luther King Jr.

ADRA could not agree more with this statement. By serving humanity so all may live as God intended, we seek to ensure the health, development, and dignity of people both overseas and here in Canada.

Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS) has been serving the First Nations communities in and around Ponoka, Alta., for over 30 years. Approximately 225 students attend the elementary and high school programs. All of the students come from the Samson, Montana, Louis Bull, and Ermineskin Cree First Nation communities. The school is “dedicated to the development of the whole person, the harmonious development of the mental, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual faculties.”

Students were coming to school and asking for food. Hungry students have a harder time focusing on their lessons and applying themselves to their work, so the staff at MANS began a school feeding program to help the students succeed in their studies.

Students learn to grow their own food in a small school garden. Cooking clubs teach them how to prepare food for themselves and others.

Jersey is a high school student. Her favourite subjects are baking, English, and photography.

“I don’t want to go into culinary arts in the future, but I like the class because it’s good to know how to do it and it’s a nice hobby,” Jersey shares.

Jersey’s dream for her future lies in a very different but

inspiring direction. “I really want to be a child advocate,” she says. “I saw a documentary on child abuse, and I know that if children have a voice earlier in life, they wouldn’t have to suffer the traumas that they face. With child advocates, there would be more help for children in the community.”

Though Jersey and her four siblings bring their own lunches to school, she knows that the feeding program at MANS is very beneficial to the students.

“For some students, the day seems really long and taxing. They have a hard time focusing. The breakfast program has a great impact on the students because all the students I have known at MANS have at some point needed to have a meal from the school,” says Jersey.

The feeding program encompasses breakfast and lunch. Breakfast is often sandwiches, cereal, fruit, toast, and bagels. Lunch is usually a variety of sandwiches, baked potatoes, and salads.

“To be honest, it is a great program,” says Jersey. “Without it, there would be more starving children.”

With the generous support of our donors, ADRA has been helping to fund the nutrition program at MANS. We are so grateful for your care and kindness to students right here in Canada.

As Principal Gail Wilton says, “The Lord has a great work here with our children. ... We have a mission field right here in our own backyard.” ■

Heather Grbic is the publications co-ordinator for ADRA Canada.



FRESH FAITH

Peace in the Unknown

by Alannah Tjhatra



Every career day during her elementary school years, Megan Mootoo would dress up as something different: an optometrist or teacher one year, an accountant or actress the next. She was never certain of what she wanted.

Upon graduating from Crawford Adventist Academy, Megan was pressured to choose a field of study. Many had told her she should pursue English as a degree, so that's what she did. Still, something didn't settle right with her. She often felt confused, crying in frustration to God and begging Him to tell her what she should do.

After graduating from Andrews University with an MA in English, Megan began looking for English teaching jobs. She soon realized, however, that her true desire was to counsel others. She decided to apply to a psychotherapy program in Toronto, but she didn't get in. Her frustration grew.

"I was 24 and had no sense of direction for my life! God was silent. I felt like He didn't want my life to progress," Megan explained.

Eventually, Megan was offered a full-time job with the *Canadian Adventist Messenger*. She had no idea where she was being led, but she knew God was the One opening doors for her.

Megan learned from the inspiring individuals she encountered at the *Messenger*, and during this time she also learned about spiritual care. She had always had a desire to counsel; spiritual care provided her an opportunity to do that. Still, Megan was anxious and afraid of what the future might hold.

But God kept opening doors for her. Megan found a program and was accepted! She started this new program just this September.

Looking back, Megan realizes that God led her down all of those winding roads for a purpose. "I know why I didn't get into that psychotherapy program five years ago. I wasn't spiritually ready to take on such a task at the time, and God knew that."

Oftentimes we don't realize that God is working in our lives in the midst of our struggles. We don't know God's ways, but we know He loves us and He has our backs.

As Megan starts a whole new journey in school, she still doesn't know exactly what job she wants to pursue after she graduates. But she is confident that she is in the right place. Everything she has gone through has equipped her to be where she is now. ■

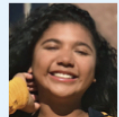
fresh faith / 35 & under

35 & UNDER

In 35 words or less, how do you make your faith authentic?

Maretas Emmons

By being completely honest and not making excuses for yourself. When we are authentic with God about our thoughts and feelings, it helps us grow our faith and build our relationship with Him.



Nicole Caran

I enjoy personal reflection in my devotions and seeing how I can apply what I learned in daily living.



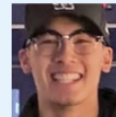
Sarinah Tjhatra

You need to have your own experiences. You have to trust God when you go through hard situations. Your faith will be tested through the challenges that you face.



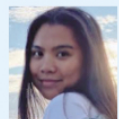
Reiniel Davila

The best way to make faith authentic is by your actions and not just your words. You can't make it authentic by saying it; you have to put in the work.



Jeimyl Rullamas

By letting go and letting God. Time after time I find myself leaning on my own understanding; however, authentic faith is when I accept that I can't do anything without Him and when I lean on Him fully.



Shelby Edgson

To be authentic with God is to be genuine and intentional, constantly growing in Him. It means to accept Him in your life as your Saviour. It means to be vulnerable and transparent with Him.



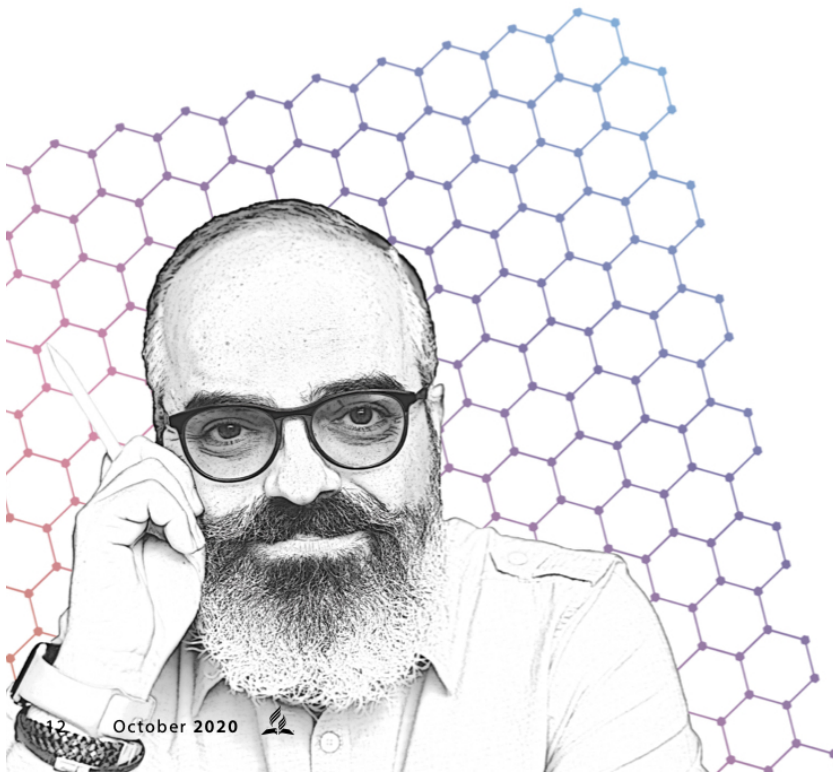
teen talk

Dear Pastor Josué,

For 12 years you have provided open and honest answers to the questions asked of you. Thank you for being real, thank you for always pointing to Jesus, thank you for trusting young people to make the right choices for the right reasons, and thank you for showing us the depth of your heart and love for the Lord.

As you move on to new journeys, may you experience God's richest blessings.

With gratitude,
The *Canadian Adventist Messenger* team
(on behalf of teens across Canada)



Keep an eye out for a new Teen Talk: Ask Me Anything with Pastor Ashia Lennon.



PANDEMIC DISTRACTIONS

What has the COVID-19 pandemic taught your church and community? You would think that a church that places such a strong emphasis on eschatology would be prepared for a “worst-case scenario.”

For most Christian communities, we were blindsided by how quickly things evolved into a public health epidemic. We were even more surprised by the government’s involvement and sometimes overreaching edicts on how many people could meet together and under what conditions. I’m amazed by how many in the church have debated angrily about their rights and liberty. The pandemic has become a political issue, and sadly it has spilled into the church.

As an eschatological church, we already know that our ability to worship in the “end times” will be hampered. We already know that suffering is expected. Ellen White has warned in countless places of these kinds of times. So why do we seem so shocked and offended? “God has a purpose in permitting these calamities to occur. They are one of His means of calling men and women to their senses. By unusual workings through nature God will express to doubting human agencies that which He clearly reveals in His Word.”¹

Think about those words, written over 100 hundred years ago. She says that future calamities will call people to their senses. In other words, this is a wake-up call for the faithful. The last time we experienced a global crisis, it affected every human being on this earth. As Christians, our call is not to fight with the government or be sidetracked by political issues, such as whether you should be forced to wear a mask. Instead, this is the call to proclaim the soon coming of Jesus. This is the time we must spend demonstrating the love of Jesus, instead of demonstrating for our rights.

Mrs. White says, “In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with, but let us not forget that the three great Power of heaven is working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His purpose to pass.”²

Let us not become distracted with the ways of the world but rather stay focused on Jesus. ■

Kumar Dixit is the creative principal of Dixit Media Group, an organization that rebrands religious and non-profit organizations.

¹ *Manuscript Releases* 19:279, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/60.1467#1468>

² *Evangelism*, 65, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/30.311#332>



Tech SAVvy

BY SANDY AUDIO VISUAL



Webcasting: CLIMB (Part 2 of 3)

No matter how simple or elaborate your live webcasting setup, you need these basics—CLIMB: Camera, Light, Internet, Microphone, and Box (Encoder).

Last month, in Part 1, we discussed the camera. This article focuses on lighting and your internet connection.

Lighting

Good light makes a low-cost camera shine. Lighting may seem basic, but it is an essential part of your livestream.

The sun is often your most powerful light source. It can also be a hindrance. For example, if you are trying to capture a pastor in his or her study with a window at his or her back on a bright day, you will get what is called a silhouetting effect, where the pastor appears dark and everything around the pastor is bright.

Your choice of light is usually paired with your choice of cameras. Different cameras, the type of lenses they have, and the distance from your subject to the camera will determine how much and what type of light you need.

Almost all lights sold today are LED lights. The great advantage of these lights compared to older types of lights is that they are more affordable, use less energy, and generate less heat.

The big secret with light is that you don't need a lot of it. You need just the right amount pointed at the subject you want to film. So, for a Bible study over Zoom, for example, if everyone is using a laptop or a webcam, you don't need powerful lights. You need small lights close to the presenters that will make them the focus of the presentation. You want your subject to be twice as bright as their background. This 2:1 ratio of light will allow your presenter to stand out and not have the background be a distraction.

This leads to a side note: don't use virtual backgrounds. There is a right and wrong way to do them. In general, the ones built into your Zoom or Skype software are not the way to go. It *can* be done effectively but requires a detailed setup that is beyond the scope of this introductory article.

Some good recommendations for small lights are the Lume Cube series, 1x1 panels from Neewer, and ring lights

from Aperture, Dracast, and similar manufacturers; and on the higher end, lights from ARRI, Light Panels, Kino Flo, and others. The type of light, the colour temperature (essentially how blue or red the resulting light appears), and the power depend on your setup. In general, the further away you are from the light, the bigger a light you will need. Sometimes the size of the light doesn't mean it is more powerful than a smaller light, but may have different optics to shape the light or focus it over a certain distance.

Internet

The simplest solution is to use the internet connection available on your smartphone. However, using data, or the internet over your cellular phone, is the least reliable internet connection you can use. So, it is an option only when there is no other option.

Ideally, you will want to use a hard-wired connection from a major provider like Bell Canada, Rogers, or Telus. Now, an important thing to note is that most internet services are marketed for their *download* speeds. However, when sending out a livestream from your church, it's the *upload* speed that is the most critical. So, make sure you are aware of the *upload* speed of the connection you are getting; do not assume you are getting the same speed for upload as you are for download when you are shown a single number for your internet connection speed among available options. If you anticipate featuring a lot of remote guests through Zoom or other means, you will want a connection that is fast in both directions.

Finally, reliability is ultimately more important than raw speed. A phenomenon called "jitter" occurs when your connection speeds up and slows down. You want a reliable, steady connection. It is easier to adjust your stream to accommodate a slow, steady connection than to deal with a connection with high jitter. ■

Colin Sandy is a graduate of Oakwood University with a BA in communications. He has engineered the livestreaming efforts of the Ontario Conference Campmeetings for over a decade and has been passionately streaming video online since 1997.

Growing Up Millennial



*"What I really want is the October mindset all year long.
I want to feel the peace that October gives me all year."*

The Best Month



t happened. We're back to my favourite month of the year. It's totally and unequivocally fall.

It's October, when trees are changing colours, the sun sets earlier, and mornings are crisper. It's the month when clouds seem kind of ominously mysterious, when I get to break out all of my sweaters, when boots become a staple but I don't yet to have to deal with snow.

Everything just feels cozier this time of year. I want to go to a pumpkin patch and take cute pictures with friends, I want to go for long hikes through crunchy leaves, and I want to curl up in bed with a coffee and a good book. I just feel so peaceful.

In my head, I want October to last all year long. The month where I can wear cute fall clothes, enjoy crisp mornings but warmer afternoons, observe the contrast between a grey sky and red-and-yellow trees, appreciate an early sunset and late sunrise, and eat soups and buns and seasonal treats.

What I really want is the October *mindset* all year long. I want to feel the peace that October gives me all year. I'm sometimes very emotionally driven by my environment, and in October, this is when I feel the most comfortable and relaxed. Not summer, not winter (the stress of driving in the snow is too much for me), and certainly not spring.

Actually, I can't stand spring. I have terrible allergies. So bad that I need to have an EpiPen ready. I don't like the time change that happens, or the early sunrises. I don't like all of the light green that trees and plants seem to be, or all of the rain. The very idea of waking up on a spring morning sneezing is miserable. So how do I try and

keep my October mindset of being content all year when I'm so influenced by my environment?

Honestly, I don't know. I'm allowed to enjoy this month of the year more than the others if I really want to. I'm allowed to love how I feel this time of year, but what I don't want to allow myself to do is feel miserable the rest of the year when I'm annoyed by the light-coloured sun and pollen of springtime.

So, I looked up Bible verses about trying to stay positive. Romans 14:17 probably said it most clearly for me: "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (ESV). I added, in my own mind, to "eating and drinking," being peaceful no matter what part of the year I'm in. Because really, God who is the one who can bring me peace and enjoyment out of life. Really, I should be able to find peace all of the time.

And sometimes it's a lot easier than others. It's really easy in October. It's really hard in April when it's raining and I'm allergic to everything. But God is there. He's there when it's hard for me to be cheery, when I'm feeling stressed, and when I'm not content. He's there when I'm excited to be in October, He's there when I can't stand the fact that it's only the beginning of March. God has given me the ability to be thankful for Octobers, and to really find comfort in Him in Aprils. And that has become a way for me to really, truly, connect with God. ■

Jordyn Boonstra is a British Columbian millennial studying at Walla Walla University.



Believe in Burman Annual Fund



October 31, 2020

Each year alumni, friends and Seventh-day Adventist church members across Canada give an annual offering to help young people at Burman University as they journey to higher education and greater service. On October 31, 2020, you will again have the opportunity to enhance the learning environment at Burman. Your gift may help support projects that range from entrance scholarships to sidewalks, from bike racks to tutoring, from chapel lighting to microscopes. Each dollar makes a difference.

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Ralph Magsalin
3rd-year Religious Studies Major



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Prayer, Anxiety, Trust?!

"Much of the anxiety experienced today is not of the 'helpful' kind. It is the 'overwhelming, take hold of you in a death grip that will not loosen' kind."

Today's world is filled with anxiety. Many people live in war-torn countries and, from one day to the next, don't know if they will survive. Around the world, COVID-19 has infected millions and has led to many deaths. Towns and cities have shut down to flatten the pandemic curve, resulting in economic hardship. We have much to be anxious about.

Some fear is healthy. Fear of pain stops me from putting my hand in an open flame. Fear of hurting someone has me carefully choosing what and how to share things. However, fear sits on the throne in many hearts and minds, and it is *not* helpful. Fear incites us to focus on all the potential negatives and then compels us to actions we would not otherwise do.

The Old Testament tells us that burnt offerings and fellowship offerings were performed by the priests. First Samuel 13 tells the story of King Saul facing the Philistine army. King Saul very much wanted to consult God about going into battle. Anxiety was running rampant in the Israelite camp—so much so, that thousands of soldiers ran and hid, leaving only 600 unarmed men to fight many thousands of well-armed Philistines. King Saul waited on the prophet Samuel to arrive and carry out the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. However, Samuel did not arrive by the expected time, and anxiety convinced and compelled King Saul to take matters into his own hands and offer the sacrifices himself.

In what ways does anxiety convince you of something and then compel you to behaviours you would not otherwise engage in? Does anxiety compel you to speak sharply instead of gently? to be hypervigilant instead of calm and content? to focus on worrying about the worst possible outcomes rather than to trust in God? Is anxiety what God wants for us?

I have heard it said that "Fear not" and "Do not be afraid" are the commands given more often than any other command in the Bible. It would seem God does not want us to be driven by anxiety to unhelpful behaviours or even to sit in anxiety and be distressed instead of trusting and being content. Philippians 4:6, 7, says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (NIV).

Much of the anxiety experienced today is not of the "helpful" kind. It is the "overwhelming, take hold of you in a death grip that will not loosen" kind. It masquerades as helpful, convincing us it is needed to keep us safe, when it is, in fact, restraining us from experiencing the abundant life God desires for us.

What we really need to keep ourselves safe, content, calm, confident, and at peace is to be still and know that God is God (see Psalm 46:10). Paul reports, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, ... I can do all this through him who gives me strength" (Phil. 4:12, 13, NIV).

Pray. Trust God. Sit and visualize yourself in the loving arms of Jesus, relaxing into His embrace. When we get a touch from a loved one, it significantly reduces anxiety. Acknowledge the emotions you are feeling and then give them to God. Ask Him to take them away and replace them with peace and contentment. Give thanks to God that He is with you and is for you and that with Him you can handle anything. ■

Honey Todd is director of prayer ministries for the Alberta Conference.



Where Are They Now



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

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



Harold Reimche

Messenger: *Tell me where you were born and about your childhood family.*

Harold Reimche: First, I want to give praise to God for what He has done for me and my family. I was born on a farm north of Maple Creek, Sask. My father and mother had 12 children, but three died at birth. The boys came first, and I was the last one. My mother told me that I was a very sick baby, but I grew up to be the tallest. Three sisters were next.

After my mother died, Dad married again, and our family expanded with two half-sisters and three stepbrothers.

M: *Where did you go to school and what degree did you earn?*

H: Our family moved from Saskatchewan to Cluny, Alta., where I started my education in a small country public school. We moved from Cluny to Bassano, Banff, and then Bentley, all in Alberta. By this time, I had completed Grade 9.

In 1937, I went to Canadian Junior College (CJC) for Grade 10. In 1938, I moved with my parents to Kelowna, B.C., where I continued school by correspondence. In 1939, after helping my brother Ron harvest a crop on the Simpson farm, I enrolled a month late in Grade 11 at CJC. I continued my education while working in the shoe shop and as monitor in the boys' dormitory.

My education was disturbed again when I received a call to the army. I made an appeal as a conscientious objector to bearing arms and was sent to camps in B.C. parks, where I worked in making mine props and provided first aid for the camp. In the evenings I studied for Grade

12 by correspondence. In the spring of 1944, I was released but was sent to a farm near Cassils, Alta. In June, I received permission to attend the graduation at Canadian Junior College. While I was there, President H. M. Johnson asked me if I was interested in coming to the college and work in the dairy and farm. When I agreed, he got permission from the government for me to come.

When school began in the fall, I enrolled to work on my degree in theology. This worked out well, because at the end of that school year CJC had become CUC, resulting in my graduating with a bachelor's degree. During the last year of my education, I also was associate dean of boys, since half of East Hall was demolished to make room for Maple Hall. I was in charge of the boys in the old church school. In June 1947, I received my bachelor of theology degree in the first graduating class of Canadian Union College.

M: *I understand Aug. 18, 2020, was a special birthday for you. Tell me about it.*

H: I was born on Aug. 18, 1920; so this year I celebrated my 100th birthday! I praise God for caring for me through all those years.

M: *Where did you serve the church in your pastoral ministry?*

H: After graduation, I received a call to join the Alberta Conference and my first work was to assist in the campmeeting at Beauvallon. In September, I went to Olds and was given about two weeks to prepare for marriage on Sept. 28 to Mary Penner, whom I met at college while she was studying to become a Bible worker. We set up our first home in Olds. I assisted in an evangelistic series conducted by a pastor from Calgary.

While at Olds, our first son, Allan, was born. We later moved to pastor the Peace River district, and our son, Donavon, was born there. My wife said, "Now we have a minister and a doctor." This was prophetic, as Allan became a pastor and Donavon became a physical therapist.

In 1951, we moved from the Peace River district to Medicine Hat. An evangelist, Pastor Chalmers, joined me as we held meetings there and later in the school near Cluny, where I had taken Grade 1. As a result, we organized a church. While still pastoring the Medicine Hat district, we moved to Lethbridge, and Pastor Chalmers joined me there as well for a series of meetings.

While in this district, I had an interesting experience. Each week I summarized the Sabbath sermon and sent it to the local newspaper. One week the topic was the seventh-day Sabbath. At that particular time there were some who wanted to change the Sabbath to a different day of the week through a world calendar. A letter came

to the editor a few weeks later from a lady in New York who didn't agree with what I had shared. I explained to her that the weekly cycle came from the seven days of Creation and had never changed. I hope that she was able to understand it better from that viewpoint and was someday able to enjoy the blessings of keeping the Sabbath.

In 1955, we moved to Kingston, Ont., and in that district, by God's blessing, two churches were organized through baptisms and visiting some isolated members. From Kingston we moved to Hamilton, Ont., then back west to New Westminster, B.C. After organizing Bible studies by members as well as being on radio, we had a very successful evangelistic series conducted by George Knowles. We also served in Victoria, B.C., where, in 1969, we received a call to New York city to pastor and transition a German-speaking church to English. While there, I did evangelism as well as a series of meetings with Ron Halverson.

I also served as pastor of the Silver Spring church in Washington, D.C. In 1978, I received a call to come back to B.C. to the Oliver district, where, besides preaching, I helped build a church and a school.

Our next move was to Vernon, B.C., where again, besides preaching and an evangelistic series, I helped build a church. In 1986, I retired and moved back to Kelowna. It is very interesting that I left Kelowna as a youth and came back there to retire.

M: *As you look back on your long and full life, what is your testimony?*

H: I thank God for the people He has given me the privilege of pastoring all these years, and that I am a 14-year cancer survivor. I look forward with excitement to the soon return of Jesus.

M: *Tell me about your family.*

H: My wife Mary and I had two sons, Allan and Donavon. Two daughters, Jackie and DellaRose, also joined our family as young children. I have 10 living grandchildren (two deceased) and five great-grandchildren. After Mary died in 2011, I married Sylvia (Ganz) Tkachuk in 2012. She had a son, Perry, and a daughter, Gloria, who predeceased her. Sylvia died in January 2019.

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

H: I am now living in an independent living home in Kelowna. In my retirement I have accepted preaching appointments in the churches in the Okanagan and interim appointments. I also served as senior pastor of the Rutland church (Kelowna, B.C.) twice for total of a year. One of my favourite activities was planting a garden and tending a beautiful backyard. ■





Hummus

INGREDIENTS:

- 540 ml (19 oz) can chickpeas (or 2 cups cooked)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1–2 tbsp (15–30 ml) tahini
- 1–2 tbsp (15–30 ml) lemon juice
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- 2 tbsps (30 ml) water

INSTRUCTIONS:

- In a food processor, blend all ingredients until smooth.
 - Serve as a dip with whole wheat pita bread or as a spread in sandwiches.
- Tip:** Jazz up your hummus by mixing in different flavours. For example, blend hummus with sundried tomatoes or mix in pine nuts or olives.
- Makes 4 servings (approximately ¼ cup per serving).*



NUTRITIONAL INFO:

- Serving Size 114 g
- Calories 272
- Total Fat 16.7 g
- Saturated Fat 2.3 g
- Cholesterol 0 mg
- Sodium 356 mg
- Total Carbs 24.8 g
- Dietary Fibre 7 g
- Sugars 4.3 g
- Protein 8.7 g

The late Afia Donkor was a passionate health advocate who volunteered for LCES and authored the cookbook The Powerful Plate. It is now available for purchase at the ABC Christian Bookstore in Oshawa, Ont.



Request for Lighthouse FM

"It's so exciting to see the Lord continue to open doors of interest."

It's such an encouragement when we hear from people who have heard Lighthouse FM for the first time. Some of those listeners, however, may be only visiting a transmitter area and do not have a tower in their own community. Such was the case with a letter we received from a Pentecostal pastor who asked if we would consider putting up a tower in Churchill Falls, Labrador.

Currently, we have two towers in Labrador: one in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and another in Labrador City-Wabush. A local pilot from Labrador had initially contacted us about coming to the Big Land. We worked with him and the ministerial association to see if there was an interest in having Christian radio.

We don't have an Adventist church in Labrador, so Lighthouse FM has been a way to introduce our beliefs. Just recently we partnered with an Adventist nurse working in the area, to get the word out about Lighthouse FM.

It's so exciting to see the Lord continue to open doors of interest.

There are three other communities wanting a Lighthouse FM tower. It costs about \$40,000 to put up a CRTC-licensed low-power FM tower. Right now we don't have those funds. We are leaving that with the Lord. He knows our needs.

Recently, we had talks about developing Indigenous programming for Lighthouse FM. We know this will be welcomed in Labrador and other areas of Canada. So, would you kindly keep all of this in prayer? We continue to follow a vision of growth and reach even more people for Christ with the truth of the gospel and God-honouring ministry. ■

Sherry Griffin is the station manager for Lighthouse FM.

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RAINMAK

A Different Side of the Gospel

Born in the heart of a young girl was a love for the gospel of Jesus Christ and His Word, and a passion for finding new ways of doing things. Baptized at age 13, Sharon Modeste became active in the Adventist Youth (AY) program at the Ottawa East Seventh-day Adventist Church, eventually becoming the AY director.

Maurice Ennis was studying at McGill University in Montreal, Que., when the LaSalle New Life Seventh-day Adventist Church was invited to Ottawa East to host an AY program in 1995. He decided to tag along. Meeting Sharon changed the course of their lives. "We began our relationship as friends," Sharon said. With friendship blossoming into more, she moved to Toronto (Maurice's hometown) to further her career as a broadcast journalist. After courting for two years, they were married in 2002.

During those two years while working at CTV Inc., Sharon recognized that there was little Christian content in mainstream news. She decided to change that. "This was the beginning of a five-year adventure for us," said Sharon. "Maurice became my videographer, and with my newly created video production company, Images of You, we embarked on an ambitious mission to bring the Toronto-area Christian community together. I wanted to give local churches and musicians a voice, and to show the light of Christ."

Their coverage of Christian news, music, events, and lifestyle were broadcast on Crossroads Television System and the Miracle Channel in Alberta. This was their first ministry project together.

The Ennis family began to grow with the birth of Isaiah in 2003, followed by Micah in 2005, Gabrielle (Gabby) in 2007, and Noah in 2009.

Gabby's birth signalled the beginning of their next ministry project. In 2011, portions of Sharon's journals were published in a book titled *Gabby's Gift – Hope in the Heart of a Child: A Mother's Journal*.

Asked to write a second book, she wrote *My Silly Feet*, the story of Gabby's desire to run in a race. These books led to Sharon's speaking ministry. Men, women, and children in churches, in schools, and at public events responded to her written words, as well as the comfort and encouragement she provided when they met her in person.

"Often a message will arrive from someone who continues to find inspiration and courage in the story of Sharon and Gabby's early challenges," said Maurice. "These messages always seem to come at a critical time; they encourage Sharon to keep pressing on despite the challenges. By inspiring others, Sharon has consistently found that she becomes inspired and encouraged herself."

When Isaiah joined Pathfinders, Sharon joined too so that she could be part of the Pathfinder ministry with him. Eventually, the Bowmanville Seventh-day Adventist Church sought her out; they needed a Master Guide to start a Pathfinder club and to be their Adventurers' director. After much prayer, the Ennis family answered the call to Bowmanville.

In 2018, Sharon decided to create a game to be played Friday evening at a

Bowmanville Archers Pathfinder event at Ontario's Camp Frenda. Armed with dollar store materials, her game had components of Pathfinder honours: health and fitness, recreation, camping skills, arts and crafts, nature, world missions, and Bible facts. When asked, "Why this game?" Sharon replied, "They had lots of games to play, but nothing that challenged them in the areas where they were learning new information. I wanted them to be able to integrate the skills they were learning in a fun and interactive way."

The Pathfinders thought it was a great game! So did Maurice. "You have to develop this," he told Sharon.

"I don't know anything about developing games," she said. But she knows a lot about developing families. "The thing I love about our family," she explained, "is that we love trying something new. We love to do projects that help to bring a different side of the gospel."

That's the reason all Ennis family members participated in the game's development. "This time we took on a family business project," said Sharon. "This enabled the children to see how our company, 6 in the House Inc., was created from the ground up."

Isaiah, Micah, Gabby, and Noah participated in the decisions regarding the colourful and beautifully illustrated game board (that is twice the size of other board games), the company's logo, and which manufacturing company would produce and print the game. They helped to write the trivia questions and answers. They tested the prototype

ERS

by Ann Donnelly

to make certain that it read and played well; they helped to develop the rules of play.

Sharon explained the importance of the “Challenge” component of the game. “Non-Christians rarely want to play a Christian game,” she said. “They feel they won’t know the answers, so they can’t win. In this game, when you land on a square that lets you choose a “Challenge” card, you’re asked a Bible question. If you don’t know the answer, you’re told where to find it in the Bible—the Bible that’s right there on the table!”

The Ennis family has created a way for the Bible to be opened and read, because, as Sharon explained, “God’s Word never returns void.”

Isaiah, known as the family’s social media expert, created the social media accounts on all the platforms the family uses to market the game. He and Micah helped with video recording and editing the promotional videos. “Noah is the face of our videos on YouTube,” said Sharon. “He’s the star of the show. I think now he’s asking for compensation and a dressing room!”

As Gabby participated in the game’s development, she was more concerned about her mom, the person behind the game. “She would check in with me to see how I was doing,” said Sharon. “She would encourage me; she’s such a pick-me-upper!”

Pin 2 Win! comes with its ability to be adapted to the imagination of those playing it. “We designed it so that people can play by the rules or be creative with it,” Sharon said. “We encourage families to try something new; to use the game



The Ennis family (Back row L to R: Micah, Maurice, Isaiah; Front row L to R: Gabrielle, Sharon, Noah)

to bring a different side of the gospel to the people they invite to play.”

Available for purchase on Amazon.ca, Pin 2 Win! can be played successfully with others on Zoom. As Sharon says, “It’s not about a product; it’s about an experience. Pathfinders can use Pin 2 Win! as an outreach to their non-Christian friends and relatives, and adults can do the same. The family is the heart of the community, and it’s important for us to preserve that heart. This game helps families reunite and reconnect.”

Maurice’s words ring true: “While the world is working through upheavals both technological and viral, Sharon is promoting a back-to-basics family board

game to help families stay connected. Through it all, she continues to prioritize our family’s well-being. Her experience of constantly pressing forward through uncharted territories truly demonstrates that, with God, all things are possible.”

The Ennis family is dedicated to spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ and His Word. Their creation of Pin 2 Win! makes it possible for us to join their efforts to bring a different side of the gospel to others too. ■

You can reach Sharon at info@pin2win.ca.
Ann Donnelly is the founder and CEO
of Taking the Next Step Corp.



cover story

A Conversation With DAN AND DONNA JACKSON



Dan and Donna Jackson are not strangers to the True North. They were both born and raised in Canada and spent many years in ministry here—including Dan’s time as president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada—before being elected to the North American Division presidency during the 2010 GC Session in Atlanta, Ga. After retiring on July 1, 2020, Dan and Donna sat down (virtually) with Messenger staff writer J.D. Victor Fitch to discuss their journey and where they are heading next.

Messenger: *Tell me where you were born and about your childhood family.*

Dan: I was born in Edmonton, Alta., to Daniel Malcolm Jackson and Isabella Frances (née Black) Jackson. I was the youngest of three children. During my early years my family did not believe that I could talk. Being the only boy with two sisters and a mother who loved conversing, I found it difficult to get a word in edge-wise. Of course, I made up for that deficit during the rest of my life. My mother faithfully came to my room every night and studied the Sabbath school lesson with me and then prayed. Her love for God and His church continue to inspire me.

Donna: I was born and brought up in Sidney, a little town on Vancouver Island, with my sister, Lilian, and brother, David. My parents were in business—sheet metal, plumbing, and roofing—before Dad switched to building apartments. Vancouver Island is still my beloved rock.

M: *You met at CUC, where couples were watched very carefully. Tell me about your courtship and the life you’ve enjoyed together.*

Dan: We first met at a quartet practice. Donna was a new student on campus, and one of the quartet members asked her to accompany us [on the piano]. To be honest, I was smitten with her from the very first practice. However, we formed a relationship very gradually.

Donna was a very spiritual person and I was a little more carefree. At one point I was pulled out of a social gathering by a faculty member who warned me that if I “hurt that girl,” he would see to it that I never walked on the campus again.

During our courtship Donna led me to Jesus. We were married at 19 and 18 [years of age] and have travelled the world together. With our three children, we’ve lived in several countries including India and Sri Lanka.

M: *Donna, please share your employment history. What service brought you the greatest joy and satisfaction, and why?*

Donna: I was self-employed as a piano teacher while our children were young, and an organist at various faith community congregations. I worked for the BC Ministry

of Social Services and Housing administering income assistance and various benefits; worked for Alberta Suicide Prevention Services; served as the Family and Women’s Ministries director of the Ontario Conference; and finally as an NAD associate ministerial department director responsible for overseeing ministry to ministerial spouses within our division and creating resources for them.

While not “employed” as a pastoral spouse, the 24 years while my husband pastored brought me joy and growth from the friendships of so many. My nine years in Ontario were revitalizing, seeing the Holy Spirit draw together gifted people (whom I grew to love deeply) to start new ministries; and my time at the NAD allowed me the privilege of working with union and conference leaders, pastoral and chaplain spouses including male spouses, my office team, and the amazing Desiree Bryant, who now sits in the chair I occupied for a season.

But perhaps one of my greatest joys was during a volunteer project in Ethiopia, hanging out with street kids in my spare time and seeing their horrible wounds heal with a little TLC and clean daily bandaging. What a God!

M: *Dan, what were the factors involved in your call to ministry?*

Dan: A series of events led me to the conclusion that God was inviting me to enter ministry. I had started college with the intention of pursuing business/economics and then adding a political science degree. During the summer of 1968, I concluded that God was calling me. I had a mother who was praying for me and a wife who actually led me to Christ. No one convinced me. I just finally heard His voice.

M: *I know you as a man of deep conviction based on your study of the Word. As a General Conference vice-president and the North American Division president, how did you work between those two responsibilities and handle the possible frustrations of committee decisions with which you may have disagreed?*

Dan: It is a challenge to work in an environment where you have to constantly take into account varying perspectives of multi-cultures, ethnicities, races, and countries. Added to that you have the diverse religious solitudes that flow from conservative to liberal with



everything in between. On the one hand it is very stimulating and a great blessing. On the other hand great misunderstandings can arise.

While I recognized that I had been called to serve the world church, my first responsibility was to those whom I directly served—the members of the church in the North American Division.

I have always believed that transparency is the best position to take when you are a part of a decision-making group, that God’s work doesn’t benefit from people sitting silently in disagreement, and that there can be a point when silence is tantamount to cowardice. So, when I disagreed with a given position during the process of decision making, I expressed my views on the principles or lack thereof behind what was being proposed. Where decisions were being made with poor information, I tried to build bridges of understanding.

I had a good team in our office and throughout the division whom I relied on and who supported me. More importantly, there was God to go to for strength. After the crucial vote taken in 2015 in San Antonio on the possible freedom of individual divisions to decide on the women’s ordination issue, I called the NAD delegation together, and [we affirmed] that our division would not break faith with the world church decision and that we would continue to strongly affirm our support of women pastors and hold them up to God in prayer. In that huge room, groups encircled each female pastor and prayed earnestly for God’s comfort and strength in their lives. That reach up to God connects all of us with our strongest Support System.

M: *What do you think was the greatest accomplishment, with the Lord’s leading and blessing, of your 10 years as president of the North American Division?*

Dan: It is a very interesting question. I believe that the

fundamental answer is that, by God’s grace, we saw the growth of a world division into full division-hood. Early on I would say to people, “It is time for the NAD to self-differentiate. We are in the business here of growing a division.” So, our administrative team, with broad consultation and the endorsement of the large NAD Executive Committee, embraced the goals of becoming more strategic, aligned, collaborative, and accountable to more effectively reach people with Christ’s hope and wholeness.

Several core values and six fundamental building blocks were adopted to give further clarity to our mission. Structurally for the NAD, it led to asking the world church to move toward tithing parity (which began in 2012), doing our own payroll, establishing a human resources department, and eventually purchasing our own building. Our commitment to accountability led to some closures and restructuring of NAD entities and to embracing others (such as Pacific Press, Oakwood University, Christian Record Services, and AdventSource). We accepted the GC’s request to take on the Guam-Micronesian Mission. Much remains to be done, but it was a busy and eventful 10 years in which we saw God work many miracles in this division where the sun never sets.

M: *What do you pray for now at the North American Division and for President Bryant?*

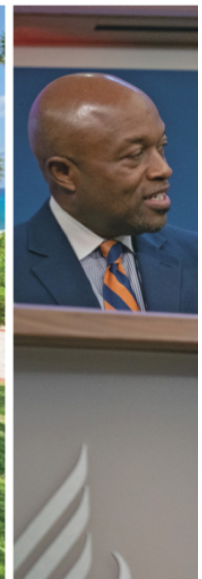
Dan: I pray that God will stimulate a level of creativity, initiative, and energy in the NAD that will bring the division, our unions, conferences, and local congregations to a new level of evangelistic zeal and awareness.

For Elder Bryant, I pray that God will give Him wisdom and resilience to deal with the vast array of challenges that will come to him and his team. Elder Bryant is, above all things, a genuine Christian committed to God and to His church. So I will also be praying that

Donna at a Women’s Ministries event. Photo credit: Dan Weber/NAD



Dan and Donna on a vacation in Maui. Photo courtesy of Dan and Donna Jackson.





Dan and Donna having fun at an NAD office Christmas party. Photo credit: Karnik Doukmetzian



The Jacksons' children (photos clockwise): Dan, Marisa, Tessa, and Renic; Dena; Lara and her husband, Joel. Photos courtesy of Dan and Donna Jackson.

God surrounds him with mighty angels to protect him from the snares that the devil will undoubtedly place on his path.

M: *Donna, please tell me about your family.*

Donna: Dena, who lives in Whistler, B.C., is a massage therapist and one of the first in western Canada to teach stone therapy to massage therapists. Dena is most at home in nature. She loves to snowboard in virgin snow and surf bigger waves than she should!

Lara, an educator, lives in Calgary with her husband, Joel Melashenko, who works in IT. Lara, while she worked

as a high school teacher, loved to make God come alive in her favourite subjects: physics, chemistry, and biology. She was a stellar principal at Chinook Winds Adventist Academy (ask her former students and teachers) and right now is writing high school course content for online education. They have two sons, Andre and Jonathan. We happily welcomed Jonathon's wife, Nicole, into our family.

Our son, Dan, a mechanic, business owner, appraiser, and now university student, is an innovative and hard worker and is passionately committed to his family. He, his wife Marisa, and their children Renic and Tessa, live in Lacombe. Marisa works in the audiology field.

M: *Welcome back to Canada! What are your plans, the Lord willing, for your retirement?*

Donna: We're happy to be back home in Canada. It's a new experience for us to be able to choose where to live! I'm rather excited about how God will help me reinvent myself for this next phase of life.

Dan: Donna and I are grateful to be back in our homeland, and thank you for the welcome. We love Canada and always will. After some time we do intend to become involved with a local congregation. I don't believe that one can put a time limitation on serving God, and we will never do that even though we need a little rest at the moment. ■

G. Alexander Bryant presents Dan and Donna with a farewell gift. Photo credit: Dan Weber/NAD



J.D. Victor Fitch is a staff writer for the Canadian Adventist Messenger. He resides in Red Deer, Alta.



A Dog and a Prayer

"I thank God that He answered the prayer I offered at the beginning of that street. Even if I had to endure Peanut, God's purpose was fully realized."

"God, I know there is someone you want me to meet on this street today. Please give me your Spirit and the right words to say, so that I can find that person for you."

This was the prayer Sharon offered as she started a new street as a Canada Youth Challenge missionary. Read as she shares with us how God answered her prayer that particular day.

I approached the steps of a house and met a young man who was smoking. I introduced myself and shared with him a book called *Foods That Heal*. He said that his mother would probably really like the book, so he went inside to get her. His mother, Judy, came outside, holding a small dog. Although she liked the book, she seemed in a hurry and would not let me share more. "How much? ... Do you take cheques? ... Why not step inside?"

Once I was seated, she thrust her dog into my arms and went to get her cheque book. God knows I'm not a dog person. I think they're a wonderful part of His creation, but I like them only when we're not in each other's space. So while Judy wrote the cheque, I silently directed a number of questions to God concerning Peanut, the dog in my lap. God didn't answer my questions, but in turn asked me a question: *Sharon, why not show her the other books?*

So I did, and Judy listened intently to everything I was sharing about the additional books—*Peace Above the Storm*, *The Great Controversy*, and *God's Answers to Your Questions*. She ended up taking them all! I then offered to pray for her and asked whether there was something special she wanted me to pray for.

Judy paused for a long moment. Then she said yes and

went on to tell me that her son, whom I had met outside and who was only 17 years old, was addicted to crack.

I prayed for Judy and pleaded for God to break the chains of the enemy and to pour out His Spirit upon her, her son, and her home. She cried uncontrollably. I hugged her, signed her up for Bible studies, and gave her a magazine for her son that deals with addictions.

She looked at me and said, "You're such a beautiful person. I am sure that God sent you here today!"

I thank God that He answered the prayer I offered at the beginning of that street. Even if I had to endure Peanut, God's purpose was fully realized. Pray that Judy and her son find victory and peace in Jesus and a place in heaven.

In all our associations it should be remembered that in the experience of others there are chapters sealed from mortal sight. ... There stand registered long, hard battles with trying circumstances, perhaps troubles in the home life, that day by day weaken courage, confidence, and faith. Those who are fighting the battle of life at great odds may be strengthened and encouraged by little attentions that cost only a loving effort. To such the strong, helpful grasp of the hand by a true friend is worth more than gold or silver. Words of kindness are as welcome as the smile of angels.¹ ■

Sharon Desir shared her story with us while serving as a CYC literature evangelist. Lifestyle Canada is Canada's literature evangelism ministry.

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, 158.



Mission Trip Short but Sweet for PAA Students

A famous poem on the value of time asks the reader to imagine “the value one day makes to the person born on February 29 (leap year).” For Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA) students on this year’s mission trip to Grand Bahama, one day made all the difference.

The team was already en route to Fort Lauderdale when the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. Trip co-ordinator and PAA youth pastor Ted Deer explains, “Shortly after arriving, we learned of the many government decisions happening in rapid sequence in taking measures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.” He adds, “Because of similar decisions, three groups from the United States who were scheduled to travel a day or two after our group had their trips cancelled.”

PAA student Serena Munyaneza was not daunted by the change in circumstances. “God’s timing is everything—I never really understood this quote until March 2020,” says Serena. “I had been trying to get my Canadian passport renewed, but the government took longer than expected due to missing documents. Thankfully, I was able to pick up my passport the day before the trip.” She continues, “I couldn’t believe everything worked out so perfectly. On our first flight, I started tearing up because God really came through for me when I had lost all hope.”

Upon arrival, the group was overwhelmed with the support of the Bahamian churches and conference, as well as local mission trip co-ordinator Karendia Swain. Many hurricane survivors were still unable to return to their homes because of the extensive damage and work to be done. With Mrs. Swain’s help, the PAA team quickly organized to do as much work as possible at six sites, including the local Adventist primary school, before the window of opportunity closed.

Students tiled floors and bathrooms, painted, installed kitchen cabinets, assisted with playground repairs, laid flooring, and performed yard and beach debris removal. Sabbath was a highlight, with the team holding services at two churches and

participating in an Adventist Youth program.

“On Sabbath, I had the chance to talk with a man close to my age about how he saw God through nature,” says student Luke Ganson. “To my surprise, he used the hurricanes as his example. He said that God uses these hurricanes as reminders of what God has given them and how much He provides time and time again. He said that cleaning up and repairing the blessing God gave them shows how He will provide for them once again,” Luke explains. “This impacted me because even in devastation, this young man saw the positive when it looked like there was none.”

“This trip was incredible because it was the first time where we’ve gone to work with people we actually know; there are numerous Bahamian students attending Burman University,” concludes Pastor Ted. “Although our time was short, a lot was accomplished because of the skilled workers who had come on the trip.”

Student Janelle Glover feels blessed. “Even being able to travel outside of Canada was a miracle,” she says. “COVID-19 had caused all the other groups to stay in the United States and could have stopped us despite already being en route. Although our numbers were small, we were able to make an impact on the very welcoming community. God’s hand was visible throughout the whole mission trip, and He blessed us with safety.” ■

Patti Smedley is the former assistant dean and communications director for Parkview Adventist Academy in Lacombe, Alta. To learn more about PAA and its many programs, visit www.paa.ca.

In September 2019, Grand Bahama was hit by a Category 5 hurricane, Dorian—the strongest storm on record to hit the Bahamas. Over 48 hours, it caused millions of dollars in damage, displacing families and taking lives. Today, the people of Grand Bahama are trying to rebuild. Visit the North Bahamas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists’ Facebook page to learn how you can help.

THE BURMAN EFFECT

BURMAN ALUMNI
IMPACTING THEIR COMMUNITIES

Acts of Kindness

Almost 25 years ago, they asked themselves, “If our church burned down tomorrow, would we be missed?” The obvious answer was no. But when they ask themselves the same question today, the answer is a resounding yes.

The Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA) and Canadian University College (now Burman University) alumni who initiated the transformation in 1996 were Michael and Marj Halushak and Lloyd and Leoni Miller. These visionaries, together with their friend Howard Kettner, inspired a “can-do” attitude at the Aldergrove Seventh-day Adventist Church in Langley, B.C. And that’s how Lawrence Stoyanowski (PAA ’85, CUC ’89) became the community facilitator.

Lawrence recalls that the church organized a breakfast club for inner-city children and a summer camp for kids. They put on a Christmas dinner for the community with gifts for all children. They ran a computer training school, held vegetarian cooking classes, and invited the community to stop-smoking programs. Lawrence was busy!

As community facilitator, he also sat on boards such as the Community Health Education Committee at Langley Memorial Hospital (Langley, B.C.), where he was vice-chair, then chair, and finally past chair.

Lawrence says, “Most church members [his estimate is 80 percent] then and now help out in one way or another. Even better, lots of community people donate time, effort, money, and supplies. They work right alongside of us. Some of those who attended our computer school are now worshipping with us.”

Eventually, the Aldergrove church grew into the Church in the Valley, and the community services department added the descriptor “Acts of Kindness (AOK): Meeting the needs of struggling families in the township of Langley.” Pastors Francis Douville (CUC ’04) and Michael Dauncey (CUC ’98) were the AOK co-ordinators for many years. Recently, Anderline Bredy joined the pastoral staff as co-ordinator. David Jamieson (CUC ’85), lead pastor since 2001, has inspired his church to be the hands of Jesus in our troubled and hurting world.

The AOK website (www.actsofkindness.ca) explains that the church offers programs for moms, as well as family support programs, camp sponsorships, and food and clothing. One service is a free dental day. Another service, “Nightshift,” provides nightly outreach to people facing poverty, addiction, and

homelessness in the nearby city of Surrey.

All of the services and programs require dependable volunteers; they also require funding. One fundraiser is an annual golf tournament. For the past 16 years, Lawrence has served on the organizing committee. During that time, more than \$650,000 went to projects ranging from 21 extreme home makeovers; to numerous oil changes for single moms’ cars; to 55 refurbished, roadworthy vehicles to families needing reliable transportation.


Lawrence says, “The time, energy, commitment, and total dedication to helping our neighbours is enormous. But the relationships built and the effects on people’s lives are overwhelmingly positive.”

Recently, Lawrence was running an errand in an office, when the office manager addressed him by name. When he looked surprised, she explained that she knew him from the computer training program that had given her a start in her career so many years ago. Positive effects on people’s lives indeed! ■

Renate Krause is the editor of Burman University Magazine.



A volunteer mechanic works on a car during a Church in the Valley AOK event.



Mission Statement:
To inspire in each student
a life of faith, wisdom
and service.

Designed. 4. Excellence
Faith. Wisdom. Service.



Seventh-day
Adventist Church

MARITIME CONFERENCE

THE SPIRITUAL DEPOT



In 2011, Peter and his family decided to make a colossal change. They moved across the globe from China all the way to Vancouver, B.C., after Peter accepted employment as a skilled worker. Needless to say, Peter and his family felt alone and lost in a new country. Many had warned Peter and his family about the vast differences between Chinese and Western culture. Still, the family took a leap of faith and made sure to carry their beliefs and values with them.

In the last two decades, the number of international students enrolled in Canadian colleges and universities has been on a significant rise. In 2018, the number of international students studying in Canada rose to more than half a million, coming only second to Australia. Of the half million international students in Canada's post-secondary institutions, Chinese students make up 25 percent of that number. The majority of these students come to Canada on their own, leaving them without familial connections. Not surprisingly, then, many end up

journeying as international students and feeling alone.

Fully understanding the plight of loneliness, Peter and his wife determined to do something to help students in the same situation. They created the Spiritual Depot, a house-church type of ministry catering primarily to the Mandarin-speaking Chinese community in the Metro Vancouver area.

"We started doing this ministry in Vancouver. At first, we were not so sure about its relevance. ... We didn't know anything else except our own experience,

so we just did [our] best [based on] common sense and carried our motto from China into Vancouver—and it so happened that it worked the same way," Peter explained. Peter's wife had coined the term "Spiritual Depot" in Chinese.

The Spiritual Depot began meeting on Friday nights. Traditional home-cooked Chinese food, lively music, and messages of hope were shared. The first Friday night worship began with seven people, which included Peter and his wife. Most of the guests were classmates from her government ESL program.

Peter and his wife created the Spiritual Depot to help students find a sense of belonging.



A definite attraction for many of the young people is the food that is provided every Friday night. Peter and his wife provide guests with delicious Chinese meals.



Josh explained the group's main mission is to meet people's needs, not convert them.



Peter continued, "From then on, God provided different people along the way. During the first few years, while we were still in Chinese church, we concentrated more on the ... campus ministry, targeting the overseas Chinese students, inviting them ... for free food [and a] family environment."

A definite attraction for many of the young people is the food that is provided every Friday night. Being a student away from home can leave one craving the comfort of familiarity. Peter and his wife provide guests with delicious Chinese meals as a way to alleviate this need. "Whether [they] are Christian or not, they are being attracted. But not only that, it's fellowship. Free, non-judgmental fellowship and a homey feeling also attracted those overseas people, even immigrants," Peter says.

Josh migrated to Vancouver to further his studies. However, he had first met Peter and his family in China. Josh was relieved to find familiar faces when he arrived in Vancouver. He then began to attend the Spiritual Depot meetings. At first, he just attended as an observer, enjoying the food and fellowship. Eventually, his participation grew into a leadership role. He is now helping lead the Spiritual Depot into its next phase of growth. The small group has quickly grown from seven people to about 40 to 50 who now regularly attend Friday night get-togethers. To accommodate everyone, Peter and his family had to begin renting a larger space.

Josh and the Spiritual Depot team are focused on connecting with local Mandarin-speaking students. While they continue to hold Friday night meetings,

sharing food and the Word of God, they also provide a space for individuals to share their personal experiences. For example, Spiritual Depot guests are encouraged to share burdens that might be on their hearts or testimonies of how God has helped them each week. One of the main goals of Spiritual Depot is to connect on a personal and relatable level.

As the Friday night gatherings continue to grow, leaders have introduced a second component to their ministry: weekly Bible study groups. Attendees of the Friday night gatherings have grown curious about God. Many people have been baptized through the Spiritual Depot. However, the group's main purpose is not to convert people, but to meet the people's needs. When discussing the heart of the Spiritual Depot's purpose, Josh said, "We have different talent[s], gift[s], and people have different needs. I think the most important thing is [to] serve the needs of the people. You know what they want, you know what they need. And then show you care [for] them and show that you love them. Let them know all of your inspiration and motivation is not from deep [within] yourself but because of the love of God."

Spiritual Depot leaders continue to encourage the younger members of the group to aspire to lead and carry on the concept of service to those in need, whether the need is psychological or emotional. It is their hope that the Spiritual Depot will remain operational through the generations so that people may continue to receive help whenever they need it.

Peter and his family immigrated to

Canada with just their own experience and a love for their Lord. Yet, they have been able to provide numerous students and newcomers with a safe, comforting, supportive place to be themselves. And without any pressure, several have surrendered their lives to Christ. Peter and his wife used what they had to connect with others: understanding. They understand what it's like to feel alone. They understand what it's like to move to another country, knowing very little of it. They understand what it's like to just want someone to relate to ... someone who will show empathy. As a result, they took their understanding of these needs and did what they could to meet these same needs for others.

As believers of Christ, we also share common understandings with others. We may understand what it's like to be alone, afraid, confused, hungry, worried, traumatized, lost, or from a different culture. We may have had someone show us comfort, direction, friendship, a listening ear, relevance, or provide food and ways to heal. And it is these experiences that make us fully equipped to meet the needs of others. Concepts similar to the Spiritual Depot can be established anywhere. All it takes is someone willing to create a space—online, in person, over the phone, etc.—where people with common experiences can gather and receive support. Perhaps the reality is, each of us is a walking spiritual depot. ■

Megan Mootoo is the former secretary for the Canadian Adventist Messenger. Parts of this article were adapted from the video "Spiritual Depot" (<https://vimeo.com/388351170>).

In an effort to provide fellowship and fun, attendees enjoy playing sports together, especially badminton matches.



As Friday night gatherings continue to grow, leaders have introduced a second component to their ministry: weekly Bible study groups.



MAIN MISSION

- TO SERVE PEOPLE'S NEEDS
- TO SHOW THEM SOMEONE CARES
- TO SHOW THEM GOD'S LOVE

God's Shield of Protection

The Canadian and Ugandan governments worked together to have a special flight for expats to leave Uganda and return home. We were given six days to prepare for the repatriation flight—six days to get *everything* together.

Fortunately, there was a pet food sale the week before, and my mom managed to purchase a four-month supply of food for our dogs. It felt excessive at the time, but pet food and other imported goods aren't always readily available and have become even more scarce since the pandemic. God knew the dogs would have to be taken care of in our absence.

Ate Jewel¹ still had her school stuff packed, so at least that was set. We stocked the pantry with groceries and household necessities for Papa, who would remain behind. We continued to eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, kept physically active, and most importantly no more late nights. We needed to keep our immune systems at their prime.

Six days.

We were nervous and anxious with the anticipation of being exposed to the novel coronavirus, but we held on to God's Isaiah 41:10 promise to be with us and strengthen us.

Pre-flight protocols were emailed to inform us what to expect and what was required of us as travellers. Strict measures were outlined: masks worn at all times, frequent hand sanitation, and regular temperature checks.

However, PPE varied from person to person. Some wore cloth masks; some, medical masks; while others, a face shield and mask. Some took no risks and were completely covered from head to toe in a hazmat suit. It made me wonder if we had enough protection.

The airport halls were eerily empty and quiet; the tension, undeniable.

We boarded the plane and were surprised to be seated right beside other passengers. Social distancing was adhered to in the airport with designated areas for seating, two-metre markings on the floor, and staggered lines. We expected the same for the flight. However, the passengers were condensed in the front part of the plane alongside families with small children and babies. We assumed it was a full flight. Later we realized there were plenty of empty seats in the rear



Tired Jaden, Jewel, and Onyx arriving at Vancouver International Airport.

sections of the plane and wondered why we were not spread out more evenly to maintain social distancing. In addition, when meals were served, everyone unmasked at the same time. I was very nervous, and we decided to eat after most of those around us had finished their meals.

I felt bad for the exhausted parents dealing with little ones during the 18-hour leg of the trip from Addis Ababa to Toronto. But children cry, get fussy, and need space to play. Undoubtedly, the question remained in my mind: *Would we contract the virus?* Ate Jaden mentioned that it seemed like we heard every cough, every sneeze, and every nose blow. We were so conscious of our surroundings. We continued praying for God's shield of protection.

We landed in Toronto to catch the last leg to Vancouver. We were almost home and enjoyed our Canadian welcome with our family tradition of Tim Hortons donuts and cream cheese bagels.

The flight to Vancouver was very different: once the cabin doors were closed, the flight attendants rearranged our seating to ensure social distancing. In addition, we were not served meals but a care package with water, pretzels, gloves, a mask, hand sanitizer, and alcohol wipes. Different protocols, but we still wondered if we had already contracted the virus.

On the completion of our 14-day isolation, we celebrated with delayed hugs and dinner with family.

With a sigh of relief, we breathed the fresh Vancouver air as we praised and thanked God for His shield of protection. ■

Onyx is the son of Charles and Betty Aguilar. The Aguilars hail from British Columbia and are currently serving as missionaries in Uganda.

¹ The word *ate* (pronounced "ah-teh") is Filipino for "older sister."



Students Win City Sculpture Commission and Become Philanthropists



Miweyih towin, a public art sculpture commissioned by the City of Lacombe, was designed by Eileen Firingstone and Tessa Potts. The welded steel sculpture with stainless steel highlights took shape in MANS's Leon Ingraham CTS Building, the CWB Welding Foundation Shop in July and August. Photo credit: Mike Willing



Tessa Potts, philanthropist and one of the co-creators of *Miweyih towin*, graduated from MANS in June 2020. Tessa talks about her experience with MANS and welding ambitions in *The First in My House*, a video that can be viewed at www.mans1.ca. Photo credit: Pattie Reasor

This summer while most high school students were looking for jobs, two Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS) students took the initiative to apply to create a sculpture for Lacombe's traffic circle at the intersection of Calgary and Edmonton Trail and College Avenue. Tessa Potts, who graduated from MANS in June, and Eileen Firingstone, a current Grade 11 student, spent approximately 150 hours with their welding teacher, MANS high school vice-principal Mike Willing, to create *Miweyih towin*. Firingstone and Potts donated a significant part of their earnings to help cover MANS's COVID-19-related expenses.

The welded metal sculpture of two sharp-tailed grouse was commissioned by the City of Lacombe as part of its public art program. The Cree name of the sculpture, which can be translated as "Affinity for One Another," was chosen initially to represent friendship and connection between the Plains Cree people and the people of Lacombe. It has, however, taken on a very personal meaning for Firingstone and Potts.

For Firingstone, a MANS student since Grade 7, and Potts, a student since kindergarten, "Affinity for One Another" sums up their relationship to the MANS community, but it especially sums up their summer experience in the Leon Ingraham CTS Building welding shop at MANS. Both studied welding there before becoming entrepreneurs, paying for the material and space they used as well as Willing's supervisory time from

commission funds. Potts and Firingstone worked intensely together, designing and welding six hours a day, two days a week in July, and kept an even more rigorous schedule in August.

As if in synch, the two girls can finish each other's sentences. "We [Mr. Willing, Eileen, and I] spent the whole summer together," begins Potts. Firingstone adds, "It's brought the three of us together—like homies!"

The girls were also of one mind when, as they were finishing the sculpture, COVID-19 safety protocols were being announced by Alberta Education, and it became clear that the measures exceeded MANS's budget for the coming year. With opening day just a couple of weeks away, Potts and Firingstone chose to donate \$750 for an electrostatic cleaner to help keep future students safe.

"I have some pretty important people in my life," said Firingstone, including a twin brother who also attends MANS. "I don't want to risk losing them."

Miweyih towin was unveiled in September, much to the excitement of the two philanthropists, who really looked forward to the event. ■

Lynn McDowell is director of planned giving/philanthropy for the Alberta Conference, and Pattie Reasor teaches sciences, math, and religious studies at Mamawi Atosketan Junior and Senior High School.



You can follow school life and activities at MANS on Facebook.



October 2020

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A Whole Lot of Sweetness Goes a Long Way



Calia shows off a cupcake that she made for contactless pickup sales during COVID-19.



Calia displays her creative side with an array of cupcakes.



Calia, pictured at one of her first cupcake sales, has been fundraising for ABW Canada since kindergarten.

Calia Akehurst is stirring up a whole lot of sweetness for Kenyan children.

Cupcakes, cinnamon buns, and cookies have been her favourites to bake for A Better World Canada programs. The 13-year-old from Delta, B.C., recently donated \$1,300 to ABW for her initiative that began in August 2019 and ended in June.

Since kindergarten, Calia has been fundraising for ABW. She first saw that same interest from sister Jessana, who fundraised with other students at Sunshine Hills Elementary School, which collected more than \$150,000 for ABW projects over eight years. Calia was keen to help too and was passionate to do her best. Over four years, she raised the most at Sunshine Hills, including in Grade 5 when she raised \$1,400.

“For the past four years I tried to be the top fundraiser so I could feel accomplished for helping people,” says Calia.

Calia’s mother, Angela, added it was “awesome to see” her youngest child be so zealous about fundraising while carrying on other interests such as skateboarding, drawing, and especially writing. “She was always very motivated,” says Angela.

Calia was moved to help after seeing photos of projects funded through her school and being inspired by ABW co-founder Eric Rajah’s passion as he spoke to students. Even after Sunshine Hills chose another charity this past year, Calia became even more committed.

It was a true labour of love. With the help of her mom, Calia typically baked 144 cupcakes for each sale. They also created sugar cookies shaped like fall leaves in celebration of autumn.

Calia’s father, John, helped to get her set up for selling the baked goods outside. They’d post a sign, pitch a tent with a chair,

and magnificently display all of her sugar cookies and decorated cupcakes. Prior to COVID-19, most purchases were made by friends and parents at bake sales in the Akehursts’ driveway.

When the coronavirus struck hard in mid-March, Calia changed her marketing plan. Sales were boosted through Facebook, and whenever possible, contactless pickup sales were done.

Calia sold about 17 dozen cupcakes and six dozen cinnamon buns during COVID lockdown.

“We’d spend all day making them. Sometimes I’d get bored and my mom would continue for a little bit, and then I’d go back and help. So it took me and my mom one or two days to make the cupcakes (at one time). And then we iced them and that took a while.”

The cinnamon buns, made from scratch and drizzled with cream cheese icing, seemed to be the customer favourites. During a fall fundraiser, Calia sold 26 dozen cinnamon buns. “We set a price so people knew what to pay,” added Calia.

The \$1,300 will fund instruments for children with intellectual disabilities. Calia would “love to go one day” to Kenya and see the impact of her fundraising. The Grade 8 student already has career ambitions.

“It’s a dream of mine to be an author, but if that doesn’t work out, ... I’d really like to be a lawyer, like a human rights lawyer,” says Calia. And if it’s anything like her dedication to support children, she’ll achieve those dreams too. ■

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

The Joy of Sharing



On July 15, 2020, my husband, Arnold, and I drove 70 kilometres to purchase a piece of machinery from Jerry. Arnold wanted me to meet Jerry's wife, JoAnn, for the first time. It took considerable time to assemble the part, so it was well past lunchtime when we went to the house. It was not good timing! As we approached, JoAnn was walking to the car with her grocery bags prepared to go shopping. However, she graciously invited us into the house to write out the receipt and spend a few minutes getting acquainted.

Our discussion about the difficulties caused by the pandemic opened the way for us to explain where we are in earth's history. I explained the progression of kingdoms outlined in Daniel 2 and pointed out that we were in the very toenails of that great image. The next event would be that those kingdoms will be completely swept away without a trace remaining. Jesus, represented as the stone throughout Scripture, sets up His everlasting kingdom where there will be no war, no violence, death, pain, or grief.

We sensed the presence of the Holy Spirit as they sat, mouths agape, listening with complete attention. I felt impressed to share the story of the minister Arthur Branner during the Iraq war.

Chaplain Branner was deployed for a year in Iraq, entrusted with the spiritual

care of a platoon. He prayed before each foray with the assembled soldiers, prayed individually for each soldier each week, and claimed Psalm 91 daily. Gradually, the platoon welcomed and appreciated the prayers of the chaplain, hearing the 91st psalm, and experiencing God's protection in very real ways. When their tour of duty ended and they returned to Los Angeles, the commanding officer spoke to all the assembled families who had come to meet their soldiers. He proudly told them, "These soldiers have gone on 4,000 missions in the past year. We return with every soldier who left. Not one lost his life, nor even a limb, thanks to God answering the prayers of Chaplain Branner and the power in the 91st psalm."

I continued speaking hope to the couple. "God is so faithful. Psalm 91 says, 'He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. ... A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou ... see the reward of the wicked.'"

It seemed vital to appeal to them. "We can choose to be among those who belong to God upon whom He promises His protection," I said. "I don't know where you are spiritually, but I feel impressed to invite you to make your

peace with God, to accept Him as your Saviour, so that you can be among the faithful who will inhabit the new earth."

We closed with a short prayer committing them to the care of God. This was an unprecedented appeal to someone whom I had never met before, but without question, the Holy Spirit was present in those moments. My husband and I could tell that they were not offended and that they were deeply touched. There was no talk of doctrine, no literature shared, just a simple sharing of stories in an endeavour to build faith in God and inspire hope for what appears to be a dark and menacing future facing us. There was a mutual awareness of the Holy Spirit sanctifying those few minutes.

There is one multifaceted promise we pray daily that is universally appropriate for us and those for whom we intercede: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things I will do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isa. 42:16). ■

Leora Schmidt and her husband, Arnold, live on a Saskatchewan grain farm that includes an organic flour mill, Schmidt Flour Inc.



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North American Division

Kyoshin Ahn Named North American Division Secretary



New North American Division Secretary Kyoshin Ahn and his wife, You Mi Kim. Photo credit: Dan Weber/NAD

On Aug. 20, 2020, the Seventh-day Adventist Church's General Conference Executive Committee met virtually to receive the name of Kyoshin Ahn, the recommendation for division secretary, from both the North American Division's standing nominating committee and executive committee. Ahn was confirmed in a vote of 118 to 2.

"Dr. Kyoshin Ahn brings to the position a wealth of knowledge and experience he has garnished through various assignments," said G. Alexander Bryant, NAD president. "He is a humble man with a quiet spirit and a but God has shaped him and called him to be the secretary of the North American Division in these challenging

and unprecedented times. He is a great addition to the executive team." Bryant, who chaired both NAD meetings, was elected to the division presidency on July 9, after serving as the NAD's executive secretary for 12 years.

"I have had the privilege of working with Dr. Ahn for the last eight years," Bryant added. "He has an evangelistic fervor in his bones. He is organized and detailed; and [with] his gifts he very much meets—and exceeds—the required [needs] for this particular office."

"I have interacted with Dr. Ahn both as a union treasurer and now as division treasurer," said Randy Robinson, NAD treasurer. "In both contexts I have found him to be a man who loves God and His church, and also one who is an expert on how it works. His leadership as executive secretary will be deeply appreciated, and I look forward to serving with him as a fellow officer."

Upon learning of the voted decision, Ahn shared, "I am deeply humbled by the trust the church has placed in me with this responsibility. I approach this new task prayerfully. I solicit your prayers for me and my family as I work, along with you all, [and] endeavor to carry out the mission of God in North America."

All world division executive officers serve as elected officers of the GC and their nomination and election by the region they represent must be approved by the General Conference Executive Committee. NAD meetings leading to the GC meeting were also held virtually via Zoom with a previously used electronic voting process that utilizes mobile phone technology.

Ahn replaces Bryant, who was voted NAD president to replace the newly retired Daniel R. Jackson. The process to elect an individual to the position of undersecretary, the position left vacant by Ahn, is now underway.

Ahn served as NAD's undersecretary since February 2016. Previously, he worked at the division as an associate secretary from 2013 to 2016.

While serving at the division, Ahn chaired several

committees, including the NAD Church Governance Committee and the NAD Human Sexuality Statement Committee. He also helped in digitizing the NAD Secretariat functions. During the past two decades, Ahn has assisted in church plantings for Korean congregations across the division, conducted seminars, trained local church clerks, and held evangelistic campaigns.

Ahn began his pastoral ministry in 1995 in the Potomac Conference, and served there until 2001. He was then president of the Korean Churches Association in North America from June 2001 to October 2005. Before coming to the NAD, Ahn served almost eight years (2005–13) as executive secretary for the Illinois Conference.

He graduated with a bachelor's degree from Sahmyook University in Korea, followed by an M.Div. from Andrews University Theological Seminary in Michigan, and a PhD in New Testament and Early

Christianity from Vanderbilt University. During his time in college and university, and also post-graduation, Ahn showed his interest in training and education by serving as a freelance translator (1989–95), a research and teaching assistant at Vanderbilt Divinity School (1993–95), and a D.Min. advisor for Andrews University (2012–19).

Ahn is the first Korean American elected to serve as NAD secretary. He is married to You Mi Kim, and together they are the parents of two adult children. He joins Bryant and Robinson, as the leadership team of the North American Division, a territory with more than 1.2 million members in the countries of Bermuda, Canada, Guam, Micronesia, and the United States. ■

—Office of Communication,
North American Division

Ontario

Mount Olive Church Holds Virtual Evangelistic Series



Pastor Devron Thomas from the Cocoa Seventh-day Adventist Church in St. Lucia.

Seventh-day Adventist Christians around the world widely embrace evangelism. Churches always look forward to opportunities to spread the gospel of Christ's salvation either from the church pulpit or under a tent. However, the global pandemic has thrust the world into varying degrees of lockdown with stringent measures restricting mass gatherings.

Despite the lockdown Mount Olive Church was undaunted. The evangelistic team embarked into the virtual world to proclaim God's Word and bring hope

and comfort to His people through Facebook, Zoom, and YouTube. The church co-hosted a one-week evangelistic series in collaboration with the Cocoa Seventh-day Adventist Church in St. Lucia, from July 31 to Aug. 8, 2020.

The tag line "Hold Fast to Jesus, the Bible, and the Truth" came to life each night with powerful presentations by our guest presenter, Devron Thomas, Cocoa church pastor. Topics included "The Gospel: Is It Facts or Folklore?"; "Reason to Believe the Miracle of Creation"; and "A Breach Between the Two Worlds." Chatrooms across the platforms were alive as the global audience expressed words of encouragement and praises.

Though short, the evangelistic series was a resounding success. Some listeners even expressed the desire for an extension beyond the one week allotted. We praise God for the commitments made, friendships formed, and inspiration to keep pressing forward despite challenges.

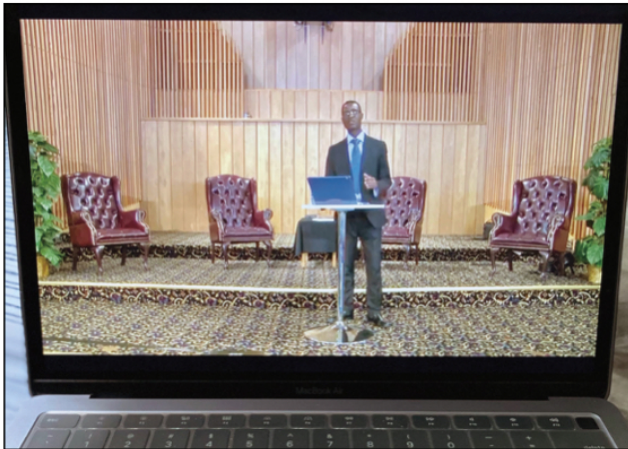
Isaiah 40:31 states, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." May God continue to bless those who wait upon Him. ■

—Veronica Lyttle, communications,
Mount Olive Seventh-day
Adventist Church



Alberta

Churches Embrace Innovation and Creativity During COVID-19



Church members joining prayer meetings, motivational minutes, connecting virtually and spiritually. Technology proves to be a great tool when used purposefully.

I've often heard our pastors mention how the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the church to implement long-overdue innovations. I couldn't agree more! The current lockdown has brought out talent and creativity previously hidden and unknown among our members.

Pastors and members have stepped up to the plate with innovative teaching methods and the leading-edge use of technology. Videoconferencing technology has been embraced in conducting the business of the church, and in some cases, completely new ministries have been birthed from this crisis. Another unexpected surprise has been the visitors who have "shown up" for many of our services from places as far as the United States and even Africa!

It has been said many times that church is not the building; it is the people who make up the church. Perhaps this pandemic will help us refocus on reaching out to the world beyond our walls.

At Edmonton Central, some of the creative ideas we have implemented since the lockdown include:

- A daily "Minute Motivation" video message from our pastors via Facebook
- Zoom prayer meetings for adults and a youth "Power Up" meeting on Wednesdays
- A children's department weekly video and newsletter
- An enhanced YouTube streaming worship experience and interactive Zoom Sabbath school
- A Sabbath afternoon virtual pastor's study class
- A weekly virtual workout session

God has opened up new and exciting windows to share His grace and peace with a hungry and desperate world, and He has promised to walk with us to the end.

"Have I not commanded you? 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).

—Chifuka Chundu, Edmonton Central Seventh-day Adventist Church, reprinted from Alberta Adventist News

Reflecting the Shepherd: Alberta Conference's Virtual Campmeeting Provides Full Week of Spiritual Engagement During COVID-19 Crisis



Alberta Conference president Gary Hodder presented the sermon on the Sabbath of July 18 for the conference's virtual campmeeting.

Every year at Foothills Camp and Retreat Centre, thousands of families gather in one place to connect with friends, family, and faith, but this year that changed. We cancelled the traditional Alberta Conference Campmeeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In its place, the Alberta Conference Virtual Campmeeting: Reflecting the Shepherd was introduced July 17–25, 2020.

The event was streamed on every central platform, including YouTube, Facebook Live, Vimeo/Livestream, and its own website, albertavirtualcampmeeting.ca. The virtual campmeeting featured children, youth, and adult programs, including morning and evening devotionals, concerts, interactive prayer meetings, weekly Sabbath school classes, and worship.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the event was the enormous collaborative, co-operative effort it took to successfully pull the event off. Over 250 individuals served in various areas, including production, planning, support, or participating with music, singing, or speaker presenting. The virtual campmeeting highlighted a vast array of talent from every corner of our conference, including the Northwest Territories and Alberta. And as several attendees remarked, it empowered local pastors and highlighted local church talent.

On YouTube alone, during the week of July 17–25 there were 111,238 impressions made with 24,843

program views on 5,393 unique devices and 4.6 views per device. Those figures do not account for viewers from Facebook Live, Vimeo/Livestream, or those who engaged in the interactive Zoom meetings; nor do they encompass all the additional viewers who were watching programs from shared devices.

With 8,399 family units and 12,212 members in the Alberta Conference (at the time of writing), it is not far-fetched to assume roughly 64 percent of the Alberta Conference membership's family units were reached through our virtual campmeeting on YouTube. Considering what would have happened if we had cancelled the traditional camp meeting and didn't offer the alternative virtual option, it seems the initiative was worthwhile.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and its corresponding isolation of members from one another, Alberta Conference Virtual Campmeeting provided a spiritual retreat for many during a global health and financial crisis. If you would like to be blessed by the fantastic programs provided, you may view them by visiting us at albertavirtualcampmeeting.ca. ■

—Eric Ollila, communication/IT/
media director, Alberta Conference

>> SDACC REVOLVING FUND REPORT. As of Aug. 31, 2020, there were 389 depositors with a total deposit of \$31,999,652. There were 93 loans with a value of \$29,901,676.

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- 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 submitable) are available at www.adventist.ca/messenger.
- The *Messenger* assumes no liability for typographical errors or responsibility for inaccuracies originating in submitted material.

■ **Announcements**

Notice is hereby given that the 49th Regular Members' Meeting of the Maritime Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held *virtually*, on Sunday, Oct. 18, 2020, beginning at 9 a.m., ADT.

This meeting is called for the following purposes: election of a board of directors, election of a standing bylaws committee, election of officers of the conference, consideration of proposed changes in the bylaws of the conference, transaction of other business as may properly come before a Regular Members' Meeting.

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

Delegates who are members of the Organizing Committee are asked to meet at the place of the session on Sunday, Oct. 18, at 8 a.m., ADT.

*David Miller, President
Teresa Ferreira, Secretary
Ed Sharpe, Treasurer*

The Cornerstone Seventh-day Adventist Church is looking for the following missing members: Mirislava Antonuk, David B. Barreno, Maria Barreno, Bernice Bergy, Andre Bock, Audrey Brown, Stephanie Kira Butler, Karina Byrne, Paul Byrne,

Kathleen Chitombo, Steven Comm, Samantha Cross, Anna Cullingworth, Russell Cullingworth, Jim Donnett, Jasmine Ghala, Shawn Ghala, Hirod Gill, Lorretta Harris, Nicki Harris, Qi Xu Hu, Bonnie Huber, Helen Jackson, Anthony Johnson, Donna C. Jordan, Keith W. Jordan, Mary Lou Jordan, Louisa Keteca, Elizabeth Kremer, Laura Kruzick, Leona Kruzick, Angela Lungy, Oleg Lungy, Monica Martinez, Yvonne Matabela, John Lyam McGann, Leona McVicker, Vera Morgan, Chris Morrison, Gerard O. Obery, Marianne Obery, Andrea Parkerson, Ellen Parkerson, Michael Don Parkerson, Michael J. Parkerson, Florence Price, Arlene Ricard, Michelle Ricard, Melissa Tinoco Sanchez, Kathy Schulenburg, Doria Silvana, Adrian Small, Anthony (Rickey) Small, Larry Small, Andrea Stanhope, Todd Stanhope, Dan Stevenson, Tia Stevenson, Kara Straub, Anna Marie Suchy, Allen U. Upton, Lorna Upton, Amber V. Van Dun, Kristina Cathleen Van Dun, and Xiaomei Wang. If you have a current phone number, address, or email for any of these people, please contact Norman Cote at pastornormcote@mail.com.

■ **Birthdays**

Alice (née Eliuk) Chaikowsky of Penticton, B.C., celebrated her 100th



birthday on July 10, 2020, at Sun Village Retirement Home. Alice outlived her husband, son, and eight siblings, but her youngest brother, Eugene Eliuk, was there with his wife, Ruby, and two other relatives. Using Zoom, Alice was also able to see and talk with her four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Pastor Greg Wellman and his wife, Debbie, attended the celebration with two other church members, and Alice's physician surprised and delighted her by dropping in to wish her well.

Harold Reimche of Kelowna, B.C.,



celebrated his 100th birthday on Aug. 18, 2020, for a week! Due to COVID restrictions, 14 family members met at a park in Kelowna on Aug. 12. That evening, immediate family had a party via Zoom. Lastly, on Aug. 23, there was a drive-by for church members and friends at the church lawn. Harold has four children, 10 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

■ **New Members**

John Ivan Smarch and **Myra Greda Gorobao** were baptized in Whitehorse, Yukon, on Aug. 1, 2020, by Matthew Reyes. John and Myra were influenced by Doug Batchelor's trip to the Philippines and follow-up studies with Pastor Reyes, and the Whitehorse Seventh-day Adventist Church is so happy to have them join the church family. John and Myra are now members of the Whitehorse church.

■ **Obituaries**

Leonard Dennis Andrews was born on April 28, 1934, in Victoria, B.C., and died on July 14, 2020, in Oliver, B.C. Pastor Leonard faithfully served the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 40 years, as both teacher and pastor throughout Canada and Michigan. He and his wife celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary just days before he passed away. Leonard is predeceased by his parents, Percy and Alice Andrews. Surviving: wife, Elizabeth Andrews; son, Patrick (Karen) Andrews of McBride, B.C.; daughters, Colette (Ben) Ferris of Kilauea, Hawaii, Jacqueline (Dave) Gunther of Guntersville, Ala.; sisters, Marilyn (Roy) Procter and Lynda (Willie) Tataryn, both of Lumby, B.C.; 11 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Wanesa (née Brock) Barr was born on Jan. 21, 1930, in Oshawa, Ont., and died on May 23, 2020, in Whitby, Ont. Wanesa is predeceased by spouses Thomas Barr and David Johnson. Surviving: sons, Gary (Christine) Johnson of Whitby, Wayne (Deborah) Johnson of Gaylord, Mich., and Kevin (Linda) Johnson of London, Ont.; daughter, Linda (Larry) Thwaites of Leamington, Ont.; five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Harold Wayne Blize was born on Aug. 24, 1941, in Edmonton, Alta., and died on March 14, 2020, in Saskatoon, Sask. He is remembered for his 25 years of service as a wise and caring pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada who

offered quiet and calm council. Harold is predeceased by his parents, Harold and Myrtle (née Hager) Blize; brother, Myron Blize. Surviving: wife, Donna (née Rodgers) Blize; sons, Earle (Shauna) Blize, Bruce (Christine) Blize; daughters, Jennifer Blize, Mitzi (Edward) Wesolowski; sister, Donna (Wayne) Bechthold; 10 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Wilfred Michaels was born on Oct. 23, 1938, in Yarmouth, N.S., and died on June 9, 2020, in Regina, Sask. He pastored in five provinces. Wilfred is predeceased by his daughter, Barbara Michaels; parents, Ernest and Martha (née Surette) Michaels; brothers, Jack Michaels, Ernest Michaels Jr., and George Michaels. Surviving: wife, Helen (née Muise) Michaels; sons, Wilfred (Sam) Michaels, Karen Michaels; daughters, Shawn Michaels, Lucinda Michaels; 13 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

■ **Tributes**

In Memory of Mabel Dorothy (Liske) Gertz



Mabel fell asleep in Jesus on Aug. 16, 2019, at the age of 97 in Kelowna, B.C., with a family member by her side. She was predeceased by her husband, Otto (1978), and her son, Wayne (1998). The Winfield Seventh-day Adventist Church and community were very close to her heart. Teaching Sabbath school and leading out in VBS was where she shared her love of Jesus with so many children over the years. Her garden, flowerbeds, and fruit trees brought her great joy. She loved to can, make apple juice, and spoil others with delicious meals and home-baked goods! Even Alzheimer's disease could not dim her smile, contagious giggle, and sparkling eyes. She will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by her children Brian (Sheila) Gertz and Cyndi (Gertz) Walker, along with their children and grandchildren.



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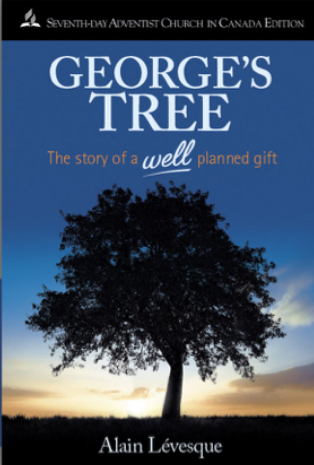
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WHAT A YEAR this has been! Here's hoping that 2021 will not be anything like 2020.

Church planning for 2021 starts with a nominating and planning committee for each church. That was one of the annual experiences I did not enjoy very much. Some enthusiastic members want to contribute in every way they can and maximize the potential of their respective positions, while others exhibit a pronounced reluctance to serve their congregation.

On one occasion I happened to be in a country where church members who held all the typical, elected assignments in their congregation we're familiar with (deacons, elders, Sabbath school teachers, etc.) could, for all intents and purposes, be titled evangelists. All of these members were responsible for making sure there were new and recurring visitors in the church every service. Perhaps some variation of that could be adopted here in Canada.

I would like to see more elected or appointed positions that are designed to help members connect with community groups of influence; it would be nice to get more church members involved in service clubs and other groups because we should, as Jesus did, mingle with people. We want our members to connect with people of all walks of life without making anyone feel uncomfortable. In the past, I was invited to Rotary and other community service groups where I gave a report (or a friend would do a presentation) on how the funds they had donated to our humanitarian organizations (like ADRA and A Better World Canada) made a difference in the lives of people who could never really thank them in person.

I think the Branch Sabbath Schools concept (an evangelistic type of service geared mainly toward non-Adventists) should be implemented again. It would be a great way to focus on people in our community with a weekly Bible reading, conversation, or study. This can be done in the form of youth reaching youth, seniors connecting with seniors, moms connecting with other moms ... via small group sessions that could be structured or non-structured.

I know of one church that started an initiative of sending a choir to minister to the folks in a nursing home; it was very well received by the people in that community.

Sabbath school can also focus on various ethnic groups and facilitate home-based fellowship, such as Simple Churches. We can find out more about a culture and integrate it into our worship. Our church has provided some information about that at www.simplechurchathome.com.

Some people may prefer to take their shoes and socks off before coming into a worship or prayer service. Others may have different preferences or unique perspectives. In my personal experience, when I hear people say they want to have a more multicultural church, I often find that what they really mean is a *multi-coloured* church that is *monocultural*. I think we should move beyond the surface and, for example, incorporate different cultural styles of worship within our services.

Getting back to the point, as we strategize for 2021—elected or re-elected positions—let's do it with well-defined, measurable goals that we review at every board meeting. That only makes sense, right? ■

from the editor

That Time of Year

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME you said thank you to your pastor? October is Pastor Appreciation Month, so what better time to take a moment to thank your pastor for his or her hard work and dedication? This month let's take another look at an article from the January 1996 *Messenger*, entitled "How to Treat Your Pastor Well."

How to Treat Your Pastor Well

by Donald G. King
Executive Secretary, Alberta Conference

Moses was hand-picked by God to lead His people to freedom. Freedom from physical and spiritual bondage was his mission. Pastors perform the same function as they minister to their churches and communities. And whatever our theological perspective may be, the down-to-earth reality is that the effectiveness of a congregation depends to a large degree on the pastor. As a general rule when the pastor performs well, the church moves forward. When the pastor fails, the congregation tends to fail also.

Many times we fail to recognize that the difference between an effective pastor and one who's not, often lies not just in the pastor but in the congregation's support or lack of support for the pastor. Indeed it is a two-way relationship. The way church members care for their spiritual leader can and will make the difference between his or her success or failure.

Caring can be expressed in all sorts of ways. The following are some earthy ideas that were suggested by some pastors and their spouses:¹

1. Offer to help the pastor in providing ongoing ministry to some troubled or lonely person who the pastor knows is in need of personal attention.
2. Offer to care for the pastor's children especially after the church service in order to free the couple to minister to the members during the vital hour or so right after the worship service.
3. Extend an invitation to the pastor and his family for a meal at your home. It is amazing how few invitations many pastors receive.

4. Compliment the pastor's spouse about your appreciation for the pastor's ministry. Do the same for the pastor regarding your appreciation for the spouse's service.

5. If you've been helped by a particular sermon, write a card of appreciation to say thanks. Kind words are like apples of gold in silver containers.

6. Offer to baby-sit so the pastoral couple can get away for a few hours or an evening.

7. Seek opportunities to show tangible support for the pastor and family through appropriate gifts at Christmas time, Thanksgiving, birthday and wedding anniversary celebrations.

8. Yield not to the temptation to expect the pastoral family to be flawless Christians.

9. If you are an elder in the church, make a conscious effort to pastor the pastor. Tactfully offer to pray about things concerning the pastor's personal and spiritual life.

10. Finally, and most of all, pray for your pastor and family. Not just in a generic way. Pray specifically. Thank God for their gifts. Ask the Lord to protect them from Satan's assaults and to fill them with Pentecostal fire. If there are failings, ask God to forgive them and help them gain the victory. Pray that their ministry will encourage new people to attend church; Bible study contacts to be baptized; members to become disciples of disciples while bringing their own lives under the lordship of the Saviour.

I will never forget the Wednesday night prayer meeting when my members gathered around me as their pastor, laid their hands upon me in prayer asking God to continue to bless my ministry in that church. Even the Apostle Paul craved this experience (Col 4: 2-4). So should we as we seek to treat our pastors well.

¹ Adapted from the *Adventist Review*,
Nov. 12, 1992



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